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**Rebels and Nomads:**

**Have White Southerners Found Refuge in the Republican Party?**

**Abstract**

During the last 30 years, the Republicans have become an interesting assortment of economic, international, and social conservatism, with each leg of the triad having more prominence at distinct times. Examining key votes throughout this period, we assess how the most recent converts to the party, those from Southern states, align with Republicans from other regions on each of these three dimensions. We also estimate the relative importance of each of the three dimensions annually during this period. Finally, we examine whether the unstable equilibrium that haunted the Congressional Democrats through the first half of the Cold War era has merely found a new resting place in the Republican Party. In order to analyze these issues, we analyze House roll call votes from 1975 - 2000 to determine how closely Southern and non-Southern Republicans are aligned. Next, we examine various issue dimensions, determining how party cohesion is affected when different sets of issues take on greater legislative importance. Our findings confirm that issue dimensions affect party cohesion and that regional differences are an important distinction when analyzing House Republicans in a modern context.

## INTRODUCTION

Franklin Roosevelt put together a motley collection of Northern blacks, union members, Southern whites, and assorted ethnic and immigrant groups to form a powerful alliance within the Democratic Party. Following World War II, as the civil rights issue began becoming more prominent, this coalition that had made the Democratic Party successful began to splinter. By the mid-1960's, soon after the passage of landmark civil rights legislation, white Southern politicians began migrating to the Republican Party in search of a more hospitable environment for their views. The civil rights reforms enabled the Republican Party to make inroads into the Southern states, which, since the beginning of the century, had been under the control of the Democrats. Around the same period, a strong middle class was also developing in the region due to a decreasing dependence on agriculture as economic centers developed. This had two effects: (1) an increase in the potential constituent base for the party and, (2) a reduction in the power of northeastern business interests within Republican policy circles. Thus, the Democratic coalition had been torn apart. But, as the more conservative elements of their opposition joined them, would the Republicans be able to avoid the same fate?

In this research, we seek to determine whether Republicans in the House of Representatives have become less cohesive during the last 25 years. Then, we analyze if the difference in emphasis placed upon three separate issue dimensions (defense/international, economic/trade, domestic/social) affects Republican Party cohesion. Finally, we analyze various factors that may cause some Republicans to defect from the majority party position in the post-reform era.

## CHANGES IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY COALITION

American political parties at the Congressional level tend to represent the interests of the districts in which their members serve (Frymer, 1999). This is shown in various ways. First, when campaigning, candidates are free to minimize the national party positions if it will better enable them to be selected by the voters (Fenno, 1978). Second, party leaders generally permit representatives to vote on policy issues to please their constituents (Mayhew, 1974). Third, representatives have great latitude in determining their preferred committee assignments, based upon their district's interests, their own areas of expertise, or special policy concerns to which they are attracted. Until the 1960's, this autonomy permitted Southern Democrats in the House of Representatives to stall virtually all civil rights legislation (Polsby, 1968).

For two decades, beginning in the 1940s, representatives from both parties attempted to pass civil rights legislation, but were generally thwarted through the efforts of powerful committee chairmen, who generally were Southern Democrats. As the public became more sensitive to the concerns of African-Americans, Democratic Party leaders sought ways to enact bills over the objections of their erstwhile allies. The assassination of John F. Kennedy and the 1964 election provided them with the opportunity. Non-Southern Democrats joined with Republicans to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the 1968 Fair Housing Act (Carmines & Stimson, 1989).

The 1964 Civil Rights Act, the first major civil rights measure of the century, was successfully shepherded through Congress as a result of Lyndon Johnson's legislative acumen. It barred discrimination in public facilities, allowed the federal government to act to stop segregated public schools, and prohibited job discrimination based upon race. This was a major

signal by the federal government that it intended to be an influential player in the civil rights arena (Carmines & Stimson, 1989).

That same year, Barry Goldwater, one of the few senators outside of the South to vote against the bill, won the Republican presidential nomination. The Republican platform instituted at the national convention refused to call for strengthening weak areas of the bill. Due to the 1964 campaign, African-Americans were driven into the Democratic camp, and some Southern whites began viewing the Republicans as a harbor of refuge from governmental intrusion (Carmines & Stimson, 1989). The following year, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 cemented both of these attitudes. It gave the federal government the power to supervise voter registration in seven Southern states. This led to a vast increase in the percentage of African-Americans who were eligible to vote in those states, and made the linkages to the Republicans stronger among potential constituents, especially white Southerners (Carmines & Stimson, 1989). Housing access was the third major civil rights bill passed during Johnson's presidency. This was a much more problematic policy issue to most Republican legislators from other regions, since it would affect their own constituents as well as those in the South.

The passage of civil rights legislation led to increasing cohesiveness among the Democratic representatives. Their unification was driven by three main forces. First, many of the more conservative members abandoned the party, and joined the Republicans. Second, the increase in African-American voters in Southern districts induced many of the Democratic House members who remained in the party to become responsive to this new electoral constituency. Finally, representatives felt pressure from party leaders to accept civil rights proposals such as affirmative action, opposition to apartheid, and extended voting rights (Rohde, 1991).

