Government 317: Campaigns and Elections

Fall 2005
Tuesday and Thursday 2:55–4:10 (ML 106)
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TA email: `slc58@cornell.edu`
TA Office: B13 White Hall
TA Office Hours: Tue 12:30–2:30 or other times by appointment.

- **midterm elections and midterm loss**
  - **midterm loss: president's party loses vote share at midterm**
  - **midterm loss was a reliable pattern through most of the 20th century, except for 1998 and 2002**
  - **every indication is it will be back in 2006**
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  - **why did it happen, and why did it go away?**
- **alternative possible theories**
  - **surge and decline (false)**
  - **economic performance voting (mostly false)**
  - **"presidential penalty" (Erikson's term: mostly true)**

- **midterm loss: two reliable mechanisms seem to exist, one always, the other mostly**
  - **institutional balancing (based on institutional awareness and strategic voting)**
  - **ideological shifting**

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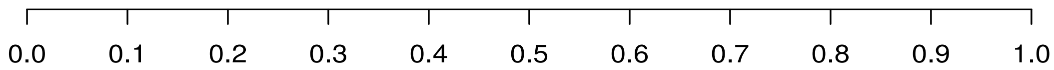
  - **Fiorina's model: voters choose the closest policy (sincere voting)**

voting model example



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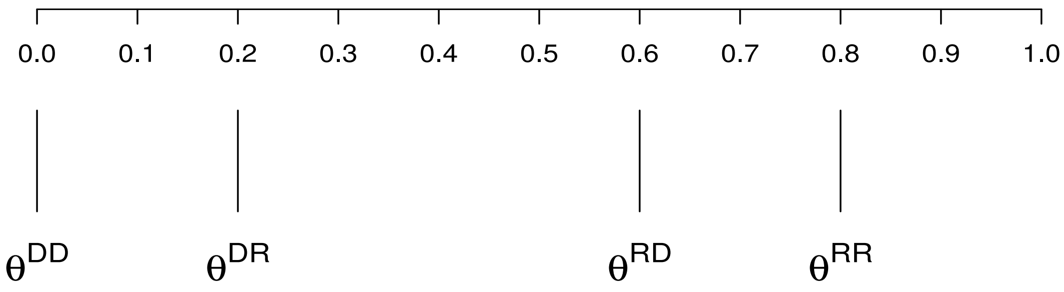

