Representation and Legislative Roles in Congress: Evidence From the 1950s

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October 3, 2023

Abstract

Classic and contemporary research assumes legislators subjectively adopt a role orientation. This role indicates the degree to which they attempt to provide delegate representation for their constituents in the policies they support. Existing research, however, is divided on the causes that influence the choice between a relatively delegate or trustee role. I hypothesize that district heterogeneity has a major effect on this choice. Using data from the American Representation Study in the 1950s, I assess how a U.S. Representative's selection of a delegate or trustee role is affected by district heterogeneity. The findings indicate that greater *ideological* heterogeneity generally increases the likelihood of delegate representation, depending on a legislator's electoral marginality. Greater *partisan* heterogeneity usually decreases the likelihood of delegate representation, except among electorally marginal legislators. I also find that other variables suggested in prior research affect legislators' role choices, including marginality, seniority, and party, providing evidence that in some ways Congress has remained the same over time.

Word count: 11,994

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Introduction

Classic work on representation divides legislators into two archetypes: delegates and trustees (see Pitkin 1967, 146-147, and Eulau and Karps 1977, 242). Trustees ascribe to Edmund Burke's idea of representation and act as enlightened agents of the people they represent (Pitkin 1967, 128-129, 210). They make political decisions based on what they think their constituency's best interest is, not necessarily what their constituency expresses that it wants. A delegate is the opposite of a trustee. He or she does what the constituency wants in all circumstances. Some scholarship has expanded these two groups into more specific categories (e.g., Mansbridge 2003, Rehfeld 2009), but delegates and trustees remain the primary representational roles that political scientists study (Fox and Shotts 2009, Woon 2012, Barker and Carman 2012).

Explaining why the preferences of political actors vary is essential for understanding how policies are created, especially for bureaucracies and Congress (Clinton, Bertelli, Grose, Lewis, and Nixon 2012); preferences over delegate or trustee roles are no exception. Even the outcomes of Supreme Court nominations are affected by how much legislators vote according to the demands of their constituents or their own ideological preferences (McGrath and Rydberg 2016). The question of representational style is important because as Barker and Carman (2012, 3) note, it helps us understand "why some politicians actually do seem to follow public opinion more often than others do." The decision between a delegate or trustee role is politically salient.

In considering whether to vote for or against Republican efforts to alter the Affordable Care Act in March of 2017, U.S. Representative Dan Donovan (R-NY) said his colleagues should not base their vote on healthcare reform on what was best for their re-election efforts. Donovan spoke in favor of a trustee role for legislators, saying that "I would hate to think somebody would vote against their conscience and against the interests of their constituents because they're afraid of not getting re-elected 18 months later" (Barron-Lopez 2017).

The choice between a delegate or trustee role is salient for Democrats as well. No sooner did U.S. Representative Eric Massa (D-NY) express his trustee role in 2009 and say that "I will vote adamantly against the interests of my district if I actually think what I am doing is going to

be helpful . . . I will vote against their opinion if I actually believe it will help them" (Picket 2009), then his at-that-time presumed opponent in the 2010 Congressional elections, Tom Reed, proclaimed (apparently as a delegate) that "this illustrates the differences between me and Eric Massa . . . I trust the intelligence of people from upstate New York . . . Eric Massa clearly thinks that he knows better" (Kolpien 2009).[1] Legislators emphasize their role to explain their behavior in Congress.

Trustee and delegate roles have been examined in a variety of ways. Many analyses evaluate the "demand-input" model of representation (e.g., Ardoin and Garand 2003, Clinton 2006), which assumes legislators attempt to act as delegates (Wahlke 1971, 272). The development of middle-range theory on representation has focused on when legislators respond to constituents and when they follow party wishes (Hurley and Hill 2003). Nevertheless, existing work does not fully explain how legislators choose between acting primarily as a delegate or a trustee. It is known that they do so (Erikson, Luttbeg, and Holloway 1975, Kuklinski and Elling 1977), but not fully how or why (see Kuklinski and Elling 1977, 136, and Jewell 1970, 438). This paper argues that district[2] heterogeneity provides an explanation and strongly affects legislative role choice.

Theory and Literature

A legislator's perspective on his or her representative role is to some extent the result of a selection process (Miller and Stokes 1963, 45). Representatives often tend to share the same views as their constituencies because "they are recruited from the constituencies they represent" (Erikson 1978, 526). Legislators are chosen by the people they live with; it would be astonishing if the partisan and ideological character of those people did not influence the legislator's choice of

[1] Massa retired early in March of 2010, and did not serve the remainder of his term. In November of 2010, Reed won the election to replace Massa.

[2] I use the term "district" here to indicate a legislator's geographic constituency, the people contained within the legal boundaries of the locality he or she represents. Focusing on geographic constituency avoids controversy. Scholars have identified many kinds of constituencies (see Fenno 1977, Bishin 2000, etc.), but everyone can agree on what constitutes a legislator's geographic constituency.

representational role.

Furthermore, much representation scholarship has analyzed the "marginality hypothesis" (Fiorina 1973, Deckard 1976, Kuklinski 1977, Sullivan and Uslaner 1978, Gulati 2004, Griffin 2006, Griffin and Flavin 2011, McGrath and Rydberg 2016, Cohen and Rottinghaus 2018, Hickey 2019). The marginality hypothesis can be summarized as "representatives who win elections by narrow margins are more solicitous of constituents' interests in their roll-call voting than are representatives who win by comfortable margins" (Fiorina 1973, 481). This hypothesis implicitly assumes that district ideological and partisan heterogeneity (or variation in ideology and party preference) are related to representational role choice, because heterogeneity influences candidate vote share (Fiorina 1974). Hickey (2019, 76) summarizes this idea and finds "that marginal members do, in fact, behave differently than other members of Congress but that behavior is conditioned by constituency-level factors. Not all marginal members of Congress become moderates because not all constituencies are moderate." Thus, the marginality hypothesis literature implies, but does not show, that district heterogeneity affects a legislator's representational role choice. However, simple assumptions about which role a legislator chooses based on the marginality hypothesis might be wrong, as discussed below.

Fenno (1977) described district heterogeneity as one of the important influences on legislative behavior. As Griffin and Flavin (2011) note, "there are strong electoral incentives for MCs to be responsive in their behavior to citizens' heterogeneous priorities."

The idea that heterogeneity influences role choice seems intuitively plausible. After all, the behavior of legislators is constrained by the behavior of constituents (McCrone and Kuklinski 1979), including how much they support the incumbent President (Hickey 2019). Certain constituencies also seem to prefer one style of representation over another. Barker and Carmen (2012) argue that culturally traditional Republican voters tend to favor a more hierarchical, trustee style of representation, along the lines of Edmund Burke, in which elected legislators represent their constituents based on immutable principles rather than public preferences. Democratic voters, on the other hand, tend to favor a more egalitarian, delegate style of representation with legislators responding

more directly to public opinion, based on ideas of popular sovereignty. Democratic legislators also may be more likely than Republicans to adopt a delegate style of representation in response to increasing electoral marginality (Henderson and Brooks 2016).

The existence of district selection effects, constituency behavioral constraints, or both is probably sufficient to produce a relationship between district partisan and ideological heterogeneity and a representative's role choice.[3] Even so, the ways in which partisan and ideological heterogeneity separately and jointly influence role choice are not obvious and will be explained below. This paper's *general* hypotheses, whose individual rationales are explained below, are:

Hypothesis 1*: District* ***ideological*** *heterogeneity significantly influences a legislator's choice of representational role.*

Hypothesis 2*: District* ***partisan*** *heterogeneity significantly influences a legislator's choice of representational role.*

While it is logical to conclude that heterogeneity influences legislative role choice, it is not theoretically clear how it should do so. Prominent works on legislator goals and role choice do not specify a particular causal process for the effect of heterogeneity. Fiorina (1974) asserts that "the representative votes with an eye toward achieving valued consequences" and suggests that "although goals are numerous . . . reelection is the primary goal" (29, 31). Similarly, Mayhew (1974) finds that Congressmen are "single-minded seekers" of reelection. However, this conclusion does not indicate how legislators respond to district heterogeneity.

