

Crowded Coalitions: How Demographics, Ideology, and Issue Priorities Divide the Contemporary American Parties*

Ryan Bakker

Department of Political Science, University of Georgia
rbakker@uga.edu

Christopher Hare

Department of Political Science, University of California, Davis
cdhare@ucdavis.edu

Robert N. Lupton

Department of Political Science, Michigan State University
luptonro@msu.edu

Keith T. Poole

Department of Political Science, University of Georgia
ktpoole@uga.edu

May 9, 2016

*We thank Christopher Lawrence, Gabriel Lenz, and Geoffrey Sheagley for providing helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper that were presented at the 2015 annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association and the 2016 annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. We also thank Miles T. Armaly, Adam Enders, Troy Gibson, Gary Jacobson, and William G. Jacoby for their helpful comments and suggestions for revision.

Abstract

Previous political polarization scholarship analyzes differences between the parties at the elite and mass levels, but far less attention has been afforded to internal party fractures in the contemporary American electorate. In this paper, we use a mixture modeling approach to analyze the nature and extent of demographic, policy and value cleavages between and within partisans in the mass public. The method we employ does not impose a typology on the data, but rather estimates a classification of voters that maximizes the internal homogeneity of the classes. Consistent with prevailing theories of party coalitions, our results indicate that six latent classes—three for each party—are necessary to model the diversity characteristics and political views of American voters. Moreover, in accordance with recent work documenting the asymmetric nature of the two major parties, we show that Republican fissures are ideologically driven, whereas demographic characteristics most divide Democrats.

1 Introduction

Institutional and behavioral factors explain the resiliency of the American two-party system. Electoral rules are influential determinants of the number of electorally viable parties in a given political system (Cox, 1997), and plurality, or “winner-take-all” voting rules (as in the United States), promote the existence of two-party competition (Benoit, 2001; Duverger, 1954; Singh, 2012; Singer, 2013).¹ Moreover, ballot restrictions and campaign finance laws act as additional barriers to entry for minor parties (Rosenstone, Behr and Lazarus, 1984). The behavioral response to these institutional features buttresses the American two-party system, as partisan loyalties to either the Democratic or Republican parties are formed early, are tremendously durable and serve as the primary heuristic that voters use to process political information and formulate voting decisions (Campbell et al., 1960; Green, Palmquist and Shickler, 2002; Druckman, Peterson and Slothuus, 2013).

Hence, despite growing numbers of self-described independents in the electorate and regular predictions from political pundits that the emergence of a third party is either needed or on the horizon, no such scenario has come to fruition in contemporary American politics. However, these empirical trends and predictions for change are based upon a reasonable premise: Two parties are almost certainly too few to accommodate the diversity of interests and attitudes that exist in the American mass public. Both the Democratic and Republican parties have been characterized as “big tents,” often assembling a peculiar set of groups in their electoral coalitions. Consequently, the parties are perpetually roiled—sometimes destructively so—by internal divisions.

In this paper, we set out to gain a better understanding of the nature of internal party divisions in the contemporary American electorate. Our approach differs from efforts like the Pew Research Center’s Political Typology,² which divides voters into eight pre-defined groups. Instead, we use a form of mixture modeling known as latent class analysis (LCA) that groups respondents into blocs, or classes, based upon individuals’ response patterns to a series of demographic, issue attitude and core value questions. The classes are not defined *a priori*, but instead are estimated to maximize homogeneity across the variables within each of the classes.

This approach allows us to assess both the number and characteristics of each party’s coalitions in the mass public. That is, we hope to identify empirically, for the first time, the *specific* demographic characteristics, issues and values that internally divide the major party coalitions, and how such intra-party cleavages overlies one another. Our analysis includes questions designed to specifically tap into potential internal party divisions using items that do not appear on standard public opinion surveys. Namely, we solicited respondents’ attitudes toward salient issues such as police militarization, government surveillance, and religious conscience protections for opponents of abortion and same-sex marriage. In all, we fit a latent class model to 74 demographic, values, and policy and variables, allowing us to uncover intra-party divisions that heretofore have been undetected in empirical examinations of traditional public opinion data.

We then use the estimated classes to test the “parties as coalitions” theory at the mass level (Karol, 2009; Bawn et al., 2012; Noel, 2013). In this view, parties are best understood as

¹These effects are both mechanical and psychological (Blais et al., 2011; Fiva and Folke, Forthcoming). That is, beyond the mechanical impact of the electoral formula translating votes into seats, plurality voting rules exert psychological effects on parties and voters that discourage third parties from competing for, and gaining, elected office due to spoiler effects.

²See <http://people-press.org/2014/06/26/the-political-typology-beyond-red-vs-blue/>.

“coalitions of groups with intense preferences on issues managed by politicians” (Karol, 2009, p. 7). This theory infers that party coalitions should place greater priority on issues on which they are aligned with their respective party—if and when they differ, it should be on issues they find less salient. We test this proposition by examining how respondents’ issue priorities vary by latent class.

Our findings show that six latent classes—three for each party—are needed to account for the heterogeneity that exists among Democratic and Republican survey respondents. The differences among the Democratic classes are primarily demographic (though not absent policy divisions): One class is predominantly white, educated and affluent; a second class is mostly non-white, less educated and poorer. A third Democratic class encompasses respondents who are younger, more politically apathetic and libertarian, favoring social liberalism and economic conservatism. The Republican classes capture the familiar divide between ideologically consistent conservatives and those who are economically conservative but socially liberal. However, the analysis also reveals a sizable class of downscale, politically apathetic Republicans who are economically liberal but socially conservative, resembling the individuals who Ellis and Stimson (2012) label “conflicted conservatives.” Members of the four ideologically inconsistent classes are more likely to defect from their party in House, Senate, and presidential voting.

Our results also provide mass-level support for the “parties as coalitions” theory. Members of the latent classes (our operationalization of the blocs constituting the contemporary American parties) prioritize issues on which they are ideologically closer to their party. This findings help to explain the resilience of the current ideological configuration of the American parties—while policy cross-pressures are clearly present among four of the six latent classes, these classes attach little importance to these issues. With both sets of findings, this paper contributes to the party coalitions, public opinion and voting behavior literatures by providing a richer and more detailed portrait of the nature and extent of intra-party cleavages in American politics, which—although integral to contemporary theories of political parties—nonetheless are too often overlooked in current debates regarding polarization.

2 Party Coalitions in American Politics

The two-party system requires American political parties to assemble broad coalitions—always diverse, sometimes vulnerable—of interests and identities in the electorate. In Aldrich’s (2011) influential view, parties are a solution to a series of collective action problems confronting both politicians and activists. Parties, then, continually struggle with the tradeoff between ideological purity and electoral viability, an especially pressing concern under plurality voting rules that disincentivize niche parties Cox (1997). The Democratic and Republican parties generally have been successful in uniting numerous and disparate actors under broad ideological tenets that change—at most—only glacially over time. For the better part of the last century, for example, the Democratic Party has emphasized social justice and an extended understanding of equality, whereas the Republican Party has stressed the value of free enterprise and traditional social norms and structures (Gerring, 1998). Of course, parties’ adoption of stable ideologies, or “brands,” to connect candidates competing for office to voters does not necessitate that all coalition members share similar attitudes (Aldrich, 2011).

Indeed, recent scholarship recasting parties as extended networks of activists, interest groups

and elected officials—the “parties as coalitions” theory—provides another explanation for the promulgation of party brands (Cohen et al., 2008; Karol, 2009; Bawn et al., 2012; Noel, 2012, 2013; Nyhan and Montgomery, 2015). This network theory of parties views intense and diverse entrepreneurs, or “policy demanders,” as the drivers of major party platforms and nomination contests. These policy demanders, although interested in winning elections, are not solely, or perhaps even mostly, involved in politics for this purpose. Rather, each group of policy demanders seeks to use government to achieve its preferred end, which often means realizing a much narrower ideological vision than realistically could be espoused by a “catch-all” party (Bawn et al., 2012). In this account, policy demanders must form broader coalitions by agreeing to agitate on behalf of each other’s policy goals—similar to Aldrich’s (2011) “long coalitions” formed to create stable logrolls in Congress, but at the activist level (Schickler, Pearson and Feinstein, 2010; Noel, 2012). Thus, in order to become sufficiently strong to recruit candidates, and pressure them to pursue particular agendas, activists maintaining diverse attitudes, identities and interests are wedded under the same ideological banner. Bawn et al. (2012, p. 574) incisively describe the purpose of this often unrelated and nonintuitive marriage of activists: “The conservative and liberal ideologies help the groups define the terms of their cooperation; they also promote the useful fiction that everyone in the coalition wants the same things?” “Liberal” Democrats and “conservative” Republicans are therefore inherently amalgams of distinct policy demanders who possess different priorities and preferences. The extended network theory of parties underscores why we should expect intra-party diversity in the U.S., and other work, notably that documenting the asymmetric nature of the parties, offers clues regarding the form that these intra-party might take.

Scholars long have identified organizational and structural differences between the Democratic and Republican parties (e.g., Freeman, 1986). For example, surveys of mass public party identifiers show that Democrats, relative to Republicans, conceptualize and talk about politics in terms of group benefits rather than abstract principles relating to the liberal-conservative ideological continuum (Hagner and Pierce, 1982; Grossman and Hopkins, 2014). Similarly, Democratic elite communication mostly emphasizes specific policies and proposals promising to alleviate group suffering and ameliorate societal inequalities that disproportionately harm particular groups. This rhetorical focus on social groups and targeted governmental action extends from campaign advertising (Rhodes and Johnson, 2015) and claimed electoral mandates (Azari, 2014) to campaign speeches and party platforms (Grossman and Hopkins, 2015*b*; Jordan, 2016). These findings regarding identifiers’ orientation toward politics and elites’ rhetorical strategy are sensible given the myriad historically oppressed and underrepresented groups—racial minorities, women, environmentalists, the poor, LGBT persons, Jews, labor union members and immigrants among them—that constitute and animate the Democratic Party coalition. What implications does the party’s group-based constitution have for potential internal party friction?

One possibility is that the interests and identities of these diverse groups conflict, which we have sometimes observed in real-world policy debates. For instance, in general terms, carbon taxes divide the poor and environmentalists, immigration divides union members and immigrants and gay marriage divides religious blacks and Hispanics and LGBT persons. However, conflict among these groups is generally minimized because they all largely share attitudes toward the most prominent source of elite political competition: government’s role in the economy and the size and scope of the social welfare state (Poole and Rosenthal, 1997). Indeed, the Democratic Party’s ideological brand signals first and foremost a commitment to government action to bolster

social programs across an array of issues ranging from infrastructure projects to public schools to unemployment insurance and healthcare, all policies that enjoy majority support among the constellation of social groups comprising the party (Grossman and Hopkins, 2014, 2015a). As a result of this consensus attitude toward the basic role of government in society, coalitional horse trading is easier and issue conflict is relatively minimal. Indeed, the largest source of within party conflict appears to be issue priorities. That is, tension among the political left mostly centers on the question of which group's oppression is in greatest need of remedy (Marietta, 2012). Our theory of intra-party divisions leads us to hypothesize that Democratic Party cleavages align with the racial, class and religious social groups comprising the party.

The structure and ideological brand of the Republican Party leads us to expect different sources of internal division. That is, although the Democratic social group coalition broadly agrees with the party's activist government posture, the "three-legged stool" of economic, social and foreign policy conservatism creates obvious ideological rifts among Republican identifiers. No clear logical connection exists between economic conservatism and cultural conservatism, for example, and a substantial party faction—libertarians—argue that this attitudinal configuration is illogical: In this view, support for limited government should necessitate a platform that is economically conservative and socially liberal. Additionally, Polsby (1978) introduced the terms "Main Street Republicans" and "Wall Street Republicans" to capture the divide between lower and middle-class Republicans who combine traditionalist moral values with a belief in self-dependency (Main Street Republicans) and upper-class, cosmopolitan Republicans who maintain economically conservative but socially progressive attitudes. The Tea Party represents yet another distinct faction in the Republican Party, one that appears to combine conservative positions on both economic and social issues with a highly anti-establishment posture (Hare and Poole, 2014).

Further, Ellis and Stimson (2012) identify a stable and sizable portion of the electorate who self-identity as conservatives but nonetheless maintain liberal issue attitudes. These "conflicted conservatives" endorse Republicans' symbolic belief in the need for a smaller government and fiscal responsibility, but yet support increased spending on most individual government spending programs. All of these documented internal ideological divisions involve Republican identifiers' varying commitment to movement conservatism—the demand for party members to espouse consistently conservative attitudes across the socioeconomic and cultural policy domains (Grossman and Hopkins, 2015a). Despite consistent Republican rhetoric emphasizing conservative ideological abstractions (e.g., Azari, 2014; Grossman and Hopkins, 2015a,b; Rhodes and Johnson, 2015), as well as Republican identifiers' greater awareness and use of ideological labels compared to Democrats (Hagner and Pierce, 1982; Lelkes and Sniderman, Forthcoming; Grossman and Hopkins, 2015b), the ever greater push toward consistently conservative policy positions among party activists seemingly has fractured the GOP coalition.³ Following Bawn et al. (2012), we argue that Republicans' emphasis on rhetorical symbolism, rather than policy specifics, reflects a form of coalition maintenance in which party elites message abstractly in order to avoid exacerbating party members' ideological differences. Thus, we expect Republican Party cleavages to be more ideologically oriented and issued-based relative to those of their Democratic counterparts.

Observation of contemporary American politics and existing empirical evidence similarly demonstrate that the modern Democratic and Republican parties are far from homogenous, but current

³Hare and Poole (2014) demonstrate that this trend is also evident in Congress, where the Republicans' rightward push actually has caused the party to exhibit more, as opposed to less, variance in roll-call voting.

scholarly analyses of intra-party conflict have tended to focus on single issues or created typologies that are reasonable but user-defined and arbitrary. As Reiter (20004, p. 251) argues, “While some political scientists have spun typologies of factionalism within particular parties, their methodology has often been no more sophisticated than their own observations and hunches. Their claims may be plausible and even insightful, but they offer no methodology that is accessible to other scholars other than their own ingenuity; methodology, they are like clever journalists.”

In this paper, we use latent class analysis (LCA) to identify within-party cleavages among the American mass public. This methodological approach allows us to estimate classes of individuals who have similar responses to a set of demographic, issue attitude and core values variables, many of which have never before been included on the same public opinion survey. The only imposition on the results is that the number of classes must be set beforehand. Otherwise, the substantive meaning of the classes is defined not by the analyst but rather estimated by the method. This method allows us to assess—not *assume*—how specific demographic, issue and value divisions overlap to create major party factions in the American electorate. The survey and method that we adopt enables us to test our theory—built upon an existing account of coalition management and prevailing scholarly understandings of the structural differences between the Republican and Democratic parties—that Democrats are divided mostly along racial, class and religious lines corresponding to the social groups that comprise the party, and that Republicans are more deeply divided by distinct ideological factions. Next, we formally introduce the method used to test our theory and provide the richest scholarly account to date of intra-party cleavages in contemporary American politics.

3 A Mixture Modeling Approach to the Study of Party Cleavages

Conceptually, we might imagine that there exist some number of voter “types” in the electorate, and that the differences between the groups reveal themselves through a series of variables. These variables might include measures of policy attitudes and demographic characteristics, for instance. We contend that mixture modeling is an ideal method to recover such a typology of voters from public opinion survey data.

