Trinity College Dublin

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PhD in Political Science

The effect of observable party cohesion on voter choice in liberal democracies.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work. I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

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Thesis Summary

The goal of this thesis is to assess the electoral impact of party infighting. It addresses the key research question of what is the impact of party infighting on the electoral fortunes of that party. In answering this question by confirming that party infighting does affect parties a number of interrelated questions emerge. Why does this effect occur? Is it simply a function of the way that voters receive news about the party? Is it something intrinsic about the events of disunity themselves? Is it the disunity that causes the change in party support, or might the reverse be true?

This topic is approached in a number of chapters. In Chapter One the topic is introduced. It explains why this is an important area of research and outlines the structure of the thesis. Chapter Two gives a theoretical overview and outlines what is already known from the literature on this topic. It concludes by observing that the literature is very uncertain on this area and that while there are many plausible explanations for whether and why cohesion should matter, these are often contradictory.

Chapter Three is the first of four empirical chapters. This chapter answers the question of whether party cohesion affects the votes of the public. Using election studies in a variety of countries it establishes that it does and negatively. Chapter Four assesses whether this effect derives from extensive coverage of party infighting in the media. It established that this was not the origin of the effect using the case of the Canadian Liberal Party from 1996 until 2006. Chapter Five investigates whether any effect observed was related to the events of disunity themselves. Using a new database of newspapers it establishes that it did, but positively and not negatively. A number of explanations are outlined for this but a temporary underdog effect is seen as most plausible. Chapter Six explores the causal mechanism. It is concerned with the causal direction of the relationship between infighting and the vote and what causes the relationship for voters. Using new opinion poll data it shows that party infighting being a cause of poor results is much more plausible than inverse relationship. Furthermore it links party infighting to leadership evaluations. Finally,

Chapter Seven concludes the project by showing how these findings link together and establishing their significance for future research and the wider world.

The impact and importance of this thesis stems from its deep probing into the important issue of party cohesion for vote choice. It goes beyond establishing a correlation between cohesion and the vote. It uses a variety of different sources to establish how and why that correlation comes about. Accordingly, it can make a plausible case for showing causality. Following the establishment of the relationship in Chapter Three each subsequent chapter is concerned with showing how this relationship comes about. This means that it thoroughly examines not only the existence of this relationship but also what drives it.

The findings of this thesis are broadly applicable to the area of voter choice. Party infighting, by affecting policy, leadership and performance in office touches upon virtually all major strands of opinion as to what primarily drives voters. This thesis finds that infighting mostly bears a relationship to opinions on leadership to voters. However, it also finds that voters largely think of it as separate from virtually every other issue and it interacts differently than leadership in their decision-making process. It does demonstrate, though, that regardless of what primarily drives voters, cohesion demonstrates a smaller but separate effect. It is worth accounting for.

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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis. It will first outline the concept of party cohesion in general using historical examples. It will then explain why the topic is an important one both to the public and to researchers. It proceeds to explain why our understanding of this area is not complete, and that there exists several possible ways of thinking about the issue. Following this is an outline of the structure of the rest of the thesis, with a brief description of each chapter to come.

1.1 Outline of the area

This thesis will investigate the electoral impact of party cohesion. It will show whether variations in the level of cohesion have consequences for parties where it matters most to them: at the ballot box.

Party cohesion, or its inverse of infighting, is one of the main means by which the public understand politics. Personality politics has long been one of the most significant lenses through which politics is reported and read about. Indeed, bitter personal rivalries, whether or not they lead to a party split, have often driven popular perceptions and narratives about political leaders. While some political leaders see their career die at the hands of their enemies in other parties, many others die at the ends of their supposed friends in their own. Some of the most iconic political moments have been divides within parties, rather than between them. In Britain, Margaret Thatcher rose to the leadership of the Conservatives by challenging her leader – and a former prime minister – Edward Heath. Her political career similarly ended at the hands of her own Conservative colleagues, who bluntly told her that she would not win a leadership ballot (J. Campbell, 2003; Harris, 2013). The same story is told of numerous political careers. Also from the political right, the Australian Liberals have been racked by division since 2007, with current Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and his predecessor Tony Abbott exchanging the party leadership back and forth in recent years (Manning, 2015). Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's entire political careers were defined in relation to the other, both firm political allies in the goal of modernizing the British Labour Party and equally firm personal and political rivals once in government (Naughtie, 2001; Rawnsley, 2010; Richards, 2010). In Italy, Matteo Renzi rose to the premiership with a consistent campaign against a prime minister of his own party after he had attained the leadership of the Democrats (Willey, 2014). In Ireland, the career of Fianna Fáil leader Charles Haughey was dominated by the often extremely intense animosity large sections of

the party had for him as leader which never truly disappeared. He survived four separate leadership elections and a party split before ultimately being toppled by his coalition partners, the Progressive Democrats – led by one of his former internal rivals no less (Collins, 2005; Dwyer, 1999; O'Malley, 2014).

Such infighting is not just a comparatively modern phenomenon. It is not difficult to find ructions that are considerably more severe than these. For as long as there have been political parties worth the name, people have squabbled for control of them. H. H. Asquith and David Lloyd George's battle for ultimate control of the British Liberal Party spanned from the late 1900s to the 1920s and was at least a contributory factor in the eclipse of the party by Labour (Douglas, 1971). Even more significantly, most major social democratic parties had severe ructions over the issue of communism after the end of the First World War, with several, such as the German SPD, ultimately splitting over the issue (Eley, 2002). Further back, the early political careers of two nineteenth-century British prime ministers, William Ewart Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli, had begun over a severe difference of opinion within the Conservative Party on the repeal of the tariff system of the Corn Laws in 1846; this divide was to lead to a complete realignment of the British party system, with Gladstone and others leaving the Conservatives and ultimately contributing to the creation of the Liberal Party in 1859 (Aldous, 2006).

Taken together, this seems to be a near universal feature of political life that does not change from party to party or from country to country. It affects parties from all eras, countries and contexts.

This topic is an important one to investigate for several reasons. First, it is important because it is an area of politics which, clearly, attracts a lot of attention. All of the aforementioned events were of very major importance in their time and were eagerly watched and analysed. It would be unusual for that to have absolutely no impact on the public. Second, it is important because of its consequences. These splits and divisions within parties have led to major changes in policies and in party systems. These incidences of disunity are often times of great flux and change when they occur in a dramatic way. These very real consequences and impacts for wider society are, of course, of intrinsic interest. Third, variation in cohesion is important because of the impact that it has on the parties themselves. It matters which individuals triumph and fail, what policies the party pursues and what strategies it takes. These variations in cohesion matter because parties are important actors in democratic societies. They determine both the personnel and direction of governments.

It is important to clarify what this thesis means by cohesion, infighting and disunity.

Ozbudun defined party cohesion as the extent to which, in a given situation, 'group members can be observed to work together for the group's goal in one and the same way'. (Ozbudun 1970, p. 305). This means that cohesion is a condition of unity of action among party members (Hazan, 2003).

Ozbudun also identifies party discipline. This is a subset of cohesion, and refers to parties acting together in parliament under threat of some sort of sanction. Ozbudun is concerned with cohesion in parliament. If the party voted together in parliament at all times, he would feel that the party is cohesive in the arena where it most matters. However, there are other kinds of cohesion and other areas where a party may need to speak with one voice. If a party had members regularly denouncing each other, leaking to the media or being critical of the performance of parliamentarians we could not regard it as cohesive, even if it remained so in parliament. This project is primarily concerned with the electoral impact of these kinds of reductions in cohesion.

Therefore, cohesion is lowered if there are suggestions that the party may not speak with one voice on any matter, whether policy-related or strategic. For it to matter to voters, it must be observable. This conceptualisation allows us to capture both policy and the idea that parties may be united on policy but have important divisions on other matters.

Additionally, a dissenter is defined as any individual member who breaks with the majority of their party on any matter. An act that lowers cohesion, in any form, will be referred to as a dissent. Cohesion and unity are used interchangeably in the rest of this project. Disunity will refer to a lack of cohesion. Infighting and disunity are similarly used interchangeably.

This is an important area of research for three reasons. First, it is important because it is treated as important by virtually all stakeholders of note. Second, it is an important area because it is unclear how and why voters have the response to the area that they are assumed to have – a negative one. This is of real-world importance to political parties as it affects their strategies. Third, this is an important area for research because it adds useful understanding to an area of the literature. Party cohesion interacts with both policy and valence issues that concern political parties in a way that applies to few other areas. This means that party cohesion can be used as a testing ground to help determine the relative significance of these two key areas for vote choice.

The strongest evidence that this is an area of interest and importance is the sheer amount of attention that it receives. As mentioned above, the media give considerable focus to areas of party infighting. This suggests that it is of interest to the public, assuming the media are interested in making a profit, or that it is of intrinsic importance and newsworthiness irrespective of the interest of the public, or that it is both. In any case, anything that acquires a large amount of attention is of importance for that reason alone, regardless of whatever objective importance it might have.

As this is an important area of interest, it is relevant to determine whether and how voters respond to it. This means establishing that party cohesion is a factor that voters take into account in decision-making. From there, we identify on what basis it is, or is not, taken into account. Is any impact of party cohesion related to the actual acts of disunity, or is it related simply to way that these events attract consistent volumes of negative news coverage? There are theories within the literature on why this may be true in general, but less so specifically, as direct research on the electoral impact of infighting is limited.

Some coverage of these events are explicit regarding the expectation that party infighting should have an impact on the public. Chantal Herbert, a Canadian political correspondent, reported that the Canadian Liberals complained about leadership infighting because it damaged their support with the public (Herbert, 2002). Divisions in the British Conservatives were explicitly noted as damaging with the public after the 2017 election (Harding, 2017). In Ireland efforts to control internal tension Fine Gael were reported, by the politicians themselves, as being related to public perception (RTE, 2003). Sometimes these tensions are noted as having specific, negative, impacts that are specific to the situation. For instance, when the leader of the ACT party in New Zealand removed his deputy leader in 2010 her office leaked that this would be perceived as 'the bullying actions of white middle-aged men against women in leadership' (Kay, 2010).

There is an assumption in much of the literature that infighting hurts parties in parliamentary systems. While only occasionally made explicit it occurs frequently enough to be considered conventional wisdom. Patzelt notes that 'Germans clearly dislike enduring lack of parliamentary party discipline (Patzelt, 2003, p. 111). Skjaeveland notes in his paper on election cycles that 'in Denmark voters do (presumably) punish MPs who cause a low degree of party cohesion' (Skjaeveland, 1999, p. 124) while Greene and Haber predict that 'the appearance of public division likely influences voters' evaluations of parties' (Greene & Haber, 2015, p. 17).

Examining party cohesion is a matter of more than academic curiosity; there is more to be gained than establishing which academic theory on voting behaviour is most applicable in this case. Political parties themselves base a considerable portion of their strategies on managing their own internal behaviour. This takes many forms, but one of the more prominent is efforts to control internal dissent. Parties do this for several reasons. They do this to simplify decision-making. They do this to foster a more harmonious internal working environment. But they also do this because they believe that the public might notice it. What is more, they believe that the public might act upon this information.

This means that answers to the questions relating to party cohesion are of relevance to them for a number of reasons. They may be interested to learn whether or not their efforts have had any relevance to voters. Is controlling this behaviour really worth their time? They may be interested in learning why an effect of cohesion does, or does not occur. They may be interested in this as it would affect their future strategies. If, for instance, the public responded negatively to disunity and associated this effect with instances of policy incompetence, it informs parties that they should put a priority on quelling instances of disunity. If this were true, disunity relating to leadership rather than policy would be better from the perspective of the party, and could be left alone longer without negative consequences. They may also be interested in party cohesion because of how it reaches the public. This is of interest to parties because it affects other areas. If any effect of negative disunity is primarily related to volumes of media coverage, and not the events themselves, that hints to parties that the media strategy is of paramount importance. If, on the other hand, it is the actual events of disunity themselves that are of importance, parties should focus on their own internal management above all else. It would mean that prevention is better than cure.

These responses are plausible for parties, but what we remain unsure of, however, is the ultimate public response to infighting and what is driving that response. Most of the incidences of disunity that are mentioned above were extremely traumatic and memorable experiences for their party. They generated volumes of newspaper coverage. There were books, and not simply solely for an academic audience, describing these events in exacting detail (for instance, those above). The public interest in these events and narratives is clear. Whether the public likes what they see is another matter.

What is less clear is whether there is anything more going on than simple public interest, and if there is, what is driving that. This thesis will explore this question. The thesis will

therefore investigate whether there is a public impact of infighting for political parties in elections. It will also explore why this occurs. Both of these are important due to the variety of reasons this may be relevant.

In brief, there are several reasons for us to expect that party infighting may be of importance to the public. Mostly, but not entirely, this would be expected to result in negative assessments of the party. Party cohesion or infighting can refer to lots of different things: dissenting votes in parliament, public criticism of other members of the party, indeterminate rumblings and unease in the party, or anonymous leaks. There are several reasons then that we might expect infighting to be damaging to parties. There are also reasons it might be beneficial to parties in some circumstances. Both the cases for why this should hurt parties and why it should help them are outlined below.

The first relates to party policy. This holds that as parties become more divided, it will affect their ability to implement policy. It would become more difficult for parties to agree on the policy that they want to implement. Secondly, it would make it harder for the party to implement any policy that it might agree with because the party is distracted with other matters. If true, this should affect public perception of parties in negative ways because of the impact it would have on delivering on policy and on responding to wider events. If a party seems incapable of dealing with problems, why should any voters actually vote for them?

This is related to the second reason voters should care about party infighting: the importance of management. Even if voters were not at all concerned with policy, these feuds and squabbles should be of importance to them. This is because it affects the personalities in charge of various portfolios. A voter who has chosen a party because of support for the party leader is not likely to continue feeling positively towards the party if the leader is ousted over internal politics unrelated to their own job performance. This logic can apply prospectively as well as retrospectively. If a voter has reason to doubt that the impressive leader will be appointed because of the internal politics of the party, they may become less likely to vote for the party in that case too. This same logic applies, if naturally to a lesser extent, regarding the position and careers of various party spokespersons.

The final issue relates to what a political party fundamentally is: a group of individuals acting together in a permanent fashion in order to achieve common goals. Those goals could be a policy agenda, or the acquisition of political offices, or a combination of these. Essential,

however, is that the party is organized and acts together. The principle by which this works is that each individual in the party is more likely to get more of what they want acting together than acting separately. While they may have to cope with supporting some policies or individuals that they dislike they will, ultimately, achieve more in this way. From the perspective of individual legislators, this is the main reason for parties to exist at all (Aldrich, 1995). This system breaks down if the party does not act as a unit. In this scenario, not only does the party cease to achieve its collective goals, but each individual within it also become less able to do what they want within politics. While this relates to the first point regarding the ability to implement policy, it is also somewhat more than that. A party that cannot even deliver on its main reason for existing – acting as a unified collective – looks incompetent. Why should voters choose a party that cannot even get the basics right? If the party cannot keep its own affairs in order, why should anyone expect it to be able to put the country's affairs in order? This ties into the extensive literature on the politics of valence issues. We expect bad management and incompetence to be punished by voters when they learn of it.

There are, nonetheless, a few reasons why we might expect voters to at least somewhat reward parties for this behaviour. These reasons are context-specific. They generally depend on ambiguity being a positive thing for voters. They also depend on the lack of cohesion being a temporary event. The first of these is that are there are certain environments and arenas where voters have come to expect differences of opinion within parties to be hammered out in public. In party conferences, we should expect differing figures in the party to express different views on matters. As conferences are staged as major media events, aiming to attract lots of attention for the party, it is reasonable to assume that at least some voters notice this phenomenon. The same applies in leadership contests. It would simply be unusual for different candidates for party leadership not to express at least some differences. It would also be unusual for them not to press their case against their opponents. However, leadership contests are similarly events that attract considerable notice. It would certainly be expected that parties receiving a lot of attention may perform better than those completely absent from public consciousness. Both party conferences and leadership contests also have specific end points. At the end of the process, there is an expectation that the party will get back to business as usual after the brief deviation from unity.

Additionally, the party may benefit from the ambiguity of those events. Different segments of the voting public, with a range of opinions, hear aspects of the party expressing views

that correspond to their own. Regardless of the decision the party takes, they may hang in with the party because of those strands of opinion that they agree with potentially getting the upper hand. This process is dependent on those voters not being averse to their side losing within the party. The loss cannot mean that they cease to support the party altogether. If the loss is severe enough then those voters would leave the party and the party would receive the expected electoral penalty. This logic and situation is, of course, quite specific. Even in this situation infighting in the sense of snide anonymous leaks, for instance, is unlikely to result in electoral wonders for the party. In general the negative interpretation of party infighting seems more plausible, even if there are at least some reasons to doubt it being the complete picture.

Additionally, party cohesion is of special relevance at present owing to the result of the British general election in 2017. Both major parties, but particularly Labour, were perceived to have had major issues relating to their own internal unity. In spite of these issues, Labour performed well anyway in the contest. This raises questions concerning the conventional wisdom that party infighting is, on balance, a likely negative trait for a party to have. It makes research in this area still more relevant.

These explanations of the impact of party cohesion also tell us one single uncontestable truth: public knowledge is of importance in this situation. People need to be at least aware of infighting before it can affect their behaviour. This means that the sources of that knowledge and awareness are of interest. Public awareness via the media has to be a major subject of any analysis of the role of cohesion.

These potential explanations of the electoral impact of party cohesion differ in their interpretation of the causal process. The first holds that cohesion matters primarily because of policy, the second that it matters because of leadership, and the third because of general perceptions of competence. There is no unified explanation, and this assumes that cohesion is not acting as a proxy for another variable that affects both the amount of infighting in a party and people's likelihood of voting for them. If cohesion is actually something that is significant as an independent predictor of vote choice then there must be a reason behind that. Each of these explanations has different implications for how voters think about politics more generally, and is therefore worth exploring.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis will explore each of these ideas in the following chapters. Chapter Two will provide a thorough theoretical underpinning of the thesis. This chapter will provide an exploration as to what existing research has told us regarding party cohesion and how we should expect voter responses to cohesion to structure themselves. This chapter will provide a theoretical grounding as to how and why cohesion should matter, and the specific contexts and situations in which it should matter. By doing so, it will show how the existing literature and research on this topic is incomplete; in particular, a full picture of the impact of cohesion on the support of political parties remains lacking.

After determining the current state of knowledge on the impact of infighting, we need to establish the basics first – whether cohesion has an impact or not. This is explored in Chapter Three. This chapter will examine the impact of infighting on the probability of a member of the electorate voting for that party. It will do so in a variety of contexts and situations. It will do this by examining the choices made by respondents in election studies in Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands from 1983 until 1996. These were chosen because this was the time period in which questions on this topic were asked to respondents in opinion polls. In order to ascertain that any effect was not time-specific, an opinion poll was commissioned of British voters in January 2017. While not as extensive as the election studies, it aimed to remove doubt as to the reasons behind any phenomenon observed and show that any observed effect could be considered universal. This data was analysed in terms of assessing the impact of party infighting on the party itself, but also in terms of its impact on the party system. By this we mean the impact that infighting in one party had on each other party that voters could choose from in that country and in that time. This chapter finds that there is indeed a link between perception of infighting within a party and the likelihood of voting for it.

Chapter Four explores this link through the prism of one case: the Canadian Liberal Party from 1996 until 2006. The goal of this case is to uncover how much the intensity of newspaper coverage matters to the political impact of party cohesion. As already discussed, cohesion can only be of importance if voters know of it. However, the Canadian case is interesting because almost nothing actually happened within the party; there were simply two prominent individuals in the party who passionately loathed each other, and let this fact be known. Most of this antagonism was widely reported at the time, even if they retained a functional working relationship and Canada's economy was performing excellently at the

time. Since almost nothing of substance actually happens, but the intensity of media coverage varies, we can use this case to ascertain the impact of that coverage. If media coverage is solely driving the party's performance and relationship with cohesion, then this has important implications. It would suggest that it is not infighting that hurts the party, it is negative news coverage that happens to be related to infighting, and is thus driving both perceptions of infighting and likelihood of voting for a party. While findings are far from conclusive, there was little evidence for the idea that sheer volume of coverage is a determinant in how a party performs in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, positive coverage of divisions in the party was associated with better performance.

Chapter Five examines the alternative idea that it is the events of infighting themselves that cause any changes in party fortunes. This also uses a case specific approach – in this instance the British Labour Party from 1955 until 1995. This case was chosen because of the degree of variation in infighting over this length of time; the party had periods of stability and periods of turmoil during this time. Furthermore, whether that infighting was concerned with leadership or policy differed over time. How the infighting appeared also varied over this time period. As party infighting almost never shows itself in terms of differences in party votes in parliament, a different variable was used, in this case newspaper editorials. This provides a good proxy for major events of disunity, as such events would warrant a comment. Findings for this chapter were also suggestive rather than conclusive. They suggest that the party may, in the short term, benefit from newspaper coverage of their plight. This is even as this very same process damages the party's brand long term and ultimately drives away voters. This finding will be discussed for the subtlety of the effect observed.

Chapter Six examines the causal process for the impact of cohesion in-depth. The thesis at this point has already established that there are many theoretical reasons why infighting should be important for the support of political parties. It has established that being perceived as divided is not conducive to a party's electoral success. It has been established that this is not purely a media driven effect and that there is at least some evidence that actual occurrences of disunity have some effect on a party's performance in the polls. This chapter, in two sections, provides evidence for the existence for a direct causal link and also some evidence for what may be behind that link. By returning to the 2017 opinion poll data used in Chapter Three, it establishes that voters do view infighting negatively. Furthermore, voters with this view are also more likely to report it being an important consideration for

their vote and both of these variables are good predictors of party choice in Britain in 2017 even accounting for other variables. The second portion of the chapter returns to the election studies also used in Chapter Three. It explores other factors to determine what, if anything, voters link party infighting to. Do they associate it with policy, with party leadership or with general competence? The findings of this chapter suggest the evaluations that voters make are most likely based on a combination of leadership evaluations and competence, but remain distinct from each of them. Thus, it makes sense to think of infighting as a separate consideration for voters.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis. It provides a summary of the results across all portions of the thesis and provides a short discussion of the overall findings of the thesis as well as an exploration of future areas of research that extend from these results. It will also provide practical suggestions to party managers regarding the pitfalls to avoid that emerge for parties in this thesis.

2. Assessing the electoral impact of party cohesion

2.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter will review the literature on the topic. First, it shall outline what cohesion is and how the literature refers to it. It will then discuss the institutional and sociological causes of party cohesion. Following this the chapter will discuss the likely public response to a lack of cohesion, where it will conclude that while cohesion affects policy it would likely be thought of as a valence issue by the public. The chapter will conclude by summarising what is known about the impact of party infighting before linking this to the empirical analysis which begins in Chapter Three.

2.2 Research Question and Key Conceptualisations

The goal of this chapter is to provide a review of the relevant literature. This will provide a firm base on which to base future empirical chapters.

The goal of this research is straightforward: to evaluate whether party cohesion has an impact on political parties where it matters – in voters' evaluations of parties - and whether that is reflected in the ballot box or opinion polls. Intuitively we would expect that it would. If the party is seriously divided, this reduces certainty for a voter as to the policies a party would actually implement in office. Additionally, a fall in cohesion could even have broader implications on policy areas that in turn feed back in the electoral process. This shall be described in detail below.

This policy uncertainty differs fundamentally from vague policy, which might also be expected to increase uncertainty in voters as to what exactly a party will do in office. This is because voters respond to what they perceive a party's position to be, rather than whatever that position may actually be (Van Der Brug, 2004). A vague policy means that voters may potentially not see policy positions for what they really are. For instance, with a vague policy it is easier for a voter to believe that the party is close to their own positioning, regardless of how true that is. We know that party identification, for instance, alters how voters see the actual positions of parties, making them see parties that they were more inclined to vote for anyway seem more close to them than their actual policy position is (Norris & Lovenduski, 2004). Party infighting also increases uncertainty, but does so in a challenging way to voters. It does this by highlighting to voters a variety of different positions within a party. As such they cannot just assume that policy will pan out as they believe or hope it will

as another has a reasonable likelihood of gaining precedence. They are confronted with positions contrary to that, and must therefore factor the possibility of a faction winning and imposing a position that they may not like. This logic is rooted in the logic of Downs' economic theory of voting, which holds that voters choose the party whose issue positioning is closest to them (Downs, 1957). While Downs assumes unitary parties in his model with clear positions, neither of these might be true for a divided party. If these cannot be assumed the possible range of policies that a party might introduce if in office expands hugely.

Even if voters were concerned more with personality than policy, cohesion should still matter. This is for two reasons. It could be because party divisions on policy related grounds are indications of instability in the current leadership, and thus are signs of potential change. Furthermore a change in leadership means a different set of managers. If voters choose parties because of perceived confidence or the debate is merely who could deliver on performance the most effectively then cohesion matters a great deal. If a party cannot manage its own affairs, can it be trusted to manage the affairs of the country?

As a reminder, infighting refers to several things in this thesis. It refers to parties not voting together in parliamentary votes. It also refers to denunciations of party officials from other members, leaks to the media and any other action which suggests that the party is not speaking with one voice.

There are many questions that spring from the idea of party cohesion mattering to the electorate, using election results of parties as the dependent variable and party cohesion as the key independent variable. The first and most basic is:

1) *If the observable level of cohesion in a party changes, does the level of support for that party also change?*

If this is true it leads to another question:

2) *If the electorate does respond, how long lasting are the effects?*

Existing research has engaged with these questions to only a limited extent.

This research question is broad – but can be operationalised as:

'Do changes in the internal cohesion observable to voters in parties cause changes in the share of votes received by those parties?'

2.3 What causes lack of cohesion?

In order to ascertain the impact of a lack of cohesion it is first necessary to determine the causes of that lack. This is because what is driving cohesion to fall may also be a major cause of any public response to it.

Almost all studies use cohesion of parliamentary parties as a dependent variable to be explained rather than a behavioural explanation in its own right for other factors. This means that there is an absence of scholarly work in this area. Maravall looked at whether perceived disunity affected voter behaviour. He used questions about how unified voters felt the parties were in the *British Social Attitudes Survey* of 1990 and in the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociologicas* survey of 1990 in both Britain and Spain as a potential explanation for voter choice (Maravall, 2008). Using a series of logit models he found that low cohesion correlated with a reduced likelihood of voting for certain parties. Studies that examine cohesion as a potential explanation for almost any phenomenon are very rare.

This means that most studies that use cohesion use it as a dependent variable. This is in spite of there being almost no variation in observable party unity. Nonetheless, studies have found explanations for cohesion that can be separated into institutional factors, particular those relating to party organisations, and factors relating to individual beliefs.

A huge number of party- and system-specific variables have been found to be predictors of disunity. Looking at system-specific variables, various authors have suggested a role for electoral systems in changing incentives for MPs, and that those without party dependent mandates are more likely to vote more independently. This would be because the removal of a party nomination loses its relative magnitude as a sanction as it may not end a politician's career (Heidar, 2006; Kunicova & Remington, 2008). Similarly Staniek and Ibsenskas show that in open list systems those with the ability to attract large numbers of personal votes, and thus have independent mandates, are more likely to defect – at least in Poland and Lithuania (Staniek & Ibenskas, 2013). This problem has been approached in a variety of different ways. Shomer too argues that electoral systems fundamentally change the incentive structures under which MPs operate, with those in proportional systems owing more to the party leadership, and thus being less likely to defect than those whose mandates are more personal (Shomer, 2010). Mixed electoral systems are widespread (Farrell, 2011); in these, there are both MPs elected on party lists, and those elected with a personal mandate. We should expect the latter to be noticeably less cohesive. This effect

appears strongest in countries with weakly consolidated party systems. Thames studied this in a variety of Eastern European countries, and concluded that the evidence for such a 'mandate divide' was strongest in Russia, where there were almost no institutional loyalties to parties among legislators (Thames, 2005).

Other broader political structures have been theorised to be significant. The basic structure of the democracy, that is whether it is a presidential or a parliamentary system, has been theorised to play an important role. This is related to the vote of no-confidence procedure which raises the stakes of parliamentary votes in parliamentary systems (Diermeier & Feddersen, 1998). However, other institutions can counteract this. There is some evidence of a counteraction in France, where parties grew more cohesive in the Fifth Republic, due to the use of a two-round system, in spite of the switch from a proportional electoral system to single-member districts and to presidentialism (Sauger, 2009).

Once within parliament, institutions continue to exercise an important role. The vote of confidence procedure in particular appears to be a significant factor. This appears to be because it encourages the development of control mechanisms in order to exercise control of candidate selection. If a government can be brought down by a simple parliamentary vote, this provides a strong incentive to make sure that those selected by the party will be loyal (Coman, 2015).

While all of these variables may be significant predictors of the level of cohesion between countries, they are unlikely to be particularly powerful at predicting overall levels of cohesion within one specific country, let alone inter-party variation within a country. This is because institutions like the basic democratic structure and electoral system almost never change. Even if these are the primary explanations for the level of cohesion, these are constant factors between all parties within a country. If we are interested in the electoral impact of cohesion we must look to different explanations.

One of the most popular explanations looks at role of the electoral cycle. There are several competing arguments, with different consequences for cohesion, with regard to the electoral cycle. These are based on the differing institutional setups in different states. Patterson and Caldeira argue in the US that parties should become less cohesive when they get closer to the election (Patterson & Caldeira, 1988). This is because politicians want to distinguish themselves in the eyes of their voters come election time. The opposite effect seems to be observed in proportional systems. Skjaeveland finds that in Denmark parties

actually become more cohesive closer to election time (Skjaeveland, 1999). Ceron also finds that parties in Italy become more cohesive approaching an election, as the pay-off for such behaviour is greater (Ceron, 2012).

A major debate in the literature concerns the role of parties themselves. Much of this aims to establish that party organisation or ideology is the source of party unity. There have been a number of contributions on both sides of this argument. Jenkins used a historical approach and compared the US House of Representatives, where there were parties, to the almost identical Confederate House in the 1860s, where they were absent. He found that party organisations helped account for the degree of cohesiveness among otherwise similar individuals (Jenkins, 1999). Nokken compared not legislatures but individuals – in this case party defectors – to see whether their voting patterns shifted when the organisation that they were affiliated to changed. He found that they did (Nokken, 2000). Looking at a time horizon, the emergence of cohesion often takes time, and this has been linked to the emergence of party organisations worth the name (Aldrich, 1995; Cox, 1987).

The impact of parties goes beyond their mere existence. Internal procedures and organisations seem to matter within them as well, independent of all else. A near universal feature among modern parties is the existence of whips, which attempt to persuade and cajole any reluctant deputies into voting in line with the party. Qualitative approaches seem to suggest that the strength of the whips office matters. In Germany the whips reported themselves as significant actors (Davidson-Schmich, 2006). In the US too, whips were found to be important, although their influence was more moderate. This is because applying pressure on reluctant members is costly, and parties do not tend to do it unless the vote is in some doubt to begin with and they therefore need all support they can muster (Burden & Frisby, 2004). On the flip side of punishment from the whips, party leadership rewards loyalty with important committee assignments and policy concessions, making the role of party structures not simply punitive (Pearson, 2008). Additionally formalised factions within parties have been found to be significant where they exist, where such groups seem to exercise some influence over the votes of their members even when the preferences of those members are taken into account (Bernauer & Brauninger, 2009).

How the political parties select their candidates also seems to be of some importance. Decentralised selection procedures that are not under the direct control of party barons are hypothesised to relate to lower rates of cohesion, although the evidence here is mixed.

Tavits argues that decentralised systems allow legislators to build up their own independent fiefdoms, away from the control of the party leadership, citing the example of Estonia (Tavits, 2009). However Kristinsson finds no evidence whatsoever to support this idea in Iceland, where party cohesion was consistently high despite variation in the nomination procedures for candidates (Kristinsson, 2011).

The character of these parties also seems to be of importance. Sieberer found that opposition parties and large parties were more unified than their smaller counterparts (Sieberer, 2006); however, Carey found that the reverse was true (Carey, 2007). Using a latent variable approach, Bailer, Schulz and Selb found that in the European Parliament, party leaders accounted for a small but significant 7% of total cohesion within parties, which the authors attributed to the experience of the leaders (Bailer et al., 2010). Others have focused on what is at stake when discussing cohesion – with larger parliamentary majorities for a bill reducing cohesion (Linek & Rakušanová, 2005), consistent with the findings of Burden and Frisby. Additionally, Ibenskas' work would suggest that parties that are the product of mergers are less likely to be cohesive, as the ideological distance within the party is likely to be higher (Ibenskas, 2016)

In addition to the importance of party organisations, numerous cases have found that over and above any other factor, ideology and issues seems to be a significant source of disagreement. Most of these discuss it in conjunction with party institutions. In Switzerland virtually all incidences of a lack of cohesion are related to ideological disagreements. While rates of this vary between parties and between election cycles, the cause of the disagreement almost never seems to vary (Traber, Hug, & Sciarini, 2014). Snyder and Groseclose established that ideology seems to be a larger influence than the whips office in the office in their research in the US. They found that the kind of issues discussed seemed to matter a great deal. Moral issues seemed the issues on which parties could exert the least influence (Snyder & Groseclose, 2000). While there is a large difference between the US political system and European parliamentary systems it is notable that both saw issues as a major reason for disunity in spite of these differing structures. Both Kam and Ceron painted very nuanced pictures. Kam examined attitudes of MPs in Britain and Canada to account for their votes. He aimed to determine whether their tendency to vote with the party leadership was due to party discipline or because of genuine and sincere sympathy with the views of the leadership. While he did find substantial agreement between the leadership and MPs, he determined that this alone was not sufficient to account for the lack of votes against the

leadership, as this agreement was not unanimous (Kam, 2001). Ceron looks at factional heterogeneity, and concludes that while the degree of diversity in a party does affect its observable cohesion, this effect is moderated by the strength of the whips' office. The stronger the whips are, the less such factors influenced the behaviour of parties (Ceron, 2012). Examining an entire party system, Wang and Peng found that the party system and party organisations in Hong Kong were directly underpinned by common beliefs and strong organisational structures capable of imposing discipline (Wang & Peng, 2016). In a comprehensive review of the literature at point, Owens finds the explanation for parties being united to be complex, but likely ultimately related to shared values and ideology over institutions (Owens, 2003, p. 28). Outside the parliamentary arena, Greene and Haber observe ideology having a direct effect on cohesion in the form of speeches by conference delegates. Focusing on the major parties in France and Germany, they find that those who had positions far from the party leadership at that time were noticeably more critical of the leadership than those who did not. This was true in both countries and among parties of both the left and the right (Greene & Haber, 2016). This finding might be obvious but is still important. As party conferences are designed to be highly visible showcases for the party, we would expect the public to notice them.

These are not the only reasons internal to parties that have been found to be significant; however most of the other reasons are relatively minor. Jahn and Oberst suggest that parties with a narrow ideological focus should have more cohesion because they are simply more likely to agree with one another (Jahn & Oberst, 2012). Andeweg and Thomassen, using interviews, find that much of the lack of variation can be accounted for by the homogeneity of parliamentary parties, party loyalty and trust in the expertise of party specialists on whatever policy area is being discussed (Andeweg & Thomassen, 2010). Russell, with a psychological approach, argues that cohesion can be explained by parliamentarians liking each other and feeling attachment to the group (Russell, 2012). Norton concurs, saying that 'As far as can be ascertained, peers vote loyally with their party because they *want* to...' (Norton, 2003, p. 69).

Party responsiveness to citizens is one of the key items which we expect party cohesion to have an impact on. Much of the literature is concerned either with how parties can change in response to cues from citizens, and can only really change due to this or an exogenous shock (Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009; Harmel & Janda, 1994; Somer-Topcu, 2009), or how

limited information about voters means that parties cannot change on policy grounds, as change becomes an unacceptable risk (Budge, 2013).

In short, there are several conclusions from the literature on what causes a lack of cohesion. Certain institutions, such as votes of no-confidence, are significant, as are candidate selection procedures and the strength of whips. Ideology also seems to have a bearing. However the literature is often tentative or has contradictory findings. This means that we remain unsure of much of the determinants of variations in cohesion. This, in turn, means that the possible ramifications of cohesion on the electorate cannot be obviously extrapolated from their causes. It therefore makes sense to explore the possible impact of party infighting from its consequences, to determine whether that yields greater insights.

2.4 Should lack of cohesion affect voters?

There are several strong theoretical reasons to believe that the level of cohesion matters outside of the parliamentary party. It may be because a lack of cohesion has genuine consequences for party performance, that it may impact on the electoral support of parties as it increases the uncertainty about whether they will implement their policies and in terms of impact on the party's own leadership personnel. It may also mean a reduced focus by parties on actually governing by those in government, and on attempting to sway the public and present convincing alternative points of view by those in the opposition.