## **GROWTH OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN THE SOUTH**

Since the end of World War II, the Republican Party in the House has been engaged in an internecine debate between its moderate and conservative wings. Two policy domains, reaction to New Deal initiatives and foreign policy, framed the distinctions between the factions for the first twenty years. For domestic policies, conservatives sought a return to free-market principles while moderates agreed with the social welfare agenda begun with Franklin D. Roosevelt. In foreign policy, conservative Republicans basically promoted an isolationist policy, except for anticommunist deterrence, but moderate interventionists supported foreign alliances and reduced tariffs. Both factions supported civil rights legislation and tended to have laissez faire attitudes toward personal behavior issues as well (Rae, 1994).

During the 1960's, the competition for control of the Republican Party between the two factions remained close. However, early in the 1970's, as civil rights laws began to be seen as more intrusive to business and suburban interests, through affirmative action and equal employment initiatives, much of the Republican support for civil rights began to wane. Soon after, conservative Christians began consolidating their position in the Republican Party, and many politicians soon reflected this constituent position (Rae, 1994).

Within Congress, the moderate wing was further weakened due to redistricting that tended to increase the number of legislators from the South, Southwest, and West, while reducing the number of moderates representing states from the North and the Midwest. As their faction grew weaker, many of them resigned rather than fight a losing battle for prominence within a minority party (Rae, 1994). Table 1 (and Figure 1) makes clear that the proportion of

Republican House members that represent the 11 Southern states<sup>1</sup> has steadily increased over the period of analysis, from 18.75% of Republican members during the 94<sup>th</sup> Congress to 32.0% by the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress. As stated earlier, this has been caused by a variety of forces, including the effects of the Civil Rights laws of the 1960s in developing a two-party system in the South, the increase in manufacturing in Southern states, the nationalization of Presidential campaigns, and the influence of the Religious Right in the Republican Party.

The passage of civil rights legislation led to a change in the terms of engagement as the two parties began realigning. The South became much more responsive to Republican candidates as many former legislators led their constituents away from the Democrats. Recently, House Republicans from Southern states have become much more likely to secure leadership positions than are those from other regions. Prior to the 100<sup>th</sup> Congress there was virtually no difference between Southerners and those from other regions in the likelihood of a Republican Congressman holding a leadership position. However, beginning with the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress Republican leadership posts have gravitated to the South. Evidence of this is most clearly displayed in the Republican Southern troika (Newt Gingrich, Dick Armey, and Tom Delay) in place when they took over control of the House in 1995 (104<sup>th</sup> Congress). In addition, since the 1996 elections, the South has been the only region where Republicans hold a majority of House seats. This has led to a further weakening in the power of the moderate faction, generally located in New England, the Middle Atlantic and the Midwest. Cleavages between the camps have arisen on a variety of issues, including abortion, civil liberty, law and order, and free trade (Rae, 1994).

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<sup>1</sup> We categorized 'South' as the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. These are the states that constituted the Confederacy.

Southern politics has transformed dramatically since the enactment of the 1965 Civil Rights Act. Most notable have been the emergence of a competitive two-party system and greater electoral participation by African-Americans (Fleisher, 1993). These changes have resulted in the recent emergence of a Republican majority in the South and the substantial liberalization in the voting behavior of Southern Democratic members of Congress (Fleisher, 1993). The percentage of seats located in this region held by the Republicans has steadily grown from 21.4% in the 94<sup>th</sup> Congress to 56.3% in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The liberalization of Southern House Democrats has been linked to a spatial perspective (Hood, Kidd, and Morris, 1999; Hood and Morris, 1998). The first aspect of this centers on the leftward *pull* of a growing liberal constituency as a result of the mobilization of an African-American electorate and the growth of many urban areas in the South. The second focuses on the rightward *push* of a growing and substantial Republican Party in the region that permitted conservative candidates another option more amenable to their own beliefs.

### **REPUBLICAN PARTY FACTIONS**

Typically, analysts (see Rohde, 1991) divide the modern Republican Party into three factions. The largest and most long lasting of these is considered the *Traditional Conservative* faction. These members are those who tried to ally themselves with Southern Democrats in opposition to most measures proposed by the Democratic leadership (when the Democrats controlled the House), and who now form the base of support within the current slim Republican majority. Their views include a limited role domestically for the federal government, a strong national defense, and reduced deficits.

The *Moderate* faction has, as stated earlier, had long-lasting disagreements with the Traditional Conservatives. They are predominantly located in the Northeast. Their share of Republicans in the House has fallen from about a third to less than one-fourth since the civil rights reforms of the 1960's. They differ from the other factions on domestic social issues, and believe the federal government has responsibilities in other domestic areas, such as education and transportation (Rohde, 1991).

The *New Conservative* faction was begun in the late 1970's by a group of newcomer conservative Republicans under the leadership of Newt Gingrich. They believe in a strong national defense, governmental policies that stimulate economic growth, a reduction in federal intrusion in domestic affairs, and support for traditional family values. Their main disagreement with Traditional Conservatives is that they favor tax cuts, while old-line Conservatives favor reducing the budget deficit (Rohde, 1991).

