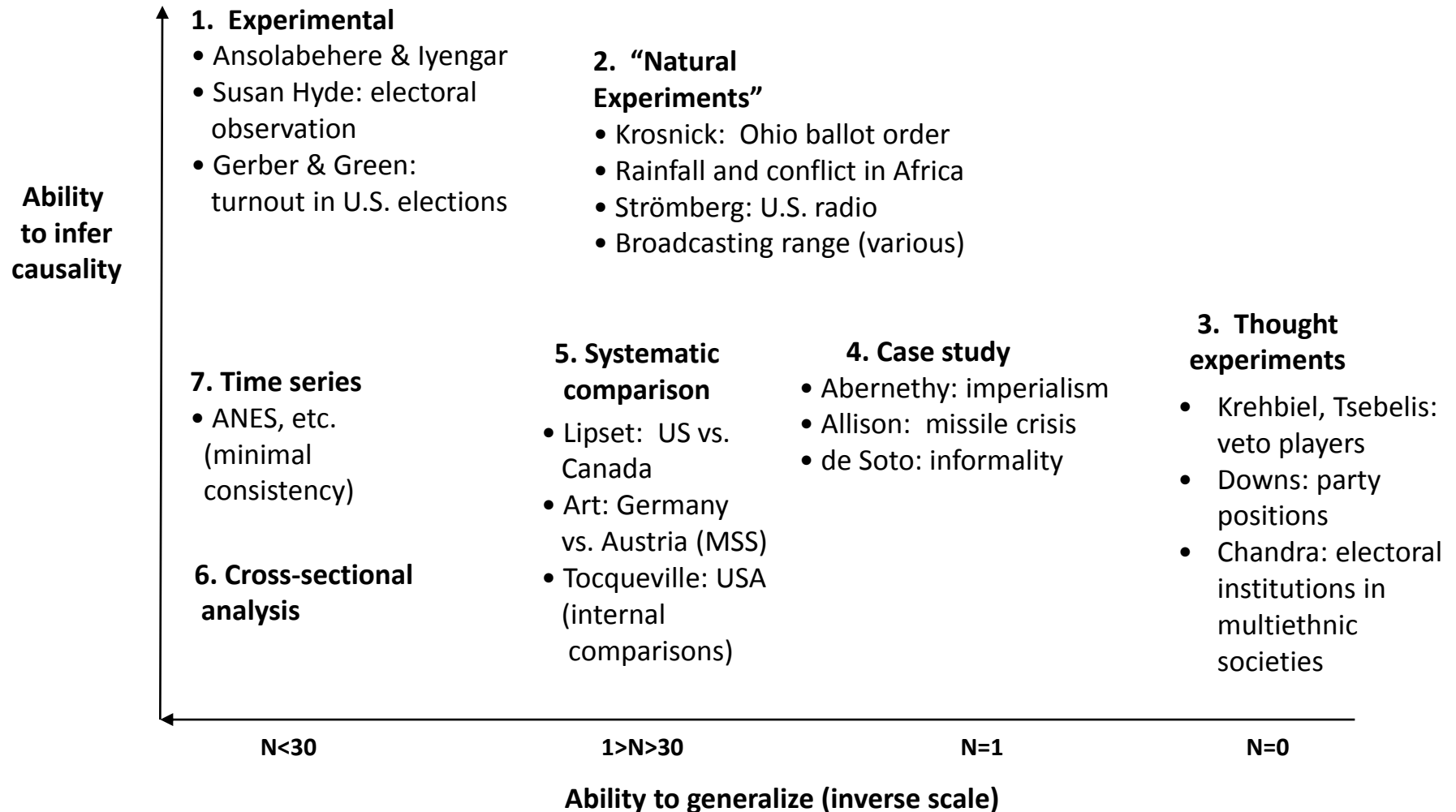


Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods



Hybrids: Putnam combines natural experiment, etc.
O'Donnell combines cross-sectional in L.A., paired comparison (Ar. / Ur.), case study (Brazil)

Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods

1. Experimental

- Ansolabehere & Iyengar: lab experiments on American voters exposed to negative advertising
- Susan Hyde: electoral observation in semi-democratic or democratizing political systems; random assignment of some of the electoral observers
- Gerber & Green: turnout in U.S. elections

American Political Science Review

Vol. 94, No. 3 September 2000

The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment

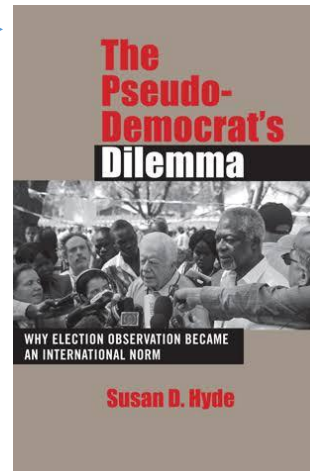
ALAN S. GERBER and DONALD P. GREEN *Yale University*

We report the results of a randomized field experiment involving approximately 30,000 registered voters in New Haven, Connecticut. Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote messages were conveyed through personal canvassing, direct mail, and telephone calls shortly before the November 1998 election. A variety of substantive messages were used. Voter turnout was increased substantially by personal canvassing, slightly by direct mail, and not at all by telephone calls. These findings support our hypothesis that the long-term retrenchment in voter turnout is partly attributable to the decline in face-to-face political mobilization.

