

Class

Key literature

- [Clarke et al \(2004\)](#) and Clark and Lipset (1991, 2001): **demand-side** theory of four cleavages
class no longer predicts consumption preferences etc
rise of the service economy and decline of trade union membership → voting is no longer on class lines
- [Evans and Tilley \(2017\)](#): **supply-side** argument
class is not as important because parties are converging, leaving the working class disenfranchised (fewer options)
objective inequalities still persist between classes
new cleavages: Brexit, immigration
- [Best \(2011\)](#):
electoral relevance is determined by size, turnout, loyalty
reverse causality in terms of change in structure and party strategies
- [Oesch and Rennwald \(2018\)](#):
tripolar system, with the radical right bringing instability
the left and the right are divided on economic issues, while the radical right differs on cultural issues, attracting manual workers and sociocultural workers from left and right

1.1 What are social cleavages?

- These are latent divides within the population such as race, language, religion, class, rural / urban

1.2 What is class?

- The concept of social class: one's position in economic / labour market hierarchy
- Measurement of social class
 - Objective measure: usually occupation, not income (e.g. the Goldthorpe schema uses employment relations and contract type)
 - But professionals and managers may be separate ([Oesch 2006](#))
 - Subjective measure: 'class for itself' – a product of current and formative circumstances

1.3 Why is occupation a better measurement than income?

- Occupation more stable than income
- Occupation less prone to self-reporting bias
- Occupation captures socialization experiences (social environment) e.g. factory workers more open to trade union influences
- Occupation captures what people *do* in their jobs – manipulating objects vs sociocultural occupations (interacting with people); danger levels and autonomy (factory workers vs middle-class) → less invested / more invested in the status quo
- Occupation captures lifetime interests (promotion prospects, pensions and benefits, job risk)

1.4 What is class voting?

- Class politics refers to class-based voting and the association of classes with parties
- In the last few decades, the class cleavage in voting behaviour has weakened significantly (class politics has declined)
- Social class was historically more tightly linked to vote choice in Britain than other Western countries
 - Class cleavages most prominent in the most industrialised countries which lacked significant rival cross-cutting cleavages
 - Other cleavages: race in the US, religion in Italy, the Catholic / Protestant divide in the Netherlands, language in Belgium

1.5 What is partisanship?

- How much one identifies with a party
- This is a better measure than voting, because it is more fundamental and accounts for those who don't vote or may vote strategically

1.6 Why might class affect partisanship?

- People in different objective classes have different objective economic interests. They could vote for parties whose policies best fit those interests (e.g. minimum wage, welfare, redistribution) out of rational self-interest
 - One way to think about it is whether one is a net taxpayer or not
 - [Weakliem and Heath \(1994\)](#): rational (maximize income) vs non-rational (influenced by environment e.g. neighbourhood, job)

- People in different objective / subjective classes could vote for parties that *seem* to represent them as groups
 - This depends on parties' history, rhetoric, composition of party elites, etc
- People in different classes have different socialisation experiences
 - Formative experience: one's family links to one's background / identity, e.g. people with working class parents are more likely to remain working class and/or hold working class ideologies
 - Workplace and unions / business organizations
 - Neighbourhood
- People in different class have different job natures, which may in turn lead them to social conservatism / liberalism
 - Working classes are most socially conservative and middle-class professionals are most socially liberal

1.7 How can we tell if class voting has changed?

- Traditional class voting: manual vs non-manual, centre-left vs centre-right
 - Britain is defined by social class voting, a model which is generally applicable elsewhere (socialization → class identity → association with party) ([Butler and Stokes](#) 1969, [1974](#))
 - [Evans and de Graaf \(2013\)](#): things have changed
- It is largely settled that traditional voting has declined
- Why is the traditional divide less useful?
 - Fewer people are working manual, low-skilled jobs
 - Modern WC jobs: low-level service jobs e.g. receptionists, Amazon warehouse worker, call centre people, Deliveroo riders → less manual
 - MC also differentiated: NMC (socio-cultural professions e.g. teachers, doctors, social workers) vs OMC (consultants, bankers)

1.7 What is dealignment and what is realignment?

- Dealignment: knowing one's class is no longer predicting anything
 - Compositional effects: perhaps there is not a class division but correlated factors like average gaps in education or age between the classes
- Realignment: group membership is still relevant but it just predicts different relationships than before

1.8 How might modern class voting work?

- Modern class voting: more complicated than traditional class voting
 - WC → radical right
 - OMC → mainstream centre-right
 - NMC → new left
- What are the reasons for realignment?
 - NMC interacts with people more → more trust, more liberal? They like to vote for left parties esp. new left parties because
 - They are more likely to have been to university
 - Their job nature involves dealing with the public → they are more sympathetic, more cognizant of problems with the market
 - Their jobs are often part of the state itself → want more spending from the government

- OMC relies on profit-sharing → more threatening for them for the state to expand tax burden / regulations in terms of affecting survival

2.1 What are the demand-side arguments for changes in class voting?

- Demand-side arguments focus on how society and voters have changed
 - Class overlap has increased (Clark and Lipset 1991) → classes are less distinct from each other → convergence in political preferences
 - Job risk more evenly spread (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002)
 - As affluence has risen, people are less poor, and thus are more concerned with things like environment, freedom than material interests → new cleavages such as post-materialism (Inglehart) or environmentalism, feminism
 - Cognitive mobilization: people may have been more influenced by their background, less independent-minded; now, with education and the internet etc, people have more particularistic preferences (Dalton 2008)
 - Social blurring? [people no longer care about class ← social blurring ← economic gains which enlarge the middle class, technology which helps break class bubbles (e.g. television)]
- Demand-side changes are monotonic as changes occur over generations; should be consistent across countries

2.2 What are the problems with demand-side arguments?

- Objective class inequalities still persist. There is not that much evidence for class overlap or risk spreading. Income / wealth inequality is increasing or static (Piketty and Saez 2014). Unemployment/health/etc risks all remain lower for middle classes
 - Consider the impacts of COVID: WC can't really work from home, have less savings, fewer benefits, find it harder to self-isolate etc
- Subjective class identity and class perceptions have remained fairly constant [i.e. still going strong] ([Evans and Tilley 2017](#); [Bartels 2008](#))
- New cleavages are not politically important if they cannot be mobilized; e.g. religion is on the decline, race divides along 90-10 lines and not 50-50 lines
- Cognitive mobilization does not make a lot of sense ([Elff 2007](#))
 - There is not a lot of evidence of people being more informed than the past
 - More knowledge might just make it easier for people to vote rationally and thereby *strengthen* class voting
- Mass media may exacerbate polarization → class voting may not weaken

2.3 What are the supply-side arguments for changes in class voting?

- Supply-side arguments focus on how elites and political parties have changed (assume that parties want to win elections)
- Classes haven't changed, but automation / deindustrialization etc since the 1970s/80s → shrinking traditional WC → can't win on appealing to them → mainstream parties (especially the left) have moved to the centre → parties converge ideologically (become less distinctive) and politics has been more focused on MC
 - This led to decreased (traditional) class voting ([Evans and de Graaf 2013](#))
 - This also led to increased class non-voting (Elff 2017; [Evans and Tilley 2017](#)) [could consider how other dimensions of competition became more important]
 - This helps explain the timing of changes (Janssen et al 2013)

- Yet, parties are not just bundles of policies; perceptions matter too, through rhetoric ([Evans and Tilley 2017](#)) and representatives (Heath 2015) [e.g. Clinton, Blair]
 - If perceptions are slow to change, policy convergence may not reduce class voting in the short run
 - If the media focus on personalities and less on policies, it makes it harder to people to vote on class lines
- Parties may choose whether to exploit class divides and thus influence the importance of class politics
 - If parties don't mobilize classes (speak to class interests) any more, class would not predict partisanship even if classes' political opinions still differ
 - But there have been new parties and competition on the social liberal-conservative dimension
- Supply-side changes are not necessarily monotonic since they are contingent on strategy

2.4 What did New Labour do?

- Economic dimension: less tax, less nationalization, not encouraging trade unions
- Social dimension: shift to social liberalism (immigration, gay rights etc)
- Perceptions: politics more professionalized, more career politicians, party appears less WC and more MC
- Heath (2016) and Grady (2018) examine the composition of working-class Labour MPs and find that the proportion of working-class MPs in Labour have declined from 30% to less than 10% (Lieu 2019)
- [Evans and Tilley \(2012\)](#) use BES panel data and find that the gap between the working-class and middle-class in terms of support for Labour has fallen from around 30% in 1983 to around 10%. While part of this is certainly due to Labour becoming more attractive to middle-class voters, a larger part of this is due to working-class abstention. Most notably, the proportion of working-class voters who identified with "No Party" has increased tremendously, from 15% in 1983 to about 35% in 2010. The proportion of people who perceived a great difference between the parties plummeted from 85% in 1987 to 17% in 2001 (Lieu 2019)

3.1 How can the demand- and supply-side arguments be synthesised?

- Class is still relevant but WC is smaller and MC is more fragmented
- Supply-side: shrunk WC → economic policy convergence → declining traditional class voting and increased non-class voting
- In-between: more fragmented MC → parties need to put together much more fragile coalitions to win → realignment and increased voting along non-economic, but still class, lines → more likely entry of new parties that compete on non-economic dimensions
 - This is perhaps more clearly seen in relation to new parties (e.g. Green and radical right parties) rather than mainstream SD / conservative parties
- Bottom-up: society is less structured by occupation, and mobilizing organizations are on the decline → reinforcing socialisation is weakened → class voting is weakened
 - Families are getting smaller, people are living further away from their parents
 - Unions / business organizations have become less integrated in the workplace
 - Social circles are less based on where people live than before
- In the end, these cleavages could just be a house of cards waiting to fall since it's all

predicated on self-interest

3.2 What are the implications of this discussion?

- Implications of declining class-based appeals by parties on the development of democracy
 - Voters are less emotionally attached and more rational
 - Reduced representation of the working class
- Implications of increasing inequality in the viability of class politics
 - Easier to exploit class divides
 - More scope for redistribution
 - Incentive to appeal to donors

