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Notes From the Editors

Welcome to the latest issue of *The Political Methodologist*. We have a nice set of articles, section news, and graduate student abstracts in this issue. Pechenkina and Bennett start us off with a survey of models that are used in published research. They examine the use of OLS in IR articles and ask whether OLS is dead. They survey the top journals and present some empirical evidence for their conclusion. Olivella and Gill follow up with an article on parallel Gibbs sampling with the snowfall and rjags packages. They present a new tool for researchers interested in estimating complex Bayesian hierarchical models. Next, we move on to conference news. Box-Steffensmeier and Mattioli give us a summary of the Visions in Methodology conference. The SLAMM conference, held annually at Washington University, always provides a serious forum for graduate students to present their work and receive feedback. The next set of articles are long abstracts (or short notes) that derive from these graduate student presentations. Lastly, we end with our traditional Note from Our Section President. Jeff Gill gives us an update of administrative details for the section, updates on conferences and awards, and *Political Analysis*. We thank Jeff for his service as president of the section and welcome Rob to the post!

As always, we thank our contributors. If you have ideas for future issues of *TPM*, do not hesitate to contact us. Enjoy!

The Editors

Articles

Is OLS Dead in IR?

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Krueger and Lewis-Beck (2008) find that OLS is a primary methodological technique employed in the top Political Science journals. Our intuition after reading their piece suggested that there likely exists a wide variation among subfields of Political Science, because we expect that the use of OLS is minimal and has been declining over the years in the subdiscipline of International Relations (IR).

To test this twofold expectation, we have analyzed the content of three leading journals in IR, *International Organization, International Studies Quarterly* and *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. We have coded the methods used for inference in at least every third year of these publications between 1990 and 2007, coding the content of 933 articles. 87 articles (or 9.32%) contained no systematic method of analysis (theory and exchanges). If an article used more than one method, we coded each method separately and so articles could be coded as containing more than 1 method. 1,274 systematic methods were recorded in our sample of 933 articles, yielding an average of 1.37 methods per article (including coding of case studies and game theory).

Following Krueger and Lewis-Beck, we classify these methods as more or less sophisticated than OLS depending on whether the material is typically taught before or after OLS in a standard methodological sequence in a political science Ph.D. program. Most categories were coded based on simply whether a given method was employed at all. For a few methods, we had particular coding rules. For instance, to code "Correlations" or "Descriptive Statistics" as a 1, we required that the method be used as (one of) the inferential method(s) in the article and not only in auxiliary fashion. These and other more specific coding decisions are described in the web appendix.

Table shows how frequently different quantitative methods have been employed in general Political Science journals (from Krueger and Lewis-Beck, 2008, pg. 3) and in specialized IR journals in 1990-2007. The first two columns of Table 1 show the data coded by from Krueger and Lewis-Beck from *APSR, AJPS* and *JOP* for 1990-2005. The last two columns present the IR data we sampled from *IO, ISQ* and *JCR* for 1990-2007. Our main conclusion from Table 1 is that OLS is not the main research method used in IR. Not only do *IO, ISQ* and *JCR* publish a lower proportion of papers with OLS (13% in IR vs. 31% in general journals), but also time series models and MLE techniques are used more widely than OLS. While we cannot conclude that OLS is dead in IR, it is clearly not the primary method of quantitative inquiry in published articles in international politics.

Krueger and Lewis-Beck also note that over time there has been a trend toward a greater proportion of methods that are more advanced than OLS in the top Political Science journals. Figure 1 shows that this trend is true for IR publications as well. Figure 1 also demonstrates that the lower use of OLS in IR journals is not only the result of recent trends in publication. Rather, the use of OLS has been consistently less in these journals back to 1990, and the proportion of OLS has actually remained quite stable over time. And, while the use of less sophisticated methods has decreased slightly, the dominant trend is that more methods are being used per article, most of which are more advanced.

In addition to Krueger and Lewis-Beck's categories of quantitative empirical methods, we also coded data on the use of game theory, experiments, survey, text analysis, and case studies in the said journals. Table 2 shows the significance of game theory and case studies in IR; these methods make up nearly 30% of the methods in these journals. Over time data (presented in the web appendix) show that the frequency of case studies over time has decreased in these journals, while game theory has been stable.

Conclusion

Unlike the general Political Science journals, publications that specialize in International Relations do not employ OLS as their primary quantitative technique. Research papers that use OLS for inference constitute a small but stable proportion of IR publications. While we cannot conclude that OLS is dead in IR, it is certainly not "the dominant method" in IR, as claimed by from Krueger and Lewis-Beck, 2008 about the field generally.

One may speculate that the difference in the frequency of use of OLS between the IR and the rest of the field may be accounted by the types of data the scholars of international politics use. Often, the dependent variable is limited (e.g., the conflict/peace dichotomy, or a categorical coding of conflict intensity), which explains the higher frequencies of use

The authors thank Jakana Thomas and Jon Moody for research assistance. The web appendix can be found at their respective websites at http://www.personal.psu.edu/aop105/ and http://www.personal.psu.edu/dsb10/

of MLE methods. Furthermore, the prevalence of time series cross-sectional data (e.g. data sets of panels of countries or dyads over time) account for greater proportions of time series models than in general journals.

References

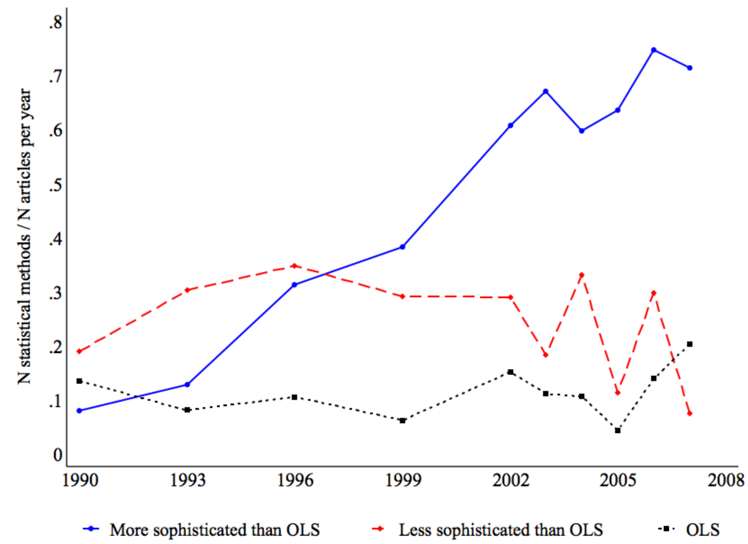
Krueger, James S. and Michael S. Lewis-Beck. 2008. "Is OLS Dead?" *The Political Methodologist* 15 (2): 2-4.

Table 1: Statistical Methods Employed in Articles in *APSR*, *AJPS*, and *JOP* (1990-2005) vs. *IO*, *ISQ*, and *JCR* (1990-2007)

Method	APSR, AJPS, JOP Count (Percent)	IO, ISQ, JCR Count (Percent)
Less sophisticated than OLS		
ANOVA	40 (1.8)	22 (2.7)
Correlations	89 (4.0)	26 (3.2)
Difference tests	95 (4.3)	29 (3.6)
Descriptive statistics	238 (10.7)	146 (17.9)
Subtotal	**462 (20.8)**	**223 (27.3)**
OLS	**684 (30.8)**	**106 (13.0)**
More sophisticated than OLS		
Advanced regression	186 (8.4)	35 (4.3)
Time series	77 (3.5)	127 (15.5)
Logit/probit	534 (24)	191 (23.4)
Other MLE	97 (4.4)	111 (13.6)
Strategic statistical models		1 (0.1)
Scaling and measurement	31 (1.4)	2 (0.2)
Latent variables	8 (0.4)	6 (0.7)
Simulation/computational	10 (0.5)	15 (1.8)
Subtotal	**943 (42.6)**	**488 (59.7)**
No Method Reported	132 (5.8)	
N Methods	**2221 (100)**	**817 (100)**
N Articles	**1756**	**933**

Note: IR journals are coded in 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007. Methods are grouped by degree of sophistication. Different statistical methods employed within the same article are coded separately. See Web appendix for the detailed presentation of the IR data with more categories including game theory, case studies, experiments, and survey.