I now describe the ways by which district heterogeneity may influence role choice, and explain how they create a theoretical puzzle. Consider a hypothetical district that is homogeneous in both ideology and partisanship, such as California's very liberal, very Democratic 11th district, currently represented by Representative Nancy Pelosi. A legislator with preferences similar to those of his or her constituency can easily view himself or herself as and act as a delegate. This legislator's

[3]Heterogeneity may affect behavior in other ways too; see Ashworth and Bueno de Mesquita 2006.

policy goals will match the district's. Bailey and Brady (1998) find that "the relationship between constituency characteristics and voting is much clearer for senators from homogenous states," but that does not necessarily mean a legislator from a homogeneous district with similar preferences acts as a delegate. As Fiorina (1974) notes, "there is no necessary incompatibility between a desire to maximize electoral support and a desire to achieve other ends."

For our hypothetical representative, it is virtually costless to be a trustee. This legislator can do what he or she thinks is in the district's best interest, and most of the time his or her decision will match the district's preferences. As Matsusaka (2017, 2) put it, these kinds of legislators can represent majority opinion in their districts because they "share the opinions of their constituents, not because legislators seek to reflect constituent opinion." Furthermore, on the rare occasion when a vote does not match the district's preferences, this hypothetical trustee will probably be trusted enough by the district that it will forgive the legislator[4] or assume she has unique private information.[5] Therefore, for legislators who represent homogeneous districts with which they share partisan and ideological preferences, it is not certain how their district's homogeneity influences their choice of representational role. Table 1 illustrates these conflicting motivations.

Table 1: District Heterogeneity Level, Legislator and Constituency Preference Similarity, and Conflicting Motivations to Choose Delegate and Trustee Roles

Heterogeneity Level	*Legislator & Constituency Preferences Are:*	*Delegate Motivation*	*Trustee Motivation*
Homogeneous	Similar	Similar constituent goals	Costless to be a trustee
Homogeneous	Opposed	Electoral vulnerability	Reelection not primary goal
Heterogeneous	Mixed	Electoral vulnerability	District lacks defined preferences

[4]Kingdon (1989) found legislators can sometimes contradict the desires of constituents like this.

[5]Canes-Wrone, Herron, and Shotts (2001) discuss this form of representation for Presidents, as does Bianco (1994) for House members on the Ways and Means Committee.

What about a legislator who represents a homogeneous district with opposed preferences, that is, a district that favors political positions which are generally incompatible with the legislator's?[6] This hypothetical legislator might adopt delegate-style representation due to fear of being voted out of office. In this case, however, the legislator might not have reelection as his primary goal. If reelection is not the primary goal, it is not clear what political scientists should expect that to be (Fiorina 1974, 35). Nevertheless, this hypothetical legislator managed to get elected in a homogeneous district with opposing partisanship or ideology. This suggests that this legislator may have been elected as a trustee who represents the district on some aspect other than policy congruence (such as being a "favorite son") or has extraordinary political qualities and skills.

In either case, he or she may not need to be policy congruent to be reelected, and could freely choose to act as a trustee. Fox and Shotts (2009) conclude that trustee representation is most likely to occur when the legislator and district's preferences are very similar or very different. A legislator from a homogeneous district with opposing preferences might also choose to pursue non-policy forms of representation, such as allocation responsiveness or service responsiveness (Eulau and Karps 1977, Griffin and Flavin 2011), although such concerns are beyond the scope of this paper.[7]

It is also not clear what representational role choice should be expected of legislators from heterogeneous districts, like Pennsylvania's 8th district or Ohio's 9th district. Most heterogeneous districts are likely marginal (Fiorina 1974, 43). Neither party will have a strong advantage in these districts, and their legislators will have an exaggerated vulnerability to the contemporary political environment. Fiorina (1974) asserts that legislators from heterogeneous districts do not have an

[6]Implausible as this may seem, it does occur. U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) is a great example. Manchin, a moderate Democrat, has represented West Virginia in the Senate since 2010, despite the fact that West Virginia has voted for the Republican candidate for President in the last 3 Presidential elections by 25% or more. One example from the U.S. House of Representatives was Minnesota's 7th district, a rural, fairly conservative district that voted for the Republican Presidential candidate in the last 6 Presidential elections and voted for Republican Donald Trump in 2016 and 2020 by an average of 30 percentage points. From 1991-2021, it was represented by moderate Democrat Collin Peterson.

[7]This paper chiefly considers what is often referred to "policy responsiveness" (Eulau and Karps 1977, Griffin and Flavin 2011) or "policy congruence" (Harden 2016), or the degree to which legislators attempt to pass policies consistent with what their constituents want, due to the unique look that the American Representation Study provides at Representatives' self-described representation style. Griffin and Flavin (2011) note that across demographics, a majority of constituents rank "policy representation as the most important aspect of representation," even though "policy responsiveness cannot provide a complete explanation of representation" (Harden 2016).

obvious voting strategy to increase their likelihood of reelection. Nevertheless, the electoral vulnerability that characterizes representing a heterogeneous district may cause legislators to choose a delegate style of representation (and be more "responsive" in the demand-input model sense of the word) in the hopes of overcoming their electoral vulnerability (Jones 1973). This idea is derived from the "marginality hypothesis" in the representation literature.

Yet, districts characterized by ideological and partisan heterogeneity lack unified preferences by definition.[8] The lack of homogeneous district preference constraints may allow a legislator to act as a trustee,[9] vote against mean or median district preferences fairly often, and still be reelected. Even if the legislator votes in a way that the majority of constituents opposes, there is probably a large minority that agrees with the legislator, and he or she may be able to persuade others.[10] Furthermore, heterogeneous districts may encourage their representatives to see themselves as trustees because they do not know what the preferences of their districts are. Districts lacking strong aggregate preferences do not send clear signals of preferences (McCrone and Kuklinski 1979, Harden and Carsey 2010).[11] In the absence of clear signals from their constituents, legislators from heterogeneous districts may have to choose a trustee style of representation and vote what they think is in the best interest of their constituents.

Representation scholars are left with a theoretical puzzle. It is not clear what influence the heterogeneity of district ideology and partisanship has on a legislator's choice of representational roles, and this impact is probably substantial. Both ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity are important due to the nature of party politics in the 1950s. The Democratic and Republican Parties had far more ideological variation within themselves than they do today, such that "Democrat" and "Republican" were not synonymous with "liberal" and "conservative" at either

[8]This idea, true in general, may not hold for specific issues. For example, one can easily imagine a usually heterogeneous district that holds a large military base having very homogeneous preferences about the future and funding of that base. Its representative's decisions regarding this base will be salient and most likely satisfy Arnold's (1990) requirements for traceability.

[9]Fenno (1977, 913) describes a similar argument.

[10]Assuming, of course, that the legislator believes constituents can be persuaded to care (see Fiorina 1974). A legislator's ability to shape constituent opinion is also dependent on the kind of issue in question, which can affect the direction of representational linkages (Hurley and Hill 2003).

[11]Other factors contribute to legislator uncertainty about constituent preferences as well, including the arrival of new voters in a district (Bertelli and Carson 2011, Grose and Yoshinaka 2011)

an elite or mass level. There were many conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans.

As a result, it is necessary to evaluate the effects of district heterogeneity on legislative role choice by taking account both ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity. Due to their distinct character during the 1950s, ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity may exercise competing effects on a legislator's choice of a delegate or trustee role.

Voters in a very Democratic district in Texas during this era, for example, may have exhibited great ideological variation among liberal, moderate, and conservative voters. The Democratic U.S. Representative for such a party-homogeneous, ideologically heterogeneous district may have faced competing representation motivations like those described in rows 1 and 3 of Table 1. This legislator would clearly have similar partisan goals to his district on some topics, making it easier to act as a delegate, but the district will probably lack defined preferences on some other issues, which might lead him to choose a more trustee style of representation.

This paper tests the four additional hypotheses stated below, which are implied by different lines of research summarized above:

Hypothesis 3A*: Representing* ***ideologically*** *heterogeneous districts makes legislators more likely to choose a* ***delegate*** *style of representation.*

Hypothesis 3B*: Representing* ***party****-heterogeneous districts makes legislators more likely to choose a* ***delegate*** *style of representation.*

Hypothesis 4A*: Representing* ***ideologically*** *heterogeneous districts makes legislators more likely to choose a* ***trustee*** *style of representation.*

Hypothesis 4B*: Representing* ***party****-heterogeneous districts makes legislators more likely to choose a* ***trustee*** *style of representation.*

Materials and Methods

To test Hypotheses 1-4, it is necessary to obtain data on how legislators view their representational roles. This paper uses data from the 1958 American Representation Study, conducted by Miller and Stokes (1963).[12] The Study interviewed a representative sample of over 100 U.S. Representatives and samples of their constituents. These data allow scholars to analyze representational linkages in ways not possible with any study of national legislators conducted since. No other Congressional study has a direct, self-reported measure of legislator representational role.