Readings

- [*Bartels \(2008\) Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age](#)
- [Benedetto, Hix, and Mastrococco \(2020\) The Rise and Fall of Social Democracy, 1918–2017](#)
- [*Best \(2011\) The Declining Electoral Relevance of Traditional Cleavage Groups. European Political Science Review 3\(2\):279-300](#)
- [Butler and Stokes \(1974\) Political change in Britain: The evolution of electoral choice](#)
- [Clarke et al \(2004\) Political choice in Britain](#)
- [*Elff \(2007\) Social Structure and Electoral Behavior in Comparative Perspective: The Decline of Social Cleavages in Western Europe Revisited](#)
- [Elff \(2009\) Social Divisions, Party Positions, and Electoral Behaviour](#)
- [*Evans and de Graaf \(eds\) \(2013\) Political choice matters: explaining the strength of class and religious cleavages in cross-national perspective](#)
- [Evans and Mellon \(2016\) Social class](#)
- [Evans and Tilley \(2012\) The Depoliticization of Inequality and Redistribution: Explaining the Decline of Class Voting](#)
- [Evans and Tilley \(2017\) The New Politics of Class: The Political Exclusion of the British Working Class - Introduction](#)
- [Ford and Jennings \(2020\) The Changing Cleavage Politics of Western Europe](#)
- [Gingrich \(2017\) A New Progressive Coalition? the European Left in a Time of Change](#)
- [Goldberg \(2020\) The Evolution of Cleavage Voting in Four Western Countries: Structural, Behavioural or Political Dealignment?](#)
- [Hayes \(1995\) The Impact of Class on Political Attitudes](#)
- [*Heath, Curtice and Elgenius \(2009\) Individualisation and the Decline of Class Identity](#)
- [Heath \(2013\) Policy Representation, Social Representation and Class Voting in Britain](#)
- [Jansen, Evans, and de Graaf \(2013\) Class voting and Left–Right party positions: A comparative study of 15 Western democracies, 1960–2005](#)
- [Lipset \(1960\) Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics](#)
- [Luttig \(2013\) The Structure of Inequality and Americans' Attitudes toward Redistribution](#)
- [Nieuwbeerta \(1996\) The democratic class struggle in postwar societies: Class voting in twenty countries, 1945-1990](#)
- [O'Grady \(2017\) How Do Economic Circumstances Determine Preferences? Evidence From Long-Run Panel Data](#)

[O'Grady \(2018\) Careerists Versus Coal-Miners: Welfare Reforms and the Substantive Representation of Social Groups in the British Labour Party](#)

[Oesch \(2006\) Coming to Grips with a Changing Class Structure: An Analysis of Employment Stratification in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland](#)

[Oesch and Rennwald \(2018\) Electoral competition in Europe's new tripolar political space: Class voting for the left, centre-right and radical right](#)

[Rigby and Wright \(2013\) Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States](#)

[Rueda \(2005\) Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties](#)

[Rydgren \(ed\) \(2012\) Class politics and the radical right](#)

[*Weakliem and Heath \(1994\) Rational choice and class voting](#)

*Bartels (2008) Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age

Summary

- Periods with Democrat presidents have seen less unemployment, more overall economic growth and greater income growth for the middle class and working poor than periods with Republican presidents
- Bartels seeks to explain why Republican presidents are more common than Democrats despite this fact
- Attribute to (1) voters care about cultural issues (2) voters care about growth in election years (3) affluent voters can influence campaign finance and do better under republicans

Theoretical arguments: 3 arguments for why Republican presidents are more common

- Voters care about issues besides income
 - Voters prefer Republican positions on cultural issues, race or foreign policy and consciously accept lower income growth → reflects the secondary status of economic issues on the contemporary political agenda
 - **Objection** Moral values do not trump economics
 - **Evaluation** Among white voters in all three income groups, the two issues most strongly related to presidential vote choices are government spending and services and defence spending
 - **Evaluation** Even white voters who said that religion provided a great deal of guidance in their daily lives attached only half as much weight to abortion as they did to government spending and services
- Voters are myopic
 - Voters respond to income growth in presidential election years but ignore most of the rest of the incumbents administration record of economic performance i.e. the time horizon of retrospective voting is short
 - **Evaluation** Partisan patterns of income growth have been reversed in presidential election years, with families in every part of the income distribution experiencing considerably more growth under Republican presidents than they have under Democratic presidents
 - **Evaluation** The relationship between the election year income growth to incumbent party's popular vote margin is much closer than the relationship between cumulative income growth across the whole term of the party and the popular vote margin
- Election year income growth for affluent families is much more consequential than growth for middle-class and poor families
 - American voters regardless of their own place in the income distribution seem to be more sensitive to the economic fortunes of high-income families
 - **Evaluation** For the electorate as a whole, each percentage point of income growth for affluent families seems to have produced as much additional support for the incumbent party as 4 points of growth in overall real disposable income per capita
 - This can be attributed to
 - Mass media paying more attention to the economy fortunes of affluent people than middle class and poor people

- Income gains for affluent families get translated into campaign contributions to the incumbent party. This allows the incumbent to have more campaign spending
- Since Republican policies are more favourable to affluent families, with less redistribution and business friendly regulation, income growth for affluent families in election year larger under Republican Party

Evaluation

- We are unsure about for how long into an administration before we hold the president accountable for economic conditions (lag term). Bartels uses a one-year lag term, as it offers the best fit of the data. But that seems to beg the question since it effectively proves the partisan relationship we are supposedly testing
- Campbell argues that if we use an 18-month lag, the two parties have an equivalent record of mean growth in transition months (Rep to Dem or vice versa). Rep to Dem – 3.47% and Dem to Rep – 3.43%
- If 1-month lag, median growth for Dem to Rep is 1.25% while Rep to Dem is 5.2%

Summary

- Survey of support for social democratic parties from 1918-2017: fallen in recent years
- SD parties have become catch-all parties in trying to grow their electoral base, as the size of the industrial working class shrank. This caused them to lose support of industrial working class, as policies became more moderated and less directed at WC

Theoretical argument: 3 waves of social democracy

- Wave 1 (after WW1): Aimed at achieving socialism (maximum working hours, paid annual leave, collective bargaining, pensions system)
 - SD parties appealed to industrial workers
 - **Evaluation** Won 30% of vote in some of the first elections after WW1. In the mid-1920s, Swedish and Austrian parties exceeded 40%. The 1920s and 1930s also saw brief periods in government for social democrats in Czechoslovakia, Germany, France, the UK, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, most often in coalition with or tolerated by other parties
- Wave 2 (after WW2): Attempted to reach beyond traditional working-class base, sought catch-all policies that appealed to public-sector employees, urban professionals and agricultural labourers (social market, welfare state, nationalising monopolies, liberal social policies on divorce and gender equality)
 - SD parties recognised that social-democrat-voting industrial workers unlikely to generate a majority (Sassoon 1996)
 - SD parties downgraded class-based politics in favour of catch-all policies that appealed to individuals across different classes – working class was too small
 - SD formed governments with liberals and Christian democrats. In government everywhere and single party govt in UK, Sweden and Norway
- Wave 3 (after 1970s oil crisis): Idea of a third way (regulating markets, SS-side economic management, balanced budgets, social liberalism and environmentalism)
 - By 1988, SD back in office in every Western European country except Spain, Norway and Ireland and single party govt in UK, Portugal, Sweden and Greece + in Central and Eastern Europe, former communist leaders used social democracy to distance themselves from past
- The decline
 - Between 2000-17, most SD parties secured lowest level of support since 1918

The conundrum

- SD wants to transform capitalism and to represent industrial working class
- SD initially appealed to the working-class but as the size of WC was not big enough, SD parties moderated their policies to broaden their electoral coalition. This allowed them to win 1/3 to 1/2 of votes in most countries, by adding public-sector workers to the coalition by increasing public spending
- Globalisation and technological change → industrial workers a relatively small group
- SD parties tried to make up for this by appealing to younger, urban professionals industrial workers less inclined to support SD because they don't support the policies SD relies more on public sector employees
- With increasing constraints on public spending after the Great Recession, it is more difficult to gain support of public sector employees

*Best (2011) The Declining Electoral Relevance of Traditional Cleavage Groups

Summary

- Best defines electoral relevance as group contributions to party vote share
- Best finds pervasive, cross-national declines in working classes and religious citizens' (i.e. the traditional cleavage groups') contributions to party vote shares
- Best attributes these declines to structural changes in Western European societies, thus they are irreversible; he then concludes that the changes observed in election results and party strategies are likely to be long-lasting alterations

Social cleavages and election results in Western Europe

- The number of traditional cleavage groups have declined as a result of structural changes in the economies and societies of Western Europe (e.g. secularization)
- Changes in behaviour of cleavage group members → lower electoral relevance
 - Dalton's theory of cognitive mobilization: educational increases and prevalence of mass media → voters rely less on social cues when voting
 - Inglehart: increases in material well-being → value changes and emergence of new issues (move away from traditional cleavage politics)
- Changes in size → lower electoral relevance
 - Structural changes in the economies and societies of Western Europe → working class has diminished and societies are increasingly secularized
- **Electoral relevance = size of the group * turnout * loyalty** (hence, strong loyalty rates do not necessarily translate into high levels of electoral relevance)

Data and analysis

- Data gathered from Eurobarometer series from 1975-2002 on eight countries
- Religious affiliation measured by denomination and frequency of church attendance; focus on manual and non-manual members of the labour force
- 1970s: Manual workers contributed rather low percentages of support to social democratic vote shares; in sharp contrast to their social democratic counterparts, Christian democratic parties derived almost all of their support from their cleavage base: the Christian population
- 1975-2002: Declines in all three factors have driven the declines in the contributions of manual workers, and the most consistent results are found regarding size; declines also found in the contributions of both Christians and church-goers to Christian democratic parties in all countries, substantially and statistically significant, and the largest contributor often size (Germany, Netherlands) or loyalty (GB, Italy)

Conclusion

- While patterns of voting behaviour may vary cross-nationally, the declining electoral relevance of traditional cleavage groups does not
- Socio-demographic changes (likely irreversible) → pervasive, cross-national declines in the electoral relevance of traditional cleavage groups (likely irreparable) → consider party strategies: there is little incentive for parties to employ electoral strategies that encourage traditional patterns of cleavage voting, so parties become increasingly catchall. Parties themselves weaken cleavage attachments themselves by de-emphasising cleavage issues
- **Example** Protestant and Catholic parties in the Netherlands had to merge in the 1970s

Butler and Stokes (1974) Political change in Britain: The evolution of electoral choice

Summary

- Class rose to be the dominant cleavage but is weakening and aging in the 1960s

Introduction

- Three types of electoral change: replacement through birth and death, lasting changes in party alignment (e.g. class), response to immediate issues and events of politics
- Primary data between 1963-70 (poll data and interviews)

Ch 4-5

- Virtually everyone [interviewed] accepted the conventional class dichotomy between middle and working class; occupation played a primary role in perceptions of class
- [As other findings] 'lower' classes tend to be more Labour-leaning and vice versa
- The working class is much more prone than the middle class to see politics in class terms, whether including conflict or not; the Conservatives' appeal as a 'national' party, the governing agent of an integrated if stratified social order, has helped keep the middle class strongly Conservative since the rise of the Labour Party
- Social mobility offers a partial explanation of why middle and working class voters aren't more perfectly aligned behind the class parties (family allegiances carried over)

Ch 8 The rise of the class alignment

- The emergence of Labour as a strong and explicitly class-based party was both cause and consequence of the decline of the religious alignment
- Among the 1945 and post-1950 cohorts, Labour has come much closer to a full seizure of its 'natural' class base; their partisan attachments were less strongly affected by an earlier electoral history and by Labour's late start as a national party
- Labour gained working class support by the enfranchisement of the working class, by Labour's espousal of working class interests, and by the split of the Liberals that made Labour one of the two main parties; but the realignment was unfinished by the 1960s
- The changing pattern of cross-support for the parties in both main classes suggests that the class alignment may have weakened somewhat even in the period in which Labour has most fully occupied its working class constituency