Mixture models treat the distribution of observed data as arising probabilistically from a mixture of component distributions. Each observation i ($i = 1, \dots, n$) is modeled as belonging to component distribution r ($r = 1, \dots, R$) with probability ϕ_{ir} , where (in finite mixture models) $\sum_{r=1}^R \phi_{ir} = 1$. For instance, in one popular application of mixture modeling, stock market returns are modeled as a mixture of two component distributions relating to “normal” and “crash” periods. Mixture modeling is especially useful in the social sciences because it is almost always unrealistic to that the observed behavior or choices of voters, legislators, states, etc. is generated based on their membership in only a single latent group.

In this paper, we employ a class of parametric finite mixture models known as latent class analysis (LCA) models. LCA models have been used in political science to identify and interpret clusters or latent classes of political actors (e.g., Blaydes and Linzer, 2008; Gross and Manrique-Vallier, 2012; Blaydes and Grimmer, 2013; Weber and Federico, 2013). For instance, McCutcheon (1985) uses LCA to conclude that four classes are needed to model Americans’ tolerance attitudes:

a group that is tolerant of both the left and right, and group that is intolerant of both the left and right, a group that is intolerant of the left, and a group that is tolerant of the right. The classes group respondents with similar patterns together, even if we cannot directly observe the classes themselves. In this sense, LCA shares a close connection to other latent variable models in political science (such as item response theory and Poole and Rosenthal’s (1997) NOMINATE model) that are used to estimate unobservable variables such as ideology from observed choice data, with the major difference being that LCA methods treat the latent variable as categorical rather than continuous.

In order to study party cleavages by assessing the number and meaning of classes needed to categorize voters in the contemporary American electorate, we estimate the LCA model developed and implemented in the R package `poLCA` by Linzer (2011) and Linzer and Lewis (2011). In this model, let individual i ’s response to categorical variable j ($j = 1, \dots, J$) with K_j categories be denoted with Y_{ijk} . $Y_{ijk} = 1$ if individual i provides the k th response to variable j , and 0 otherwise. Let π_{jrk} represent the probability that an individual belonging to class r responds to variable j with response category k , and let ϕ_r represent the weight or mixing proportion of class r . The log likelihood function to be maximized by the latent class model is:

$$\ln \mathcal{L} = \sum_{i=1}^n \ln \sum_{r=1}^R \phi_r \prod_{j=1}^J \prod_{k=1}^{K_j} (\pi_{jrk})^{Y_{ijk}} \quad (1)$$

Of greatest interest to us will be the total number of classes (R) needed to model survey respondents’ response patterns, the mixing proportions or the relative sizes of the R classes (ϕ_r), and, in order to determine the substantive meaning of the latent classes, the probabilities that respondents in class r will provides response k to each of the J th variables (π_{jrk}). The number of latent classes to be estimated must be set beforehand, but the optimal number of classes can be determined by comparing the statistical fit of configurations with different numbers of classes.

4 Identifying and Understanding Party Factions in the Contemporary American Electorate

In this section, we fit the latent class model described above to a set of 74 variables from a 1,000-respondent module of the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). These variables—detailed in the Appendix—span demographic characteristics such as race, income, and education; partisan and ideological identification; policy attitudes on economic, social/cultural, and foreign policy issues; and core values and beliefs such as religiosity, postmaterialism, and what constitutes morally acceptable behavior. Critically, respondents are also asked a battery of items that were designed to tap into intra-party divides such as police militarization, energy exploration, the trade-offs involved in providing federal funds to religious charity organizations without gay discrimination policies, free trade, the use of military drones, whether health care is a human right, and raising the minimum wage. We think these questions will better allow us to pick up nascent divisions among Democratic and Republican respondents. When multiple questions measure the same underlying concept (for instance, church attendance and frequency

of prayer both measure religiosity), we create summated rating scales and divide respondents into quartiles based on their scores. For instance, **religiosityQ4** means a respondent is in the most religious quartile of respondents. On issues attitudes, higher quartiles correspond to more conservative/right-wing attitudes, so **abortionQ4** means a respondent is in the most conservative quartile of respondents on the issue of abortion.

We must first decide the number of latent classes needed to account for the observed heterogeneity in our data. To do so, we estimate separate models using one through six latent classes and calculate two fit statistics—the AIC (Akaike information criterion) and BIC (Bayesian information criterion)—for each result. Adding latent classes will always improve the fit of the model, but the AIC and BIC statistics penalize the inclusion of additional parameters (in this case, classes) to prevent overfitting. Lower AIC and BIC values are better, with the difference between the two being that the BIC penalizes additional parameters more harshly than the AIC. Figure 1 shows the AIC and BIC values for the six different class configurations. Both statistics decline steeply until the three-class configuration (allowing for separate classes for Democratic, Republican, and independent respondents), but continue to drop (albeit at a slower rate) until reaching six classes. We cannot estimate more than six latent classes because we run into the problem of negative degrees of freedom (that is, with more than six latent classes, the number of parameters to estimate is greater than the number of observations).⁴ However, by six classes, the rate of decline in both fit statistics is nearly flat, and so we are comfortable in proceeding with a six-class configuration.⁵

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

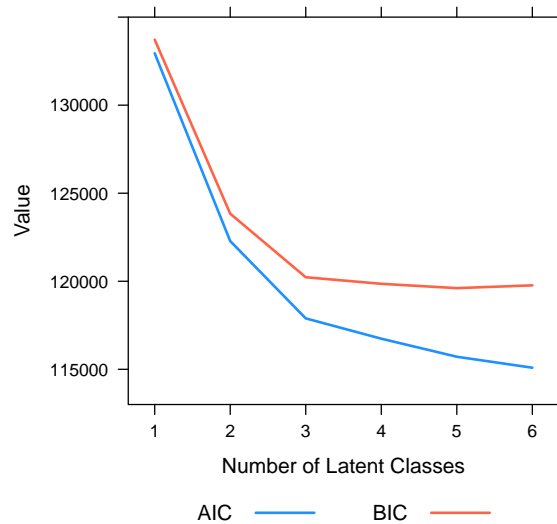


Figure 1: Latent class analysis fit statistics for configurations of one through six classes.

⁴We configurations of one through ten classes with a bootstrapping approach, randomly selecting 45 of the 74 variables from the 2014 CCES (without replacement) in 100 separate trials. The calculated fit statistics are provided in the Appendix, and confirm that the AIC/BIC values flatten or even begin to increase by the time we reach six classes.

⁵Weber and Federico (2013) also find a six-class configuration best accounts for ideological and moral value heterogeneity the American electorate.

4.1 Demographic and Ideological Differences among the Latent Classes

In order to interpret the substantive meaning of the six latent classes, we examine the response probabilities. The response probabilities (the π_{jrk} term from Equation 1) represent the probability that a given member of the class will provide a certain response to the variable (for instance, that a member of Class 1 will identify as a Republican). We present the response probabilities for the 39 variables we believe are most illustrative of latent class differences in Figures 2-3.⁶ The numbers shown in the ellipses represent the probability that a given member of the corresponding class on the x-axis provides the correspondent response on the y-axis. For instance, the bottom left corner of Figure 2 indicates that a member of Class 1 has an 86% probability of identifying as a Democrat. The values in parentheses below the class labels (“c1,” “c2,” etc.) represent the proportion of respondents falling into each of the classes. Class 3 is the largest class (containing 24% of respondents) and Class 5 is the smallest class (containing 8% of respondents).

Figures 2-3 provide clear evidence that the first three latent classes (especially Class 1) are predominantly Democratic, while the last three latent classes (especially class 6) are predominantly Republican. Classes 1-3 overwhelmingly identify as Democrats, voted for President Obama in 2012, believe health care is a basic human right, and support raising the minimum wage. Conversely, Classes 4-6 overwhelmingly identify as Republicans and conservatives, voted for Mitt Romney in 2012, believe we should expand oil, coal, and natural gas production, are opposed to raising taxes to create a universal health care system, are pro-life, and support the military’s use of drone strikes. On these issues, we find expected divides between the parties, or the two sets of latent classes (the three Democratic classes and the three Republican classes).

However, it is also readily apparent that many—indeed, most—of the variables reveal differences among the three Democratic classes and the three Republican classes. Among the Democratic classes, Class 1 members are overwhelmingly liberal, white, educated, affluent, secular, cosmopolitan (likely to travel and be culturally adventurous), and postmaterialist (more concerned about values than material concerns in political life). Indeed, Class 1 members are by far the least supportive of the notion that large retail stores are good for local communities (a statement supported by majorities in all other classes). On policy issues, Class 1 members register consistently left-wing responses across economic, social/cultural, and foreign policy matters. They are also the class that is most opposed to free trade, expanding traditional energy production, and police militarization. Class 1 stands out for its liberal views on immigration, as its members’ probability of believing that immigrants are a burden is only 8%, compared to 56%-89% for the other five classes.

In contrast, Class 2 is predominantly non-white, economically downscale, and politically uninformed and uninvolved. Class 2 is also the most religious, least postmaterialist, and second least cosmopolitan of the classes. On economic issues like raising the minimum wage, health care, and government assistant for the needy, Class 2 members are about as liberal as Class 1 members. However, there are marked differences on social and—to a lesser extent—foreign policy issues between Class 1 and Class 2 members. Class 2 members are fairly socially conservative: more likely to believe that euthanasia and homosexuality are immoral, that marriage and children should be a priority, and that gay marriage and abortion should not be legal. Several of the more nonconventional questions also divide Class 1 and Class 2 members, with Class 2 members being more supportive of expanding traditional energy production, large retail stores, and police

⁶Response probability plots for all variables are provided in the Appendix.

militarization than Class 1 members.

The last of the Democratic classes—Class 3—is more politically apathetic, younger, and fairly secular. It has the highest proportion of self-identified moderates of all of the classes, but still broke overwhelmingly for President Obama (87%) in 2012. Class 3 has something of a libertarian streak: left-wing on social issues (especially on gay rights), but more centrist on economic issues like health care and government assistance for the needy. While nearly as environmentalist as Class 1, Class 3 members are also supportive of free trade and large retail stores. We suspect Class 3 is composed of the kinds of voters that some Republican politicians and operatives think can be won over with libertarian-based appeals, particularly on foreign policy issues. For instance, Class 3 is the most resistant to the notion that the United States should play an active role in the world.

Moving to the Republican classes, the difference between Classes 5 and 6 capture the classic intra-party divide between consistent conservatives (Class 5) and more affluent and socially liberal Republicans (Class 6). Gay rights, immigration, and the environment are the issues that most separate these classes. It is also noteworthy that Class 6 is about twice as large as Class 5, speaking to the relative influence of these two groups in the Republican Party. Class 6 is also closely aligned with the Tea Party (with its members having a 92% chance of positively evaluating the Tea Party).

The results also reveals a sizable (in fact, the largest of the three Republican classes) group of Republicans in Class 4 that might be characterized as communitarian or populist (e.g., Carmines, Ensley and Wagner, 2015): very socially conservative but more economically moderate. Class 4 members are between—but closer to Class 6—on the issues of gay rights, euthanasia, abortion and immigration. But they are also the furthest left of the three Republican classes on the issues of health care, whether businesses make too much profit, government assistant for the needy, the environment, and the minimum wage. Demographically, Class 4 is composed of economically downscale whites with low levels of education, high levels of religiosity, and low levels of cosmopolitanism.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Political and Demographic Variables

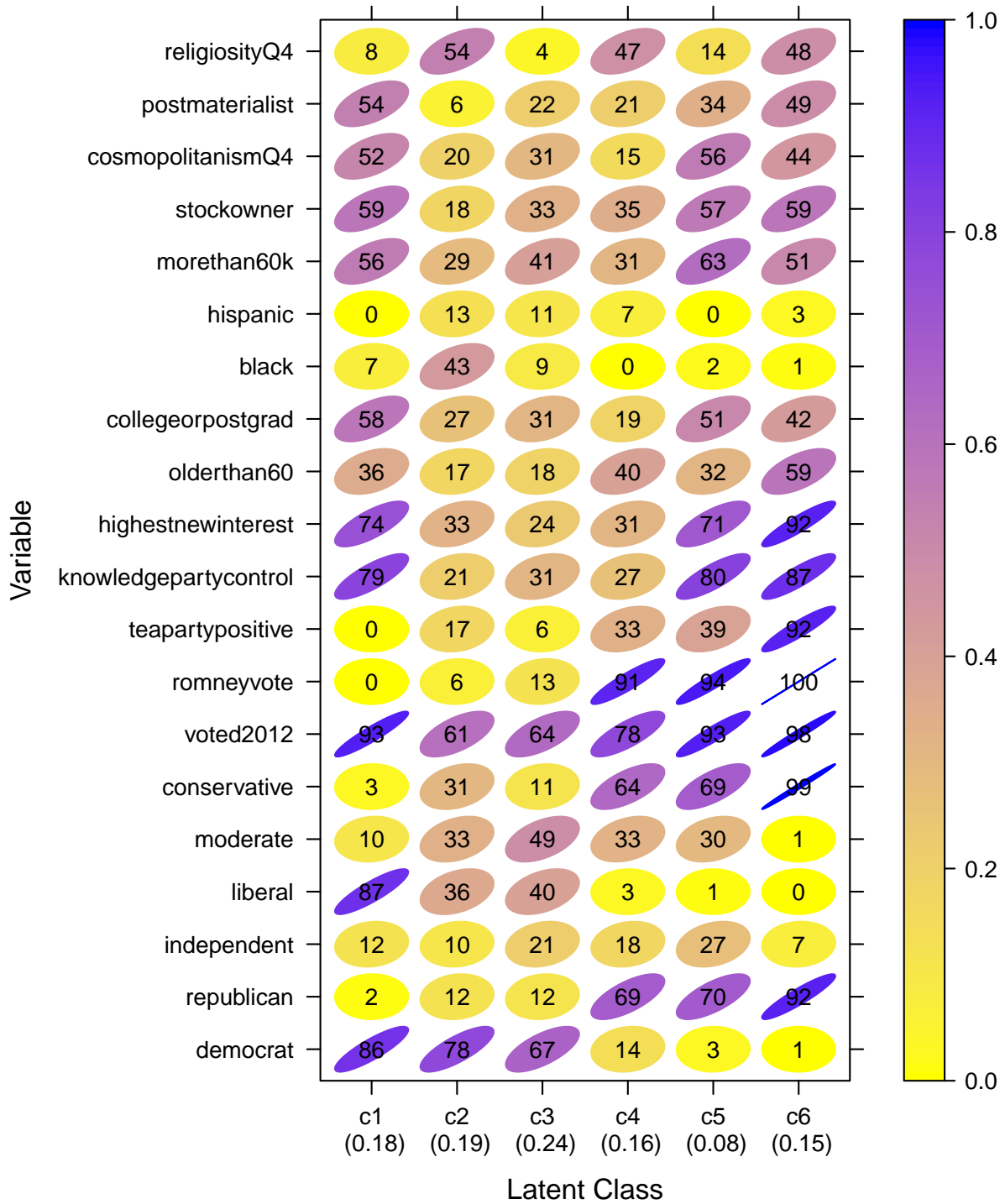


Figure 2: Probabilities of political and demographic responses given latent class membership. Class population shares in parentheses.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Issue Attitudes