### **PARTY COHESION**

Members must keep many goals in mind when they cast their votes on bills. Fenno (1973) asserts that the most widely held and significant objectives of congressmen are re-election, influence within the House, and good public policy. In order to achieve these ends, they try not to offend their constituents by voting against their wishes since they need their electoral support. Kingdon (1989) adds that members base their votes on the degree of conflict between interested groups, the electoral salience of an issue, and the relative weight of these goals in their decision process.

Based on the above arguments, representatives have incentives for supporting the preferences of party leaders. First, congressional parties influence and support each of the goals

of their party members by providing considerable financial and professional assistance that help members achieve their electoral goals (Butler, 2000). Likewise, parties can affect the probability of an incumbent facing a primary challenge by either withholding or granting them political and financial support. Second, the party has the ability to grant committee appointments, increasing the influence of loyal members. Third, since most members choose the party closer to their own preferred policy position on most issues, they have an important stake in the success of the legislative policies of the party.

Party loyalty is also bolstered because representatives often look to fellow party members for a number of voting cues, due to specialization norms, areas of expertise, and reciprocity. Likewise, most of the member's friends in Congress are likely to be members of the same party and these personal links create a sense of loyalty to their associates, and through them, to the party (Clapp, 1966; Kingdon, 1989). Thus, party leaders usually count on a high degree of loyalty unless there are strong constituent or personal reasons to oppose the party position (Rieselbach, 1995).

Finally, party resources may also be used to increase cohesion since the party elites, who control the resources, benefit from a stronger, more cohesive party. It is important for voters as well that political party elites have a high level of cohesiveness, otherwise they are unable to cast votes that reflect their ideal positions. If a party lacks a high degree of homogeneity, in the eyes of voters, their options become problematic and they become less likely to vote.

### **PARTY COHESION VS. PARTY UNITY**

Let us briefly examine the difference between party cohesion and another more widely used term, party unity. The latter refers to those votes where a majority of Democrats vote in the

opposite direction of the majority of Republicans. Party cohesion, though, examines how the majority of a given party votes on some set of issues, and then analyzes causes of cohesion or conflict.

Party cohesion has been investigated in different ways. Coleman (1996), for example, measured party cohesion by analyzing all budget-related roll call votes in the House of Representatives. Rohde (1991) preferred to look at all votes cast in the House of Representatives, and subdivided them into party unity and non-party unity votes. Patterson and Caldeira (1988) examined how party platform, divided government, turnover, and split districts affected party coherence and conflict.

We prefer to measure party coherence by examining presidential support votes, then subdividing these measures into different issue dimensions. There are five fundamental reasons for using presidential support votes when examining coherence. First, presidential support votes generally represent the major roll call votes and issues addressed in each Congress. Secondly, a substantial group of researchers has found a linkage between the congressional agenda and the president (Sundquist, 1981; Kingdon, 1984; Light, 1983). Thirdly, researchers have generally found that the President's program substantially influences the congressional agenda (see Patterson & Caldeira, 1988). Fourth, the president is the de facto leader of his party, thus inducing fellow members to acquiesce to his goals. Finally, the president is expected to create a national consensus; thus, he has the greatest incentive to promote party cohesion.

### **INFLUENCES ON PARTY COHESION**

The following section provides a discussion of the factors we hypothesize influence levels of individual representative's party cohesion. We begin by briefly discussing the influence

of various political factors on party cohesion. We then examine the influence of economic, domestic, and defense issue dimensions on representatives' levels of party cohesion.

## **POLITICAL FACTORS**

### **Majority Party President**

When one party controls both the presidency and the Congress (in our study, 1977-1980, 1993-94), there is expected to be more of a linkage between party coherence and presidential support, since there will be an increase in majority party coherence, leading to an increase in minority party coherence.

### **Minority Party President**

When there is divided control, the president's agenda is expected to have less of an effect upon party coherence, since he is required to negotiate with the majority party over various alternatives (Rieselbach, 1996). Bond & Fleisher (1990) state that 'the opposition party bases are more likely to unite in opposition to the president on important votes.' This is caused by the tendency of cross-pressured bases to induce ideological behavior against the president when the representative is of the same party as the president. However, the ideologies tend to unite in opposition to a president of the opposition party (pp105-106).

### **Party Leadership**

Party leaders are expected to have high levels of cohesion. They may have attained leadership positions originally because of their loyalty to the party (Rieselbach, 1995). More importantly, perhaps, they are part of the agenda-setting action within the party and are expected to promote winning coalitions. Therefore, they are likely to have discipline imposed upon them if they reject the party's majority position (Davidson & Oleszak, 1996).

## **POLICY FACTORS**

We anticipate that issue dimensions should differ in the amount of party cohesion. Some policy areas are widely agreed upon by party members, while others remain quarters of great conflict. Within some domains, members cede greater autonomy to party leaders. In others, they are less amenable at relinquishing control (LeLoup, 1993). We have divided the issue space into three separate dimensions: economic/trade, domestic/social, and defense/foreign policy,.