Ch 9 The aging of the class alignment

- Newer cohorts divided their loyalties along class lines more completely than older cohorts, but they were less disposed to see politics as an arena of class conflict
- Factors weakening the class alignment: the [post-war] betterment of the electorate's economic condition; revolution in life styles (e.g. pop-culture, permissive attitudes); the incentives to Labour, when in power, to establish its independence from the unions in the eyes of the electorate → Labour became less working class; the policies of the two main parties seemed in many aspects to converge
- The decline in the relationship between class and party [in the 1960s] was seen in every cohort, but it affected least the cohort which had fixed its beliefs about class and party in the period which brought Labour to power after the war
- Aging of the class alignment → continued decline in participation and volatility of electoral support in the 1960s

Clarke et al (2004) Political choice in Britain

Summary

- With the exception of the declining role of social class, the relative importance of the various signature variables associated with the sociological and individual rationality frameworks has remained more or less constant from the mid-1960s onwards

Ch 2 Theories and models of party support

- Sociological framework: emphasizes the role of society, notably the effects of social characteristics (e.g. class, ethnicity, gender, race), social contexts, or social psychology on political choice (e.g. home ownership, region)
- Individual rationality framework: encompasses a set of decision-making models (baseline model of expected utility maximization, and various spatial/valence models)
 - The Downsian spatial model portrays electoral politics as taking place on a unidimensional, left-right continuum; voters choose the party nearest to them
 - The valence model argues that the issues that matter most are ones where public opinion is heavily skewed; voters reward incumbent for good performance and punish it for bad performance
 - The issue-priority model is a hybrid that incorporates shared goals and parties' reputations for policy competence
- Butler and Stokes (1969) implicitly recognized the limitations of a class-based model of electoral change by devoting several later chapters of their book to analyses of the effects of potentially highly mutable variables such as voters' economic evaluations, party preferences on important issues, and party leader images
- Evidence gathered over the past three decades indicates that attenuated relationships among class, partisanship, and vote are not a short-lived period phenomenon or a methodological artefact of when and how the data were collected

Ch 3 Party support in Britain, 1964-2001

- Data: successive British Election Study (BES) surveys conducted at each general election since 1964; evidence from a new data set based on over 127,000 interviews carried out by the Gallup Organization in monthly surveys between 1992 and 2002
- Sociological model: the 1964-2001 BES surveys reveal that both party identification and class-based voting have declined significantly; even in the 1960s, class voting was not pervasive → the sociological approach is less relevant now than in the 1960s
- Issue-proximity model: Labour's shift to the right in the 1990s brought the party much closer to the issue preferences of much of the electorate (e.g. privatization vs nationalization, increase vs decrease taxes and public services). This change was an important precondition for Labour's success in both 1997 and 2001
- Valence model: leadership effects (an average of the effects for CON/LAB leaders only) are always greater than those associated with class; from the mid-1970s onward, the difference in the magnitude of class and leadership effects is always substantial; unlike those for class, leadership effects do not decline over time (emphasis on economic competence: Blair's commitment to fiscal prudence vs Major's ERM crisis)
- All approaches have some explanatory leverage, but the valence model performs best—providing a plausible and consistently powerful explanation of voting behaviour over the past four decades

*Elff (2007) Social Structure and Electoral Behavior in Comparative Perspective: The Decline of Social Cleavages in Western Europe Revisited

Summary

- Social cleavages have not disappeared and are not in universal decline, as demonstrated by an examination of data from seven countries from 1975 to 2002
- Religious–secular voting is mostly stable, while class voting shows an unambiguous decline in only some of the countries under study
- Neither rising levels of cognitive mobilization nor a dissemination of postmaterialist value priorities can account for these changes in class voting
- The exaggeration of limited changes to general trends seems to rest on a disregard of the effects of party competition on patterns of electoral behavior

The nature of social cleavages in electoral behaviour

- Even if changes in the relation between class or church attendance on electoral behavior can be observed, it cannot be ruled out that they are attributable to *political* rather than societal transformations

Social cleavages and party preferences of European voters: persistence or change?

- Although the impact of class has been in decline at least in some of the countries under study, the impact of church attendance has been almost stable
- If social cleavages really have become irrelevant for electoral behaviour, there will be no systematic differences between voters from various social groupings with respect to their support for “cleavage-based” parties or families (labour parties and Christian and conservative parties), but this clearly is not the case in Western Europe
 - UK seems to be the deviant case wrt religious/secular cleavages, but weakness is not particularly surprising given its history of church/state relations

Cognitive mobilisation / value change can’t adequately explain changes in class voting

- Increasing political awareness will weaken the relevance of voters’ social location for party choice only if an orientation to one’s social position precludes an orientation to issues and runs counter to an enlightened self-interest, but this is not self-evident
- Inglehart’s theory is consistent with four possible scenarios for political development: direct displacement of class cleavages by value-based cleavages, greening of the Left, split within the middle classes, electoral irrelevance of value change; neither is borne out completely by data
- Labour parties may moderate socialist stance to appeal to middle-class voters on materialist grounds, seeing as traditional working class constituency was shrinking

Conclusion

- Reports of the death of social cleavages are exaggerated
- My main argument is that changes in the electoral relevance of social cleavages—insofar as they have actually occurred—are unlikely to be aspects or consequences of an irreversible, large-scale, long-term process of social change. Rather, it is only natural to attribute cross-country variations in the development of class and religious–secular voting to contingent political choices of parties about which social groups to appeal to

Elff (2009) Social Divisions, Party Positions, and Electoral Behaviour

Summary

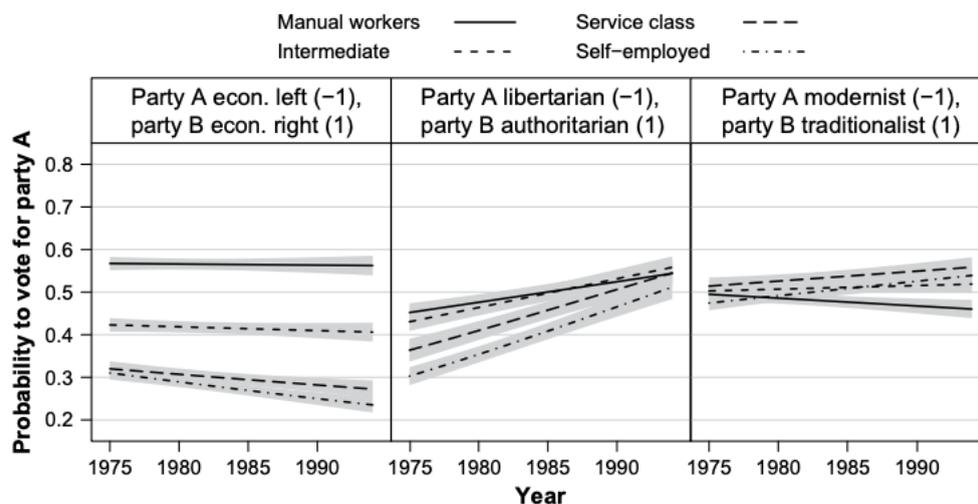
- So far as the decline in relation between social division and voting can be observed, it is attributable to parties' changing political positions

Data and methodology

- Most comparative analysis of the changing electoral role of social cleavages have relied on a fixed classification, and ignored the tendency of social democratic parties to become catch-all parties in "dilemma of electoral socialism" (Przeworski 1985)
- Data: Comparative Manifestos Project and Eurobarometer on citizens' vote intentions and social characteristics in Belgium, Denmark, France, Britain, Italy and Netherlands 1974–2002

Findings

- Result: effects of parties' positions on class differences are not constant, some of the changes in pattern of voting behaviour may occur independently from parties' changes in policy positions, classes increasingly differ in the way they react to economic left/right position
- Predicting vote Party A as the ideal left libertarian and modernist party, B the right authoritarian and traditionalist party



Conclusions

- Voters can decide politically as they are socially only to the degree that available political options reflect or appeal to the voters' specific values or economic interests
- Inter-group differences of vote intentions show stability rather than decline in relevance of social divisions
- Classes become more similar in terms of responses to parties' positions on libertarian/authoritarian dimension, indicate some sort of value change taking place

*Evans and de Graaf (eds) (2013) Political choice matters: explaining the strength of class and religious cleavages in cross-national perspective

Summary

- Investigates the role of the ideological positions adopted by political parties in shaping the extent of class and religious voting in contemporary democracies
- Simultaneously tests alternative, ‘bottom up’, approaches that attribute changes in class and religious voting to processes of individualisation associated with socio-economic development and secularization
- Favours the political choice thesis over the social blurring thesis; political choice not only matters for cleavage strength, but also for expectations concerning the party-driven evolution of cleavage voting rather than its gradual decline

Ch 1 Explaining cleavage strength (Evans and de Graaf)

- Bottom-up: social divisions derived from different locations in social structures are argued to influence political interests, values, and party preferences
- Top-down: the extent of social divisions in political preferences derives from political actors and their strategic positioning along dimensions of ideology or value
- There is probably a process of mutual interaction
- Social blurring: a growing heterogeneity of social categories / social atomization
- Political choice: the restricted choices offered by parties wrt ideology and values
- Social blurring attributes changes in the extent of social divisions in ideology and values to variations in the coherence of social categories, whereas political choice attributes changes in ideological and value divisions to the choices offered by parties
- Data: case studies of 11 European and Anglo-democracies examining, mostly, election studies ranging from the post-war period until the early 21st century

Ch 2 Measuring party positions (Bakker and Hobolt)

Table 2.1. Advantages and disadvantages of different party position measures

Type	Advantages	Disadvantages	Sources
Party manifestos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objectivity ● Separation of preferences and behaviour ● Time-series data ● Validity (e.g. Budge and Pennings 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saliency-based measure ● CMP ‘one-size-fits-all’ left-right measure with standard categories ● No measure of uncertainty/high volatility in position measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comparative Manifesto Project (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006; Volkens et al. 2011)
Experts surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Position measures ● Measures of uncertainty ● Validity (e.g. Marks et al. 2007; Benoit and Laver 2007a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Subjectivity (experts) ● Fixed dimensionality ● Conflation of preferences and behaviour ● High stability in position measures ● Information asymmetry ● Limited time-series data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laver and Hunt (1992) ● Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Ray 1999; Steenbergen and Marks 2007; Hooghe et al. 2010) ● Benoit and Laver (2006) ● Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2009)
Voter surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Position measures ● Measures of uncertainty ● Voter perceptions of party placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Subjectivity (voters) ● Conflation of preferences and behaviour ● High stability in position measures ● Information asymmetry ● Few dimensions ● Limited time-series and cross-sectional data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National election studies ● European election studies (EES) ● Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) ● Eurobarometer

Ch 3 Class voting and left-right party positions (Jansen, Evans, and de Graaf)

- See other notes

Ch 4 Ideological convergence and the decline of class voting in Britain (Evans & Tilley)

- Left-right ideology: the positions voters take on issues concerning (in)equality, redistribution, and the unfettered operation of the free market