Figure 1: Use of statistical methods over time in *IO, ISQ* and *JCR*



Note: The y axis is the number of statistical methods in a given category relative to the total number of articles published per year. The x axis is the year of the pubication. The sum of the proportions can exceed 1, because some articles may use more than one method of the specified categories. Furthermore, the sum of the proportions does not always add up to 1, because some aggregate categories have been omitted from this plot (e.g., game theory, case studies, etc.) See web appendix for full description of the data.

Table 2: Methods Employed in Articles in *IO*, *ISQ*, and *JCR* (1990-2007)

Method	Raw Count	Percent
Game theory	138	10.8
Case study	222	17.4
Less sophisticated than OLS	223	17.5
OLS	106	8.3
More sophisticated than OLS	488	38.3
Other (e.g., experiment, survey)	97	7.6
N articles	**933**	
N methods	**1274**	**100.0%**
Mean N of systematic methods/article	1.4	
No systematic method	87	

Note: See the web appendix for full data description.

Parallel Gibbs Sampling With snowfall and rjags

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Overview

We recently had cause to use `JAGS` on multiple cores and found that the critical tools for running parallel chains have matured to the point where this process is reasonably easy. This research note describes this under-utilized way to obtain lengthy Markov chain Monte Carlo processes in more convenient times. While nothing can replace thoughtful model specification, careful coding in `JAGS`/ `BUGS`, serious attention to burn-in times, consideration for letting the chain mix through the full parameter space, and faster production of iterated values helps researchers in all of these fronts. This is because faster times mean more sampled values can be tested/considered; because it helps with mixing concerns; and because one of the more popular convergence diagnostics (viz. Brooks/Gelman/Rubin) requires multiple chains.

Our solution is a wrapper for `rjags` using the `snowfall` library in `R` such that each initiated chain is computed on a separate CPU core with a load balancing queue to make the assigment process efficient. Having noticed that `JAGS` has increased dramatically in popularity relative to `BUGS` (probably since it is cleaner and works on more platforms), we have chosen to use this software only. Although it is possible to build `JAGS` from source to allow for multi-threaded computations (see the `JAGS` installation manual, particularly the section on the 'j' flag), it has been noted that multiple runs on a single-thread build can be faster than a single run on a multi-threaded build of `JAGS` (see Martyn Plummer's comment on this issue). Hence, parallelizing from `R` is a preferred option.

Consider the familiar varying-intercept 'radon' example in Gelman and Hill (2007, p. 350):

```
model {
  for (i in 1:n){
    y[i] ~ dnorm(y.hat[i], tau.y)
    y.hat[i] <- a[county[i]] + b*x[i]
  }
  b ~ dnorm(0, .0001)
  tau.y <- pow(sigma.y, -2)
  sigma.y ~ dunif(0, 100)
  for(j in 1:J){
    a[j] ~ dnorm(mu.a, tau.a)
  }
  mu.a ~ dnorm(0, .0001)
  tau.a <- pow(sigma.a,-2)
  sigma.a ~ dunif(0,100)
}
```

This is a typical use of the language, and it is an example that many students of multilevel models will recognize. We will use it to demonstrate a decrease in elapsed computation time when using our wrapper `snowJags` (presented in the appendix). The radon data can be downloaded directly from Andrew Gelman's website for the book or from our command below. As usual, the model is stored in a separate file (`radon.jag`), and we wrap the usual unparallelized commands in order to get elapsed computation times:

```
# OBTAIN DATA
source(
  "http://solivella.wustl.edu/radonSetup.R"
)

# SET INITIAL VALUES FOR THE CHAIN
inits<-function()  {
  list(a=rnorm(J),b=rnorm(1),mu.a=rnorm(1),
  sigma.y=runif(1),sigma.a=runif(1))
}

# DEFINE A WRAPPER TO PERFORM
# UNPARALLELIZED COMPUTATIONS
myWrap <- function(){
  library(rjags)
  radon.ex<-jags.model("radon.jag",
    inits=inits,
    data = list("n"= n, "J"=J, "y"=y,
    "county"=county, "x"=x),
    n.chains = 3,
    n.adapt = 1e5)
  coda.samples(radon.ex,
    c("a","b","mu.a",
      "sigma.y","sigma.a"),
    n.iter=1e5,
    thin=10)
}

# SOURCE PARALLELIZING FUNCTION
# (IN APPENDIX)
source("snowJags.R")

# BENCHMARK OUR PARALLELIZING WRAPPER
# VS. REGULAR APPROACH
print(system.time(myWrap()))

# IN PARALLEL (SPECIFY FULL PATH TO
# MODEL FILE)
model.file <- paste(getwd(),
```

```
   "/radon.jag",sep="")
print(system.time(
  snowJags(
    file.name=model.file,
    inits=inits,
    data = list("n"= n, "J"=J, "y"=y,
           "county"=county, "x"=x),
    n.chains = 3,
    n.adapt = 1e5,
    monitors=c("a","b","mu.a",
               "sigma.y","sigma.a"),
    samples=1e5,
    thin=10,
    nodes=2
  )
))
```

Sourcing this code (which we have stored in a file `benchmark.R`) on a typical two-core laptop for these three chains is very fast and produces the following output in our `R` environment:

```
source("benchmark.R")
Compiling model graph
   Resolving undeclared variables
   Allocating nodes
   Graph Size: 4693

  |++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++| 100%
  |******************************| 100%
   user  system elapsed
540.480   4.440 545.176

snowfall 1.84 initialized
  (using snow 0.3-3):
  parallel execution on 2 CPUs.

Library rjags loaded.
Library rjags loaded in cluster.

Library MCMCpack loaded.
Library MCMCpack loaded in cluster.

Stopping cluster

   user  system elapsed
  0.750   0.880 347.768
```

Notice that this can be substantially expanded in number of cores used (when more cores are available), and therefore number of parallel chains run.

Parallel Chains for Diagnostics

One important use in MCMC for parallel chains is as a convergence diagnostic. The popular Brooks, Gelman & Rubin (BGR) diagnostic (Brooks and Gelman 1998, Gelman and Rubin 1992) is based on an ANOVA comparison of multiple parallel runs of a Markov chain but started from widely dispersed posterior positions (Gill 2008). This begins by running $m \geq 2$ chains of length $2n$ from these overdispersed starting points and getting rid of the first n. For a single parameter enumerated k, out of K in the model, we denote $\beta_{(j)}^{[t,k]}$ as the tth value ($n < t \leq 2n$) from the jth parallel chain ($1 \leq j \leq m$). For this kth parameter coefficient we now calculate the quantities: within-chain variance, $W = \frac{1}{m(n-1)} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \sum_{t=1}^{n} (\beta_{(j)}^{[t,k]} - \bar{\beta}_{(j)}^{[\cdot,k]})^2$, and between-chain variance, $B = \frac{n}{m-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} (\bar{\beta}_{(j)}^{[\cdot,k]} - \bar{\bar{\beta}}^{[\cdot,k]})^2$. From regular ANOVA theory, the marginal posterior variance here is given by $\widehat{\texttt{var}}(\beta) = (1 - 1/n)W + (1/n)B$, and the so-called *scale reduction factor* is calculated by: $\widehat{R} = \sqrt{\widehat{\texttt{var}}(\beta)/W}$. If the value of $\widehat{R}$ is close to one, then we can claim some evidence of convergence.