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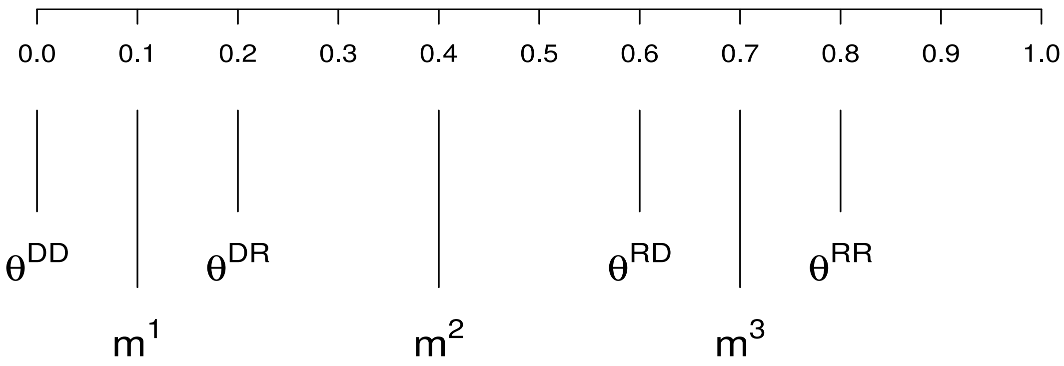
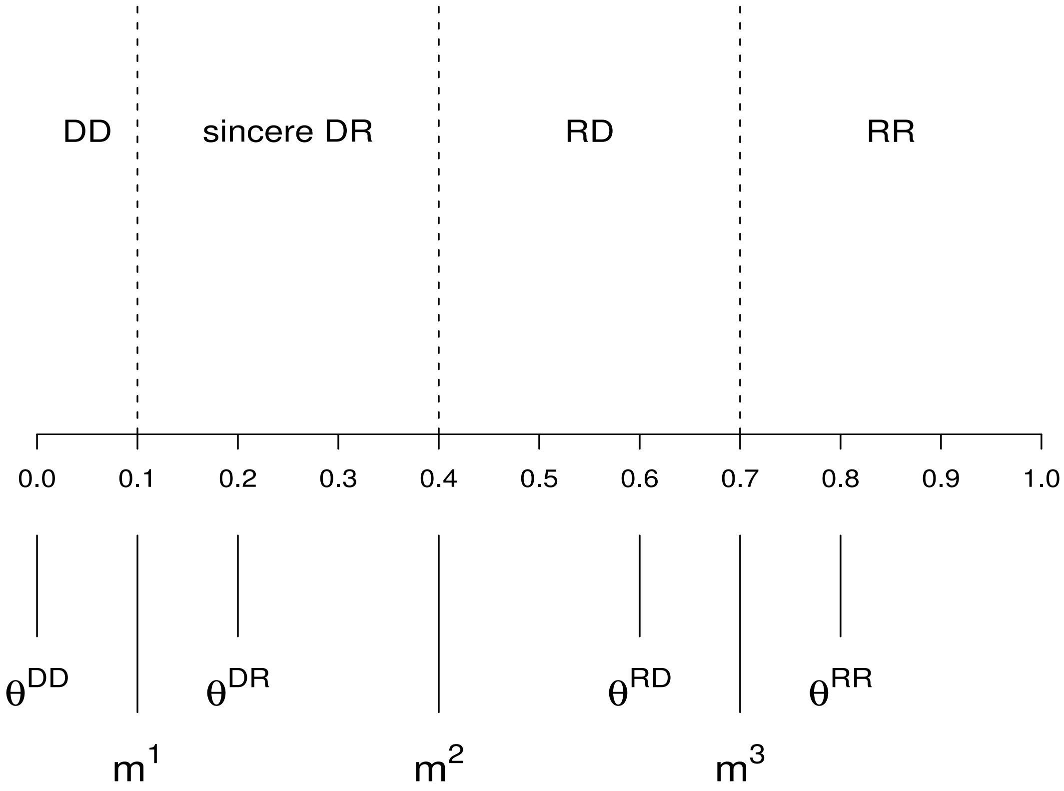


Fiorina model example