### **Economic Issues**

Since the beginning of our nation's history, economic and trade issues have been important in framing differences between parties (Poole & Rosenthal, 1997). Included within this domain are broad concerns such as budgetary issues, tax policy, and international trade. While the other domains may maintain some consistency within a party for short periods, eventually intra-party splits usually develop due to constituency pressures. But, since voters maintain allegiance to the parties through the fiscal and monetary policies that define them, there has usually been a consistency in economic issues that defines legislative voting. Since the parties remain divided basically over the issue of income redistribution, it seems natural that those who categorize themselves as Republicans would generally take like-minded positions within this domain. Therefore, we expect that, for Republicans during the period of our study, party cohesion should remain highest in the **economic** dimension.

### **Domestic Issues**

We expect that **domestic** issues will prove to be the least coherent among the different domains. Policy disputes in this domain are among the most intense that arise in our political system. Issues in this arena many times have an undercurrent question of fairness and social justice that causes actors and constituents to become highly emotional. Because of the intensity

of feelings surrounding potential action, many legislators, particularly those in competitive districts, are particularly concerned with how their roll-call records will affect re-election campaigns. Cleavages that arise may center over the role of governmental responsibility and individual rights (LeLoup, 1993). Included within this domain is legislation affecting issues on a variety of topics, including abortion, crime, the environment, and civil rights.

### **Defense Issues**

Since World War II, the **defense/foreign policy** domain has undergone three major periods: the early Cold War, the Vietnam War and its aftermath, and the post-Cold War. The first of these periods, which lasted for about twenty years after the end of World War II, saw issues arise such as the containment of Communism and the desirability and nature of nuclear defense. Much policy in this early phase was bipartisan and consensus-driven. During the second stage, the Vietnam War and its aftermath, disputes centered around issues such as the desirability of American intervention in foreign conflicts, human rights, and limiting the influence of the Soviet Union. Disputes became more common as questions of strategy supplanted the earlier harmony. During the third phase, the post-Cold War period, the heart of disputes among political elites has been about issues such as the differing diplomatic and military needs and the appropriate levels of defense spending given different fiscal restraints. Our study, which covers the latter part of the second phase listed above and the early part of the third, cover periods where Congress has become increasingly influential in the determination of policies (LeLoup, 1993).

Table 2 makes clear how the patterns of presidential support issues have changed by domain over the period of this study. Let us consider why these patterns may exist. First, we see that Democratic presidents have an average of 187 presidential support votes per Congress.

When Republicans are president, though, there is an average of only 151.4 presidential support votes in each Congress. Another interesting feature is that during the Congress that includes a presidential election year, there is an average of 173.8 presidential support votes, while in the alternative Congress there is only 153 presidential support votes. This pattern holds for each presidential term that we studied with the smallest difference occurring between Bush's first and second Congress (17 votes), and the largest difference during Reagan's second term (76 votes).

When we examine the differences by domains, we also see some features that bear comment. First, let us look at the economic issues. Here we see that in the first two Congresses, covering Ford's final two years in office and Carter's first two years, the percentage of presidential support bills devoted to economic issues was very low. For the next four Congresses (from 1979-1986), the percentage of presidential support bills rose dramatically. Here we may be seeing how the federal institutions reacted to the stagflation of the late 70's and the recession of the early 80's. As well, many of Reagan's initiatives in the economic domain were devoted to his efforts to reduce taxes. Then, once again, as the economy calmed, presidential support bills were reduced for the next two terms. We see the pattern replicated again, as during the final two years of Bush's presidency and Clinton's first two years (1993-94), in response to the recession, the share of economic bills increased substantially. Since then, as the national economy grew steadily, the percentage of bills devoted to the economy fell.

For defense bills, we see that the percentage was very low in the first two Congresses of our study. This was probably a reaction to the end of the Vietnam War, and the anti-war feelings that were pervasive during that period. Then, for the next four Congresses, presidential support share of defense bills increased or remained stable. This covered the period of the Iran hostage

incident, and Reagan's defense buildup. Since then, as the Cold War wound down and later, following the elimination of the Soviet bloc, defense bills have steadily decreased.

For domestic bills, we see that in the first few Congresses, the percentage of bills dealing with domestic issues was very high. Then, during the next two Congresses, covering Carter's final two years and Reagan's initial Congress, the percentage of domestic issues dropped drastically. *Congressional Quarterly* (1982) states that this decline was probably because support scores are based only upon bills that reach a roll-call vote on the House floor. Since the House leadership disagreed with much of Carter's and Reagan's domestic agenda, few of the elements that the White House promoted actually reached the House floor. Then, other than the 99<sup>th</sup> Congress, the distribution of domestic issues has remained high. Thus, the share of domestic issues is a response generally to the share committed to the other two domains.

## METHODOLOGY

As stated earlier, we measure party cohesion in a slightly different way than previous scholars. Rather than examining all votes in a Congress, many of which were procedural/administrative, we analyze only Presidential Support votes (as provided by *Congressional Quarterly*), which we contend include the 'important' roll-call votes of each Congress. As noted above, presidents are the primary agenda setters in national public policy. Thus, analyzing Presidential Support votes examines those opportunities members have to show support or opposition in avenues that are likely to garnish more public notice (Rieselbach, 1996).