Now we will re-run the model (taking fewer samples, so our reported $\widehat{R}$ are more interesting) and calculate the BGR diagnostic from 10 parallel chains using one of the two popular implementations of MCMC convergence diagnostics in `R`, `coda`:

```
system.time(BGRExample <- snowJags(
    file.name=model.file,
    inits=inits,
    data= list("n"= n, "J"=J, "y"=y,
  "county"=county, "x"=x),
    n.chains = 10,
    n.adapt = 1e3,
    monitors=c("a","b","mu.a",
      "sigma.y","sigma.a"),
    samples=1e3,
    thin=10,
    nodes=2
))
...
Stopping cluster

   user  system elapsed
  0.460   0.230  16.086

library(coda)
gelman.diag(BGRExample)

        Point est. 97.5% quantile
a[1]         1.000          1.004
a[2]         1.004          1.014
...
a[84]        1.001          1.007
a[85]        1.001          1.006
b            1.000          1.005
mu.a         0.999          1.002
```

```
sigma.a      0.999          1.004
sigma.y      1.002          1.009

Multivariate psrf
1.08
```

Concluding Remarks

In this brief research note we seek to provide users of modern statistical software for MCMC description of Bayesian posteriors with a new tool to make their research more efficient. Parallelization has the potential to allow researchers to try more model specifications (yes, we *all* do that!); to produce more values in limited time for inferential purposes; and to give a faster way to run one of the more important convergence diagnostics. It is our hope that TPM readers can use this explicit prescription to their advantage in estimating complex Bayesian hierarchical models with political science data.

References

Brooks, Stephen P. and Andrew Gelman. 1998. "Convergence Assessment Techniques for Markov Chain Monte Carlo." *Statistics and Computing* 8: 319–335.

Gelman, Andrew and Jennifer Hill. 2007. *Data Analysis Using Regression and Multilevel/Hierarchical Models.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Gelman, Andrew and Donald B. Rubin. 1992. "Inference from Iterative Simulation Using Multiple Sequences." *Statistical Science* 7: 457–511.

Gill, Jeff. 2008. "Is Partial-Dimension Convergence a Problem for Inferences from MCMC Algorithms?" *Political Analysis* 16(2): 153–178.

Appendix

This appendix gives our wrapper for `rjags::jags.model` and `rjags::coda.samples` that implements socket parallel computing using the `snowfall` package in `R`. This takes the same arguments as `jags.model()`, the additional number of samples, character vector of monitors, and thinning value for updating with `coda.samples()`, and the number of cluster nodes for the parallelization. This only works with cores (or actual chips for some systems) in localhost, but the code below can be easily modified to accept more complicated node definitions (e.g. nodes across a network). This function returns an `mcmc.list` object.

```
snowJags <- function
(file.name, #Name of file containing JAGS model
data.list, #List of data used in model
inits, #Function giving initial values
n.chains=2, #Number of parallel chains
n.adapt=1000, #Initial number of steps in each chain
monitors, #Character vector with parameter names
thin, #Value indicating thinning interval
samples=2000, #Samples taken by coda.samples
nodes=2 #Number of cores)

# CHECK FOR 'snowfall', AND INSTALL IF NEEDED
hasSF <- require(snowfall)
if(hasSF){
  library(snowfall)
}else{
  cat("Package 'snowfall' required. Installing it
  now.\n")
  install.packages("snowfall")
  library(snowfall)
}
# CHECK FOR 'rlecuyer', AND INSTALL IF NEEDED (FOR THE
RNG)

hasLC <- require(rlecuyer)
if(hasLC){
  library(rlecuyer)
}else{
  cat("Package 'rlecuyer' required. Installing it
  now.\n")
  install.packages("rlecuyer")
  library(rlecuyer)
}

  library(rjags)

# CREATE A FUNCTION THAT COMBINES jags.model()
AND coda.samples(),
# THEN RETURNS A mcmc.list OBJECT
jags.updater <- function(counter){
  modelInit <- jags.model(file.name,data.list,
  inits,n.chains=1,n.adapt)
  postSamples <- coda.samples(modelInit,
  monitors,samples,thin)
  return(postSamples)
}

# INITIALIZE A CLUSTER
sfInit(parallel=TRUE, cpus=nodes,type="SOCK",
socketHosts=(rep("127.0.0.1",nodes)))

# EXPORT VARIABLES, rjags AND MCMCpack PACKAGES
TO EVERY NODE
sfExportAll()
sfLibrary(rjags)
sfLibrary(MCMCpack)

# START NETWROK RN, TO AVOID PROBLEMS WITH USING A
```

```
SINGLE COMPUTER'S RNG
sfClusterSetupRNG()

# SEND TASKS TO CLUSTERS USING LOAD BALANCING
result <- sfClusterApplyLB(1:n.chains, jags.updater)

# STOP CLUSTER!
sfStop()

# GATHER RESTULS AND RETURN mcmc.list OBJECT
chains <- result[[1]]
for(z in 2:n.chains){
  chains[[z]]<-as.mcmc(result[[z]])
}
return(chains)
```

2011 Visions in Methodology Workshop

2011 Visions in Methodology Workshops Continue to Support Women in Political Methodology

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The 2011 Visions in Methodology (VIM) conference for Women in Political Methodology hosted twenty-six methodologists at Ohio State University from May 5th to 7th. This conference was the third of its kind, previous VIM conferences having been hosted at Ohio State (2008) and the University of Iowa (2010). The workshop series continues to bring together female faculty and for the first time, graduate students, whose research interests relate to political methodology. Janet Box-Steffensmeier and Corrine McConnaughy hosted the conference, while Lauren Mattioli served as the conference coordinator. Generous sponsorship was provided by the National Science Foundation - Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics and Political Science Programs, as well as by Ohio State University's Program in Statistics and Methodology (PRISM), Complex Systems Innovation Group, and the Department of Political Science.

There was a full day workshop on network methods by Bruce Desmarais, Political Science and Computational Social Science at the University of Massachusetts Amherst prior to the start of the conference. The workshop drew a diverse local crowd in addition to the VIM participants. VIM was kicked off with senior scholars Nancy Burns (University of Michigan) and Caroline Tolbert (University of Iowa) presenting their professional biographies. The remaining conference sessions consisted primarily of research presentations and discussions, pertinent to both methodological and substantive topics. Professionalization sessions included topics on Women as Career Academics, Publishing and Citations, and Teaching, which allowed lively discussion on these topics. More information on the 2011 VIM conference, the full program, and information on past VIM conferences can be found here: http://polisci.osu.edu/conferences/vim/index.htm

The VIM conference series is designed around the broader goal of supporting women who study political methodology. In addition to providing a forum to share scholarly work, VIM also serves to connect women in a field where they are under-represented. This year's conference brought together new and previous attendees, giving participants the opportunity to forge new ties and strengthen existing ones.

VIM provides opportunities for scholarly progress, networking, and professional mentoring in research and teaching in order to support women in the political methodology community. We offer an opportunity to:

- provide mentoring,
- discuss career-focused issues across ranks,
- present research in a friendly, positive environment while also providing critical feedback, and
- network and exchange ideas with each other and with senior female researchers.