2.4.1 Poor Party Governing Performance

There are several reasons why we may expect cohesion to affect the ability of parties to do their job. The first is that it affects the kind of legislation that parties pass and the kind of approaches that they take in order to pass legislation. This effect was first observed by Collie. She observed that in the US, weak levels of cohesion were associated with a change in tactics from the party leadership. If they were unsure that a bill would receive sufficient support from their own caucus, they provided incentives to support it from legislators. This usually manifested itself in terms of 'pork' – local spending in the districts of congresspersons – and support for pet projects in the legislation. This means that low cohesion is associated with profligate spending for no clear economic purpose (Collie, 1988). There are some limitations with Collie's work. The party leadership that matters for the time period that she draws on is invariably the Democratic Congressional leadership, and the Democrats were certainly divided between a liberal Northern wing and a quite conservative Southern wing throughout much of the twentieth century. It may have been that the Democrats simply had to employ such tactics in order to ensure broad caucus support for legislation, in addition to the party

discipline procedures discussed above. However, Gaines and Sala replicated Collie's work and found the same result as she reported. Furthermore they extended it until 1998, which meant that a number of Congresses controlled by the Republicans were included as well. They found that, while the effect was not as strong as that observed by Collie, it was nonetheless very much still present (Gaines & Sala, 2000). In more general terms, 'greasing the wheels' has a long history as a means of getting things done in the US legislative process (D. Evans, 2004). This phenomenon is not limited to the US or to national politics. Davidson-Schmich examined it in Berlin local government in the 1990s. After the unification of Germany, parties were (naturally) well established in the old areas of West Berlin; in East Berlin, however, party politics was quite new and without the same experience of disciplined political parties. This meant that they could not take for granted that because a local party controlled an area of the city any measure that they used would be passed. Davidson-Schmich found that the parties in those places used precisely the same strategy of adding money to bills in order to entice local members to support the measure. Furthermore, she found that parties in West Berlin did not do this. She attributed this to parties being much more able to rely on disciplined party machines there (Davidson-Schmich, 2001).

There are several possible public responses to this. The first is that the public will respond negatively and punish the party. Poor fiscal management is not usually associated with future economic health and political parties do get punished for economic mismanagement. It is also possible that the public may respond positively to this development; certainly the politicians who do this expect political reward for their efforts, and there is evidence both that politicians do behave differently if they believe that such actions will benefit them and that the public responds positively to such local attentiveness (Alvarez & Saving, 1997; Lancaster, 1986; Stratmann & Baur, 2002). These studies mostly examine this in single-member districts, but in any system where there are incentives to cultivate a personal vote this occurs in some form or another. Certainly this individualised vote building at the expense of good national policy has been observed in Italy's open-list electoral system before 1994, before diminishing substantially with differing incentives under a new electoral system (Chang & Golden, 2007). It would surely not be expected nor logical for politicians to behave like this if they felt that there were no benefits whatsoever accruing to them. This is particularly so as parties try to control such behaviour. This means that this result likely reflects the genuine efforts of distributing resources to local areas that MPs would engage in if the leadership did not restrain them in this area.

There are other specific policy issues. These relate to disunity making it more difficult for governments to pass legislation. In broader terms we should expect cohesion to matter in certain broader policy areas. A strong contender for this is income inequality, which has been identified as being prone to 'drift' (Hacker & Pierson, 2010). This refers to its tendency to get gradually worse over time unless corrective action is taken. As political parties are an important veto point in the policy process (Tsebelis, 2002), it follows that cohesion should impact the policy process to the extent that a lack of cohesion reduces the likelihood of policy being enacted. We see this in several real-world situations, such as through the existence of the Hastert Rule in the US, under which a motion must have majority support among the majority party before a vote is held (Feehery, 2011). In practical terms this means that there must be a broad agreement, or at least a majority, of the governing party on an issue before a vote could be held – even if there was clear support in the legislature for it among all lawmakers. Similar, albeit less formalised, rules often exist for European political parties. Additionally, party cohesion has been observed to have an effect on the implementation of labour laws (West & Lee, 2014). The existence of such policy effects may also be driving the electorate's evaluation of cohesion as a proxy for competence, and is worth exploring.

2.4.2 Credible Policy Commitment

However this is not the only possible perspective on cohesion. Laver argues that a (strategic) lack of cohesion may be of benefit to parties in achieving their national policy goals in certain circumstances. This is because of the way it affects coalition negotiations and ongoing efforts to enact policy. If a party claims that it cannot credibly guarantee the support of its party to the demand of another party in a coalition negotiation due to the existence of rebels, there is at least a chance the other party will drop the demand (Laver, 1999). While too much lack of discipline still hurts parties, an ability to force coalition partners to drop demands is likely to result in a party getting more of what they want, or at least less of what they do not want, which should in turn be associated with a difference in how the electorate perceives them.

A lack of cohesion may have a positive effect on parties by showcasing to the electorate a party that is a diverse and vibrant institution and as a party that welcomes alternative point of view. More centrist, 'catch-all' parties, as described by Kirchheimer (Kirchheimer, 1966), may be less cohesive as well. This is because the greater emphasis on management over ideology means they may contain more diverse opinions. While theoretically plausible, much of the literature on voter choice, and in particular on ideological voting, would

contradict this perspective. Such spatial models of voting would hold that voters will choose the party that is ideologically closest to them (Enelow & Hinich, 1984). There are other views. Directional voting and voting for general tendencies have their advocates. They would tend to support the idea of catch-all, diverse parties as vote winners over more narrowly focused alternatives as there is more opinion within the party for voters to find favour with (Rabinowitz & Macdonald, 1989). However, evidence for the value of this view is mixed at best (Lewis & King, 1999), it seems to be extremely statistically changeable (Westholm, 1997), and it may even perform worse than the ideological proximity model at predicting voter choice (Taniguchi, 2006). For these reasons, it would seem that there is a significantly stronger argument for low cohesion being an electoral liability for parties.

Much of the literature that examines parties as a whole find that a low level of party cohesion has negative electoral consequences for parties. Maravall found that, all else being equal, a party being seen as divided made British and Spanish voters much less likely to vote for that party (Maravall, 2008). Greene and Haber examine Germany and find that low cohesion incurs heavy reputational costs on parties. This hinders their ability to commit credibly to policy. Much like having a reputation for appearing incompetent, this makes voters less likely to vote for a party relative to its competitors even if they agree with its policies and left–right placement (Greene & Haber, 2015, p. 17). All this suggests that we can tie cohesion into the literature on party competence, and voting on valence issues in particular, as it seems to be operating under the same mechanism for voters.

2.4.3 Cohesion as a valence issue

Valence issues are those on which there are no genuine differences of opinion between parties, for instance on the desirability of a strong economy, or a good health system. There is no debate as to the desirability of these outcomes. However, voters nonetheless distinguish between parties on these issues in their beliefs different parties vary in their competence at delivering on these universally desirable goals. There are a number of debates regarding valence in the literature. The most important of these is whether voters are capable of distinguishing parties on these grounds at all. If they cannot make judgements as to which parties are in fact more competent than others, then it does not matter that voters value competence. They cannot use it in order to make any kind of evaluation that affects their behaviour. However it seems that voters can make these judgements, at least in rough terms. Using cognitive interviews in Austria, Wagner and Zeglovits established that while voters may have weak opinions and little information on these matters, they use

complex criteria, such as salience and positioning, to answer these questions (Wagner & Zeglovits, 2014). Even aside from these, there is evidence that voters use the issues that they care about most of all to help form their general image of the competence of a party. If the party seems capable and has good policies on that issue that will, unsurprisingly, be associated with positive evaluations of the competence of that party (Fournier et al., 2003).

There is considerable evidence that valence models perform well in predicting vote choice in elections. Yet this has not been without debate. Evans and Chzhen have argued that the causal direction may actually run in the opposite direction to what the valence model indicates. They argue this position because of the substantive interpretation of the coefficients that one finds in the British Election Study data that was used to formulate much of the original valence model. They point out that that there is a substantively greater effect of party choice on party evaluations than the reverse, which suggests that the party choice is causing positive or negative evaluations of all of the various parties in the party system, and not the reverse. Furthermore, they argue that valence issues actually have no effect in explaining vote movements of ill-informed voters, which we would expect that they would if this was a simplifying heuristic or acting as a substitute for more ideological ways of thinking. Partisanship, in this account, is the most likely explanation of vote choice (Evans & Chzhen, 2016). This view has been strongly criticised. Whiteley et al. defended the initial results, claiming that their results hold up, and for Evans and Chzhen's results to be valid they need some sort of theoretical justification for partisanship to be an exogenous factor (Whiteley, Clarke, & Sanders, 2016).

However, there is evidence for the valence model in other contexts aside from the British case. This suggests that as a general model for human behaviour, it is fairly robust. Clarke and Whitten established that valence seems to have outperformed more spatial models of vote choice in the 2009 German parliamentary elections (Clarke & Whitten, 2013). Valence similarly emerged as quite a good predictor of election performance in Taiwan, a relatively new democracy where parties are not divided on the same kinds of issues that they are in Western Europe (Ho, Clarke, Chen, & Weng, 2013).

Party cohesion is one of the factors that scholars have included when attempting to measure competence (Clark, 2013). This is because low party cohesion acts as an impediment to party leaders. They find it more difficult to pursue any and all kinds of issues. Marx and Schumacher, for instance, discuss how low levels of party cohesion hindered the ability of leaders of European social democratic parties to implement economic reform that was seen

as absolutely integral to future prosperity by making it difficult for leaders to carry out decisions even though they were supported by large sections of the membership (Marx & Schumacher, 2012). The acknowledged importance of valence issues and competence more generally as a means for voters to make judgements between parties in the ballot box (Ansolabehere & Snyder, 2000; Best et al., 2013; Johns et al., 2009) means that cohesion must be considered in analyses of voter choice.

Valence complements the more classic theory of voter choice – that of ideological voting, where voters choose the party closest to them ideologically, where ideological placement can be visualised in spatial terms (as explored by Downs, 1957; Hotelling, 1929). Much of the more recent literature on the area explores the juxtaposition between valence and ideology. Using data from election studies in Britain Sanders et al. find that both valence and ideology matter to voters (Sanders et al., 2011). Similarly, Bernhardt and his co-authors in theoretical models show that politicians viewed as more competent could afford to take more extreme ideological positions and still be re-elected (Bernhardt et al., 2011, p. 488). To put this in the perspective of the voter, it means that when candidates were viewed as capable, considerably greater leeway was afforded to them for their positioning.

This reinforces information that we know regarding the role of leadership in politics. This is relevant both to cohesion and to candidates as leaders are usually the most high profile candidates; any specific issues with cohesion that emerge are likely to come from them or to be in at least some way connected to the office of leadership. In psychological studies, voters report that what they value most in political leaders is competence, charisma and integrity (Pancer, Brown, & Barr, 1999). This result held across Britain, Canada and the US, the three countries under study by Pancer et al. Significantly, it did not appear that these were simply characteristics that voters just liked across the board. The results did not hold for figures who were not political. This suggests that if leadership is important for voters, competence, among other things, is significant in an indirect way for predicting voting behaviour. This seems to be the case. Evans and Andersen examined this in Britain and found that perceptions of party leaders did indeed matter there, and that Tony Blair's unpopularity did actually cost Labour large numbers of votes in the 2005 election. This was true even considering that the then leader of the Conservatives, Michael Howard, was not popular enough to receive any more than lukewarm benefits from this (Evans & Andersen, 2005).

Once again, this effect appears to be moderated by competence, the key characteristic of valence issues. This can be examined with a focus on political scandals. Scandals are a useful tool to use as they are not particularly subjective. While often they do not have a direct impact on the legislative process, it would be quite rare to find voters who regard, for example, tax fraud or marital infidelity as desirable behaviour in politicians. Those few who are impressed by such behaviour one would imagine would be disappointed that the politician who engaged in it was inept enough to be caught! Funk examined this in terms of an experimental approach. In this she asked voters to rate fictional politicians with short biographies in the form of vignettes. For these she varied whether or not the fictionalised candidate had a scandal or not. She did find that voters rated those with scandals systematically less positively than those who did not have one. Furthermore, exposure to scandal changed how these voters rated their leaders. If they knew the candidate had a scandal, competence was important to them. If they did not, factors like warmth became important. This suggests that competence is a basic characteristic. Only once candidates are perceived as competent do other characteristics take on importance (Funk, 1996). While useful, there are problems with an experimental setting. It is easier for voters to be aware of issues in an experiment, with no distractions and a specific task they have been assigned to do, than they might be in real life. In real life no one processes information with such focus.

Certainly, the conventional wisdom in the US would tell us that politicians with a reputation for assiduous constituency work (a valence issue) are given a freer hand with policy. While this project does not explore why that might be, it may be that competence masks 'flaws' possessed by a candidate, which become more apparent in more objective circumstances. As cohesion is a component part of competence in the eyes of voters, and not the whole picture, we should not expect it to be a defining characteristic of voter choice without the other factors related to competence. However, we do expect it to be significant for parties that are otherwise similar, as a means to distinguish them when there are few other options available to voters. This means that we expect this to matter most of all for voters choosing between ideologically similar parties and not, for example, between moderate centre-right and far-left parties, which is likely determined by more fundamental issues for voters. Essentially, what matters is the importance of valence. If voters only care about competence, then infighting is quite likely to cost parties support as it damages their reputation for competence. If voters only care about policy, it becomes more difficult for them to switch over to a policy distinct alternative.

In any case, there are limits to the relationship between parties and voters. While we know that in a general sense voters and parties do respond to each other (Brooks, 1985; Burstein, 2003), we also know that this relationship is neither intrinsic nor perfect. Both parties and voters respond to things that have nothing to do with each other. A common example of this in the literature is the responsiveness that parties show to members. Members do not necessarily respond to events similarly to voters, and are hypothesised to have different goals to them in a general sense (May, 1973). Furthermore they been shown in some specific cases (Gallagher & Marsh, 2002; Kennedy, Lyons, & Fitzgerald, 2005) to have different priorities and policy goals from the public.

We also know that one of the best strategies for parties in computer simulations is not to be responsive, but rather ideologically consistent (Fowler & Laver, 2008). Additionally, even when parties and voters do make decisions that relate to each other they do not have perfect information on which to base that decision. Responsiveness is also reduced in complex systems, as it becomes confused who exactly is responsible for any decision.

2.4.4 Differing incentives for parties and legislators

Moving from parties to individual legislators, the picture changes significantly. Voters do notice when individual legislators dissent from the party on legislation (Ansolabehere & Jones, 2010, p. 588). It follows that there are consequences to that notice for those legislators. There is evidence from Britain that voters reward individual party rebels in the ballot box with a small, but nonetheless still significant, increase in vote share (Vivyan & Wagner, 2012). This is because MPs received electoral rewards from voters who like the party the MP was a member of, but disliked the leadership. Rebels give such voters a means of continuing to support the party they like without rewarding the party leadership that they dislike, by returning to parliament an MP that is difficult for the leadership to work with. The effect is small, however, because it does not override voters' existing opinions of parties. A voter who dislikes the British Labour Party will not support a rebel Labour MP simply because they are a rebel. However, a disillusioned Labour supporter would certainly be more likely to. The reason for the small effect is that there are relatively few voters who like a party while having serious problems with it and its leadership. Further research by the authors and others suggest that this affect emerges because voters value independence and integrity, and by showing dissent that they are demonstrating their own independence (Campbell et al., 2016). Similarly in open list systems, individual rebels seem to get rewarded by the electorate (Olivella et al., 2013). They get more votes from the public than their more loyal colleagues, and in the long-run they are more likely to be placed in higher list positions

as the party recognises their vote winning abilities and rewards them accordingly, hoping to capitalise on their perceived popularity. There are other potential explanations for this phenomenon, such as rebellion being newsworthy and therefore increasing the public prominence of the party rebel, making them simply the beneficiary of a higher profile. This is plausible considering that we know that possessing a higher profile does help candidates get elected, at least in the US (Squire, 1992). The electoral rewards for rebellion for candidates do not end in general election ballot boxes. Greene and Haber find, for instance, that candidates in internal party elections do better if they stand on platforms distinct from the general party stance, because it helps them stand out from their opponents and makes them appear free-thinking and independent (Greene & Haber, 2014). This suggests that there may be wider positive electoral consequences for individuals to differ on party messaging, and hints at a more general trend.

The literature on this is not universal – Carson finds that rebels do worse than loyalists in the US Senate for instance (Carson, 2008). But this finding may be explained by rebels being more likely to hold seats that are vulnerable for their party in the first place. It is certainly plausible that these rebels are voting more in line with their constituents and against the leadership if their re-election is in doubt. This would also be consistent with Carson's finding that retiring senators are more loyal. The US is also a unique case. Certainly the balance of the literature suggests that individual candidates perform better if they are rebels.

There is a tension between the idea of parties as a whole being punished for low cohesion while individual candidates get rewarded for creating it. This may create a Prisoners' Dilemma where the best possible course for the party is bad for each individual candidate. However, it is possible for both to be true. Individual rebels may simply receive a greater share of a vote total that was made smaller by their rebellion. In any case, if there is a difference it should become apparent in the analysis in Chapter Three, where the attitudes of voters to party cohesion are directly explored.

In practice, changes to the status quo on the issue are likely to be what matters. In general this status quo should be a state of high cohesion.

In summary, we expect that ideological difference between the party and the voter is what makes the biggest difference when that voter decides to vote for one party over another. However, if that difference is small, other valence-related factors such as cohesion start to be influential in helping that voter make up their mind. Whether that electoral effect is

positive or negative depends on what the voter is deciding between. If they are deciding between two distinct parties then high cohesion is of benefit. If they are deciding between candidates of the same party, then they may prefer the more independently minded rebel.

For behaviour within a party that leads to lower cohesion to matter to the electorate, it must be observable, as must the behaviour of candidates. If they cannot observe it, it is impossible for them to take lower cohesion into account when casting their votes as it would be unknown to them.

It must be noted that the causal relationship between party election results and cohesion may run in both directions. Parties may become less united because of poor election results, in addition to receiving those results because of a lack of cohesion. While such endogeneity is an issue, it can be dealt with methodologically to determine the degree to which election results are the product of cohesion specifically, as discussed in the methodology section below.

This leads us to a set of hypotheses:

> ***H1A –*** *As observable party cohesion falls, support for that party falls.*
>
> ***H1B*** *– As observable party cohesion in a party falls, support for parties ideologically close to that party increases in a multi-party system.*
>
> ***H1C*** *– As observable party cohesion in a party falls, support for parties not ideologically close to that party is unaffected in a multi-party system.*
>
> ***H2 –*** *As behaviour from a candidate that leads to observable party cohesion falls, support for that candidate rises.*

2.4.5 Other Relevant Factors

There are a number of other relevant factors that relate to cohesion that are worthy of investigation. These are:

1. Whether the party is 'niche'
2. Party governmental status
3. The time period and positivity of coverage received by parties

All of these need to be controlled in any analysis of the process.

There is evidence that parties with niche ideologies, such as communists and ecologists, react differently to the demands of the electorate than their mainstream counterparts (Adams et al., 2006). They emphasise issue ownership and salience over ideological positioning (Meguid, 2005). They may make a virtue of internal argument, and as such may be rewarded for debate (Gauja 2013, p. 5). By presenting such divisions as positive it may be that the electorate reacts differently to low levels of cohesion in niche parties. Governmental status may also matter, as cohesion has an impact on the government's ability to enact an agenda. These must be considered where possible. This means a variety of parties must be examined over a time period, as parties can move in and out of niche status (Meyer & Wagner, 2013), and where this is not possible, analysis should be confined to a particular kind of party. Both approaches are taken in this project.

It is noteworthy that much of journalistic writing on scandals is perceived to be as damaging as it is because the media spends so long examining the scandal, eventually causing even the politically unaware to notice a problem. This was why the Canadian Senate Expense Scandal of 2013 became so damaging to the Conservative Party (Grenier, 2014). This leads us to the question of whether the severity of a damaging split is the issue or if perhaps what matters is the longevity of the story in the media. These are usually related but do not have to be.

This, in turn, reflects what we know about party policy fulfilment. While there is considerable literature on how many election promises (another way of reflecting party policy) are fulfilled (Naurin, 2011; Royed, 1996; Thomson, 2001) this is only of value to the parties if voters learn of pledges being fulfilled and reward them. This ties into the existing research on public opinion which assumes that the public divides themselves into various groups of citizens that are engaged on specific issues and whose opinions on those issues then leak into the population (Dalton 2008, pp. 27-28). This in turn ties into the media and the volume of coverage because the greater the attention an issue receives the larger the share of the public who are informed becomes. Additionally, between the different organs of the media, we expect them to try to cover as many different policy areas as possible between them (with readers of one newspaper prioritising different set of issues than those of another, causing a different focus) and to focus on them in a manner proportionate to public interest in them (Wittman, 1989). This means that the volume of coverage an issue receives matters in terms of cohesion, and is worth investigating. If all media systematically

ignore a certain 'boring' issue, it should not matter, as this suggests that the issue was of no great concern to the public, and unlikely to affect their vote.

If volume and intensity of coverage is really what is driving an electoral effect of cohesion we must attempt to account for it.

2.4.6 Causal Process

However the causal process is unclear: how exactly does cohesion actually impact on voter behaviour? At what level do they take this into account if they do so?

There are several possibilities. The first is that voters use real events on which to base their evaluations on any issue. This would mean that the public uses genuine changes in cohesion on which to base their evaluations. This view would therefore hold that the best way to capture the importance of the concept would be through measures of the 'true' state of cohesion.

The second view holds that the public does do this, but that their view is tempered by the lenses through which they receive this information. This view would hold heavily to the importance of those organisations that convey what happens to the general public. There is certainly evidence that public awareness of broader issues increases in relation to the amount of news coverage they receive (Zaller, 1992). Evidence as to how much impact this has on persuasion, rather than on agenda setting, is more mixed, with the way the media frames the issue having an impact (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). With media coverage likely to correspond to the degree of disunity, the public may use it to make a sort of running tally based on the information that actually reaches public consciousness.

A third view says that the public could also make their evaluations on more ethereal evaluations. The public does not necessarily think of things objectively – their own biases have a strong influence (Gunther et al., 2001). This means that it may make more sense not to think of voter response to an issue as clear-minded, but rather that we should look at how the public actually perceives the issue using our methodology, independently of how those evaluations are formed, or even whether they have any basis in reality.

All of those possibilities are theoretically plausible, and can all be evaluated separately. This means that we must undertake an analysis involving evaluations of many kinds of parties at once, as well as an analysis assessing the role of the media and assessing exactly why the this effect comes about.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature is informative, but there are clear areas that remain unexplored and a certain lack of consensus exists among scholars. The causes of a lack of cohesion are uncertain. This makes it difficult to pinpoint what sort of effect to expect. There are compelling arguments though that we might expect it to be a valence issue that relates to the competence of the party. It may also impact policy formation. This means that there are theoretical reasons to consider cohesion to have importance to voters. Furthermore, this variety of differing explanations suggests that cohesion may have an impact not hitherto accounted for in existing analyses.

This means that structure of the next four chapters follows logically. It is first necessary to ascertain that cohesion is a factor that voters use to make choices in elections. If it is, then it becomes necessary to find out why. The role of volumes of media coverage must be assessed separately to determine whether or not that drives results, as must the role of actual specific incidences of disunity. The literature suggests that their disunity comes from specific factors in parties, and that these factors have broad consequences to the real world. These factors should be of specific importance in the area of competence, an area that is particularly important for leadership evaluations. The area of most direct importance for this project is determining whether cohesion actually affects the likelihood of voters choosing a party. This will be examined in the next chapter.

3. The role of perceptions of parties in assessing the electoral impact of cohesion

3.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter will first set out why it is necessary to assess directly the impact of party infighting. This chapter will discuss election studies and opinion polls used as data for analysis. The chapter will then present descriptive statistics of the data before providing more complex statistical results using probit and multinomial logit analyses. The chapter will then provide analysis of the finding before concluding that, while an effect is present, we still have little idea of what causes it.

3.2 Introduction and Theory

This chapter provides the first empirical tests of theoretical ideas established in Chapter Two. It will do so by looking directly at whether voters are less likely to support disunited parties over united ones. If so, then it follows that disunited parties are likely to lose votes.

This chapter is primarily concerned with two goals. First it aims to examine the electoral importance of cohesion itself for actual individual voters. To do this, this chapter will use the individual level data provided by election studies in order to determine the electoral impact of cohesion. If cohesion seems to make voters less likely to want to choose a party, even controlling for other factors that may influence vote choice, it seems reasonable that if perceptions of lack of cohesion were high enough, this should affect the party on aggregate as well.

This means that this chapter's main area of interest is each individual voter's *perception* of cohesion. This chapter is not fundamentally interested in whether or not the actual cohesion of these parties varied. Rather, it is concerned with whether voters thought that the cohesion of the parties varied, regardless of the reality of the situation.

We examine this in a three-step process. First, we determine whether or not perception of unity varies among voters voting for different parties. We then test whether or not any superficial difference seen holds even with the presence of compounding factors that we know affects vote choice. Finally, this part of the process will use multinomial logit analysis to determine whether cohesion disproportionately affects certain kinds of vote choices over others.

As has already been discussed during the literature review in Chapter Two, it is expected that perceptions of low cohesion will have a negative impact on parties (for instance Maravall, 2008). This leads to:

> ***H1****: A respondent perceiving a party as disunited will be associated with a lower likelihood of voting for that party than respondents who do not perceive the party as disunited.*

Cohesion is expected to be a subtle effect. It is not anticipated that the effect of this would be uniform. As has been already discussed in Chapter Two, this is expected to most severely impact parties that have close ideological neighbours or alternatively are rivals for governmental office, as cohesion is likely to be a valence issue affecting the ability of parties to implement policies:

> ***H2:*** *A respondent perceiving a party as disunited will be associated with a higher likelihood of that respondent voting for a party that they would have otherwise considered in any case, such as an ideologically proximate party or a rival to lead a government.*

3.3 Dataset and Methodology

3.3.1 Dataset and limitations

In order to examine the effect of cohesion on the likelihood of voters actually voting for a particular party, the election studies that asked questions relating to perceptions of party cohesion were obtained and analysed in detail. The studies were Australia in 1987 and 1990, New Zealand in 1990, 1993 and 1996, Britain in 1983, 1987 and 1992 and the Netherlands in 1989. These nine studies represent the entirety of possible election studies that ask voters this question; there is then extremely limited data on the topic. Considerable work was undertaken exploring election studies for the elections of other countries, as well as those for other years of the countries under study. This often involved exploring dozens of datasets in a variety of languages and took considerable time. This means that it can be confirmed that the countries and elections under study do in fact represent the entirety of possible existing data on the subject. Additionally confirmation testing used British polling data, commissioned and gathered in January 2017. This has a number of specific features described below.

3.3.2 Election Studies

There are further limitations with the data. A question relating to cohesion is not asked of every party in the system – and not even all relevant parties. In Australia this is only asked for Labor and the two main parties of the Coalition in 1987; in 1990 only the Labor and the Liberals warranted questions. New Zealand is similarly limited. In 1990 the question is only asked of Labour and the National Party – in spite of other parties having reasonable electoral support and, in the case of New Labour, actual parliamentary representation. The 1993 study includes four parties – Labour, National, Alliance (which was technically a coalition of four to five small parties that contested elections together) and New Zealand First (NZF) – while the 1996 study includes the same four parties, in spite of the change in electoral system rendering several new parties as important to the party system. The Dutch study includes four parties – the Labour Party (PvdA), Christian Democrats (CDA), Liberals (VVD) and Democrats 66 (D66) – the four traditionally largest parties in Dutch politics. There were, however, other relevant actors in Dutch politics at that time.

Nonetheless, the studies consistently ask for the two largest parties, and generally that of other important actors as well. While not perfect, these studies cover parties that received at least 80% of the votes cast in the elections under study.

There are advantages to these cases. Australia and New Zealand, in particular, share many similarities and operate quite differently from a consensual democracy like the Netherlands. Additionally, these countries are all parliamentary democracies – an important consideration when whether a regime is presidential or parliamentary is known to influence the level of cohesion, allowing us to hold this source of variation constant (Sauger, 2009). While this data is specific to its time and place it is still extensive and valuable. We should, of course, remain cautious about generalising too much from any data, but there is no reason to assume that this is a poor collection of data, and several to assume that it is good.

There are other merits to the use of these countries and these elections beyond these institutional factors. It is hardly controversial to say that British politics in the 1980s in particular was tumultuous. The Labour Party, in particular, went to war with itself in a struggle for leadership and the future policy direction of the party. Repeated efforts at the deselection of MPs, at securing top positions in the party for figures perceived on the left of the party such as Tony Benn, in addition to efforts to radically shift the platform of the party to the left were met with opposition from other figures in the party. This reached its peak with the eventual creation of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) by four former cabinet

ministers, an explicitly centrist party that aimed to bridge the gap between an increasingly left-wing Labour and the very right-wing Conservative government at that time (Crewe & King, 1995). Nonetheless, the struggles of Labour continued, and it would be after the last election under study (1992) that the divisions within Labour had become less visible. Both other main political forces in Britain also had deep divisions at this time. The Conservatives, while strongly led by Margaret Thatcher, were nonetheless quite divided on policy terms between Thatcher and her monetarist supporters and the so-called 'wets', who favoured the continuation of the Keynesian economic policies that had characterised British politics from 1945 until her premiership. Later in the period, the Conservatives would become quite divided in non-policy terms as well, with the toppling of Thatcher from the premiership and the election of her successor John Major in 1990. The SDP formed an alliance with the Liberal Party, where they would not oppose each other in seats; as such the SDP–Liberal Alliance is treated as a single party for the most part in the model. There were clear differences between the two parties that may have been picked up by voters, and this might be expected to show itself in 1983. These should have become starker by 1987 as the party leaderships increasingly disagreed before their eventual merger in 1988 as the Liberal Democrats. All this means that there is variation in the model on each of these parties' perceived unity in the eyes of the electorate, and in each election under study. They also vary on both policy and non-policy dimensions. Finally, with the British parties in increasing disarray again following the vote to leave the EU in 2016 (Brexit), the parties divided on much the same grounds as the 1980s. The Conservatives have serious divisions on both sides of the vote, while Labour's divisions are even more severe, concerning its leadership, party structure and future ideological direction, with most MPs being reluctant to back the increasingly leftward course charted by Jeremy Corbyn as leader.

This was also an interesting period in New Zealand politics. It covers the last election fought under the plurality electoral system in 1993 before the country switched to a mixed-member proportional electoral system in 1996. This occurred during a tumultuous period in New Zealand politics, as both major parties were wracked with infighting over the future direction of economic policy. Both parties split on economics throughout the 1980s. Following the introduction of the PR electoral system in 1994, numerous smaller parties were set up by rebels from both major parties. These rebels saw that by doing so they would not necessarily jettison their chances of staying in Parliament. Therefore, as in the case of the British election studies, those in New Zealand with differing divisions on policy terms. This was in addition to the different electoral systems in New Zealand referred to above.

In the period in these studies, Australia similarly had a variety of differing levels of noticeable cohesion. While the Labor government of Bob Hawke was relatively stable at its beginning, it began to noticeably fray as the 1980s drove on, culminating in a public feud between Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, his deputy Prime Minister and eventual successor. As in Britain and New Zealand, tensions in the government ranks were not the only issue with party cohesion in Australia at this time. The opposition Coalition was also riven with policy and personality conflicts both between and within its constituent parties.

Finally, while less noticeable than in other countries at this time, Dutch politics also had considerable tensions. Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, while generally popular, spent much of the parliamentary term struggling to manage the governmental coalition of his own CDA, a Christian democratic party, with the conservative-liberal VVD, who were considerably more economically right-wing than his own party. Lubbers had to both satisfy them enough to keep them from bringing down the coalition while also ensuring that the government would not move so far to the economic right that it would lose the next election. He also had to ensure that the CDA remained relatively centrist due to the volatile nature of Dutch coalition building. It was quite conceivable that the CDA would need to cooperate with the social-democratic PvdA or the social-liberal D66 in the next parliament, so the party would need to remain palatable for them. Whether or not they were was an area of considerable debate in Dutch politics during this time. Ultimately, Lubbers failed to keep his coalition together, with the VVD eventually voting against a bill to cut travel costs after considerable internal arguments.

There is of course a selection bias in these cases. Election studies can only ask a limited number of questions. It makes sense for them to have asked about cohesion in periods when there actually were considerable issues with disunity that were known to those who commissioned the studies. This does not, however, weaken the argument, as the crux of the hypotheses remains that when disunity is prominent on the agenda these parties will perform worse in elections.

3.3.3 Opinion Poll

As mentioned above, in addition to data from a variety of election studies from the 1980s and 1990s, this thesis has been able to draw on data from survey questions commissioned for this research in January 2017. In order to explore the issue of cohesion in a modern setting the case of Britain was chosen. Britain is a particularly pertinent current case which makes it worth studying in some depth, as questions of a lack of cohesion arise across many

of the major parties. Labour's leadership struggles were a persistent issue since Jeremy Corbyn became party leader in 2015 and were very much current at the time of research. This triggered a raft of process stories explaining how this situation arose (for instance Mason & Asthana, 2016 describe what exactly happened the day of Hilary Benn's resignation, without reference to policy), none of which portrayed the factions in the party as full of love and kindness for their rivals. John McDonnell, the shadow chancellor, referred to those planning on ousting Corbyn as 'f—king useless', a feeling that was entirely reciprocated (Rawnsley, 2016).

Corbyn successfully defeated a leadership challenge in September 2016 and the party continued to be divided. Leaks from parliamentary party meetings were persistent and often hostile in tone, with reference to both the party's well-documented and consistent polling weakness and to the perceived poor quality of Corbyn's party leadership. For instance, in October 2016 one unnamed MP referred to Corbyn's answers when questioned as to his political strategy as 'the usual patronizing crap' while an ally of Corbyn reported:

> The public divisions and attacks are damaging. If there are public divisions that will depress Labour support. That's why it's essential that people work together effectively. That's why, if we work together, the [opinion poll] gap can be closed. The possibilities and the scope for Labour to bounce back are huge, but to do that we have to be united and work together. I think you'll see that people are responding to that. (Waugh, 2016).

Labour's troubles are recent and ongoing, but the Conservative Party also had significant internal divisions in 2016. The party was officially neutral in the referendum on Britain's continued EU membership, reflecting the extremely strong divisions within the party on this issue (Hope, 2015). After the referendum was lost, the contest to replace David Cameron was politically dramatic and often bitter. Boris Johnson, initially a favourite for the post, withdrew from the election when Michael Gove, whom he saw as a key ally, announced that he would bid for the leadership himself (BBC, 2016). This was not well-received by Johnson's supporters in the party, which can be seen in their language. Gove's actions were referred to as a 'systematic and calculated plot', 'midnight treachery' and that there was a 'very deep pit reserved in hell' for Gove (Swinford, Hope, & Dominiczak, 2016).

But the party soon rallied. After the victory of Theresa May, the party became much quieter than Labour, suggesting that their problems had largely become resolved before the

election, when they reopened again. There have been some issues since the referendum with some of those MPs who supported a Remain vote, but they have been relatively minor. In February 2017, when the House of Commons voted to formally begin the process of withdrawal, both the Conservatives and Labour had a party whip instructing MPs to support it; former Chancellor Ken Clarke was the only Conservative to actually break the whip, while 47 Labour MPs rebelled against Corbyn, showing the disparity between the parties in their levels of internal unity at this time (Sparrow, 2016).

UKIP has also had a tumultuous year. Nigel Farage resigned as leader following the referendum, and was succeeded by Diane James. James was in the post for a mere eighteen days before choosing not to finalise the position, as she claimed the position was filled under duress (which was written in Latin on her leadership documents) and because she lacked the ability to control her colleagues. She subsequently left the party (Mason, 2016). The party's political divisions were severe enough to include literal bloodletting, as two UKIP MEPs were involved in a fistfight over the leadership (Elgot, Halliday, & Rankin, 2016).

Therefore each of the three parties which had the largest share of the vote at the 2015 general election faced questions of party cohesion and disunity at the time in which the survey was commissioned. All three of these parties have had divisions, of varying lengths and intensities. Nonetheless, the varying internal party cohesion and shifting events means that we have good reason to believe that public evaluation of the internal cohesion of these parties in Britain should differ. Therefore this makes it ideal to test whether cohesion matters to voters on modern data.

Specifically, this used opinion poll data from the polling company BMG Research (BMG) – a large independent market research company based in Birmingham.

The poll was conducted as part of BMG's January Omnibus, which was conducted between 11 January and 17 January 2017. The January Omnibus was chosen because it was hoped that coming so soon after Christmas there would be little news that would change the political system. This was especially pertinent owing to the sheer eventfulness of 2016, with the Brexit referendum, a new prime minister and repeated efforts to topple the leader of the opposition. With all of these ongoing events it was considered strongly preferable that the poll respondents would not be overly influenced by events taking place concurrently with the poll. While these cannot be predicted with certainty, it was thought that would be

a quiet time, and thus provide a chance that respondents would be able to assess the current state of parties dispassionately.

At 1,520 respondents, the sample size of the poll is relatively large. This decreases the margin of error for the poll and increase certainty regarding small differences from one poll to another.

3.3.4 Measurement of Variables

The party that respondents voted for in the election was included in all election studies, and was used as the dependent variable. This was coded in two different ways depending on the model used (outlined below). First, new variables were created, so rather than a single variable outlining how a respondent voted with all options, several new variables were made, so that voting for a particular party was coded as 1, and voting for anyone else or not voting at all was coded as 0. In the Australian election studies, respondents were asked this question in respect to both the House of Representatives and the Senate. For this thesis, only the question referring to the House of Representatives was used This was to allow ease of comparison with unicameral New Zealand and the Netherlands, where only the house of representatives is directly elected.