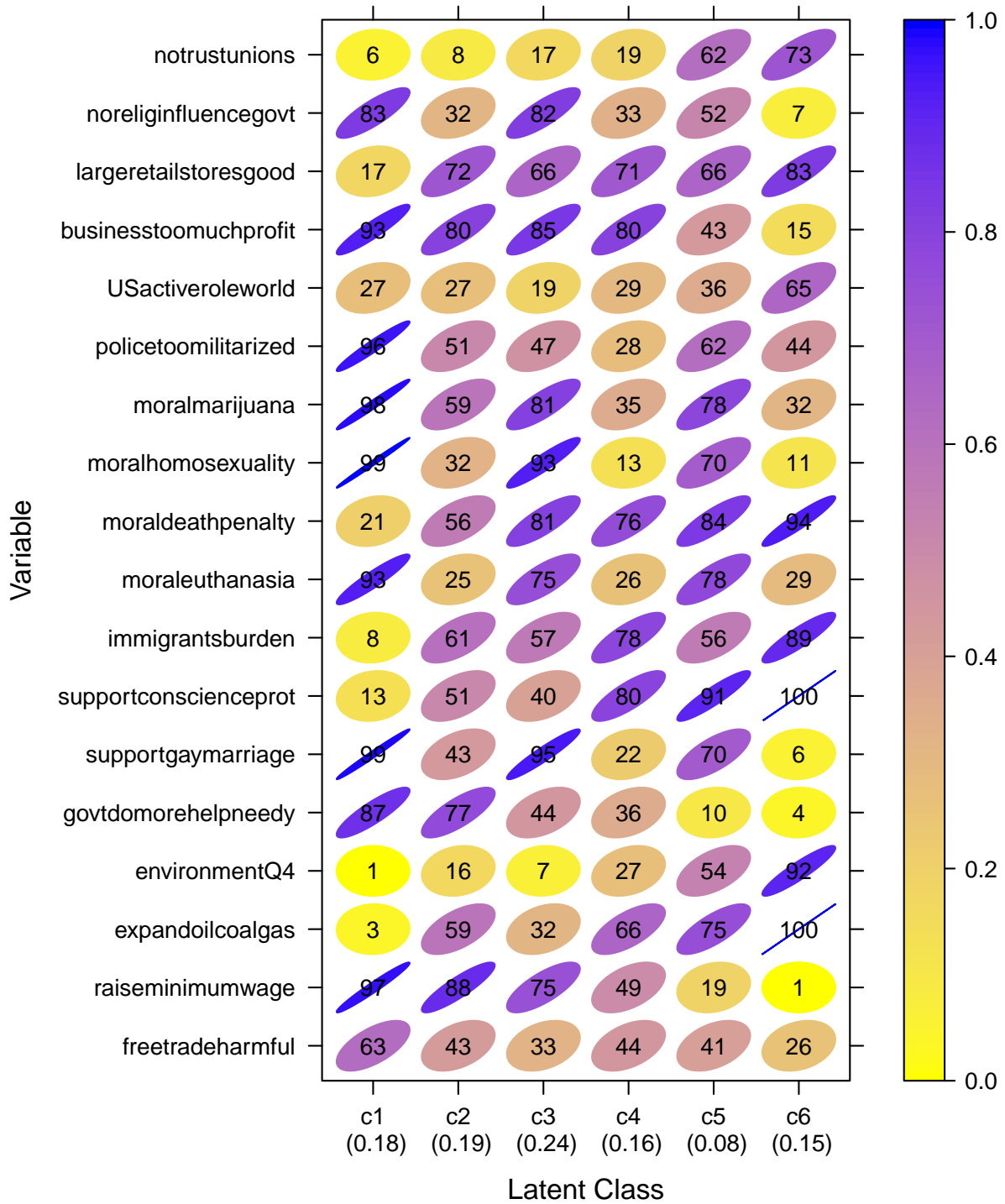


Figure 3: Probabilities of issue responses given latent class membership. Class population shares in parentheses.

We next examine how the estimated class configuration maps onto a two-dimensional ideological space composed of separate economic and social/cultural dimensions. We estimated 2014 CCES respondents' positions on these two dimensions using an ordinal item response theory (IRT) model (Quinn, 2004; see also Treier and Hillygus, 2009). Economic scores are estimated using responses to eleven issue attitude questions concerning healthcare, government spending, environmental regulation, the minimum wage, and free trade; social/cultural scores are estimates using responses to ten issue attitude questions concerning gun control, immigration, LGBT rights, and the desired role of religion and religious conscience protections. The scores are normalized and scaled such that higher values indicate more conservative/right-wing positions.

If the classes are successfully picking up ideological divisions between voters across the two dimensions, then there should be distinct clusters of respondents corresponding to latent class membership. This is what Figure 4 shows. Members of Class 1 and Class 6 are clustered in the consistent liberal and conservative, respectively, quadrants of the space. Class 2 has the highest concentration of voters in the economically left-wing/socially right-wing (sometimes labeled “communitarian” (Carmines, Ensley and Wagner, 2012)) quadrant. Class 3 and Class 4 are both economically centrist, but diverge on social/cultural issues: Class 3 members trend socially liberal while Class 4 members tend to be further right on social/cultural issues. Class 5 members are between Class 4 and Class 6 members on economic issues, but it is also the most socially liberal of the Republican groups. To the extent there are truly libertarian (right-wing on economic issues and left-wing on social issues) respondents, they are mostly dispersed between Classes 3, 4, and 5.

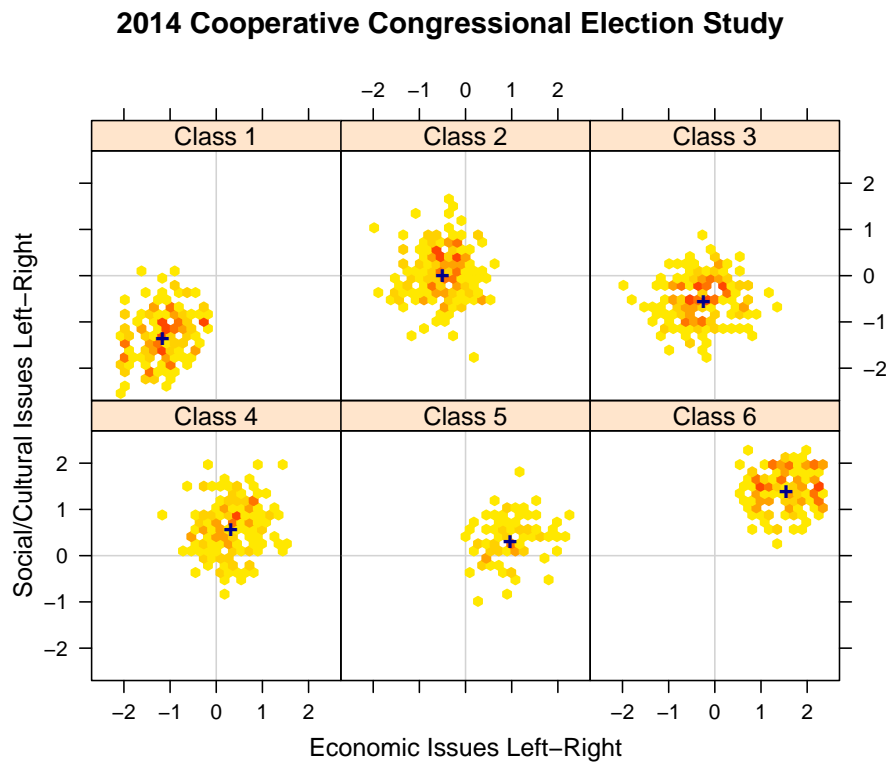


Figure 4: Ideological positions of respondents by latent class membership. Darker cells indicate greater densities, with mean scores for each class marked with a “+.”

4.2 Predicting Party Defections from Latent Class Membership

If our model is useful and our understanding of the latent classes is correct, then latent class membership should predict vote choice—specifically, party defection—in presidential and congressional elections. To test this, we estimate a series of probit models in which Republican vote choice (for president in 2012 and in House and Senate elections in 2014) is regressed onto dummy variables for the six predicted classes.⁷ We also include seven-point party identification as a predictor in these models to eliminate the possibility that the differences between classes in probability of Republican vote are not simply a product of partisan imbalances in the classes.

Figure 5 shows the predicted probabilities of Republican vote choice for members of the six latent classes (holding party identification fixed) with 90% credible intervals. Consistent with expectations, Class 2 and 3 members are more likely than Class 1 members to defect and vote Republican, and Class 4 and Class 5 members are more likely than Class 6 members to defect and vote Democratic. Interestingly, both sets of classes are about equally likely to defect, with the exception of Class 4 members being more likely than Class 5 members to vote for the Democratic candidate in House and Senate races in 2014. The results suggest that the latent class configuration is picking up consequential cleavages in both parties that lead some partisans to defect.

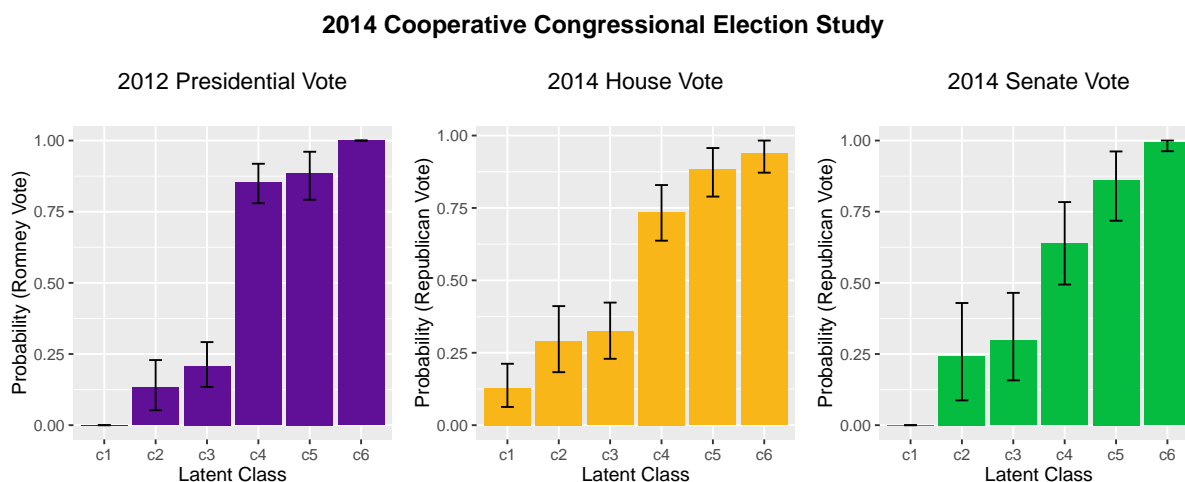


Figure 5: Predicted probabilities of vote choice by latent class membership, controlling for partisanship. 90% credible intervals shown.

4.3 Issue Priorities: Do “Parties in the Electorate” Function as Coalitions?

One puzzle is that the preceding analysis—particularly Figure 4—demonstrates that the classes represent fairly ideologically distinct clusters. Nonetheless, even in the face of policy cross-pressures, Classes 2–5 exhibit tremendous degrees of partisan loyalty. They are much more likely to defect relative to members of Class 1 or 6, but still quite unlikely to do so overall. These

⁷Class 1 is omitted as the reference category.

findings can be resolved with a “parties as coalitions” understanding (Bawn et al., 2012; ?), *but* only if members of the cross-pressured groups attach greater importance to the issues on which they are aligned with their respective party. This requires a measure of issue salience, one which is available from a separate module of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) conducted in 2015.

The 2015 CCES asked respondents to rank the top four issues of greatest personal importance to them from a list of fourteen issues. We map the estimated class configuration from the 2014 CCES onto the 2015 CCES using 25 common items included in both surveys.⁸ Using the class conditional probabilities for these items from the 2014 CCES result, we can place respondents in the 2015 CCES in the six latent classes. This allows us not only to bring additional variables into our analysis, but also to test our interpretation of the substantive meaning of the classes and the external validity of the results. In the Appendix, we demonstrate that response patterns on a variety of items (e.g., candidate and group feeling thermometers, core value batteries, and open-ended political self-descriptions) align with our prior interpretation of the latent classes.

Figure 6 shows the proportion of respondents in each class who ranked the issue as one of the four most important issues to them in deciding which candidate they will support.⁹ While there are some important differences in the issue priorities of the classes, and they are generally oriented in such a way that facilitates the present ideological configuration of the American parties. To the extent that the “parties in the electorate” are policy demanders, they are widely focused on issues on which they are in agreement with their latent class’s preferred party.¹⁰

Among the first three (Democratic) classes, the largest differences in issue salience are between Class 1 and Classes 2/3. Members of Class 1 attach much greater importance to the issues of income inequality and cultural issues like abortion, the environment, and gay rights. Members of Classes 2 and 3 view issues like unemployment as well as potentially cross-cutting issues like the debt, immigration, and taxes as more important. Of course, the actual differences between a policy agenda based on income inequality and one based on unemployment and jobs may be small, although at the very least this finding suggests Democrats are speaking with different tongues about their economic goals.

Among the three Republican classes, members of Classes 4 and 6 are alike on social issue salience but diverge on economic issue salience. In particular, to the extent Class 4 members view economic issues as important, they tend to be items such as health care and spending on social programs like Social Security that are concerned with providing benefits. Class 5 and Class 6 members care about economic issues like the debt and taxes that are postured towards reducing the size of government and its role in the economy. Virtually no Class 5 members—who are more liberal on social/cultural issues—mention abortion, gay rights, or morality as one of their four most important issues.

⁸A list of the common items, as well as the code used, is provided in the Appendix.

⁹The exact question wording is: “Usually there is no candidate who shares all of our positions on the important issues facing the country. All of the issues listed below are important, but which of the following are the MOST important to you in terms of choosing which candidate you will support?”

¹⁰This also implies that class members who find cross-cutting issues important will be more likely to break away from their coalition (i.e., become detached from their party). In the Appendix, we present findings that Class 2 and Class 5 members who find economic issues less salient and Class 3 members who find economic issues more salient exhibit higher levels of partisan detachment.