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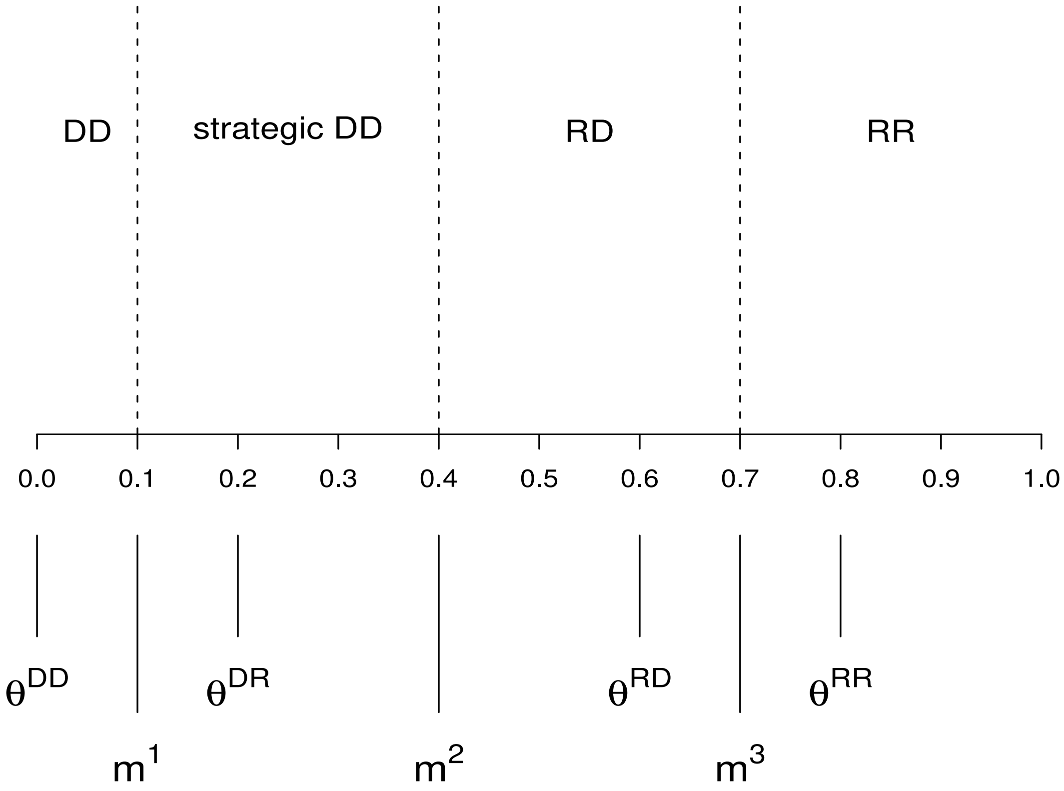
  - **Fiorina's model with strategic voting: voters choose the closest policy, taking into account how others will vote**