Great efforts were made to ensure that the independent variables would be comparable, but sometimes they simply were not exactly the same in one study as they were in the others. Exceptions are given below.

There were two ways of asking the question of party cohesion. All Australian and New Zealand studies asked the question as follows:

Would you describe each of the following parties as united or divided?

This would be followed by a list of parties in order of their size. This question is phrased in a general way, and by its nature would acquire binary answers. Respondents who said 'Don't Know' were recorded listed as feeling neutral on this issue.

The UK uses a very similar phrasing in all three election studies and is treated similarly. The question is, exactly, below:

And would you describe the Conservative Party as united, or – divided?

The Dutch studies asked the question differently. It followed a series of questions about cooperation between political parties in a coalition setting:

And next the cooperation within political parties. The PvdA: How good or how bad do you think the cooperation is among PvdA politicians?

This question then asks respondents to rank cooperation within the party on a seven-point scale and is repeated for the CDA, VVD and D66. This is clearly more informative than the question asked in the other studies, but it is not possible to directly compare the two without transforming this into a binary variable. The lowest three categories (so those that feel cooperation within the party is bad) have therefore been recoded as 1, while other categories – including the middle category – have been recoded to 0. Additionally, this question refers directly to politicians, while the other does not. This may act as a prompt for voters to disregard any perceptions of cooperation, or lack of it, when thinking about any other aspect of the party. This may include a potential conflict between the leadership and party members who may hold more radical policy views (May, 1973). This means that the Dutch question may not be capturing the same breadth of possible variation as the Australian and New Zealand questions – in spite of not being a binary question. This must be borne in mind for subsequent analysis.

A number of controls were added to account for the major schools of voting and to determine whether any electoral effect of cohesion was merely something already accounted for by established theories.

Many theorists argue that the economy is what matters to voters. While other factors such as accountability can lessen or enhance its impact – fundamentally the economy and government economic performance is primarily what voters are interested in, and what they will evaluate before even considering the opposition (Anderson, 2000; Nadeau & Lewis-Beck, 2001; G. B. Powell & Whitten, 1993; Tucker et al., 2006). Perhaps voters disapprove of uncohesive parties solely because such parties are incapable of good management, being so concerned with internal struggles. To account for this possibility, a control variable referring to voter perception of how well the government has managed the economy was added to the model. It is also binary to account for some of the studies coding it as a scale. A good perception was coded as 1, while a poor or neutral one was coded as 0, as with cohesion.

This is not the only model of voting that must be accounted for in any analysis. Party identification – the idea of feeling close to a particular party and thus being more likely to support them over alternatives, whatever other circumstances, is widely held as a significant factor in the literature (Carsey & Layman, 2006; Converse, 1976; Franklin & Jackson, 1983;

Goren, 2005; Mendelsohn, 1996). Such attachments are generally thought of as coming from family socialisation at a young age, and if based on personal circumstance in life being in general similar to the situation of one's parents, can be thought of as rational (Achen, 2002). While party identification may account more for why voters do not regularly change their decision of which party to vote for, rather than why they make that decision in the first place, it must still be taken into account in any model of voting behaviour. Additionally it may be that voters who are predisposed towards particular parties may see fault only with other parties that they were already inclined not to support. There is already evidence of voters having such a 'selective perception' with regard to party ideology. In Britain in 2001, Conservative candidates systematically estimated their own ideological position as close to the centre, and that of other parties further away. Voters also believed that the party's position was fairly centrist – in spite of it being the mainstream party whose issue positioning was furthest away from the median voter in British politics at that time in its views according to academics examining their manifesto (Norris & Lovenduski, 2004). Similarly Groenendyk found that partisans of the opposing party to the US president reprioritised issues depending on what suited their party, in this case increasing or decreasing the importance on unemployment (Groenendyk, 2013, pp. 52–61). It is possible that such perceptions may affect aspects of party politics other than party ideology – they may see every flaw in their opponents and every criticism of their leadership but remain ignorant of the same issues in the party that they support. To account for this possibility a set of variables was added for party identification, which was in all datasets. If you have an identification with a particular party (or 'felt close' to a party) it was coded 1, if not it was coded 0. Strength of party identification was not assessed. Strong adherents of a political party are increasingly few in number with increased dealignment of voters from parties in western party systems – including the countries under study (Dalton & Weldon, 2007).

Finally, ideological proximity must be considered as a significant factor in voter choice. This has a long history in political science, dating to Downs in 1957. This spatial model of voting holds that voters arrange themselves on an ideological spectrum, and vote for the party whose position is closest to them on that spectrum (Downs, 1957; Enelow & Hinich, 1984). This idea is common in the literature; it formed the theoretical framework for the ubiquitous Nominate scores (Poole & Rosenthal, 1985), as well as spatial models of legislative behaviour (Shepsle & Weingast, 1981).

Ideological proximity is the only directly ideological factor that will be considered here. This was calculated as follows. Each study asked respondents to place themselves on an ideological scale, all with zero representing the furthest left-wing point possible, and becoming more right-wing as the number increased. In all bar one case (Australia in 1990), they also asked respondents to place the parties on the same scale. The number that respondents gave to each individual party was then subtracted from the number that respondents gave themselves, in order to obtain the relative distance between respondents and for each party in that election. As the ideological direction of that deviation is not of any particular interest in this case the absolute value of the difference in order to obtain an absolute measure of perceived proximity. Using the absolute value for measuring proximity has precedent (Somer-Topcu, 2009). This means that the higher the number the further away from the party ideologically the voter perceived themselves to be. Australia in 1990 asked for the ideological placement of respondents, but did not ask for ideological placement of parties. A different, albeit similar, measure for this concept was thus created. This study used the ParlGov database for party ideological positions, which aggregates a number of other studies so that problems with any one of them should hopefully be averaged away (Doring & Manow, 2014) as an estimate for an 'objective' placement of Australia's major parties. This measure was then subtracted from the ideological placement of each respondent and an absolute value taken of that number – as before. This 'objective' measure is not the same as respondents' placement of the party. As with party identification, voters may have selective perception of parties and place parties that they like close to themselves regardless of their 'objective' positions. It also does not allow voters to weight their own placement and that of the party by whatever criteria are important to them. For instance, a socially 'left' voter who was also fiscally conservative could place themselves on either end of the scale depending on what was more important to them. This measure, being less focused on the respondents themselves by definition, is also less likely to yield significant results, which in turn makes it less likely to make cohesion insignificant. Nonetheless, there is no alternative to this measure for this study.

Additional and more standard controls were also added to the model. A lag of whether respondents voted for the same party in the last election as in the election under study was included in each model. Age and gender were added to the control model. These sometimes differed slightly. The Dutch study did not ask respondents for their exact age, but did ask for ages with five year brackets. While less precise, it was still used in the present research. Additionally, in New Zealand in 1993, Alliance and NZF did not exist in the previous election,

so no lagged variables of respondents voting for them in the previous election could have been included.

For the opinion poll confirmation data slightly different questions were asked. Unfortunately the question is not worded exactly the same way as the British Election Study. This was for cost reasons. However, the question in both incidences is quite basic and should have been clearly understood by respondents. It is below:

> *In your opinion, how united or divided are each of these parties?*
>
> [SINGLE RESPONSE]
>
> [GRID – Very divided, Fairly divided, Neither united or divided, Fairly united, Very united, Don't know]

The question was asked for the Conservatives, Labour and UKIP. These are the three parties that received the most votes in the 2015 general election and can thus be seen as reasonably representative. The Liberal Democrats were not included. This is not ideal as the Liberal Democrats were one of the parties for which this question was asked in the BES. Its absence from this question is primarily a cost consideration, and a function of its decreased importance in British political life since its calamitous 2015 result. This does mean that all three parties asked have been in upheaval in the year preceding the study. Nonetheless, there remains variation in answers – certainly not every respondent feels that these parties are divided, and not every respondent makes identical assessments of the parties either.

The BMG omnibus also includes a variety of other questions. These include interest in politics, current vote choice, how and whether the respondent voted in both the 2015 general election and the 2016 Brexit referendum, place on the ideological spectrum, socio-economic background, gender, age, region of residence, and type of accommodation. Unfortunately, education and party identification were not included.

Also included here was how a respondent felt about infighting. They may regard it as either positive or negative, and this variety of views is accounted for here. Respondents were then asked whether they felt the issue was important.

Most of these variables were collected as scales if they were not clearly factors or binary. The party respondents voted for, region of residence and type of accommodation were collected as factors. Socio-economic background, age, place on the ideological spectrum, views on infighting and the importance that they placed on it were arranged as scales, with

higher numbers respectively indicating those from better off socio-economic backgrounds, older respondents and those with more right-wing views, positive views of infighting and a lower importance to infighting.

Thus it is remains possible to test for confirmation of solid electoral impact of cohesion on British parties in the modern era.

3.3.5 Model and Methodology

To test the hypothesis that the level of cohesion affects the electoral performance of political parties the following model was created. Three approaches were undertaken.

Voting for a particular party is not a continuous variable and cannot be expressed as such. Linear regression is therefore inappropriate for quantitative analysis in this case. What was done instead was a probit analysis, using having voted for a particular party or not as the dependent variable, and using the binary variable of believing a party to not be united as the only independent variable. A probit analysis was performed as the dependent variable is binary. This would be to establish whether there is any effect worth investigating – if it does not exist on the best possible conditions for it to appear statistically, it probably does not exist.

If an effect is found, a further probit model, with controls, was performed. This was done to determine whether the statistical effect of cohesion was 'real', or already captured by already existing commonly held beliefs about why voters make the decisions that they do.

From both of these sets of probit analyses probabilities were calculated, so it is possible to see directly how the probability of voting for a party changes if a respondent perceives that party as disunited rather than united.

While those probabilities are informative, they do not tell the entire story. They do not help determine how voters will change the decision for which party to vote for *when that probability is put against the probability of that voter voting for any of the alternatives*. To do that, odds ratios were calculated from multinomial logit models. A multinomial logit model uses a categorical variable as the dependent variable for statistical model. This was chosen over any of the available alternatives because, while the parties in any given party system are clearly different, it is almost impossible to quantify the degree of difference between them. While we know that New Zealand Labour and National Parties are clearly different organisations, beyond that it gets murkier. Using this model allows us to bypass this problem completely. The odds ratios allow us to determine the 'odds' of a respondent

being in one category of the dependent variable over a base category if that dependent variable changed and all of the others included in the dataset remain constant. In this case, it allows us to determine how the cohesion of one party actually affected a respondent's chance of voting for that party over any one of the others if disunity was the only changing factor.

The base category used was always the social democratic party in the party system – New Zealand Labour, British Labour, Australian Labor and the Dutch PvdA – as it was felt that their common ideological heritage and trade union links, as well as their common membership of Socialist International, meant that they were the parties most alike between the four countries, and as such comparisons of other parties with them are the most relevant for comparative purposes. This party vote variable would include not voting as a category, including in Australia where voting is mandatory; there were still respondents in that category. Also included was voting for any party other than the parties for which questions about cohesion were asked. In general, this category was small and aside from voters for the National Party in Australia in 1990 and voters for the Dutch GreenLeft in 1989, contained almost no respondents at all.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

There is certainly evidence that voters for particular parties are more likely to see their own party as substantially more united than voters for almost any other party. This holds true for every election study, and might be considered a nearly universal rule. For instance in the two Australian elections under study we can observe that supporters of each major party were much more likely to view the party that they were voting for as much more united than those they were not voting for, relative to the population at large (see Table 3.1). For instance, in 1990 31% of Liberal voters viewed the Labor as disunited, while only 4% of Labor voters thought the same about their own party.

Table 3.1 – Public opinion as to cohesion in Australia, by party voted for

		Perceptions of Liberals			Perceptions of Labor		
		Liberal voters	Labor voters	All voters	Liberal voters	Labor voters	All voters
1987	United	43.2	26.4	34.5	73.3	93.1	84.0
	Divided	56.8	73.6	65.5	26.7	6.9	16.0
1990	United	50.9	26.7	37.4	69.4	95.6	80.9
	Divided	49.1	73.3	62.6	30.6	4.4	19.1

The same pattern is true, albeit not as starkly so, for each example here. It is worth noting that not voters did not seem to be blind – their average evaluations for each party were different – even though Liberal voters were less likely to see the Liberals as divided than Labor voters, they were still more likely to see them as divided than they were to see Labor as divided. While both Labor and Liberal supporters viewed the Liberals as much less united than Labor, they differed on the degree of party supporters who saw division. In 1990, 49% of Liberal voters saw the Liberals as divided, while 73% of Labour voters thought the same – a difference of nearly twenty-five percentage points. In 1987, 57% of Liberal voters felt that their party was divided, while 74% of Labor voters agreed.

Table 3.2 – Public opinion as to cohesion in the Netherlands, by party voted for

		CDA Voters	PvdA Voters	VVD Voters	D66 Voters	Other Voters	All Voters
Perception of CDA	United	93.2	68.2	87.7	80.3	84.6	82.5
	Divided	6.8	31.8	12.3	19.7	15.4	17.5
Perception of PvdA	United	79.4	91.9	84.7	78.4	77.7	83.1
	Divided	20.6	8.1	15.3	21.6	22.3	16.9
Perception of VVD	United	32.5	33.6	52.0	23.7	39.5	36.1
	Divided	67.5	66.4	48.0	76.3	60.5	63.9
Perception of D66	United	91.2	92.2	89.8	97.3	87.7	91.1
	Divided	8.8	7.8	10.2	2.7	12.3	8.9

In the Netherlands for the 1989 election, the picture was somewhat more nuanced (see Table 3.2). There was a clear consensus among voters that the VVD was a generally divided force; even 48% of the party's own supporters thought the party was divided. Voters for the other three major parties were generally very adamant that their party of choice was united. Only 7% of CDA voters thought the party was divided, versus 17% of the electorate as a whole. Similarly, while 8% of PvdA voters thought that their party was not united, this figure more than doubled to 17% when asked of the electorate as a whole. Even D66, generally regarded by the electorate as a whole as very united, saw such discrepancies. 9% of the electorate saw the party as divided, while only 3% of their own voters thought so. Voters for the CDA and PvdA were particularly likely not to be generous in their perception of the unity of the other. 32% of PvdA voters saw the CDA as divided. Similarly 21% of CDA voters saw the PvdA as divided. Aside from that, there did not seem to be any other particular differences between perceptions of a party being disunited and those voting for another party.

The picture is similar with regard to the two major parties in New Zealand (see Table 3.3). Both show that supporters of them are systematically inclined to regard their own party of choice as more united than the supporters of any other party in the system. In 1990, 55% of Labour voters thought that their party was divided. While this is a high number, it is much lower than the 71% of the total electorate who thought the party was divided. While this figure falls in subsequent contests Labour voters consistently rate the party as more united

than those of other parties. In 1993, 23% thought the party was divided, compared with 31% of the public. In 1996, 18% of Labour voters thought them divided, against 25% of the public.

Table 3.3 – Public opinion as to cohesion in New Zealand, by party voted for

	Perception of Labour	Labour Voters	National Voters	Alliance Voters	NZF Voters	All Voters
1990	United	45.4	17.5			29.1
	Divided	54.6	82.5			70.9
1993	United	77.2	61.9	68.0	65.5	69.3
	Divided	22.8	38.1	32.0	34.5	30.7
1996	United	82.4	69.4	73.8	68.6	74.8
	Divided	17.6	30.6	26.2	31.4	25.2
	Perception of National					
1990	United	55.7	85.5			70.0
	Divided	44.3	14.5			30.0
1993	United	61.0	81.8	63.1	55.0	68.8
	Divided	39.0	18.2	36.9	45.0	31.2
1996	United	79.7	95.3	78.2	79.9	86.4
	Divided	20.3	4.7	21.8	20.1	13.6

Notably, it cannot simply be said that Labour voters were simply less likely to view any party as divided. Their opinions on whether the National Party was divided were relatively similar to what those of the general public and considerably less favourable to national than the opinions of National voters. In 1990, 44% of Labour voters felt that National was divided, while only 15% of National voters thought the same. As with perceptions of Labour unity, the pattern repeats itself for National in each election, with those supporting the party viewing it as much more united than those not voting for it. It is important to point out that voters are distinguishing between these parties – they are not blindly criticizing a party that they dislike. For instance, more Labour voters in 1990 viewed National as united than viewed their own vote choice as so. They were, however, considerably more likely to view their own party as united than anyone else was.

Finally, we see the same pattern in Britain (see Table 3.4). In all three elections, supporters of the Conservative Party were much more likely to view that party as united than were supporters of other parties. In 1983, Conservative voters were fifteen percentage points less likely to view their party as divided than the public at large were. In 1987, this figure was fourteen percentage points, before growing to twenty percentage points in 1992. Labour exhibits the same pattern. While almost everyone considered Labour a party divided in

1983, Labour voters were still much less likely to think so than voters for other parties were, with a ten percentage-point difference between them and the general public. This gap remains in later contests, as the total number of people who viewed Labour as divided in 1987 was 76%, a much higher proportion than the total proportion of Labour voters who thought so, which stood at 54%, showing the gap between the two swelling to twenty-two percentage points, before falling back slightly in 1992 to a sixteen point gap. Unsurprisingly, the same pattern is true for the parties in the Alliance, albeit at a much smaller level – particular in 1987 – before exhibiting the same clear issues as all of the above parties in 1992.

Table 3.4 – Public opinion as to cohesion in Britain, by party voted for

		Perceptions of Conservatives				
		Conservative Voters	Labour Voters	Liberal Voters	SDP Voters	All Voters
1983	United	89.8	56.9	67.5	68.2	74.1
	Divided	10.2	43.1	32.5	31.8	25.9
1987	United	89.8	61.9	71.1	69.9	75.6
	Divided	10.2	38.1	28.9	30.1	24.4
1992	United	90.1	53.3	65.9		70.5
	Divided	9.9	46.7	34.1		29.5
		Perceptions of Labour				
		Conservative Voters	Labour Voters	Liberal Voters	SDP Voters	All Voters
1983	United	3.4	18.7	4.6	8.1	8.6
	Divided	96.6	81.3	95.4	91.9	91.4
1987	United	13.1	46.0	17.2	24.3	24.3
	Divided	86.9	54.0	82.8	75.7	75.7
1992	United	20.3	47.6	31.1		31.7
	Divided	79.7	52.4	68.9		68.3
		Perceptions of Alliance/LDs				
		Conservative Voters	Labour Voters	Liberal Voters	SDP Voters	All Voters
1983	United	41.2	40.1	63.5	56.8	46.6
	Divided	58.8	59.9	36.5	43.2	53.4
1987	United	9.1	10.1	17.2	15.6	12.0
	Divided	90.9	89.9	82.8	84.4	88.0
1992	United	84.6	78.3	91.6		82.5
	Divided	15.4	21.7	8.4		17.5

As in New Zealand, this is therefore not a party-specific effect. It seems to be a universal trait across parties, governments and elections. It would seem that there is some face validity, at least, to the idea that perceiving a party as divided makes an individual voter less likely to vote for them. Those who voted for parties in all four countries, and in all elections here, exhibited strong tendencies to think of the parties they are voting for as more united than the public at large did. It does not follow that voters simply voted for the party that they felt was most united. As can be seen, there were clear variations in the perceptions of the internal cohesion of all parties, with some parties being seen as less united by the voters of all parties – including those that voted for that party. Clearly it does not make sense for a greater perception of unity to be the sole driving factor behind votes in the empirical data. It is still possible though for cohesion, after controlling for other factors that may influence vote choice, to be influential.

There are no systematic differences in any demographic variables in any country examined. Perception of the internal cohesion of various parties did not seem to vary systematically by gender, age or education levels. This suggests that party loyalties are not covering for some other variable that we know may influence vote choice.

Examining the modern poll data through a somewhat different lens, the public certainly does not seem to have a strong belief in the unity of any of the three main British parties under study.

Table 3.5 shows that the public sentiment is rarely convinced of the total unity of parties. Only 6% of respondents thought that the Conservatives were very united, while 6% thought the same of UKIP and only 2% thought this of Labour. Where assessments differed most sharply though were on the other end of the scale. While only 10% of respondents thought the Conservatives were very divided and 17% thought the same of UKIP, an enormous 40% thought the same of Labour. This even holds for respondents thinking that the parties were somewhat divided. More respondents thought that Labour was somewhat divided (35%) than thought either the Conservatives (28%) or UKIP (27%) were.

Table 3.5 – The assessment of respondents as to the degree of unity in each of the three largest British parties in 2017, by interest in politics, figures in percentages

		Very Interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	Total
Conservatives	Very Divided	19.4	8.2	5.6	13.5	10.1
	Somewhat Divided	37.4	27.3	26.7	21.4	28.4
	Neither United nor Divided	13.2	26.4	29.9	42.1	26.4
	Somewhat United	25.1	31.6	34.0	15.9	29.5
	Very United	4.9	6.4	3.8	7.1	5.6
Labour	Very Divided	60.1	42.1	26.5	25.0	40.1
	Somewhat Divided	26.8	36.6	41.8	26.6	35.1
	Neither United nor Divided	6.6	13.8	23.8	38.3	17.1
	Somewhat United	5.3	5.9	6.1	6.3	5.9
	Very United	1.3	1.6	1.7	3.9	1.8
UKIP	Very Divided	29.7	14.0	10.6	17.6	16.5
	Somewhat Divided	23.6	28.8	30.2	16.0	26.8
	Neither United nor Divided	27.4	30.7	34.5	47.2	32.7
	Somewhat United	14.2	20.6	17.7	12.8	17.9
	Very United	5.2	6.0	7.1	6.4	6.1

While all three parties had serious divisions in 2016 it was undoubtedly Labour that was perceived as the most divided, particularly after the Brexit referendum. As expounded above, following on from that contest Labour's internal unity collapsed still further, with regular occurrences of both dissent and parliamentary rebellions against the leadership. By contrast, the Conservatives largely consolidated behind their new leader. This confirms that the voters do not have a uniform view on this issue.

We also have some evidence here that public knowledge, awareness and interest in politics may be at the root of some of these issues. This can be seen in the differing assessments of the parties by political interest in Table 3.5. Once again, this is most stark in the case of Labour. While 60% of the very politically interested thought Labour was very divided, only 25% of those not at all interested in politics thought the same. The same pattern is evident for the Conservatives and UKIP, although as divisions in those parties are less prominent, the pattern is less stark. What is also noticeable for all parties is the much higher proportion of those not at all interested who report that the parties are neither united or divided. While only 7% of the very interested thought this of Labour 38% of the not at all interested thought the same – making it the largest category. The Conservatives are almost as stark. While only 13% of the very interested thought the party was Neither United nor Divided 42% of the not at all interested thought the same. In general, those who were interested generally seemed more likely to have evaluations of whether a party was united or not – they were also more likely to see parties as unified as well. This suggests that public knowledge is important for these evaluations.

3.4.2 Probit and Multinomial Logit Results

The main results are summarised below. For all parties, the baseline models showed statistically significant results. All results indicate a negative relationship between perceptions of party disunity and the likelihood of a voter actually opting for that party in a general election. All controls were always included, but only major independent variables are reported here. Substantively, the impact of disunity varies quite considerably. The results are given as probabilities, for the probit models, and as odds ratios for the multinomial logit models. Substantively, their interpretation is similar. Both relate to the likelihood of change from a baseline likelihood.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands, in Table 3.6, the party whose vote was most affected by disunity was the CDA, which saw the probability of a respondent voting for the CDA fall by 0.2 if they saw the party as disunited (Column two, Row one). The PvdA recorded a similarly substantively strong effect – with the probability of voting for that party falling by 0.18 (Column one, Row one). The party with smallest impact was D66, which saw probability of voting for them fall by 0.08 (Column four, Row one). The VVD is similarly more affected. If a respondent saw them as disunited, the probability of that respondent voting for them fell by 0.08 (Column three, Row one). Pseudo r-squared values were low without the effects of known indicators of voter behaviour.

With controls, however, the effects for several of these parties vanish. The effect is most stark in the Netherlands, where only one party retains significance with a p-value of below 0.05: the CDA. With controls the effect of disunity on the probability of voting for the party was to reduce the respondent's chance of doing so by 0.12 (Column six, Row one). The PvdA and VVD are close to this threshold, with p-values of below 0.1. The reduction in probability of voting for these parties if you perceive them as disunited was 0.08 and 0.03 respectively (Column five, Row one and Column seven, Row one). However, even with these looser criteria there was no observed effect for D66. It must be noted that the pseudo r-squared values for D66 was significantly lower than for the other three parties, so it is possible that traditional models of voting behaviour were simply poor at explaining why individuals supported the party in 1989.

All controls performed generally as expected and in the expected direction of the relationship, with the exception of government economic management which was insignificant for the VVD and D66. This may indicate that voters for these two parties, neither of which had realistic hopes of the prime ministry at that time, were potentially more concerned with issues other than economics when making their voting decisions.

The odds ratios of the multinomial logit in Table 3.7 in general tells a similar story in aggregate, but provides further information that the probit models do not. Note that odds ratios cannot be negative. If they are above one then an event is more likely, if below it is less likely. In the Netherlands, the PvdA was used as the base category in the model. Predictably therefore, the odds of a respondent choosing to vote for any other party or not vote at all over choosing the PvdA increase considerably when the PvdA is perceived as disunited. This is always significant in the base model, and is least important for the VVD

and not voting at all, where nonetheless the odds of respondents being in those categories over the PvdA increase by 2.53 and 2.62 (Column one, Row one and Column three, Row one). The odds of being in any category other than these two when respondents perceive the PvdA as disunited increase by roughly 3.6. However, perceiving the CDA as disunited reduced a respondent's odds of being in any category other than the PvdA – making respondents only 0.15 as likely to vote for the CDA over the PvdA in the baseline model for instance (Column two, Row two). Respondents perceiving the CDA as disunited were also only roughly half as likely not to vote at all or to vote D66 over voting PvdA, and roughly only one third as likely to vote VVD or for any other party. The ratios for VVD disunity only tell a story for the VVD, with respondents being only 0.47 as likely to vote VVD over PvdA if they saw the VVD as disunited (Column three, Row three). In the multinomial logit models, D66 disunity is not even significant for the party in the baseline model, but is over not voting at all. It increases the odds of a respondent not voting at all over voting PvdA by 2.60 (Column one, Row four). This effect drops away with the introduction of controls. This kind of effect is complex, but present in these results. One of the advantages of using this kind of analysis is to capture such relatively complex effects.

Table 3.6 – Probit Baseline and Control for the Netherlands 1989. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient

	Unity 89 PvdA	Unity 89 CDA	Unity 89 VVD	Unity 89 D66	Unity with controls 89 PvdA	Unity with controls 89 CDA	Unity with controls 89 VVD	Unity with controls 89 D66
Party Disunity	−0.184***	−0.202***	−0.0803***	−0.0794***	−0.0777	−0.118***	−0.0259	−0.0223
	(0.0276)	(0.0231)	(0.0185)	(0.0208)	(0.0450)	(0.0385)	(0.0135)	(0.0307)
Govt Economic management positive					−0.162***	0.0986***	−0.0184	0.0273
					(0.0361)	(0.0325)	(0.0135)	(0.0164)
Party ID					0.355***	0.456***	0.291***	0.346**
					(0.0899)	(0.0823)	(0.0980)	(0.145)
Party LR proximity					−0.0824***	−0.0735***	−0.0255***	−0.0356***
					(0.0103)	(0.0100)	(0.00346)	(0.00578)
Vote 1986					0.597***	0.641***	0.405***	0.401***
					(0.0367)	(0.0331)	(0.0500)	(0.0695)
Observations	1,294	1,506	1,488	1,055	1,096	1,276	1,264	904
Pseudo *R*-squared	0.0212	0.0295	0.0194	0.0107	0.559	0.572	0.530	0.330

Standard errors in parentheses
*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$,

Table 3.7 – Multinomial Logit results for the Netherlands 1989. PvdA is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients.

	Unity 89 No vote	Unity 89 CDA	Unity 89 VVD	Unity 89 D66	Unity 89 Others	Unity with Controls 89 No vote	Unity with Controls 89 CDA	Unity with Controls 89 VVD	Unity with Controls 89 D66	Unity with Controls 89 Others
PvdA Disunity	2.615***	3.628***	2.532**	3.739***	3.706***	1.740	1.782	1.645	3.620***	1.951
	(0.814)	(1.056)	(0.934)	(1.288)	(1.317)	(1.086)	(0.939)	(1.003)	(1.773)	(0.962)
CDA Disunity	0.481***	0.149***	0.353***	0.540**	0.348***	0.390*	0.185***	0.377	0.581	0.214***
	(0.121)	(0.0448)	(0.119)	(0.159)	(0.120)	(0.209)	(0.0973)	(0.215)	(0.244)	(0.0961)
VVD Disunity	0.720	1.129	0.468***	1.472	0.972	0.541	0.868	0.552	1.190	1.063
	(0.150)	(0.222)	(0.114)	(0.393)	(0.250)	(0.220)	(0.335)	(0.241)	(0.443)	(0.371)
D66 Disunity	2.602***	1.485	1.542	0.321	0.390	0.399	0.667	0.973	0.296	0.225
	(0.874)	(0.532)	(0.674)	(0.209)	(0.255)	(0.348)	(0.448)	(0.710)	(0.254)	(0.188)
Constant	0.633***	0.788	0.549***	0.263***	0.352***	2.117	0.511	2.634	1.129	0.381
	(0.109)	(0.131)	(0.102)	(0.0618)	(0.0757)	(1.597)	(0.394)	(2.138)	(0.823)	(0.256)
Observations	954	954	954	954	954	813	813	813	813	813
Pseudo R-squared	0.0386	0.0386	0.0386	0.0386	0.0386	0.539	0.539	0.539	0.539	0.539

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05,

With controls, like the probit models, many of the variables lose significance in the Netherlands. Only CDA disunity and PvdA disunity continue to show statistical significance in the model. Being seen as disunited makes the odds of voting CDA over the PvdA fall to only 0.18 of the previous likelihood what they would have been otherwise (Column seven, Row two). It also reduces the odds of voting for other parties over the PvdA to only 0.21 of the previous odds (Column ten, Row two). PvdA disunity substantially increases the odds of voting D66 over the PvdA. Respondents are 3.62 times more likely to vote D66 over the PvdA if they perceive the PvdA as disunited (Column nine, Row one). There were two other instances of disunity with p-values above 0.05 but below 0.1. D66 disunity leaves respondents only 0.23 of the previous probability to vote D66 over the PvdA (Column nine, Row four). CDA disunity makes respondents only 0.38 of the previous probability to vote for the VVD as well (Column eight, Row two).

There is evidence in these results for proximate parties receiving benefits when disunity arises. Respondents become more than three times as likely to choose D66 over the PvdA when they perceive the PvdA as disunited in Table 3.6, but the effect does not exist for any other parties further away from them ideologically.

New Zealand

Table 3.8 – Probit Baseline and Control for the New Zealand 1990. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient

	(1) Labour 90	(2) National 90	(3) Labour 90	(4) National 90
Party Disunity	−0.232***	−0.316***	−0.141***	−0.194***
	(0.0229)	(0.0207)	(0.0301)	(0.0340)
Govt Economic management positive			0.229**	−0.226**
			(0.0909)	(0.0892)
Party ID			0.455***	0.471***
			(0.0333)	(0.0341)
Party LR proximity			−0.0538***	−0.0875***
			(0.0105)	(0.0137)
Vote 1987			0.275***	0.465***
			(0.0271)	(0.0325)
Observations	2,102	2,102	1,603	1,607
Pseudo R-squared	0.0426	0.0663	0.373	0.460

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.9 – Multinomial Logit results for New Zealand 1990. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients

	Unity 90 No vote	Unity 90 National	Unity 90 Other	Unity with Controls 90 No vote	Unity with Controls 90 National	Unity with Controls 90 Other
Labour Disunity	1.354	5.312***	2.953***	1.445	2.350***	2.511***
	(0.234)	(0.680)	(0.462)	(0.343)	(0.495)	(0.503)
National Disunity	0.753	0.160***	0.719**	0.981	0.342***	0.923
	(0.131)	(0.0212)	(0.103)	(0.227)	(0.0727)	(0.169)
Constant	0.296***	0.773**	0.307***	1.116	0.636	0.641
	(0.0407)	(0.0806)	(0.0411)	(0.411)	(0.211)	(0.200)
Observations	2,042	2,042	2,042	1,563	1,563	1,563
Pseudo R-squared	0.0788	0.0788	0.0788	0.364	0.364	0.364

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

New Zealand in 1990, in both sets of models, has fundamentally the same pattern again as in Britain and the Netherlands. The probit analyses in Table 3.8 reveal that party cohesion matters at a substantively important level with high coefficients. This fades with controls. The National Party fades from 0.32 less likely to 0.19 less likely, while Labour fades from 0.23 to 0.14. The results are significant in all models, although the pseudo r-squared values are low in the basic models, at 0.0426 for Labour and 0.0663 for National.

The multinomial logit results in Table 3.9 suggest a similar pattern as in other studies and examples. In the basic model both Labour and National disunity are relevant. Labour being seen as disunited is associated with respondents being more than five times more likely to choose National over Labour (Column two, Row one), while National being disunited was associated with respondents being only 0.16 as likely to choose National over Labour (Column two, Row two).

With controls, this picture is fundamentally unchanged, although the magnitude of effects falls, even if they remain high. Labour disunity was associated being more than twice as likely to vote National over Labour (Column five, Row one), while National disunity was associated with respondents being 0.34 as likely to choose National (Column five, Row two). Labour disunity was also associated with a strongly increased likelihood of choosing another party other than National over Labour (about two and half times more likely, Column six, Row one). This likely reflects that the largest of these parties was New Labour, an offshoot of the party. All controls were either significant or at least in the expected direction.

In 1993, this effect was largely, albeit not entirely, reaffirmed. While all parties were significant in the basic probit model only National and the Alliance were significant when controls were added, with respondents being 0.09 and 0.08 less likely to choose these parties respectively with the addition of controls. While Labour and NZF were not significant the signs of the coefficients were at least in the expected direction, and both were significant in the basic model.

The multinomial logit results had a similar pattern as the probit analyses. Every party was significant in the basic results, and in the expected direction. But when controls were added only one result still held – the effect of National disunity – while was associated with respondents being only 0.49 times as likely to vote for the party over Labour (Column seven, Row two).

Table 3.10 – Probit Baseline and Control for the New Zealand 1993. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient.

	Unity 93 Labour 93	Unity 93 National 93	Unity 93 Alliance 93	Unity 93 NZF 93	Unity with controls 93 Labour 93	Unity with controls 93 National 93	Unity with controls 93 Alliance 93	Unity with controls 93 NZF 93
Party Unity	−0.110***	−0.201***	−0.0814***	−0.0734***	−0.0162	−0.0889**	−0.0766**	−0.0493
	(0.0197)	(0.0194)	(0.0215)	(0.00926)	(0.0300)	(0.0367)	(0.0316)	(0.0325)
Govt Economic management positive					−0.182***	0.223***	−0.110***	−0.00440
					(0.0277)	(0.0379)	(0.0259)	(0.0207)
Party ID					0.466***	0.450***	0.537***	0.692***
					(0.0433)	(0.0412)	(0.0717)	(0.106)
Party LR proximity					−0.0680***	−0.110***	−0.0788***	−0.0480***
					(0.0124)	(0.0155)	(0.0111)	(0.00943)
Vote 1990					0.223***	0.204***		
					(0.0373)	(0.0413)		
Observations	2,251	2,251	2,251	2,251	1,155	1,151	1,040	769
Pseudo R-squared	0.0106	0.0327	0.00524	0.0131	0.383	0.490	0.195	0.193

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.11 – Multinomial Logit results for New Zealand 1993. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients

	Unity 93 No vote	Unity 93 National	Unity 93 Alliance	Unity 93 NZF	Unity 93 Others	Unity with controls 93 No vote	Unity with controls 93 National	Unity with controls 93 Alliance	Unity with controls 93 NZF	Unity with controls 93 Others
Labour Disunity	0.877	3.033***	1.788***	1.789***	3.137***	1.306	1.285	1.122	0.704	3.114
	(0.199)	(0.401)	(0.267)	(0.351)	(1.015)	(0.633)	(0.442)	(0.351)	(0.271)	(2.055)
National Disunity	0.680**	0.236***	0.808	1.125	0.408**	0.960	0.491**	0.835	1.108	0.382
	(0.132)	(0.0321)	(0.112)	(0.206)	(0.142)	(0.475)	(0.175)	(0.256)	(0.415)	(0.251)
Alliance Disunity	1.078	1.321	0.564**	0.982	1.638	1.686	0.629	0.900	0.787	2.721
	(0.318)	(0.242)	(0.140)	(0.295)	(0.697)	(1.012)	(0.307)	(0.426)	(0.441)	(2.077)
NZF Disunity	1.116	1.507	1.038	0.0924**	1.530	1.957	2.626	2.476	0.915	4.472
	(0.430)	(0.355)	(0.311)	(0.0947)	(0.827)	(1.926)	(2.090)	(1.892)	(1.111)	(4.945)
Constant	0.300***	1.141*	0.597***	0.221***	0.0627***	0.203	2.858	1.247	0.830	0.204
	(0.0330)	(0.0819)	(0.0511)	(0.0270)	(0.0131)	(0.224)	(2.151)	(0.821)	(0.690)	(0.280)
Observations	2,204	2,204	2,204	2,204	2,204	733	733	733	733	733
Pseudo R-squared	0.0364	0.0364	0.0364	0.0364	0.0364	0.422	0.422	0.422	0.422	0.422

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

In New Zealand, the substantive impact of cohesion seemed to be similar in this election. Examining the probit models in Table 3.12, the negative and statistically significant relationship remained as well. The party with the largest substantive effect was National. Respondents who perceived the National Party as disunited were 0.23 less likely to vote for them. This was a much stronger effect than for the next party – NZF. Respondents who saw them as disunited were 0.11 less likely to vote for them. Labour recorded an essentially identical result. Finally, disunity in the Alliance resulted in a reduction of 0.06 in the probability of respondents voting for them.