2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

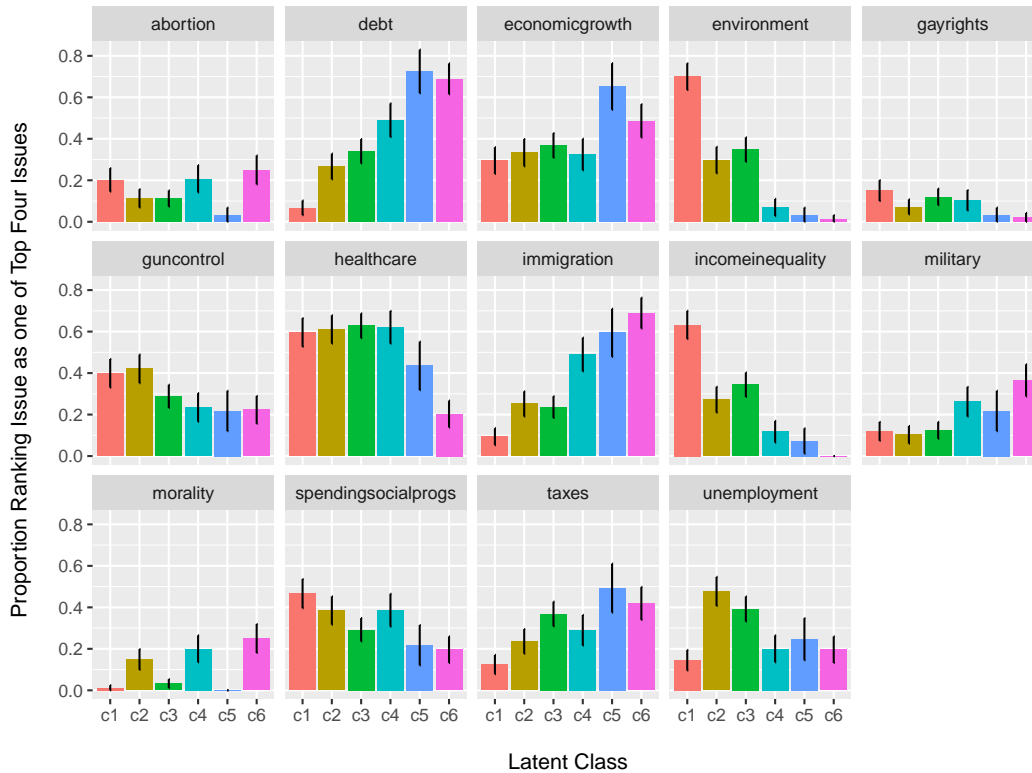


Figure 6: Salience rankings by latent class. 95% confidence intervals shown.

5 Discussion

Our main finding is that there are important demographic and policy differences within both parties, and that these differences generally align to create at least six latent classes of voters in the contemporary American electorate. This result diverged from our hypothesis that differences among Democrats would mainly center on demographics, while ideological fissures would be deeper among Republicans. However, while these internal party divisions are consequential in terms of partisan defection and detachment, the party configuration exhibits considerable stability. We think that both results can be resolved by considering the role of issue salience—looking within the classes, partisans generally care less about issues on which they diverge from their party. Indeed, many of the internal divisions within the parties are not differences of positions, but differences of priorities. Cross-pressured partisans who do view those issues as important, however, exhibit greater detachment from their partisan identities.

Moving forward with this work, future work should also consider how core values and other antecedent variables (perhaps party and ideological identification and group affect) can be incorporated as predictors of latent class membership as part of a latent class regression model. Alternatively, these variables could be left out of the model entirely, and their relationship with the latent classes examined post hoc through regression analysis or simple descriptive statistics. Measures of political sophistication and attention could also be used as a way to divide latent classes (such as Class 3 in our analysis) between politically engaged and unengaged segments.

References

- Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Azari, Julia R. 2014. *Delivering the People's Message: The Changing Politics of the Presidential Mandate*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Bawn, Kathleen, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel and John Zaller. 2012. "A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(3):571–597.
- Benoit, Kenneth. 2001. "District Magnitude, Electoral Formula, and the Number of Parties." *European Journal of Political Research* 39(2):203–224.
- Blais, Andr, Romain Lachat, Airo Hino and Pascal Doray-Demers. 2011. "The Mechanical and Psychological Effects of Electoral Systems: A Quasi-Experimental Study." *Comparative Political Studies* 44(12):1599–1621.
- Blaydes, Lisa and Drew A. Linzer. 2008. "The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam." *World Politics* 60(4):576–609.
- Blaydes, Lisa and Justin Grimmer. 2013. "Political Cultures: Exploring the Long-Run Determinants of Values Transmission." Presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the International Political Economy Society, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA.
- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: Wiley.
- Carmines, Edward G., Michael J. Ensley and Michael W. Wagner. 2012. "Political Ideology in American Politics: One, Two, or None?" *The Forum* 10(3).
- Carmines, Edward G., Michael J. Ensley and Michael W. Wagner. 2015. Why American Political Parties Can't Get Beyond the Left-Right Divide. In *The State of the Parties*, ed. Daniel Coffey, David Cohen and John Green. 7th ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield pp. 55–72.
- Carsey, Thomas M. and Geoffrey C. Layman. 2006. "Changing Sides or Changing Minds? Party Identification and Policy Preferences in the American Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2):464–477.
- Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Druckman, James N., Erik Peterson and Rune Slothuus. 2013. "How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation." *American Political Science Review* 107(1):57–79.
- Duverger, Maurice. 1954. *Political Parties*. New York: Wiley.

- Ellis, Christopher and James A. Stimson. 2012. *Ideology in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fiva, John H. and Olle Folke. Forthcoming. "Mechanical and Psychological Effects of Electoral Reform." *British Journal of Political Science* .
- Freeman, Jo. 1986. "The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties." *Political Science Quarterly* 101(3):327–356.
- Gerring, John. 1998. *Party Ideologies in America, 1828-1996*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist and Eric Shickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Gross, Justin H. and Daniel Manrique-Vallier. 2012. "A Mixed-Membership Approach to the Assessment of Political Ideology from Survey Responses." Presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology, Chapel Hill, NC.
- Grossman, Matt and David A. Hopkins. 2014. "Policymaking in Red and Blue: Asymmetric Politics and American Governance." Presented at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC.
- Grossman, Matt and David A. Hopkins. 2015a. "Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats: The Asymmetry of American Party Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 13(1):119–139.
- Grossman, Matt and David A. Hopkins. 2015b. "Party Asymmetry in American Election Campaigns." Presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL.
- Hagner, Paul R. and John C. Pierce. 1982. "Correlative Characteristics of Levels of Conceptualization in The American Public 1956-1976." *Journal of Politics* 44(3):779–807.
- Hare, Christopher and Keith T. Poole. 2014. "The Polarization of Contemporary American Politics." *Polity* 46(3):411–429.
- Jordan, Marty Patrick. 2016. "Talking Past One Another: Trends in Republican and Democratic Rhetoric." Presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Karol, David. 2009. *Party Position Change in American Politics: Coalition Management*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lelkes, Yphtach and Paul M. Sniderman. Forthcoming. "The Ideological Asymmetry of the American Party System." *British Journal of Political Science* .
- Linzer, Drew A. 2011. "Reliable Inference in Highly Stratified Contingency Tables: Using Latent Class Models as Density Estimators." *Political Analysis* 19(2):173–187.

- Linzer, Drew A. and Jeffrey B. Lewis. 2011. "poLCA: An R Package for Polytomous Variable Latent Class Analysis." *Journal of Statistical Software* 42(10):1–29.
- Marietta, Morgan. 2012. *A Citizen's Guide to American Ideology: Conservatism and Liberalism in Contemporary Politics*. New York: Routledge.
- McCutcheon, Allan L. 1985. "A Latent Class Analysis of Tolerance for Nonconformity in the American Public." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 49(4):474–488.
- Noel, Hans. 2012. "The Coalition Merchants: The Ideological Roots of the Civil Rights Realignment." *Journal of Politics* 74(01):156–173.
- Noel, Hans. 2013. *Political Ideologies and Political Parties in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nyhan, Brendan and Jacob M. Montgomery. 2015. "Connecting the Candidates: Consultant Networks and the Diffusion of Campaign Strategy in American Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(2):292–308.
- Polsby, Nelson W. 1978. Coalition and Faction in American Politics: An Institutional View. In *Emerging Coalitions in American Politics*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset. San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies pp. 103–126.
- Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal. 1997. *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Quinn, Kevin M. 2004. "Bayesian Factor Analysis for Mixed Ordinal and Continuous Responses." *Political Analysis* 12(4):338–353.
- Reiter, Howard L. 20004. "Factional Persistence within Parties in the United States." *Party Politics* 10(3):251–271.
- Rhodes, Jesse H. and Kelly Johnson. 2015. "The Politics of Group Targeting in Presidential Campaign Advertisements: A Preliminary Investigation." Presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Rosenstone, Steven J., Roy L. Behr and Edward H. Lazarus. 1984. *Third Parties in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Schickler, Eric, Kathryn Pearson and Brian D. Feinstein. 2010. "Congressional Parties and Civil Rights Politics from 1933 to 1972." *Journal of Politics* 72(3):672–689.
- Singer, Matthew. 2013. "Was Duverger Correct? Single-Member District Election Outcomes in Fifty-three Countries." *British Journal of Political Science* 43(1):201–220.
- Singh, Shane P. 2012. "Where Do Parties Live? Electoral Institutions, Party Incentives, and the Dimensionality of Politics." *Social Science Quarterly* 93(4):950–967.
- Treier, Shawn and D. Sunshine Hillygus. 2009. "The Nature of Political Ideology in the Contemporary Electorate." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 73(4):679–703.

Weber, Christopher R. and Christopher M. Federico. 2013. "Moral Foundations and Heterogeneity in Ideological Preferences." *Political Psychology* 34(1):107–126.

A Appendix

A.1 Robustness Checks: 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

In this section, we assess the robustness of our estimated LCA configuration to varying specifications.

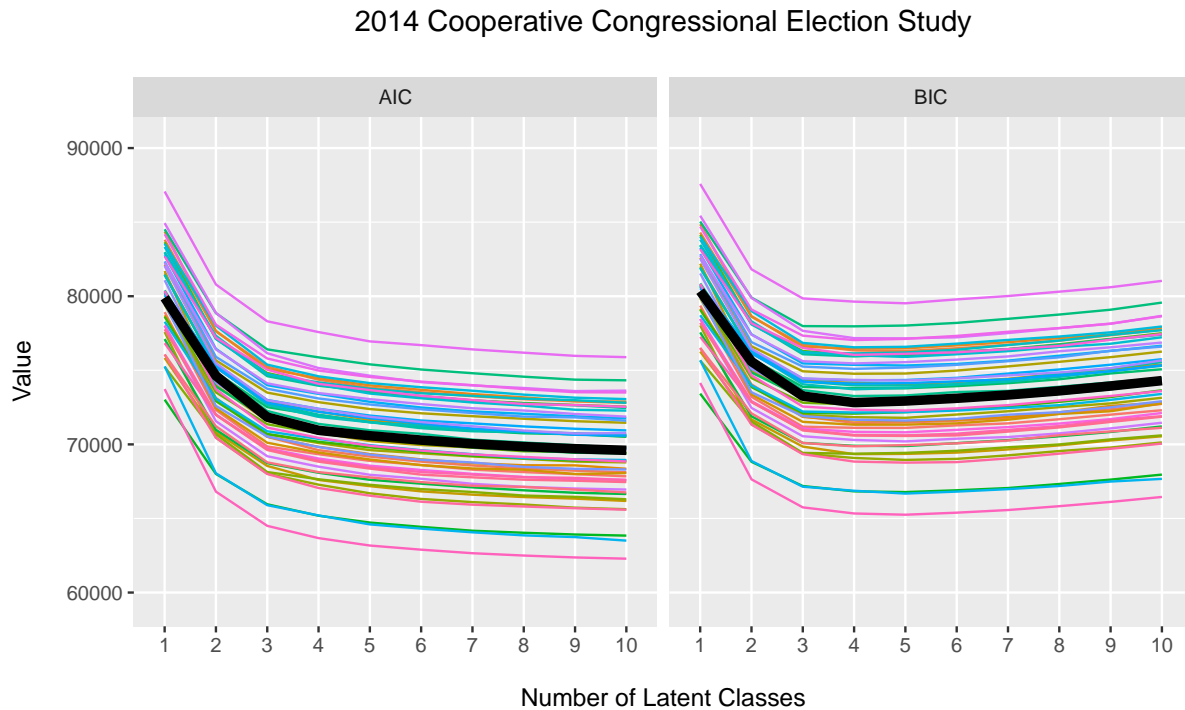


Figure 7: Latent class analysis fit statistics for configurations of one through ten classes from 50 bootstrap trials, including 45 variables in each trial. Smoothed mean plotted in thick black line.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

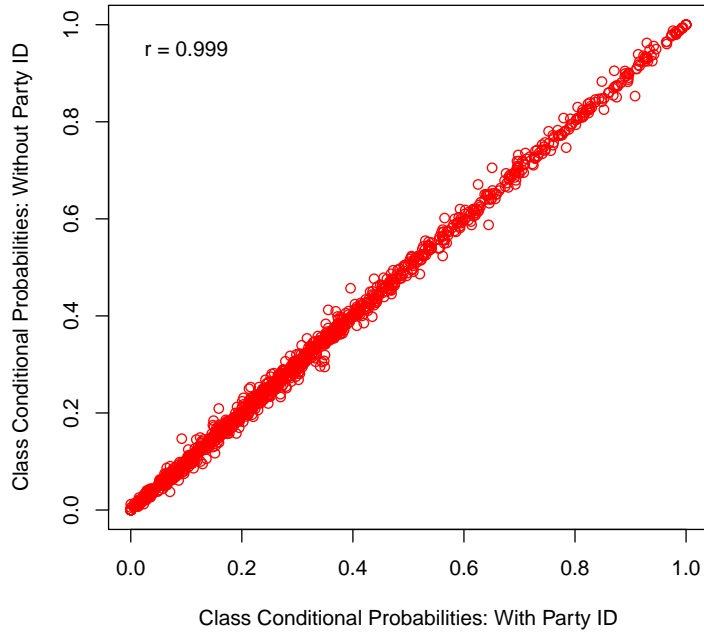


Figure 8: Correlations between class conditional probabilities including and omitting party identification.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

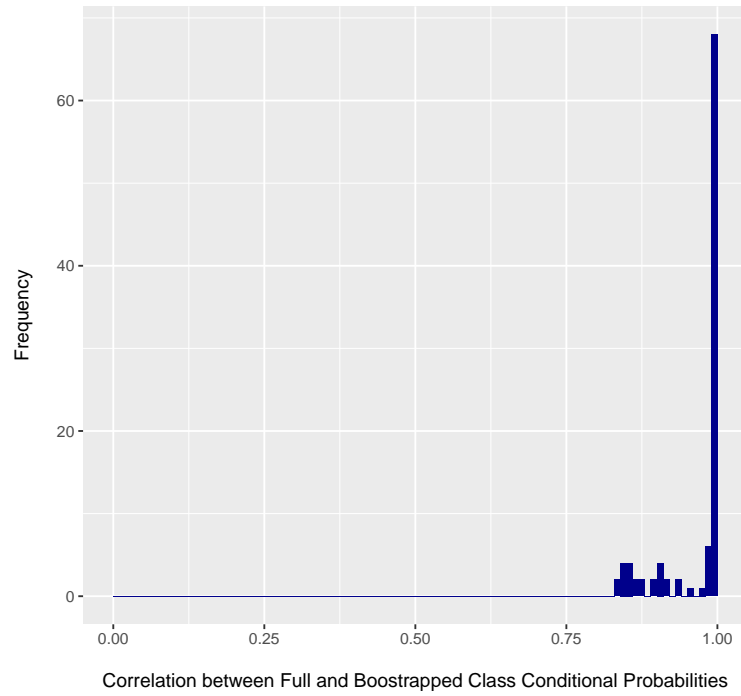


Figure 9: Distribution of correlations between class conditional probabilities from full result and class conditional probabilities from 100 bootstrap trials, omitting 10 variables in each trial.