VIM began as an implementation of recommendations for improved networking and systematic mentoring from the recent National Academy of Sciences report, the APSA Workshop on the Advancement of Women in Academic Political Science, and the 2006 Political Methodology Long Range Strategic Planning Committee Report. VIM 2011 provided opportunities for scholarly progress, networking, and professional mentoring within a small conference in order to support women in the political methodology community.

Figure 1: VIM 2011 Participants.

BACK ROW (L TO R): Suzanna Linn (Penn State University); Courtenay Conrad (University of California at Merced); Lauren Ratliff (University of Texas); Janet Box-Steffensmeier (Ohio State University).

THIRD ROW (L TO R): Lauren Mattioli (Princeton University); Jennifer Wolak (University of Colorado at Boulder); Dalia Baldissarri (Princeton University); Aya Kachi (University of Illinois); Carolina Mercado (Ohio State University); Meredith Rolfe (Nuffield College–University of Oxford); Sona Golder (Penn State University): Eleonora Mattiacci (Ohio State University).

SECOND ROW (L TO R): Caroline Tolbert (University of Iowa); Nancy Burns (University of Michigan); Olga Chyzh (University of Iowa); Burcu Savun (University of Pittsburgh); Lee Ann Banaszak (Penn State University); Margaret Peters (Stanford University); Sara Mitchell (University of Iowa)

Front Row (l to r): Rocio Titunik (University of Michigan); Amanda Murdie (Kansas State University); Stella Rouse (University of Maryland); Amanda Licht (University of South Carolina); Michelle Dion (McMaster University).

NOT PICTURED: Jennifer Mitzen (Ohio State University); Corrine McConnaughy (Ohio State University).

SLAMM Abstracts

The fourth St. Louis Area Methods Meetings (SLAMM) were held April 15 and 16, 2011 at Washington University. Generous supporters of the event included the Center for Applied Statistics, the Department of Political Science, and the National Science Foundation. Once again, day two was set aside for graduate student presentations. Again this year, the *TPM* editors invited those presenters to submit brief notes previewing their papers. (We note that SLAMM's reputation for excellence is clearly spreading, as attendees came from such outer rings of the St. Louis area as New York, Atlanta, and Berkeley.)

A Bottom-up Approach to Linguistic Persuasion in Advertising – Research Note –

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How do the contents of political advertisements determine their persuasive effects? With hundreds of different ads broadcast during a presidential campaign, many for only days at a time, researchers usually must group ads into broad categories (such as "negative ads") before testing their hypotheses. But this top-down approach limits discovery to existing theories, and is also dependent on subjective categorization decisions or on automated dimension-reduction techniques such as principal component analysis (PCA). This paper instead presents a new, bottom-up approach to measuring, understanding, and predicting the persuasive effects of advertisements, first by using one-at-a-time regression to determine the effect of each ad, and then by using automated text analysis to infer the general characteristics that determine those effects. Extensive out-of-sample testing is used in both cases to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach, and to evaluate a variety of related methods for analyzing effects in such high-dimensional data.

The Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG) has collected data on almost every showing of every ad run during the 2004 presidential campaign. The National Annenberg Election Survey provides extensive opinion data during the same timeframe, but with over 350 unique ads, there are far too many unique ad count variables (showings per region per week) for standard methods to evaluate their effects on vote intention. Instead of reducing the number of independent variables via classification or PCA, the effect of each ad is determined by a new method: simply regressing vote intention on each ad count variable (plus demographic controls) one at a time. Evaluating the effectiveness of this apparently simple approach is crucial. Since standard statistical measures of significance are unreliable here, the best test of the model is out-of-sample testing. Vote intention is predicted out of sample using the average prediction from all the in-sample regressions.

As Figure 1 (top) shows, this approach predicts vote intention better than existing methods. Each bar shows the percent of out-of-sample (OOS) tests where the specified model beat the controls-only prediction (green line = significantly better; red = significantly worse). Using the dozens of CMAG category variables (such as "negative ad") in a single regression does poorly, as does using just a few that best correlate (in-sample) with vote intention. Using PCA components does somewhat better than nothing. Using all the hundreds of ad count variables in a single regression does terribly due to over fitting, and the popular LASSO variable-reduction technique only does bit better than nothing as well. By far the best performer is the one-at-a-time regression, especially when Bayesian shrinkage has been applied to the coefficients to reduce the effects of small-sample ads. (These results are also supported by various Monte Carlo simulations.) This shows that the one-at-a-time technique effectively determines the effects of hundreds of different variables, at least when taken in aggregate.

But how can we draw general conclusions about why certain ads are more effective than others? At the most simple level, the results show that Democratic ads tended to be much more effective than Republican ones during this campaign, and strategic buying using the information discovered here could have boosted Kerry's performance by up to 5 points. But to derive more specific results, automated text analysis is employed. Since such techniques generally begin with a "bag of words" (word counts per document, with no attention to word order), we must first establish that such crude measures of "content" have any bearing on persuasive effect. This is done by further out-of-sample testing: the coefficients on out-of-sample ads are predicted by comparing their textual content to in-sample ads, and these predicted coefficients are in turn used to predict vote intention. A number of techniques for this are evaluated: one-at-a-time regression (of effects on words); averaging the k nearest neighbors (or neighbors closer than a cutoff) in word-space; weighting by distance; or a Bayesian probabilistic approach. The spatial approaches in particular effectively allow the prediction of the effects of new ads based solely on a comparison of their textual contents to earlier measured ads. This constitutes an important tool for campaigns, and also shows that these measures of ads' textual contents can determine their persuasive effects.

Finally, to characterize the words and themes that underly the most effective pro-Democratic and pro-Republican ads, two text-based scalings are used, one based on the approach developed by Monroe & Maeda (2004) and Slapin & Proksch (2008), the other based on one-at-a-time regression of effect coefficients on words (with Bayesian shrinkage). The top pro-D and pro-R words from each method overlap, and the overlapping words are presented in Table 1. This shows that the most effective pro-Democrat themes from 2004 were related to health and prescription drugs, while those for Republican were deficits, the infamous swift-boat ads, and ads for the libertarian candidate (which presumably helped by drawing disaffected Republicans away from voting for Kerry). The Iraq war appears to have played little role, perhaps because voters are already well-informed about it.

The combination of one-at-a-time regression with automated text analysis provides a powerful new bottom-up approach to understanding persuasion, allowing us to measure the effects of hundreds of treatments, and generalize from them to the words and themes that most determine their effects.

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Table 1: Most effective words for shifting intended vote in pro-Democrat and pro-Republican directions

Pro-Democrat	Pro-Republican
hospital	democrat
standards	deficits
jail	michael badnarik
blocking	boat
mess	veterans
canada	
broken	
strength	
moveon	
prices	
cost	
medicare	
profits	
negotiating	

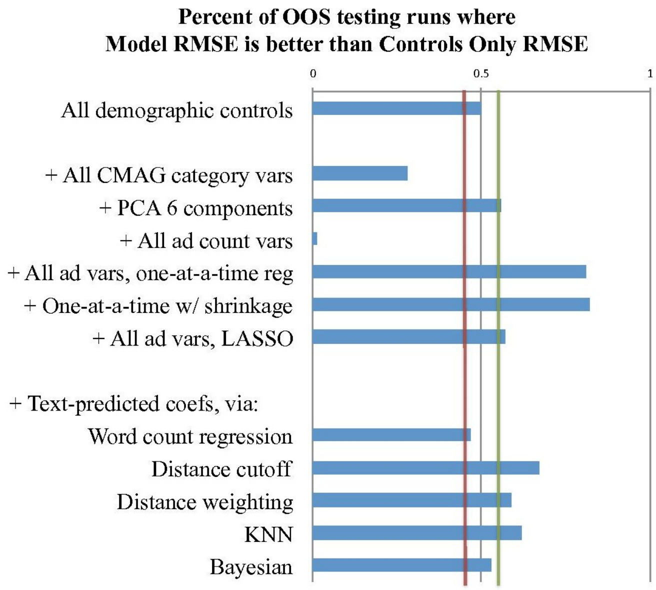

Figure 1: The percentage of out-of-sample runs in which the specified model out-performed the controls-only model. Bars outside the red-green band have less than 0.05 probability of occurring by chance.