The effect of cohesion on National disappears with controls, but remains for the other three parties. The p-value for National disunity remains below 0.1. The percentage reduction in likelihood of voting for Labour, Alliance and NZF are 0.07, 0.03 and 0.07 respectively. For National the reduction is 0.07. All controls are significant and in the expected direction.

Turning to the multinomial logit in Table 3.13, perceiving Labour as disunited increases the odds of voting for any other party but does not increase a respondent's odds of not voting at all. Perceiving National as disunited make respondents only 0.13 as likely to vote for them over Labour (Column two, Row two). A perception of National disunity also reduces the odds of a respondent not voting or voting for a minor party over Labour to 0.39 and 0.30 what it was before (Column one, Row two and Column five, Row two). Disunity in Alliance and New Zealand First only seem to affect those parties in the baseline model. The odds of respondents voting NZF over Labour are only 0.18 what they would be otherwise with a perception of NZF disunity (Column three, Row four). For Alliance the odds fall to 0.33 what they would otherwise have been (Column four, Row three).

In this election, only National was insignificant with controls. Labour disunity increased the odds of respondents voting for both National and Alliance, by 1.97 times and 2.157 times respectively (Column seven, Row one and Column nine, Row one). Alliance and NZF disunity affected the odds of respondents voting for them, but not for any other party. The probability of voting Alliance over Labour are only 0.37 of what they would have been otherwise if a respondent saw Alliance as disunited (Column nine, Row three). For NZF the odds of voting for them over Labour were 0.23 what they would have been if the respondent saw the party as united (Column eight, Row four). National disunity was almost significant for NZF, with a p-value above 0.05 but below 1.0. It increases the odds of voting NZF over Labour by 1.92 (Column eight, Row two). Once again, all controls are significant and in the expected direction.

Table 3.12 – Probit Baseline and Control for New Zealand 1996. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient

	Unity 96 Labour 96	Unity 96 National 96	Unity 96 Alliance 96	Unity 96 NZF 96	Unity with controls 96 Labour 96	Unity with controls 96 National 96	Unity with controls 96 Alliance 96	Unity with controls 96 NZF 96
Party Disunity	−0.111***	−0.228***	−0.0569***	−0.112***	−0.0659**	−0.0701	−0.0310**	−0.0694***
	(0.0204)	(0.0211)	(0.0132)	(0.0126)	(0.0271)	(0.0364)	(0.0157)	(0.0135)
Govt Economic management positive					−0.0846***	0.111***	−0.0431***	−0.0446***
					(0.0284)	(0.0284)	(0.0161)	(0.0139)
Party ID					0.447***	0.322***	0.552***	0.660***
					(0.0394)	(0.0393)	(0.0737)	(0.0784)
Party LR proximity					−0.0775***	−0.0639***	−0.0140***	−0.0318***
					(0.00761)	(0.00728)	(0.00342)	(0.00478)
Vote 1993					0.137***	0.0889***	0.0959***	0.183**
					(0.0331)	(0.0320)	(0.0321)	(0.0755)
Observations	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152	1,303	1,303	1,252	1,206
Pseudo R-squared	0.0104	0.0278	0.0101	0.0308	0.416	0.406	0.328	0.335

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.13 – Multinomial Logit results for New Zealand 1996. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients

	Unity 96 No vote	Unity 96 National	Unity 96 NZF	Unity 96 Alliance	Unity 96 Others	Unity with controls 96 No vote	Unity with controls 96 National	Unity with controls 96 NZF	Unity with controls 96 Alliance	Unity with controls 96 Others
Labour Disunity	1.094	2.883***	2.319***	2.901***	1.994***	1.845	1.976**	1.583	2.157**	1.564
	(0.402)	(0.458)	(0.460)	(0.604)	(0.368)	(1.161)	(0.564)	(0.508)	(0.690)	(0.438)
National Disunity	0.394**	0.126***	1.173	0.760	0.297***	0.469	0.548	1.915	1.017	0.781
	(0.167)	(0.0284)	(0.228)	(0.167)	(0.0670)	(0.420)	(0.215)	(0.655)	(0.358)	(0.275)
Alliance Disunity	0.686	1.189	0.968	0.335***	1.311	0.629	0.677	0.646	0.374**	0.792
	(0.287)	(0.202)	(0.227)	(0.0979)	(0.253)	(0.472)	(0.210)	(0.238)	(0.154)	(0.238)
NZF Disunity	0.693	1.091	0.181***	1.124	1.179	0.752	1.010	0.233***	0.887	1.335
	(0.253)	(0.171)	(0.0511)	(0.240)	(0.211)	(0.501)	(0.299)	(0.0952)	(0.296)	(0.380)
Constant	0.178***	1.030	0.472***	0.315***	0.546***	0.947	1.430	0.189**	0.335	1.420
	(0.0239)	(0.0741)	(0.0428)	(0.0326)	(0.0466)	(0.988)	(0.841)	(0.127)	(0.217)	(0.799)
Observations	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152	2,152	1,157	1,157	1,157	1,157	1,157
Pseudo R-squared	0.0393	0.0393	0.0393	0.0393	0.0393	0.424	0.424	0.424	0.424	0.424

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Australia

Australia 1987 is closer to the New Zealand 1993 results than it is to other results. The basic pattern is still present here however. All probit results are significant for the basic models, with a fairly strong magnitude of effect. It ranges between making respondents 0.34 less likely to vote for Labor and 0.11 less likely to vote for the Liberals. However, with the exception of the effect for Labor, this disappears with the inclusion of controls. This falls to 0.20 less probability to support Labor with the inclusion of controls. While both Coalition parties were insignificant, the signs were in the correct direction.

This set of slightly disappointing results continues into the multinomial logit analyses. Almost everything is statistically significant in the basic model, with substantively very large effects. Seeing Labor as disunited for instance is associated with respondents being five times more likely to vote for either coalition partner over them (Column two, Row one). Conversely, seeing the Liberals as disunited was linked with respondents only being half as likely to vote for either Coalition partner over Labor (Column two, Row two and Column three, Row two). National disunity had no effect here. In some ways, it is unsurprising that the Liberals affect National so strongly. National is clearly the junior partner in the Coalition and the partners rarely compete directly. Cohesion in the Liberals is therefore likely to matter a lot more to voters than that of National.

With the controls, Labor exhibits the strongest effect. Seeing Labor as disunited is associated with being 3.40 times more likely to vote for the Liberals over Labor (Column six, Row one), and with a 3.67 time increase in the probability of a respondent not voting than voting for Labor (Column five, Row one). This suggests that according to the data at least some voters who are unhappy with Labor's internal state may be abstaining rather than directly switching over to the Coalition. Liberal disunity is also relevant. Seeing the Liberals as disunited was associated with a reduced probability of 0.55 for voting for the party over Labor (Column six, Row two). There was no effect for National disunity.

All controls behave as expected, as do the pseudo r-squared values.

Table 3.14 – Probit Baseline and Control for the Australia 1987. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient

	Unity 87 Labor	Unity 87 Liberal	Unity 87 National	Unity with controls 87 Labor	Unity with controls 87 Liberal	Unity with controls 87 National
Party Disunity	−0.334***	−0.125***	−0.0328**	−0.203***	−0.0586	−0.00329
	(0.0270)	(0.0235)	(0.0141)	(0.0528)	(0.0342)	(0.0144)
Govt Economic management positive				0.254***	−0.231***	−0.0431***
				(0.0392)	(0.0313)	(0.0138)
Party ID ID				0.588***	0.467***	0.366***
				(0.0308)	(0.0360)	(0.0702)
Party LR proximity				−0.0516***	−0.0236**	−0.00673*
				(0.00974)	(0.00937)	(0.00358)
Vote 1983				0.325***	0.335***	0.404***
				(0.0406)	(0.0396)	(0.0748)
Observations	1,830	1,830	1,830	1,491	1,414	1,337
Pseudo R-squared	0.0457	0.0125	0.00531	0.571	0.487	0.408

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.15 – Multinomial Logit results for Australia 1987. Labor is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients

	Unity 87 No vote	Unity 87 Liberal	Unity 87 National	Unity 87 Others	Unity with Controls 87 No vote	Unity with Controls 87 Liberal	Unity with Controls 87 National	Unity with Controls 87 Others
Labor Disunity	2.447**	5.366***	5.337***	3.169***	3.671**	3.396***	1.766	1.631
	(1.054)	(0.878)	(1.204)	(0.847)	(2.368)	(1.070)	(0.746)	(0.631)
Liberal Disunity	0.632	0.415***	0.493***	0.525***	2.176	0.551**	1.090	0.806
	(0.204)	(0.0547)	(0.102)	(0.122)	(1.343)	(0.149)	(0.404)	(0.268)
National Disunity	0.330***	1.073	0.754	1.525*	0.294**	1.356	1.002	1.876*
	(0.111)	(0.139)	(0.153)	(0.360)	(0.164)	(0.365)	(0.358)	(0.633)
Constant	0.123***	0.873	0.258***	0.141***	0.429	0.674	0.500	0.792
	(0.0272)	(0.0886)	(0.0391)	(0.0271)	(0.372)	(0.338)	(0.321)	(0.431)
Observations	1,830	1,830	1,830	1,830	1,311	1,311	1,311	1,311
Pseudo R-squared	0.0469	0.0469	0.0469	0.0469	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.16 – Probit Baseline and Control for the Australia 1990. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient.

	Unity 90 Labor 90	Unity 90 Liberal 90	Unity with controls 90 Labor 90	Unity with controls 90 Liberal 90
Party Disunity	−0.378***	−0.210***	−0.220***	−0.108***
	(0.0192)	(0.0221)	(0.0332)	(0.0293)
Govt Economic management positive			0.322***	−0.238***
			(0.0635)	(0.0411)
Party ID			0.536***	−0.327***
			(0.0284)	(0.0277)
Party LR proximity			0.00572	−0.0469***
			(0.0104)	(0.0116)
Vote 1987			0.378***	0.529***
			(0.0307)	(0.0293)
Observations	2,037	2,037	1,787	1,787
Pseudo R-squared	0.0801	0.0337	0.547	0.473

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.17 – Multinomial Logit results for Australia 1990. Labor is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients.

	Unity 90 No vote	Unity 90 Liberal	Unity 90 Others	Unity with Controls 90 No vote	Unity with Controls 90 Liberal	Unity with Controls 90 Others
Labor Disunity	9.054***	11.52***	7.942***	4.913***	4.410***	4.161***
	(3.268)	(2.216)	(1.624)	(2.407)	(1.303)	(1.152)
Liberal Disunity	0.482**	0.290***	0.613***	0.837	0.517***	0.989
	(0.146)	(0.0331)	(0.0810)	(0.357)	(0.103)	(0.187)
Constant	0.0765***	1.378***	0.572***	0.261	11.27***	16.31***
	(0.0185)	(0.122)	(0.0627)	(0.233)	(5.158)	(6.747)
Observations	2,037	2,037	2,037	1,787	1,787	1,787
Pseudo R-squared	0.0740	0.0740	0.0740	0.443	0.443	0.443

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Australia in 1990 is substantively larger in its effects than 1987. While National is missing in this study, this should matter little, given that it is the junior partner in the large and stable Coalition. As usual, both parties record significant results in the probit analysis in table 3.16. Seeing Labor as disunited is associated with a 0.37 reduction in one's likelihood of voting for them, for the Liberals a 0.21 reduction in probability. These fall to 0.22 and to 0.11 respectively with controls.

There are no surprises in the multinomial logit results in table 3.17. In all cases, the odds ratios are very large. Labor disunity is associated with respondents being over eleven times as likely to vote Liberal (Column two, Row one), nine times more likely not to vote (Column one, Row one) and nearly eight times more likely to vote for another party (Column three, Row one). Liberal disunity is associated with respondents having only 0.29 relative odds of voting Liberal over Labor (Column two, Row two), half as likely not to vote (Column one, Row two) and just over half as likely to vote for another party (Column three, Row two).

When controls are added, not all of these effects disappear. Labor disunity continues to be very important. It is associated with respondents being four times as likely to vote for the Liberals (Column five, Row one), and 4.91 times as likely not to vote (Column four, Row one). While Australia has mandatory turnout, this was nonetheless a category in the dataset. It is also associated with a four time increase in odds of voting for another party over Labor (Column six, Row one). For the Liberals, when the controls are added respondents are about half as likely to vote Liberal if they felt the party was disunited versus those who felt that it was united (Column five, Row two).

All controls behave as expected, and the pseudo r-squared values again suggest that unity is a variable of minor importance. These values increase sharply when the controls are added.

United Kingdom – Election Studies

Britain in 1983 strongly recalls the patterns that were seen in the Netherlands. In the probit analyses in Table 3.17, perceptions of party unity were an important and relevant factor for every single party. The magnitude of these effects did vary from party to party in these analyses. They were tempered somewhat with the inclusion of controls. Seeing the Conservatives as disunited made a respondent 0.30 less likely to vote for them, but with controls this fell to 0.12 less likely. The substantive effect was somewhat weaker for the other parties. Labour fell from 0.31 less likely to 0.07 less likely, while the Alliance dropped from 0.10 less likely to 0.04 less likely. Naturally, with controls, the pseudo r-squared is much

larger from the quite low levels of variance accounted for in the basic models. This is unsurprising and is consistent with the Netherlands and, indeed, with all other countries and elections.

The multinomial logit results in Table 3.18 unveil more insights. Almost everything was significant, and with substantively strong effects, in the basic model. Perceiving Labour as disunited revealed the strongest effect, but this is perhaps unsurprising considering that Labour is the base category. This means that this is the odds of voting for the Conservatives, or Alliance, or another party, or not voting at all over voting for Labour. Since we expect that perceptions of the Labour Party are more pertinent to ones' likelihood of voting Labour this is not unexpected.

In general, the effect observed in the Netherlands of ideologically close parties being the beneficiary of a rival's lack of cohesion was observed again. Labour lack of unity benefits the Alliance, but not the Conservatives, for whom no statistically significant effect was observed. Alliance lack of unity hurts them, to Labour's benefit, similarly to Conservative lack of unity (Column seven, Row three). These effects are substantively relatively minor. The Conservative effect on Labour is the largest, and still only makes the respondent 0.37 times as likely to vote for Labour (Column six, Row one).

The 1987 study tells almost exactly the same story as 1983 for every result, although the exact numbers differ, and the substantive effects are somewhat stronger in 1987. This may reflect the fact that in 1987, the parties were in fact more united than in 1983, so it is more revealing if a respondent does not feel that a party is united than it was in 1983.

The probit results in Table 3.19 tell us that, without controls, perceiving the Conservatives, Labour or the Alliance as disunited corresponds with a 0.29, 0.31 and 0.10 less chance of voting for those parties respectively. Those numbers fall to 0.16, 0.14 and 0.09 respectively with controls, but all remain significant and in the expected direction.

In the multinomial logit portion of the results in Table 3.20, all parties behave largely as expected and in the expected direction without controls. Labour remains the base category, and perceiving them as disunited makes respondents much less likely to vote for them in an election relative to all other options. They are 5.56 times more likely to vote Conservative over Labour (Column two, Row two) and 4.68 times more likely to vote Alliance (Column three, Row two). However, while seeing the Conservatives as disunited made respondents 0.18 times as likely to choose them over Labour (Column two, Row one), it was also

associated with respondents being 0.66 times as likely to choose Alliance over Labour (Column three, Row one). This was also statistically significant. Alliance disunity behaved as expected, making respondents 0.41 times less likely to choose them over Labour.

With controls, the effects get substantively less strong, and largely fade except for those explicitly relating to the parties under question. Conservative disunity is associated with a 0.25 times as likely of voting for the party over Labour (Column six, Row one), while Alliance disunity with respondents being 0.36 times as likely to vote for them over Labour (Column seven, Row three). Labour fares worst of all, with disunity being associated with high increased likelihoods of voting for both other major political forces over it. Controls generally behave as they should in this model, and for all 1987 the pseudo r-squared vales are consistent with other elections.

1992 is, once again, substantively almost identical to the other British cases, both in terms of the probit and in terms of the multinomial logit models. Controls and pseudo r-squared remain broadly consistent, as per previous models here.

Unity is significant for every single probit model in Table 3.21. It loses some of its substantive power when controls are added. The Conservatives fall from 0.34 less likely to vote for the party to 0.23 less likely. Labour falls from 0.22 less likely to 0.15 less likely. Finally the Liberal Democrats fall only slightly, but they do still fall, from 0.10 less likely to 0.09 less likely.

Table 3.17 – Probit Baseline and Control for the UK 1983. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient.

	Conservative 83	Labour 83	Alliance 83	Conservative 83	Labour 83	Alliance 83
Party disunity	−0.303***	−0.305***	−0.0973***	−0.122***	−0.0726***	−0.0438***
	(0.0148)	(0.0285)	(0.0115)	(0.0255)	(0.0255)	(0.0109)
Vote for party in 79				0.296***	0.149***	0.00384
				(0.0249)	(0.0189)	(0.0154)
Govt unemployment perception positive				0.220***	−0.0929***	−0.0760***
				(0.0259)	(0.0141)	(0.0101)
Party ID				0.469***	0.418***	0.256***
				(0.0234)	(0.0247)	(0.0249)
Party LR proximity				−0.0449***	−0.0133***	0.00181
				(0.00756)	(0.00338)	(0.00554)
SDP LR proximity						−0.0187***
						(0.00551)
Observations	3,702	3,799	3,176	3,095	3,207	2,539
Pseudo R-squared	0.0634	0.0318	0.0328	0.473	0.504	0.226

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3.18 – Multinomial Logit results for the UK 1983. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients.

	Unity 83 No vote	Unity 83 Conservative	Unity 83 Alliance	Unity 83 Other	Unity with controls 83 No vote	Unity with controls 83 Conservative	Unity with controls 83 Alliance	Unity with controls 83 Other
Conservative disunity	0.513***	0.164***	0.740**	0.747	0.762	0.373***	0.724*	0.978
	(0.0677)	(0.0209)	(0.0878)	(0.164)	(0.141)	(0.0829)	(0.137)	(0.313)
Labour disunity	1.766***	4.543***	4.797***	2.291**	1.150	1.417	2.468***	2.591
	(0.333)	(0.903)	(1.055)	(0.838)	(0.309)	(0.498)	(0.823)	(1.574)
Alliance disunity	0.831	0.940	0.353***	0.755	0.805	0.978	0.510***	0.800
	(0.103)	(0.0988)	(0.0408)	(0.158)	(0.138)	(0.182)	(0.0893)	(0.233)
					(0.00546)	(0.00591)	(0.00557)	(0.00866)
Constant	0.600***	0.689*	0.441***	0.103***	10.38***	6.596***	1.929	0.861
	(0.117)	(0.139)	(0.0983)	(0.0387)	(4.309)	(3.200)	(0.919)	(0.678)
Observations	3,047	3,047	3,047	3,047	2,425	2,425	2,425	2,425
Pseudo R-squared	0.0542	0.0542	0.0542	0.0542	0.409	0.409	0.409	0.409

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.19 – Probit Baseline and Control for the UK 1987. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient.

	(1) Conservative 87	(1) Labour 87	(1) Alliance 87	(1) Conservative 87	(1) Labour 87	(1) Alliance 87
Party disunity	−0.293***	−0.305***	−0.102***	−0.160***	−0.141***	−0.0881***
	(0.0158)	(0.0187)	(0.0241)	(0.0334)	(0.0235)	(0.0310)
Vote 83				0.336***	0.215***	0.242***
				(0.0298)	(0.0272)	(0.0326)
Govt unemployment perception positive				0.203***	−0.158***	−0.126***
				(0.0343)	(0.0178)	(0.0205)
Party ID				0.426***	0.457***	0.514***
				(0.0279)	(0.0279)	(0.0266)
Party LR proximity				−0.0349***	−0.0217***	−0.0215***
				(0.00573)	(0.00422)	(0.00506)
Observations	3,502	3,505	3,324	1,979	2,731	2,428
Pseudo R-squared	0.0554	0.0723	0.006	0.430	0.527	0.326

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.20 – Multinomial Logit results for the UK 1987. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients.

	(1) Unity 87 No vote	(2) Unity 87 Conservative	(4) Unity 87 Alliance	(5) Unity 87 Other	(1) Unity with controls 87 No vote	(2) Unity with controls 87 Conservative	(4) Unity with controls 87 Alliance	(5) Unity with controls 87 Other
Conservative disunity	0.683***	0.178***	0.664***	0.642*	0.635*	0.249***	0.647*	0.413*
	(0.0942)	(0.0226)	(0.0794)	(0.152)	(0.166)	(0.0720)	(0.167)	(0.192)
Labour disunity	2.976***	5.556***	4.682***	2.484***	2.637***	3.103***	2.512***	1.657
	(0.432)	(0.649)	(0.624)	(0.608)	(0.706)	(0.869)	(0.671)	(0.728)
Alliance disunity	0.421***	0.743*	0.413***	0.811	0.466**	0.898	0.360***	1.274
	(0.0791)	(0.126)	(0.0702)	(0.291)	(0.171)	(0.350)	(0.131)	(0.916)
Constant	0.569***	0.845	0.682**	0.0996***	4.908***	3.464**	2.299	0.709
	(0.111)	(0.149)	(0.123)	(0.0372)	(2.938)	(2.171)	(1.403)	(0.707)
Observations	3,056	3,056	3,056	3,056	1,597	1,597	1,597	1,597
Pseudo R-squared	0.0628	0.0628	0.0628	0.0628	0.438	0.438	0.438	0.438

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.21 – Probit Baseline and Control for the UK 1987. Percentage change in likelihood of having voted for that party if the independent variable changes by 1 is given over a coefficient.

	(1) Conservative 92	(1) Labour 92	(1) LibDem 92	(1) Conservative 92	(1) Labour 92	(1) LibDem 92
Party disunity	−0.344***	−0.221***	−0.0986***	−0.237***	−0.150***	−0.0904***
	(0.0149)	(0.0179)	(0.0141)	(0.0274)	(0.0287)	(0.0196)
Vote 87				0.564***	0.593***	0.537***
				(0.0265)	(0.0267)	(0.0411)
Govt economic management positive				0.101**	−0.0362	−0.0591**
				(0.0443)	(0.0395)	(0.0250)
Party LR proximity				−0.0492***	−0.0449***	−0.0107**
				(0.00477)	(0.00512)	(0.00446)
Observations	3,251	3,249	2,878	1,557	1,561	1,343
Pseudo R-squared	0.0904	0.0398	0.0142	0.434	0.415	0.210

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

Table 3.22 – Multinomial Logit results for the UK 1992. Labour is the baseline party for both basic model and model with controls. Odds ratios were given over coefficients.

	(1) Unity 92 No Vote	(2) Unity 92 Conservative	(4) Unity 92 LibDem	(5) Unity 92 Other	(1) Unity with controls 92 No Vote	(2) Unity with controls 92 Conservative	(4) Unity with controls 92 LibDem	(5) Unity with controls 92 Other
Conservative disunity	0.507***	0.110***	0.652***	0.707**	0.598**	0.149***	0.751	1.114
	(0.0745)	(0.0151)	(0.0866)	(0.115)	(0.152)	(0.0423)	(0.179)	(0.299)
Labour disunity	2.005***	4.244***	2.392***	3.248***	1.985***	4.142***	2.299***	3.108***
	(0.287)	(0.485)	(0.318)	(0.583)	(0.491)	(1.036)	(0.541)	(0.880)
LibDem disunity	1.030	0.785*	0.321***	1.052	1.413	1.268	0.402***	1.167
	(0.175)	(0.110)	(0.0656)	(0.198)	(0.419)	(0.394)	(0.138)	(0.378)
Constant	0.352***	0.908	0.439***	0.152***	0.732	0.727	0.572	0.280***
	(0.0421)	(0.0845)	(0.0490)	(0.0245)	(0.324)	(0.319)	(0.248)	(0.138)
Observations	2,674	2,674	2,674	2,674	1,254	1,254	1,254	1,254
Pseudo R-squared	0.0710	0.0710	0.0710	0.0710	0.354	0.354	0.354	0.354

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05

The multinomial logit results in Table 3.22 are also functionally identical to 1987 and 1983. Essentially all variables are relevant in the basic model, and strongly so. Perceiving the Conservatives as disunited was associated with a respondent being 0.11 times as likely to vote for them than perceiving them as united (Column two, Row one). The story is the same for the Liberal Democrats. Perceiving them as disunited was associated with respondents being 0.32 times as likely to vote for them (Column three, Row three). Perceiving Labour as disunited was associated with big increases in the odds of voting for both their rivals, of 4.24 and 2.39 respectively (Column two, Row two and Column three, Row three). It was also associated with increases in the odds of not voting or of choosing another, more minor party.

With controls, the picture is essentially identical. Conservatives disunity is associated with being 0.15 times as likely of voting for them as believing they are united (Column six, Row one), while Liberal Democrat disunity is associated being 0.40 times as likely to vote them as seeing them as united (Column seven, Row three), relative to Labour. Again, Labour disunity costs them, but most heavily to the Conservatives in this instance, their main rival for government. It is associated with being 4.14 times more likely to vote Conservative (Column six, Row two). It still is relevant for the ideologically proximate Liberal Democrats, for whom this increase is 2.30 times as likely (Column seven, Row two).

This means that all three British Election Studies have quite consistent results. Perceptions of disunity cost parties, and cost them quite severely, consistent with the Netherlands.

United Kingdom – Opinion Poll

Several variables that were present in the election studies, such as party identification and feeling about the economy, were not included in this poll. Several others were available and were added. While then this is not precisely the same as the analyses undertaken using the election studies, it is hoped that it is, nonetheless, adequate to account for the same processes.

Examining Table 3.23, the results can be seen to be largely as expected in this instance. Most particularly, seeing a party as disunited reduced the probability of voting for that party in every case. This was in each case a relatively large effect. It is important to note that these are scaled variables. This means that for each point more disunited the respondent felt that the Conservatives were, their probability of voting for the party fell by 0.38. This is a cumulative and not an additive process, so moving four points on the scale does not lead to an impossible number. The probability for Labour fell by 0.36, and that for UKIP fell by 0.43.

Also of note is the relevance of how respondents view infighting. Important too is the significance of Conservative unity for the likelihood of voting Labour and vice versa, as well as the significance of UKIP unity for the Conservatives. This suggests that the main finding for Chapter Three, that cohesion was most likely to be an important consideration when voters were deciding between parties that they had not already rejected for other reasons, is true. Additionally, the more positively they rate infighting as a good thing for a party, they more likely they were to vote for Labour. This variable was not statistically significant for other parties.

The other results were not particularly surprising. Voting for the party in the previous election was easily the most significant and substantively important variable for each party. For the Conservatives, having voted for the party in 2015 was associated with respondents being 1.97 times more likely to support them now, holding all of the other variables constant. For Labour and for UKIP this was only slightly less stark, with them recording increases in probability of 1.82 and 1.82 respectively. Ideology seemed to be an important factor. The more right-wing a respondent was, the more likely they were to support the Conservatives. The reverse was true for Labour. Class was only significant for UKIP, where the lower the socio-economic grade a respondent was, the more likely they were to vote for UKIP. Finally younger voters were more likely to support Labour, but the effect was insignificant for other parties.

The pseudo r-squared for all of these is reasonable, with all parties scoring results between 0.4 and 0.5, which suggests that while these models do account for many factors, they are also quite incomplete.

Similarly, as can be seen in Table 3.24, the multinomial logit results largely tell the same story that was told in previously in spite of the lack of same controls that were used there. This provides some more support for those findings. Labour was used as a base category in order to be consistent with what was done there.

Unsurprisingly and consistent with Table 3.23 party unity is a good predictor. Perceiving Labour as not united was associated with a 0.90 increase in probability of voting Conservatives, with a 0.81 increase in the probability of the respondent voting for UKIP and a 0.77 increase in the probability of voting for the Liberal Democrats.

Table. 3.23 – Probit analyses of whether a respondent voted for a party or not, coefficients reported are % change in likelihood

	(1) Conservatives	(2) Labour	(3) UKIP
Supported Party in 2015	1.965***	1.817***	1.822***
	(0.110)	(0.124)	(0.133)
View of Infighting	0.0115	0.191**	0.0104
	(0.0671)	(0.0733)	(0.0774)
Infighting Factor for vote	−0.0733	0.113	−0.112
	(0.0586)	(0.0670)	(0.0671)
Con unity	−0.375***	0.272***	0.0219
	(0.0524)	(0.0630)	(0.0587)
Lab unity	0.168**	−0.355***	0.102
	(0.0631)	(0.0630)	(0.0695)
UKIP unity	0.161**	0.0268	−0.432***
	(0.0509)	(0.0562)	(0.0589)
Class	0.0128	−0.0200	−0.0929*
	(0.0344)	(0.0395)	(0.0401)
Right-wing	0.199***	−0.291***	0.0451
	(0.0510)	(0.0608)	(0.0570)
Political Interest	−0.125	−0.0175	0.106
	(0.0674)	(0.0722)	(0.0750)
Age	−0.00835	−0.124**	0.0321
	(0.0353)	(0.0380)	(0.0410)
Female	−0.107	−0.0240	−0.165
	(0.107)	(0.123)	(0.124)
Constant	−1.654***	−0.281	−0.660
	(0.471)	(0.525)	(0.536)
N	1145	1145	1145
pseudo R^2	0.496	0.489	0.416

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3.24 – Multinomial logit results of poll results with Labour as base category, coefficients reported as odds ratios

	Conservatives	UKIP	Liberal Democrats	Others
Infighting view	−0.281	−0.256	−0.359*	−0.343**
	(0.174)	(0.195)	(0.206)	(0.145)
Infighting factor for	−0.373**	−0.434**	−0.330*	−0.194
Vote	(0.158)	(0.173)	(0.183)	(0.133)
Con unity	−1.108***	−0.610***	−0.355**	−0.458***
	(0.153)	(0.164)	(0.175)	(0.133)
Lab unity	0.895***	0.810***	0.766***	0.568***
	(0.164)	(0.174)	(0.196)	(0.131)
UKIP unity	0.0937	−0.773***	0.0687	0.0155
	(0.142)	(0.152)	(0.161)	(0.117)
Constant	−1.020	0.0705	-2.530*	−0.0362
	(1.287)	(1.408)	(1.524)	(1.081)
Observations	1,145	1,145	1,145	1,145
Pseudo R-squared	0.445	0.445	0.445	0.445

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The way respondents view infighting and whether it is a factor in their decision-making were significant variables here – much more so than in the probit models in Table 3.23. Perceiving infighting as positive was associated with a 0.40 reduction in the probability of voting Liberal Democrat over Labour and with a 0.34 reduction in the probability of voting for a party other than the four largest nationwide. Similarly, viewing infighting as an unimportant factor for your vote was also associated with decreases in the probability of voting for each of the main alternatives to Labour. It was associated with a 0.37 fall in the probability of choosing the Conservatives over Labour, with a 0.43 reduction in the probability of choosing UKIP over Labour, and with a 0.33 fall in the probability of choosing the Liberal Democrats over Labour. This is an unusual result. It likely means that Labour has already lost the support of those who care about infighting, leaving those indifferent to it in the ranks of party voters.

3.4.3 Results expressed as Predicted Probabilities

These results can also be expressed in a number of other ways, to visualise these results in a different way. Expressing some of these results in terms of predicted probabilities and graphically allows the easy comparison of parties with each other in the same election. This

was done together for ease of interpretation. The models used are identical to those already reported and discussed. In general these reulsts are the same as those of the odds ratios already reported – these are simply the same results shown in another way.

Analyses of all elections was undertaken. However only the results of New Zealand in 1996 and the United Kingdom in 1983 will be shown and explained here. These elections are both representative of those studied as a whole and also interesting in their own right, as four parties are under study in the Netherlands and 1983 in Britain the parties were especially disunited. All others may be found in the Appendix.