A.2 Robustness Checks: Applying Configuration to 2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

As a further validation check, we next apply the classification scheme estimated from the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) data to respondents in an external dataset: a module of 1,000 respondents from the 2015 CCES. The 2015 CCES includes many of the questions included in the aforementioned 2014 CCES, but also includes batteries of survey items related to core values and beliefs, issue scales, and candidate and group feeling thermometers. Using 25 common items included in both surveys, we apply the class conditional probabilities from the 2014 CCES result in order to place respondents in the 2015 CCES in the six latent classes.¹¹ This allows us to test both our interpretation of the substantive meaning of the classes and the external validity of our results.

We begin by testing this approach by examining responses to an open-ended question on the 2015 CCES that asked: “When it comes to politics today, how would you describe yourself?” Table 1 details the most commonly used words by respondents by latent class (again, where respondents are classified using the 2014 CCES result based on their responses to the common items between the surveys).¹² If our interpretation of the latent classes is correct, we should expect to find phrases that correspond to respondents’ predicted classes. Indeed, respondents in Class 1 are most likely to use the word “liberal” in their political self-descriptions, while there is no dominant phrase appearing in Class 2 and Class 3 self-descriptions. Class 4 through 6 members tend to use the word “conservative,” though in increasing proportion. Though not widely used, the terms “progressive” and “libertarian” appear among the five most commonly used words by Class 1 and Class 5 members, respectively. It is also worth noting that the word “interested” is usually preceded by “not” or “not very,” and is more common among Class 2-4 members.

¹¹A list of the common items, as well as the code used, is provided in the Appendix.

¹²We omit so-called stop words like “a/an,” “the,” “of,” etc.

Table 1: Most commonly used words in respondents’ political self-descriptions by predicted latent class. Percentages shown are proportion of members of the latent class who include the term in their response.

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
liberal [38%] democrat [18%] moderate [10%] progressive [9%] independent [6%]	democrat [11%] moderate [10%] liberal [7%] interested [4%] conservative [4%]	moderate [10%] liberal [10%] democrat [10%] interested [8%] independent [8%]
Class 4	Class 5	Class 6
republican [19%] conservative [17%] interested [8%] moderate [7%] independent [4%]	conservative [36%] independent [17%] republican [14%] moderate [9%] libertarian [7%]	conservative [57%] republican [9%] independent [7%] constitutional [4%] moderate [3%]

Source: 2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

Figure 10 details the relationship between predicted class membership and responses to a set of items on the 2015 CCES. These items include respondent self-placements on three separate ideological scales (economic, social/cultural, and foreign policy), three batteries of core value questions (economic egalitarianism, moral traditionalism, and militarism), self-placements on an economic/social issue salience scale, and feeling thermometer ratings of several groups and political figures (including the difference between thermometer ratings of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton).¹³ All responses are normalized and the ideological and value scores are scaled such that higher values indicate more conservative/right-wing dispositions.

The most direct test of the applicability of the class configuration from the 2014 CCES to external data from the 2015 CCES concerns two items—economic/social issue salience and Tea Party favorability—that were included in both surveys in different formats, and therefore were not included as common items used to bridge across surveys. Accordingly, the order of the classes should be the same in both years. Figure 10 shows that they are: in both the 2014 and 2015 CCES, Class 5 (Class 1) respondents are the most (least) likely to say that economic issues are more important than social issues, while Tea Party evaluations follow a Class 1-3-2-4-5-6 ordering.

Responses to the other items correspond to our interpretation of the latent classes. Class 1 members are furthest left across all items in Figure 10. Class 2 and Class 3 members are similar across issues, values, and thermometer ratings (such as labor unions and socialists) concerning economic matters, but Class 2 members are further right than both Class 1 and Class 3 members on social/cultural items. Class 5 is the most socially liberal of the Republican classes (for instance, it is to the left of even Class 2 in its thermometer ratings of evangelicals, atheists, and LGBT persons), but its members are nearly indistinguishable from Class 6 members on most economic items. Likewise, Class 4 differs most sharply from Class 5 and Class 6 on economic issues, values,

¹³Full question wordings provided in the Appendix.

and thermometer ratings. The classes also follow the same pattern of partisan defection seen in 5 with the difference between thermometer ratings of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton increasing monotonically over the latent classes.

2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

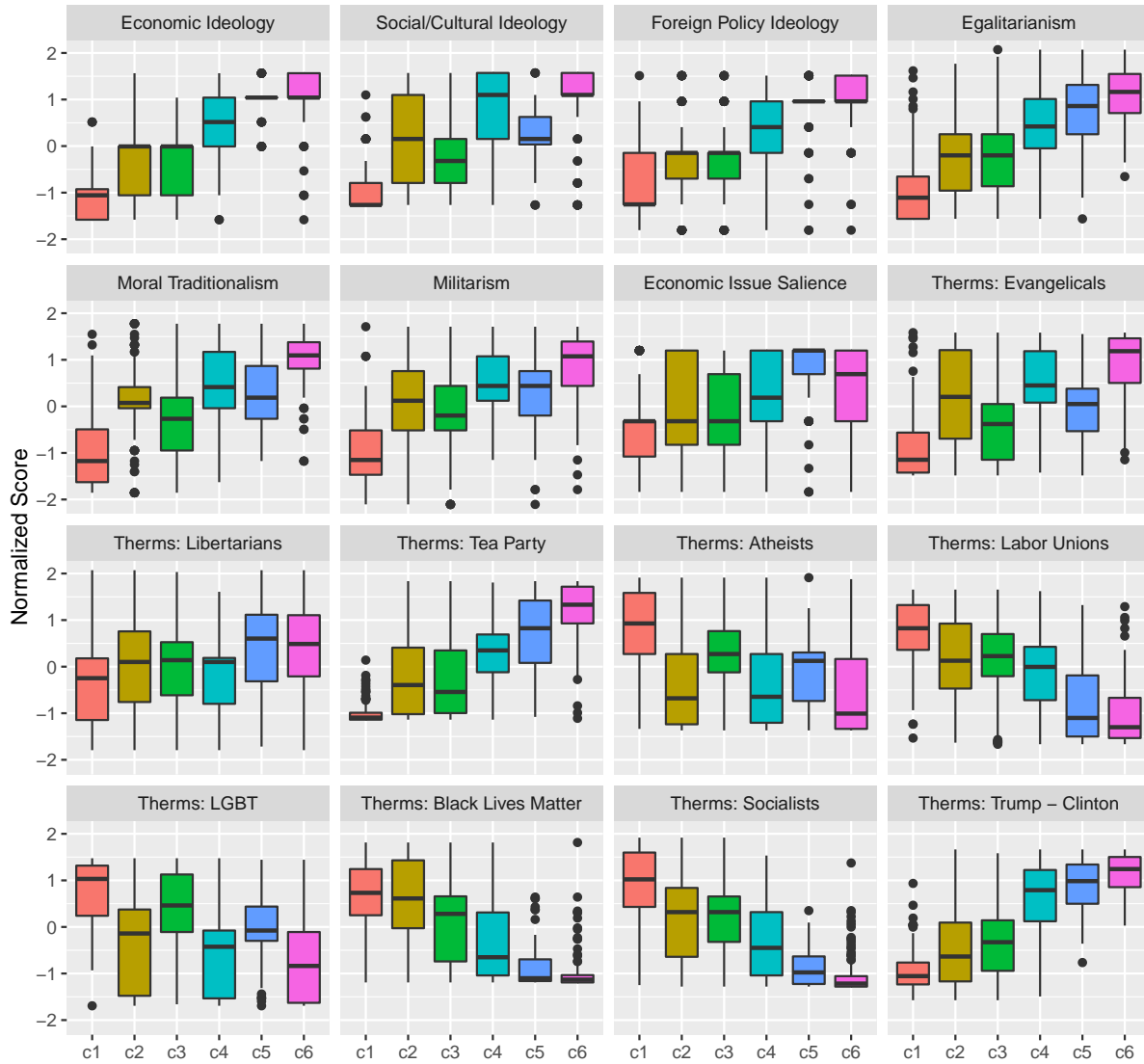


Figure 10: Distribution of (normalized) item scores by predicted latent class.

A.3 Issue Salience and Partisan Detachment

To the extent they attach importance to issues on which they deviate from their party, they are more likely to defect in their vote choice. If this explanation holds water, though, salience should predict party detachment when it occurs on cross-pressured issues. Namely, respondents in Classes 2 and 5 who assign more importance to social issues, and respondents in Classes 3 and 4 who assign more importance to economic issues, should exhibit greater partisan detachment since they care about issue dimensions on which they are cross pressured.

We measure partisan detachment (for each party) by creating a summated rating scale of three items: whether the respondent identifies as a strong partisan, whether they rate the Democratic/Republican party as more extreme than themselves on the liberal-conservative scale, and whether they voted for the opposite party's presidential candidate in 2012. Item responses are averaged and the resulting scores range between 0 (no detachment) and 1 (maximum detachment).¹⁴ The detachment scores are modeled via OLS regression using economic ideology, social/cultural ideology, and the number of economic issues that respondents included in their rankings of the four most personally important issues as explanatory variables.¹⁵

The effects of economic issue salience on party detachment are presented in Figure 11. All salience effects except those for Class 4 are significant at $p < 0.05$, one-tailed. Consistent with our expectations, economic issue salience increases Democratic attachment among Class 2 respondents, but decreases it among Class 3 respondents. Likewise, Class 5 respondents who exclusively or nearly exclusively list economic issue as most important are more attached to the Republican Party. To the extent that these intra-party cleavages are consequential—either for short-term defections or even long-term realignments—salience appears to play a key role. The latent classes are most predictive of partisan detachment among members who view issues along the dimension on which they disagree with their party as important (see also Carsey and Layman, 2006).

¹⁴Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.8$ for the Democratic Party detachment scale, 0.78 for the Republican Party detachment scale.

¹⁵Debt, health care, income inequality, unemployment, economic growth, spending on social programs, and taxes are treated as the economic issues.

Table 2: Predictors of partisan detachment by latent class.

	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
Economic conservatism	0.04 (0.03)	0.09* (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)	0.00 (0.06)
Social/cultural conservatism	0.12* (0.05)	0.16* (0.04)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.08)
# Economic issues ranked in top 4	-0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.10* (0.05)
Intercept	0.52* (0.08)	0.53* (0.08)	0.37* (0.09)	0.79* (0.15)
<i>N</i>	189	241	142	69
<i>R</i> ²	0.07	0.16	0.01	0.06
adj. <i>R</i> ²	0.06	0.15	-0.01	0.02
Resid. sd	0.35	0.33	0.34	0.32

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$, one-tailed.

Source: 2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

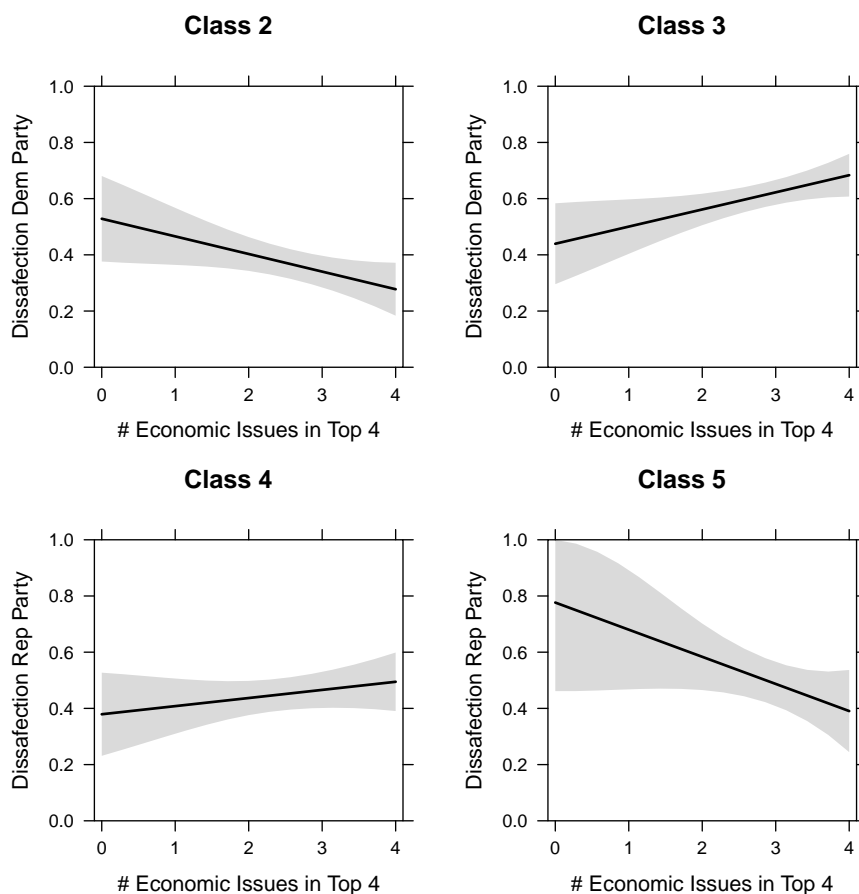


Figure 11: Economic issue salience and partisan disaffection by latent class. Estimates from Table 2.

A.4 List and Class Probability Plots of the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Variables Used in the Analysis

Number of response categories and 2014 CCES variable ID in parentheses:

Political Identification and Sophistication

partyid (7, pid7)
ideology (7, CC334A)
voted2012 (2, CC14_316)
romneyvote (2, CC14_317)
teapartypositive (5, CC424)
news_interest (4, newsint)
mediause_blog (2, CC14_301_1)
mediause_newspaper (2, CC14_301_3)
knowledge_correcthousesenate (2, CC14_309a & CC14_309b)
dimensionalsalience (2, UOG302)

Demographic Variables

age (4, birthyr)
female (2, gender)
education (3, educ)
black (2, race)
hispanic (2, race)
georegion (4, region)
income (4, faminc)
homeownership (2, ownhome)
stockownership (2, investor)
unionmember (2, union & unionhh)

Personal Values

religiosity.Qs (4, pew_bornagain, pew_religimp, pew_churatd, & pew_prayer)
postmaterialism (2, UOG405_1, UOG405_2, & UOG405_3)
conspiracy.Qs (4, UOG309_E, UOG309_I, UOG309_L, & UOG309_N)
cosmo.Qs (4, EurorAus, CAorMex, AsiaAforSouthAm, Indian, & Japanese)

Economic Issues

govtmorehelpneedy (4, UOG309_D)
raisetaxesuniversalhealthcare (4, UOG309_M)
repealACA (2, CC14_324_2)
refusestatehealthexpansion (2, CC14_324_3)
supportryanbudget (2, CC14_325_1)
raisedebtceiling (2, CC14_325_5)
environment.Qs (4, CC14_326_1, CC14_326_2, CC14_326_3, & CC14_326_4)
minimumwage (2, UOG304)
freetradeharmful (2, UOG407)

balancebudget_firstchoice (3, CC14.329a)
balancebudget_lastresort (3, CC14.329b)

Social Issues

guncontrol.Qs (4, CC14.320a, CC14.320b, CC14.320c, CC14.320d, & CC14.320e)
immigration.Qs (4, CC14.322.1, CC14.322.2, CC14.322.3, CC14.322.4, & CC14.322.5)
immigrantsburden (4, UOG309.A)
abortion.Qs (4, CC14.323.1, CC14.323.3, CC14.323.4, & CC14.323.5)
favorgaymarriage (2, CC14.327)
prohibitfundscharitiesdiscriminate (4, UOG309.J)
roleofchristianity (4, UOG311)
religiousconscienceprotections (3, UOG406)
supportaffirmativeaction (4, CC14.328)
racialdiscrimination (2, UOG310)
racismhigherinsouth (2, UOG403)