The Impact of Temporal and International Context on Democratic Survival

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How does temporal context affect models of democratic survival? Empirical and theoretical studies on democratic survival show that factors such as inequality, economic growth, and trade openness impact democratic survival. Existing studies, however, tend to ignore contextual factors, the mix of events that happen in any calendar year. I argue that temporal context should be taken into consideration in an analysis of democratic survival.

There are two times in a democratic survival analysis. First is the time or duration of a regime, and second is the calendar time in which a democracy emerges or breaks down. In current democratic survival data, each country is assigned a count variable which shows the age of a democratic regime (regime time). All democracies are assumed to start from the year 1 at their emergence or after their break-down. Figure 1 shows calendar time of the democratic break-downs in five countries; Figure 2 shows how they are represented in existing datasets. As it is seen below, the representation in Figure 2 does not reflect the break-downs in calendar time. All democratic episodes start from the same count variable even though their respective calendar years are different.

I begin to address this problem by considering the Cox proportional hazard model (c.f. Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). In the Cox model, the hazard rate is:

$h(t_i; x_i) = h_0(t_i)exp(\beta' x_i)$

where, t_i is the time to event for unit i, x_i is a vector of covariates, and β is a vector of parameters, and h_0 is the baseline hazard which does not include a shape parameter.

In the case of democratic survival, exclusion of the temporal context in which democratic failures take place ignores the dependency between events due to existing in the same calendar time. One strategy to account for this problem is the inclusion of random effect, or frailty terms, which account for the fact that some units are at greater risk of experiencing an event due to factors not incorporated in the model (Darmofal, 2009). In the case of democratic survival, some calendar years may be more likely of experiencing democratic failures.

In order to control for temporal context, I use a shared frailty model which includes a random parameter that accounts for the random frailties (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1994, Darmofal, 2009). As Darmofal (2009) argues, if the researcher believes that units are clustered in a hierarchical structure, such that units within the same cluster share a common frailty, a hierarchical, shared frailty model is an appropriate choice.

$h(t_{ij}; x_{ij}) = h_0(t_{ij})exp(\beta' x_{ij} + W_j)$

where unit i is now nested in cluster or stratum j, and a shared frailty, $W_j = \log(w_j)$, is added for units nested in stratum j.

When I apply the shared frailty model to Reenock et al. (2007) dataset, I find that economic growth and trade openness have significant effects on democratic survival. These results support the theory that poor economic performance bring more socioeconomic conflict, increase levels of discontent and the attractiveness of extra-systemic solutions, thus increasing the likelihood of regime breakdown. Results also support the argument that an open economy creates its own dynamic that limits state power. Unlike Reenock et al.(2007)'s model—which assume temporal independence—the shared frailty model shows that inequality have no significant impact on democratic survival.

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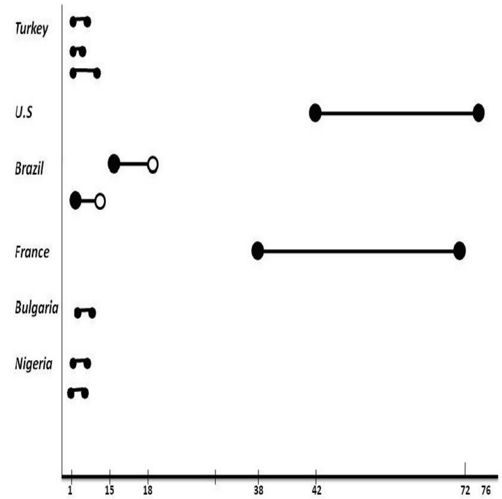

Figure 1: Examples of Democratic Regime Durations by "Regime Time"

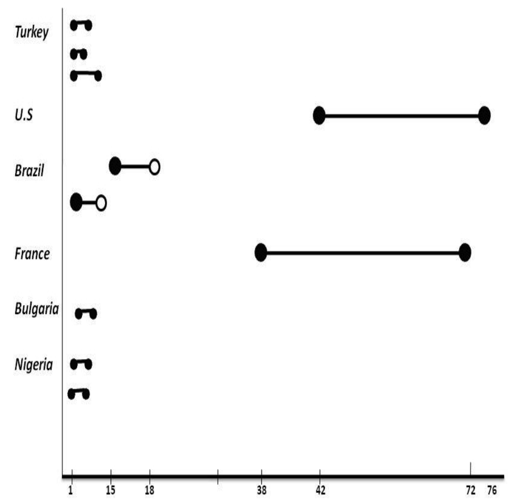

Figure 2: Examples of Democratic Regime Durations by "Calendar Time"

Myopic Enforcement of Antitrust Policy, 1970-2010

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In this project, I find that enforcement of Antitrust law is myopic, meaning that the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division (DOJ hereafter) does not strategically protect policy positions over a long time horizon. Instead, the DOJ is unresponsive to budgetary signals, and is driven by short-sighted policy concerns. Agency heads for the DOJ receive little utility from appropriations to the agency. I test this argument by developing a dynamic discrete choice model of antitrust enforcement. I directly estimate the primitive parameters of a formal model of incremental appropriations politics and agency responsiveness. The estimated parameters include agency preferences over policy, money, and the weight the agency places on future outcomes. I find that the DOJ derives the highest utility from pursuing status quo outcomes (which is largely short run, small cases), and gains little utility from money, which is compounded by a short time horizon. These findings jointly imply the agency does not act to protect resources nor act to pursue long term policy goals.

Lawyers (and agency heads) suffer from competing incentives when enforcing antitrust law. The complexity of antitrust law is such that cases can span decades in the extreme cases. The government's case against the aluminum producer ALCOA ran three decades, and the ongoing antitrust concerns against Microsoft have outlived the browser wars that created in the case in the mid-90's. While the law is complex, many of the lawyers hired by the agency are interested in cases with a short life and a high success rate– many are interested in a career in industry, or are simply interested in raising their career profile by litigation of sure-fire cases (Bork, 1978). The question, regarding antitrust enforcement, concerns who wins out. Do long term planners, or short term legal issues, dominate antitrust policy?

To answer this question I develop a structural model based upon Rust (1987). Agency planners have a discrete policy choice, which stochastically impacts the future appropriations to the agency. I consider the aggregate policy activity for a given policy instrument; for the DOJ, for example, one policy instrument are investigations of price fixing between firms. The discrete policy choice is a large change from the status quo, with large meaning one standard deviation of change. Agencies earn policy from choosing a particular policy, such as the status quo, or doing more or less, noted by $a \in \{l, s, m\}$. The state variable for the agency is money appropriated by Congress, noted x_t, with the year indicated by t. Agencies utility is written,

$$u(x, a, \epsilon, \boldsymbol{\theta}) = \begin{cases} 0 + \epsilon(l) & \text{if } a = l \\ -(\theta_s + \theta_1 x_t + \theta_2 x_t^2) + \epsilon(s) & \text{if } a = s \\ -(\theta_s + \theta_m + \theta_1 x_t + \theta_2 x_t^2) + \epsilon(m) & \text{if } a = m \end{cases}$$

Summing across all years and applying the Bellman equation, the optimization problem agencies face simplifies to a sum of their utility and their expectation of all future utility, discounted by $\beta \in [0, 1]$. The value function of the agency simplifies to

$$V_\theta(x, a) = \underset{a \in \{l,s,m\}}{\operatorname{argmax}} \left[u(x_t, a, \epsilon(a), \boldsymbol{\theta}) + \beta E V_\theta(x, a, \epsilon(a)) \right]$$

.