Netherlands 1989

Fig. 3.1 – Predicted probability of voting CDA in 1989 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

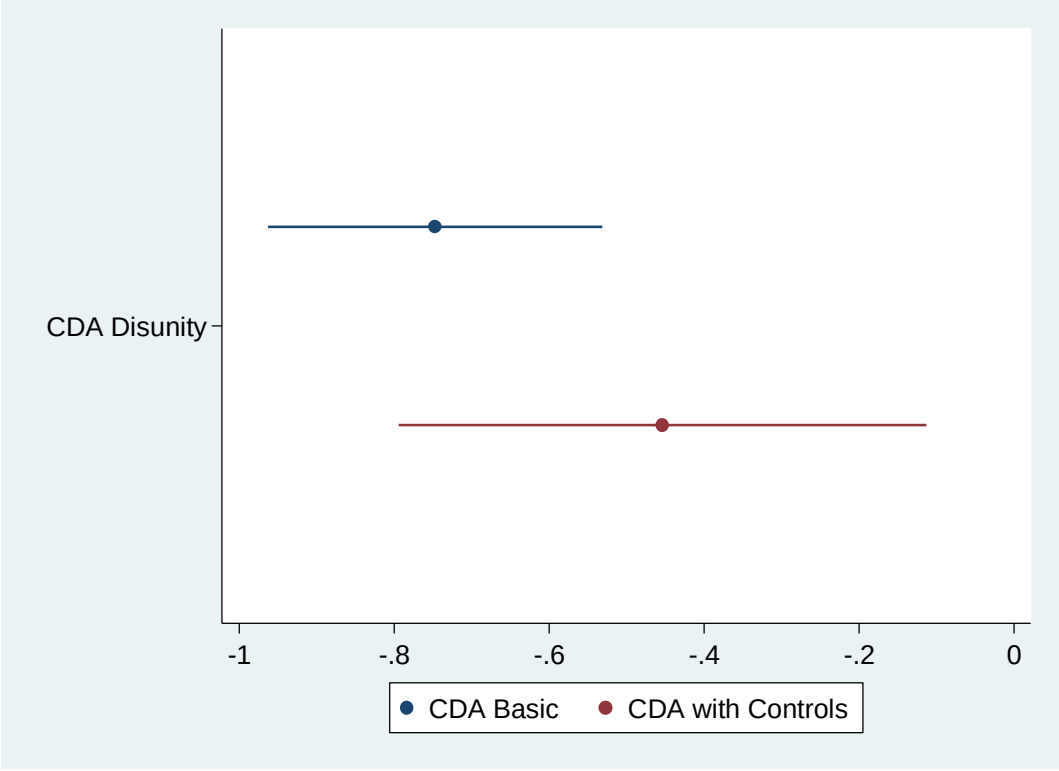


Fig. 3.2 – Predicted probability of voting PvdA in 1989 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

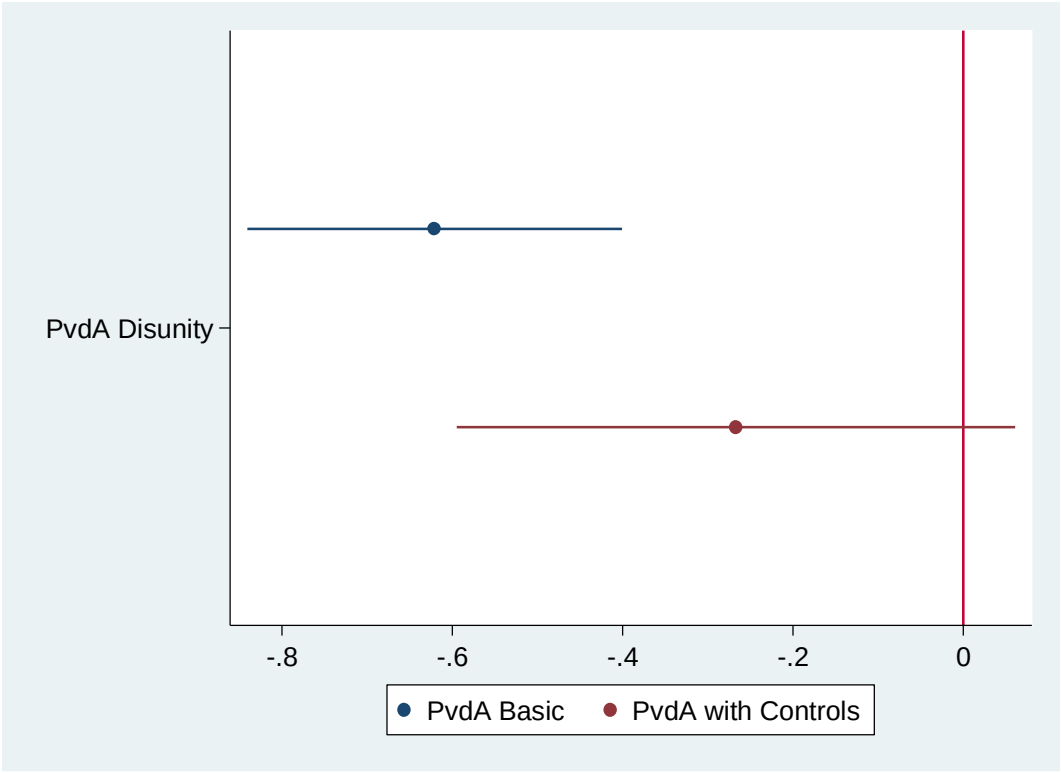


Fig. 3.3 – Predicted probability of voting VVD in 1989 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

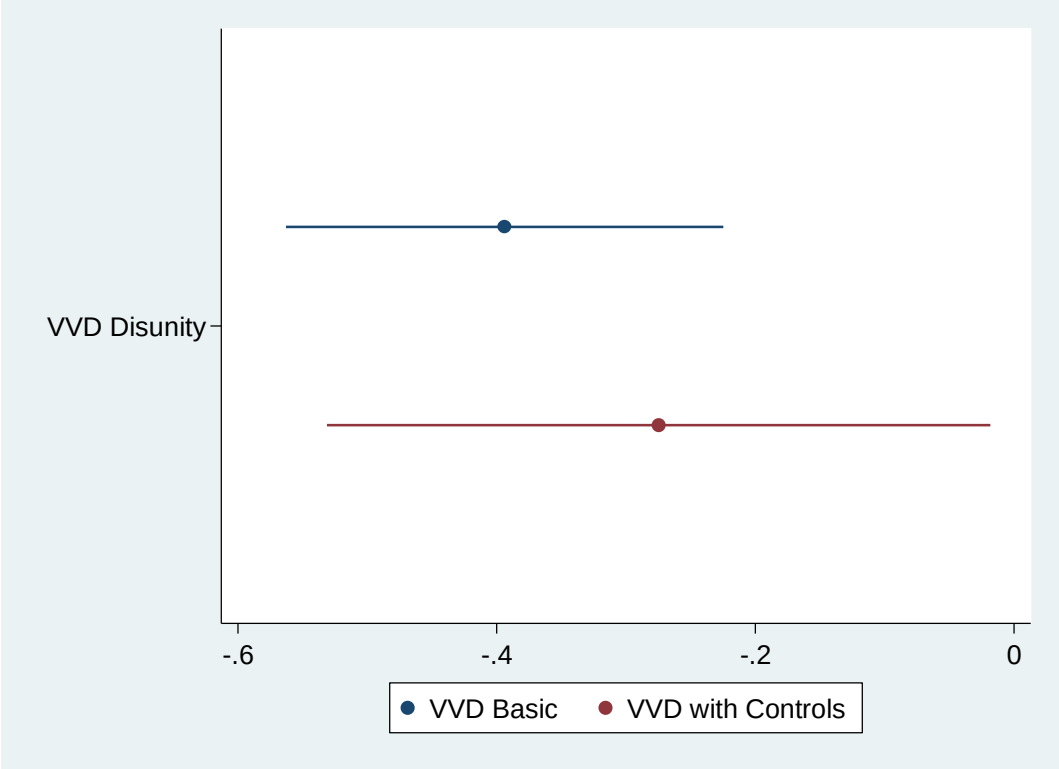
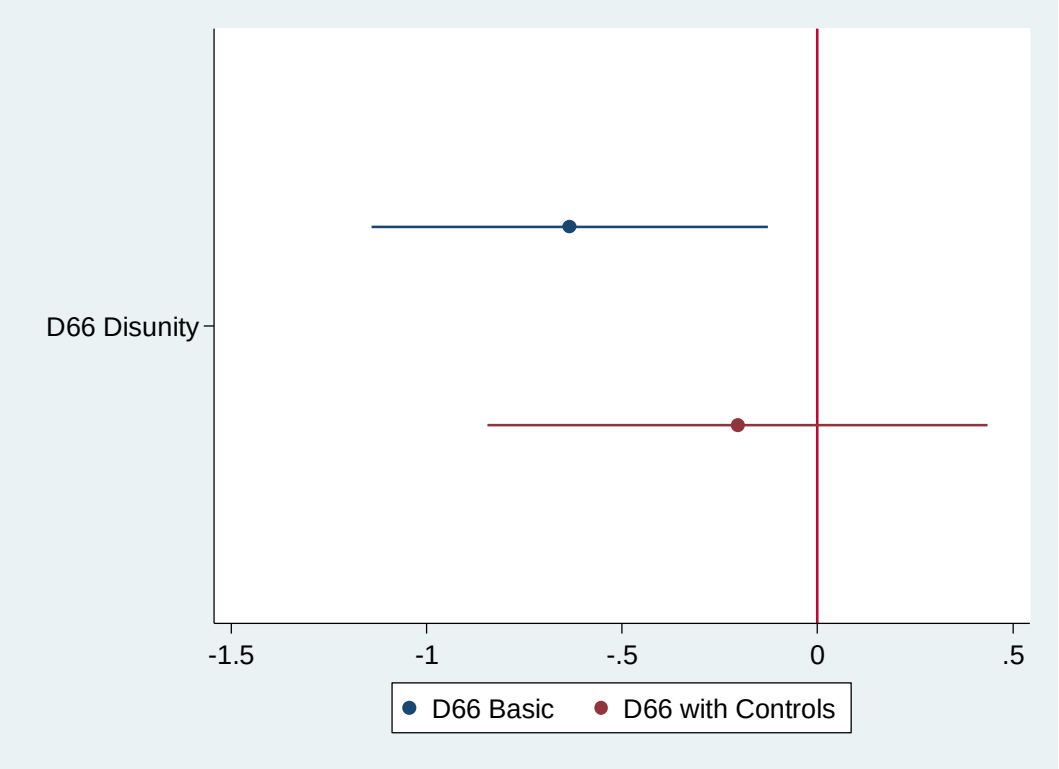


Fig. 3.4 – Predicted probability of voting D66 in 1989 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

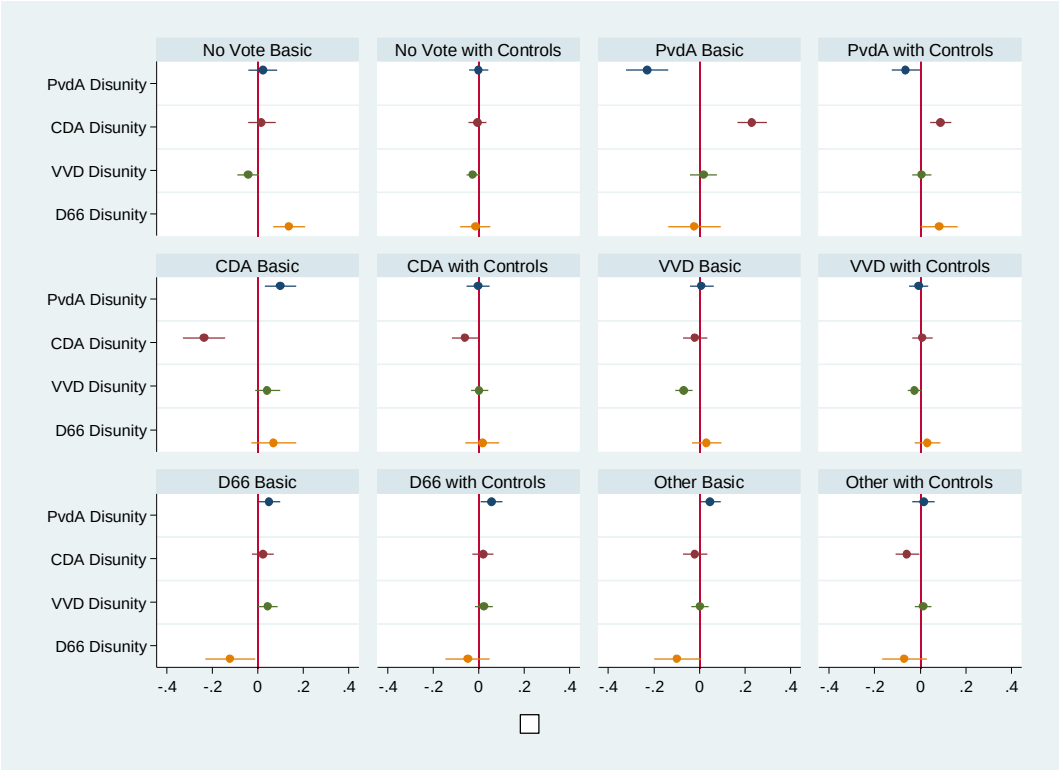


All probit analyses demonstrate a strong effect in the basic model and can be seen to do so. They are always statistically significant and negative. The change in the predicted probability of voting CDA when the party is disunited can be seen to be just below -0.8, with a standard deviation of 0.2. This can be seen to be a substantively greater effect than the same result when controls were added. The standard deviation is now nearly 0.4, with disunity reducing the predicted probability of voting CDA by just over 0.4. This remains statistically significant. The only other party that is significant when controls were added is the VVD, where the substantive effect is somewhat less, at just below a reduction in probability of 0.3.

The Multinomial logit analyses compare the parties with one another within the same model, so comparing results directly is somewhat easier. The directions of analysis here are especially interesting, even if not all are statistically significant. They lend support to both major hypotheses – that disunity in a party affects that party negatively and that disunity in a competitor is a help to a party. CDA disunity can be seen to affect the CDA negatively but parties like the PvdA and VVD – their main competitors, positively, even if this was not always statistically significantly. PvDA disunity can be visually seen to do the same with its

main competitors – the CDA and D66. Even if the degree of substantive importance changes the way the relationship shows itself in these results does not change.

Fig. 3.5 – Predicted probability of voting for Dutch parties in 1989 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls



United Kingdom 1983

Fig. 3.6 – Predicted probability of voting Conservative in 1983 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

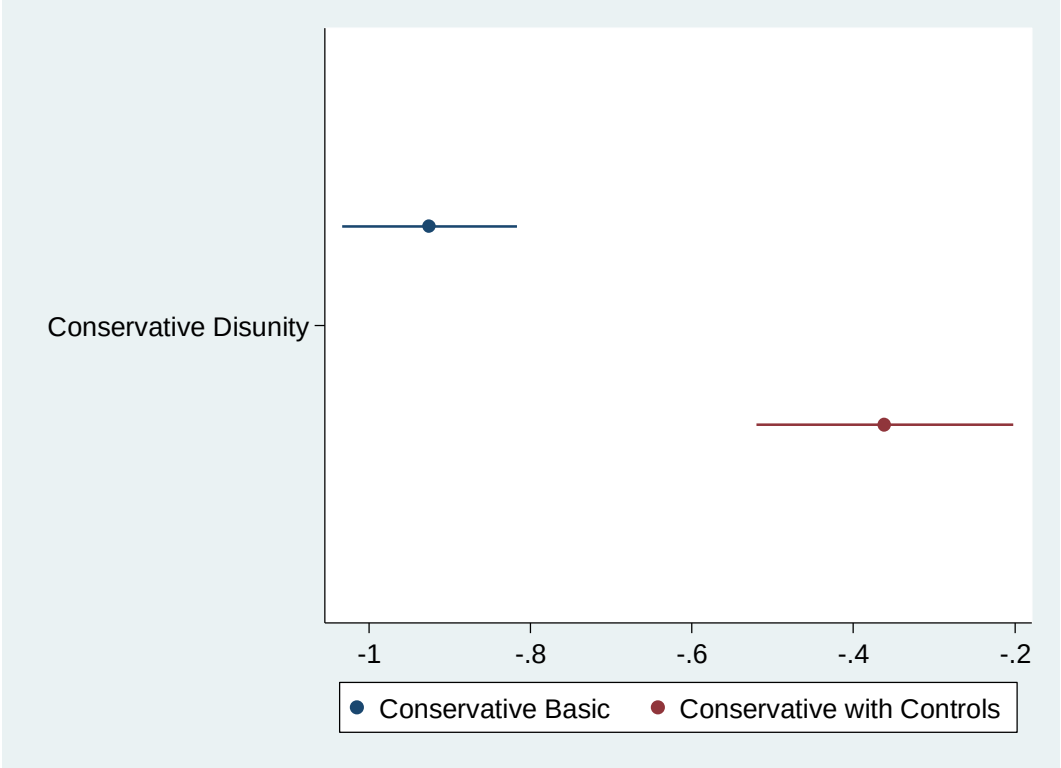


Fig. 3.7 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1983 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

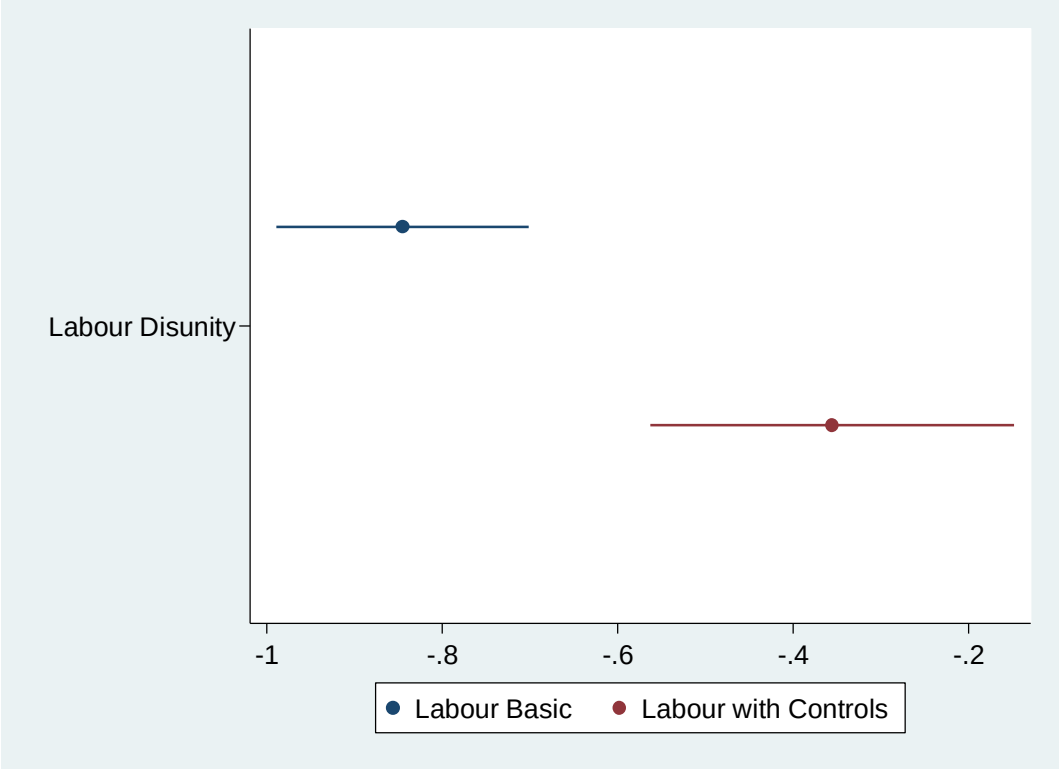
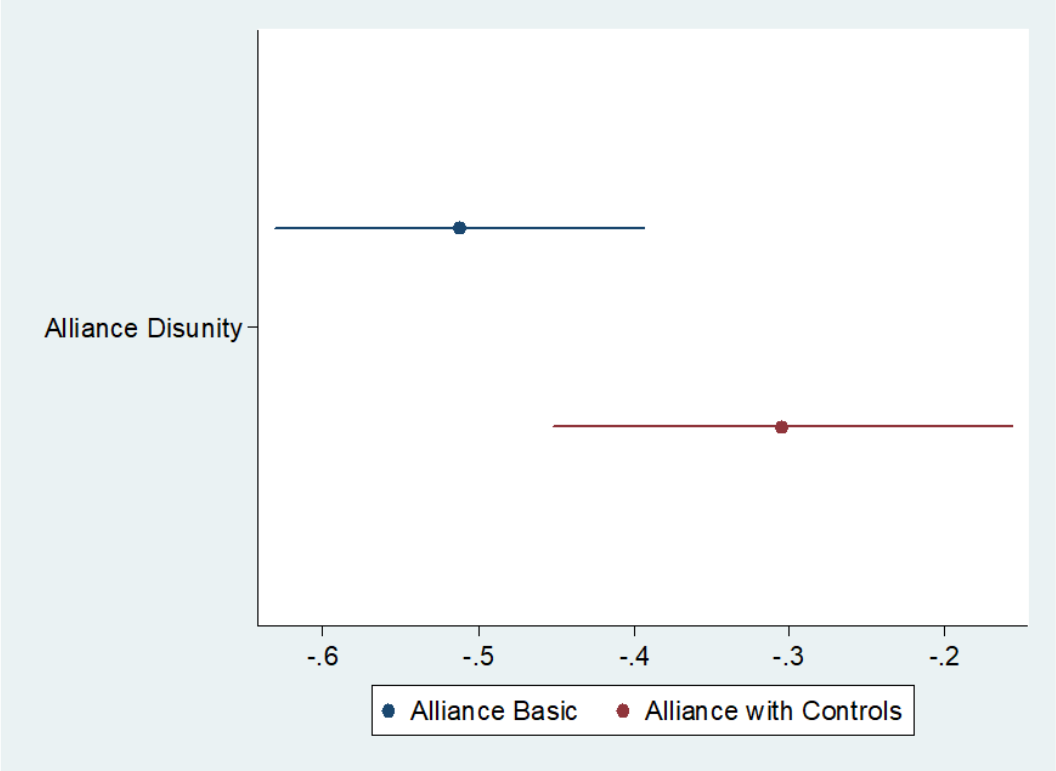


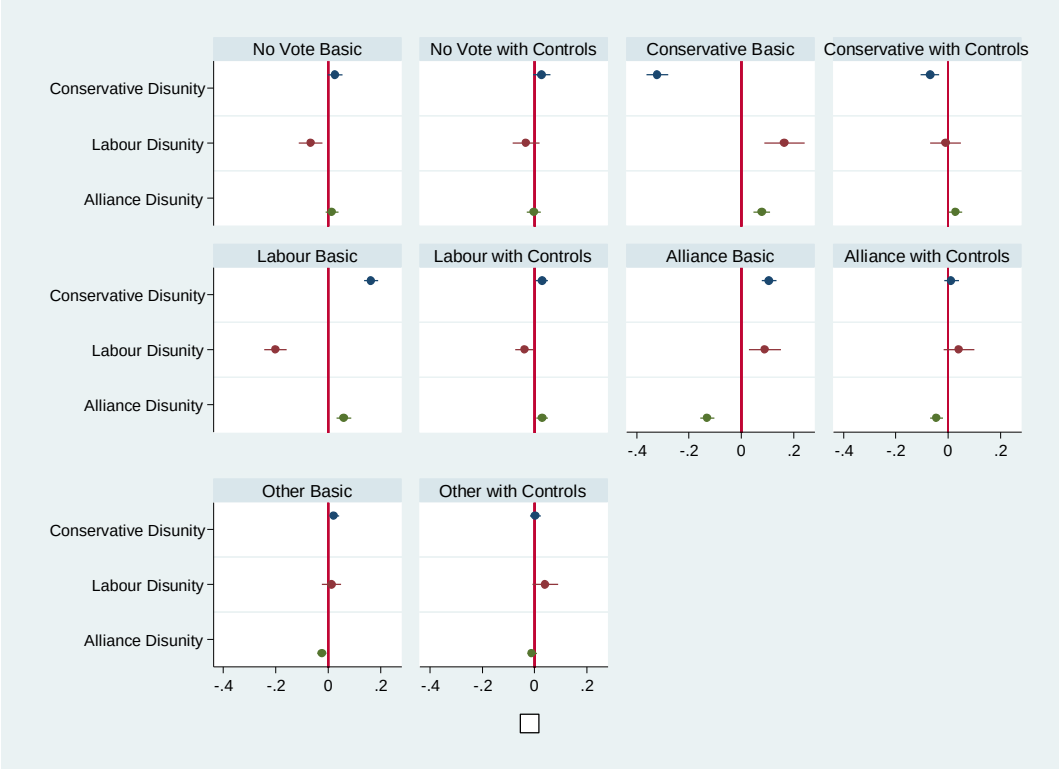
Fig. 3.8 – Predicted probability of voting Alliance in 1983 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls



There is a similar pattern for the United Kingdom in 1983. In the probit analyses there is always a very strong effect for the basic models, which is never weaker than a reduction in probability of 0.5. Even with controls this effect for all three parties roughly a reduction of 0.3 for each party. This remains both statistically significant and substantively large.

In the multinomial logit analyses both major hypotheses seem to be visibly borne out. Labour and Alliance, two similar parties, can be seen to have relationships where disunity in one makes voters more likely to choose the other. Even if the effect is sometimes substantively small it is always present and in this direction. The Conservatives and Labour, as another pair of parties with which we expect voters to be liable to switch between, show a similar relationship

Fig. 3.9 – Predicted probability of voting for British parties in 1983 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls



3.5 Analysis

These results indicate that there may be a relationship between perceptions of political party cohesion and the results those parties receive in elections. This result is neither always consistent nor strong. Additionally, disunity in some parties in the multinomial logit report significant results in parties other than the party to which they are referring. Both of these findings need to be examined in turn.

The more important of these results is the inconsistent substantive importance of cohesion. While significant in most models, it still falls quite far from achieving significant results for all parties in all models. Even when those effects can be found they are substantively quite small – something indicated by both the percentage change in likelihoods and the pseudo r-squared values of both probit and multinomial logit models. Nonetheless, this is not a surprising finding. It was never claimed that party cohesion was a vitally important aspect of voter decision making – on a par with party identification and government economic

performance. Rather, it was hoped to establish that voters do take this factor into account when casting their votes generally, and that voters are aware of it and respond to it.

Furthermore, the inconsistency of the results, both in terms of significance and the substantive strength when significant may indicate that there is a salience effect. It may be that voters only take a factor like cohesion into account under certain circumstances, and ignore it when those conditions are not met.

Additionally there may be country and election specific factors behind some of these results. For instance, consider the Netherlands 1989 and New Zealand 1996. Participation in government in the Netherlands would seem to be the biggest single explanatory factor for the observed results. When in government, anything that affects the ability of the government to implement its manifesto is likely to be of importance to voters. Voters cared about cohesion because low cohesion may have negatively affected government performance. As the CDA was the primary government party this would explain why substantively this was the party most affected by cohesion. It would also account for why cohesion in the CDA was negatively affecting the VVD. As the junior coalition partner, it makes sense that a factor that negatively affects government performance would impact on evaluations that voters would have of them as well. Additionally, if governmental status is driving the importance of the cohesion variable, it makes sense that the perceived cohesion of the senior coalition partner would be substantively more important than that of the junior.

In New Zealand, there were matters that were less ordinary in 1996, so simple governmental status could have superseded other matters. The 1996 election was the first election that was fought in New Zealand under a proportional electoral system. This did not affect the two major parties evenly. Labour, in spite of being in opposition, was significantly more negatively affected than National. Two relatively major new parties were formed by Labour MPs prior to the election – the centrist United Party and the libertarian ACT New Zealand, which had two former cabinet ministers, including a former finance minister, among its supporters. Furthermore, these splits in Labour were reflections of longer divisions in the party over policy direction from the 1980s onwards over the validity and efficacy of monetarist 'Rogernomics' (named after finance minister Roger Douglas) (Curtis & Miller, 2012a, 2012b). National did not nearly have as many issues. While the emergence of breakaways may have left what was left of Labour more united than if they had not broken away, what matters here is the perception. If the public perceives substantive Labour

disunity, they are likely to say the party is divided, regardless of the practical impact of that division.

Salience and context seem to matter too in the fate of smaller parties. Alliance in New Zealand in particular records a substantively much weaker effect than that of any other party for whom significant results were found. It is worth noting that in 1996 Alliance is not really a party in the sense that we understand it. Rather it was a coalition of four to five different parties to jointly contest elections and ensure some representation under first-past-the-post; they maintained their pact after 1994 owing to the 5% threshold under the new proportional system. These parties, while generally on the left, varied in ideological focus. This means both that voters may expect Alliance to be particularly uncohesive by its nature, and had already factored that into their base evaluations of the parties before even considering which party to vote for. This would make a perception of disunity in Alliance unsurprising and unlikely to particularly affect a respondent's vote while a similar perception in Labour would do major damage.

The other important result was the impact that cohesion of one party had on other parties. This occurred a number of times. In the Netherlands, as mentioned above, CDA cohesion affected the VVD, PvdA disunity affected D66 and D66 disunity affected votes for other parties. In New Zealand, National disunity affected NZF while Labour disunity had an impact on Alliance and National votes. This set of effects indicate, once again, that voters may view cohesion as important but it may not necessarily be what matters in absolute terms when casting a vote. This is because of the kind of party each other party is affecting. For instance in New Zealand it makes sense that the cohesion of National, as the main centre-right party, affects NZF, a smaller party further to its right, but not Alliance, which is to its left. Similarly, Labour cohesion affecting Alliance and National is also logical if cohesion is a factor, but not the primary factor, for voters making decision. This is because, based on ideological proximity, these are the parties we would expect voters to actually choose between based on their positions on the ideological spectrum. A voter who is centre-left would never under any circumstance consider voting for NZF – so their perceptions as to their cohesion will not make the slightest difference as to how they will vote. They might vote for the ideologically proximate Alliance or, if interested in changing the government, for National. However knowing what they already believe and taking other factors into account they may be willing to consider either Labour or Alliance. Therefore only after they already narrowed down their options by other means does this factor come into effect.

The same effect can be observed in the Netherlands – providing an alternative explanation for the effect the CDA has on the VVD and accounting for the effect the PvdA has on D66, a left-liberal party that is ideologically close to it (D66, 2014.). The effect that CDA and D66 disunity has on other parties is easily accounted for as well using this logic. In 1989, other parties were predominantly Green Left, an ecological party that had a lot in common with D66, and several small evangelical protestant parties that shared a voter base with the CDA.

This means that for both the Netherlands in 1989 and for New Zealand in 199 H2, that the effect would be strongest for ideologically proximate parties, was observed. As similar results were observed for the other countries and elections it would seem that ideological proximity does matter for voters. They will only switch to their vote to parties that they would otherwise consider.

It is important not to overstate these results. These arguments provide possible explanations for these findings, but the inconsistency of those same findings mean that they certainly cannot be regarded as anything other than indicative. Ultimately, they do provide support for H1 and H2. There is evidence here for party disunity hurting political parties in the eyes of voters, and for the benefits of that not accruing equally to all parties in the party system. H1 and H2 are restated below:

> ***H1****: A respondent perceiving a party as disunited will be associated with a lower likelihood of voting for that party than respondents who do not perceive the party as disunited.*
>
> ***H2:*** *A respondent perceiving a party as disunited will be associated with a higher likelihood of that respondent voting for a party that they would have otherwise considered in any case, such as an ideologically proximate party or a rival to lead a government.*

There is also knowledge to be gleaned from the polling data. There is an argument that there may be party specific effects with this analysis, This is most evident with the case of the British Labour party. The figures in Table 3.7 tell us that 75.2% of the total number of respondents felt that Labour was divided. This is an extremely high figure and well above that of either the Conservatives or UKIP. It also seems high in a comparative sense, higher than that recorded by any other party in Chapter Three. The degree to which Labour seems abnormal in this analysis may be skewing the responses of respondents. There is a very broad consensus that Labour is divided. If the Conservatives and UKIP are being judged

relative to Labour, then it makes sense for them to be regarded as more united than they are, simply because the bar for what constitutes disunity has been raised so high by Labour. An interesting counterpoint would be how united respondents felt that the Liberal Democrats were, as they have been remarkably united since the Brexit referendum in their conviction that the outcome is catastrophic and should be overturned if possible. If respondents had given the Liberal Democrats similar ratings as they gave to the Conservatives and UKIP then it would suggest that all parties are simply being evaluated relative to Labour as essentially neither united nor divided. Unfortunately that data does not exist.

There are interesting results in the findings here beyond the confirmation of the hypotheses. The first of these can be found in the magnitude of the party-specific effects. As so many more voters see Labour as disunited compared to other parties, this is clearly a bigger issue with regard to evaluations of the party than it is for their rivals. This would only be enforced by the large majority of respondents who report that infighting makes them think more negatively about a party. However, when this is thoroughly explored in Chapter Six (see Table 6.5) we observe that a perception of Labour as disunited does not have a stronger effect than seeing the Conservatives or UKIP as disunited does on those parties. This is suggestive. It indicates that the perceived degree of disunity does not hold any special importance for evaluations of cohesion. Once respondents evaluate whether or not a party is united that evaluation seems definitive, regardless of which party it is or the degree to which that disunity looms over a party.

Leaving aside this intriguing idea, H1, that infighting should affect parties negatively, and H2, that any effect of infighting in one party should be especially strong on similar parties in the party system, achieved complete support in both the probit and multinomial logit analyses. In both Tables 3.22 and 3.33, party unity was always an important predictor. It was also always in the correct direction. This confirms Hypothesis One. Hypothesis Two also achieves support in Table 6.5. Labour disunity is a good predictor of switching to all parties. This is unsurprising when Labour is the base category, but disunity for other parties only occurs as significant when such a voter defection makes intuitive sense. For instance, UKIP disunity does not predict respondents moving from Labour to Liberal Democrats, as very few voters would be expected to be wavering between those parties. This is consistent with the election studies, where disunity mattered only when options had already been narrowed down by respondents. Even with strong circumstances the effect of cohesion is

relatively constant over time. This suggests that the idea that disunity correlates with poor performance is a robust result.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has had one major priority. It aimed to establish whether disunity has discernible costs to parties in elections. In relation to this goal, it has uncovered important results. First of all voters, across a variety of parties and elections, seem to be systematically punishing parties that they perceive as disunited. Furthermore, this punishment of certain parties does not equally benefit all of their opponents, but primarily those such voters would have otherwise considered, like ideologically similar parties or major rivals for control of governmental office. What these findings do not tell us, however, is how this perception arises. Is the result driven solely by perception, or is it the actual events of disunity that drive the party's fortunes in this area? The possibility that cohesion is relevant because of a media-driven perception of disunity that may not reflect reality is examined in Chapter Four.

4. The Media and Voter Assessment of Party Cohesion: The Case of the Canadian Liberals

4.1 Summary of Chapter

This chapter will first introduce the idea of accounting for cohesion using newspapers. It will then introduce the case of the Canadian Liberal Party and its leadership. The background to this case will be explained so that it can be shown that the party was clearly divided, but not on substantive issues, and that this division was well documented. The methodology and the use of newspapers as a data source will then be outlined. Following this, descriptive statistics will be presented and analysed, followed by more complex statistical explorations of the data. Potentially confounding factors will then be tested before finally the results are substantively analysed. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the results, and showing how those results lead into the research conducted for Chapter Five.

4.2 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to move beyond what voters think is happening in parties, as was assessed in Chapter Three, and look instead at what is actually happening. This will be examined using the primary means by which voters acquire the information to formulate what they think – the media. This is the first of two chapters that aim to explore this aspect of the electoral impact of party cohesion. While the basic structure and methodology is similar in both cases, they approach the topic differently. Both chapters use the medium of newspapers to explore the electoral impact of cohesion in two centre-left parties in Western democracies – the Liberal Party of Canada and the British Labour Party; however, they differ in the breadth and depth of the data that is available. This allows us to uncover and unpack different areas of the issue. Ultimately, this helps us to determine how and why cohesion affects the vote, in addition to whether or not it does.

This is important because of what we know from Chapter Three. We know that party infighting is associated with voters being less likely to vote for the party. What remains unclear is why that is happening.

This chapter aims to look at the depth of coverage of cohesion in newspapers and its impact on the vote. Rather than selecting only important events, it looks at everything that was printed on the subject. It does not matter if the same topic is extensively written about, with numerous almost identical articles stretched over several days. This chapter is not

concerned about the impact of actual incidences of low cohesion per se. Instead, it is concerned with the medium by which the public gets this information.

If significant results are found here, it would suggest that how and to what extent the topic is approached matters to voters. It would suggest that cohesion, in and of itself, may not necessarily be of absolutely intrinsic importance, and could be an area open to exploitation by media elites to attempt to cause short-term poll difficulties and long-term perceptual and electoral damage to parties they dislike by playing up divisions in those parties.

This chapter selects a specific and significant case to examine these questions – that of the Canadian Liberals between 1996 and 2006. The Liberal Party is one of the dominant parties in Canadian politics, as seen with its return to a majority government in 2015. However, the party has also seen a recent history dominated by issues of cohesion. Throughout this time-period, the party, and Canadian politics as a whole, was dominated by the political ambitions of only two figures, and they dominated news coverage of the party during this time period as well. Significantly, the rivalry between them was based on public animosity, rather than disagreement on policy or response to events.

If sheer volume and intensity of coverage affects the poll results of the Liberals, it would suggest that cohesion is, at least partially, a perceptual issue. Establishing whether perceived low cohesion within a party makes voters less likely to vote for that party allows us to determine how empirically strong that foundation is. Do voters develop that perception because their conduit of information, the media, reports a lack of cohesion, independent of major policy differences or cabinet reshuffles? Or can voters really uncover what does and does not matters in terms of cohesion, and make their decisions based on that more grounded reality?

4.3 The Case of the Canadian Liberal Party

In order to examine whether cohesion in a political party is electorally significant the case of the Canadian Liberal Party was chosen for analysis. This was done both because of characteristics of the Canadian institutional structure and party system, as well as traits specifically relating to the Liberal Party in Canada.

Canada is a federal parliamentary democracy, which uses a plurality electoral system for its lower house and has an appointed upper house. This makes it rather typical, it possesses characteristics of many Western democratic countries. Importantly, unlike in the US, it is a parliamentary system, which helps with the generalisability of any results from this study.

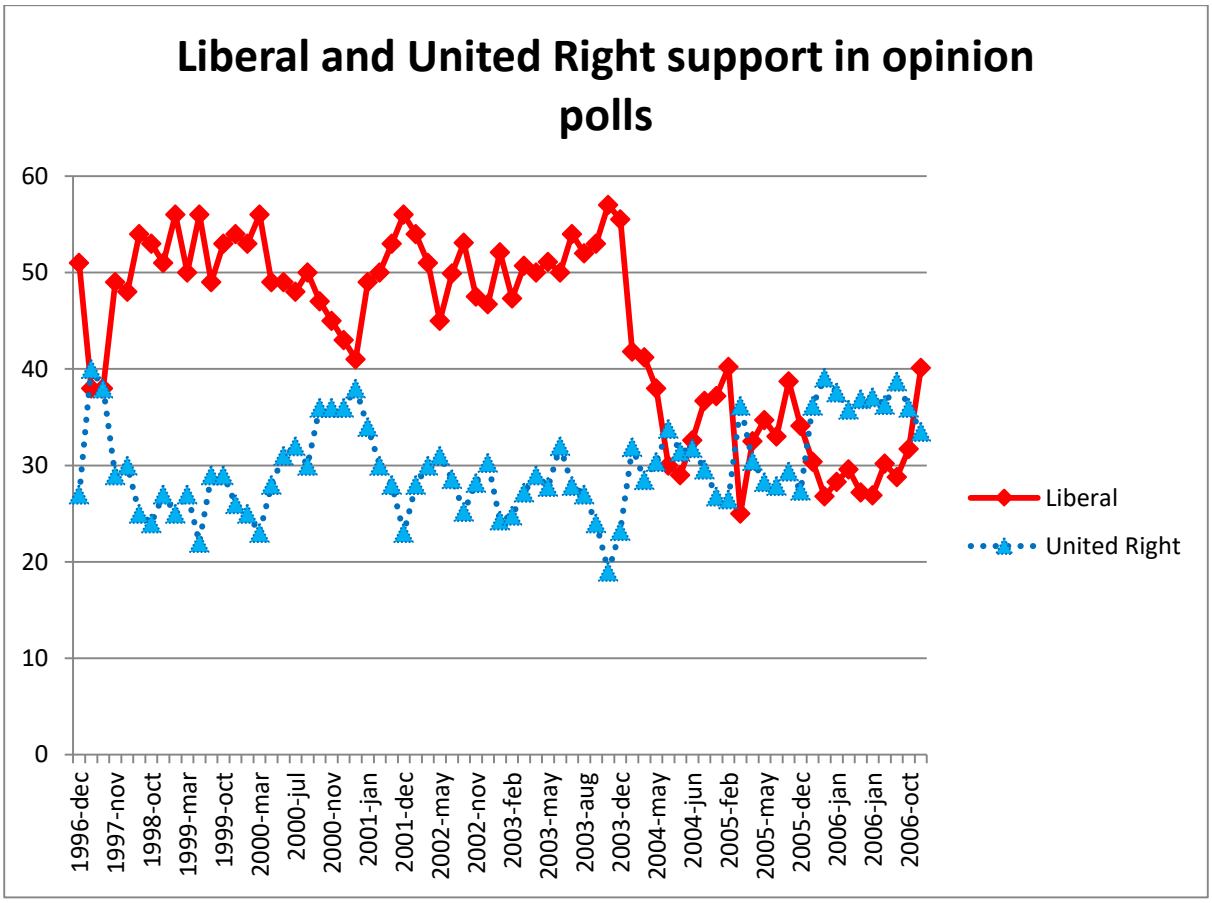
The Canadian party system does have some unusual features. It is has been historically dominated by the centrist Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties, with the system also usually including a smaller social democratic force and a force for the expression of regional interests in Quebec. Of the two major parties, the Progressive Conservatives were considered the more right-wing, although the Liberals were not certainly not opposed to business (Lang, 2010). In most elections the Liberals triumphed. The party has governed for 45 years between 1945 and 2016, and has only seen another party win a majority mandate in seats against it in four elections in that time – 1958, 1984, 1988 and 2011. This remarkable governmental longevity has meant that the Liberals can be considered comparable to Fianna Fáil in Ireland, the Swedish Social Democrats and the Japanese Liberal Democrats in terms of the most domestically electorally successful parties in the developed world (Blais, 2005). Canadian politics has also been historically characterized by heavily regionalized politics, with parties having distinct areas of national strength and provincial politics often having little, if any, relationship to national political party strength or issues. Liberal strength in Quebec, right-wing strength in Alberta and social-democratic strength in Saskatchewan have been the biggest manifestations of this (Smith, 1981). While an extreme case, this is not unknown in plurality systems, with Britain also showing evidence of increasingly regionalized politics in recent years (Johnston & Pattie, 2006), making Canada simply an unusually strong case of this phenomenon rather than it being some wholly unique aspect of Canadian politics.