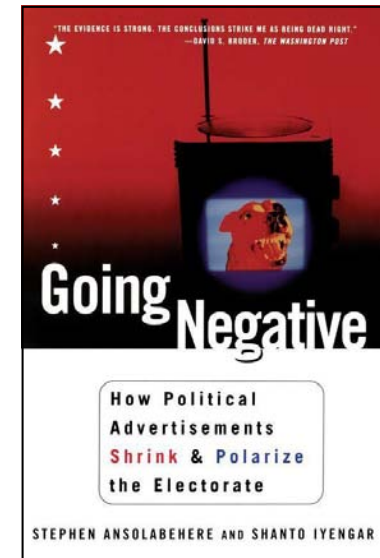
During the last half-century, a dramatic transformation has occurred in the manner in which voters are mobilized. The election campaigns described by Gosnell (1937), Sayre and Kaufman (1960, chap. 6), and Wolfinger (1974, chap. 4) relied heavily on face-to-face contact between voters and those seeking their support. Notably absent from such accounts are professional campaign consultants, direct mail vendors, and commercial phone banks, all of which have gradually replaced work performed by party activists. The advent of modern campaign tactics (Broder 1971; Ware 1985) has coincided with a decline in the proportion of adults who report working for a political party. Based on an annual aggregation of Roper surveys between 1973 and 1994, Putnam (2000, 41) reports a steady decline in this proportion: Whereas 6% of the public reported working for a political party in the early 1970s, just 3% did so in the mid-1990s.

activity. As Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde (1998, 85) point out in their discussion of Rosenstone and Hansen, there has been no clear trend over time in the proportion of American National Election Study (ANES) respondents who report some form of contact with political parties or campaigns, whether personal or impersonal. When read in conjunction with the trend lines compiled by Putnam, the ANES data are consistent with the view that campaigns are reaching as many people as ever but through less personal means.

Our hypothesis about declining turnout rates rests on the claim that personal canvassing mobilizes voters more effectively than other modes of contact that have taken its place, such as direct mail or telephone appeals. The literature on collective action and prosocial behavior supports this conjecture. Studies of blood donations, recycling, and "good deeds" underscore the importance of delivering urgent requests and making vivid the obligation to act (Christensen et al. 1998;



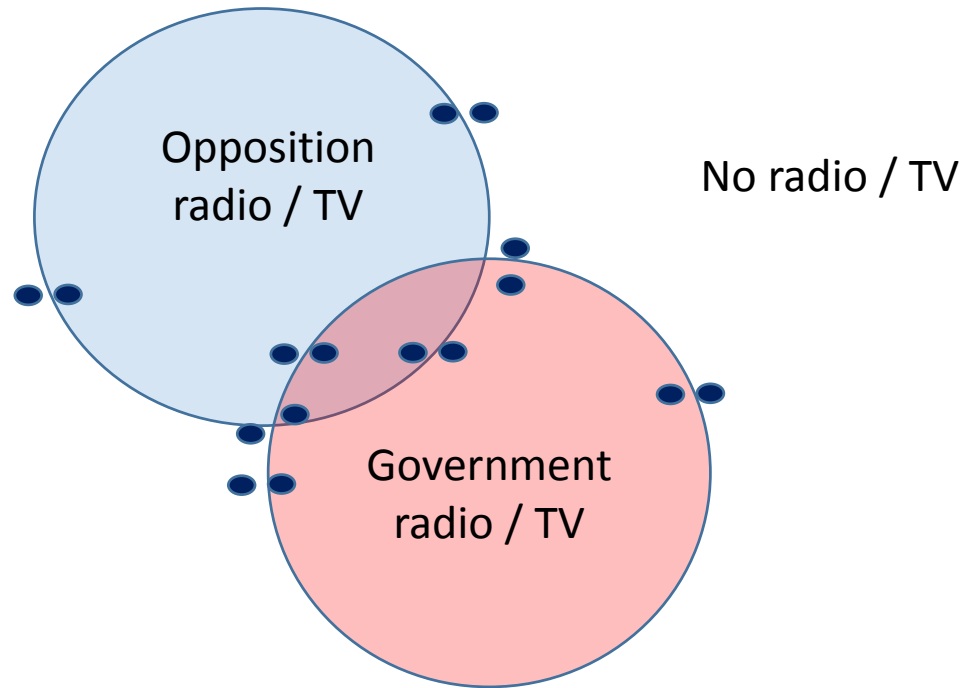
Hyde, Susan D. *The Pseudo-Democrats Dilemma: Why Election Observation Became an International Norm*. Cornell University Press, 2015. © Cornell University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Ansolabehere, Stephen, and Shanto Iyengar. *Going Negative: How Political Advertisements Shrink & Polarize the Electorate*. Free Press, 1997. © Free Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 3 (2000): 653–63. © Cambridge University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Natural experiments using broadcasting ranges (e.g., Moehler)