In order to recover parameter estimates of $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ and β, observations are weighted by the expectation defined in the value function by means of a control function. Given the previous structure, a discrete choice model can be derived which reduces to a choice model in the style of Train (2003), with the likelihood defined as a logistic model. Estimation of β, which is fixed during estimation of $\boldsymbol{\theta}$, is done by performing a grid search across values of β (reestimating the model at each value) to find the maximum likelihood. Solving for EV_θ, the expected value of all future outcomes, is done in a nested fixed point algorithm. The solution involves taking the current parameter vector from the ML estimate, and solving by a series of approximations to the fixed point in the utility (c.f. Rust, 1987).

Table 1 lists the parameter estimates. Of note is that appropriations, scaled to the millions of dollars, has minimal impact on the likelihood of altering policy, contemporaneously. Additionally, the optimal value of β is quite low, peaking around .4. This suggests that the agency, in its aggregate behavior, myopically views policy. DOJ Antitrust is meant to impact now, not later, and the agency gives relatively little thought to protecting its long term policy preferences.

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Table 1: Parameter Estimation, $\beta = .4$

Parameter	
θ_1	0.0113
	(0.00949)
θ_2	-8.24e-05
	(8.32e-05)
θ_s	-1.451
	(0.242)
θ_m	1.612
	(0.128)
Observations	492

Standard errors in parentheses

An Extended Abstract of Randomization Tests and Inference with Grouped Data

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Political scientists often ask questions that require making inferences about the effects of variables measured at the *group level* on outcomes measured at the *individual level*. Inference with grouped data presents special challenges because the amount of independent information in the data is often more related to the number of groups than to the number of individual observations. I present Monte Carlo evidence comparing a parametric approach that is common in studies using observational data, t-tests with cluster-robust standard errors (CRSEs), to randomization tests, a non-parametric approach originally derived for use with experimental data. I show that, in terms of Type I error rates, randomization tests outperform t-tests with CRSEs, regardless of the number of groups. Randomization tests are always exact, whereas t-tests with CRSEs are overconfident, especially when G is small. In terms of power, the loss from using randomization tests is minimal. Thus, randomization tests are more appropriate for group-level inference than the cluster-robust approach, particularly when the number of groups is small.

Grouped Data

Grouped (clustered) observational data is common in political science, e.g., people within states, sub-national units within countries, votes with legislators. In such datasets, it is reasonable to expect some correlation among observations in the same group. When data are generated by a grouped process,

$$y_{i,g} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 x_{i,g} + \gamma_2 z_g + e_{i,g} + u_g \qquad (1)$$

where the error terms $e_{i,g} \sim$ *i.i.d.* $N(0, \sigma^2)$ and $u_g \sim$ *i.i.d.* $N(0, \sigma^2)$, $i = 1, ..., N$ indexes individuals, and $g = 1, ..., G$ indexes groups, estimating the effect of the group-level variable z_g on the individual-level variable $y_{i,g}$ is simple using OLS. However, it is well known that OLS standard errors on $\hat{\gamma}_2$ are biased downward because they ignore u_g, an unobserved, group-level shock that all members of g share (e.g., Moulton, 1990).

T-tests with Cluster-Robust Standard Errors

A common parametric fix for downward bias in standard errors on group-level regressors is to perform tests using a test statistic calculated with CRSEs instead of typical SEs. CRSEs are a generalization of sandwich estimators and allow for both heteroskedasticity of unknown form and correlation across observations in the same group. T-tests using CRSEs are easy to implement and are common in political science—since 2000, over 120 articles in *APSR*, *AJPS*, and *JOP* have used them. However, a serious limitation is that the asymptotic properties of CRSEs kick in only when G is large (Rogers, 1993). Thus they may be biased downward in applications in which G is small (< 50) and fixed.

Randomization Tests

Randomization tests are a non-parametric way to test hypotheses. Instead of using theoretically-derived reference distributions (e.g., student's t) to judge the rarity of a test statistic, they use a custom reference distribution created from the data themselves. They require only *exchangeability of errors*, a mathematically weaker assumption than the standard *i.i.d.*, and do not rely on asymptotics. To derive the reference distribution, one uses the data to simulate the distribution of test statistics that would arise if the null hypothesis were true:

1. Randomly shuffle the variable of interest to break its relationship with the outcome variable.
2. Estimate a test statistic, knowing it should be zero on average.
3. Repeat many times to obtain a distribution of test statistics from randomized data.

As usual, if the test statistic from the observed data is in the extreme tails of the distribution, reject the null hypothesis.

Randomization tests were originally derived to test the effect of a treatment in a randomized experiment. When using them on large-N, grouped observational data, there are three considerations:

1. How many shuffles are enough? Though the number of possible permutations becomes large quickly, sampling many times without replacement from the set is sufficient (Manly, 1997), which creates a sample estimate of Fisher's exact test (Fisher, 1935).

2. How should one shuffle multivariate observational data? Many methods have been proposed (Kennedy and Cade, 1996), but the simple shuffle Z performs well in terms of size and power, even with high correlation between Z and other covariates (O'Gorman, 2005).

3. How should one shuffle grouped data? The set of possible permutations must be consistent with the study design (Moore et al., 2003), and so Z should be randomized across groups but not within them.

Monte Carlo Evidence

To compare these two approaches to hypothesis testing with grouped data, I conducted a Monte Carlo experiment. I generated data using equation 1, where all variables are $\sim$ *i.i.d.* $N(0,1)$, and each group has $m_g = 500$. I varied $\gamma_2 = (0, .25, .5, 1, 2)$, and $G = (10, 20, 50)$. In each simulation, I estimated the coefficients using OLS, performed a t-test with CRSEs and a randomization test on $\hat{\gamma_2}$, and stored the p-values.

Figure 1 shows the size results for conventional nominal α levels. The "C" points plot the actual size of the t-tests with CRSEs, and the "R" points plot the randomization tests.[1] When $\gamma_2 = 0$, t-tests with CRSEs incorrectly reject the null at a rate higher than their nominal sizes, even when $G = 50$. Randomization tests are exact (within sampling variability) regardless of G. Figure 2 shows the power results. When $\gamma_2 > 0$, both tests approach or achieve maximal power. As usual with non-parametric tests, the randomization test is slightly less powerful.

Conclusion

Randomization tests are superior to t-tests with CRSEs for inference on group-level variables. Randomization tests are exact, whereas CRSEs are overconfident and yield only minimal power gains.