strategic model example



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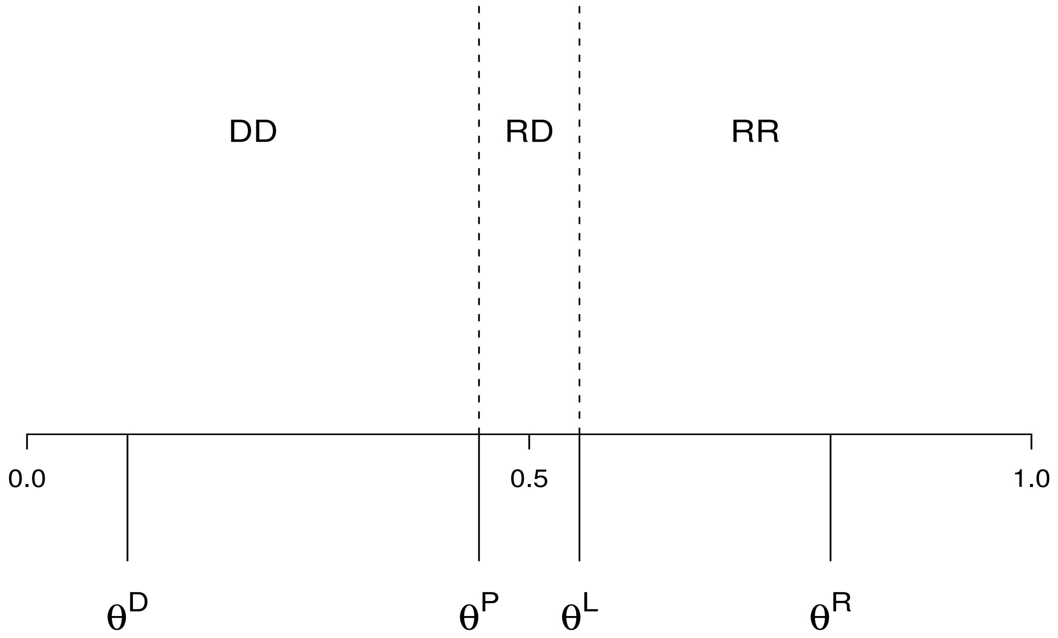
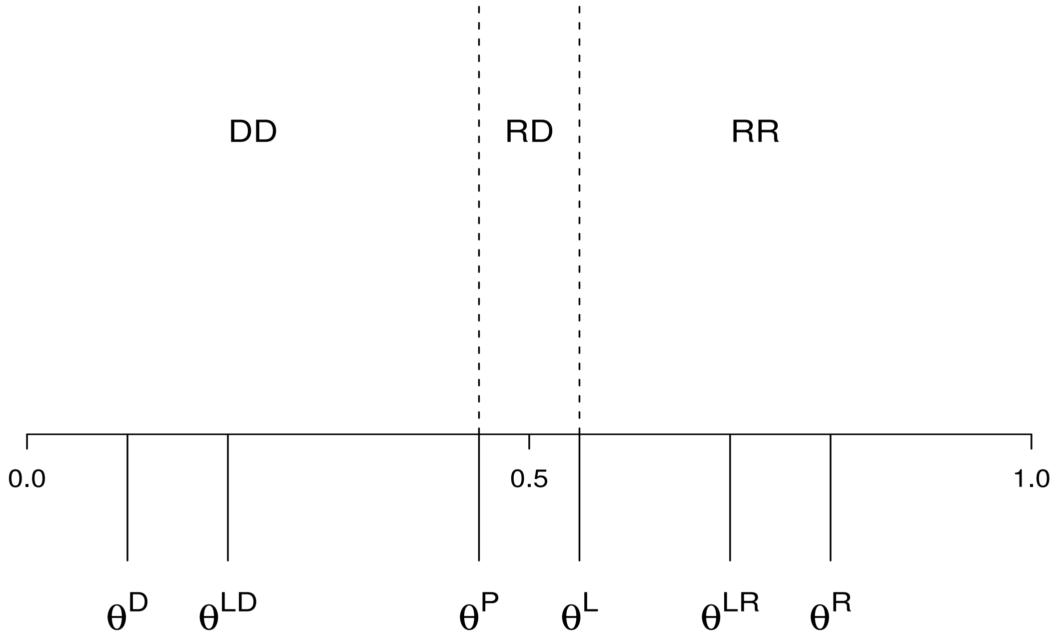
- **ticket splits go only one way**