- Data: BES for GEs from 1964-2005; British Social Attitudes surveys from 1983-2006
- DV: party support; IV: class; controls: trade union membership, housing type, income, education, private schooling; religion, ethnicity, sex, birth-year
- Class voting: an early period of moderate decline (1960s), a period of stability, and a later period where the decline is more pronounced (1990s)
- Increasing social heterogeneity accounts for only a small proportion of the observed pattern of decline in class voting (for both the former decline and the latter decline)
- Former decline: remains unresolved
- Latter decline: shrinking size of manual working class (inter alia) → Labour strategic move to ideological centre → parties' ideological convergence → voters' class-based, left-right values less politically relevant → decline in the explanatory power of ideology for party choice → class voting weakened
- The relationship between class position and left-right ideology remained more or less unchanged between the mid 1980s to the mid 2000s, and had probably been constant for twenty years or more before then
- Thus, evidence supports the political choice thesis more than the social blurring thesis
- The responsiveness of the electorate to choices offered provides the basis of the political choice argument; this fits well with rational choice accounts of voting

Ch 5 The United States (Weakliem)

- Data: American National Election Studies between 1952 and 2004
- Controls: race, age, dummy variable for Southern whites
- Voting patterns in the mid 20th century: region, race, religion; during the 1930s the Democrats began to align themselves with the poor and working classes
- Changes since 1950s: in contrast to race and region, where there is general agreement about what happened and why, there is no consensus about changes in class voting
- Basic trend: decline in the number of manual workers and an increase in the number of professional and routine non-manual workers
- There has been a realignment in which parts of the middle classes have moved towards the Democrats, relative to manual workers. The Dems are now something more complex: the party of the lower classes and professionals
- The pattern of results (both class and religion) is not consistent with the 'social blurring' perspective, which implies a general decline in group differences
- The relationship between income and party choice has grown stronger
- The CMP measures of difference in ideological position predict some of the class differences in voting choices, but could not explain changes in class voting over time
- In support of bottom-up approaches: evidence of a gradual long-term shift involving certain groups (e.g. professionals, observant Catholics) is too strong to ignore
- In the US, the influence of income on party choice has been rising while the influence of class, by most standards, has been falling → research should distinguish between 'income voting' and 'class voting'

Ch 15 The importance of political choice and other lessons learned (Evans & de Graaf)

- Cross-national analysis tells two stories: class declines are a source of party choice; party positions on the CMP help to explain the strength of the class-party association
- The general patterning of many socio-economic changes in the transition from industrial to post-industrial society in the latter part of the twentieth century simply did not impact on party strategy in any simple and general way

- We find top-down effects for class and religion in all established democracies, which clearly suggests political choice matters; but this is less true in the newer democracies

Table 15.1. Summary of influences on class voting based on case studies

	Pattern of change	Bottom-up	Top-down	Explanation for patterns of change?
<i>Anglo-Saxon democracies</i>				
Australia	Decline	Yes	Yes	Top-down & bottom-up
Canada	No	No	Yes	Top-down stability
Britain	Decline	No	Yes	Top-down
United States	Realignment	Yes	Yes	Top-down*
<i>Mainland Europe</i>				
Denmark	No	No	Yes	Top-down stability
France	Decline	No	Yes	Top-down
Germany West	Modest decline	No	Yes	Top-down
Italy	Modest decline	No	Yes	Top-down
Netherlands	Decline and realignment	Yes	Yes	Bottom-up
<i>Recent democracies</i>				
Germany East	No	No	No	
Poland	Alignment	Yes	No	Bottom-up
Spain	Decline	No	Yes	None detected

*In the United States the pattern of the top-down effects depends on which measures of party position are to be believed: ANES scores are probably to be preferred over those from the CMP. However, they both show some evidence of choice effects relating to different aspects of class-party realignment

- The choices offered to voters influence the strength of the class cleavage in all of the established democracies (395)
- The case studies provide evidence not just of a link between party positions and the strength of class voting, but also that class position continues to provide a basis for different, opposing, ideological or policy preferences
- Overall, the bottom-up explanation has not been very successful, which suggests the changes in these social characteristics are generally of marginal importance
- Dealignment becomes realignment when we identify distinctive class groupings within larger classes (402)
- A further implication of adopting a political choice perspective is that the assumptions of a gradualist decline in cleavage strength that typically characterize bottom-up approaches no longer hold
- The assumption that the effects of social structure must always be in decline because of increasing heterogeneity is also itself questionable, for both class and religion

Evans and Mellon (2016) Social class

Introduction

- Two ‘working classes’: there is a big difference between being working class as defined by officials and social scientists in terms of occupation and being working class as defined by people themselves

Class identity and awareness

- Class identity: the tendency for people to place themselves in a social class
- Class awareness: present when people believe that class position has important consequences, that there are barriers between classes, and that social class still has an impact on their own and others’ lives (Vanneman and Cannon, 1987)
- Only a minority of people are engaged in working class occupations in Britain, but a majority of people still think of themselves as working class
- The proportion identifying themselves as working class has barely changed in the past 33 years (~60%) → class identity, especially working class identity, is alive and well
- A majority of people appear to perceive that there are class divisions and boundaries in British society; those who identify as working class are more likely to be aware of these divisions and boundaries

Source of working class identity / images of inequality

- Those in middle class occupations still think of themselves to a surprising degree as working class, and especially so if their family background was working class or they have never been to university
- Those middle class people who see society as a division between a large disadvantaged group and a small privileged elite are much more likely to regard themselves as working class (59%) than are those who see society as either having relatively few people at the bottom (16%) or even most people in the middle (16%)

Class identity and political attitudes

- Within each occupational class, those who identify as working class are more likely to be authoritarian and less likely to be pro-immigrant. At the same time, with the singular exception of those in professional and managerial occupations, those who identify as working class are also less likely to be right-wing in their value

Conclusion

- Contrary to expectations of some academics, class still has resonance for people
- The ‘golden age’ of upward social mobility in the second half of the 20th century saw many people from working class backgrounds end up in middle class jobs, but this has now very much slowed, if not stalled completely → the proportion of 1st gen people in the middle classes who come from working class backgrounds is set to fall
- Massive rise in higher education over the last few decades → middle class occupations are far more dependent on educational qualifications for access → the proportion in middle class occupations who have HE qualifications is set to rise
- These two processes would lead one to expect working class identification to decline among those in middle class jobs → a closer match between class identity and objective class → social attitudes would become more libertarian, but not more economically right-wing → likely to be more sympathetic to Labour and Lib Dems

Evans and Tilley (2012) The Depoliticization of Inequality and Redistribution: Explaining the Decline of Class Voting

Note: I think this is supplanted by [Evans and de Graaf \(eds\) \(2013\)](#), especially Ch 4

Abstract

- Class dealignment results from the impact of an ideologically restricted choice set on the electoral relevance of values concerning inequality and redistribution
- Data: British Social Attitudes survey, carried out annually between 1983 and 2010
- A supply-side constriction in the choices presented to voters, rather than the weakening of class divisions, accounts for the declining political relevance of redistributive values and the class basis of party choice

Testing the competing explanations of the decline of class voting

- Demand-side approach to the structuring of political divisions: lack of class differences in values and policy preferences weakens demand for parties to offer distinctive options (964)
- Various explanations: rising living standards and spread of affluence, changing gender composition of class positions, alternative cleavages, expansion of education, decline of traditional communities and increased social mobility
- Supply-side approach: parties need to diverge on matters of relevance to people in different classes for there to be class difference in party preferences; without party strategy that emphasizes class differences in interests, class position is less likely to be strongly associated with party choice

The role of left-right values

- **Left-right values:** the positions voters take on issues concerning inequality, redistribution, and the unfettered operation of the free market (965)
- Class position provides both a consistent & relatively strong influence on these values
- Demand-side argument assumes the decline of the class-party association results from declining divisions in orientations towards redistribution and inequality between classes, whereas the supply-side argument assumes that it results from the declining relevance of these divisions to party choice
- Values are measured using BSA data; class is measured by occupation and income

Conclusions

- Centrist movement of the parties, especially Labour → weakening of the left-right ideological signals sent to voters by the two main parties → decline in the impact of voters' positions on inequality and redistribution on their party choice
- Results hold regardless of whether occupation or income is used to measure class
- During the same period, the relationship between class position and values remained relatively unchanged: the latter simply mattered much less for party choice
- Our argument posits that the electorate is responsive to the choices offered by parties; class voting is not tribal but rational
- Endogeneity: left-wing parties respond to the shrinking of their working-class support base by broadening their appeal (so party polarization is responsive to social change)
- Further source of endogeneity: class-party dealignment itself influences party convergence by increasing incentives to pursue the support of the median voter

Evans and Tilley (2017) The New Politics of Class: The Political Exclusion of the British Working Class Introduction

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198755753.003.0001>

Abstract

- The working class has shrunk and educated middle classes have grown
- 1. Class inequalities, identities and divisions in political attitudes remain potent in modern Britain
- 2. Changing sizes of classes have forced parties to adopt policies and images that are more appealing to a more middle class, more educated electorate
- 3. The consequences are: the demise of class voting for mainstream parties, the rise of non-mainstream parties catering to the working class, and the huge increase in non-voting among working class people

What is class?

- Social class is one of the widely discussed and disputed concepts in social science. No one characterisation of class is definitive. Measures of class position are useful to the degree that they allow us to demonstrate important relationships between social positions and outcomes.
- The authors focus on occupation, and to a lesser extent education, as key measures of where people are positioned in the class structure. Occupation determines people's current and future earnings and the security of that employment
- **Occupation** The authors modify the Goldthorpe schema
 - Compared to MC jobs, WC jobs offer lower and more insecure incomes; they tend not to offer guaranteed sick pay, generous pensions, or clearly-defined promotion opportunities, while involving more supervised monitoring, less autonomy, less hourly flexibility, and more unpleasant working conditions
 - The middle class is divided into old, new, and junior

Old Middle Class	New Middle Class	Junior Middle Class
Managers, small employers, farmers, self-employed professionals	Professional employees, ancillary non-manual workers, supervisors	Junior non-manual employees (aka 'routine white collar workers')

- **Education** Educational qualifications are a source of information about people's capacities, transferable skills and potential attainment. Education has been shown to shape values and political preferences differently to occupational class (Evan et al. 1996; Tilley and Heath 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007)
- **Occupation data** Census data from 1931 to 2010, and BES and BSA surveys from 1963–2015 shows that there was a steady decline of WC and a steady increase in NMC. By 2000, NMC had become larger than WC
- **Education data** Data from the Labour Force Survey from 1979–2015 and BES/BSA from 1964–2015, shows that in the 1960s only a small percentage of people had a degree and 2/3 of people left school at minimum age. Now, 1/4 of electorate has a degree and 1/4 have no qualifications