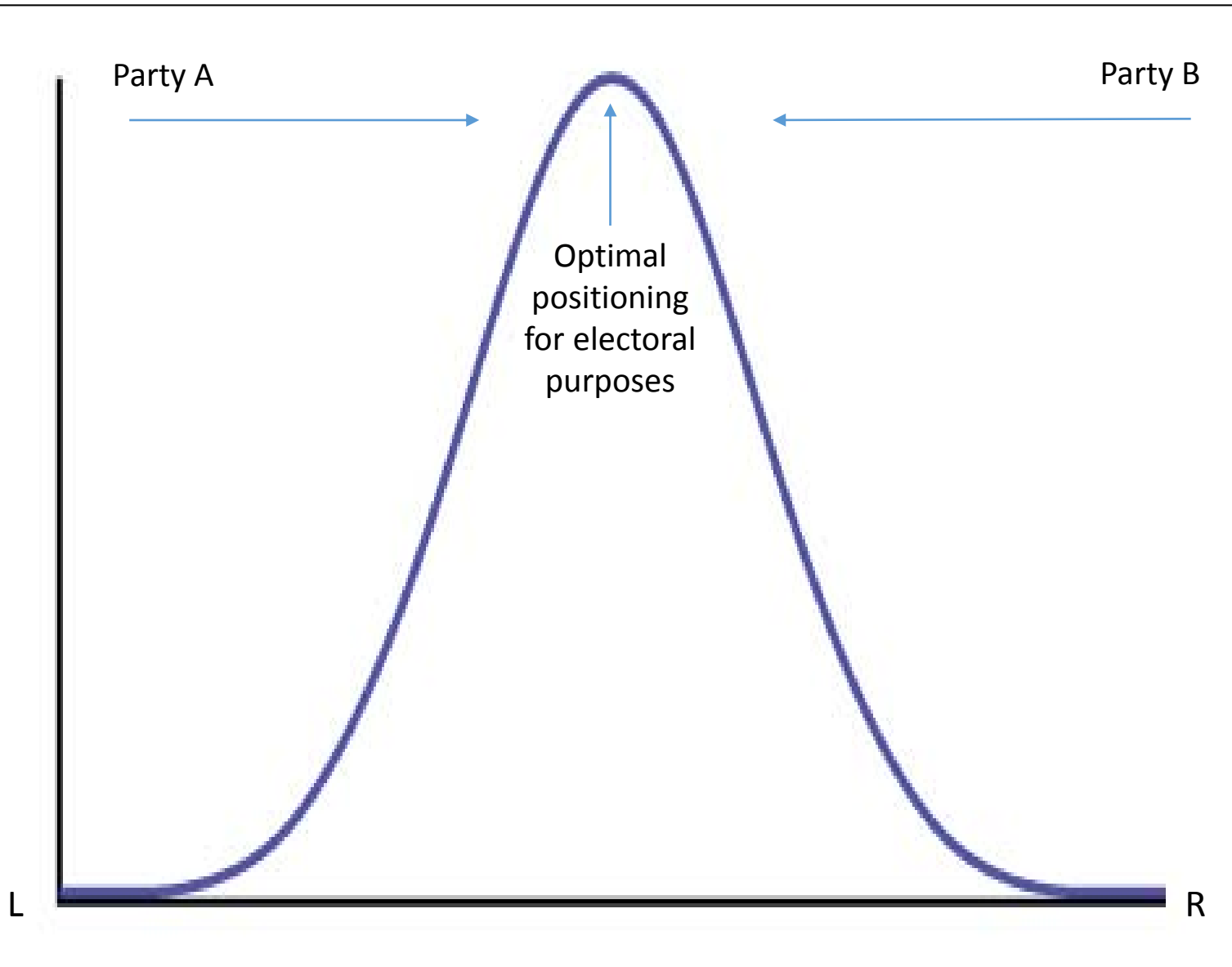
Strömberg: Radio and relief



The problem with claim that radio predicts turnout?

Strömberg's solution: Ground conductivity

Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods: thought experiments (Downs)

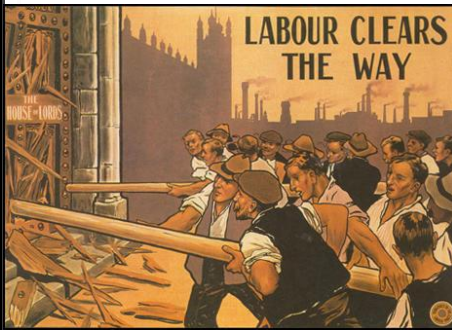


3. Thought experiments

- Hotelling, Downs, Shepsle: party positions
- Krehbiel, Tsebelis: veto players
- Chandra: electoral institutions in multiethnic societies

Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods: thought experiments (Downs)

Party A



This image is in the public domain.