While the data from the American Representation Study are decades old, they can tell us much about how contemporary theories of representation apply in a different era. To the extent that these data show similar factors affected representation in Congress in 1958, they allow us to understand legislative behavior over time. Many of our theoretical expectations about representational roles in Congress have not changed much in the last few decades.

The American Representation Study asked Representatives "if you want to take a particular stand on a bill that is before the House, but feel that a majority of the people in your district would want you to take a different stand, what would you probably do?" Miller and Stokes use responses to this question and a few follow-ups to construct "a general estimate of whether the candidate thinks a representative should vote as he thinks best or as the people of his district would want him to." The final variable has five options: "should vote the way he thinks best," "should vote the way he thinks best, with qualification," "pro-con; depends," "should vote the way his district wants, with qualification," and "should vote the way his district wants."

The observant reader will point out that the Miller and Stokes variable has five categories, and I am only concerned with two kinds of representation. This difference can be methodologically accounted for by treating the five categories as an ordinal scale from pure delegate to pure trustee.[13]

[12] Available here: `http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/7293`

[13] Pitkin (1967, 210-214) herself observes that representatives in the real world are rarely the extreme of either type. The median category of this ordinal scale could be thought of as "politicos" (see Kuklinski and Elling 1977), who blend delegate and trustee roles. This analysis subsumes them and determines the conditions under which they are most likely to adopt each role.

This variable will serve as my dependent variable. An ordered probit model is employed for this approach to test Hypotheses 1-4.

This is a particularly special measure because it measures a U.S. Representative's perspective on his or her own representational role from the eyes of the legislator. Members of Congress do not answer political science surveys like this anymore. Much other research has examined questions of representation using observations or expressions of legislator behavior, such as votes in Congress (Hickey 2019), NOMINATE scores (Gulati 2004), number of district offices (Harden 2013), press releases (Grimmer 2013), or federal spending in Congressional districts (Griffin and Flavin 2011). This measure from the American Representation Study is, uniquely, a direct measure of U.S. Representatives' self-reported style of representation. It shows how they think of themselves, rather than what scholars think of them.

There are certainly some drawbacks to relying on a legislator's self-reported adherence to various behaviors consistent with delegate and trustee representational roles as a key dependent variable. As Gulati (2004) discusses, a legislator's perception of representation dynamics is not the same as reality. However, the American Representation Study provides a unique measure of members of Congress from their own viewpoints that is not found elsewhere. An analysis of the dynamics that underlie a Representative's expressed choice of a delegate or trustee legislative role can add invaluable information to our broader understanding of the U.S. Congress.

The purpose of this statistical analysis is to ascertain whether district heterogeneity influences a legislator's choice of representational style, and how. Therefore, the two explanatory variables of interest that are examined are district **partisan** heterogeneity and district **ideological** heterogeneity. Both variables are included because of the character of the political era of the American Representation Study. In the 1950s, the Democratic and Republican parties were more ideologically diverse than they are now (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006). There were many conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans, and therefore it is necessary to have measures of both partisanship and ideology to accurately capture district heterogeneity. The American Representation Study has variables for both of these concepts.

The Study asked Representatives about "the relative strength of the parties in your district. Over the years has the district been a safe district, a fairly close district or what?" Representatives selected from choices of "safe," "fairly safe," and "fairly close," and also indicated which party was favored. Responses therefore form a three-point ordinal scale from "safe" (partisan homogeneity) to "fairly safe" (some partisan heterogeneity) to "fairly close" (partisan heterogeneity), and are treated as such in this analysis.[14]

This question measures what legislators believed the partisan strength in their districts was as opposed to actual partisanship percentages. However, in thinking about representational linkages, legislator perception may be a more accurate measure of key concepts than reality. If the partisan heterogeneity of a district influences its legislator's choice of representational style, it does so through the perception of the legislator of this condition, as discussed in the Theory section of this paper. Therefore, this paper uses Representative perceptions of district party strength to measure partisan heterogeneity.

To operationalize district ideological heterogeneity, I follow the design of Gulati (2004, 508), who used the variance in constituent responses to an ideological self-placement scale to measure ideological diversity in each state. To take advantage of something similar on the American Representation Study, I use survey measures of U.S. House district ideological variance on social welfare issues in 1958. The greater the variance, the more spread the distribution of preferences was, and the more ideologically heterogeneous the district was.[15]

There are many potential ways to measure district ideological heterogeneity, and the American Representation Study also includes district-level measures of foreign policy and civil rights attitudes. This analysis takes advantage of the measure of district civil rights attitudes as a robustness check later (see "District Ideological Heterogeneity on Other Issues"), but otherwise uses district

[14]This measure does exhibit meaningful variation: 52.94% of Representatives describe their districts as "safe," 19.33% describe their districts as "fairly safe," and 27.73% describe their districts as "fairly close." By this author's count, there were at least 107 House districts actually decided by 10 points or less in the 1958 U.S. House elections (24.60% of the 435 total). For a modern comparison, 74 of the 435 (17.01%) U.S. House elections in 2022 were decided by 10 percentage points or less. This comparison highlights the greater number of close, party-heterogeneous districts in the 1950s.

[15]This measure of variance is commonly used in related research (Levendusky and Pope 2010).

variance on social welfare policy opinions as its measure of district Ideological Heterogeneity. Social welfare issues comprised the key divide between liberals and conservatives, and Democrats and Republicans, from the Great Depression until the Civil Rights-era of the mid-1960s (McCrone and Stone 1986). Social welfare attitudes are therefore used as a proxy for general ideology.

In 1958, civil rights and foreign policy attitudes did not correlate with social welfare attitudes as much as they do today (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). Furthermore, civil rights and foreign policy issues were not yet a distinct cleavage between the Democratic and Republican parties in 1958, either at an elite or mass level (see Poole and Rosenthal 1997 and Hurley and Hill 2003 for some discussion). Social welfare issues and civil rights issues both were and are what Hurley and Hill (2003) might refer to as uncomplicated issues.[16] They are easy to follow for voters, who are familiar with the general arguments about them, and they easily capture public attention (Hurley and Hill 2003, 306). However, in 1958 social welfare issues were both uncomplicated and party-defining issues, or ones on which party elites took a clear stand. Civil rights issues were uncomplicated, but not yet party-defining issues (Hurley and Hill 2003). Erikson (1978) also observed the elite-mass public linkages were stronger on social welfare issues than civil rights or foreign policy issues in the late 1950s. As a result, we should expect social welfare issues to exhibit greater representational linkages between elites and the mass public in 1958 than civil rights issues.

The Study's measure of districts' ideological means and variance on social welfare issues is far from perfect. As Erikson (1978) discusses, it includes considerable sampling error in surveying each U.S. House district in the study, and the respondents in each district do not form random samples. It also includes districts where less than 10 people's views were surveyed. The average number of survey respondents per House district on the social welfare issues scale is about 13.

[16]In contrast, foreign policy issues, a subject that the American Representation Study also measure constituent opinions on, are not uncomplicated issues. They harder for the public to understand, something that the public is not as familiar with hearing arguments about from politicians. Erikson (1978) also expected foreign policy issues to show weaker constituent-Representative linkages than social welfare or civil rights attitudes. Since they are a different kind of issue, what Hurley and Hill (2003) would call a complex issue, it is not surprising that district variance on foreign policy attitudes is not as related to variance on social welfare issues or variance civil rights issues as the variance of attitudes on those 2 issues are to each other. Variance on district foreign policy attitudes is only correlated with variance on social welfare attitudes at .15, which is not significant at conventional levels of statistical significance. Variance on district foreign policy attitudes is only correlated with variance on social welfare attitudes at .32 (which is significant at $p < .001$)

Erikson (1978) attempts to solve some of these problems by simulating constituent attitudes on the American Representation Study, but this method of correcting for survey sampling error is unreliable at best. It requires excluding the South from the analysis, and doing some methodologically questionable practices like using district Presidential vote share as an explanatory variable for district opinion. Given the choice between an analysis that uses this very imperfect, methodologically questionable simulated data, or the real constituent attitude measures that suffer from sampling error, I prefer to use the real constituent attitude measures that are more transparent.

Erikson (1978, 514), however, does describe one advantage of this data that is relevant for this analysis. He argues that "because nonrandom samples are generally more homogeneous than their populations, they yield underestimates of the within-district population variance." The American Representation Study data is based on non-random samples of the House districts, and therefore almost certainly shows *less* opinion variance on social welfare issues than actually existed. In some sense, this weakens the power of a key explanatory variable in this analysis (district Ideological Heterogeneity), but it also suggests that had this variable been measured correctly, it might have had even more influence on a legislator's choice of legislative role than my results later show.