Within this political and party system, the case of cohesion within the Liberal Party between December 1996 and December 2006 was chosen for analysis for a number of reasons. The first is that this covers a fairly large time period in recent Canadian political history, which means that any effect observed should not be specific to a very narrow point in time. The

second reason is more intrinsic to the Liberal Party. At the start of this period the Liberals had already been in government for three years, and would remain so until 2006. This means that the governmental status of the party under observation essentially does not vary over the time period. This helps, again, ensure that any effect observed is a product of actual variation in the cohesion of the party.

This period of Canadian political history stands out for the sheer dominance of the federal Liberals on the political scene. The party was considered almost unbeatable for government owing to almost all of its opponents being – essentially – regional parties without broad national support. The Bloc Québécois were a separatist party only operating in Quebec; Reform and their successors in the Canadian Alliance only wielded significant support in Western Canada (garnering 13% or less in each of the four Atlantic provinces, and being almost negligible in Quebec); and after their collapse in 1993 the Progressive Conservatives only recovered votes east of Manitoba where Reform was weak. However it would be a mistake to say that the Liberals were not under threat in elections until 2004. Arguably this split of the right meant that the Liberals could not lose elections to a single party owing to the split opposition vote. However, the Liberal loss of 20 seats in the Atlantic Provinces in 1997 would have cost them their parliamentary majority, in spite of finishing almost 20% ahead of their closest rival, had they not made some unexpected gains in Quebec. Being reduced to a minority government is not a threat of the same magnitude as losing office entirely. However, the highly regionalized nature of the Canadian political system meant that the party was nevertheless under the same electoral pressures as governments worldwide. Because of the regionalisation of the system and the subsequent merger of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives, it may make sense to think of the two as different local organizations for the same national movement. If we assume that each voter who voted for one or the other would also have voted for a unified party we can observe that at almost no point until May 2004 were the Liberals behind the combined right in any opinion poll (fig. 4.1) – which suggests the Liberals were genuinely leading opinion polls throughout the period.

Fig 4.1 – Support for the Liberals and the combined support of Reform and the Progressive Conservatives in EKOS opinion polls, 1996-2006



The third reason for selecting this case is actually related to the specific characteristics of the Liberal Party in particular at this time. To understand this, it is necessary to provide a small amount of background. The party leader was Jean Chrétien, a former Deputy Prime Minister, who was first elected to the leadership post in 1990. In the election for party leader he defeated newly-elected MP Paul Martin, among others, in an extremely contentious and acrimonious race. Following on from the landslide Liberal election victory in 1993 over the Progressive Conservative government Martin was appointed Finance Minister by Chrétien, although the relationship between the two men could never be described as better than frosty, and usually was considerably worse than that (Goldenberg, 2009; Gray, 2003). Eventually, in 2003, Martin succeeded to the party leadership.

Notably, while much of their initial antipathy did seem to be policy related, it could not be considered such after 1995. This was because of the policy area on which they disagreed: Quebec. Both Chrétien and Martin were MPs from Quebec constituencies, and both were strongly federalist and opposed to Québécois nationalism; however, they disagreed on how

best to defeat the idea of an independent Quebec. Martin was in favour of a very soft approach, which would acknowledge Quebec as a nation within Canada. By contrast Chrétien was considerably more strident, emphasizing Canada as one indivisible nation, and wholly rejecting even the premise of Quebec separatism. This was a firm policy difference between the two politicians (Delacourt, 2004; *Toronto Star*, 2003), and one that stretched back to the very beginning of their rivalry, where Martin forced Chrétien in a leadership debate to be explicitly clear regarding his policy on Quebec (*Globe and Mail*, 1990). However, following a very closely fought referendum in Quebec on independence in 1995, which was carried by the anti-independence side, the issue seems to fade from true public discussion.

After this, when policy is discussed with regard to the two men it is to note how politically similar they are. In the 2003 leadership review it was noted that in policy terms it has been 'hard to slide a dime between Chrétien and Martin; the differences have been ones of emphasis, style and process' (Fraser, 2003, p. 6). Following on from the leadership of both men, their policy similarity was noted by journalists (*Toronto Star*, 2006). Their political similarity is exceptionally important and useful for analysis. It helps isolate the causal factor for voters. If the Liberal performance in opinion polls does correlate with cohesion, then this cannot be in anticipation of a new leader with new policies that simply appeal to voters more. Rather, it must come from the simple act of their dislike for one another and their – and their allies – efforts to acquire and maintain control the party over their feuding rivals.

The other factor that makes the Liberals at this time period such a good case is the sheer intensity of the mutual loathing between the two men, something that seemed to be totally apolitical. An example of this appears in the *Toronto Star* in April 2004:

> *The political rivals found themselves just pews apart at the funeral of cherished friend Mitchell Sharp, the distinguished former cabinet minister whom Chrétien eulogized and in an interview later called a second father.*
>
> *But in a scene that passes for normalcy these days in Ottawa, the two Liberal prime ministers spent more than an hour in the same room, walked in and out separately, never glanced at each other, didn't shake hands and shunned even the scantest public display of affection.* (Panetta, 2004, p. 6)

This is an extreme version of a state of affairs that seemed to be ongoing in the Liberal party, and one which neither man seemed to have any desire to discourage. When he finally

wrested the leadership from Chrétien in December 2003, Martin was heavily criticized for rewarding his own loyalists – and most particularly those who had gone out of their way to cause disruption in the party – with cabinet appointments. One long-time MP for instance criticized this process by exclaiming that 'The basic criteria to get in [to Martin's cabinet] was how much blood you had on the knife' (Fraser, 2004, p. 1). The two men engaged in such petty behaviour that an MP who criticized Chrétien publicly in a caucus meeting was taken to dinner afterwards by Martin that evening to show his support for her (Martin, 2003, p. 357).

This trait in Martin was likely encouraged by Chrétien's own attitude to how to treat politics. He memorably described the art of politics as 'walking with your back to the wall, your elbows high, a smile on your face. It's a survival game played under the glare of lights. If you don't learn that, you're finished' (Reynolds, 2006, p. 3). This does not exactly indicate an approach to politics that is policy-driven, but one focused squarely on one's own personal survival, which for Chrétien was always under threat from Martin.

This intensity of this rivalry was not unnoticed by the Canadian public either. When Chrétien fired Martin as Finance Minister in 2002, a poll indicated that 84% of the Canadian public were aware of the event and that 80% of them were closely following events. Moreover, when asked what they felt were the primary motivations for the firing 'Conflicts over power and ambition' was chosen by 73% of respondents, well ahead of 'personality conflict', with 50% of respondents – neither of which are related to policy or ideology (Graves, 2002). Clearly voters were aware of the antagonism between the two men, and did not fundamentally believe this antagonism was created by genuine policy or broadly different visions for the nation between the two men.

This combination of circumstances – a heated, but largely non-policy related rivalry that generally destabilised the party which also extended over a very long period of time – makes the case of the Canadian Liberals over this time period ideal to study. It means that if there is an electoral effect of low levels of cohesion, independently of any other factor, we should likely observe it in this individual case.

Timeline of Canadian Political Events December 1996 – December 2006

2 June 1997 – Liberals win reduced majority government in federal election.

10 March 2000 – 30 Liberal MPs loyal to Martin publicly meet during Liberal convention to discuss replacing Chrétien with Martin.

27 March 2000 – Reform Party disbanded. Most members join the newly created Canadian Alliance, which aimed to provide a new united centre-right challenge to the Liberals. The Progressive Conservatives refuse to join.

27 November 2000 – Liberals win increased majority government in federal election.

2 June 2002 – Chrétien dismisses Martin from cabinet.

21 August 2002 – Chrétien announces his intention to retire by February 2004, after it became clear his chances of winning a mandatory leadership review in February 2003 against Martin's supporters were slim.

14 November 2003 – Martin elected Liberal leader.

7 December 2003 – Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party merge to create the Conservative Party, to be led by Alliance leader Stephen Harper.

12 December 2003 – Martin elected Prime Minister.

10 February 2004 – Auditor-General Sheila Fraser reveals misuse of public funds in federal sponsorship scheme (the Sponsorship Scandal).

28 June 2004 – Liberals are reduced to minority government in federal election.

1 November 2005 – The Gomery Report condemns Chrétien's office (though not him personally) and his Public Works Minister Alfonso Gagliano for the Sponsorship Scandal, but clears Martin and members of his then current cabinet from any wrongdoing.

23 January 2006 – Conservatives win minority government in federal election.

2 December 2006 – Stéphane Dion replaces Martin as Liberal Leader.

4.4 Data and Methodology

In order to examine the hypothesis that low party cohesion hurt the Canadian Liberals it is necessary to turn to a new source of data. The traditional method for uncovering the amount of the variation in party cohesion is to use the Rice index, which is essentially the proportion of MPs which break the party whip in parliamentary voters (Rice, 1925). The problem with this is it tends to shows very little variation, either in Canada or in the wider world of industrialized democracies. The dislike between Chrétien and Martin was not expressed in parliamentary terms. The actual amount of parliamentary rebels in the Liberals was almost negligible during this period – similar to the party at other times (Lang, 2010; Malloy, 2003). This is replicated among other parties in the system, and reflects a general trend in Western democracies of strong party whips with almost no parliamentary dissension which has existed for over a century (Depauw & Martin, 2009; Eggers & Spirling, 2014). However, as cohesion is generally so high we would not expect high cohesion to be particularly noteworthy, as it is the status quo. Rather, anything that lowers it from the normal very high level is of interest.

Since we know that the dissent existed and that the public was highly aware of it, and we also know that it was not expressed in parliamentary proceedings, we turn to the source of that awareness: the media. From newspapers it should be possible to compile a database of cohesion in the party.

This approach has a number of advantages. For the most part, newspapers record objective measures, in that they report on facts that occur. However, their articles are not only a proxy for cohesion in this case. Studies suggest that, while interest in the story does matter, sheer volume of coverage affects how many people are aware of an issue (Zaller, 1992, pp. 151-54). Before the digital age, complex messages were better and more easily absorbed through print media, making it have more of an impact on voters than the same story on television (Oskamp, 1977, p. 144) and even now newspapers hold greater public credibility as a source of information than their competitors, such as the internet (Kiousis, 2001; Schmierbach & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2012). While ideological and party differences have been found in perceptions of media trustworthiness in the US (Lee, 2010, p. 16), supporters of both parties, even there, fundamentally saw the media as trustworthy during the 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium, even if Democrats were more trusting than Republicans. As Canada is a less polarized society than the US there is little reason to expect

even this modest difference to be important. In practical terms, newspapers can be examined retrospectively – which is difficult to do with television or radio.

Newspapers also help to shape public perceptions as well, both by making the public aware of issues, thus driving those issues up the policy-making and public importance agenda, and by the way that their coverage can influence how the public sees and thinks of certain events (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; McCombs, 2013). This is borne out in the real world. The near unanimity of public reporting and editorials in the US on the Iraq war made it difficult for the American public to see, let alone critically assess, alternative perspectives, even if they did not support the war generally (Ryan, 2004). Election campaigns seem to operate in a similar way, with newspaper coverage helping to determine what candidates and parties discuss, and with corresponding effects on public opinion and on what parties will do to acquire that coverage (Dalton et al., 1998; Green & Hobolt, 2008; Singer & Ludwig, 1987; Walgrave et al., 2008; Winter & Eyal, 1981). Similarly, specific to the field of medicine, we also know that newspapers tend not to report on matters occurring in developing countries, evidence-based scientific trials and other low salience issues (Bartlett, Sterne, & Egger, 2002). While the media does have an agenda-setting role, they still mostly restrict themselves to topics that the public are likely to care about. All of this suggests that examination of newspapers is an extremely fruitful tool for analysis of this topic. Their examination, particularly when analysis is focused on important time periods for cohesion in parties, should prove useful for helping to uncover the exact minutiae of the causal mechanism, if it exists.

Two newspapers were used to create this database – *The Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*. These were chosen for a number of reasons. Both are major broadsheets with extensive coverage of events. Both newspapers are based in Toronto – which is enormously beneficial in a nation as regionalised as Canada as it ensures that the broader set of political issues that they are likely concerned with should be similar. Any difference in their coverage is not simply due to differing regional interests of their audiences. Both should be concerned primarily with events that affect Toronto. This is important as there is evidence that newspapers are more inclined to cover politicians with local political bases (Schaffner & Sellers, 2003). In addition to their other favourable qualities for analysis, both newspapers have a wide circulation. In 2015, *The Globe and Mail* had an average of 336,487 readers daily. This makes it the most read newspaper in Canada. The *Toronto Star* is also very widely read, with an average daily readership of 318,763. This is makes it the second-most popular

newspaper in Canada. Its circulation is nearly 150,000 larger than the third-most popular English language newspaper (Newspapers Canada, 2015).

The two papers however are different in two important respects. They are owned by different media groups – the Woodbridge Company and Torstar for *The Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* respectively – which have different interests and ownership structures. Woodbridge is a family-owned company while Torstar is a public corporation with a large number of shareholders. This means that their incentives to report on different issues should be different for each paper (Lacy, 1991). The papers also differ ideologically and party support. The *Toronto Star* has a long history of Liberal support and general sympathy for leftist and reformist causes, and while it has not always endorsed the Liberals it has always preferred the Canada's left and centre to the political right (*Toronto Star*, 2008, 2011). *The Globe and Mail* has been considerably more ambivalent towards the Liberals and the left, and in the last few contests has endorsed the Conservatives, albeit with some reluctance (*Globe and Mail*, 2011, 2015). The use of newspapers that differ on these lines is important, as newspapers of different ideological leanings have been found to be biased in the tone of their coverage and what they cover with regard to major political leaders, even if they do give them the amount of attention that size and importance warrants (Eberl, Wagner, & Boomgaarden, 2017).

LexisNexis, which stores the content of each of these newspapers for the entire time period, was used to create this database. News articles to search for variation in cohesion were found by searching for news articles that contained both the words 'Chrétien' and the word 'Martin' in the article. Not all of these articles had any relationship to cohesion, so they were read before coding. This resulted, between the two newspapers, in 345 articles for analysis, including sixty-one front page stories that spoke of party cohesion explicitly. These articles were coded under an array of categories, which were: date of publication; day of the week of publication; word count of the article; how many paragraphs of the article actually discuss cohesion; whether it was simply a passing reference; the subjects of the article; whether the subjects of the article were evaluated together or separately; whether the article discussed policy and if so what policy area; whether the dissent occurred in a party conference, whether it occurred in a general election campaign, whether it occurred in direct relation to someone's leadership ambition, whether it actually occurred in a leadership campaign, whether it occurred in a constituency nomination dispute, whether the article took place the rank of the dissenter, whether the article was a news piece, an analysis piece, an

editorial, whether the dissent was referred to in the headline, whether it was a process story (a story not related to policy and simply describes the process by which political decisions are made, not the outcome) and whether the article was negative.

The data was compared to polling data over the ten-year period from the polling company EKOS. EKOS was chosen because it actually covered the whole period of analysis and because it publicly releases and archives all of its press releases, which contain the details of all of the polls run by the company. These records are not always complete – in particular the polling details for the Bloc Québécois are often left out of early samples, and the Green Party is not separately asked until May 2004. However, the polls consistently ask for the parties considered major – the Liberals, the Progressive Conservatives and Reform, separately prior to their merger and together thereafter, and the NDP. There is another issue with EKOS – during the sponsorship scandal it was one of several firms noted for having unlawfully received federal money from the Liberal government in relation to Quebec. The company however have denied any wrong doing and there is no evidence that this affected their results (Graves, 2004). There were seventy EKOS polls available over the time period, or an average of 0.58 polls a month. This number of polls is quite small, which must be borne in mind for analysis. The last date of polling was used as it was assumed that most poll respondents would not see any news articles published on the final day of polling. This is because almost all of this polling was conducted over at least three days – which meant that anything published on the final day of polling could be seen by no more than a third of the polling sample. Such articles were included in the total for the following poll.

The key independent variable of newspaper coverage of cohesion has been approached in a specific way.

The method used for looking at this data uses the alternative idea of discounting. This is an idea from the literature on how individuals assess financial gain. Essentially, they regard gains in the future as less and less valuable the further they are from the present. This makes sense. We might expect that the further away something is, the more likely something will happen to disrupt the likelihood of receiving the return to that investment, simply because there is more time for something to happen.

We can apply the logic of this in reverse – corresponding to the past rather than the future. The further away an event is from the present, the less likely it is that the event is exerting an influence on the present. Furthermore, the further away from the present an event that

is influencing the present is, the less influence that event should have. This means that we should expect that the further chronologically a news article is from an opinion poll, the less we should expect that single article to be informing the views of the public as expressed in that poll.

This remains a cumulative effect. Multiple articles should still have a greater effect than those published alone. However, the closer a single article is to when the poll was actually conducted, the more influence we should expect it to exert on public behaviour. We might therefore be able to think of it as similar to weighting the data, with far off articles simply being given less weight than those published at the closer to the polling date.

This discounting effect has been calculated at a rate of multiplying the previous value by 0.95 per day. This means that on the day an article is published its net value and impact is 1 on the poll. The following day its value will be 0.95. The day after that its value will be 0.9025 and so on. Alternatively, this can be expressed as the value being discounted at a rate of 0.05 per day, and each day it loses 0.05 of the old value. In the dataset this was continued until the value for an article on a poll fell below 0.01. After this, the number gets so insignificant that they can be discounted entirely. With a discount of 0.95 a day this will take ninety days to occur. This approach has a number of other advantages. By the very nature of the discount applied, the fall away into relative insignificance happens quite rapidly. It only takes fourteen days for an article's influence on a given poll to go to less than half of a newly published article. However, there is quite a long period of relative insignificance without much change day-by-day. This makes sense conceptually. We might expect that poll respondents might take into account something that happened within the last week, simply because it is easier to spring to mind, than something that took place two months ago. As the event becomes longer and longer ago, however, individual days should matter less and less. There is a sizable difference between recalling something that happened yesterday and recalling something that happened three days ago. The difference is much less sizable between recalling an event that happened fifty-three days ago and event that happened fifty-five days ago. Both were a long time ago, and the proportional distance between them is much less for a respondent in the present, than the difference between more recent events. In absolute terms, the gap within both sets of articles remains the same, but the meaningful impact of that gap varies quite sharply from one to another. This difference is therefore reflected.

As articles are discarded from analysis of a poll after they reach a weight of less than 0.01 there are thirty-one articles that are added to the dataset, discounted and discarded before any poll is released. This is because periodically there is a gap longer than ninety days between polls. Most of these articles are written between January and October 2006, when there was no poll at all. This period is following the 2006 election, when Martin lost, effectively bringing this era of Canadian politics to a close in any case.

Articles published on the day the poll was released are not counted for that poll. This means that there are no articles for any poll that value '1'. This was done because it makes very little sense to include those articles for that poll if the poll was conducted prior to that article being published. EKOS does not always release the dates for its fieldwork – except that it is immediately prior to releasing the poll. Therefore articles published on the day of the release will not have been seen or read by respondents. These articles are, naturally, included for any opinion polls for which they are still relevant after that date.

Many EKOS polls are not accompanied, however, with an exact date of release, providing only the month and year. In these cases, the poll was treated as having been released on the fifteenth day of the month. This is not ideal and somewhat arbitrary. The date was chosen as it is the middle of the month and is a recognition that polls whose dates are known exactly that were published by EKOS always took place at some point in the middle of the month, barring those covering election campaigns.

It is intended to determine whether there is a correlation between cohesion, as measured by newspaper coverage of it, and the difference between the Liberal Party's result in a poll and its result in the poll immediately preceding it. The difference must be used as it is certainly not expected that newspaper coverage of cohesion could account for the entirety of the Liberal poll rating. As the number of polls is so small only one control was used, in an effort to preserve the degrees of freedom of the statistical model. A lagged dependent variable was used in all models. This is an effort to account for the potentially severe endogeneity problem that exists in all analysis of this sort. By controlling for the results of the last poll, it is hoped that any effect found can be considered solely relating to the independent variable and caused by it, rather than parties starting to in-fight as a result of a bad poll.

Not all events, all writers or all sections of a newspaper report events in quite the same way. This is partially the rationale for using two different newspapers with differing records of

partisanship. This means, however, that the tone of their coverage could be quite different. The tone of different writers and sections of the same newspaper could also be quite different. For instance, a news article may speak of events dispassionately while the editorial may ascribe a normative value as to the desirability of that action. Cohesion, much like anything else, requires some amount of interpretation. It might be expected that when the media uses a positive tone the public response would be quite different to what might be expected if they were uniformly critical. Accordingly we should expect that these differences matter as this is how the public gets their information. The more positive articles that are associated with the poll, the better the Liberals should do in that poll relative to the previous poll. The reverse should be true for negative articles.

There are a number of other factors that we would expect to be important. These have to be tested and controlled for in order to determine how meaningful the data is. It is expected that a party would perform better if they are having a conference for instance. It is important to check whether the article is a news article or an opinion piece, to determine whether the article is covering a new event or is merely offering analysis of an existing event. It is also expected that the number of editorials is significant, as these are likely to refer to events of particular importance.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) is the party in the Canadian political system that is traditionally closest to the Liberals. It cooperated with them in the party's minority governments in the 1970s, both are associated with generally progressive policies and in general when one party does well the other does badly. The 1980s – then historic low points for the Liberals – saw the NDP receive its best ever results, while in 2011 the Liberals finished third while the NDP became the official opposition. Conversely, the Liberal strength in the 1990s was accompanied by NDP weakness. If variation in Liberal cohesion hurts the Liberals, we should also expect it to the help the NDP above other parties as we expect voters to still vote on grounds like ideology and policy and for cohesion to matter most to voters for distinguishing between otherwise similar forces. While evidence for this has been mixed in other valence issues (M. Clark & Leiter, 2013), results in Chapter Three have suggested that this may hold for cohesion. Furthermore, this tests hypothesis **H1B** outlined in Chapter 2 - *As observable party cohesion in a party falls, support for parties ideologically close to that party increases in a multi-party system.*

For clarity, the dependent variable of analysis is therefore the difference between the current poll and the previous one chronologically, expressed in percentages. It varies from

8.4 to −13.7 for the Liberals and 3.6 to −6 for the NDP. The independent variable is the sum of the discounted articles that met that description

The hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

> ***H1:*** *As the number of negative articles in a month relating to cohesion in the Liberal Party increases the Liberal Party will decrease in polls.*
>
> ***H2:*** *As the number of positive articles in a month relating to cohesion in the Liberal Party increases the Liberal Party will increase in polls.*
>
> ***H3:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in a party conference for the Liberal Party increases the Liberal Party will increase in polls.*
>
> ***H4:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in news articles for the Liberal Party increases the Liberal Party will decrease in polls.*
>
> ***H5:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in editorials for the Liberal party increases the Liberal Party will decrease in polls.*
>
> ***H6:*** *As the number of negative articles in a month relating to cohesion in the Liberal Party increases the NDP will increase in polls.*
>
> ***H7:*** *As the number of positive articles in a month relating to cohesion in the Liberal Party increases the NDP will decrease in polls.*
>
> ***H8:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in a party conference for the Liberal Party increases the NDP will decrease in polls.*
>
> ***H9:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in news articles for the Liberal Party increases the NDP will increase in polls.*
>
> ***H10:*** *As the number of articles in a month relating to cohesion in editorials for the Liberal party increases the NDP will increase in polls.*

This data is not normally distributed, so a simple linear regression is not appropriate. In order to overcome this bootstrap regression was used in each case with a pseudo-random number generator, in order to allow replicability. Bootstrapping involves randomly sampling the data obtained with replacement a set number of times that is determined by the researcher; this data was sampled with replacement 1,000 times. Each of these 'new' datasets is analysed, and averages of these results are obtained for a bootstrap analysis. As

this is an average, it changes the distribution of the data, allowing us to perform analysis. This rests on the assumption that the data being resampled resembles the total population, and that if expanded the size of the data would resemble a larger version of this data. This assumption is reasonable in this instance, as EKOS polls resemble broader polling and the methodology with the regard to the newspapers is representative of incidents of disunity over the time period, covering all major incidents of disunity. This methodology has the advantage of overcoming the relatively small size of the dependent variable for analysis. While this somewhat hampers the interpretation of exact coefficients, it does mean that the analysis can actually take place (see Davidson & Mackinnon, 2006; Freedman & Peters, 1984; Mooney, Duval, & Duval, 1993, p. 2 for a full discussion as to what bootstrapping entails and the mathematical ideas underpinning it).

4.5 Results and Analysis

The content of the articles, in aggregate, can be seen in Table 4.1. On the whole, the articles were reasonably varied in their content, although a few trends emerged. The first is that the articles were much more likely to be negative rather than positive in tone. A full 83% of all of the articles could be interpreted as negative in either tone or content. These were the articles presenting infighting as disastrous to the party, or hindering the advancement of government policy. These also included articles that could be construed as government mishaps and blunders, in which the cohesion of the Liberals was seen to play a part. Only 18% of articles could be considered as positive for the Liberals. Similarly this can mean positive events actually happening or simply taking a positive tone with events relating to cohesion, such as discussing the 'vibrancy' of proceedings.

Predictably, the vast majority of articles (84.5%) that discuss cohesion are concerned with leadership speculation. This accounts for how there was so much discussion of an issue in Canadian politics upon which so little meaningful was happening. Considerably less focus was placed on policy, which only 31.7% of articles were concerned with. This is especially stark considering that the data allows an article to overlap and be considered to relate to multiple issues. Other possible areas where tension can creep into a party were quite rare. Only 1.5% of articles concern a struggle for a constituency nomination, all bar one of which relate to the Liberal nomination for the same seat in Greater Toronto. Only 5.8% of articles additionally take place during a party conference, when it is both customary and expected to have speakers from the same party both stand against one another and to disagree on policy matters, as this is where policy gets publicly debated within the party. All of this lends

an impression of newspapers that were not particularly interested in covering substantive matters. Rather it suggests a media that was concerned with endless leadership speculation at the possible expense of other areas of division, as well as other areas of general importance. A much smaller proportion of articles (13.7%, or 45 in total) address an actual leadership campaign.

Table 4.1 – Number and proportion of articles in *The Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* on cohesion that were on individual areas of cohesion, 1996–2006.

Article Content	*Globe and Mail*	% total	*Toronto Star*	% total	Total	% total
Policy	30	24.6	74	35.9	104	31.7
Conference	7	5.7	12	5.8	19	5.8
Leadership	99	82.0	177	85.9	277	84.5
Constituency	4	3.3	1	0.5	5	1.5
Election	13	10.7	16	7.8	29	8.8
Leadership Campaign	19	15.6	26	12.6	45	13.7
News	46	37.7	71	34.5	117	35.7
Analysis	94	77.0	149	72.3	243	74.1
Editorial	4	3.3	15	7.3	19	5.8
Headline	58	47.5	67	32.5	125	38.1
Process stories	90	73.8	163	79.1	253	77.1
Positive	25	20.5	33	16.0	57	17.7
Negative	97	79.5	173	84.0	269	82.3
Total	122	100.0	206	100.0	328	100.0

This idea of newspapers being concerned with trivialities in relation to cohesion is further borne out by the timing and makeup of the articles. 77.1% of articles can be considered purely 'process' stories. These are articles with no interest in matters of substantial importance at all; they simply describe deal-making, gossip and legislative procedures, rather than either the resulting legislation, or particular major personnel changes. In spite of this general triviality, an extremely high proportion of these articles were considered headline news, with 38% warranting their own headline.

A much larger proportion of these articles can be considered analysis pieces than anything else. 74.1% of the articles were trying to analyse and process an event to draw out its significance and impact. These were rarely impartial pieces either. Columnists and colour-

writers can be considered as contributing predominantly to this category. However, even the general news page can, and often does, contain analysis. Analysis is much more likely to be normative and value-laden than simple descriptions of events though. By definition, it is not letting the coverage of the news event speak for itself. News articles encompass 35.7% of articles, which means that actual events seem to warrant less space and time than commentary on them. It is still telling though than a mere 19 articles – 5.8% of the total – are from the editorial page of either newspaper. The editorial section is the newspaper official line, and anything considered truly significant would receive comment there. This, once again, suggests that little of much actual import was happening during this time, in spite of the general attention the issue was getting.

There is little real difference between the coverage of the two newspapers, with the volumes of different kinds of articles remaining roughly constant. This suggests that little systematic difference between the two papers in practice in their quantity and kind of coverage.

All of this suggests that newspapers were indeed talking about divisions in the party but were not talking about anything substantive or particularly significant with regard to those divisions. This means that any effect observed can be considered largely relating to the coverage, rather than the event being of genuine significance. This, in turn, would suggest that if the hypotheses are borne out that the electorate is more concerned with general impressions of coverage than the reality of the importance of particular events, at least relating to cohesion.

4.5.1 Discounted Data

The discounted data was somewhat significant for the major hypotheses, as can be seen in Table 4.2.

Unlike with the simple count data, positive the tone of the newspaper coverage seemed to be statistically important for the prediction of future Liberal poll results. Model Two in Table 4.2 has a statistically significant result in the expected direction for the key independent variable. This provides some evidence for the confirmation of Hypothesis Two using the discounted data. It is difficult to interpret coefficients of bootstrapped regressions directly. The somewhat artificial nature of the main independent variable for this portion of the analysis increases this difficulty. Essentially however, with this bootstrapped sample for every positive new article or the equivalent weight of one positive new article the Liberals increased their poll rating from the previous poll by 1.5%. Nonetheless the R-squared value

is relatively low at 0.095. This means that only 9.5% of the total variation in Liberal poll ratings is captured in this model. While comparatively low, this is not particularly surprising. It was never expected that cohesion would be the sole useful explanatory factor for Liberal opinion polls – simply would that it would matter.

Table 4.2 – Effect of articles on cohesion on Liberal support

	(1) Negative articles	(2) Positive articles	(3) Conference articles	(4) News articles	(5) Editorials
Article Impact	0.179	1.491*	2.102	0.292	0.517
	(0.255)	(0.595)	(9.359)	(0.428)	(2.928)
Lagged Lib Poll change	−0.200*	−0.219*	−0.222*	−0.201*	−0.203*
	(0.0967)	(0.0894)	(0.0952)	(0.0960)	(0.0974)
Constant	−0.757	−0.506	−0.409	−0.444	−0.270
	(0.638)	(0.676)	(0.572)	(0.642)	(0.610)
N	70	70	70	70	70
R^2	0.050	0.095	0.072	0.046	0.040

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

The only used control, the lagged dependent variable, was statistically significant and negative in all models.

However, there was much less success with the other hypotheses. Negative articles were statistically insignificant, and furthermore were in the wrong direction. None of the other hypotheses for the Liberals was borne out either. Articles primarily concerned with cohesion that were based around party conferences did not have an effect. The same was true with news articles and those editorials, which seemed to lack any statistical impact either.

Unlike for the Count measure, there are far fewer egregious outliers. This would be expected with the greater spread of cohesion-related articles touching on at least one poll.

Table 4.3 explores the results with the NDP. Unlike for the Count variables, none of these models were significant at conventional levels, including the control variable in most cases. However, the variable measuring the impact of the number of positive news articles was extremely close to statistical significance, with a p-value of 0.056, just barely above the threshold of 0.05 used for statistical significance. This was also the only model with a statistically significant control variable. Yet for every other model the p-value is below 0.10, making it relatively close to significance.

Table 4.3 – Effect of articles on Liberal cohesion on NDP support

	(1) Negative articles	(2) Positive articles	(3) Conference articles	(4) News articles	(5) Editorials
Article Impact	−0.0998	−0.722	−1.785	−0.161	−0.855
	(0.0901)	(0.378)	(2.239)	(0.164)	(1.113)
Lagged NDP Poll change	−0.232	−0.277*	−0.271	−0.240	−0.236
	(0.138)	(0.138)	(0.139)	(0.138)	(0.137)
Constant	0.224	0.326	0.226	0.188	0.155
	(0.263)	(0.251)	(0.235)	(0.256)	(0.250)
N	70	70	70	70	70
R^2	0.069	0.122	0.180	0.063	0.062

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The signs, of the models in Table 4.3, are though in the correct direction. This is suggestive of the idea that if there are more and more recent positive articles on cohesion on the Canadian Liberals, the worse the NDP will do in the next opinion poll. The effect is not as substantively large as that for the Liberals directly, but we should not expect it to be. Any effect on the NDP was always going to be an indirect effect, with correspondingly smaller substantive impact. This provides some support for the idea that cohesion affects ideologically proximate parties, as outlined in Chapter Two.

Accordingly only Hypothesis Two, that as the number of positive articles in a month relating to cohesion in the Liberal Party increases the Liberal Party will increase in polls, was confirmed using the discounted data.

It is important to test whether these results are being driven by the amalgamation of the two papers. The *Toronto Star* and *The Globe and Mail* have different editorial lines and readership. It may be that the media effect observed is based on only one of these papers.

This possibility was tested for by separating the two newspapers and performing the statistical tests on each separately. There is almost no difference from the general pattern, as can be seen in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 below.

Table 4.4 – Effect of articles on Liberal cohesion on party support, using *Globe and Mail*

	(1) Negative articles	(2) Positive articles	(3) Conference articles	(4) News articles	(5) Editorials
Article Impact	0.504	2.652	3.649	−0.228	4.213
	(0.524)	(1.390)	(47.15)	(1.314)	(19.94)
Lagged Lib Poll change	−0.205*	−0.197*	−0.214*	−0.205*	−0.191
	(0.0866)	(0.0958)	(0.101)	(0.100)	(0.0978)
Constant	−0.678	−0.531	−0.340	−0.128	−0.302
	(0.632)	(0.649)	(0.562)	(0.666)	(0.579)
N	70	70	70	70	70
R^2	0.089	0.052	0.065	0.040	0.049

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 4.5 – Effect of articles on Liberal cohesion on party support, using *Toronto Star*

	(1) Negative articles	(2) Positive articles	(3) Conference articles	(4) News articles	(5) Editorials
Article Impact	0.245	2.109*	3.374	0.749	−0.398
	(0.393)	(0.857)	(6.953)	(0.518)	(3.748)
Lagged Lib Poll change	−0.224*	−0.202*	−0.224*	−0.204*	−0.202*
	(0.0958)	(0.0972)	(0.0966)	(0.0954)	(0.0988)
Constant	−0.613	−0.461	−0.409	−0.533	−0.176
	(0.617)	(0.667)	(0.585)	(0.633)	(0.602)
N	70	70	70	70	70
R^2	0.078	0.048	0.068	0.059	0.040

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

As can be seen when separated, almost all variables find it difficult to maintain statistical significance. The only one that does is the impact of positive editorials for the *Toronto Star*. This means that negative coverage in a Liberal supporting paper has no more of an impact than that same coverage in a newspaper more hostile to the party. Both newspapers behave very similarly to each other. This means that there is no evidence that the individual newspaper used is of importance for analysis. This means the effect is general. This makes sense as this is concerned with volume of coverage, and not whether these specific newspapers had specific effects. These results still hold under these conditions.

4.5.2 Analysis

There are several possible explanations for the partial confirmation of Hypotheses Two and Eight and the rejection of all others for this paper, using different measurements of the independent variable.

The first explanation relates to the wider context of Canada during this time. When the Liberals won office in 1993, the Canadian economy was simply not doing well. It was in a severe deficit with very high unemployment. By contrast, when the infighting in the party was at its peak, the economy was clearly booming again (World Bank, 2015). A considerable portion of the credit for this was accorded to Martin by the public (Graves, 2002). Yet it would be foolish not to think the prime minister would enjoy some benefits in public support and sympathy for a booming economy that occurred under his premiership. This can be seen in the polling information in Figures 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. This is significant as it may affect what kind of information and analysis the public were willing to take on board. If Canada was doing well it may have been that negative articles simply did not resonate in the general air of positivity. These articles would have been against the public mood and irrelevant to the government's general fortunes. By contrast, positive coverage could still be heard in that environment.

However, in the absence of a strong, clearly confirmed hypothesis, the possibility must be entertained that cohesion, in this form, simply did not matter to the Canadian electorate at this time.