The politics of class

- **Thesis** There has been a transformation of society and class politics, but not because of class divisions but rather the “top down” influence of politicians and the media
 - Social continuity = objective inequalities between classes, perceptions of class identities and class divisions in social and political attitudes
 - Political change = change among parties (policies mainstream parties offer), politicians and the media (media representation of class)
1. **Social continuity** Class inequalities, identities and divisions in political attitudes remain potent in modern Britain [i.e. not much change in social divisions]
 - a. **Bottom-up argument** The typical argument is that there is a decline of class structure in politics, as the distinctiveness between classes has decreased. Classes are no longer monolithic sources of identity and interests (etc)
 - b. **Responses** Assumption that classes are more alike is incorrect. Evidence shows that objective inequalities, perceptions of these inequalities, awareness of class position and divisions and political ideologies of the different classes largely remain unchanged in Britain. The changes in the size of classes, however, have had dramatic consequences
 2. **Political change** The changing size of classes lead to changes in the behaviour of politicians and parties [& the media] which caused the decline of importance of class
 - a. Electoral strategy [focus on the median voter] has resulted in the convergence of political parties on the middle class voter and the exclusion of the preferences of working class people from the political mainstream, which in turn has been amplified by the disappearance of class politics from the press
 - b. **Evidence** While there was similarity between the parties at the end of the 1960s, this is sometimes exaggerated and the policy convergence only really happened in the 1990s. References to the working class was standard for Labour and even Conservatives in the post-war era, but started to fall dramatically from the late 1980s onward. After that point, class effectively disappeared from the lexicon of party politics
 3. **Consequences** The demise of class voting for mainstream parties, the rise of non-mainstream parties catering to the working class, and the huge increase in non-voting among working class people
 - a. Policy convergence weakens the motivation for choosing parties as a result of class interests or values
 - b. Politics is not just about policy; it is also about the kinds of people or groups that parties refer to and are seen to represent [i.e. it is about the parties’ image]
- Changes in policy must change people’s perception of the parties (in policy and class image terms), if not it will not lead to dramatic and persistent changes in class voting
 - Large, abrupt changes by a party are required to reshape perceptions and only multiple concurrent changes produce a transformation of the political equilibrium. Images of a party are “sticky”
 - Class-based abstention from voting increased as a result of a lack of political choice
 - Due to a lack of representation of WC interest, with the recasting of Labour as a party for MC [a top-down political change], WC people have increasingly chosen not to vote → reinforces the declining representation of WC
 - The presence of a RRP is providing a new political choice for WC (Ford and Goodwin 2014). It is now a standard finding that RRP are disproportionately supported by WC

Summary

- Trend: decline in traditional lines of political conflict; new parties succeeding while centre left and right parties hit record lows
- The authors identify socio-demographic developments that are potentially generating new cleavages in Western European democracies: the expansion of higher education; mass migration and the growing ethnic diversity of electorates; the aging of societies and sharpening of generational divides; and increased geographical segregation of populations between prospering, globalized major cities and declining hinterlands

What are political cleavages? A three-part formula

- Social-structural – cleaves exist between large social groups with conflicting interests
- Psychological – cleavages involve the perception of distinct group identities, ideological values and interests among group members
- Organisational – mobilisation of these identities, loyalties and values by political parties who then structure and institutionalise the political conflicts arising between groups

Why are new cleavages forming?

- Expansion of higher education
 - The overall share of university graduates doubled in just 25 years across Western Europe
 - They tend to be libertarians (rejecting social hierarchies, prioritising individual rights and freedom) (Flanagan 1987) + positive views towards minority groups (Strabac and Listhaug 2008) + more likely to support free trade, open borders and liberal migration policies (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007)
 - Higher education consistently predicts support for European green parties (social liberalism + internationalist and environmentalist) (Dolezal 2010)
- Mass migration and growing ethnic diversity
 - The number of EM voters in Western Europe is growing due to liberalisation of citizenship rules, increasing naturalisation of long-term resident migrants and large native-born 2nd-gen migrant-origin communities (Heath et al 2008)
 - EMs have distinct ethnic identities and cultural traditions; economically worse off; seek political representation & protection from discrimination & hostility
 - EMs gravitate towards centre-left parties (Wüst 2004, 2011) which make greater efforts to have policies that address their concerns (protection from discrimination and protection of minority culture)
 - But Inclusion Dilemma so it might not facilitate renewal of centre-left parties and instead fragment voters (EM, graduates, nativist white voters)
- Decline of white school leavers (white voters who leave formal education with the lowest level of qualifications / no qualifications)
 - Decline of WC makes them smaller, left parties shifting to centre to gain votes, shifting away from labour-capital cleavage
 - Radical right parties capitalise this and mobilise them on identity driven alignment. RRP capitalise on mass immigration and ethnic diversity triggering nationalist attitudes + loss of political influence + economic marginalisation

- Dilemma for centre-left: social liberal and cosmopolitan value of middle-class progressives and EMs are at odds with the authoritarian nationalism of traditional WC electorate even if they agree on leftist economic policy
- Dilemma for centre-right: cannot ignore competition from RRP for socially conservative and nationalist voters but adopting stronger stance can alienate more moderate voters while legitimising radical right
- Rise of RR reflects a new political cleavage. Reflecting unmooring of low-skilled white WC voters from traditional labour-capital conflict and growing alignment with second-dimension conflicts over national identity, diversity and immigration
- Aging societies
 - Average life expectancy in Western European countries increased from 70.6 in 1967 to 80.6 in 2017
 - Old voters: insulated from economic shocks (retired), hold assets, not exposed to future cost of climate change + reliant on state welfare + generational difference in value orientations (e.g. immigration, same-sex marriage)
 - Age is not yet being mobilized as a new cleavage but highlights the presence of other cleavages (e.g. immigration, climate)
- Place (geography) as a cleavage
 - Economic agglomeration (mega-cities and high-tech town attract population and skills while peripheral town have declining human and economic capital) leads to polarisation of in mix of people in different areas
 - Major cities – more socially liberal (young, educated, ethnic diverse)
 - Outlying regions – more populist and socially conservative
 - Concentration of liberal votes in cities may weaken influence of these electorates depending on the electoral system
 - Rural residents may link economic decline of their peripheral areas to political favouritism towards metropolitan areas and liberal voters within them reinforcing the urban-rural divide
 - **Example** *Gilet jaunes* in France – discontent with metropolitan Paris elite

Gingrich (2017) A New Progressive Coalition? the European Left in a Time of Change

Summary

- Left parties rely on coalition of new middle-class voters and traditional and new working-class constituencies
- This coalition is relatively cohesive on questions of economic redistribution but divided on social and cultural issues
- Recent instability in Labour's coalition reflects broader structural trend facing Left parties that are increasing salience of social and cultural issues (e.g. immigration)

Fundamental conflict

- Middle-class voters (professionals, skilled and semi-skilled service worker and white-collar employees) make up a larger proportionate of Left voters than WC and lower-skilled service workers
- Middle-class voters are more centrist in attitudes and more volatile in voting patterns
- New middle-class voters tend to be far more culturally liberal than traditional WC voters even if they both prioritise economic redistribution and social welfare when social issues become more salient and populist alternatives are available, this coalition is threatened
- If parties try to regain support of WC by moving left on economic issues, they may alienate more traditional middle-class voters

Other problems

- New middle-class voters have options within the left (e.g. green parties)
- WC voters have populist alternatives to left parties (e.g. radical right)

Implications

- Economic polarisation may be an effective strategy for shoring up support for Left parties
 - But through 1990s and 2000s Labour support was depolarise along economic preference line, as party move more to centre
 - Also likely to favour conservatives, in a FPTP system with 2 dominant parties. Due to dependence on MC voters who are likely to be more risk-averse on economic issues

Goldberg (2020) The Evolution of Cleavage Voting in Four Western Countries: Structural, Behavioural or Political Dealignment?

Summary

- Collective voting abstention of social groups (political dealignment) and turnout gaps regarding class cleavage are caused more by change in group behaviour than class structure

Theoretical argument

- Brooks et al. (2006): cleavage impact is understood in terms of the magnitude of the average difference in political alignment among groups comprising a cleavage → not only about class voting for “their party”
- Class structure does not lead to less distinctive voting directly, but through political parties adapting mobilization strategy to add to behavioural dealignment
- Argued that expansion of welfare state, diversification of mass media, rising education, mobility and multiculturalism weaken traditional sources of information, heterogenized individual life and create stronger emphasis on social issues
- Manza and Brooks (1999) found in the US small class influence on party choice but strong influence on electoral participation, may argue changing party strategies lead to non-voting *or* poorer people possess less political knowledge and interest

Data and methodology

- Great Britain, Netherlands, Switzerland and USA: all witnessed decline in cleavage voting beginning at various points of time
- DV: difference in party voting and in electoral participation for last election
- IV: different class schema per country, Switzerland Oesch scheme, Netherlands adopted Goldthorpe, UK “Registrar-General’s Social Classes”
- Demand-side analysis only, not analyze role of parties and political system

Results

- All countries see increasing heterogeneity in turnout between classes elections, started with 10-15% difference but reached maximal 40% difference in Britain and US, 30% Netherlands and 20% Swiss, however US class voting increasing influence lately
- Britain diverged 2001 → 2015 professionals turnout double that of unskilled workers, Netherlands 90s → 2010 managers 1.5x turnout that of semi- or unskilled manuals, Switzerland fluctuating since mid-90s, US gap begins in late 70s but significant in ‘04
- Lower classes e.g. unskilled workers decide increasingly more often to abstain compared to higher classes e.g. professionals, gap especially developed in more recent election meaning misrepresentation may worsen
- Shows decline is almost entirely due to behavioural changes among social groups as party-voter links significantly weakened (reduced turnout) and not due to changing group sizes
- Timing of political dealignment (turnout effects) much more parallel to behavioural dealignment (voting choice effects), may require weak cleavage voting in the first place, lose traditional party representation and then lose contact with politics

Hayes (1995) The Impact of Class on Political Attitudes: A Comparative Study of Great Britain, West Germany, Australia and the US

Summary

- Despite similarities in class structure, differences in patterns of class identification have significant effects on political attitudes

The salience of class divisions for political attitudes

- Since the 1960s it has been widely argued that class basis has dramatically declined (Clark et al. 1993), undergone “class de-alignment” as rising standards of living, social mobility, service sector growth, post-materialism undermined cohesive social foundation of class
- Britain and Australia are prototypical examples of class-based political system, strong institutionalized links between unions and labour parties, class as primary cleavage to political alignment while US and Germany class mediated and lack explicit links

Data and methodology

- Objective class position measured in Goldthorpe classification scheme: service (professionals, administrators, managers), intermediate (routine non-manual, personal service, petty bourgeoisie) and working class (agriculture, manual wage workers)
- Class identification measured in subjective placement 1 middle class, 0 working class
- Measure attitudes towards unions, government intervention, industry and business
- Regression model included both variables directly so cannot capture indirect effects of objective class through self-identification

Class position and class self-identification as independent predictors

- Overall class similarities as intermediate class largest in all four countries > 35%
- Australia least proletarianized (23% working class) has the second largest self-identified working class (55%); Germany most proletarianized (36% working class) but highest of people identifying as middle class (60%)
- 3/4s of intermediate and working class in Britain identify as working class, USA only 2/3s of working class self-identify

Impact of class on political attitudes

- Class self-identification significant in all four countries, while objective class only significant effect in Great Britain
- Except for West Germany, class self-identification shows similar or stronger strengths compared with other socio-demographic variables e.g. union member, education
- Class not equally consequential in all areas of political life, objective class fail as significant predictor of attitudes towards industry and business in Germany, business and government intervention in the US → complex and variable effects
- Difference in historical political tradition explains importance and resilience of class in determining political attitudes, limited impact of non-economic concerns in turn reinforce traditional class-party alignments

*Heath, Curtice and Elgenius (2009) Individualisation and the Decline of Class Identity

Summary

- Objective class inequalities have not disappeared but rather classes as social formations that have a sense of group belonging and solidarity have died
- The incidence of class identities overall has not declined, but the WC identity has