Fundamentally, there are not really any other preferable options to using the flawed measure of U.S. House district attitude variance on social welfare attitudes on the American Representation Study. Since there is no other study that has this data, the small-N and non-random survey problems must be tolerated. Bootstrapping is employed in this analysis to deal with the small-N problem more generally, as is discussed later.

It would also be ideal to have a more detailed measure of constituency and subconstituency ideology and issue positions for this analysis. The American Representation Study measured constituent opinions through very scant district surveys. These surveys do not allow for subgroup analysis.

As Bishin (2009) points out, the demand-input model of representation relies in part on the idea that politicians treat all citizen opinions as equal. This assumption is dubious at best. However, the constituency measures on the American Representation Study are scant and broad. While it

would be ideal to have representative samples of constituents in each one, such that an examination of potentially important subconstituencies like high-income or educated constituents would be possible, it is not possible to examine public opinion on the American Representation Study in any real level of detail beyond broad metrics.

It is known that legislator seniority influences choice of representational style and relations with the constituency (Lipinski 2003, Henderson and Brooks 2016), with senior legislators more likely to choose a trustee role. The American Representation Study includes a variable which measures the tenure of the Representative in Congress, and it is included as a control in the analysis. Accounting for the effects of a Representative's party is also necessary. Due to their differing views on the proper role of government in society, religion (Barker and Carman 2012), and the importance of immutable principles and popular sovereignty (Barker and Carman 2012), Democrats and Republicans may favor different legislative roles in Congress. I include a dummy variable that is coded as "1" if the Representative is a Republican and "0" otherwise.

I also include a dummy variable that measures whether a Representative is a Southern Democrat, which takes a value of 1 if the Representative is a Democrat from one of the states that formed the Confederacy and a 0 if not. Due to the one-party Democratic rule over much of the South in the 1950s, representational role choice in the South may have had its own unique character.[17] The distinct nature of South in Congress during this period remains a relevant subject of study even in contemporary political science, and as Bateman, Katznelson, and Lipinski (2015, 183) note, during this period Southern Democrats were "an entirely distinct party from the nonsouthern Democrats."

My analysis also controls for the influence of Representative ideology on legislative role choice. During the 1950s, there was considerable ideological overlap between the Democratic and Republican parties. As a result, controlling for Representative party alone may not adequately account for the effects of liberals and conservatives' different views of government. I measure Representative ideology as the Representative's reported position on a 5-point social welfare attitude scale that

[17]For one illustrative quote, see V.O. Key's (1949, 41) *Southern Politics in State and Nation*: "A more or less totally irrelevant appeal - back the hometown boy - can exert no little influence over an electorate not habituated to the types of voting behavior characteristic of a two-party situation."

runs from "liberal" to "conservative." As discussed earlier, social welfare attitudes most divided liberals and conservatives during this time period, and therefore they serve as an excellent proxy for general ideology.[18] I am unsure, however, what the direction of effect of the ideology and partisanship variables will be.

Numerous scholars have debated whether electoral marginality causes Representatives to choose a delegate role in Congress (e.g., Gulati 2004, Griffin 2006). Some of this research has shown no evidence that legislators who are more likely to lose re-election are more likely to act as delegates (they may even be *less* likely to act as delegates, see Gulati 2004), while other research has shown that legislators who are electorally vulnerable are more likely to reflect their constituents' opinions in Congressional votes (Hickey 2019). Griffin (2006) shows that electoral marginality conditions the relationship between constituent preferences and legislator voting in Congress, though the substantive effects are modest (see Figures 1a and 1b in Griffin 2006, 917). Bishin (2009) finds no difference in subconstituency responsiveness between homogeneous and heterogeneous districts. [19]

To account for this debate, this paper includes a control for electoral marginality. Marginality is operationalized by using a measure of the legislator's share of the vote in the last election.[20] The higher the percentage of the 2-party vote that the legislator received in his or her last election, the smaller the electoral marginality score will be. I expect that higher marginality scores will increase the likelihood that a Representative will choose delegate-style representation.

While representation scholars have some theoretical expectation that marginal Representatives

[18]DW-NOMINATE scores are available for this period, but the American Representation Study preserves anonymity of respondents and I am unable to match legislators with DW-NOMINATE scores. Furthermore, a DW-NOMINATE score is not a direct measure of ideology, but a proxy based on voting record that may be contaminated with the influence of constituency preferences and party effects.

[19]It is worth noting that some of the contradictory findings about the marginality hypothesis may be due to research being done with data from different eras of Congress, some which are more ideological and partisan than others. Gulati (2004) recognizes this when he suggests in his conclusion that legislators may choose different strategies when control of the legislature is very competitive and partisan than when it is not. This is another reason it is valuable to extend research on the marginality hypothesis back to the 1950s, a distinctly less ideological era than the 1990s (which provide most of Gulati's data) or the hyperpartisan era of today (2023).

[20]The percentage of the total vote that the Representative received is divided by 100 to create a decimal number that ranges between 0 and 1. This number is then subtracted from 1. The remainder is used as the legislator's electoral marginality score. Marginality Score = 1 - $\frac{\textit{Legislator's Percent of Total Vote in Last Election}}{100}$

are delegates, we have conflicting expectations from other research about the impact of heterogeneity on role choice. Much of this conflict revolves around the uncertain and conditional relationship between district heterogeneity and marginality, as discussed above and summarized in Table 1.

District heterogeneity may directly affect a legislator's choice of a delegate or trustee style of representation. In a district with homogeneous preferences similar to the legislator's (row 1 in Table 1), the legislator can do what the district want easily, and most of the time that will be the same as what the legislator thinks is best. In a district with heterogeneous preferences (row 3 in Table 1), it may be so difficult to determine what the district wants that the legislator has little choice other than choosing a trustee style of representation, since doing what the district wants is impossible to determine. I expect these relationships between district heterogeneity and legislative role choice may exist regardless of a legislator's marginality.

In addition to having direct effects on a legislator's choice of representation style, however, district heterogeneity may have conditional effects dependent on a legislator's marginality. A legislator's marginality (or vulnerability to losing re-election, summarized as "electoral vulnerability" in Table 1) is one reason that representation scholars might expect a legislator in a heterogeneous district or homogeneous district with opposed preferences to be more likely to choose a delegate style of representation.

District heterogeneity is known to affect how vulnerable a legislator is to losing re-election, and the marginality hypothesis supposes that the more vulnerable a legislator is to losing re-election, the more likely that person is to choose a delegate style of representation. If so, in addition to its direct effects, I expect district heterogeneity to have conditional effects on legislative role choice through marginality. I therefore include variables that measure the multiplicative interaction effects between a Representative's marginality score and his or her district's ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity.

Below, I present the functional form of the statistical model that tests Hypotheses 1-4. As is discussed earlier, this ordered probit model (**I**) treats the dependent variable of representational style as a five-point ordinal scale from "pure delegate" to "pure trustee."

I. *Representational Style Continuum* = β_0 + *Ideological Heterogeneity*$*\beta_1$ + *Partisan Heterogeneity*$*\beta_2$ + *Seniority*$*\beta_3$ + *Marginality Score*$*\beta_4$ + *GOP Dummy*$*\beta_5$ + *Representative Ideology*$*\beta_6$ + *Ideological Heterogeneity**Marginality Score Interaction Effect*$*\beta_7$ + *Partisan Heterogeneity**Marginality Score Interaction Effect*$*\beta_8$ + *Southern Democrat Dummy*$*\beta_9$ + ϵ

This model allows testing of Hypotheses 1-4. If either β_1 or β_2 is significant, then district heterogeneity directly influences a legislator's choice of representation style. If either β_7 or β_8 is significant, then district heterogeneity conditionally influences a legislator's choice of representation style, depending on marginality. These findings will lend support to at least one of my primary Hypotheses. I then draw conclusions about Hypotheses 3A through 4B and whether ideological and partisan heterogeneity lead to delegate or trustee roles.

Results

The results of my ordered probit analysis of model **I** are displayed in Table 2. Alongside the statistical significance of my explanatory variables, their substantive significance and effects on the likelihood that a U.S. Representative chooses a pure delegate or pure trustee role in Congress are discussed below.