Foreign Policy Issues

interventionism (2, UOG307)
mistakeiraq (2, CC14.305)
troopsbackiraq (2, CC14.306)
supportlimitsnsasurveillance (2, CC14.331.2)
supportdronestrikes (4, UOG401)

Miscellaneous Issues

healthcarehumanright (4, UOG309.B)
vaccinationsautism (4, UOG309.C)
marriagechildrenpriority (4, UOG309.F)
businesstoomuchprofit (4, UOG309.G)
integratedpublichousing (4, UOG309.H)
largeretailstoresgood (4, UOG309.K)
energyproduction (2, UOG303)
policemilitarization (2, UOG305)
gmosdangerous (2, UOG402)

Moral Items

moral_euthanasia (2, UOG301.A)
moral_testanimals (2, UOG301.B)
moral_deathpenalty (2, UOG301.C)
moral_eatanimals (2, UOG301.D)
moral_pornography (2, UOG301.E)
moral_homosexuality (2, UOG301.F)
moral_stemcells (2, UOG301.G)
moral_marijuana (2, UOG301.H)

Trust in Institutions

trust_cia (5, UOG308_A)
trust_military (5, UOG308_B)
trust_supcourt (5, UOG308_C)
trust_bigbiz (5, UOG308_D)
trust_orgrelig (5, UOG308_E)
trust_unions (5, UOG308_F)

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Political Identification and Sophistication

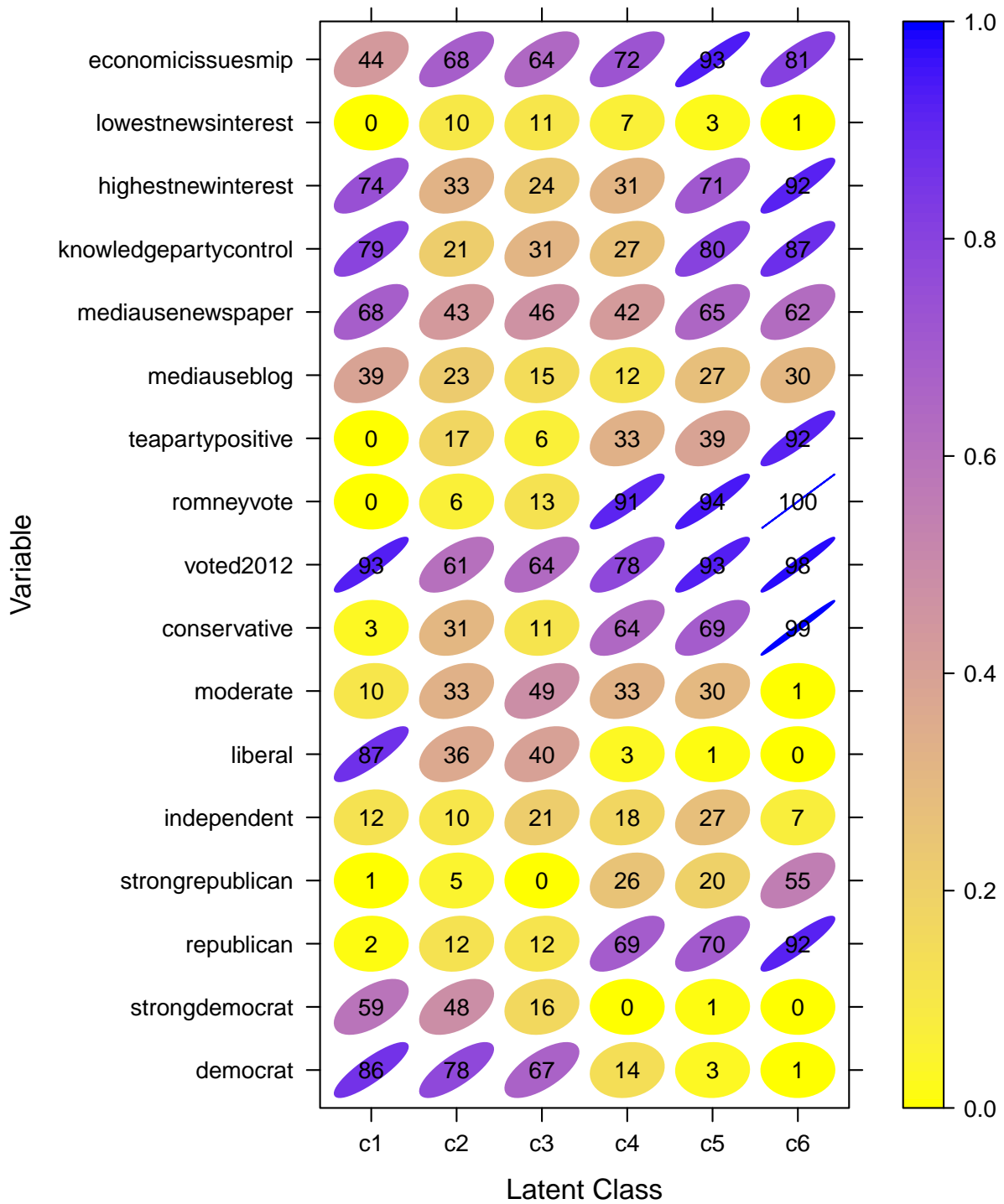


Figure 12: Probabilities of political identification and sophistication responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Demographic Variables

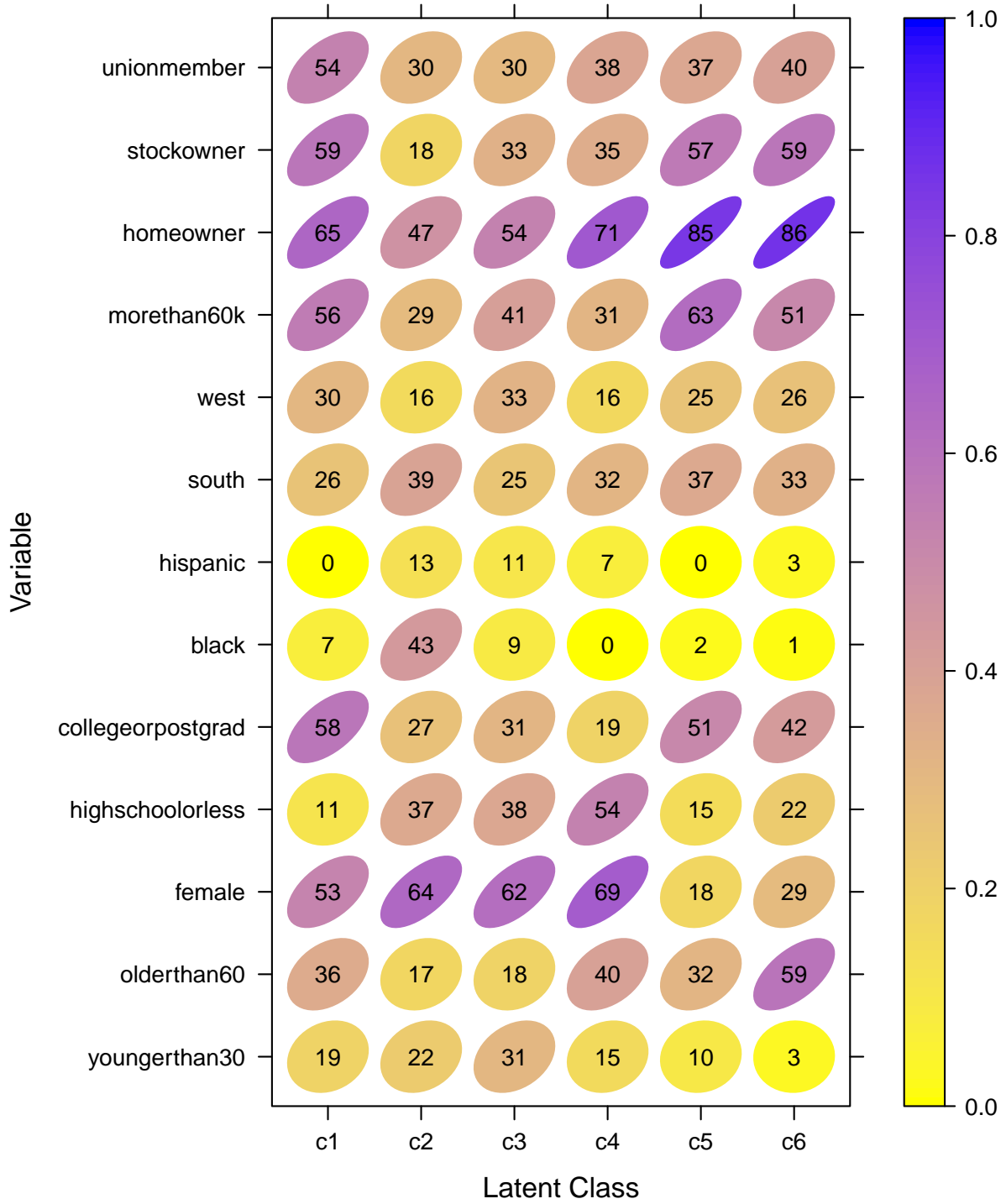


Figure 13: Probabilities of demographic responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Personal Values

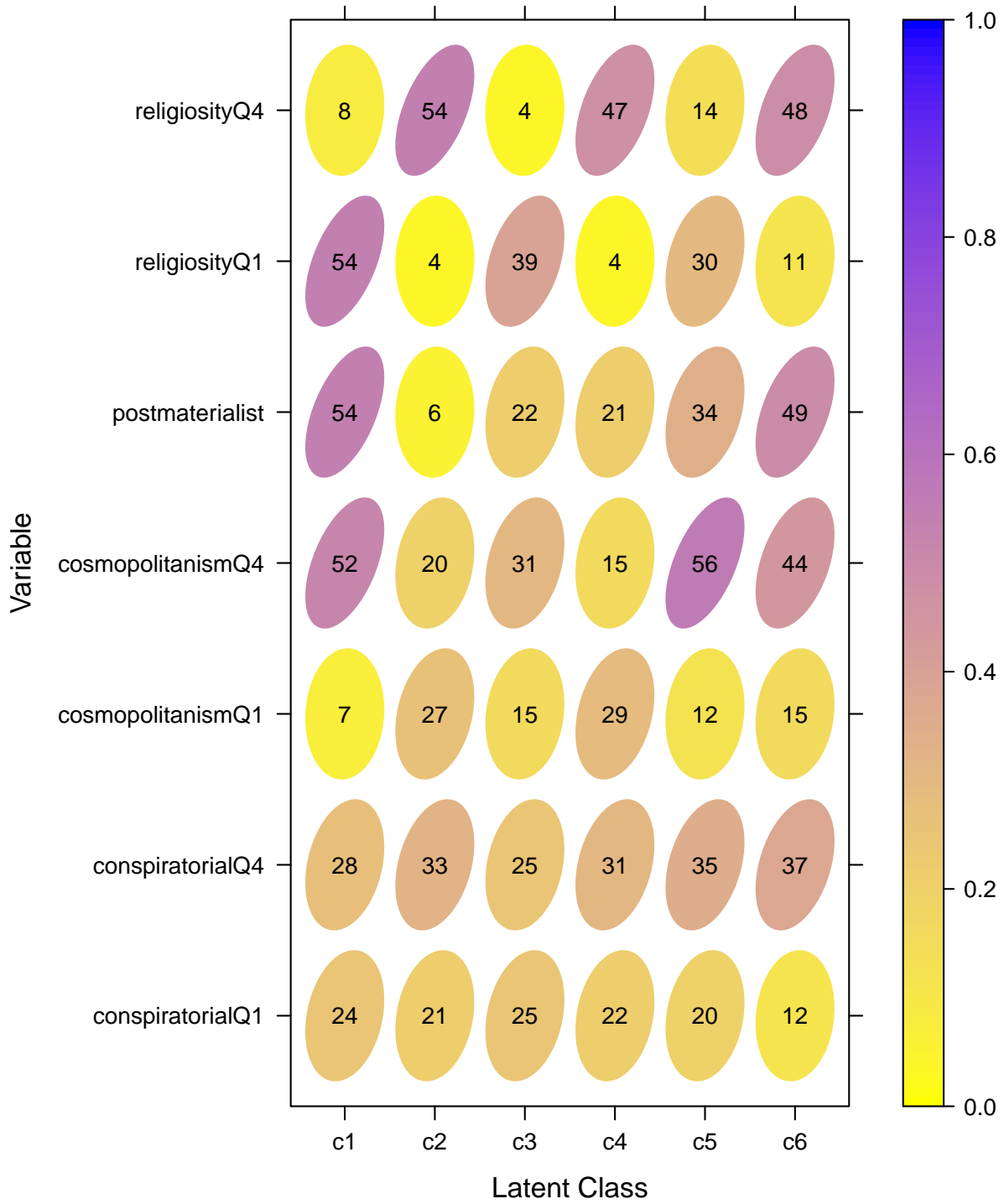


Figure 14: Probabilities of personal value responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Economic Issues

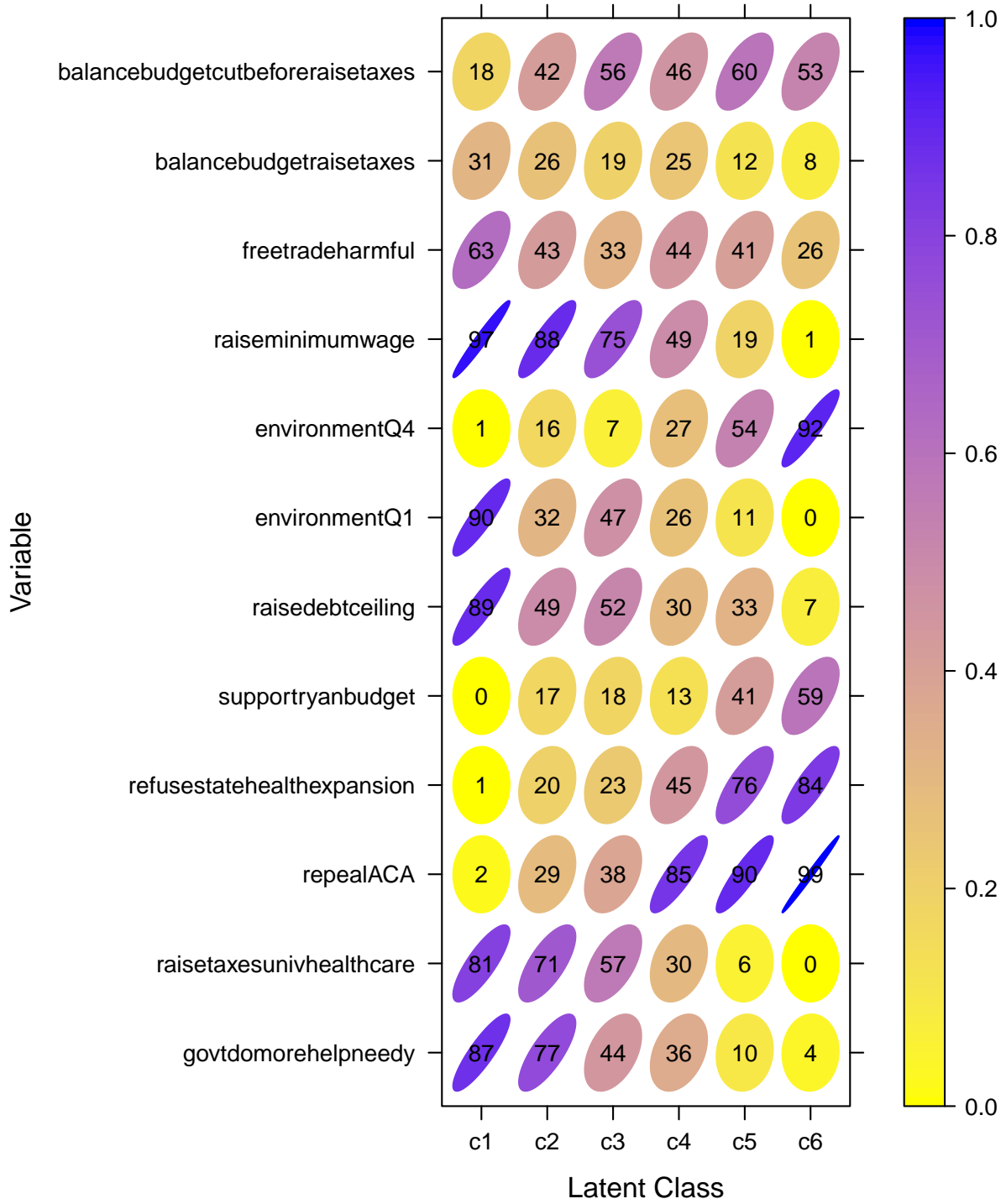


Figure 15: Probabilities of economic issue responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Social Issues