Theoretical arguments

1. Class as a social identity has declined due to economic growth / development and industrial restructuring (Clark and Lipset). Strong social classes are features of an earlier stage of industrial development centred on traditional manufacturing industry. Increasing affluence, social mobility and decline of trade unions and stable communities associated with heavy industries → class identity declined
2. Class as a social identity has declined due to institutional features of the post-modern society. The organisation of the labour market and the welfare state undermines class cohesion & ensures that life chances depend on decisions made by individuals (Beck)
 - a. Success in the competitive labour market depends on individuals' ability to acquire educational qualifications and the personal career choices they make → they are forced to take charge of their own lives → class position no longer viewed as a predictor of life trajectory
 - b. The welfare state assigns rights and responsibilities to people based on the decisions they make as individuals rather than their membership of collective groups or social institutions such as the family
3. Class as a social identity has declined due to top-down changes
 - a. Class identities are not simply spontaneous grass root occurrences but can be stimulated or inhibited by political organisation. The movement of Labour away from the working class image (under Kinnock, Blair) → WC identity no longer promoted → fewer people feel impetus to acknowledge class

Empirical material BES since 1964 and 2005 BSA survey

Conclusions

- There has been a small but noticeable decline in the strength of belonging to one's class, but people still use the language of class and there has been little change in the proportions who are willing to assign themselves to a class (prompted or unprompted)
- Class identities are increasingly decoupled from one's social origins
- Class identities are increasingly decoupled from one's current occupation → this seems to reflect more social mobility rather than a decrease in class identity
- Dramatic decline in the relationship between adherence to class identity and individuals' political attitude and partisanship, as measured by its relationship with support for Labour
- There is no indication that the trends were given any marked impetus by the Thatcherite reforms of the 1980s that liberalised the labour market, which according to Beck's argument would have led to the decline of class identities accelerating
- In every case where change has happened, it accelerated in Britain during the era of New Labour, especially in the decline in the relationship between class identity and Labour partisanship. Thus, political top-down development (option 3) seems like the best explanation of the decline in class identity

Abstract

- Examines different aspects of political choice, and investigates whether voters are more likely to respond to the social or policy cues that parties send voters
- The results suggest that, in Britain, the former are more important than the latter
- Central implication: social representation matters, and the social background of political representatives influences how voters relate to political parties

Introduction

- In the British context the policy polarization thesis helps explain the decline of class voting in the 1990s, but does not shed light on why class voting was so strong in the 1960s and 1970s, when there was also little ideological difference between CON/LAB → there may be other factors that condition the relative strength of social cleavages
- I draw a distinction between political choice based on policy or ‘substantive’ representation and political choice based on social or ‘descriptive’ representation
- There is a growing body of work that shows, at least as far as voters are concerned, that descriptive (or social representation) matters
- One explanation: the public use the social background of politicians as a heuristic shortcut for making judgments about what sort of policy their party will pursue; thus the social background of MPs influences party image, which in turn influences voting

Data

- Merged dataset: BES 1964-2010 for social characteristics and voting behaviour; data from Manifesto Research Group for policy representation and policy platforms; data from Datacube project for social representation and MPs’ occupational background
- DV: recall of vote choice in the last general election; IV: social class

Findings

- Somewhat contrary to the expectations of the strategic incentives hypothesis, during the 1970s the Labour party moved substantially to the left and stayed there for the best part of twenty years → casts doubt on the political choice perspective
- There is much clearer evidence to suggest that as the electorate became more middle class so did Labour representatives
- Working-class voters are more likely to think that the Labour party is left wing and stands for traditional working-class policy interests when their local MP is from a working-class rather than a middle-class background

Conclusion

- I find much stronger evidence for social [descriptive] representation effects on class voting. This shows that the social cues that parties send to voters matter, and that voters are perhaps not as instrumental or individualistic in their voting decisions as is sometimes portrayed in the policy representation literature
- Whereas policy representation implies an individualistic and instrumental calculus (which may be aggregated to the group level), social representation implies a more group orientated and expressive calculus, which explicitly engages with social identity theory and social distance theory

Jansen, Evans and de Graaf (2013) Class voting and Left–Right party positions: A comparative study of 15 Western democracies, 1960–2005

Note: This is basically Ch 3 of [Evans and de Graaf \(eds\) \(2013\)](#)

Two approaches to the decline of class voting

- Bottom-up approach: has assumed that the decline of rigid, monolithic class structures accounts for declining levels of class voting
 - Various explanations: see [Evans and Tilley \(2012\)](#)
 - Class conflict is also believed to be replaced by newly politicized social cleavages such as gender, or new post-material value cleavages
 - Gradualist nature of social changes → gradual political changes → there should be a smooth and monotonic decline in class politics
- Top-down (party choice) approach: political change is more discrete, traceable to changes in party strategies and new parties that shape the focus of political debates and party representation
 - The degree to which parties offer choices that are more or less relevant to differences in interests between classes should condition the extent of class voting; class voting is also conditioned by the extent to which political parties are seen to be associated with interests of different social classes
 - Not exclusively top-down because party strategy itself is conditioned by structural changes: deindustrialization, market liberalization, globalization

Data and measurement

- Cleavage voting: we analyze data of a new dataset of no less than 188 national surveys; most surveys used in this article were originally integrated in the International Social Mobility and Politics (ISMP) file
- Manifestos: we construct a scale using data from the Comparative Manifesto Project
- Evaluation: There is undoubtedly measurement error in the CMP data and because of the need for cross-national comparability our measures are of the Left–Right position of party family groups rather than individual parties; class, too, has been measured quite crudely without differentiating between higher and lower professional and managerial positions

Conclusion

- Social class has undeniably weakened as a basis of left-right party choice; the most apparent exception to the pattern is the US, where differences in voting between the working class and the self-employed are increasing rather than decreasing
- Our results are consistent with the erosion of class voting in modern democracies, but class continues to have an impact on party choice in most countries; the large majority of the variation in the strength of class voting is not associated with linear decline
- Our results in part support the idea that compositional structural changes lead to changes in class voting, as changes in background characteristics (age, gender, and education) are partly responsible for the decline in political divisions between classes – approximately 1/5 of the linear decline is accounted for by these variables
- No evidence for the idea that left–right positions of left-wing parties alone influence the association between class and vote, but the polarization of parties along the left-right dimension is associated with substantially higher levels of class voting [i.e. absolute ideology doesn't matter, but relative ideology does]

Lipset (1960) Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics

Summary

- Class voting mediated by belief in mobility, traditionalism and party competition to maintain sufficient participation to maintain healthy participation for democratic state

The sociology of politics

- Cleavage contributes to integration of society and organization, by unions gain representation, societal norms of tolerance require continued conflicts to sustain
- Tocqueville emphasized aspects of social units which could maintain political cleavage and consensus at the same time e.g. branches of government, private associations, social basis to sustain political competition against state dominance
- Weber saw bureaucratization as institutional form prerequisite for highly industrial society, shift focus from economic system to social and political conditions, fear growth of superstate will lead to downfall of due process and rule of law

Participation in democracy

- Stable democracy requires a situation in which all major parties include supporters from many segments of population, Tory worker not merely deviant from class pattern but required for democracy so as not to rule out compromise
- A state in which a large part of the population is apathetic is one which consent cannot be taken for granted and consensus may actually be weak, disadvantaged groups are underrepresented due to combination of low vote and lack of organization
- However sudden increase in turnout reflects tension and serious governmental malfunctioning, introduces individuals whose social attitudes are unhealthy from the point of view of a democracy (myopic, unwilling to think independently) to voting

Elections as the expression of democratic class struggle

- Left voting originates from deprivation under existing socioeconomic system (income, work conditions, low prestige) affecting groups differently, facilitated political response by
 - (1) Channels of communication: Germany 1953 survey find correlation between size of plant and leftist vote (under 10 workers 28%, above 1000 workers 57%)
 - (2) Belief in opportunities for individual mobility: US rags-to-riches myth
 - (3) Traditionalism: resignation to traditional standard and loyalty to the “powers that be”, 1952 France 47% of women pay attention to church position when voting
- While lower classes vote their self-interest, besides responsible elites maintaining leadership for success of paternalism (Disraeli) or false class consciousness (Marx), key is constant adjustments made by parties to keep the system in balance
- Cross-pressures resulting from multiple-group affiliations or loyalties account for much of deviation from dominant pattern of a given group
- US: New Deal revolution, urbanization and industrialization of the country led to rise in class cleavages against regionalism (South), but conservatives to gain poor vote will always attempt to reduce saliency of class in politics

Abstract

- Luttig assesses the influence of both income inequality and the changing structure of income inequality on Americans' public policy mood. Contrary to various theories, rising inequality and a shift in the distribution of income to those at the top has led to increasing support for conservatism in America as opposed to liberal policies

How income inequality has changed

- Income distribution in America has shifted towards the very wealthy over the past 30 years (Piketty & Saez 2003) making it the most unequal of advanced democracies (Piketty and Saez 2006)

Theoretical arguments

- Rational model of public opinion
 - Expects that rising inequality would lead to increasing demand for redistribution amongst lower-income citizens e.g. Meltzer and Richard (1981) – as mean income separates from median income, the median voter will increasingly support redistribution
- Models of public opinion rooted in social affinity
 - Lupu and Pontusson (2011) argue that social affinity between classes drives preference for redistribution. As the middle class becomes economically closer (further) to the poor relative to the rich, MC should increasingly (decreasingly) support redistribution
 - These hypotheses derive from 'altruism bounded by perceptions of common group membership or shared experience'
 - On this view, it is the structure of inequality (relative distances between classes) that matters more than the absolute level of inequality

Data and measurement

- IV: inequality – the 95–50-percent income ratio and the 50–20-percent income ratio
- DV: Stimson (1991)'s public mood
- Controls: ideological direction of policy, measures of unemployment and inflation

Findings and conclusion

- Inequality and public mood appear to be in a self-reinforcing relationship, decreasing demands for redistribution among the public, rich and poor alike
- Changes in the structure of inequality have meaningful and opposed impacts on the opinions of the lower and upper classes
- Both the *absolute* level and *changing* structure of inequality have largely been a force promoting conservatism, not increasing support for redistribution as theoretically expected
- There may be factors other than income and class that hinder MC affinity with the poor, limiting ability of increasing skew to increase liberalism among MC
- Inequality may be a proxy for political polarisation, leading individuals to rely less on income or social-class identity and more on political identity in forming economic opinions

Nieuwbeerta (1996) The democratic class struggle in postwar societies: Class voting in twenty countries, 1945-1990

Abstract

- Using simple measures of absolute class voting and simple class schemes, almost all studies showed that levels of class voting differed between countries and declines in levels of class voting occurred in most countries in the postwar period
- Recently, scholars have argued that using measures of relative class voting and more detailed class schemes might yield different conclusions
- Different measurement procedures do not lead to essentially different conclusions

Introduction

- The purpose of this article is to describe the strength of the relationship between class and voting behaviour in Western industrialized countries in the postwar period
- Uses both the old measures and the new measures and compares the results to see to what extent conclusions from traditional studies were flawed

Earlier studies on class voting

Table 1. Characteristics of studies describing variations in class voting.