For the 100<sup>th</sup> through 106<sup>th</sup> Congresses, we used the issue dimensions provided by *Congressional Quarterly*. Because CQ did not define the issue dimensions of Presidential Support votes prior to the 100<sup>th</sup> Congress, we were required to determine the issue dimensions

ourselves. We made every effort to maintain consistency with the coding provided by Congressional Quarterly (but, of course, are responsible for all errors)<sup>2</sup>. Then, for each vote, we coded the majority Republican position as 100, and the minority position as 0. We then determined a mean score for each member for each Congress, overall and on each of the three dimensions<sup>3</sup>. Thus, a Republican House member, who within a particular Congress voted with the majority of his party on each of the important votes, would have a mean of 100 overall.

We examine tendencies in Presidential support votes by issue domain over the period of our study to see if there have been any trends between domestic, economic, and defense bills, and interpret these shifts in emphasis. We then employ OLS regression to examine whether variables that have been thought to be theoretically important are empirically meaningful. Our explanatory variables include:

- Leadership – defined as Speaker, Majority/Minority Leader, Whips, and Deputy Whips.
- Republican President – defined as Congresses during the presidencies of Ford, Reagan, and Bush (Sr).
- Majority President – defined as presidents who served while the House of Representatives had a majority of the same party. This includes Carter’s presidency and Clinton’s first Congress.

To these variables, we add a regional context by examining our hypothesis that Southern Republican representatives have a different cohesion level than do their counterparts from other regions. We then consider our hypothesis that different issue domains have divergent effects upon party coherence in a multivariate analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> A list of roll-call votes for each dimension is available from the authors.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Is there any difference in voting behavior between the Southern Republican legislators and those representing other regions? We see, in Tables 3 through 6 (and in Figure 2), the difference over issue dimensions by regional representation. Table 3 examines domestic issues. We found that the means for the two regions remain relatively close until the 99<sup>th</sup> Congress then diverge in the following Congresses, with Southern Republicans much more likely to vote with the majority of their party.

On the other hand, Table 4, which examines the votes on economic issues, by region, shows that whatever differences there were between Southern and Non-Southern Republicans occurred in the earlier Congresses which we studied but that, since the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress, Republican representatives tended to vote similarly, regardless of region.

In Table 5 we see that Southern Republicans are much more likely to vote with members of their party on defense issues than are those from other regions. Although we had not posited the relationship between Southern Republicans and those from other regions in regard to defense issues, it is fairly obvious why there would be a difference based on region of the legislator. First, Southern constituents tend to favor a strong national defense. Second, and probably related to the first reason, a much higher proportion of Southerners have served in the military or have family members with a military background. Third, many military bases are located in the Southern states (for example, 10 of the 22 army bases on American soil are located in the eleven Southern states). Thus, it would be more natural for a non-Southern legislator to defect from the party position than a Southerner.

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<sup>3</sup> All cohesion scores will be available from the author's website and the ICPSR public archive following publication.

Finally, we view in Table 6 all of the issue dimensions in tandem with each other. Here we see that in all of the Congresses, non-southerners were substantially more likely to defect from the majority Republican position than were their Southern counterparts.

We then conducted correlation analyses between the increase in the share of Southern Republicans and the difference in party cohesion over each of the three issue domains. As we predicted, in the domestic domain (correlation coefficient = .626), there is a sharp increase in the difference in party cohesion as the share of Southern Republicans increases. For the other two domains, the party became more cohesive as the share of Republican legislators from the South increased. Especially for economic issues (correlation coefficient = -.657), the Republican Party in the House has spoken with a more unified voice. But, due to the increase in the proportion of domestic issues on the agenda as the share of Southern Republicans has increased, the difference in the total party cohesion (.11) has grown.

We then conducted OLS regression analyses to determine the effects of some of the variables we have discussed on the mean cohesion score of a Republican member of the House of Representatives in any Congress. The dependent variable is the mean party cohesion score (on a scale of 0-100) arrived at by determining the percentage of votes by a Republican representative on important issues that coincided with the majority of voting Republicans.

In Table 7, we show four regression models. The independent variables include three dichotomous explanatory variables shown in previous research to affect party cohesion, as well as our primary independent variable, South.

The first variable, **Leader**, is positive and statistically significant in all four models. Its substantive significance varies from 1.55 for economic issues to 2.71 for defense concerns. Overall, Republican representatives who serve in leadership roles in the House of

Representatives are likely to have means 2.08 points higher than other Republican representatives, controlling for the other variables. This fits existing theory nicely (see Rieselbach; Davidson and Oleszak, above).

The variable **Republican President/Democratic Majority**, with negative coefficients in the four models, indicates that when the President is Republican (with a Democratic majority in the House), during our period of study (1975-76, 1981-92), Republicans are much less cohesive than when the President is Democratic. This fits with Bond & Fleisher's analysis that opposition parties are much more likely to unify against a president than are members of the president's party to unite in support of him.

**Democratic President/Democratic Majority shows** how Republican cohesion is affected when the President is of the same party as the majority in the House (1977-80, 1993-94). This variable, with a coefficient of  $-2.27$  matches the theoretical explanations previously given, that parties are more likely to be cohesive when the minority party is also the party of the president.