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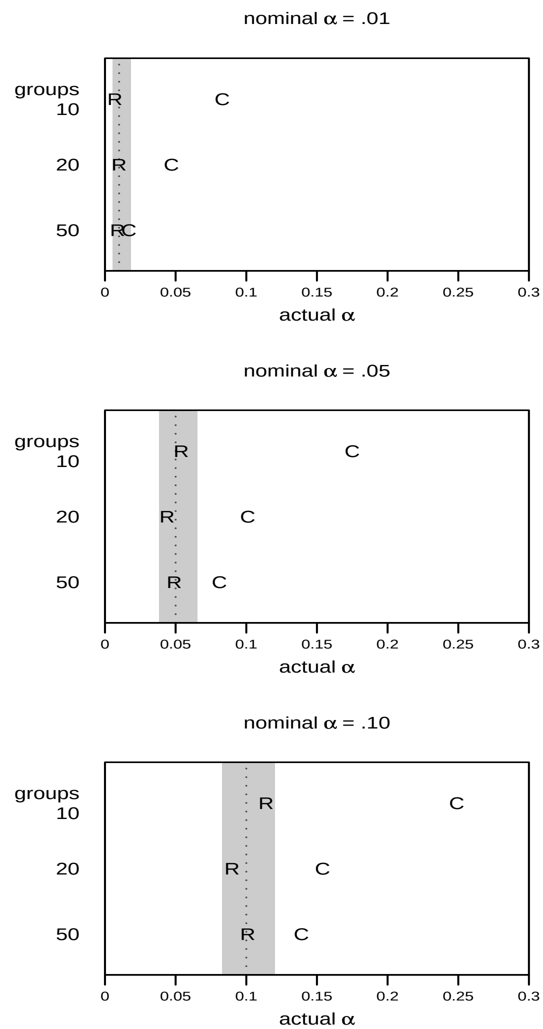

Figure 1: Size results from Monte Carlo experiments.

[1] The actual size of the tests will be measured with some error. The shaded areas show 95% binomial confidence intervals around the nominal α levels for sample size 1000, the number of trials.

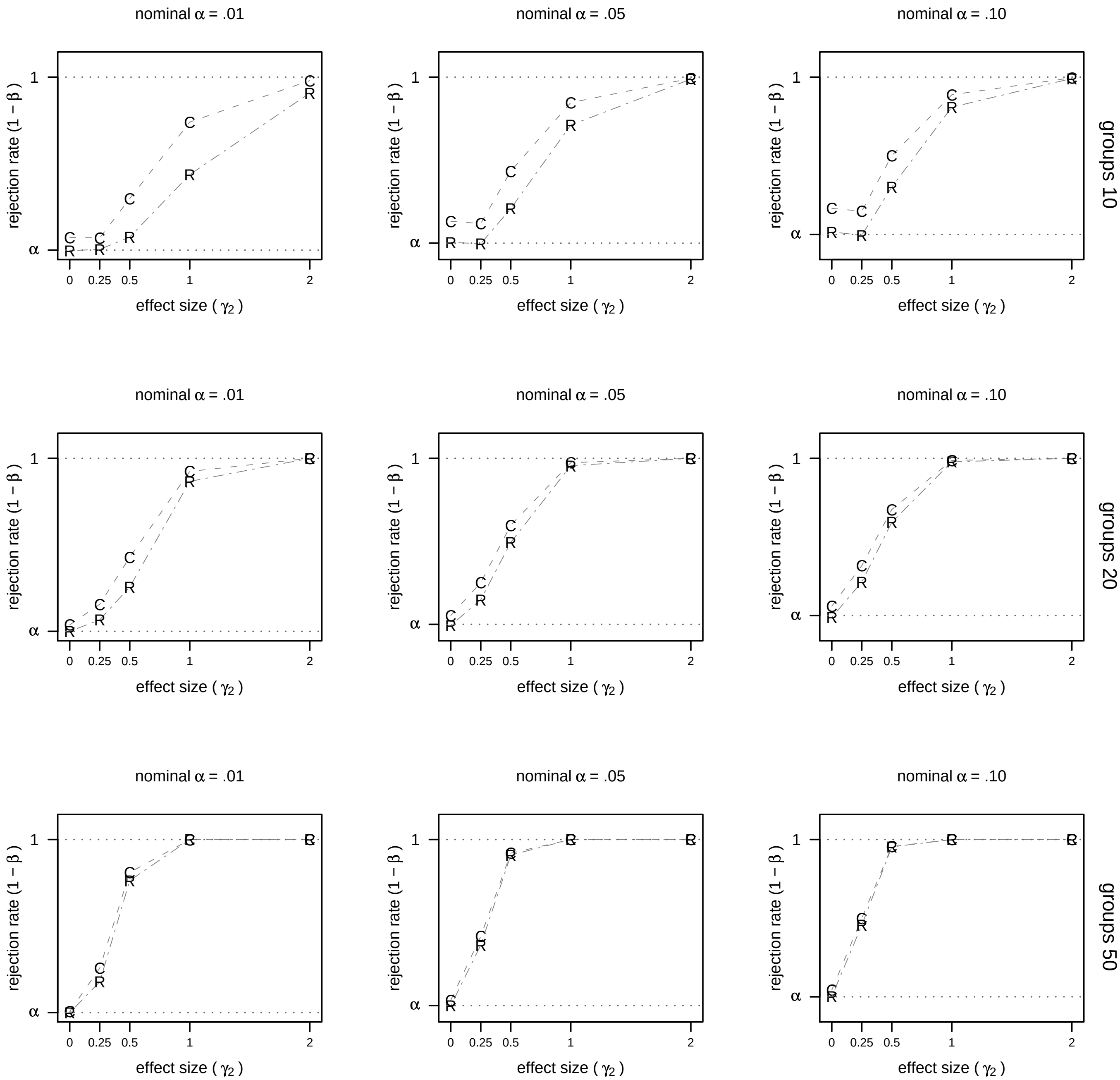

Figure 2: Power results from Monte Carlo experiments.

A Note from Our Section President

A Note from Our Section President

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This is my final *Update From the President* since Robert Franzese recently became SPM President. So it is my last opportunity to highlight our developments and achievements over the last year and comprises mostly information that was announced at the business meeting in Seattle.

General Administrative Information

The Society for Political Methodology is incorporated in Nevada. This year we finished our 501(c)3 paperwork, which is now in-process at the IRS. Hopefully it is all correct and I will not be going to jail. Incorporation, corporate insurance, and tax-free status are all important as we grow and continue to maintain an expansive Summer meeting, federal support, and the top journal in the field. Relative to other sections and interests in the field, we have significantly more organizational and legal responsibilities.

We added a new Fellow this year, Stanley Feldman of Stony Brook University. Since the Fellows are the legal owners of the Society for Political Methodology, this means we also welcome a new member of the Board of Directors. Sadly, we lose one though, with passing of Mel Hinich. Mel was a terrific colleague and valuable contributor to the Society. I recently learned that the University of Texas Board of Regents approved creation of the The Melvin J. Hinich Excellence Fund for Graduate Students in the Department of Government. Details can be found here.

We also gave a new award this year: the *Political Methodology Emerging Scholar Award*, which is designed to honor a young researcher, within ten years of their degree making notable contributions to the field of political methodology. My goal in establishing this award was to enable us to recognize our stellar young colleagues and the work that they are doing. Congratulation to Kosuke Imai for the inaugural award.

Since this is an odd-numbered year, we elected one new officer, Kevin Quinn as *Vice-President*, and elevated another to *President*, Robert Franzese. I am convinced that the Society will continue to enjoy good leadership in the future.

Finally, interested scholars can join the Society, with full benefits, without being members of APSA for $25. We expect this opportunity to appeal to quantitative social scientists in other fields as well as those of us wishing not to be an APSA member. The latter category will include me as of January 2012.

Meetings

The 2010 Summer Meeting at the Princeton University was incredibly successful and I thank our host Kosuke Imai. This meeting attracted 180 attendees, staying in the hotels and dorms in Princeton. There were 19 paper presentations, 2 distinguished local speakers, 20 faculty posters, and 56 graduate student posters. This meeting is a lot of work (I know from experience) and we should all be grateful to Kosuke and his excellent staff.

Our next Summer Meeting will be at UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University in 2012, followed by the University of Virginia in 2013, and the University of Georgia in 2014. I continue to be reassured that we can line-up such high quality venues and that the administrators at those institutions see the value of having our group on their campus for a few days.