If economic voting and voting for parties based on their competence in either government or opposition occurs and it is also felt that voting for parties based on cohesion is unlikely to be the primary consideration for voters then perhaps – in this specific case – this result may be considered less surprising. Clearly in Canada over this stretch of time the public bloodletting and infighting in the party was not affecting the ability of the government to do its job in the areas that matter most to voters. As Chrétien was Prime Minister and Martin was Finance Minister it is also possible that, despite the immense personal difference between the two men, voters did not see a major policy difference between them. Both men bore responsibility for the economic boom and shared essentially the same policies. As such, while all of this may be of great interest to pundits and newspaper columnists, any outcome does not change voters' expectations of who the Liberals are, and the valence questions of what they can be expected to do and how effective they will be at it.

There are a number of alternative possibilities that must be accounted for. It remains possible that the effect observed is actually a product of a renewed, and popular, shift towards policy. While the Liberals generally did agree on policy during this time, discussion of it could vary considerably. It is possible that neither positive nor negative articles are necessarily driving this result – rather that it is simply a greater discussion of policy which is appreciated by voters. It is possible to test this possibility, by seeing whether or not articles that primarily discussed policy over any other consideration recorded a positive effect in a bootstrapped regression. These articles were found and categorized through the same process as other articles – searching on LexisNexis and then manually reading through individual articles to determine what areas it addressed. The results of this are below, in Table 4.6:

Table 4.6 – Effect of articles on Liberal Party policy relating to cohesion on party support

	(1) Liberal	(2) NDP
Policy	0.708	−0.0973
	(0.507)	(0.261)
Lagged Party vote	−0.221*	−0.244
	(0.0963)	(0.138)
Constant	−0.622	0.116
	(0.685)	(0.261)
N	70	70
R^2	0.063	0.053

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

As can be seen, there is little evidence that policy-related articles had much influence at all on Canadian opinion polls in this time period. Only the lagged result of the previous opinion poll had any great influence on the poll result, and even there the influence is relatively marginal. It would seem that any result relating to article tone is likely a product of the tone itself, rather than the contents of that article.

A more serious possibility is the problem of endogeneity. While efforts have been made to include lagged variables in the main models, it remains possible that this does not completely remove the danger. For instance, it is possible that articles are published when the issue is at its worst. This would make it inevitable that the articles would correlate with an improvement in the party's poll ratings. This would be because, by the time the article is published, the short-term damage may already be done and the party should begin to rise simply because it cannot fall lower.

There is another possible issue. Infighting could be triggered by consistent party weakness that stretches out over a much longer period than a month to month basis. In practical terms the logic of the issue is relatively similar and should appear in results in a similar way.

In practical terms, if this were true it should make itself known in the data in a simple way. If there is a correlation between the total number of articles concerning cohesion published and a party's total poll rating, then that is suggestive of one of the two issues above being at play.

This would involve another bootstrapped regression. The key independent variable would be the party's total poll rating that month – the percentage of respondents in that poll that said they would vote for the party. The main dependent variable would be the total weighted number of articles for that poll. If the party's total poll numbers 'predict' the amount of articles then that raises serious questions concerning the validity of the causal mechanism. The results of this analysis, for the Liberals and the NDP, are below in Table 4.7.

Reassuringly, there again seems to be little relationship. The party's overall rating in the polls does not seem to correlate, one way or another, with the number of articles published. This, again, suggests that the relationship observed likely runs in the opposite direction. This means that, as the Liberals are not responding to low poll rating by becoming fractious, that the idea that the quantity of articles actively influences poll ratings becomes, by the process of elimination, more plausible.

Another possibility is that the public did notice and care, but that corresponding issues with cohesion in other parties were sufficient for them not to waver from choosing the Liberals. The Liberals, after all, exist within a wider political and party system. The Canadian Alliance had four different party leaders in the period from March 2000 and March 2002. The Progressive Conservatives were similarly plagued with doubts over their future direction and viability as a party following their third straight election as only the third most popular party. In such an environment ,the internal Liberal divisions perhaps were unimportant as a constant state of division simply hovered over much of the system. Éric Grenier, a Canadian polling aggregator, estimated that the result of a hypothetical election in 2003, at the time that Martin replaced Chrétien and just prior to the sponsorship scandal, would have seen the Liberals win 48%, a lead of 33% over their closest rival in vote share (the Progressive Conservatives) and a 212 seat parliamentary party against an official opposition of a mere 34 MPs (Grenier, 2015).

Table 4.7 – Effect of articles of party poll ratings on the number of articles published

	(1) Liberal	(2) NDP
Party poll rating	0.0258 (0.0271)	−0.0128 (0.0532)
Lagged no. of articles	0.533* (0.220)	0.538* (0.223)
Constant	−0.164 (1.133)	1.131 (0.886)
N	70	70
R^2	0.292	0.287

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

We can observe by simply looking at the polls that the public were not unresponsive to events in Canadian politics during this time. The Sponsorship Scandal had a clear effect on opinion polls in 2004 (see fig. 4.2). It caused the Liberals to drop nearly thirty percentage points across five polls and left them, effectively, in a statistical tie with the Conservatives until eventually losing the 2006 election. It is so stark it may make sense to think of Canadian politics during this time as pre-scandal and post-scandal. We can also see from looking at the polling data alone that the summer of 2002 did not noticeably alter the political status quo.

Fig 4.2 – Canadian EKOS opinion polls December 1996–December 2006

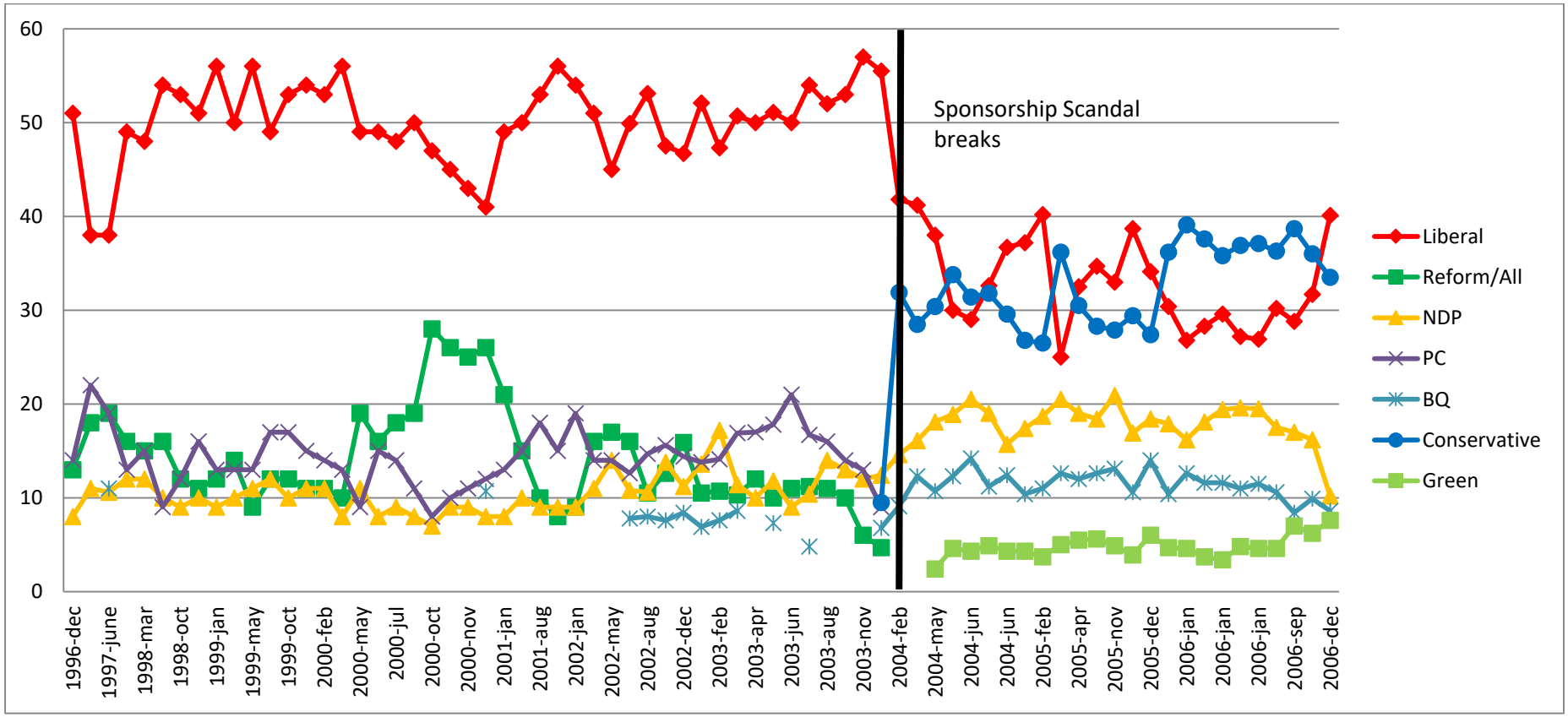


Fig. 4.3 - Canadian EKOS opinion polls December 1996-December 2006 and newspaper article frequency

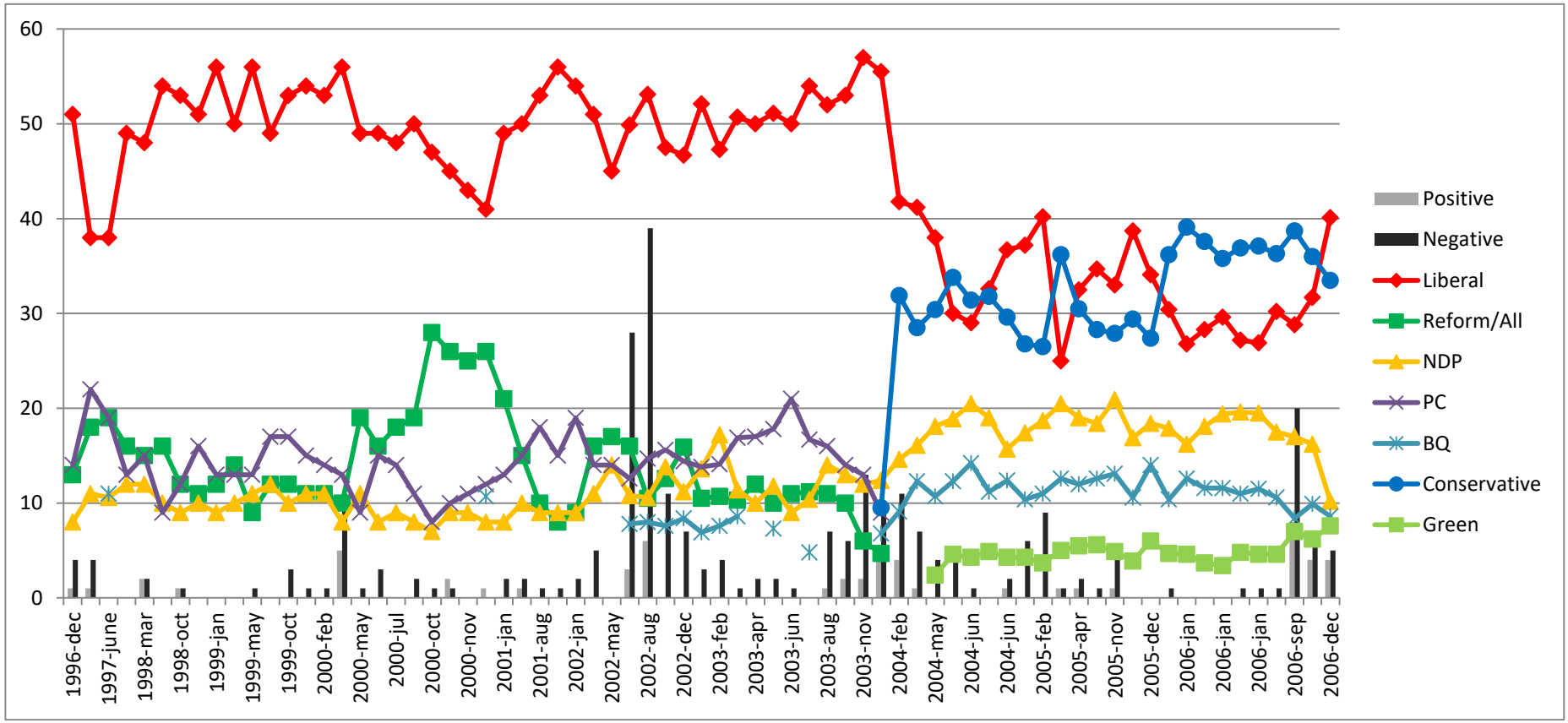
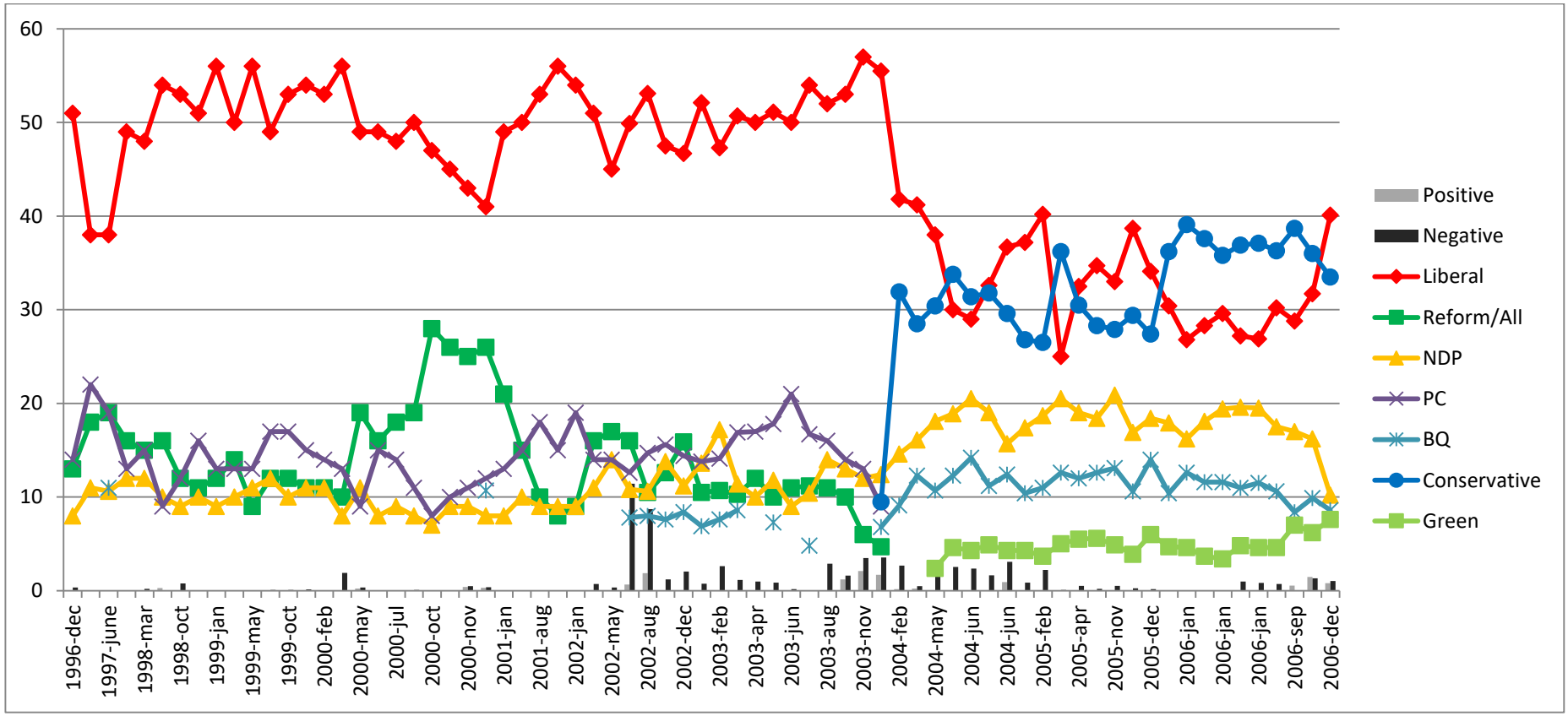


Fig. 4.4 – Canadian EKOS opinion polls December 1996–December 2006 and newspaper article frequency, discounted data



All of this also has an important implication if true. It means that the newspapers are not reporting on 'important' issues that actually matter to people in practice. There is a long-demonstrated tendency for the media to focus on news perceived as negative over that which is positive. This is something that seems to be endemic in different countries, areas of news and time periods (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001). This clearly has troubling normative implications if we feel that the media should report important information that matters to the public. While the public may have been interested, this clearly did not matter all that much to them, and certainly not enough to warrant the sixty-one front page news stories that it did receive over the time period. This view is reinforced by EKOS reporting in its polls that the public were concerned with policies rather than politics (Graves, 2002).

While many hypotheses were not confirmed, that was not true of all cases. Two hypotheses did in fact receive some supporting evidence from this analysis: that cohesion related articles that were positive in tone do correlate with upticks in Liberal fortunes, and that articles that discuss cohesion that relay events that occur at Liberal conferences correlate negatively with NDP support. There was also suggestive evidence that articles that are positive in tone regarding the Liberals may correlate negatively with NDP support.

This combination of hypotheses with supportive evidence is suggestive. All of these have quite plausible reasons other than cohesion to account for their effects. It makes intuitive sense that positive coverage, in general, should help account for similarly positive polling increases in the party being covered. This may have nothing to do with cohesion. If the party was consistently covered positively in relation to any area at all we should perhaps expect its fortunes to lift. This is an issue that could potentially apply anywhere. Similarly we might expect that coverage, whether or not it related to cohesion, to have strong effects on the NDP, a party similar to the Liberals with a lot of voters in common. Seeing one of two interchangeable parties presented more positively relative to the other is likely to cause a shift simply for that reason. Party conferences are in the same mould. They are, essentially, large set-pieces for news coverage, which a party stages in order to get more positive attention. Even if events occurring at those conferences could be thought of in mixed terms, or even negatively, the mere fact that there is a conference taking place could result in NDP supporters temporarily wavering. Nonetheless, the mere fact that NDP supporters did waver at positive coverage suggests some support for voters moving between ideologically proximate parties, as discussed in Chapter Two.

A big factor behind this is what positive articles were actually talking about. Many of them are describing events in the past, and a better present may be implicitly thought of as being against that past infighting. They were also much less likely to primarily contain barbs directed at colleagues or describe events that could only be thought of as petty. Policy arguments, cabinet reshuffles and leadership elections all felt more positive in coverage. These sorts of occurrences may have caused the public instead to think of the party as a 'broad church', with passionately opposing ideas and a party leadership willing to decisively make decisions even over the murmurings of internal opposition. It may be that this is simply capturing the idea of strong leadership.

These results, while somewhat inconclusive, do not give strong support to the idea that cohesion matters because the media *tells voters it should matter*. While there were undoubtedly tensions in the Canadian Liberals, they did not appear in policy differences, and only at the culmination of Chrétien and Martin's rivalry did it even result in a leadership challenge. It is noteworthy, therefore, that data based solely on the coverage of their relationship, and not on 'objective' factors, fails to find conclusive support.

While this does not support this hypothesis, it is extremely revealing information from another perspective. It was established in Chapter Three that cohesion matters to voters when they are making decisions between parties that they regard as similar. We also know from broader evidence that the public have to learn information; they do not just know it, nor do they learn the same quantity or the same pieces of information. We know that the media in Canada, the primary means through which the public acquires information, during this time had considerable concern and interest in the leadership and relationship between these two men. Additionally, we know that the public were interested in and followed the changes in the relationship between the two men. However, we fail to find that this volume of coverage mattered much in terms of actual vote choice.

It is important to specify the particularities of this case for the important implication that it has. It suggests that that objectivity and actual issues at stake matter to voters. They will not respond to idle gossip, however negatively presented. It suggests that it would be very difficult indeed for a media outfit disinclined to favour a party to get a return it might like simply by endlessly being critical of divisions. If the public does not believe that those divisions ultimately matter, then it should not affect how they vote. This is particularly notable in Canada because of how interested the public was in the division, with over 80% of the public following events (Graves, 2002, p. 9), in spite of the relatively low stakes

surrounding it. Interest and coverage, in spite of their intensity, were simply not sufficient to move the public, even in the short-term environment of opinion poll changes. Aside from actual elections, it was not sufficient to cross the relatively low bar to even temporarily alter the voter choice in the low stakes environment of an opinion poll. Since we already know that this can and does affect how voters see parties and their likelihood of voting for them then this means that voters require something more substantial and 'important' than simple media interest before they respond to this issue. The fact that they seemed to respond to positive coverage, based on the fact that positive coverage seemed to be more substantial, further seems to suggest this possibility.

It is important not to overstate this proposition. There was still some support, albeit incomplete, for some hypotheses. This means that the idea that this may matter, but only in the positive direction, cannot be ruled out. This would suggest that tone may matter considerably for valence issues like cohesion. This was true regardless of how it was covered; it did not matter if it was a small news article or something important enough to warrant editorial comment.

Party infighting is unlikely to be a good thing for parties; however, with a positive spin it is possible that the electorate will not perceive the downside. Furthermore, this is certainly a difference from the information we have as to voters' own thoughts, as seen in Chapter Three. Movement may be quite sporadic over the short term. It may be that voters have quite different ideas when there is a longer time horizon. It would seem that sheer quantity of coverage of cohesion, rather than the importance of that coverage, is less important to voters than their belief that a party is divided. If voters respond differently to more important incidences of cohesion over a long time horizon, it may be that the noise of this sort of analysis has crowded out the effect, and that, fundamentally, what voters believe and what is more objectively important matter more than what the media simply say, by incessant coverage, should be a concern.

4.6 Conclusions

There was mixed evidence for the hypotheses under study. This was in spite of the presence of the ideal case of the Canadian Liberals. With such levels of animosity within the leadership of the party and such public interest in these divisions, we would have expected to have a high likelihood of uncovering an effect if present. With the dependent variable being relatively transient opinion poll results, rather than general election results, we might have further expected it. Yet, for the most part, this was not found in the analysis of the results.

While certainly not a conclusive result, this does suggest that while cohesion may be a consideration in terms of voter evaluation of parties, it does not matter in absence of other factors. There seems to be some sort of threshold of relevance for voters. If an event is seen as unimportant or little more than gossip, it may not matter how much focus there is on it: the public still does not care.

This means that the findings on voter evaluations have not yet been properly accounted for. We still do not know exactly how voters have come to the evaluation that they have come to. It does not seem to be simple media interest in the topic for its own sake; something more substantial may be required before the public starts to take it seriously enough for it to affect their votes. If so, an approach involving an examination of actual incidences of cohesion, rather than based on coverage, could help uncover it. This is the focus of Chapter Five.

5. The electoral impact of the events of infighting: The case of the British Labour Party

5.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter builds on the work of Chapter Four. It first introduces the case – that of the British Labour Party – and explains why, because of Labour's diverse history, it is a suitable case for the analysis of whether events of disunity electorally matter. It will then outline the source of data and methodology for assessing this: exclusively using newspaper editorials. Following this, the chapter will present results using bootstrapped regressions. The chapter will then show that the results are not due to a variety of confounding factors or alternative explanations before presenting a possible explanation for why the results occurred.

5.2 Introduction

While the public may not be greatly interested in every aspect of politics, we have good reason to believe that there is considerable public interest in the issue of intra-party cohesion versus intra-party conflict, as can be seen in extensive media coverage in the topic. This chapter builds on the findings of Chapters Three and Four in a number of ways. Chapter Three showed that for most parties and for most voters, a perception that the party is disunited has a negative impact electorally. Furthermore and more importantly, an individual voter seeing a party divided is correlated with that voter being less likely to vote for that party.

Chapter Four showed that this relationship is more complex than it first appears. Examining newspaper coverage of cohesion, volumes of coverage is not associated with the poll ratings of the Canadian Liberals. As the media has an important agenda-setting role for voters, it would make sense that increasing public knowledge of existing lack of cohesion would negatively impact a party.

What neither of these chapters tell us is whether the events of disunity themselves matter to voters. It is established that if a voter is convinced that a party is not united, they are less likely to vote for it. It is not established that media coverage creates that impression. It is also not established that the lack of cohesion itself, removed from anything else, affects the performance of parties. This chapter aims to determine whether or not it does, independent of the volume of media coverage. Is the electoral effect of party disunity caused by the party's own behaviour?

This chapter will first consider the case of the British Labour Party, an useful case due to the degree of variation in cohesion for an extended time period within the party, as well as the position of the party within British politics. It will examine this case using editorials from *The Times*, a reliable signifier for widespread disunity in Labour. It will then explore the counterintuitive findings in some depth before concluding the chapter.

5.3 Case Justification

This chapter is concerned with cohesion in the British Labour Party. More specifically, it is concerned with cohesion in the Labour Party more specifically at the level of day-to-day and month-to-month polling, rather than directly in the minds of voters as previous chapters have done.

As explained in Chapter One above, cohesion in this research refers to infighting for all aspects of the party; it is not confined to parliamentary votes. Document leaks, backbiting, newspaper comments, and conference criticism are construed as infighting for the purposes of this research.

This allows us to access information in a somewhat different context than in a post-election study. An election study is *retrospective*. It allows respondents to think back on *how they actually did cast their votes* and the reasons behind it. Opinion polling is different and attempts to capture something different; it is a both a forecast and a snapshot in time. It is much more *prospective*. It looks ahead to the future and tries to extrapolate future outcomes in addition to providing insight as to what would happen if there were an election at this very moment. This difference is significant; post-election election studies ask questions of fact, while opinion polls ask questions of opinion. This is because election studies ask what party respondents *did* vote for, while opinion polls ask which party *would* respondents vote for. There is considerably more uncertainty in the second question, and the factors behind the assessment of who to vote for in the future are liable to change over time. This is not true of the question of fact such as the first question – the factors that caused the vote remain fixed over time.

There are a number of reasons why the British Labour Party, in particular, is a good case. Labour has been one of Britain's major political parties since the 1920s. It has supplied six prime ministers and is currently the official opposition. It has had a major influence on British political life and will doubtless continue to do so. Labour's issues, like that of any organisation of its size and stature, whether political or not, are of intrinsic interest and importance.

Labour's internal unity was certainly politically current in 2017 – and in particular in the period prior to the general election. Jeremy Corbyn's insistence on continuing as party leader in spite of receiving the support of only 20% of his parliamentary party in a confidence vote in 2016 (Chakelian, 2016) and 172 Labour MPs and MEPs directly nominating his

opponent Owen Smith in the ensuing leadership contest certainly attracted attention. In spite of Corbyn winning the contest with 62% of the vote, these divisions remained, having extended over much of the previous year. There certainly at least appeared to be severe differences between Corbyn and the majority of his parliamentary party, much of which spilled into the public sphere. Following Jeremy Corbyn's election as party leader in 2015 the party has had repeated public disputes on both policy and non-policy issues. In the beginning of 2016, shadow ministers threatened to resign over Corbyn's efforts to whip the party against renewing the Trident nuclear missile program, when official party policy was for its retention (Sculthorpe, 2016). The party was also quite publicly divided over the issue of airstrikes against the Islamic State in Syria, when the Shadow Foreign Secretary Hilary Benn gave a widely praised speech against the position of the party leadership (Wilkinson, Henderson, & Millward, 2016). There were more periodic rumbles on more general topics in the interim. Several MPs who had initially nominated him for the leadership expressed disquiet primarily with his competence rather than his policy positions (Cox & Coyle, 2016). However, it was after the referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union that Labour's internal unity completely disintegrated. After the firing of Benn there was a mass resignation of shadow cabinet ministers. Alan Johnson, the chair of Labour In for Britain, strongly criticised Corbyn's lacklustre campaign on the issue, and publicly called for his resignation (Casalicchio, 2016). Some members of the Labour Front Bench criticised his basic approach to party leadership, which they claimed was chaotic and directionless, with a tendency to undermine his colleagues with announcements in their area of responsibility without consultation with them (Debbonaire, 2016; Greenwood, 2016). One of the most notable interventions was that of former party leader Neil Kinnock, who drew on his own experience to call on moderates in the party to fight Corbyn for 'their party' (Sparrow & Jones, 2016). In light of all of this, that in the 2017 general election, Labour actually gained seats was certainly unexpected, even on the day of the election (Scott, 2017). It was also against the prior pattern of the history of the Labour Party.

One of the recurring themes of the past two years of Labour history is its striking familiarity to those with knowledge of the background of the party. Throughout the modern era, Labour has regularly had severe splits and obvious internal tension and an obvious way of understanding Labour's current struggles is to understand the background to, and consequences of, previous internal bickering within the party. During the 1950s, Aneurin Bevan maintained a consistent opposition to the party leadership from a left-wing perspective, a position that was eventually inherited by Ian Mikardo when Bevan joined the

front bench. This did not abate as time moved on. In the 1960s and 1970s the so-called Tribune Group of left-wing MPs regularly caused difficulties for the government (Finer, 1980, pp. 114–120). At this time the issues became less ideological and more personal, with even the intrinsic desirability of unity of purposes being implied to be a point of contention. Powell notes, for instance, the tension and conflict between two firebrands of the left; where Michael Foot believed that party unity should be a key priority, Tony Benn disagreed even with that (Powell, 2001, p. 66). The 1980s were marked by even more tense and bitter internal struggles over the issue of Militant Tendency, a group which aimed to transform the party into a much more radical left wing force than it ever was previously. The party was described as 'an inward-facing circular firing squad' (Kinnock, 2012, p. 175). This was a time of strong personalities, as Tony Benn finally attempted to seize control of the party apparatus and party positions from his more moderate opponents, such as Denis Healey and Roy Hattersley. This only started to abate when Benn lost his own seat in 1983 and Labour started its very long and slow process of moderating (Seyd, 1987, p. 167). This resulted in the issue of internal unity becoming an overriding goal within the party by this stage; Kinnock viewed this as 'the only way to make Labour electable' (Jones, 1994, p. 13).

In some ways this history is less than surprising for Labour. It has long been considered to be a party of 'factions' which is habitually more divided than its Conservative rival (Finer, 1980, p. 116). But this is not a story without consequences, and without outwards manifestations. It is worth noting that prominent Labour figures felt that organised rebellion was anathema to the party, and anything other than isolated conscience votes were to be strongly discouraged. Former cabinet minister Richard Crossman said that conscience votes 'must be individual, not collective, not organised' (Crossman, 1975, p. 96). Certainly, MPs needed to agree with the party generally, and confine public displays of disloyalty to technical issues. However, this was a policy pursued by both major parties and if this was how dissent actually operated than virtually all of it would be little known figures voting against governments on bills of little note, like Conservative MP Tom Stuttaford voting in support of an amendment to Clause 3 of the Water Bill 1973, an event likely only remembered because Phillip Norton uses it as his example of the dissent that party leaders can cope with (Norton, 1978, p. 35).

Nonetheless, the aforementioned Tribune Group and Militant were clearly factors in the party. Every single Tribune-affiliated MP voted against Labour at least once between 1974 and 1979 (Seyd, 1987, p. 80). Militant was considered such an issue in the 1980s that at the

Labour Party conference in 1985 the primary focus of Neil Kinnock's leadership address was not to attack the Thatcher government but to condemn the governance of Liverpool City Council dominated by Militant members of Labour (Kinnock, 1985).

The existence of these factions can be traced to a growing disappointment among the membership with the behaviour of the parliamentary party in government, as well as a change in the fundamental character of the membership. There are two trends with the membership of the party. First, Labour membership began to fall, and fairly alarmingly so, after it reached its peak in the 1950s; Labour individual membership was as high as 1,014,524 in 1952, but by 1973 it had fallen to 665,379. If anything, this overstated the true figure, and the number of 'real' party members by this point was probably really only 150,000 to 200,000 individuals (McLean, 1978, p. 51). The remaining members were also different. Even amidst the falling membership, Labour was attracting new recruits. These were disproportionally well-educated and ideological. They had not joined the party to be deferential to the existing elites. Those working-class members who remained were likewise becoming less deferential. This left a conundrum for the party. The usual strategy for winning elections is to appeal to the moderate centre of politics, and this should be reflected in party policy. But this means that 'If it [Labour] wants to win elections, it must disappoint party militants; but if it disappoints them again and again, it can hardly expect them to keep on paying their party subscriptions …' (McLean, 1978, p. 53).

Most of the areas on which large sections of party membership disagreed with the leadership were in a similar clump of policy issues. The prominence of individual issues waxed and waned as time passed but time and again the questions of nationalisation of industry, nuclear disarmament and membership of the European Communities achieved particular prominence (Turner, 1978, p. 232). The issue of nationalisation was long an important one for the hierarchy in the party, and led to frequent conference defeats for Wilson in particular when he was Prime Minister (Howell, 1976, p. 245).

The most important issue at this time was whether Britain should join the European Communities (later the European Union). This was important as a source of division for a number of reasons. First, it was an area on which the ideologically left members had strong feelings, but also one of the only areas where significant numbers of other people in the party were also critical (Turner, 1978, p. 232). Furthermore, Europe predominantly grew as a concern in the party because of what the party leadership was using EC membership as in the 1960s – as a means of compensating for Britain's poor economic performance for a

number of years (Howell, 1976, p. 272). It was also something that the US was pushing for, in light of Britain's growing international weakness (Peele, 2016, p. 282). This was particularly galling for the left-wing portion of the membership as the economic policies that Wilson's government was enacting were certainly breaches of party principles and promises, while not even having the merit of successfully improving the British economy (Howell, 1976, p. 253).

The top ranks of the party were also torn on Europe. Labour had campaigned at the 1970 general election in favour of EC membership, but opinion began to shift in the party when it moved into opposition. While several senior figures in the party expressed a growing disquiet with joining the EC, party deputy leader Roy Jenkins was very determined to express his full support for membership. In 1971, the House of Commons voted in favour of the United Kingdom becoming a member of the European Communities, and the following year Ted Heath, the Conservative prime minister, signed the Treaty of Accession. The European Communities Act 1972 was passed by 301 votes to 284. All efforts to hold the party together at the time of the vote ultimately came to nothing, with even efforts to limit the parliamentary rebellion being rejected as a compromise (J. Campbell, 2014, pp. 371–379). Ahead of the general election on October 1974, Harold Wilson pledged that he would renegotiate the terms of Britain's membership of the EC and hold a referendum on its outcome. This was an effort by Wilson to avoid a split within his deeply divided party, a purely political move to try to ease internal tension (Peele, 2016). However, after some short-term relief, things got worse within the party as time progressed, in spite of the issue's lack of salience to much of the British public (McLean, 1978, p. 48). Divisions on Europe were undoubtedly a factor in the leadership election that saw James Callaghan succeed Wilson in 1976, though the divisions between MPs were much too complex to be boiled down to any single divide, no matter how pertinent (Heppell, Crines, & Nicholls, 2010, p. 68). When Callaghan in turn stepped down in 1980, Michael Foot, an avowed Eurosceptic, was elected as leader; this was one of the primary reasons behind the split in 1981 that saw a number of prominent current and former Labour MPs leave the party to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP) (Crewe & King, 1995). It is worth noting that, if anything, the bitterness of the divide is understated, as individuals within the party did attempt to tone down their rhetoric in the interest of party unity (George & Rosamond, 1992, p. 183).

This sort of behaviour, however, strongly suggests that Labour politicians at the time viewed public displays of disunity as being something that the electorate would punish. This is

probably due to the difficulty in persuading the public as to the merits of particular policy positions when the party itself is not entirely convinced of them, and is sufficiently unhappy with to express this view publicly (Norris, 1994, p. 174). This was probably borne out by the party's very public internal disintegration at the beginning of the 1980s and its subsequent collapse by twenty percentage points in the polls between 1980 and 1981 (Whiteley, 1983, p. 4). The party's own external image on unity was so bad by 1983 that Miller argues that we should not expect unity to appear as an independent predictor of vote choice. This is because both non-Labour voters and Labour voters were in nearly unanimous agreement that Labour's team was ineffective and incompetent (Miller, 1992, p. 339). This agreement is unusual. The party certainly came across as significantly more united in subsequent elections (Curtice & Semetko, 1994, p. 52).

All of this suggests that party unity in the Labour Party is an important issue in its history and development, and certainly that the party's very public difficulties in 2016 with disunity have strong echoes in the party's history over decades. It suggests that issues that preoccupy the party at the time of research have been present – such as Europe and nuclear weapons – throughout the party's history in recent decades and have been almost as divisive at each point in time. It however suggests that this is an issue that waxes and wanes, and is not of constant importance, which suggests variation. Furthermore, there is the suggestion that this matters on multiple dimensions. It also strongly suggests that Labour's history is a good area to explore for the idea that high levels of disunity seems to adversely affect a party more times than it does not. The course of Labour's history would suggest that it certainly is a negative factor for the party. However we need more than anecdotal evidence to confirm this impression.

5.4 Dataset and Methodology

In order to evaluate the electoral impact of party cohesion on the Labour Party, data had to be gathered. Much of the data was generously supplied by James Davidson, having been gathered by him for an examination of the relationship between government popularity and economic performance in the UK, for which he created a database of forty years of monthly Gallup polls (Davidson, 2005). This chapter is based on an analysis of a database consisting of Davidson's poll data and my own database of newspaper coverage, as described below.