*“Arise, ye workers
from your slumber...”*

*“The people's flag
is deepest red...”*

Party B



This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

*“Dear Land of
Hope, thy hope is
crowned, God
make thee
mightier yet!...”*

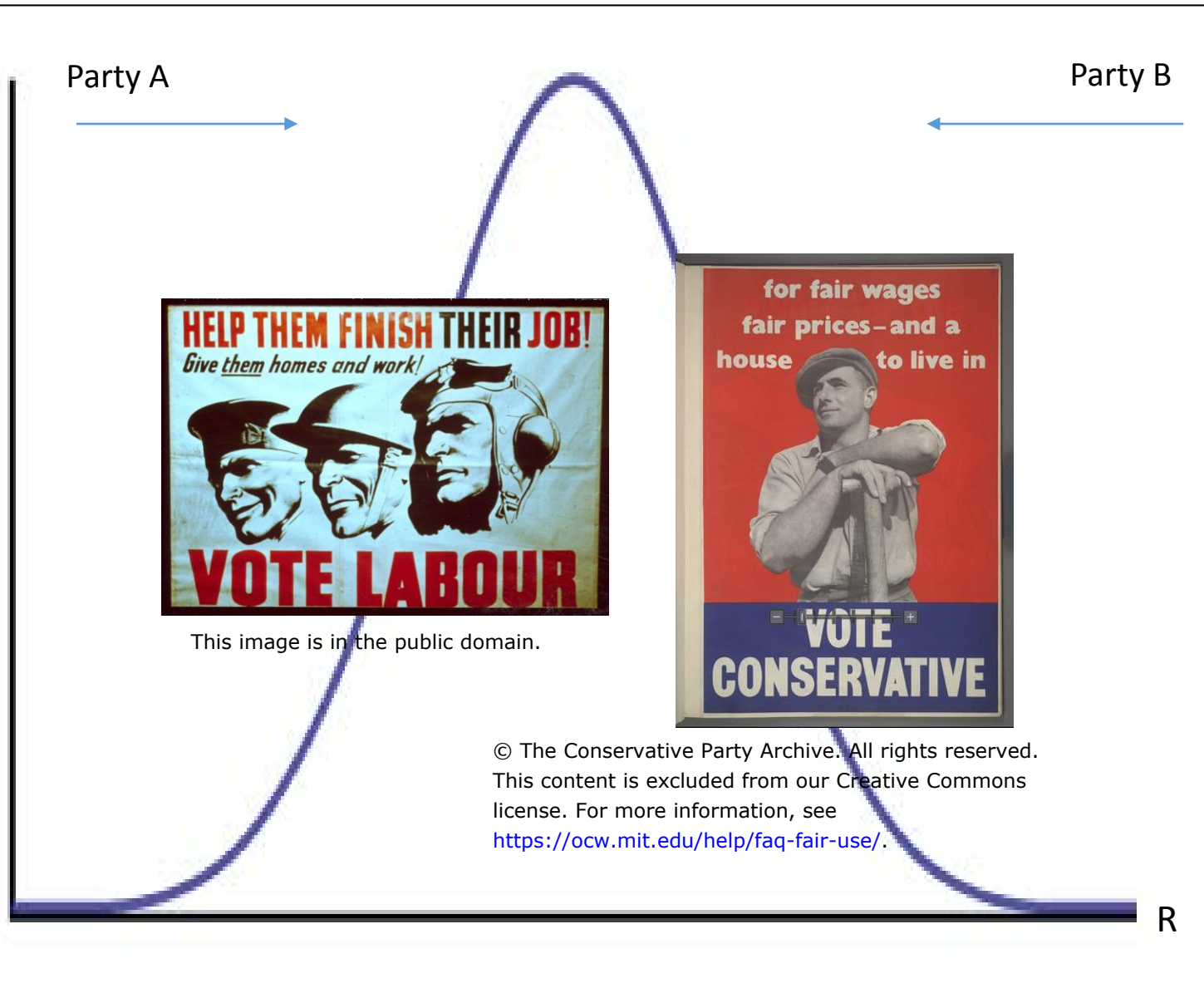
3. Thought experiments

- Hotelling, Downs, Shepsle: party positions
- Krehbiel, Tsebelis: veto players
- Chandra: electoral institutions in multiethnic societies

L

R

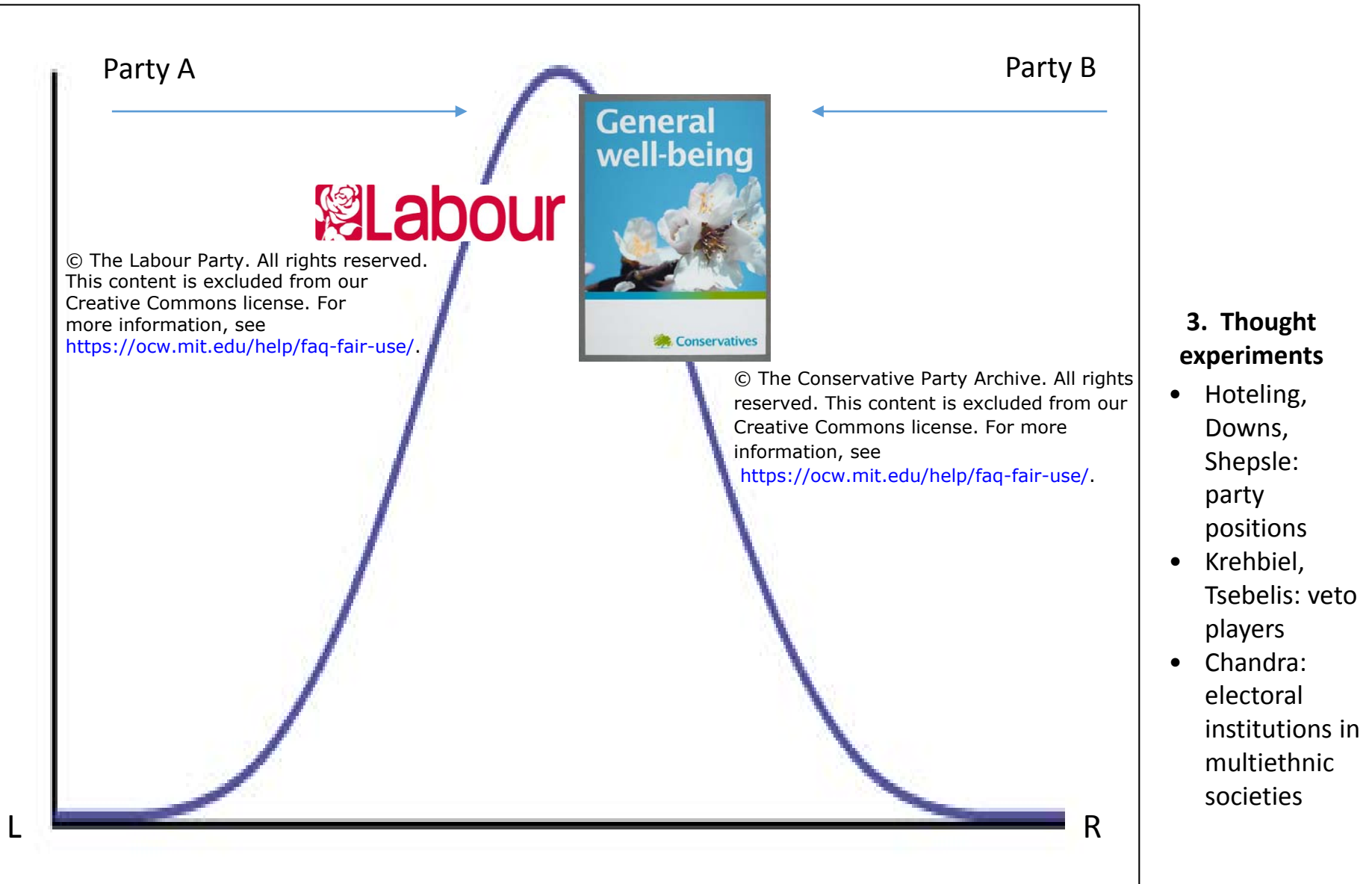
Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods



3. Thought experiments

- Hotelling, Downs, Shepsle: party positions
- Krehbiel, Tsebelis: veto players
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Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods

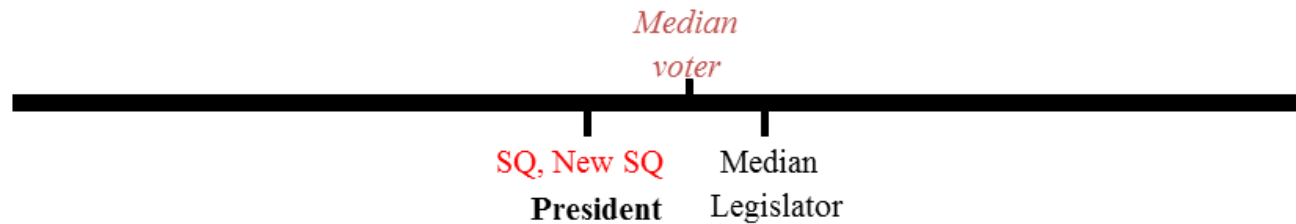


3. Thought experiments

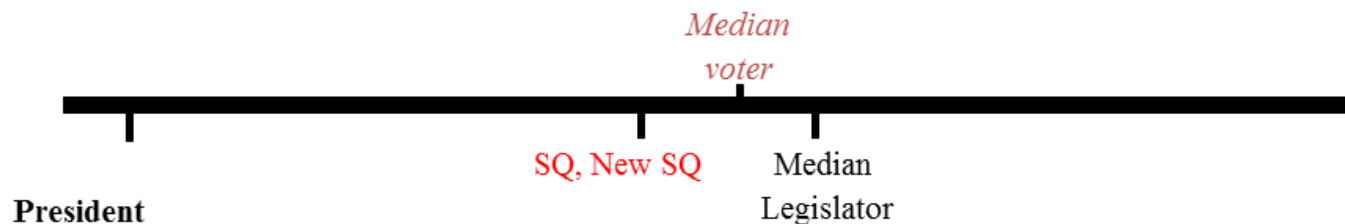
- Hotelling, Downs, Shepsle: party positions
- Krehbiel, Tsebelis: veto players
- Chandra: electoral institutions in multiethnic societies

Thought experiments: Veto players

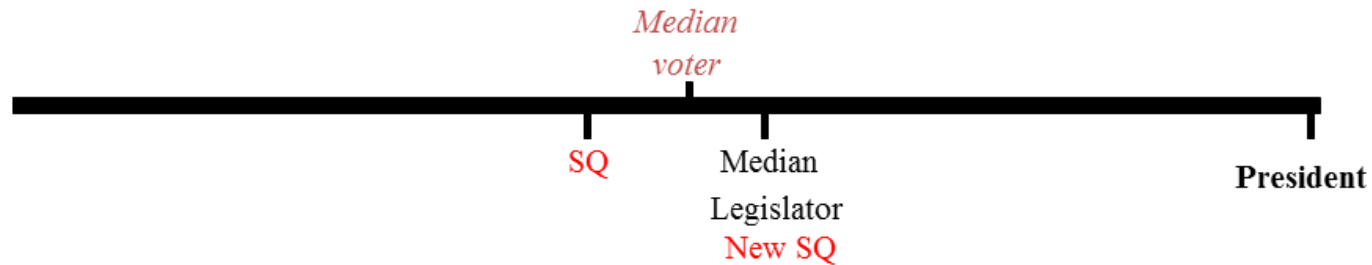
Scenario A: President is a centrist



Scenario B: President is a leftist



Scenario C: President is a rightist

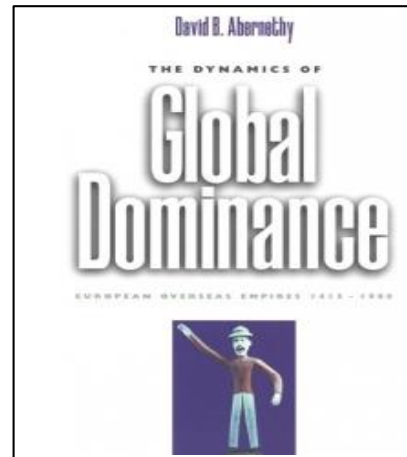
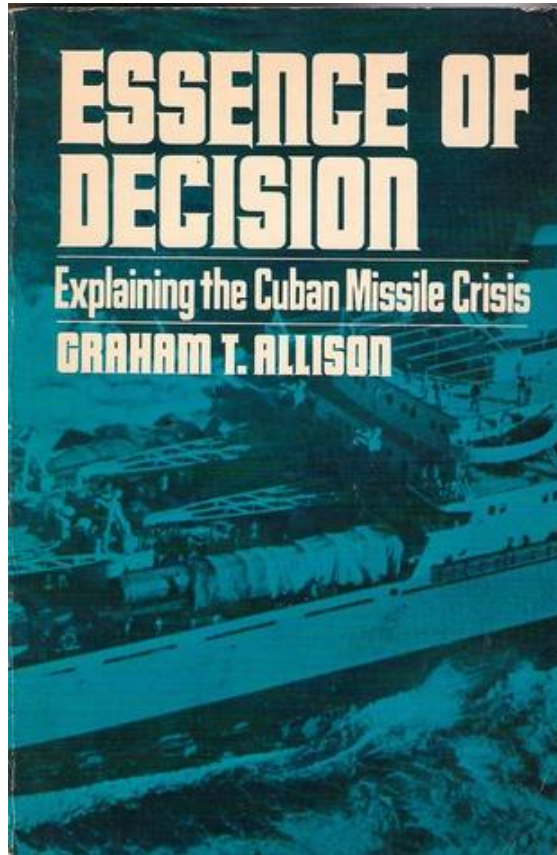


Thought Experiment: Chandra's combinatorics

	Minority % of population	Electoral system	Percent disenfranchised
Country 1	10%	Winner-take-all	0% (0 or 20% of coalition)
Country 2	25%	Winner-take-all	0% (0 or 25% of coalition)
Country 3	35%	Winner-take-all	35% (always 0% of coalition)
Country 4	49%	Winner-take-all	49% (always 0% of coalition)
Country 5	10%	Proportional	0%
Country 6	25%	Proportional	0%
Country 7	49%	Proportional	0%