Alesina-Rosenthal model: presidential year, uncertain



A-R model: pres. year with post-election policies



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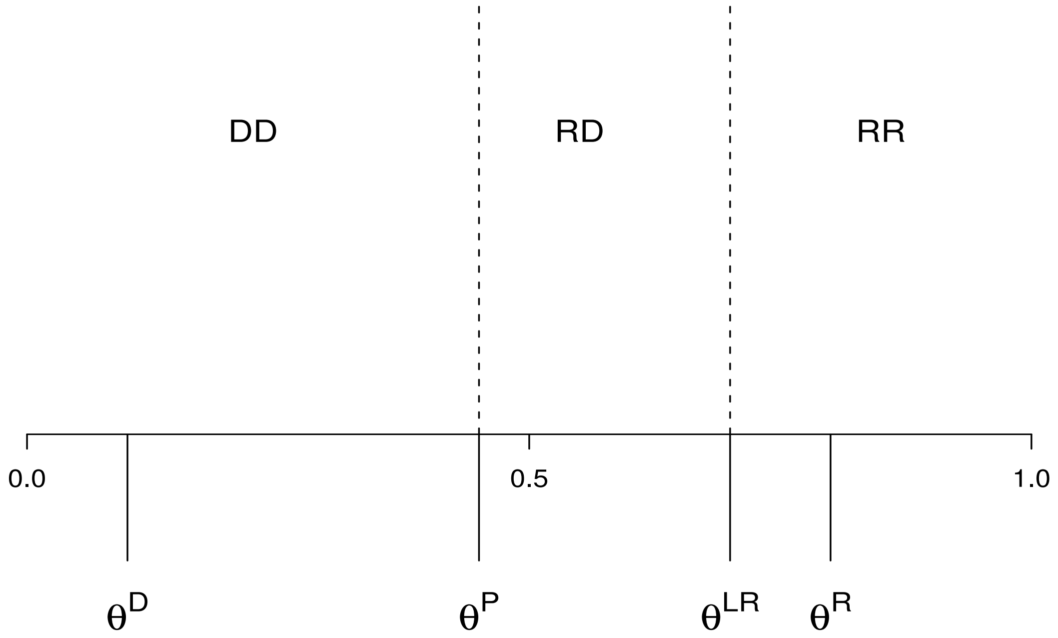
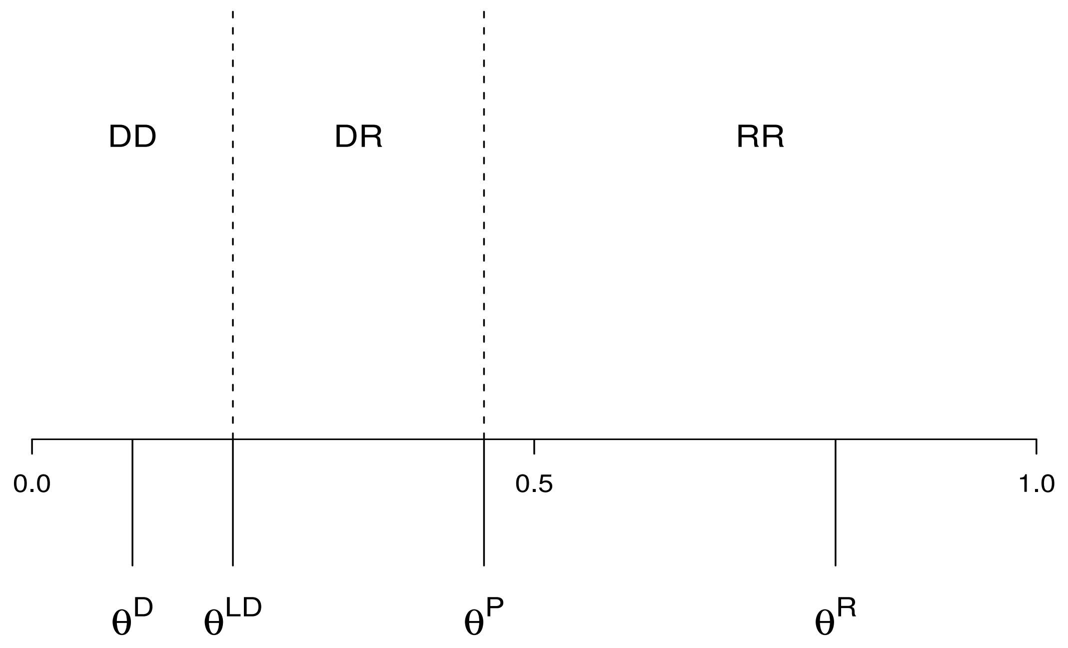
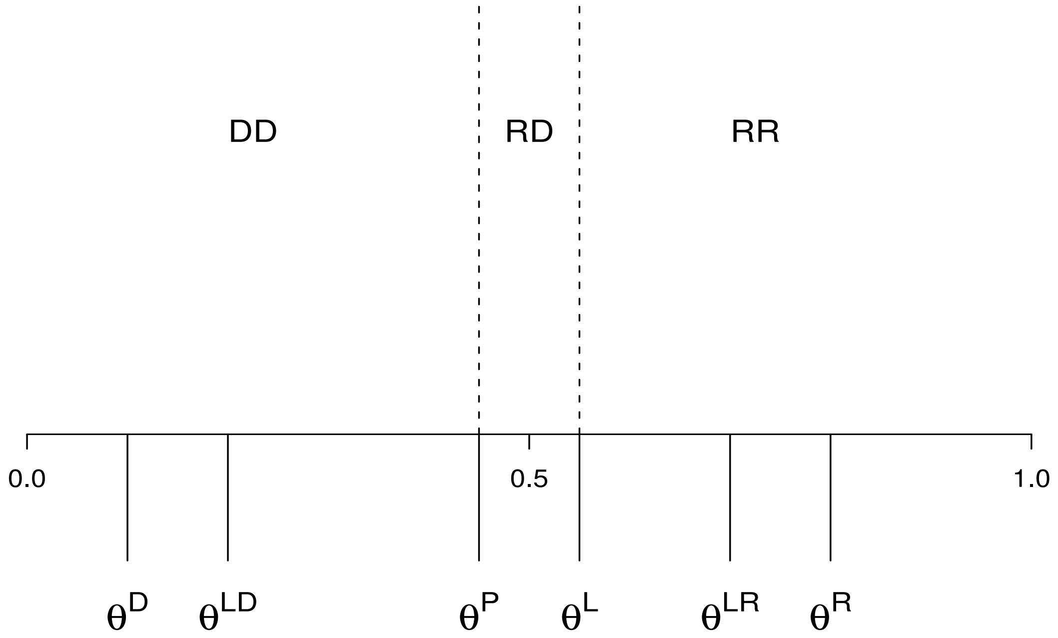