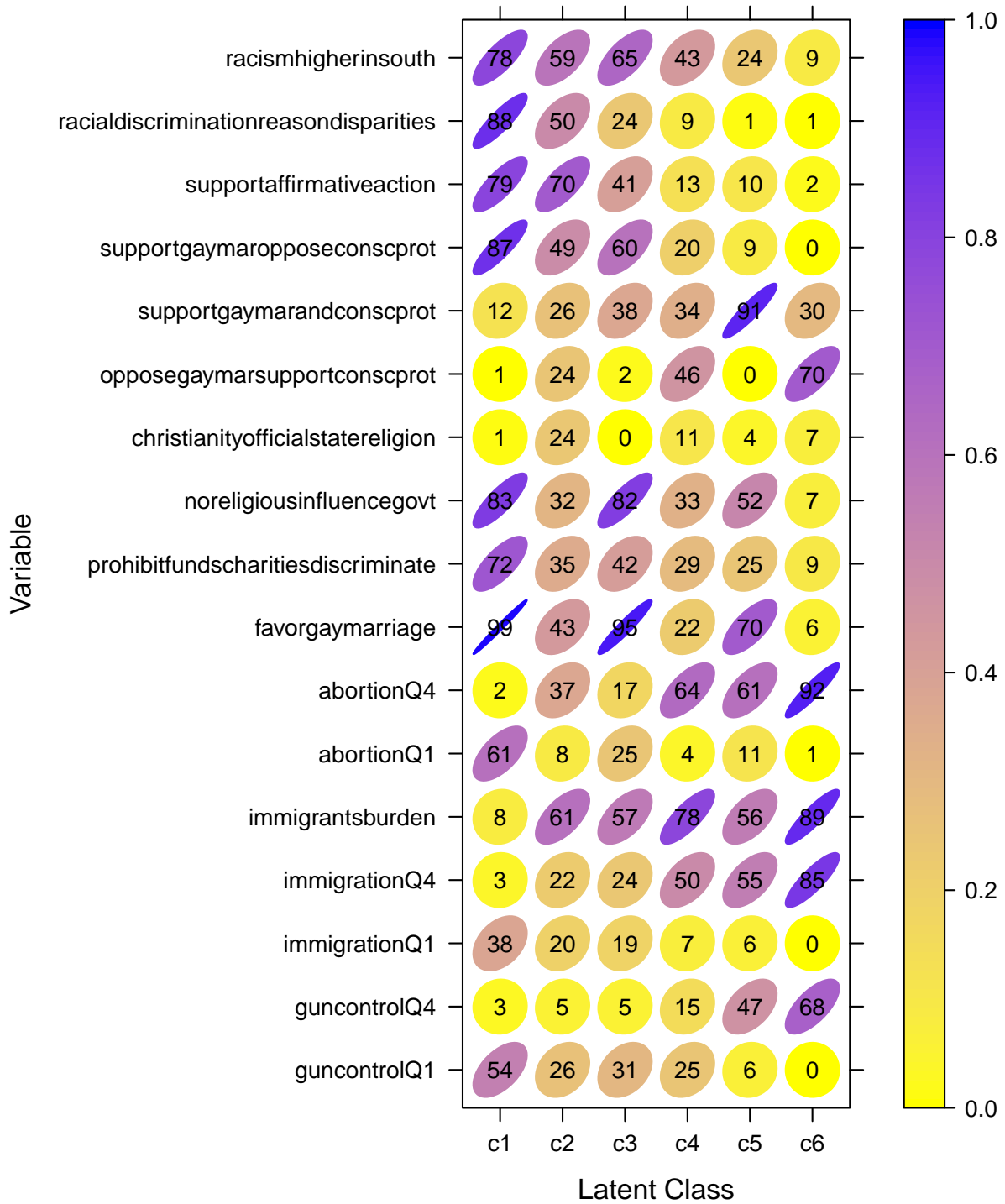


Figure 16: Probabilities of social issue responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Foreign Policy Issues

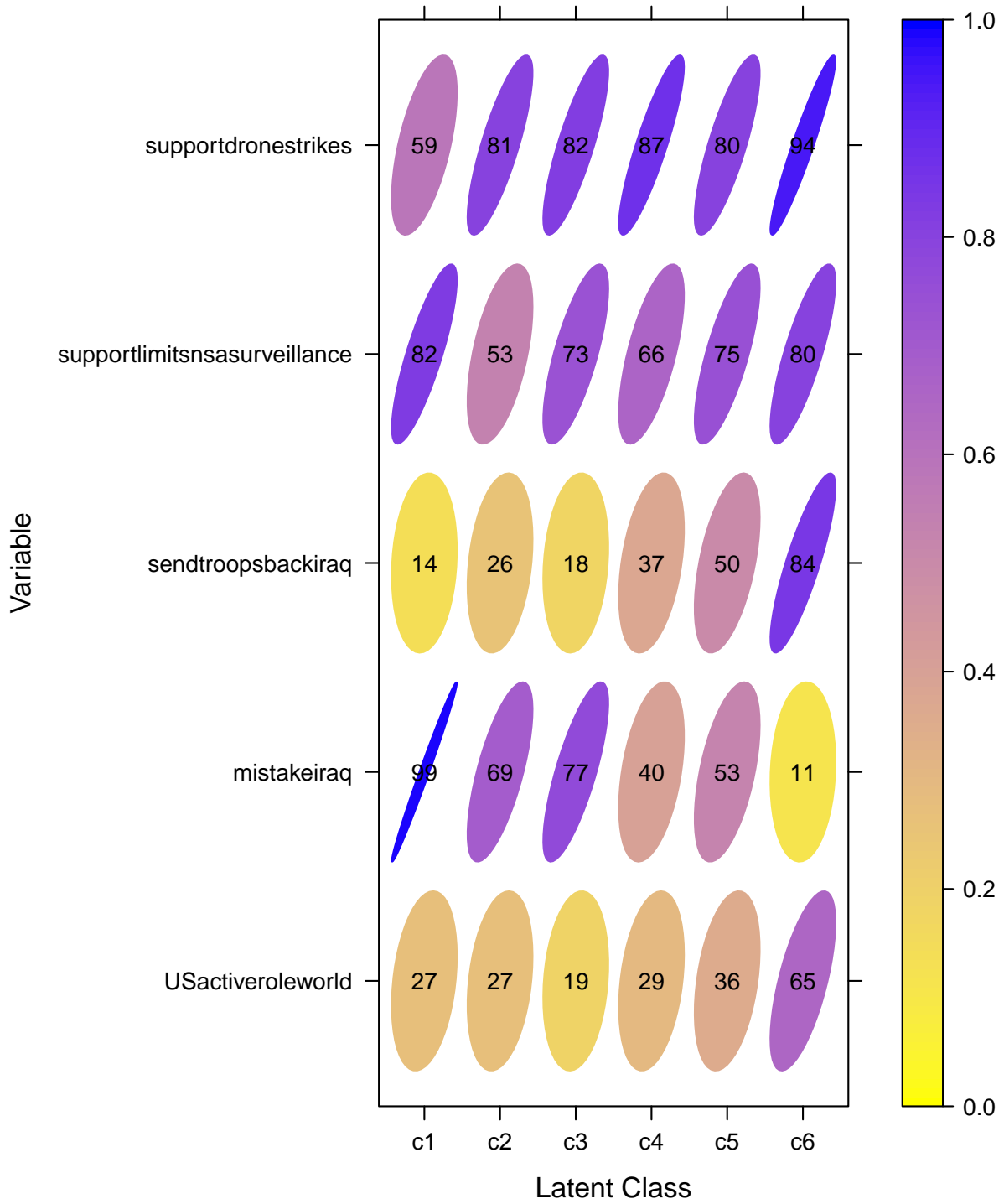


Figure 17: Probabilities of foreign policy issue responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Miscellaneous Issues

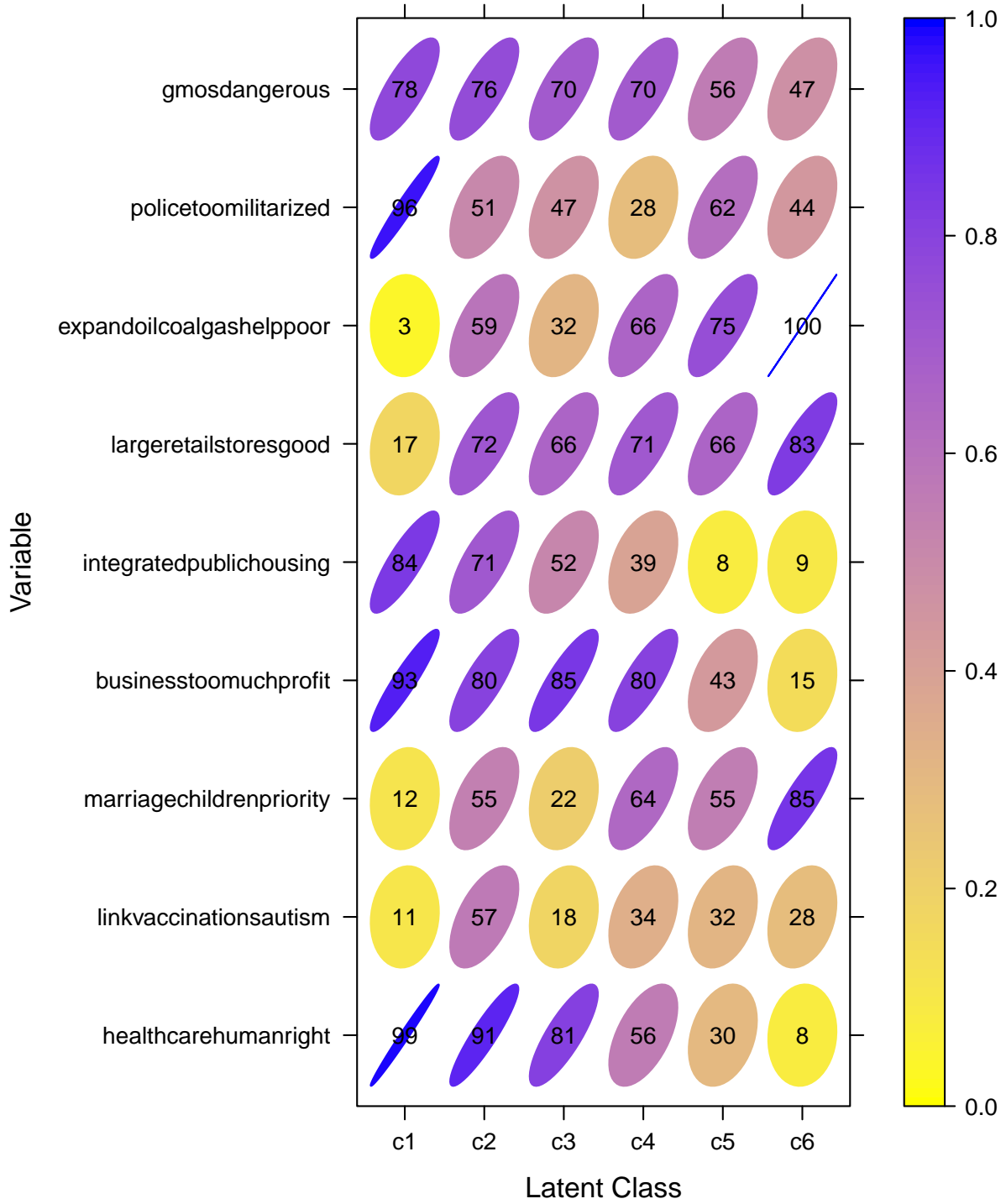


Figure 18: Probabilities of miscellaneous issue responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Moral Items

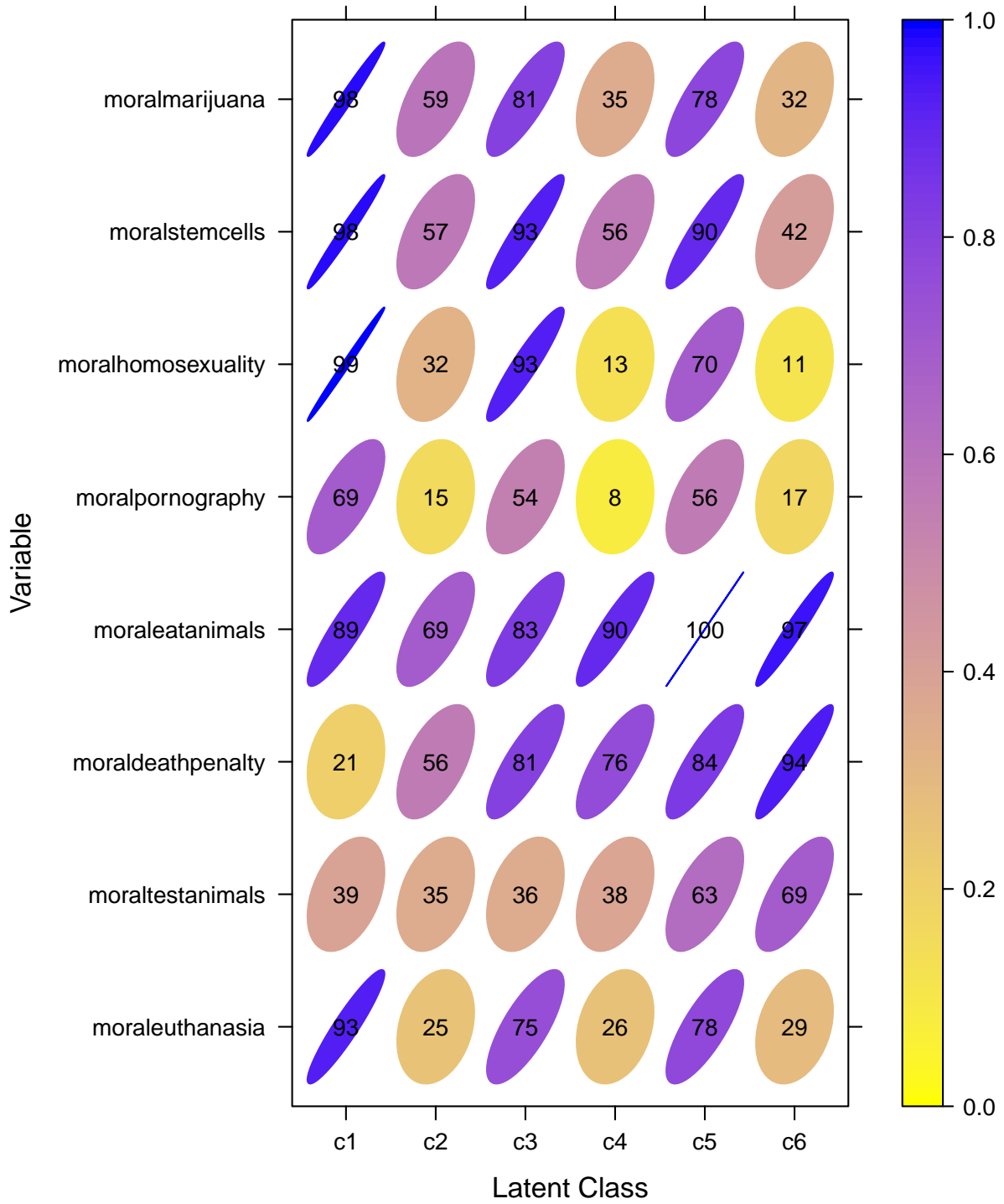


Figure 19: Probabilities of moral item responses given latent class membership.