Finally, our key independent variable is **South**, where, as stated previously, representatives from the eleven southern states are coded as 1, all others are coded as 0. We find, as predicted, that there is a noticeable difference in party cohesion scores between these southern Republican representatives and those from the other states. In fact, representatives from Southern states had party cohesion scores 4.42 higher than did those from other regions. Examining the domain differences, we see that in the defense domain, there is a greater regional difference. As we stated in an earlier section, we expected this because of the close relationship constituents from southern states are more likely to have with a strong national defense.

## FINDINGS

During the last twenty-five years, the Republican Party has gone through a major geographic change. It has gone from a distinctly diminutive presence in the South to becoming the dominant political force in the region. Over the time encompassed by our study, the share of Republican House members from the South has increased by more than 50%, with its party share increasing in virtually every election. At the same time overall party cohesion has increased in spite of these dramatic changes, with the major increase taking place within the domestic domain.

Each of the party variables that previous research had examined proved to be significant, and in the correct direction(s). We have also found that Southern Republican legislators are likely to have party cohesion scores much higher than their counterparts from other regions. Thus, there are regional differences in party cohesion, even when including other important variables. We have also found that Southern Republican legislators, as the party has increased its strength in the region, have increasingly become party leaders.

We also found that beginning with the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, when they took over control of the House, Republican cohesion increased measurably. Combining agenda control with the exuberance of taking over a political body for which it had waited forty years induced the highest cohesion levels since the political turmoil of the 1960's. As Congressional scholars bemoan the increasing power of interest groups, and examine methods to increase the preeminence of political parties in elections, it is somehow refreshing to see how the Republicans may have attained an equilibrium centered in the Deep South.

**TABLE 1**  
Share of Republican House Seats Held by Southern Representatives

<b>Congress</b>	<b>Southern</b>	<b>Non-Southern</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress (1975-76)</b>	27 (18.8%)	117 (81.3%)
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress (1977-78)</b>	28 (19.0%)	119 (81.0%)
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress (1979-80)</b>	31 (19.4%)	129 (80.6%)
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress (1981-82)</b>	38 (19.7%)	155 (80.3%)
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress (1983-84)</b>	35 (21.0%)	132 (79.0%)
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress (1985-86)</b>	43 (23.6%)	139 (76.4%)
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress (1987-88)</b>	40 (22.3%)	139 (77.7%)
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress (1989-90)</b>	40 (22.7%)	136 (77.3%)
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress (1991-92)</b>	41 (24.1%)	129 (75.9%)
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress (1993-94)</b>	48 (26.8%)	131 (73.2%)
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress (1995-96)</b>	69 (29.2%)	167 (70.8%)
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress (1997-98)</b>	71 (30.7%)	160 (69.3%)
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress (1999-00)</b>	72 (32.0%)	153 (68.0%)

**TABLE 2**  
Share of Presidential Support Votes by Domain by Congress

<b>Congress</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Defense</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Ford (R)	65.8%	19.5%	14.6%	82
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Carter (D)	78.9%	8.7%	12.4%	161
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Carter (D)	30.4%	41.2%	28.4%	194
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Reagan (R)	33.3%	42.3%	24.3%	111
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Reagan (R)	52.0%	29.7%	18.2%	148
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Reagan (R)	28.0%	34.7%	37.3%	118
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Reagan (R)	45.9%	21.1%	33.0%	194
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress</b>	Bush (R)	54.9%	19.5%	25.6%	195
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress</b>	Bush (R)	46.2%	29.2%	24.5%	212
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress</b>	Clinton (D)	54.4%	21.7%	23.9%	180
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Clinton (D)	63.4%	12.7%	23.9%	213
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Clinton (D)	60.5%	17.1%	22.4%	150
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	Clinton (D)	47.0%	25.0%	18.0%	100
<b>Total</b>		51.2%	24.2%	24.1%	2058

**TABLE 3**  
Difference in Party Cohesion by Region (Domestic Issues)

<b>Congress</b>	<b>Non-South</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	81.7	82.1	.4	54
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	83.2	83.7	.5	127
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	78.2	78.9	.7	59
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	79.6	79.7	.1	37
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	80.5	81.1	.6	77
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.9	80.2	2.3	33
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.6	78.9	2.3	89
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress</b>	76.0	77.7	1.7	107
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress</b>	77.6	79.5	1.9	98
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress</b>	76.6	78.7	2.1	98
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	88.0	89.8	1.8	151
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.4	88.3	1.9	91
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	87.2	89.3	2.1	47
<b>Total</b>	81.0	82.6	1.6	1070

**TABLE 4**  
Difference in Party Cohesion by Region (Economic Issues)

<b>Congress</b>	<b>Non-South</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	69.2	80.3	11.1	16
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.2	91.8	5.2	14
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	82.6	87.3	4.7	80
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	80.0	82.0	2.0	47
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	78.5	80.9	2.4	44
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	73.6	76.2	2.6	41
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.5	82.3	4.8	41
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress</b>	79.5	84.5	5.0	38
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress</b>	84.8	86.0	1.2	62
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress</b>	86.1	82.3	- 3.8	39
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	96.5	97.0	.5	27
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	83.5	83.9	.4	26
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.4	84.3	- 2.1	25
<b>Total</b>	82.2	85.0	2.8	500