Due to the small N of the sample (N = 85 cases), I ran non-parametric bootstrapping to calculate the 95th percentile bootstrap confidence interval (column 3) on the displayed coefficients in column 1.[21] For coefficient estimates where the 95th percentile bootstrap confidence interval does not overlap with 0, the coefficient estimate can be said to be statistically significant according to a

[21]These bootstrapped coefficients and standard errors are calculated based on B = 1000 bootstrap iterations. Bootstrapping can reduce the bias on estimated standard errors by re-sampling from the empirical distribution and is helpful in small-sample data analysis; see Efron and Tibshirani 1986.

95% percentile bootstrap confidence interval.[22][23]

Table 2 lends support for Hypothesis 1; *ideological* heterogeneity influences role choice. However, due to the significance of the multiplicative interaction term, this is a conditional effect. The significance of this interaction terms provide some evidence of an idea explored by Griffin and Flavin(2011): district characteristics "moderate the level of policy responsiveness to district preferences."

For Members of Congress who were unopposed in their last election (Marginality Score = 0), the greater the Ideological Heterogeneity in their districts, the greater the likelihood that they will choose a delegate role. These effects have a strong substantive impact, as I will discuss later.

[22]Displaying the 95th percentile bootstrap confidence interval for a coefficient, rather than a t-statistic, is recommended by Jung, Lee, Gupta, and Cho (2019) because it delivers more information about the precision of the estimate.

[23]For the most part, the explanatory variables in this model are not characterized by high multicollinearity. However, the Southern Democrat dummy is correlated with marginality at -.71, Ideological Heterogeneity is correlated with the interaction between Ideological Heterogeneity and Marginality at .81, and Partisan Heterogeneity is correlated with the interaction between Partisan Heterogeneity and Marginality at .97. This last correlation is very high, which is another reason to bootstrap the confidence interval on this coefficient. Bootstrapping can help with calculating parameter estimates in cases of multicollinearity (Zahari, Ramli, and Mokhtar 2014).

Table 2: Bootstrapped Ordered Probit Results for Model **I.**

	Estimate	Original Standard Error	95th Percentile Bootstrap Confidence Interval for Coefficient
Ideological Heterogeneity	-1.89**	.84	(-4.37, -.61)**
Partisan Heterogeneity	2.15**	.92	(.35, 5.09)**
Seniority	.44*	.22	(.02, 1.10)**
Marginality Score	-5.77**	2.64	(-14.29, -1.39)**
GOP Legislator	1.30**	.58	(-.02, 3.60)*
Legislator Ideology	.14	.13	(-.19, .53)
Southern Democrat Legislator	-.22	.63	(-1.82, 1.41)
Ideological Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction	4.78**	2.12	(.93, 11.75)**
Partisan Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction	-4.80**	2.01	(-11.35, -.49)**
Tau1	-2.27*	1.01	
Tau2	-1.99*	1.01	
Tau3	-1.59	1.00	
Tau4	-.91	.99	
Residual deviance = 160.39			
N of sample = 85			
B = n of bootstrap iterations = 1000			

** indicates $p < .05$

* indicates $p < .1$

For most other Representatives, who faced a challenger in their last election (Marginality Score > 0), increasing Ideological Heterogeneity or Marginality Score increases the probability of a Representative choosing a Pure Delegate style. However, for Representatives in *very* marginal or ideologically heterogeneous districts, the effects of increasing Marginality or Ideological Heterogeneity can cease or even reverse. If a district has a very high level of Ideological Heterogeneity, increasing the Marginality of that district's Representative *decreases* the likelihood of him or her choosing a Pure Delegate style of representation. In these districts, there is some evidence confirming the idea that "Legislators in competitive districts tend to de-emphasize policy-based representation compared to their colleagues in safe seats" (Hardin 2013). If a Representative is already very marginal, increasing the Ideological Heterogeneity in the district will actually make him or her *less* likely to

choose a Pure Delegate style of representation. These conditional effects, for a profile Representative described below, are displayed in Figure 1.

These results fit some of the theoretical expectations described earlier. What seems to be occurring is that marginality and Ideological Heterogeneity do usually lead Representatives to choose a more delegate style of representation, perhaps out of fear of losing re-election. However, for Representatives in the most heterogeneous or marginal districts, it may be difficult to know what it is that their constituents want, or there may be no real majority-preferred policy position that if adopted could increase the probability of re-election.

I next illustrate the considerable substantive effects of district Ideological Heterogeneity on the likelihood of a profile Representative choosing a Pure Delegate or Pure Trustee role. To create a profile Representative, I set Ideological Heterogeneity and Legislator Ideology at their means, and Partisan Heterogeneity and Seniority at their medians. I set the GOP dummy and Southern Democrat dummy at their modes. Marginality Score, the Ideological Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction, and the Partisan Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction are set at 0. Therefore, this profile legislator will in some sense be "typical" of the sample and allow me interpret the effects of Ideological Heterogeneity independent of the Interaction term.

This moderate, non-Southern Democratic Representative has been in Congress for 9-18 years and is from a partisan-homogeneous district which offered no challenger in the last House election and has average Ideological Heterogeneity. This legislator's probability of choosing a Pure Trustee role is approximately 61%, while his predicted likelihood of choosing a Pure Delegate role is only about 15%.[24]

Figure 2 shows how these probabilities change as a function of variations in district Ideological Heterogeneity. A 1-standard-deviation increase in Ideological Heterogeneity from the mean increases the predicted chance that the profile Representative will choose a Pure Delegate role from

[24]As discussed earlier, Representatives placed themselves on a 5-point scale of representation that ranged from "should vote the way his district wants," which is referred to as "Pure Delegate," to "should vote the way he thinks best," which is referred to "Pure Trustee." These are the primary representation categories of interest. I refrain from discussing the others, which is why the sum of the profile Representative's probabilities of choosing Pure Delegate or Pure Trustee does not equal 100%.