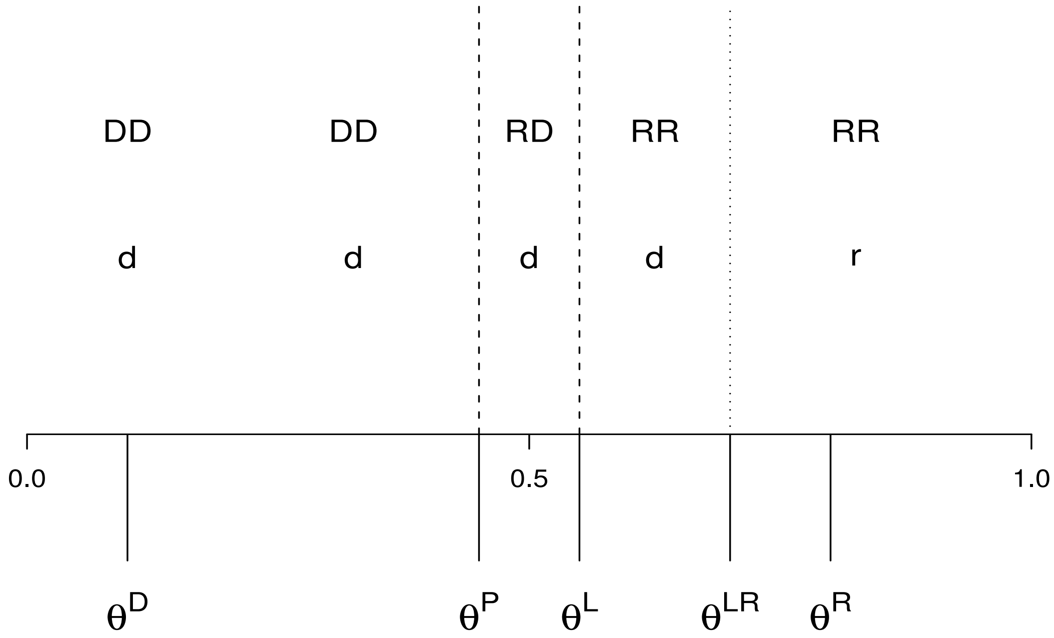
A-R model: pres. year with Democratic victory certain



A-R model: pres. year, post-election policies



A-R model: midterm with Republican president



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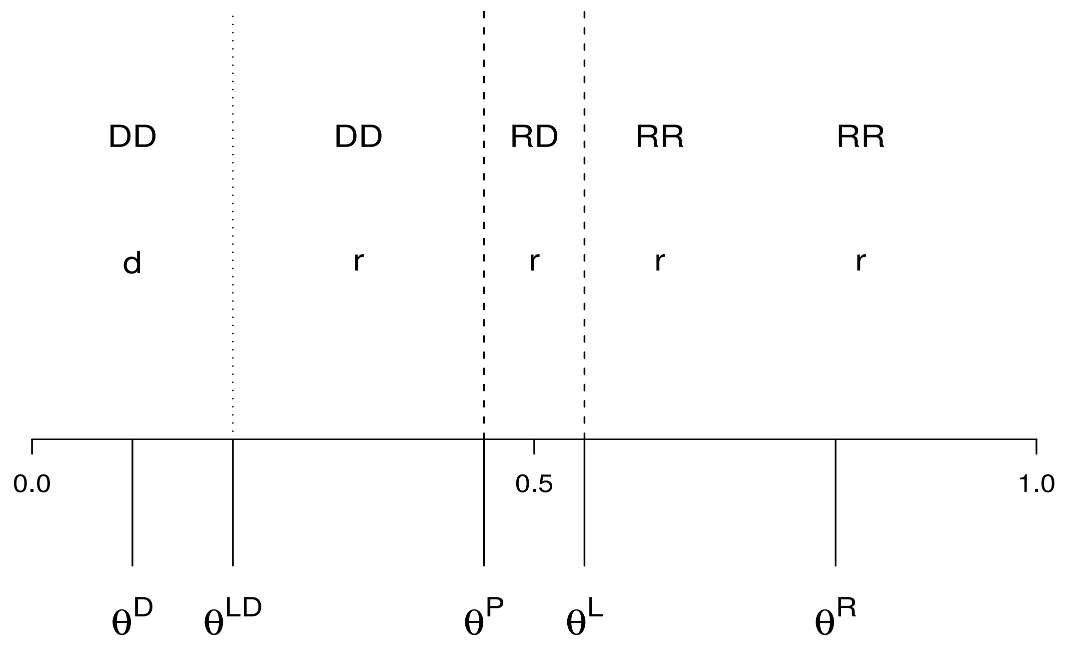