**TABLE 5**  
Difference in Party Cohesion by Region (Defense Issues)

<b>Congress</b>	<b>Non-South</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	73.8	90.7	16.9	12
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	80.0	87.4	7.4	20
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	85.1	89.2	4.1	55
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.2	86.8	.6	27
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.0	84.5	7.5	27
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	81.5	88.2	6.7	44
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.2	93.7	7.5	64
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress</b>	80.8	89.0	8.2	50
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress</b>	81.7	87.7	6.0	52
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress</b>	78.3	83.7	5.4	43
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	83.4	86.0	2.6	51
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.6	89.9	3.3	33
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	80.3	84.5	4.2	18
<b>Total</b>	81.9	87.5	5.6	496

**TABLE 6**  
Difference in Party Cohesion by Region (All Issues)

<b>Congress</b>	<b>Non-South</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.9	84.0	6.1
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	83.1	85.9	2.8
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	82.0	86.1	4.1
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	81.3	82.5	1.2
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	79.2	82.6	3.4
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.8	83.5	5.7
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	80.4	86.1	5.7
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress</b>	77.9	84.3	6.4
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress</b>	80.6	85.5	4.9
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress</b>	79.1	83.0	3.9
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	88.0	91.8	3.8
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	86.0	89.8	3.8
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	77.0	79.7	2.7
<b>Total</b>	80.9	85.3	3.4

**TABLE 7**  
Determinants of Party Cohesion

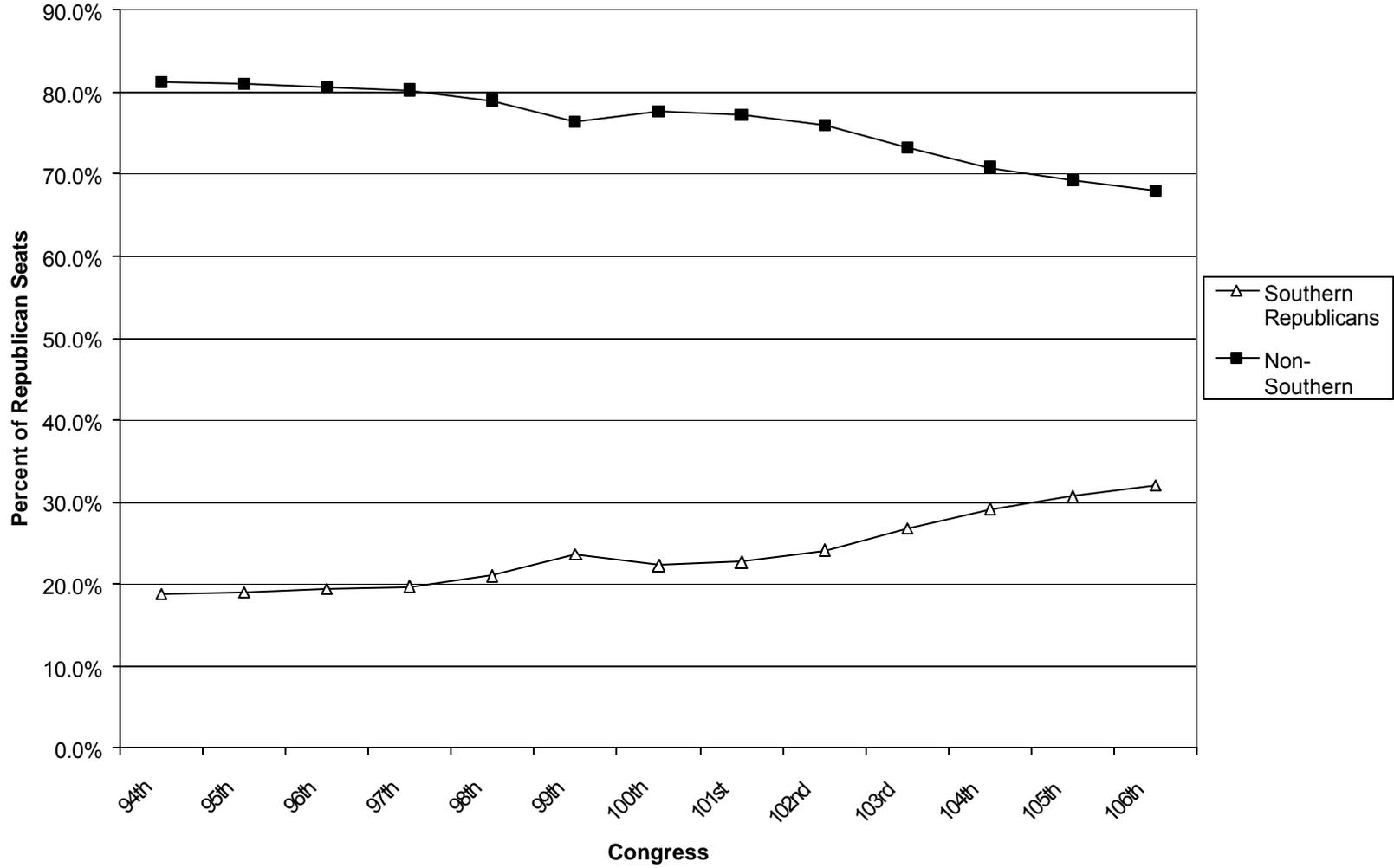
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Defense</b>	<b>Total</b>
Constant	86.93** (.45)	87.40** (.49)	82.28** (.54)	83.24** (.40)
Leader	2.07** (.55)	1.55** (.60)	.71** (.66)	2.08** (.49)
Southern States	4.87** (.49)	2.72* (.54)	5.99** (.59)	4.42** (.44)
Republican President/ Democratic Majority	-8.64** (.50)	-9.65** (.54)	-.99 (.60)	-4.11** (.44)
Democratic President/ Democratic Majority	-8.14** (.61)	-2.63** (.67)	-1.42 (.74)	-2.27 (.54)
N	2315	2315	2315	2315
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.180	.155	.056	.096