	First generation (...-1970s)	Second generation (1960s-...)	Third generation (1980s-...)
Questions	Are there differences between countries in absolute class voting? and: Are there trends in absolute class voting within countries?	Are there differences between countries in absolute class voting? and: Are there trends in absolute class voting within countries?	Are there differences between countries in relative class voting? and: Are there trends in relative class voting within countries?
Class measurement	Manual/non-manual classes	Manual/non-manual classes, more detailed class schemes	Standardized, detailed class schemes (EGP classes)
Techniques	Cross-tabulations Alford index: percentage differences Eyeballing	Cross-tabulations, linear regression	(Log-)odds-ratios, loglinear models
Data	Limited number of countries, short period	Long-term trends in single countries; Differences between countries in single period	So far: trends in single countries
Examples of descriptive studies	Alford (1963), Lenski (1970), Lipset (1983), Korpi (1983)	Kemp (1978), Franklin et al. (1992)	Heath et al. (1985, 1991, 1995), Goldthorpe (1994), Hout et al. (1994), Weakliem & Heath (1994), Ringdal & Hines (1995)

Data and operationalizations

- Twenty countries: all countries in Western Europe (except Iceland), Canada, the US, and Australia
- Dichotomized political parties: left-wing (including US Democrats) or right-wing
- Class: manual/non-manual dichotomy and EGP (Erikson, Goldthorpe, Portocarrero)

Class voting

- Realignment / compositional argument: increasing proportions of the (more left-wing) service class and of (more left-wing) skilled workers → a more left-wing non-manual class but a less left-wing manual class → declined manual/non-manual class voting
- The various measures of class voting yielded the same results: there were substantial differences in levels of relative class voting across democratic industrialized countries in the post-war period; in many countries levels of class voting have substantially declined over the postwar period; most fluctuations can be regarded as part of a trend
- **Evaluation** Did not examine class-specific voting behaviour; did not seek explanations for differences and trends

O'Grady (2017) How Do Economic Circumstances Determine Preferences? Evidence From Long-Run Panel Data

Summary

- Theory: much of the time, people rely on longer-run values as a heuristic to guide their preferences, and are unlikely to shift their views in response to short-run changes in their economic circumstances. Only large changes in economic circumstances provide the information and motivation needed for people to change their preferences
- Stable long-run preferences are shaped mainly by early socialization, which includes economic/ideological influences from the family, and early labour market experiences
- Data: Swiss Household Panel Survey, 1999-2009 and 2011
- DV: whether respondents favour an increase or decrease in 1) federal social spending, 2) tax on high incomes; IV: 1) household income, measured pre tax and transfers, and 2) respondents' subjective assessment of their risk of unemployment; controls: gender, education, age, canton of residence

Economic circumstances and policy preferences: an unresolved debate

- Whether political choice is based on economic circumstances or long-term values has implications for whether changes in circumstances will affect political choice
- Primacy of material interest: based on median voter model, which argues voters' incomes determine preferences
 - Higher income inequality → median voter has more to gain → support for redistribution raises; those with higher risk of unemployment should be more supportive of redistributive policies to avoid unemployment
 - Poorer and more insecure voters are found to be more supportive of social policy, but voters have not responded to higher inequality by demanding more action to reduce income differences, possibly due to lack of full information
- Role of long-run ideologies: material interest generally plays a minor role
 - Successful in explaining preferences e.g. govt health provision, immigration
 - But then unclear why poorer voters are much more supportive of social policy
- Both sets of studies offer important insights but can't fully explain empirical patterns

Theoretical argument

- Voters are boundedly rational → changes in economic circumstances will not alter preferences when informational/cognitive/opportunity costs are high for most voters
- Long-run ideological values serve as readily available heuristics
- Socialization is a cultural phenomenon (people assimilate their parents' values) but also an economic process (youth is a time when material interest is more likely to change preferences because economic experiences convey a lot of novel information)

Results

- Preferences are quite stable and unresponsive to income and unemployment risk; there is tentative evidence for large changes in circumstance changing preferences
- Having left-wing parents and coming from poor families both increased support for left-wing policies (accounting for the fact that these variables are mutually correlated)
- When the young experience positive/negative labour market experiences over a number of years, they are much more likely than the old to change their preferences
- **Implication** Greater inequality may not increase aggregate support for redistribution

O'Grady (2018) Careerists Versus Coal-Miners: Welfare Reforms and the Substantive Representation of Social Groups in the British Labour Party

Abstract

- Many parties have seen declines in WC legislators and increases in professional career politicians. Changes in the representation of these occupational groups matter substantively whenever legislators' strategic concerns contradict the interests of working-class voters. Welfare reforms adopted in the 1990s and 2000s by the British Labour Party exhibit this divergence. The two types of politicians held very different policy positions. The results carry over to voting behavior and are robust to alternative explanations. The changing representation of occupational groups has therefore had substantive policy effects, lowering the political influence of WC voters

Labour under Blair

- The balance of power between working-class legislators (MPs) and careerists shifted dramatically. The former had a stronger ideological attachment to **welfare provision** because it benefits working-class voters, whereas the latter's greater concerns for electoral success and career advancement pointed toward supporting **welfare reforms**
- When it first achieved electoral success in the 1920s, more than 70% of its MPs were drawn from working-class occupations (Norris & Levendusky, 1995). That proportion declined gradually over the 20th century, but did so particularly rapidly from the mid-1980s onward – 8% based on data from the 2010-15 parliament
- The two groups of legislators behave [relatively] differently for three reasons
 - Occupational Socialization: The tendency of occupations to directly shape people's ideologies and priorities
 - Differential Recruitment: The tendency of people with certain traits and characteristics to enter particular professions to begin with
 - Different Career Incentives faced by the two groups

Data

- I measure MPs' policy positions from their speeches, because party discipline with voting is very high, and rebellious voting behavior among MPs is rare
- **Controls** Age, sex, race, and whether or not the MP received a university education
- The results confirm that occupational background is strongly correlated with rhetoric
- The regression results for the second period are essentially unchanged when the benefit use rate of each MP's constituency is added
- Electoral competitiveness does not affect results because the size of MPs' majorities simply is not very predictive of their position (WC MPs had larger majorities on average, while careerists were more likely to represent marginal constituencies, and the differences were significant)
- **Caveat** Careerist MPs under Corbyn face a potential dilemma between supporting the leadership to further their own careers inside the party and opposing the leadership if its policies are likely to lose elections, whereas both motives were aligned under Blair
- **Caveat** WC people and electorally crucial swing voters seemed to be opposed on the issue of welfare reform. Today, the British benefits system has become much less popular, including among lower income voters. Their views are probably more aligned with the median voter than in the past. That removes one potential source of conflict between middle-class MPs and MPs from lower income backgrounds

Oesch (2006) Coming to Grips with a Changing Class Structure: An Analysis of Employment Stratification in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland

Summary

- The theoretical bases of a new class schema are outlined that partly shifts its focus from hierarchical boundaries to horizontal cleavages: the salaried middle class is not conceptualized as a unitary grouping and the manual/non-manual divide not used as a class boundary. Instead, heavy emphasis is put on the difference in the work logic of various occupational groups

Introduction

- Over the last 30 years, trends such as service sector growth, welfare state expansion and rising female participation rates have substantially altered Western Europe’s employment structure. At the upper end of the occupational hierarchy, educational upgrading has fostered the growth of the salaried middle class. At the lower end, deindustrialization has reduced the numbers of the unskilled industrial workforce, while routine service jobs taken on by women have been on the rise. The occupational system has thus become both more heterogeneous and more opaque

Table 1 The Dimensions at the Basis of the Three Different Work Logics of Employees

	Technical work logic	Organizational work logic	Interpersonal work logic
1. <i>Setting of work process</i>	Work process determined by technical production parameters	Bureaucratic division of labour	Service setting based on face-to-face exchange
2. <i>Relations of authority</i>	Working outside the lines of command for higher grades, working within a clear-cut command structure for lower grades	Working within a bureaucratic command structure that corresponds to a career sequence	Working largely outside the lines of command
3. <i>Primary orientation</i>	Orientation towards the professional community or group of trades	Primary orientation towards the employing organization	Orientation towards the client, student, patient or petitioner
4. <i>Skill requirements</i>	Scientific expertise for higher grades, crafts and manual skills for lower grades	Coordination and control skills for higher grades, clerical skills for lower grades	Expertise and communicative skills for higher grades, social skills for lower grades

Conclusions

- There is little doubt that an individual’s location in the employment structure continues to determine his or her life chances and to affect his or her political behaviour. Yet in order to make this link visible, these locations must be differentiated more precisely
- Within the category of employees, heavy emphasis is given to a threefold horizontal division between occupations governed by technical expertise and craft (the technical work logic), occupations involving the administration of bureaucratic power (the organizational work logic) and occupations employed in the face-to-face servicing of people’s social demands (the interpersonal service logic)
- At the level of the middle classes, my analyses confirm the marked difference between managers and sociocultural professionals with respect to party support and collective organization. Although specialists of the social and cultural services benefit from an employment relationship that is comparable to that of managers, they are significantly more likely to support ‘New Politics’ parties on the left. The divide within the salaried middle class is under-pinned by figures for union membership, revealing a large disparity between sociocultural specialists’ high levels of collective organization and managers’ low levels

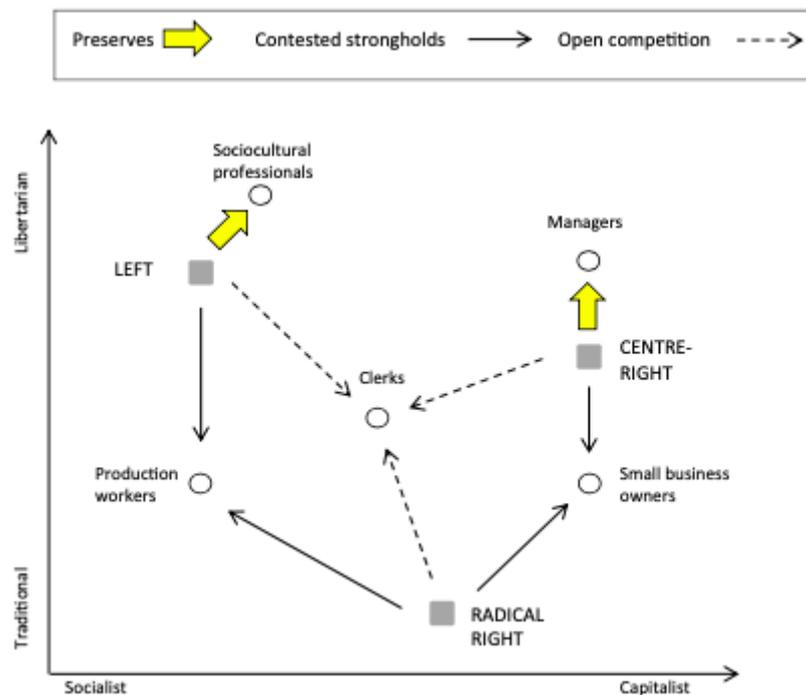
Oesch and Rennwald (2018) Electoral competition in Europe's new tripolar political space:
Class voting for the left, centre-right and radical right