Bad combination: minority is big percentage of the population + institutions are non-proportional

Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods

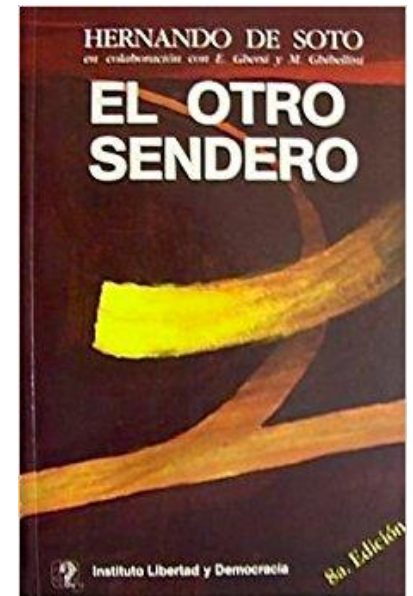


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Abernathy, David B. *The Dynamic of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires, 1415-1980*. Yale University Press, 2002. © Yale University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

4. Case study

- Abernathy: imperialism
- Allison: missile crisis
- de Soto: informality

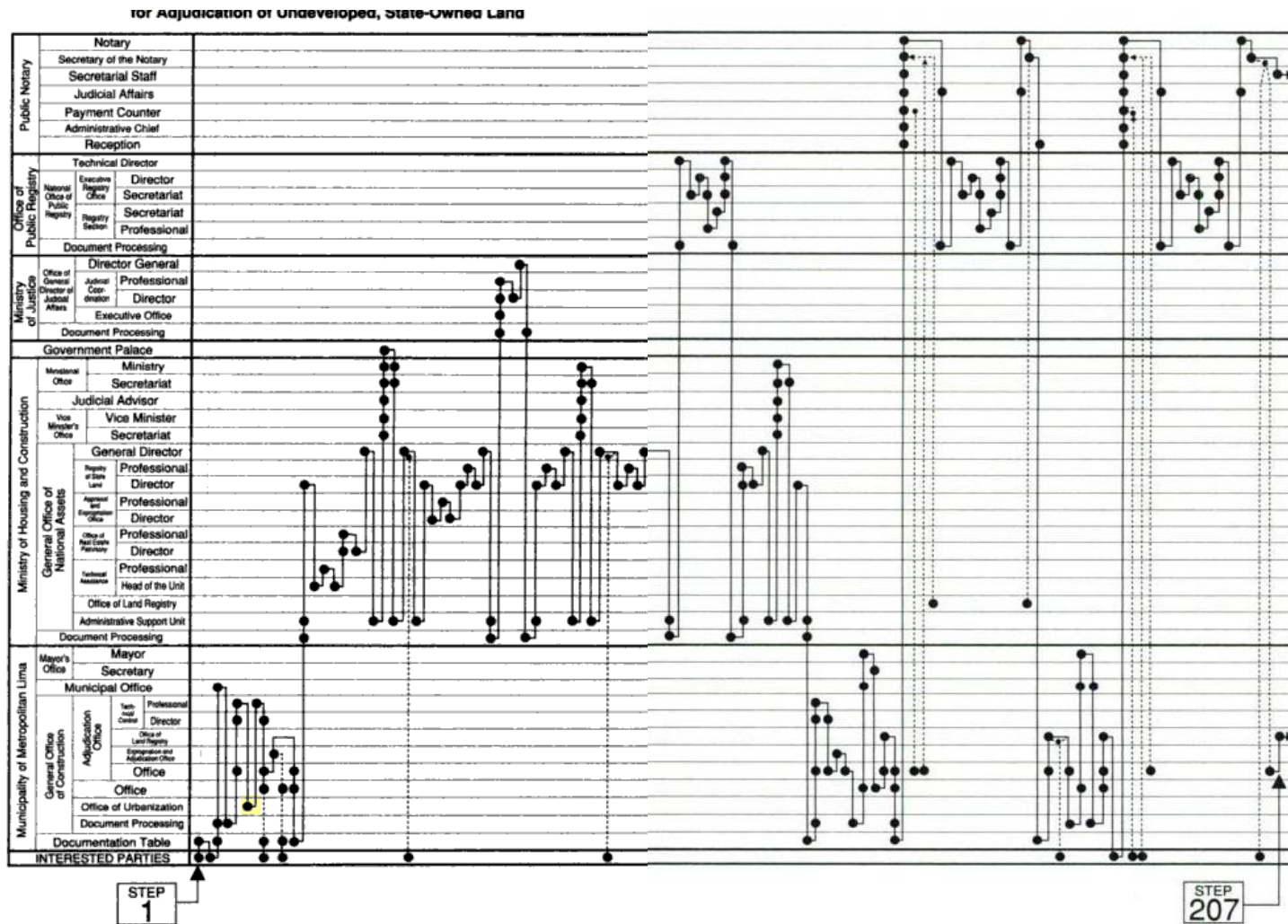


de Soto, Hernando. *El Otro Sendero*. Instituto Libertad y Democracia, 1990. © Instituto Libertad y Democracia. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Allison, Graham T. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile '77[g]g'* Little Brown, 1971. © Little Brown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Example of a case study: informal economies in Lima

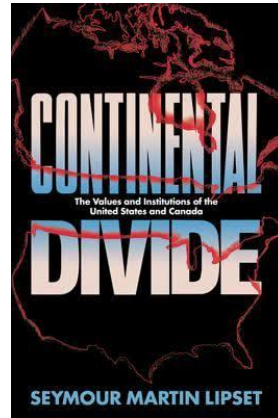
Administrative requirements for adjudication of state-owned land



de Soto, Hernando. *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World*. Harpercollins, 1989. © Harpercollins. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

See also, Hernando de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (London, Bantam Press, 2000): 1-37.