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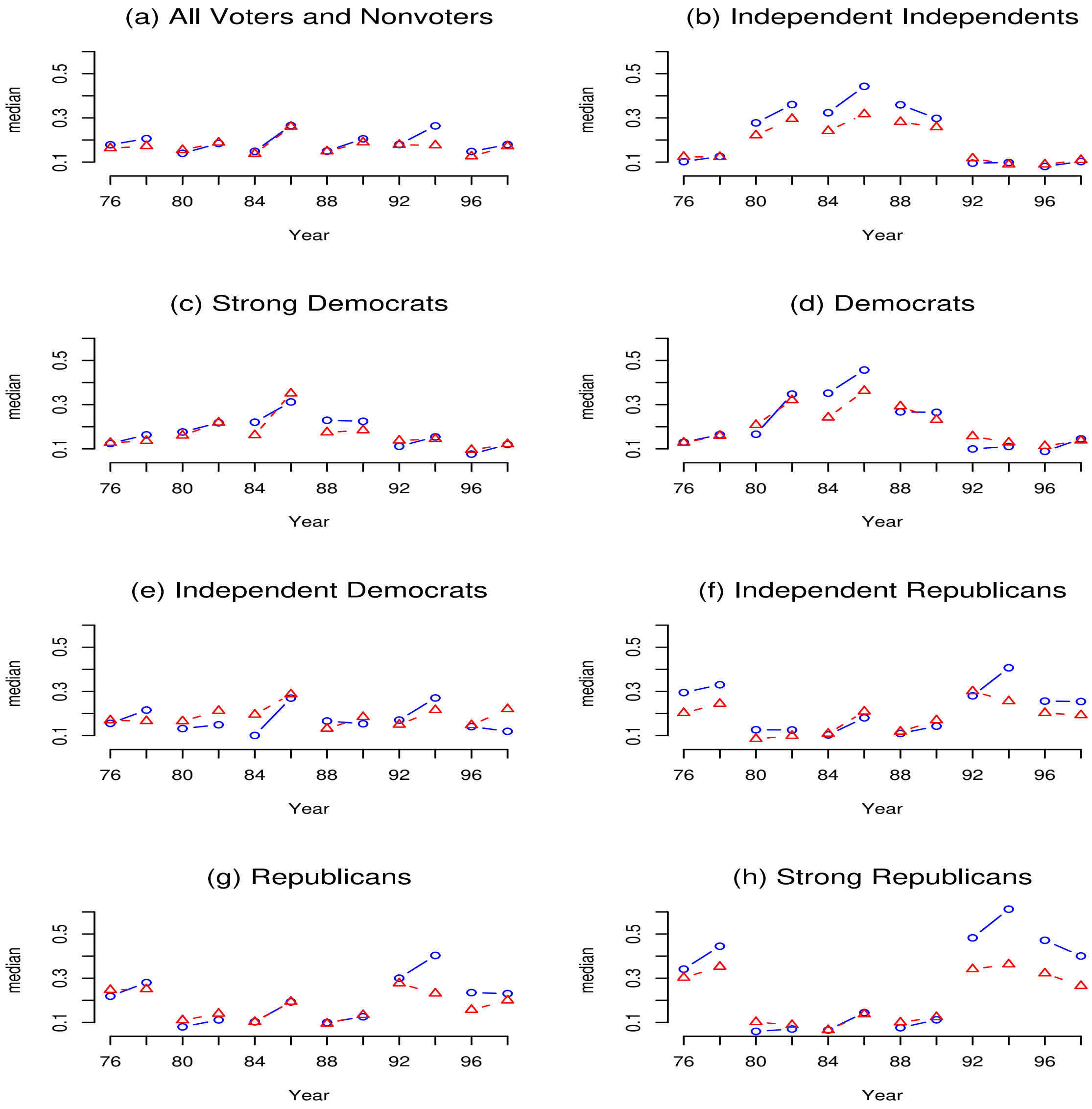
  - **Stimson's data going back to 1960 (and earlier)**
  - **NES data going back to 1976**

Median Absolute Difference, Self versus Winner's Party



Median Signed Difference, Self versus Both Parties