Summary

- The electoral rise of radical right-wing parties led to the formation of 3 political poles
- A model of class voting that distinguishes between classes that are a party's preserve, classes that are contested strongholds of two parties and classes over which there is an open competition
 - Sociocultural professionals are the party preserve of the left; large employers and managers are the preserve of the centre-right
 - But the radical right competes with the centre-right for small business owners, and challenges the left over its working-class stronghold
- Old patterns of class voting, structured by economic conflict (production workers vote for the left and business owners for the centre-right based on economic attitudes)
- New patterns of class voting, structured by cultural conflict (linked to radical right)

Theoretical argument

- The rise of the radical right has contributed – together with the rise of the new left and green parties a decade earlier – to a process of realignment between sociodemographic groups and political parties → increase in class voting
- Class voting defined as the presence of systematic links between voters' class location – their position in the labour market – and the parties they support



- Two dimensions of competition
 - Economic: socialist–capitalist (income redistribution vs free market solutions)
 - Cultural: traditional–libertarian (politics of identity)

	Socialist	Capitalist
Libertarian (migration and multiculturalism)	Left	Centre-right
Traditional	Radical right (economic policy is of subordinate importance to cultural issues)	

- Voter's class positions may affect both their economic *and* cultural attitudes, because their jobs expose them to experiences of autonomy and control and a specific set of social interactions. These work experiences likely contribute to shaping their values on both economic and cultural issues → systemic differences in class voting
- Individuals' identities are not only forged by their occupation and class, but also by religion, language or nationality. Party choice is determined by the identity that is most salient, and also depends on parties' efforts to articulate different identities and mobilise around particular conflicts (Bornschieer 2010: 58-59)

Conclusion

- Our analysis confirms the hypotheses about the party poles' preserves. While the left receives disproportionate support among sociocultural professionals, the centre-right dominates among large employers, self-employed professionals and managers. Sociocultural professionals' attachment to the (new) left owes as much to cultural as to economic preferences. In contrast, the endorsement of the centre-right by employers and their agents is primarily motivated by economic attitudes. With electoral shares of 50 per cent, one can rightfully talk about party preserves in the case of sociocultural professionals on the left, large employers and managers on the right
- At the same time, political parties cannot solely rely on the mobilisation of their party preserves to reach electoral majorities. Given the small size of the different classes, parties only obtain stable majorities if they succeed in creating new coalitions of voters. Our analysis suggests that with the shrinking of the two traditional party poles and the rise of the radical right, the forging of solid coalitions will become more difficult in the new tripolar political space. The tripolar electoral competition may thus also inaugurate a new period of increased government instability in Western Europe

Rigby and Wright (2013) Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States

Abstract

- The authors find little evidence that low-income preferences get incorporated in parties' campaign appeals

Introduction

- Political systems cannot respond (well) to all citizens as political equals if citizens hold different resources → income inequality prompts concern about political equality
- In recent years, the resource demands on parties have reached new heights → increased reliance on support from wealthy citizens → greater incentive for parties to assess and understand the priorities of their wealthy donors
- Democratic contributors more liberal on social issues but similar on economic issues compared to other Dems; Republican contributors more conservative on economic issues but similar on social issues compared to other Reps → incentive for Dems to align with the rich on social issues and Reps to align with the poor on social issues
- Income inequality produces electorates that are smaller but also wealthier

Data and measurement

- National Annenberg Election Survey: large sample of the 2000 presidential electorate (58373) with a substantial number of respondents from all 48 continental states
- National Political Awareness Tests: 18467 surveys completed by D/R candidates for state legislature, Congress, or governor → aggregated to measure state party ideology
- Public policy preferences (by low/middle/high income groups): lower income → more economically liberal; higher income → more socially liberal

Empirical strategy and results

- **Representation as alignment vs influence:** how well state parties' ideologies covary with the preferences of each income group vs whose preferences are responded to on issues in which constituents of different income groups disagree
- Economic issues: little alignment between Democratic party positions and the opinion of either low- or middle-income citizens, only alignment with high-income citizens (this group alone has independent influence); Republican party positions exhibit almost parallel associations for both middle- and high-income citizens, but neither group has independent influence
- Social issues: both parties exhibit alignment with the preferences of all three income groups when considered alone, but when income groups disagree, Democratic parties are most responsive to the distinct preferences of the high-income group, Republican parties are most aligned with the distinct preferences of the middle-income group
- Income inequality across states: for both economic and social issues, Democratic parties' responsiveness varied (greater income inequality associated w/ even more of a skew in responsiveness toward the upper-income third) but not Republican parties

Conclusion

- The representation of low-income citizens only occurs when their preferences happen to concur with the preferences of their economic betters; when their preferences diverge, those preferences seem to be left off of the active agenda

Rueda (2005) Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties

Summary

- Social democratic parties only benefit labour insiders with secure employment but ignore outsiders, abandoned goal of equality and security to most vulnerable sector of labour

The emergence of insider/outsider

- Traditional partisanship school believes social democrats promote interests of labour, as disproportionately affected by unemployment expected to promote employment
- By 1970s growth, stability and union activism meant firms accepted highly restrictive tenure and severance pay, “insiderness” emerged as insulated from unemployment
- Commitment of full employment poses less conflict for insider and outsider, but faced difficulty when developing Keynesian policies after early 70s → end of the golden age of social democracy
- Insider: employed full-time with permanent job, employed part-time due to preference
Outsider: unemployed, employed in fixed-term or temporary jobs
Up-Scale: self-employed and employed managers

Hypothesis

- Insiders benefit from higher level of employment protection legislation, outsiders more concerned about labour market policies (so closer to up-scale constituency)
- If Social Democrats have insiders as a core constituency, they would pursue employment protection rather than labour market policies
- Employment Protection: number of months of severance pay a blue collar with 10 years of service receives upon termination without cause
- Labour Market Policies: OECD data on active and passive labour market policies

Analysis

- Left labour power variable insignificant to labour market policies, lack of pro-outsider orientation in governments of the Left, while partisanship 95% significance to severance pay
- In presence of insider-outsider conflict, strong temptation for social democratic governments to implement inegalitarian policies, also explain why some feel unrepresented by mainstream parties
- As number of outsiders and under weaker unions (making insiders more vulnerable to unemployment, aligning insider-outsider interests), may lead to emergence of “third way” pro-outsider labour market policies on the left
- Recent years see growing acceptance of active labour market policies as tool to reduce unemployment, included in EU official strategy in 1994 → perceived effectiveness may influence social democratic strategies

Rydgren (ed) (2012) Class politics and the radical right

Note: here is a helpful [review](#) which I basically read instead of the book itself

Summary

- Provides strong evidence in support of a structured but puzzling multidimensionality, which also includes identity and cultural issues (not just economic issues)
- Illustrates the relevance of cultural motivations mixed with a perception of a loss of social prestige as the main reasons for the success of radical right parties

Comparative perspective: who votes for RRPs?

- Ch 1 (Bornshier and Kriesi): the typical RRP voter possesses an intermediate level of education, is a male manual worker, and has some kind of interest in politics; the driving force for the success of RRPs in Western Europe is mainly non-material, as 'cultural, not economic modernization losers support the extreme right' (27)
- Ch 2 (Oesch) comparative analysis of Austria, Denmark, Norway, and Switzerland shows that the confrontation between the RRPs and the New Left has led to the emergence of a 'full grown cleavage in the Bartolini and Mair (1990) sense' (31)
- Ch 3 (van der Brug et al): the vote for the RRPs finds its motivations in policy considerations related to the issues of immigration, multiculturalism, and, to a lesser extent, the EU
- Ch 7 (Ivaresflaten and Stubager): the support for RRPs does not appear to be related to material conditions but rather 'is ideational in nature' (135)
- Ch 8 (Coffé): 'class seems a more salient force driving RRPs voting behaviour among men compared to women' (152)

The dynamics of competition between centre-left and RRPs

- Ch 4 (Arzheimer): West European centre-left parties' move towards the centre → they may find themselves squeezed between the New Right and the New Left; staying put cannot win working-class voters back, and toughening up immigration policies does not seem to work and may alienate other social groups; the only option is to decrease the salience of immigration, but unlikely given other parties' strategic interests
- Ch 5 (Bale, Hough, and van Kessel): a miscalculated counter-strategy against the radical right may have perverse effects (e.g. New Labour's overreaction against the BNP resulted in a serious loss of credibility the issues of immigration and asylum)
- Ch 6 (Betz and Meret): RRPs have increasingly advanced socio-economic policy propositions traditionally associated with the left

Case studies

- Ch 9 (Gougou and Mayer): the French National Front's success is the result of the detachment of the working class from the left, re-polarization of political debate over new lines, and generational change → new centrality for cultural issues
- Ch 10 (Oskarson and Demker): cultural concerns are also the reason behind the rise and the success of the Sweden Democrats, as the mvmt of mainstream parties towards libertarian positions arguably has allowed the mobilization of 'authoritarian' attitudes
- Ch 11 (Goodwin and Cutts): study of the BNP highlight the fact that its performance in the 2010 elections was influenced more by the intensity of the electoral campaign than by structural factors such as cultural, economic, or demographic change
- Ch 12 (Minkenberg and Pytlas): study of Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia shows that

there isn't a clear class profile of RRP voters, even though such parties in Eastern Europe share a common emphasis on economic protectionism and nationalism

Critical commentary (ch 13)

- Kitschelt argues that most chapters underestimate the supply-side of the rise of RRPs

*Weakliem and Heath (1994) Rational choice and class voting

Summary

- Examines the rationality of class voting
- The substantial direct effect of class that remained after controlling for attitudes suggests that processes of social influence can affect voting directly, rather than operating through beliefs – contradicts the basic assumption of rational choice theory

Theoretical argument

- Rational choice theory: WC votes for the left because of economic self-interest
 - **Problem** Class is not just a proxy for income; the theoretical problem is to explain the relation between *class* and vote, not income and vote
 - **Problem** It is not clear that there is a straightforward link between redistribution [what the left promises] and economic self-interest

Data and methodology

- Data: 1987 British Election Study
- Class: Erikson and Goldthorpe's (1992) schema of seven classes

Findings

- Class and income: the income differences between the classes are indeed substantial, but so too are the differences in chances of unemployment, access to private pensions and the opportunities for advancement
- Class and vote
 - The differences between the classes in their voting behaviour cannot be wholly explained by their income levels; although class and income both have effects on voting, class is the stronger influence
 - Economic policy preferences are correlated with class and have a substantial effect on vote; controlling for preferences fails to eliminate the class effects
- So, there is more class polarization than would be expected if voters were acting rationally given their attitudes. This fact suggests that policy preferences are not the only link between class and vote
- Perceptions and vote
 - Conservative success depends primarily on being seen as a non-class party, whereas Labour success depends more on being seen as serving the social groups to which the voter belongs
 - But being seen as concerned with all classes is an asset to both parties
 - The perception of the parties as more interested in particular classes does not account for class voting

Conclusions

- Class has a substantial effect on party choice in contemporary Britain
- Class differences remain after controlling both for “objective” interests and for “subjective” interests as defined by attitudes toward economic issues
- This suggests that processes of social influence can affect voting directly, rather than operating through beliefs
- Voters do not evaluate the parties in the same way – but this does not necessarily represent a departure from rationality