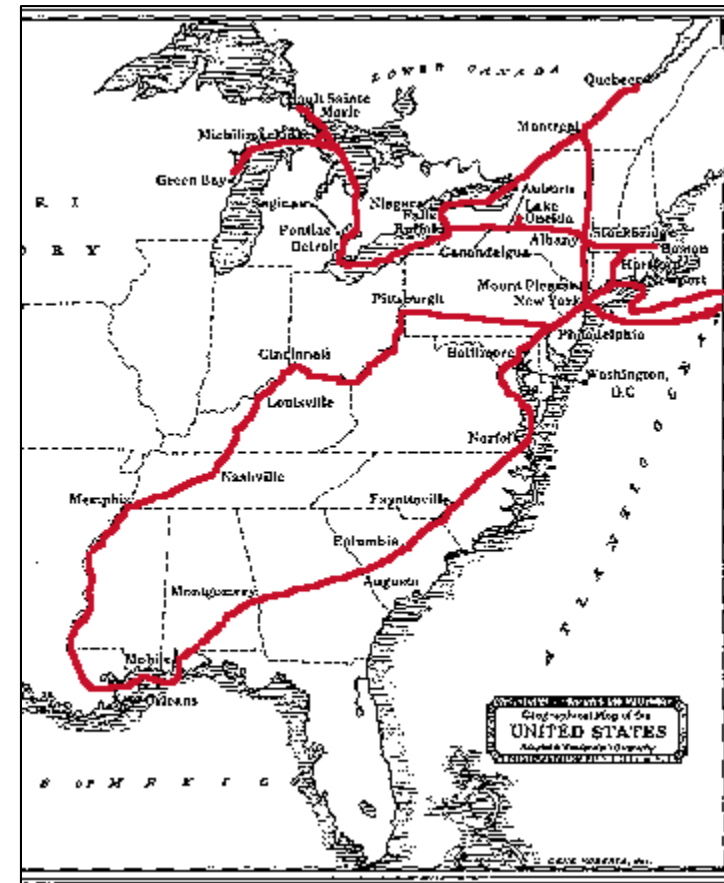
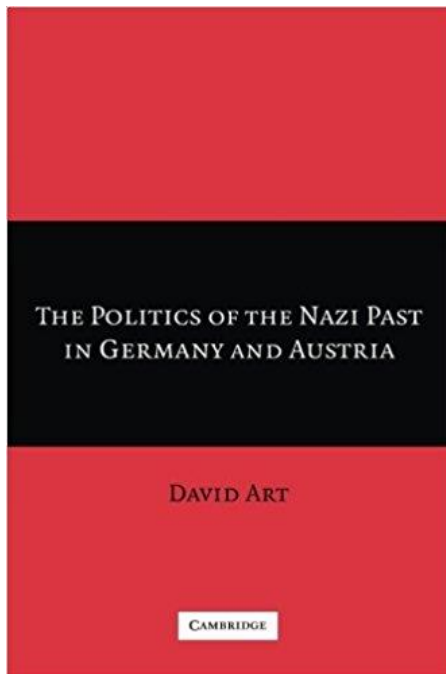
Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods



Lipset, Seymour Martin. *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*. Routledge, 1990. © Routledge. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

5. Systematic comparison

- Lipset: US vs. Canada
 - Art: Germany vs. Austria
- Tocqueville: USA (1831-2)



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Art, David. *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*. Cambridge University Press, 2005. © Cambridge University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Tocqueville uses international comparisons to assess effect of culture on democracy in the U.S.



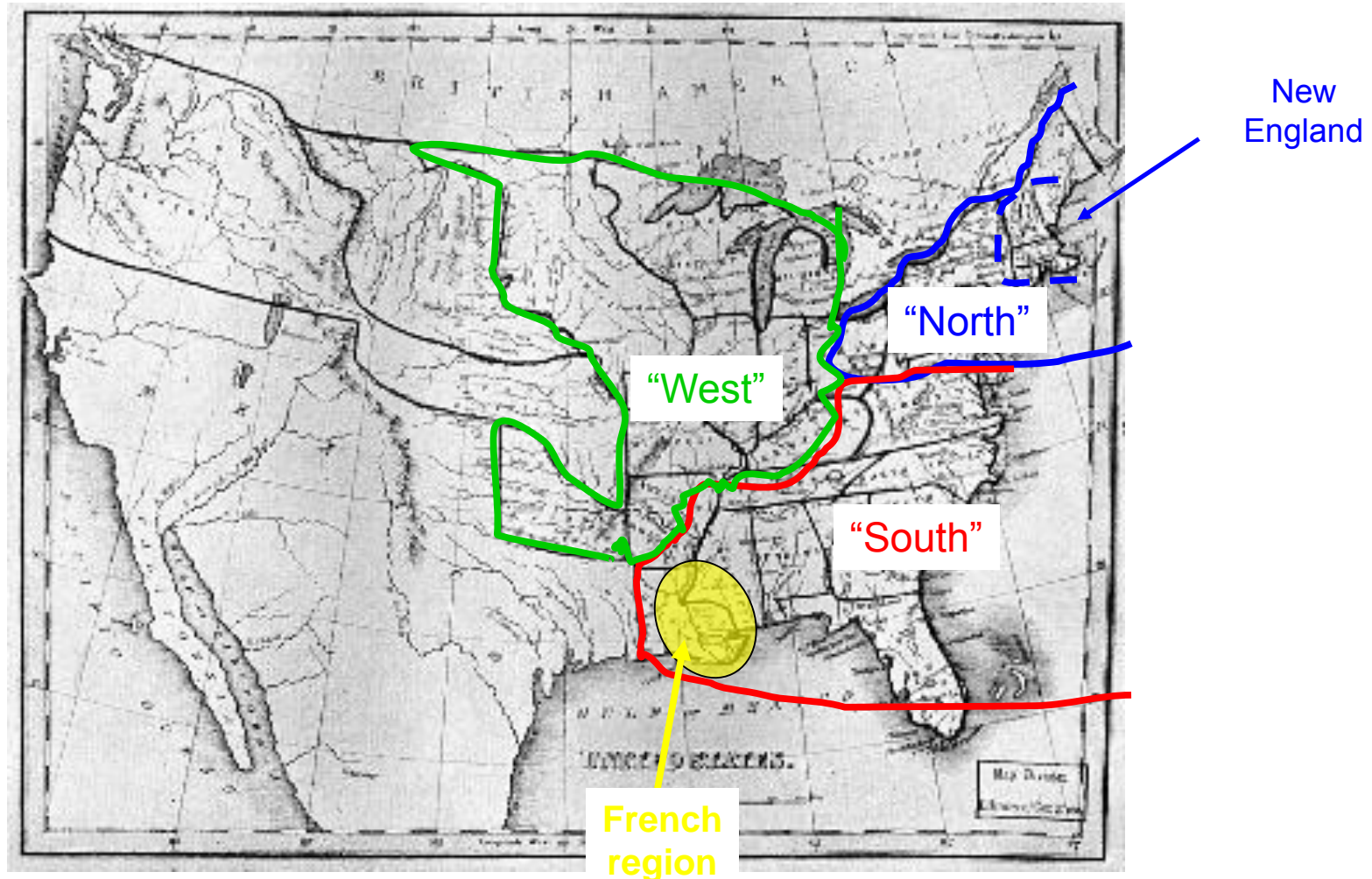
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He also uses internal comparisons to assess effect of culture on democracy in the U.S.