Figure 1: How Ideological Heterogeneity and Marginality Affect Role Choice

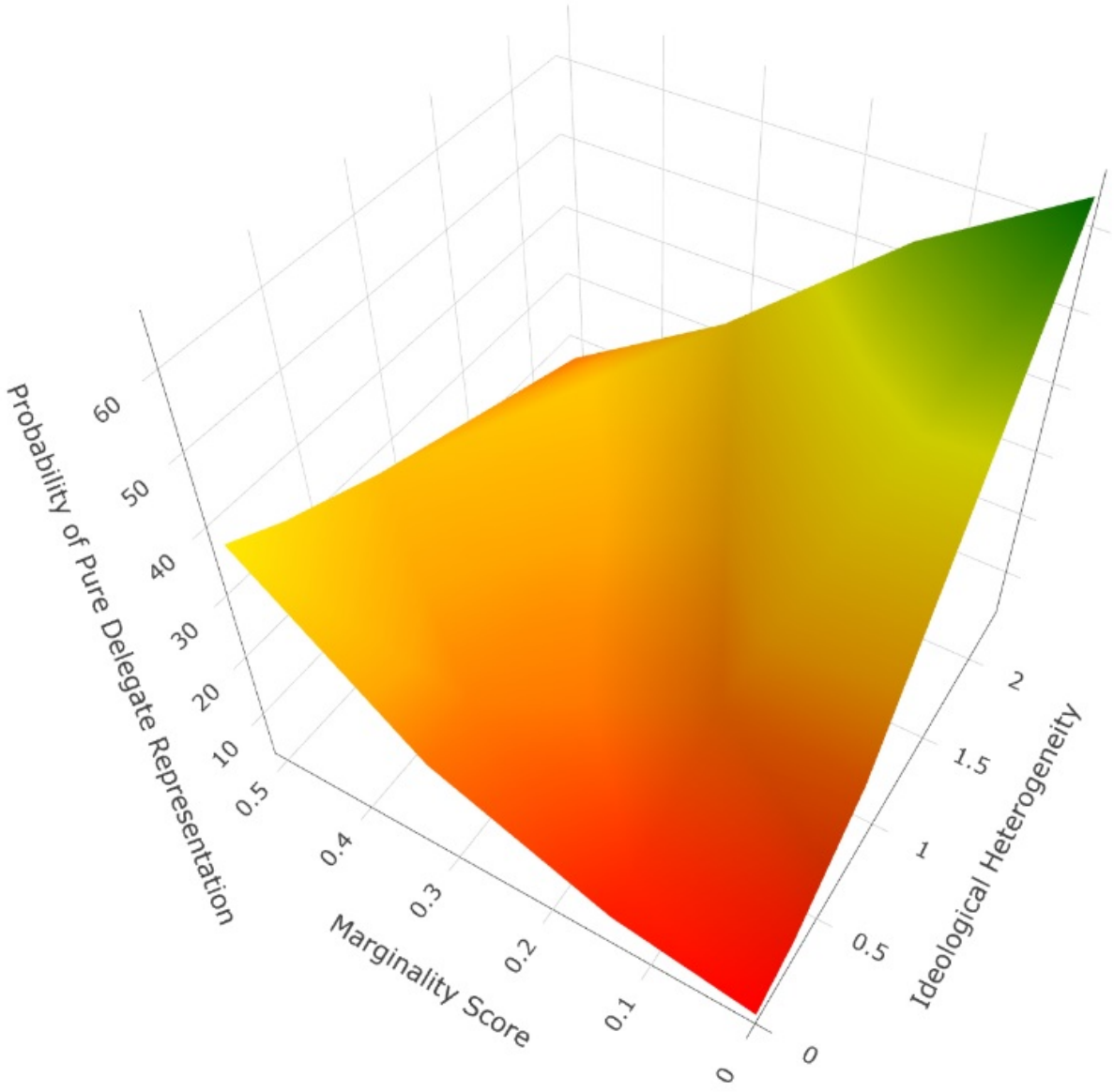
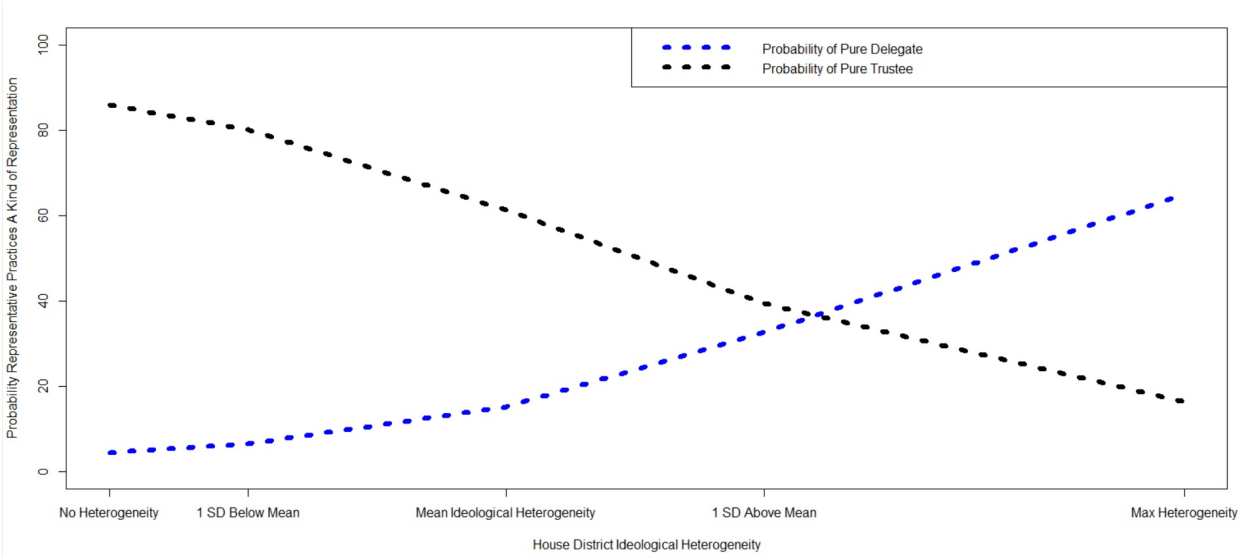


Figure 2: Probability of Legislative Role by Level of Ideological Heterogeneity



15% to 33%. The likelihood that this profile legislator chooses a Pure Trustee role falls from 61% to 39%. Increasing Ideological Heterogeneity to its maximum increases the probability that my profile respondent chooses a Pure Delegate role from about 15% to approximately 65%, and reduces the chance he or she picks a Pure Trustee role from 61% to 16%.

On the other hand, decreasing Ideological Heterogeneity from its mean reduces the chance that the profile legislator will select a Pure Delegate role and increases the probability that the legislator will select a Pure Trustee role. A 1-standard deviation decrease in district Ideological Heterogeneity decreases the predicted probability that the profile Representative picks a Pure Delegate role from 15% to 6.5%. This decrease in heterogeneity increases the likelihood that the Representative will choose a Pure Trustee role from 61% to 80%. Decreasing district Ideological Heterogeneity to its minimum lowers the likelihood that the profile legislator will choose a Pure Delegate role from about 15% to roughly 4.5%, and raises the probability that the Representative will choose a Pure Trustee role from approximately 61% to about 86%. Therefore, as Figure 2 shows, the amount of Ideological Heterogeneity in a legislator's district has great influence over the role he or she will choose. In districts that are ideologically homogeneous, Representatives are considerably more likely to choose a Pure Trustee role than they are in districts with marked Ideological

Heterogeneity.

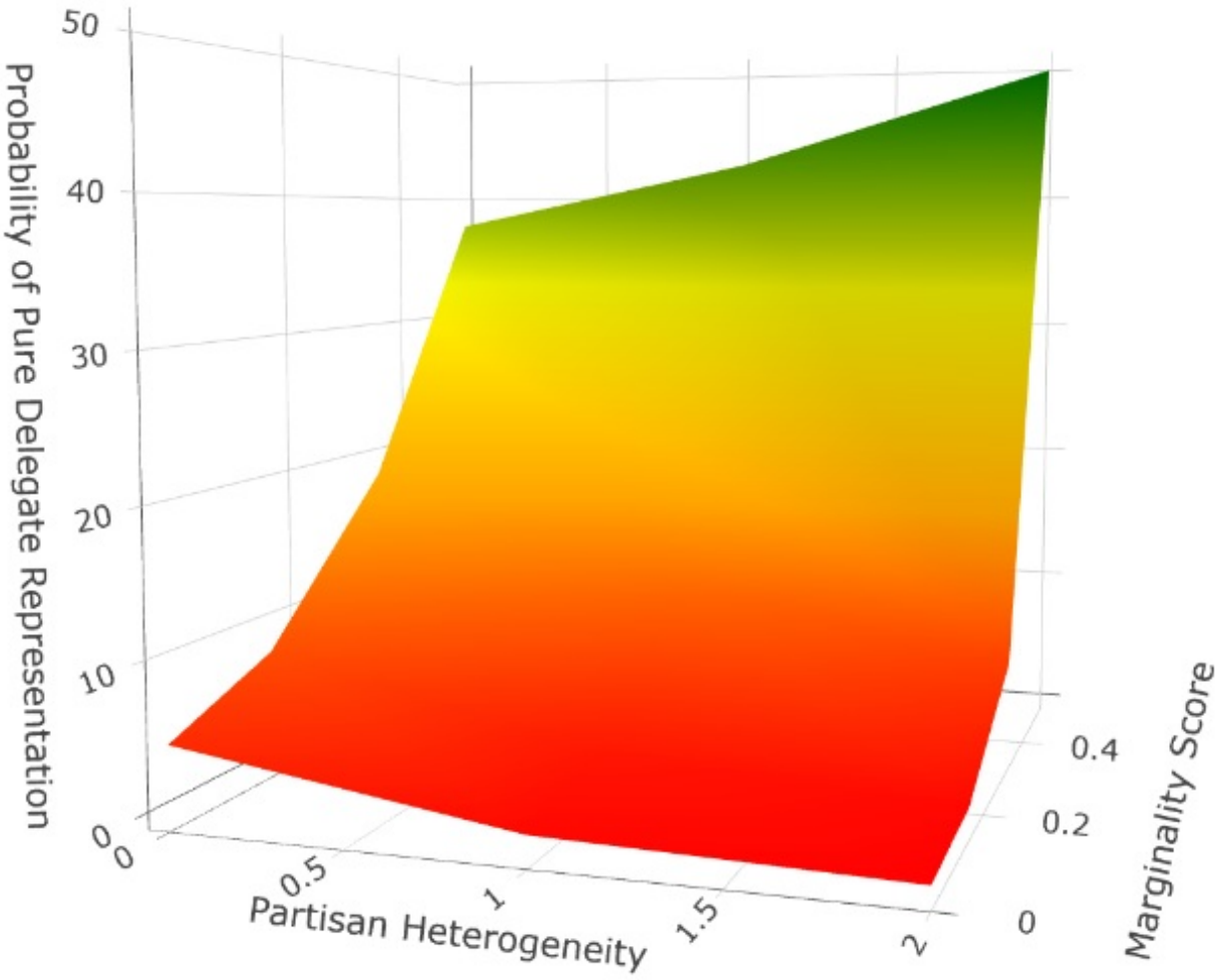
Partisan Heterogeneity has the opposite effect. For Members of Congress who were unopposed in their last election (Marginality Score = 0), the greater the Partisan Heterogeneity in their districts, the greater the likelihood that they will choose a *trustee* role. As I will discuss later, these effects also have a strong substantive impact.