The 2011 APSA meeting methods panels were successfully organized by Chris Zorn. He put together 16 panels in total, including 2 that were explicitly Bayesian (we're all Bayesians; some of us know it). Thanks to Chris for his excellent work. In addition, Jude Hays organized the EPSA panels for the Dublin meeting. This was the first EPSA meeting and we are happy to be their official methods sections exactly as we are for APSA. Next year this will be at the Church of the Resurrection and the Malthouse in Berlin (June). Finally, with some challenges, Marco Steenbergen and I worked to put together some panels for the ECPR meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland. As of this writing, Rob Franzese needs organizers for the next iteration of all three meetings. Consider volunteering!

Our regional conferences continue to thrive with the Saint Louis Area Methods Meeting (SLAMM) getting 61 attendees, the Northeastern Methods Program (NEMP) with 45 attendees, and Visions in Political Methodology (VIM) having about 25 attendees each over the last three years.

Political Analysis

Political Analysis continues to thrive under the direction of Mike Alvarez and Jonathan Katz. The journal is ranked as the top-cited journal in political science, ranked 1 out of 139 journals with a 5-year impact factor of 5.220. This year we finished the transition to `jstor`, which promises to enhance and protect our citation counts. Finally, the editors are hard at work moving PA to a single-blind review process. This was done with a great amount of thought and discussion. In the end, the publications committee, the editors, and a subcommittee of the Fellows determined that in almost all instances anonymity of authorship is a myth in a well-defined subfield with searchable terms, and that the pretense of double-blind costs the editorial staff excess effort in processing manuscripts. This change will make the review process more efficient for authors and more manageable for current and future editors.

Support

I am very pleased to report that the National Science Foundation continuing grant was awarded to the Society for Political Methodology this Summer. Rob Franzese and I are co-PIs on this iteration, and a great many members of the Society gave us useful and important advice during the writing of the grant. This proposal primarily requested resources to continue efforts by the Society for Political Methodology to support under-funded graduate students, expand mentoring and networking efforts for women and under-represented minorities, and develop new inclusive programs for making the subfield more accessible to groups with historically lower participation in the activities of the subfield. We will leverage our strengths in conference organization, journal management, mentoring, and training, to help correct an imbalance whereby some groups have not or could not pursue scholarship in cutting-edge quantitative political science. While we have made documented gains in attracting and retaining women and minorities over the last four years as a result of the 2007 NSF award that Jan Box-Steffensmeier and Phil Schrodt obtained, we see the opportunity for additional progress. Our objectives in this iteration are to: (1) ensure that qualified, but insufficiently-funded graduate students can attend and participate in our highly successful Summer methodology meetings, (2) continue holding small thematically oriented meetings that emphasize particular technical skills and foster a high level of networking and mentoring, and (3) continue a series of small meetings for women methodologists that deliberately mix senior leaders in the subfield with young, emerging scholars who can benefit substantially from such close personal interaction. I look forward to seeing the newly constituted Diversity Committee working in these areas along with the officers.

2011 Awards

We selected outstanding political methodologists at all career levels for awards in 2011. Thank you to the committees for their hard work. The *Gosnell Prize for Excellence in Political Methodology* for the best work in political methodology presented at any political science conference during the preceding year was awarded to Robert Franzese, Jude Hays, and Aya Kachi for "Modeling History-Dependent Network Coevolution," presented at the University of Iowa meeting last Summer. The *Miller Prize* for the best work appearing in Political Analysis over the last year wen to Justin Grimmer for "A Bayesian Hierarchical Topic Model for Political Texts: Measuring Expressed Agendas in Senate Press Releases" (Political Analysis, 2010, 18: 1-35). This year's *John T. Williams Award* for the best dissertation proposal in the area of political methodology goes to Matthew Blackwell for "Essays in Political Methodology and American Politics." It was so good that it overcame an exceedingly bland title.

I am happy to be explaining the poster award schedule for the last time. As President of the APSA Section on Political Methodology, I need to inform the APSA staff in mid-June of our award recipients for this year's awards so that they can print it in the annual meeting hard-copy (wouldn't we prefer a cheaper and ecologically more friendly cdrom instead?). Since our Summer meeting is always in July, we do not have the current-year's winner determined at that time. Being methodologists we invented a lag-one scheme such that we give them last-year's winner each year and then announce this-year's winner at the APSA business meeting. So for 2010 the best poster presented at our annual Summer Methodology Meeting was Fernando Daniel (Danny) Hidalgo for his poster "Digital Democracy: The Consequences of Electronic Voting Technology in Brazil." For the 2011 *Polmeth Poster Prize*, the committee has selected Brenton Kenkel of Rochester. Rob Franzese will have the pleasure of describing this honor next year.

The *Statistical Software Award* goes to three scholars for developing statistical software that makes a significant research contribution, Norman Nie, Dale Bent, and Hadlai Hull for the development of `SPSS` (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The impact that `SPSS` has had on the social sciences cannot be overestimated.

Last, but certainly not least, the 2011 *Political Methodology Career Achievement Award* goes to Nathaniel (Neal) Beck. This is our highest honor, and it is only the fifth time we have given the award. Neal's contributions are well-known having published extensively in political methodology and elsewhere, editing *Political Analysis* for four years, winning the *Gosnell Prize*, as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and an Inaugural Fellow of the Society for Political Methodology. I am certain to be accidentally leaving out other notable achievements. Congratulations Neal!

Adieu

Having just finished my two-year term as President, I have a few observations. I am continually impressed at how much our members *care* about the activities of the Society and the Section. Members are passionate about the Summer meeting, Political Analysis, TPM, regional meetings, our effect on the rest of the discipline, awards, NSF support, and leadership. We have become more professional as a consequence this agenda. The modal APSA section puts out an electronic newsletter and spends the bulk of their annual dues on a cocktail party at the annual meeting. Other aspects of what the SPM does are also impressive. When we were negotiating with Oxford University Press and others, senior publishing executives routinely observed that they had never seen such a young journal that had the impact and prestige that Political Analysis has. We have a history of enlightened and committed editors to thank for that (along with all of you reviewers!). I am also impressed that there continues to be generational change in membership and leadership that does not change any of the positive qualities noted above. Our Summer meeting is the envy of the other sections, and several are now trying (overtly) to imitate it. Finally, we have had uninterrupted support from the National Science Foundation since June 24, 1986. As far as I know, no other section of the APSA can make a claim even close to this. Such support indicates that the NSF and their reviewers clearly see the long-term value of our activities.

Of course it was not two years of just sunshine and margaritas. Dealing with the APSA bureaucracy is challenging. It is shocking that as a stated member organization they are not very responsive to queries from the second largest section. The SPM annual meeting inevitability provides some unhappiness. We have moved to the most inclusive model possible, given the size of university facilities and the realities of budgets. Yet some allocative decisions still need to be made by the program committee with regard to paper and poster slots, plenaries versus split panels, and so on. Please remember that these are unpaid volunteers trying to do their best and if the "best graduate student that you've ever had" does not get a poster it is not the end of the civilized world.

All things considered, the positive aspects of the job dramatically outweigh the occasionally irritating things (are you listening Rob?). It provides a great sense of accomplishment to work to move the Society forward, building on the solid foundation that goes back to September 3, 1983. It was an honor and pleasure to serve as President.

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Submissions to *TPM* are always welcome. Articles may be sent to any of the editors, by e-mail if possible. Alternatively, submissions can be made on diskette as plain ascii files sent to Wendy K. Tam Cho, 420 David Kinley Hall, 1407 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana, IL 61801. LaTeX format files are especially encouraged.

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