The U.S. in 1830



Excellent research in political science has been done with all these methods

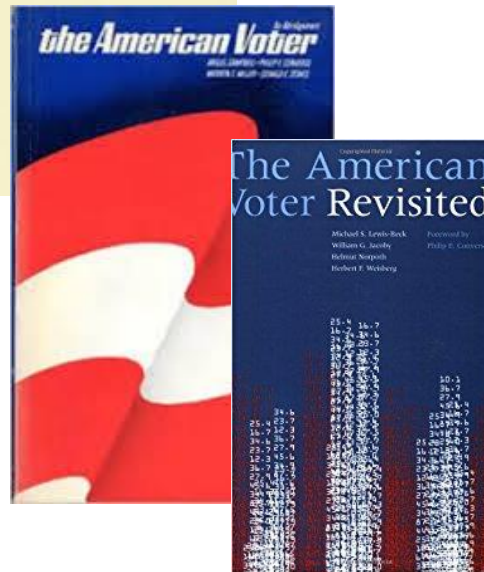
7. Time series

Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, et al. *The American Voter: Unabridged Edition*. University of Chicago Press, 1990. © University of Chicago Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



6. Cross-sectional analysis

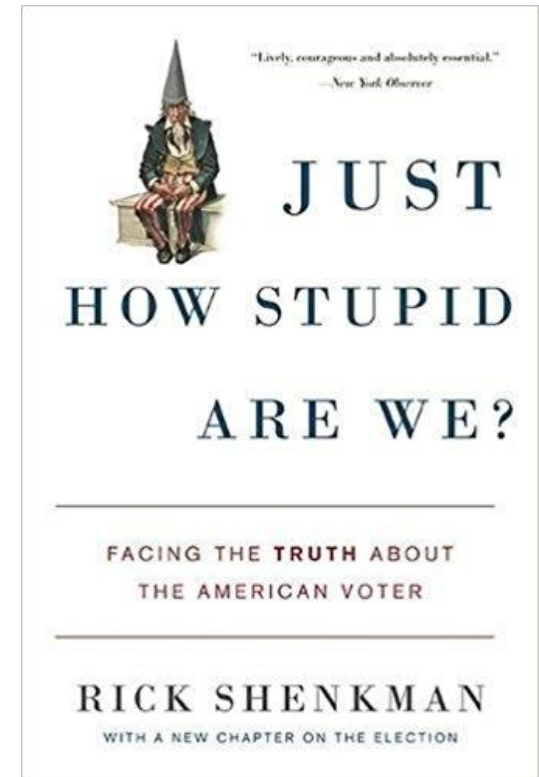
Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, et al. *The American Voter: An Abridgment*. Wiley, 1967. © Wiley. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Lewis-Beck, Michael S., William G. Jacoby, Helmut Norpoth, et al. *The American Voter Revisited*. University of Michigan Press, 2008. © University of Michigan Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Example: minimalism

- *Minimal knowledge*
- *Minimal concept recognition*
- *Minimal consistency*
- *Minimal constraint*



Shenkman, Rick. *Just How Stupid Are We?: Facing the Truth About the American Voter*. Basic Books, 2009. © Basic Books. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



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Multi-method design: Putnam

1. Italian decentralization in 1970s as natural experiment in government (with lots of measures of governmental effectiveness and legitimacy)
2. Case comparisons (e.g., Milano)



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How scientific can we be? Should we be?

1. Description versus causation
2. The collapse of the Soviet Union
3. Capturing context
 - *As in other departments of science, so in politics, the compound should always be disaggregated into the simplest elements, or essential parts, of the whole. We must therefore look at the elements of which the state is composed, in order to see how the different kinds of rule differ from one another and whether any scientific result can be attained about each one of them.* (Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book 1, Chapter 1, c.350 BCE)
 - Political scientists should “turn proper names into variables” Przeworski & Teune (1970)
4. General failure of prediction
5. Scope conditions and “theory decay”
6. Conducting *actual* research
7. Knowledge accumulation

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17.801 Political Science Scope and Methods

Fall 2017

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