The relationship between relationship between Partisan Heterogeneity and a legislator's choice of representation style, however, is conditional on marginality. For most Representatives, who faced a challenger in their last election (Marginality Score > 0), increasing Partisan Heterogeneity *decreases* the probability of a Representative choosing a Pure Delegate style of representation. However, for the most marginal Representatives, increasing Partisan Heterogeneity actually leads them to be *more* likely to choose a Pure Delegate style of representation. These conditional effects, for a profile Representative described below, are displayed in Figure 3.

It is not immediately obvious why Partisan Heterogeneity, in most cases, has the opposite effect on legislative role choice that Ideological Heterogeneity does. Returning to row 1 of Table 1, it may be that for legislators in *partisan* homogeneous districts with similar preferences to the legislator, it is easy to do what constituents want. A Representative can do what constituents think is best, and most of the time in a district that strongly favors that legislator's party, the legislator will generally agree with the constituents.

In legislators from districts described by high Partisan Heterogeneity, legislators may pursue a different form of representation other than policy responsiveness, such as constituent service or allocation representation (Harden 2013). Harden (2016) describes one liberal Democratic state legislator in Kansas who was routinely re-elected in a district described by partisan heterogeneity by focusing on these alternative forms of representation. High Partisan Homogeneity leading to more delegate-style representation fits with how Grimmer (2013) describes "Aligned" legislators, who consistently take positions favored by their districts. Legislators representing constituencies with a large number of partisans of the other party, or what could be referred to as districts with high Partisan Heterogeneity, focus more on allocation responsiveness (Grimmer 2013).

Figure 3: How Partisan Heterogeneity and Marginality Affect Role Choice



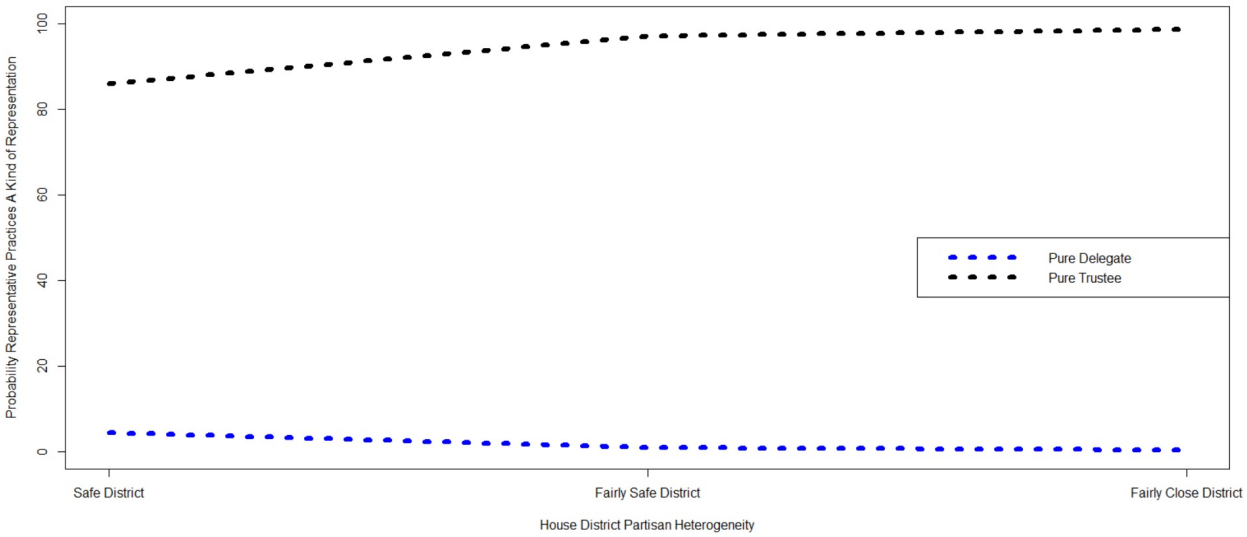
An alternative explanation for partisan homogeneity leading to more delegate-style representation may be found in the way parties market themselves to voters. Wright and Schaffner (2002, 377) describe the importance of partisan elections as a way of linking voter preferences with what a candidate does in office, such that "nonpartisan elections effectively break the policy linkage between citizens and their representatives." Legislators vote certain ways on issues and take particular stands to create a branded, partisan good to offer to a demanding public. Where a strong signal of desire for a party "good" exists in a district such that a district consistently favors one party (partisan homogeneity), legislators are more likely to receive that demand signal and respond accordingly than when that signal is weak or non-existent (partisan heterogeneity).

The amount of Partisan Heterogeneity or Homogeneity in a district is probably easier for legislators to know than the amount of district Ideological Heterogeneity. Political elites are strategic (Harden 2013) and generally aware of how much their district favors their party or the other. This should be especially true if the signal of party preference is clear: Bailey and Brady (1998) note that when "voters are relatively homogenous, votes by representatives are closely linked to constituency variables." Bishin (2009, 127) describes how legislator behavior should be more related to average constituency opinion in homogeneous districts, because it is easier to tell what district opinion is in homogeneous districts. Similarly, Bishin, Dow, and Adams (2006) recognize the importance of district preference signals in saying that the "strength of the message constituents transmit to legislators when they are unified in their preferences is quite different from the strength of the message sent when they are divided."

Like Ideological Heterogeneity, Partisan Heterogeneity has sizeable effects on a legislator's choice of representation style. For the profile Democratic Representative discussed above, but with district Ideological Heterogeneity now at its minimum, Figure 4 shows how the probability of choosing a Pure Delegate or Pure Trustee role changes as a function of variation in district Partisan Heterogeneity.

This legislator's probability of choosing a Pure Trustee role is approximately 86%, while his or her predicted likelihood of choosing a Pure Delegate role is only about 4.5%. A 1-unit increase

Figure 4: Probability of Legislative Role by Level of Partisan Heterogeneity



in Partisan Heterogeneity from its minimum (moving from a district that is "safe" for one party to "fairly safe" for one party) decreases the predicted chance that the profile Representative will choose a Pure Delegate role from 4.5% to 1%. The likelihood that this profile legislator chooses a Pure Trustee role rises falls from 86% to 97%. Increasing Partisan Heterogeneity to its maximum (moving from a district that is "safe" for one party to "fairly close" between the two parties) reduces the probability that my profile respondent chooses a Pure Delegate role from about 4.5% to nearly zero (approximately .5%), and increases the chance he or she picks a Pure Trustee role from 86% to near certainty (about 99%).

The generally contrasting effects of Ideological Heterogeneity and Partisan Heterogeneity underscore the importance of accounting for both ideology and party in analyses of legislators and constituents in this era. Because "Republican" and "Democrat" were not synonymous with "conservative" and "liberal" during the 1950s, to some degree ideology and party measured more distinct aspects of political identity and opinion than they do today.[25]

The distinction in effects between Ideological Heterogeneity and Partisan Heterogeneity may

[25]District Ideological Heterogeneity and district Partisan Heterogeneity are only positively correlated at about .20 in the American Representation Study, which not quite a statistically significant correlation at $p < .06$. They would almost certainly be much more highly correlated in contemporary U.S. House districts.

also be related to measurement. While Ideological Heterogeneity is operationalized as the variance in social welfare preferences among a legislator's constituents in that district, district Partisan Heterogeneity is measured by using the legislator's opinion of how much the district favors one party over the other. In other words, one of these measure uses constituents' perspectives, while the other uses the legislators'.

It might be that the legislators' perspective on the character of their constituents is more accurate than a survey measure[26], or that a survey measure of constituent preferences would have been more accurate. As Gulati (2004, 512) observes, "legislators already have a biased view of public opinion . . . one that is influenced mostly by core partisans." On the other hand, legislator perceptions of district conditions may matter more for actual legislative behavior than reality does. Gulati (2004, 512) notes that Miller and Stokes (1963) "showed that the candidate's perception of district opinion had a stronger effect on roll call voting than actual district opinion."

While perhaps it would be desirable to use 2 similar survey measures, rather than one measure based on a legislator's perspective and one using an actual measure of constituent preferences, the American Representation Study does not include any constituent-based measure of district party identification, and I must rely on legislator perceptions of district Partisan Heterogeneity.