2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Trust in Institutions

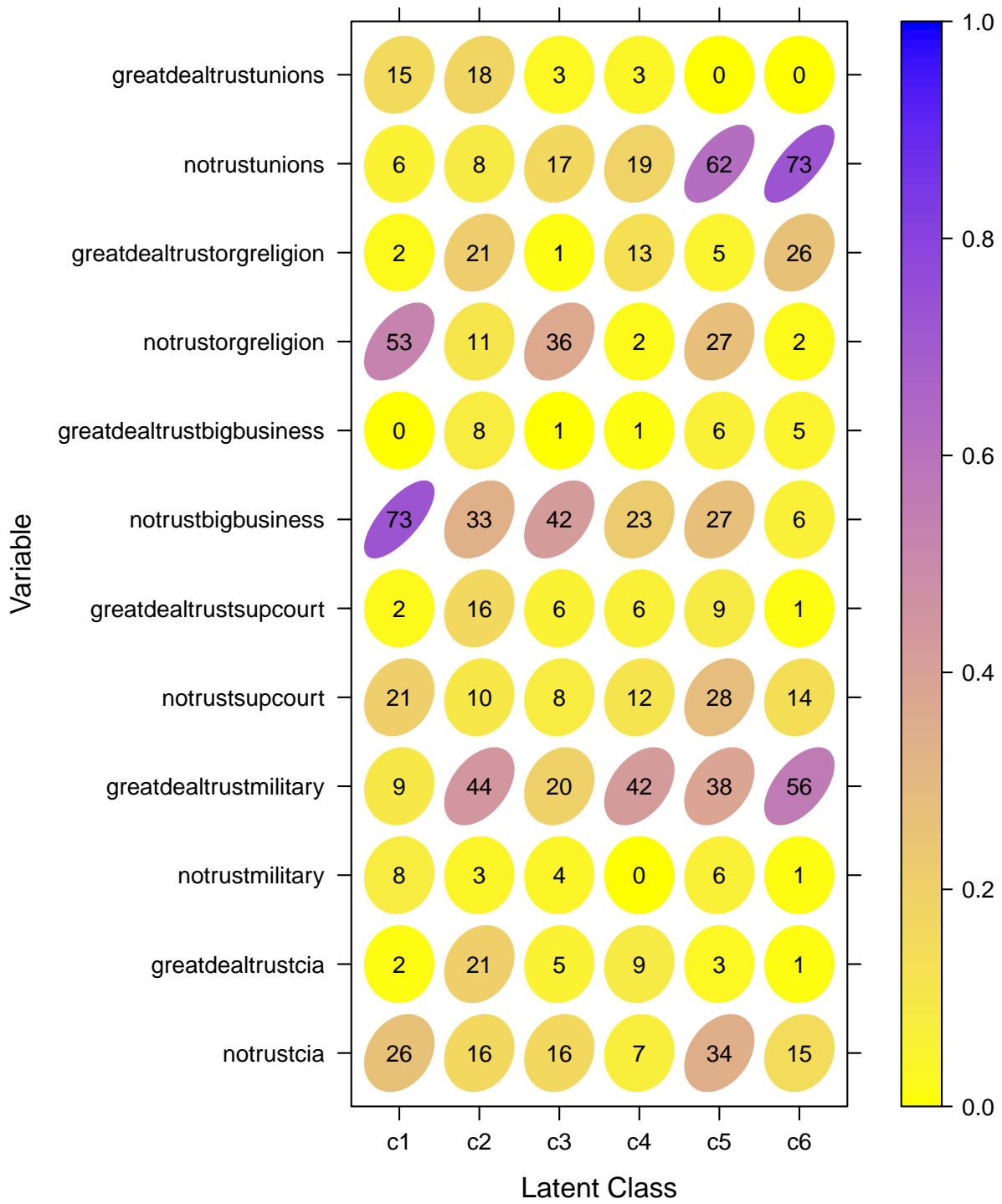


Figure 20: Probabilities of trust in institutions responses given latent class membership.

A.5 Question Wording for the Items included in the <name omitted> Module of the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

1. **UOG301:** Do you support or oppose the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (“drones”) to kill suspected terrorists overseas?
2. **UOG302:** Next we will be showing a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong.
 - (a) Doctor-assisted suicide
 - (b) Using live animals in medical testing and research
 - (c) The death penalty
 - (d) Killing animals for food
 - (e) Pornography
 - (f) Gay or lesbian relations
 - (g) Medical research using stem cells from human embryos
 - (h) Recreational use of marijuana
3. **UOG303:** Which statement comes closer to your view? Genetically modified foods are a positive development because they are cheaper, nutritional, and more resistant to weather conditions and pests **OR** Genetically modified foods are dangerous because they are unnatural, not as healthy as organic foods, and are controlled by corporate interests.
4. **UOG304:** Which statement comes closer to your view? We should expand our exploration and production of oil, coal, and natural gas to reduce energy costs, especially for poorer families **OR** We should focus on developing clean alternative energy sources (like solar and wind) to protect the environment, even if it means higher energy costs.
5. **UOG305:** Which statement comes closer to your view? The minimum wage is too low and we should raise it **OR** Raising the minimum wage would hurt the economy and we should keep it where it is for now.
6. **UOG306:** Which statement comes closer to your view? Local police forces have become too militarized in recent years and should scale back military-style tactics and equipment **OR** Local police forces have needed to become militarized to deal with threats from drug dealers, terrorists, and other criminals.
7. **UOG307:** Which statement comes closer to your view? The US should play an active role in world affairs to protect American interests and promote humanitarian goals, using military force when necessary **OR** The US already does too much to try to solve the world’s problems, and should concentrate on problems here at home.
8. **UOG308:** Which statement comes closer to your view? Free trade is a good thing because it improves economic efficiency and lowers costs **OR** Free trade does more harm than good because it costs jobs and lowers wages.

9. **UOG309:** Which of the following statements best describes your view about the role of Christianity in public life? We should not let any specific religious teachings influence public policy **OR** We should look to Christian doctrine on helping the poor and caring for the weak-but not on matters of private morality-to guide public policy **OR** Our country was founded on Judeo-Christian principles and our public policy should reflect most Christian teachings on public and private morality **OR** Christianity should be the official religion of the United States.
10. **UOG310:** Should bakers, florists, and other private businesses be required by the government to serve gay customers getting married, even if participation in the ceremony violates their religious beliefs? Yes, discrimination against gay customers should be illegal **OR** No, I support gay rights, but the government should not force business owners to violate their religious beliefs **OR** No, I believe gay marriage is immoral and support conscience protections for business owners.
11. **UOG311:** Which statement comes closer to your view? Racial discrimination is the main reason why many blacks can't get ahead these days **OR** Blacks who can't get ahead are mostly responsible for own condition.
12. **UOG312:** Which statement comes closer to your view? Racial prejudice is no higher in the South compared to other regions of the country, as seen with the high levels of racial segregation in Northern cities **OR** Racial prejudice remains higher in the South than other regions of the country due to the lasting effects of racist laws and attitudes.
13. **UOG313** [Cosmopolitanism]: We are interested in the kinds of things people do for recreation. Please tell us a little bit about yourself. In the last 10 years, have you...
- (a) Been to Europe or Australia?
 - (b) Traveled to Canada or Mexico?
 - (c) Visited Asia, Africa, or South America?
 - (d) Gone to an Indian restaurant?
 - (e) Had Japanese food?
14. **UOG314:** Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
- (a) Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care.
 - (b) Health care is a basic human right. We have a moral duty to provide health care to all American citizens, regardless of the costs involved.
 - (c) There is a link between childhood vaccinations and autism.
 - (d) The government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt.
 - (e) Government institutions are controlled largely by elite outside interests.
 - (f) Society is better off if people make marriage and having children a priority.

- (g) Business corporations make too much profit.
 - (h) Public housing developments for poor families should be integrated throughout cities because it increases racial diversity, even if it disrupts traditional and more affluent neighborhoods.
 - (i) In national politics, nothing happens by accident.
 - (j) We should prohibit federal funding for religious charity organizations that don't have anti-gay discrimination policies for services like adoption, even if this leads to cuts in services for the poor.
 - (k) Large retail stores like Wal-Mart are good for local communities (especially the poor) because they provide cheaper products.
 - (l) Nothing is at it seems. Politicians often lie, deflect blame and find other ways to look innocent.
 - (m) We should enact a universal health insurance system where all medical costs are paid for by the government, financed by raising taxes on middle and upper-class citizens.
 - (n) In national politics, you can see patterns, designs and secret activities everywhere once you know where to look.
15. **UOG315:** How much trust do you have in each of the following institutions to do the right thing?
- (a) The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)
 - (b) The military
 - (c) The Supreme Court
 - (d) Big business
 - (e) Organized religion
 - (f) Labor unions
16. **UOG316** [Postmaterialism]: For a nation, it is not always possible to obtain everything one might wish. Several goals are listed. If you had to choose among them, which two seem most desirable to you? Please rank your top two choices.
- (a) Maintaining order in the nation
 - (b) Fighting rising prices
 - (c) Giving people more say in government decisions
 - (d) Protecting freedom of speech

A.6 Common Items Used to Bridge the 2014 and 2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies

Number of response categories, 2014 CCES variable ID, and 2015 CCES variable ID in parentheses:

partyid (7; pid7;)
ideology (7; CC334A)
voted2012 (2; CC14_316)
romneyvote (2; CC14_317)
news_interest (4; newsint)
knowledge_correcthousesenate (2; CC14_309a & CC14_309b)
age (4; birthyr)
female (2; gender)
education (3; educ)
black (2; race)
hispanic (2; race)
georegion (4; region)
income (4; faminc)
homeownership (2; ownhome)
stockownership (2; investor)
unionmember (2; union & unionhh)
religiosity.Qs (4; pew_bornagain, pew_religimp, pew_churatd, & pew_prayer)
repealACA (2; CC14_324_2)
environment.Qs (4; CC14_326_1, CC14_326_2, CC14_326_3, & CC14_326_4)
balancebudget_firstchoice (3; CC14_329a)
balancebudget_lastresort (3; CC14_329b)
guncontrol.Qs (4; CC14_320a, CC14_320b, CC14_320c, CC14_320d, & CC14_320e)
immigration.Qs (4; CC14_322_1, CC14_322_2, CC14_322_3, CC14_322_4, & CC14_322_5)
abortion.Qs (4; CC14_323_1, CC14_323_3, CC14_323_4, & CC14_323_5)
favorgaymarriage (2; CC14_327)

A.7 Code to Apply Estimated LCA Configuration to the 2015 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Data

Implemented in R using functionality from the poLCA library:

```
mframe <- model.frame(formula.cces2014, cces2015.data, na.action = na.pass)
y <- model.response(mframe)
y[is.na(y)] <- 0
N <- nrow(y)
J <- ncol(y)
R <- 6 # nclasses
K.j <- t(matrix(apply(y, 2, max)))
prior <- matrix(lcaresult.cces2014$P, nrow = N, ncol = R, byrow = TRUE)
vp <- poLCA::poLCA.vectorize(lcaresult.cces2014$probs)
rgivy <- poLCA::poLCA.postClass.C(prior, vp, y)
predclass.cces2015 <- unlist(apply(rgivy, 1, which.max))
```

A.8 Presidential Primary Candidate Preference by Latent Class

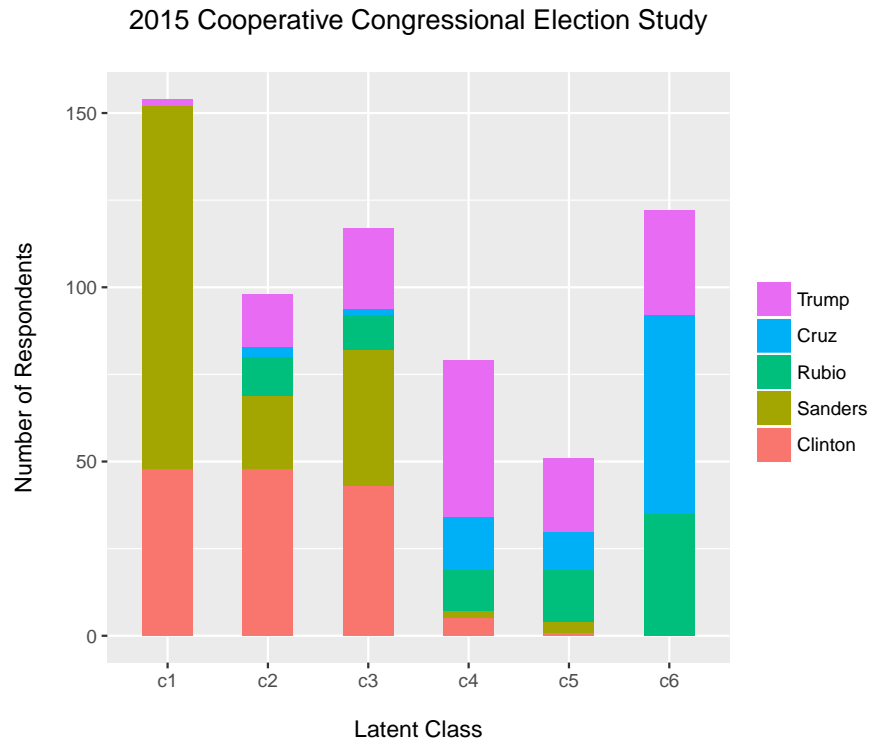


Figure 21: Most preferred presidential candidate by latent class (based on feeling thermometer ratings).