**Dependent Variable:** Mean Party Cohesion score (% of votes by a Republican Representative on important issues that coincided with the majority of voting Republicans)

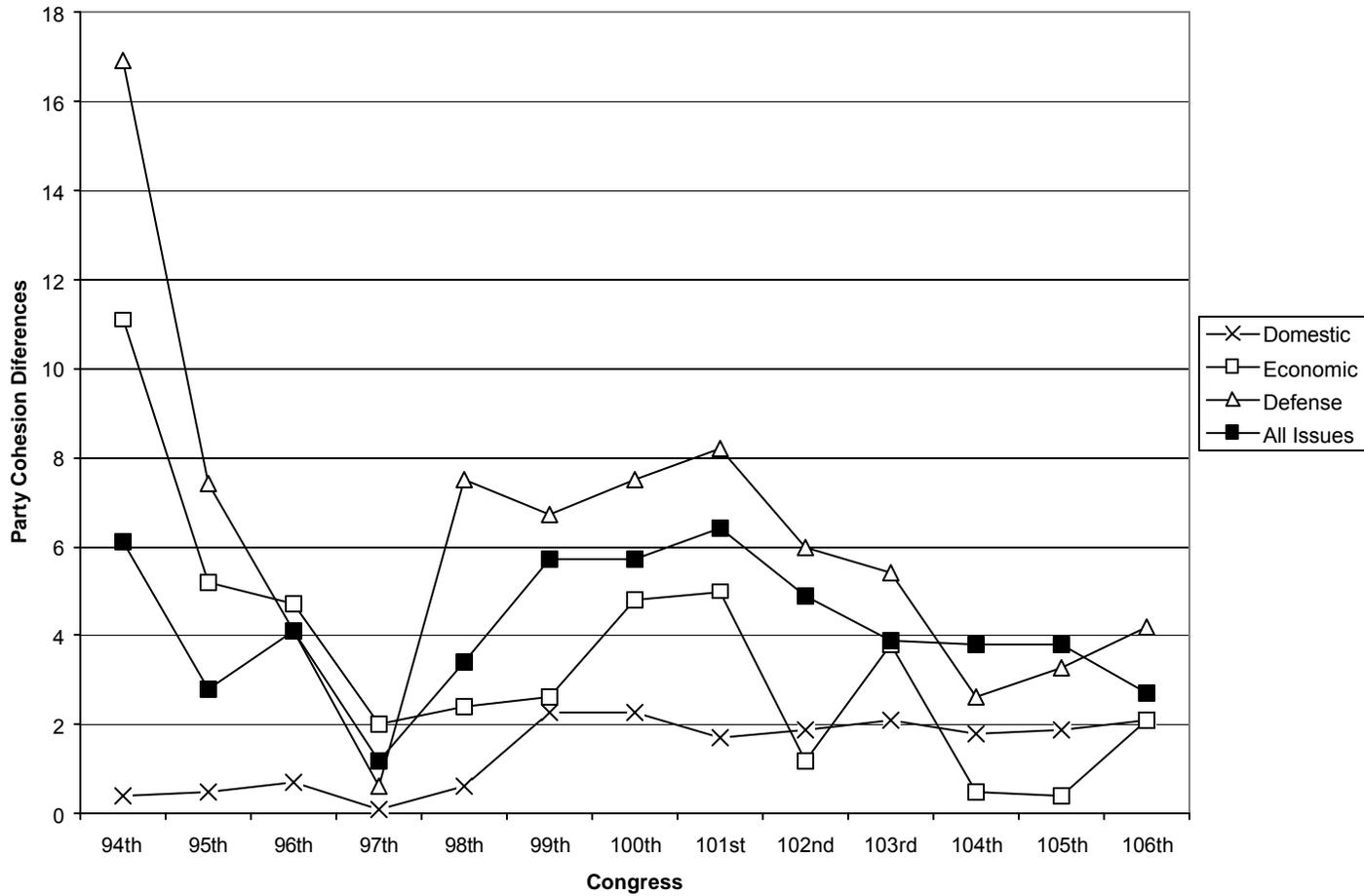
\*\* p < .01

\* p < .05

**Figure 1**  
**Republican House Members by South/Non-South**



**Figure 2**  
**Difference in Party Cohesion Scores**



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