Overall, I reach some tentative conclusions about the effects of Ideological Heterogeneity and Partisan Heterogeneity on legislative role choice. Increasing Ideological Heterogeneity always increases the chance that Representatives who were unopposed in their last elections will choose delegate roles. Greater Ideological Heterogeneity sometimes enlarges the likelihood that marginal Members of Congress will choose delegate roles, and whether they do is dependent on how marginal they are. These results support Hypothesis 1.

Increasing Partisan Heterogeneity *decreases* the chance that Representatives who were unopposed in their last elections will choose delegate roles. As district Partisan Heterogeneity grows, it sometimes decreases the likelihood that marginal Members of Congress will choose delegate roles, and whether they do is dependent on how marginal they are. These results support Hypothesis 2.

[26]This is especially true given the low N of the survey samples in each U.S. House district, discussed earlier, but might still be true even if each district survey contained considerably more respondents.

These findings also offer conditional evidence for both Hypotheses 3A and 4B. In most cases, increasing Ideological Heterogeneity does lead Representatives to be more likely to choose a delegate style of representation. Increasing Partisan Heterogeneity influences Representatives to be more likely to choose a trustee style of representation. However, for legislators in the most marginal districts, these directions of effect flip. Among the most marginal legislators, Hypotheses 3A and 4B are rejected.

A Representative's party is also important. I earlier discussed how Republicans' and Democrats' different views of the the proper role of government, as well as religion and general philosophical principles (Barker and Carman 2012), might incline them toward different legislative roles. Table 2 finds support for this idea. While Southern Democrats are not distinct from non-Southern Democrats or Republicans in their chosen representational style, Republicans are significantly more likely to choose a trustee style of representation than Democrats. These effects are substantively important. The profile Representative discussed above is a non-Southern Democrat. If that same Representative were a Republican, that legislator would be about 10 percentage points less likely to choose a Pure Delegate role.

These results suggest that Barker and Carmen's (2012) conclusion that Republican legislators are more likely to adopt a trustee style of representation is true not only back to the early 1980s, but perhaps even back to the 1950s. While Barker and Carmen (2012, 12) note that they do not expect such a relationship to exist before 1980, in part because it pre-dates the rise of the religious right in the Republican Party, their theory does not preclude this finding. It may be that aspects of traditionalist representation philosophy were common in the Republican Party as early as the 1950s, since they derive in part from the writings of 18th-century politician Edmund Burke.

As expected, a Representative's seniority has a significant impact on role choice. Increasing seniority leads to an increased likelihood of trustee representation, confirming research by Henderson and Brooks (2016), who find some evidence that more senior legislators are less responsive to constituent preferences. If the profile Democratic Representative discussed above had been in Congress since the 1930s in 1958, rather than only since the 1940s, that legislator would be

about 10 percentage points more likely to choose a Pure Trustee role. Legislator ideology has no significant effect on representational role choice.

The results in Table 2 also provide some evidence for one of the most prominent hypotheses about representation. Table 2 shows that a Representative's electoral vulnerability does influence his or her choice of legislative role, although the strength of this marginality effect is dependent on how heterogeneous the Member's district is.

Nevertheless, in all but the most heterogeneous districts, more marginal legislators are more likely to choose a delegate style of representation. If the profile Democratic Representative discussed above had been elected with 70% of the vote instead of 100% of the vote, that legislator would be expected to be about 7 percentage points more likely to choose a Pure Delegate style of representation. Like Griffin and Flavin (2011), I find that "legislators representing competitive districts are especially sensitive to constituents' priorities."

Representatives are aware of the percentage of the vote they received in their last election. If this percentage is relatively low, they may be seriously concerned with their ability to be re-elected and have incentives to pay close attention to their districts' preferences (Jones 2001, 170). My findings provide qualified, general support for the marginality hypothesis, and extend empirical evidence of it back to the 1950s.

District Ideological Heterogeneity on Other Issues

These general results are robust to a different measure of Ideological Heterogeneity as well. Due to the importance of civil rights issues during this era, the 1958 American Representation Study also measured constituent preferences on civil rights issues for each U.S. House district included in the survey.[27]

There is a strong positive correlation between the variance in constituent opinions on civil rights

[27]These survey measures have the same virtues and challenges as those measuring social welfare issues.

issues and the variance in constituent opinions on social welfare issues of .41, and this correlation coefficient is statistically significant at $p < .00001$. In other words, U.S. House districts that had high heterogeneity on social welfare issues also tended to have high heterogeneity in civil rights issues. While it is not possible to examine what subconstituencies (Bishin 2009) a U.S. Representative might be responsive to on either of these issues, given the limitations of the American Representation Study data, it is possible to say that districts that have lots of potential subconstituency variation in opinions on social welfare issues also have lots of potential subconstituency variation on opinions on civil rights issues.

I analyzed legislator choice of representation style using the same ordered probit model **I**, but with Ideological Heterogeneity measured using the variance in constituent opinions on civil rights issues instead of social welfare issues. The results of this analysis are depicted in model **IB** in Table 3, and are substantively similar in statistical significance and directions of effect to those in Table 2 for all explanatory variables discussed above.

Table 3: Ordered Probit Results for Model **IB.**

	Estimate	Original Std. Error	95th Percentile Bootstrap Confidence Interval for Coefficient
Civil Rights Heterogeneity	-3.18**	1.51	(-10.01, -0.51)**
Partisan Heterogeneity	2.09**	.89	(.48, 4.45)**
Seniority	.42*	.23	(-.02, 1.10)*
Marginality Score	-7.72**	2.69	(-19.51, -3.11)**
GOP Legislator	1.10*	.57	(-.34, 2.98)
Legislator Ideology	.06	.13	(-.33, .38)
Southern Democrat Legislator	-.78	.59	(-2.58, .90)
Civil Rights Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction	10.22**	4.01	(2.58, 28.30)**
Partisan Heterogeneity & Marginality Interaction	-4.56**	1.96	(-9.70, -.61)**
Tau1	-3.01**	1.17	
Tau2	-2.71**	1.17	
Tau3	-2.29**	1.16	
Tau4	-1.61	1.15	
Residual deviance = 158.54 N of sample = 82			

** indicates $p < .05$
* indicates $p < .1$

Conclusion

The ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity of U.S. House districts have significant effects on Representative role choice. Greater ideological heterogeneity increases the likelihood that legislators will choose delegate roles, but this effect is dependent on their marginality. Greater partisan heterogeneity increases the likelihood that legislators will choose trustee roles, but this effect is also dependent on their marginality.

The relationship between Representative marginality and district heterogeneity is complex, and the interaction effect between these two factors can alter their individual impacts. In general, however, more marginal legislators are more likely to choose a delegate style of representation.

Other variables suggested in previous literature, including Representative seniority and party, also influence role choice.

Although my findings are based on the American Representation Study from 1958, House members today face this same choice of a delegate or trustee role. It played a prominent role in the politics of healthcare reform in 2017, and is a dilemma faced by many members of Congress today on a wide variety of issues.

The dynamics of Congressional elections and representation have, of course, changed since 1958. However, we have no reason to believe that the motivations and incentives discussed here have changed. Indeed, my results provide additional support for the marginality hypothesis, which has been corroborated in various ways with more contemporary data (Griffin 2006, Hickey 2019), though it has been rejected by other more recent analyses (Gulati 2004). Like Matsusaka's (2017) analysis of recent state legislators, this study finds that the balance of Congressional legislators adopt a trustee style of representation. As Barker and Carman (2012) show with more contemporary data, my analysis concludes that as early as the 1950s, Republican legislators were more likely to choose a trustee style of representation than Democrats were. Overall, these findings corroborate existing theories in a different era of American politics and suggest that in some ways Congress has remained the same over time.

Theories of representation should incorporate these findings. For example, Hurley and Hill's (2003) theory about how representational linkages vary across different types of issues could be analyzed to see whether ideological heterogeneity and partisan heterogeneity modify these linkages and on what kinds of issues. Furthermore, my conclusion that variations in constituency heterogeneity lead to different legislative role choices implies that district elections may select for certain representation styles;[28] this generally matches the approach taken by some formal work (e.g. Fox and Shotts 2009). Future work will investigate similar implications of the present findings for existing theory.

[28]Converse and Pierce (1986) find no evidence of this in France, but this could occur in America (e.g., Eulau 1987).

Acknowledgements

Disclosure Statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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