The data used covers the whole of Davidson's period of study, from 1955 to 1996, a total of forty-two years. If there a major trend or pattern to cohesion in British political life it should show itself in data covering a period that extensive. This differs from Chapter Four. This chapter makes no assumptions that the newspaper coverage itself is responsible for any shift in the polls; instead, it assumes that the coverage is a proxy for other events.

This chapter is concerned with whether it is the events of disunity that voters respond to. Data was gathered that would be a record of instances of Labour division. Newspaper editorials were chosen for this purpose, as a proxy for instances of disunity.

The newspaper data gathered in this instance was extensive, comprising editorials from *The Times* and their Sunday paper *The Sunday Times* during the time period. *The Times* was chosen for several reasons. It is a major newspaper of record in Britain, regarded as a major broadsheet publication which provides extensive current affairs coverage. Compared to some of its major broadsheet rivals like *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian, The Times* is relatively more impartial, although it is still considered on the whole to be a right-wing paper (Curtice & Semetko, 1994). It has endorsed both major parties in general elections since the Second World War, which means that it might be expected to be somewhat more even-handed than other more ideological newspapers, or, at the least, that it is not so wedded to either party as to not be able to see the flaws of one or the merits of the other.

Editorials were chosen for two reasons. First, they were chosen for practical ease of use. Using editorials rather than every article in *The Times* reduces the number of articles that need to be read in depth. There is no reason to believe that this will meaningfully affect the quality of the data received. By their nature, editorials provide comment on the major events of the day. They also serve as an opportunity for the newspaper to express its editorial stance explicitly to its readership. It would be very unusual for a newspaper with the standing and interest of *The Times* in political events not to provide comment on the

political events of the day. The use of editorials therefore also provides an implicit filter on whether an event is 'important', or just political noise and not worthy of general notice or comment. An individual knows that something is important if the editorial board decides it worthy of particular comment. If, on the other hand, *The Times* was actually being biased or trying to 'sabotage' a party which it did not approve of we would expect that to be visible, not only in the results, but also in the basic distribution of their editorials. It seems unlikely that a broadsheet newspaper would, even in the worst interpretation of the hostile press, do anything quite as obvious as openly sabotaging a major political party. Even if it were, *The Times* has endorsed both parties in the past so cannot be considered hostile without at least some cause. The distribution of editorials is discussed in the data section. Data for *The Guardian* and *The Observer* was also collected and tested, in order to demonstrate that *The Times* does, in fact, serve as a good proxy for events.

Not all editorials were used as, naturally, there were many issues in Britain that warranted discussion, not just internal battles in British Labour. When it is relevant, we should expect the newspaper to comment. In such commentary they will certainly outline the names of the major personalities involved, to discuss either how they are causing the rupture or what they are doing in order to avert it. As the brief history outlines in the justification for the use of this case, specific personalities were often integral parts of this conflict. This includes the party leaders during this time – Clement Attlee, Hugh Gaitskell, Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock, John Smith and Tony Blair but also other senior figures in the party who never attained the leadership. This includes both Tony Benn, Kinnock's long-term nemesis from the ideological left, and also Roy Jenkins, who was more moderate and later founded the SDP, both of whom hoped to transform British politics to their own liking. The time period of 1955–1996 means that this analysis covers the last year of Clement Attlee's leadership, the full period of the leaderships of Hugh Gaitskell, Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock and John Smith, and the first two years of Tony Blair's leadership. It also covers long periods of Labour being both in opposition and in government, and great changes in British society and economy over this time period.

This is reflected in the search criteria for editorials. Using *The Times Digital Archive*, editorials that included the names of at least two of the prominent figures of the period were included. These were bounded for when they were significant factors in the Labour Party politics. While it is theoretically possible that an editorial that discussed the 'left' and 'right' of the party – without mentioning names – might be published this is very unlikely

based on their style of writing. Even if an editorial was missed this should not affect the general results. On the whole, this meant that fourteen pairs of relationships were searched for over the time period.

Table 5.1 – Dyads of politicians searched for, and the years within which they were searched for

1955	Attlee—Bevan
1955–1963	Gaitskell—Bevan
	Gaitskell—Wilson
1963–1976	Wilson—Callaghan
	Wilson—Jenkins
	Jenkins—Callaghan
1976–1980	Callaghan—Jenkins
1980–1983	Foot—Benn
	Foot—Healey
	Healey—Benn
1983–1992	Kinnock—Benn
	Kinnock—Smith
1992–1994	Smith—Blair
1994–1996	Blair—Brown

These were chosen because they were the main Labour Party figures of their time. Undoubtedly others too played a role in the debates and divisions in these decades, but none of them had the same level of clout within the party over an extended time period, or achieved quite the same level of high office within the party or in cabinet. They are more than mere local party stalwarts – they were the public faces of the party, who more than anyone else set the tone for the future of the party. If there is an effect on the public

perception of the party in any area, it is likely to originate from such figures as these. These are quite extensive as a set of personalities. Editorials discussing Labour tended to address the positions of almost all figures in the party, or at least most of them, barring very specific events. Most major events that occurred in the party originated with these individuals, and even those that did not would still be picked up here by this search criteria.

All editorials were read that met this criteria and then were coded under a number of objective and subjective criteria. The objective criteria were the length of the piece, the number of paragraphs, the date of the editorial, the page number, and the primary personalities involved. The subjective criteria included whether the article was positive or negative in tone, whether the article concerned policy and if so what policies it was primarily concerned with, whether it concerned the party leadership, whether it occurred during a party conference, whether it occurred during a general election campaign, whether it occurred during an internal party leadership campaign and whether the mention of Labour's own disunity was merely a passing reference, or the main focus of the editorial. It was found that of 15,250 editorials that were published in *The Times* between April 1955 and December 1996 there were 187 applicable editorials. This means that 1.23% of all possible days in this time period had some discussion, however tangential, of Labour Party cohesion. This is, on average, 4.5 editorials a year. This proportion may seem low, but it is should be remembered that Labour is one major party of two, and that numerous major events of global importance happened over these forty-one years. Some further discussion of the distribution of editorials occurs on page 155.

The key dependent variable for analysis is the net change in Labour support in that month versus the previous month; if Labour had 30% support in one month, and then fell to 28% in the next month, the observation would record this at −2 in this instance. This variable has a range of −9.5 to 15, although there is a heavy concentration of values close to zero, well within the statistical margin of error for most commercial polling. There are a number of advantages to using Gallup polls exclusively throughout this period. Gallup polls occur regularly and relatively frequently throughout the period. This means that they can be used as a data source for the entire time period. It also polls with extreme regularity. Gallup has exactly one poll per month throughout this period. This means that the data is unlikely to be affected by sudden bursts in polling distorting the values of the independent variable. With polling occurring at monthly intervals, the gap between polls effectively varies between twenty-eight and thirty-one days. This means that each new polling observation in

the dataset has roughly the same chance to accumulate editorials that discuss cohesion in the same timeframe. The exact date the poll was conducted is generally not known. The editorials for the previous month as the poll have been used in each case; while this may not be exact, this ensures that data is not used multiple times for different polls.

This does mean that the number of observations is small. There are only 500 months during this forty-two year interval. This is a fairly small dependent variable to base a statistical analysis. Consequently, the number of independent variables must be kept small so as not to overburden any statistical model used.

The number of observations must be cut still further for much of the analysis. This is because most months include no discussion whatsoever of cohesion in their editorial page. It simply was a non-issue and not worthy of discussion during that time. When it did arise, however, there might be a periodic mention of 'tensions' or 'disagreements', or there might be a sudden flurry of discussion and comment from the editorial board. As discussed above, there are many factors that influence how and why people make the voting decisions they do. It is not expected that party cohesion is a predominant factor; it is only expected that it matters and may sway some individuals at the margins. However, given the issue with the size of the dependent variable, any effect is likely to only be discernible when it is at the forefront of voters' minds. It is therefore proposed to examine two versions of the dataset – the first including all possible months, and the second only months where cohesion warranted at least some discussion in the editorial page. There are 130 months with at least one editorial that discusses cohesion in the Labour Party. If this was swinging some voters, even if bringing about just an instinctual reaction that does not survive long term, we are most likely to observe it in this reduced form, in those months for which we know that this was an issue raised by the media.

The main independent variable is the number of negative editorials that discuss divisions, in some form or another, within the Labour Party in that month. This is simply a count of the number of negative editorials that appeared in *The Times* that month. The distribution of this variable is in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 – Distribution of the dependent variable, a count of the number of editorials per month

Variable	Total	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max

Editorial	501	0.37	0.78	0	5

There are a number of control variables. Opinion polls do not occur in a vacuum, and have statistical error bounds and reflect broader trends in politics at that moment. This makes them vulnerable to a self-correcting long-term average. If the poll is conducted well then, in most instances the poll will be corrected, within an error bound. However, this means that if there is a strong change in one poll, we should expect there should be some sort of bounce back in the next poll, simply because of how extreme the last poll result was. This is significant if the causal mechanism actually works in the opposite way as hypothesised. If falling poll rating causes individuals members in the party to lash out and attack the leader for causing this problem, then it is possible that that this could appear in the results as a rise in support for Labour as the reversion to the mean has already started to take place. This would be in spite of the party settling into polling at a new and lower level. There are more substantive issues at play here too. There is laboratory evidence in the US for knowledge of previous opinion polls influencing how one might vote (See Mehrabian, 1998 for a full description of his experiment on the matter). It is not expected or believed that opinion polls happen in a vacuum; we expect voters to be at least somewhat aware of previous polls. As this can influence their thinking it must be independently accounted for. Accordingly, a lag of the dependent variable must be included to correct for such issues in the trend.

For similar reasons, a lag of the key independent variable, the number of negative editorials discussing party cohesion, must also be included, to account for the possibility that any effect is not instantaneous. Also included was the most statistically relevant variable from Davidson's analysis – the treasury bond rates. This is because they are a relatively good indicator proxy for the overall health of the economy. His dependent variable, the polling lead that the government had over the opposition, was also included, as it might be expected that this would affect what party figures are willing to say or consider saying as it affects their level of risk.

This data violates a number of standard statistical assumptions, which means that an ordinary least squares linear regression cannot be performed. In order to cope with the problems caused by this a regression using a bootstrapped sample was used. How this works is outlined in Chapter Four. This is a technique that assumes that the data is representative of the population as a whole (where the population is the universe of possible occurrences of Labour disunity from 1955 until 1996). It then samples the data with replacement a

specified number of times before averaging results. This means that it does not make assumptions about the population distribution as a whole – only the population distribution of the bootstrapped average. This means that we can overcome issues like a lack of a normal distribution with the generated pseudo-data, allowing this data to be statistically analysed.

Based on the response of elites to a lack of cohesion, we should expect a negative reaction from the electorate to evidence of disunity. This would be a result in line with previous results in earlier chapters as well as the broader literature, if opinion poll data behaves similarly to election data. This leads to:

> ***H1:*** *The more negative editorials that appear in any given month, the more percentage points Labour will lose in the polls in that month compared to the previous month.*

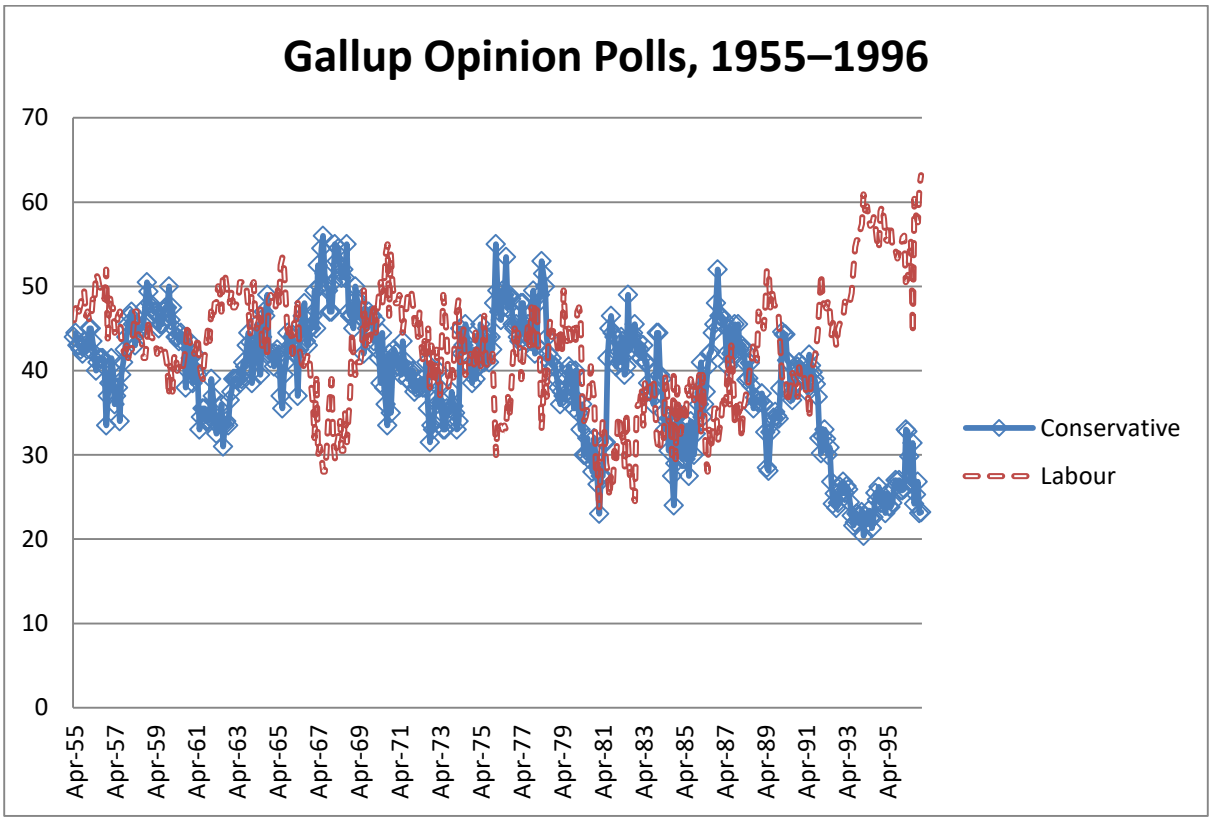
However we also expect the reaction, if any, to be sharper in those months where cohesion is of particular relevance and is current for the electorate. This, in turn, leads to:

> ***H2:*** *The more negative editorials that appear in any month where there is at least one editorial discussing cohesion, the more percentage points Labour will lose in the polls in that month compared to the previous month.*

5.5 Data

There is certainly variation in the both the dependent and major independent variable, both of which also behave much as would be expected.

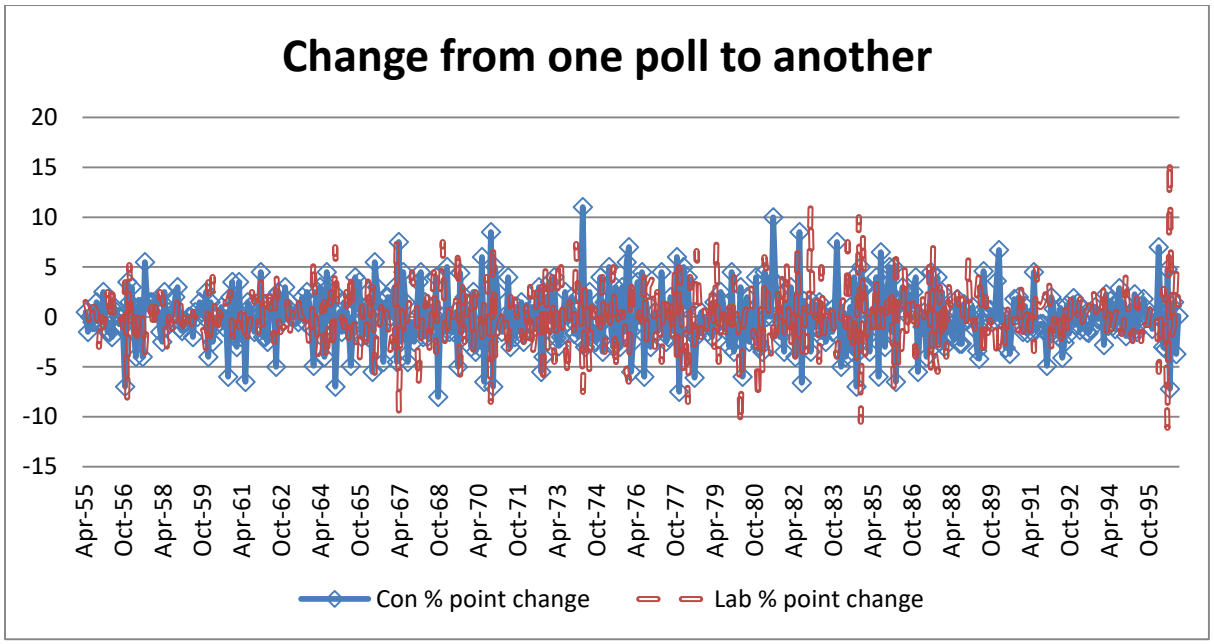
Fig. 5.1 – Gallup opinion polls from 1955 until 1996, for Labour and the Conservatives.



Polls were consistently close in the 1950s, with both major parties having the support of nearly half the voters. Labour were ahead when they win the 1964 election by a very narrow margin. The Labour margin in the polls grew and they win the 1966 election – called precisely to give the winning party a large workable majority in the House of Commons. This Labour popularity did not last and the party starts to fall quite alarmingly as Britain's economy starts to disintegrate under Labour stewardship, with the Conservatives achieving an extended lead of approximately twenty percentage points, a position that they maintained almost until the election in 1970, when Labour suddenly pulled back ahead, before losing unexpectedly by only three percentage points. Following this, we can observe the relative unpopularity of the Edward Heath government, which similarly had economic difficulty and, like Harold Wilson's Labour government, ultimately pulled back most of their lost ground and actually won slightly more votes than Labour in February 1974. Labour won the November 1974 election more easily – which is also present in the chart. After re-entering

government, the party struggled in 1975 before collapsing quite sharply in the late 1970s due to the oil crash and the 'winter of discontent'. They went on to lose the 1979 election. Gallup, however, had predicted that Labour will win the 1979 election. It correctly recorded Labour's *annus horribilis* in 1981 (Whiteley, 1983) and then recorded Labour consistently above 30% throughout the rest of that parliamentary term, only falling towards the end with the publication of the Labour manifesto (dubbed by Labour MP Gerald Kaufman as 'The longest suicide note in history') when the party won 27.6% in the 1983 contest. Labour fared better after that, both in reality and in the poll series, accurately reflecting their clear defeat in 1987 before their clear lead prior to the ousting of Margaret Thatcher in 1990. In common with the other British opinion polls, Gallup failed to predict the Conservative victory in 1992. It did record the consistent Labour lead of nearly forty per cent from 1994 on, which other pollsters noted as well. Gallup seems to be accurately recording polls relative to what was happening, so there is little reason to distrust their individual poll outside this collective. There is also no reason to doubt that that changes from one individual poll to another do not at least in the aggregate reflect something meaningful.

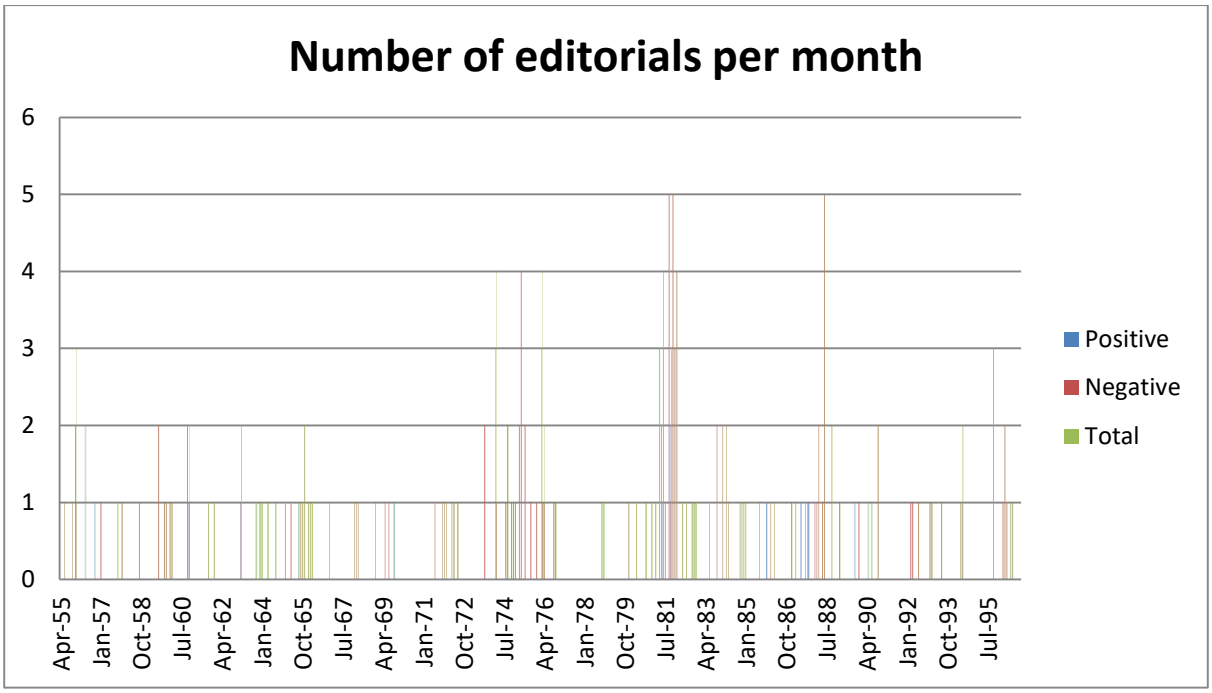
Fig. 5.2 – Changes in party poll ratings from one poll to another, 1955–96.



This pattern of predictable statistical regularity is borne out in the month-by-month change in the opinion poll results of both major parties. Neither of them exhibit much evidence of bias. Both cluster around zero for the entire period of analysis. Significant swings, either positive or negative, occur only rarely. They also tend to occur in pairs, so that a very strong swing one month is balanced by a swing in the opposite direction the following month,

which suggests polling outliers corrected the following month. The Conservative polling pattern is superficially more regular than Labour's as Labour exhibits sharp swings in both directions in the 1980s, but even then it clusters around zero on the whole, as might be expected during the most tempestuous period of Labour's modern history.

Fig. 5.3 – Number of editorials published in *The Times* per month.



An examination of the editorials also suggests that they are behaving as expected. While no month has more than five editorials that relate to Labour Party cohesion, this is unsurprising considering there are fewer editorials that discuss this than there are months in the sample. There is a somewhat constant and regular appearance of editorials with a number of surges. These correspond with the real points that the literature discusses as being the major points where the party had noticeable and observable differences. These occur at three points in particular. The middle of the 1970s are clearly a difficult period for Labour. This is when the party's internal divisions over Britain's European Community membership was most apparent and manifest. Reflecting the long time period that this rumbled on for, these crop up over a two-year period. The second surge is the most well-known: the internal disintegration in the early 1980s. This coincided with when the party was torn up over the role of the left in the party and over Tony Benn's efforts to dramatically reshape the party to his own image. This spike also coincides with the peak of this division. When Labour resettles before their calamitous defeat in the 1983 general election, the overall number of editorials relating to party disunity remains low. The final spike in the data occurs in 1988,

when Tony Benn finally challenges Neil Kinnock for the leadership of the party. This naturally attracts considerable media interest before his defeat. Lesser spikes occur when the resignation of Clement Attlee as leader in 1955 and the death of John Smith in 1994 led to speculation on their succession. In general, the spikes occur at the points in time when we would mostly expect them to, and at roughly the same intervals. This, in turn, suggests that *The Times* is not biased – at least in its rates of coverage of events and that it is thus more than reasonable to use them.

5.6 Analysis

Probing the data statistically at a basic, preliminary level does not yield major insights. Using a bootstrap regression with a pseudo-random sample from the data without controls does not yield significant results in either the large sample size consisting of the entirety of the data in the dataset, nor the smaller subsample consisting of only those months where cohesion was a particular issue at that time, as can be seen in Table 5.2, Model 1. The cohesion relevant subset was much closer to statistical significance at conventional levels than the broader sample, with a p-value of 0.077 in Table 5.3, Model 2. Predictably, the r-squared values were also low, not even reaching 2% of all variation in the dependent variable accounted for in the model using only relevant data, which was the better model in this case. Unexpectedly, the sign of the independent variable in both cases was positive. Even if the data was statistically significant, this is more meaningful than the coefficients because the bootstrap technique takes random samples with replacement of the data. This methodology has been outlined in the methodology section above. While neither model was statistically significant in this instance, this nonetheless goes against both hypotheses.

Table 5.3: Basic Models with DV Labour's poll change

	(1) Complete dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0702	0.483
	(0.174)	(0.273)
Constant	0.00813	−0.824
	(0.150)	(0.594)
N	500	130
R^2	0.000	0.013

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

The addition of controls, however, does change the picture, as can be seen in Table 5.4. In the subset of the sample where the cohesion was of most immediate relevance – where it actually warranted being discussed at least once in the month – the number of editorials is indeed statistically significant. What this means in substantive terms is difficult to evaluate fully, due to the difficulty of interpreting bootstrapped coefficients. However, in this pseudo-random sample, for every extra editorial above the first one that is written about the Labour Party's internal struggles, the party gained 0.66% of the vote in this poll relative to the

previous poll. This effect is substantively large, as there is little month-to-month movement from one poll to the next in general. This is not significant in the broader dataset, although it is still a positive effect. Conversely, the number of editorials published in the previous month that discussed cohesion was negative, albeit insignificant. In fact, the only other statistically significant variable in either model was how much Labour's poll rating had changed in the previous month. This was highly statistically significant and negative in both models. In this bootstrapped sample for the whole dataset for every 1% Labour had gained in the polls during the month prior, it lost 0.33% the next month. It is even more severe in the smaller cohesion-related sample, where Labour lost 0.54% in the subsequent month. This pattern is unsurprising with this variable. This is because we expect, and can observe, that Labour's overall poll rating tends to stay static. While there is a lot of statistical noise, on the whole, it is relatively stable. This means we should expect to see some sort of regression to the mean whenever Labour do well or badly; if Labour goes up in a poll, they are more likely to go down rather than up in the following poll.

These findings, as in the basic model, are also counterintuitive. It seems odd that Labour would gain in opinion polls when its internal arguments are noticeable. It seems especially odd that this continues to happen, and indeed that the effect gets stronger when Labour's recent polling trend is accounted for. It is valuable to know factors that are driving this. It is therefore worth checking whether this is an artefact of the data or some kind of uniform poll swing.

If this unusual effect was simply a product of polls, and not specific to Labour, we would expect the main alternative to Labour, the Conservative Party, to gain whenever Labour loses. This seems to be generally true when looking at the overall polling trends above. However, this interpretation does not seem to be valid here, as can be seen in Table 5.5. In no model did the Conservatives gain appreciably when the internal cohesion of Labour was more under discussion. In no case was there statistical significance. Once again, the only particularly relevant variable was how much of a swing the Conservatives had achieved towards them in the previous poll, which behaved as expected and similarly to the equivalent variable when examining Labour.

Table 5.4: Complete Models, with DV Labour's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0578	0.655*
	(0.186)	(0.304)
% change in Lab poll previous month	−0.324***	−0.540***
	(0.0561)	(0.129)
No. editorials previous month	−0.0815	−0.0529
	(0.159)	(0.257)
Treasury bond rate when in office	0.000878	0.0281
	(0.0399)	(0.0629)
% govt lead when in office	−0.0406	−0.0643
	(0.0304)	(0.0793)
Constant	0.0207	−1.333*
	(0.155)	(0.555)
N	497	129
R^2	0.110	0.220

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Another possibility is to examine the tone of articles. If the result is driven entirely by articles which discuss cohesion within Labour, but are positive towards the party as a whole, this result is significantly more explicable. This is not hypothesised or expected, but is theoretically possible if the data is not measuring events.

Table 5.5: All models, with DV the Conservative's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0810	0.0217	−0.0947	−0.231
	(0.128)	(0.152)	(0.218)	(0.311)
% change in Con poll previous month		−0.224***		−0.186*
		(0.0488)		(0.0934)
No. editorials previous month		0.299		0.209
		(0.230)		(0.390)
Treasury bond rate when in office		−0.00314		0.0353
		(0.0278)		(0.0570)
% govt lead when in office		−0.0111		−0.0127
		(0.0104)		(0.0301)
Constant	−0.0719	−0.209	0.282	0.106
	(0.130)	(0.226)	(0.442)	(0.480)
N	500	497	130	129
R^2	0.001	0.057	0.001	0.045

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

As can be seen in Table 5.6, editorials that are positive in tone appear to have essentially no impact on polls. While the sign of the coefficients remains negative for all models, they are insignificant, and quite strikingly so, in every model. Once again, the only relevant variable is the change in the party's poll rating in the previous month. While there are only twenty-seven positive editorials in total in the dataset it is apparent that they are not having a disproportionate impact on results; it is not that the British public has been temporarily swayed by new and positive coverage of the party. This result is as expected.

Table 5.6: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total positive editorials

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total positive editorials	−0.332	−0.300	−0.258	−0.0990
	(0.435)	(0.462)	(0.476)	(0.503)
% change in Lab poll previous month		−0.325***		−0.532***
		(0.0562)		(0.130)
No. positive editorials previous month		−0.0609		0.161
		(0.155)		(0.266)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.00254		0.0317
		(0.0401)		(0.0653)
% govt lead when in office		−0.0389		−0.0582
		(0.0301)		(0.0794)
Constant	0.0596	0.0549	−0.0539	−0.483
	(0.144)	(0.155)	(0.392)	(0.408)
N	500	497	130	129
R^2	0.001	0.110	0.002	0.199

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 5.7: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total negative editorials.

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total negative editorials	0.166	0.145	0.563	0.648
	(0.209)	(0.216)	(0.289)	(0.334)
% change in Lab poll previous month		−0.323***		−0.535***
		(0.0560)		(0.129)
No. negative editorials previous month		−0.0979		−0.0419
		(0.158)		(0.270)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.000722		0.0324
		(0.0397)		(0.0639)
% govt lead when in office		−0.0409		−0.0609
		(0.0303)		(0.0792)
Constant	−0.0150	0.00521	−0.774	−1.148*
	(0.150)	(0.156)	(0.504)	(0.531)
N	500	497	130	129
R^2	0.001	0.110	0.019	0.221

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

While there is no statistical significance at conventional levels for negative editorials in Table 5.7, it is extremely close. Without controls the p-value stands at 0.052, with them it stands at 0.053. The z-scores for both for this variable are 1.94. This is so close to the commonly accepted value for statistical significance (below 0.05 and above 1.96, respectively), that if not indicative of a relationship between these variables it is at least strongly suggestive of one. Examining solely the editorials considered negative reveals a similar pattern to what occurs when one looks at all editorials. There is a clear and positive correlation in a given month between having a greater number of editorials that discuss Labour cohesion and

Labour's performance in the polls that month. Every other variable behaves as expected and as they have in other models. This effect only emerges in the model with the reduced cohesion-related sample. Also, while the number of negative editorials is relatively close to being significant, in the conventional sense (it has a p-value of 0.063) it is not. This means that the number of negative editorials is somehow related to good fortunes for Labour in the short term, independently of the level of the previous month's coverage and independently of the trend in Labour's polls. This is important, indicating that it cannot simply be the explanation that the sequence is reversed in the short term; it is not that there is a significant drop in the polls for Labour, which causes muttering and an editorial, which promptly rights itself in the next poll. In any case, most of the events described in these editorials did not emerge spontaneously. As discussed above, they generally corresponded with major events in and of themselves, rather than in response to Labour's poll rating.

These results should not be overstated. The r-squared on all of these models is relatively modest, and never reaches higher than 0.221 of all variation in the dependent variable accounted for. There are evidently other factors accounting for a great deal of variation in opinion polls in a given month. Similarly, this sort of coverage and events does not matter in a general sense, but it does matter in those months when it is of the most relevance to voters. Something appears to be causing Labour's short term polling to improve when there is more negative coverage of events within the party.

5.6.1 Time effects

The other large issue with this analysis lies in the assumptions that govern it. It implicitly assumes that impact of cohesion on a party will be an immediate one. It assumes that the Labour will record all of the damage, or gains, from any infighting that it engages in immediately after it engages in them.

There are reasons why we might expect this to be true. Party cohesion is not a first-tier explanation for voter choice but it occasionally surges in prominence. It might seem logical that its impact should appear at its strongest right after the disunity. Even if voters do not care about disunity in and of itself expressing discontent at the party for this reason might also be expected to be a short-term, immediate response.

But there are also reasons why this might not be an immediate effect. It may be that voters simply take time in order to change their evaluation of a party. This makes sense if cohesion is important because it changes how voters think of a party, rather than the cohesion itself is of intrinsic importance to them. If cohesion is of importance because it affects what voters

think of a party this may not be an immediate effect. This is because it takes time for impressions to change. This can be fairly easily seen in contemporary polling in Britain as to which party would be the most effective on issues. According to the polling company change, when it happens, is very slow. On issues as diverse healthcare, the economy, immigration and housing the party that is perceived to be more competent stays that way since they began their poll tracker in 2016 (YouGov, 2018). This is in spite of an election and major issues involving leaving the EU occurring during this time. This suggests that voters' opinions as to the fundamental characteristics of parties does not change speedily. It might not therefore be wise to assume that an impact of party cohesion is an immediate one. In any case, the assumption that we know when in time cohesion is likely to affect a party must be relaxed. Even if this was not plausible removing this assumption must still be done in order to check the robustness of these results.

Yet another possibility is that there exists multiple time effects. It is possible that infighting could have one effect in the short term and a very different effect over the longer term. For instance, it is possible that disunity could provide immediate negative consequences to parties but no long term issues. But, if voters have long-term but ultimately stable impressions as to what parties are like it is possible that short term changes in the level of cohesion in a party do not matter, but rather what matters is the changes in the impression of the party that these engender.

This can be accounted for using an error correction model. This model breaks down the independent variable into two parts – a short run and long run impact variable (Keele & De Boef, 2004). The impact of an immediate change in disunity can be expressed as the change from the last observation to this observation. In this case that means the change in the number of editorials from last month to the month of the poll. If that shows a significant result is suggests that short term fluctuations in disunity make meaningful differences to Labour's poll results. In order to account for the long term result of disunity on a party's support the lag of the total number of editorials was used. This is because this is, by definition a total measure over time that is not immediate. This means that it should capture any longterm effect if present

In order to more precisely measure when an effect in time occurs another new model, using lags, was on the data from *The Times.* This model was account for time and change over time, but would otherwise resemble the main models already described. The dependent variable is the change in Labour's poll rating from the previous month. This was chosen, over

using Labour's total poll rating, because it is the difference in Labour's fortunes that disunity causes that interests analysis, rather than simply trying to account for the entirety of Labour's poll rating. This is also the dependent variable that was used previously.

The main independent variable is the total number of editorials that were published in *The Times* over the previous month. However as we do not wish to assume we know when this cohesion is going to influence the perception of a party enough to affect poll rating this variable was lagged four times – the number suggested by AIC analysis for this data. This means that when over the period of four months an effect starts to register could be included. Also included was the change in the number of editorials, to account for whether the effect is really change from a baseline. Also included is Labour's total poll rating and the change in Labour's poll rating during the previous month as these may plausibly affect changes in Labour's poll rating. Finally also included in this model were the treasury bond rate and the government's polling lead, as before. The results can be seen below in Table 5.8.

The results of this analysis are clear. The effect of cohesion over the very short run vanishes. This can be seen in the error correction model in Table 5.8, where the impact of the change in the total number of editorials is insignificant. Rather what is significant is the lag of the total number of editorials. As this is a proxy variable for the impact of disunity over time this suggests that disunity has a long term effect on a party. This coefficient is positive, so this suggests that disunity is of long term benefit Labour. This unusual result has already been found several times before in this thesis. This simply provides further confirmation of it.

The lagged model is an attempt to uncover the precise length of time it takes for this effect to filter through to Labour's poll rating. This transpired to be a relatively quick, albeit not immediate effect. The first order lag is the one that provides a statistically significant result. This suggests that voters change their minds relatively quickly. The lack of any statistically significant result from a time before this means that it does not stem from more distant infighting.

Table 5.8: Error Correction Model and lagged model to take into account time impact

	(1) Error Correction Model	(2) Lagged Model
Labour poll rating	0.155***	0.155***
	(0.0229)	(0.0235)
Number of editorials lagged	0.389*	0.381*
	(0.176)	(0.185)
Change in number of editorials	0.131	0.0683
	(0.139)	(0.186)
Number of editorials this month		0.111
		(0.240)
Number of editorials lag 2		0.0331
		(0.185)
Number of editorials lag 3		-0.136
		(0.184)
Change in number of editorials, lagged		0.00577
		(0.0438)
Treasury bond rate	0.102*	0.100*
	(0.0452)	(0.0460)
Govt polling lead	0.0359**	0.0365**
	(0.0131)	(0.0132)
Constant	-7.359***	-7.361***
	(1.160)	(1.191)
N	499	497
R^2	0.091	0.092

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Taken together, this suggests that infighting in British Labour has an impact. This impact is actually positive for the party and that it feels its effect relatively quickly, but not immediately, for the party. All of this is completely consistent with the statistical analysis that has already taken place. It adds more information and confirmation to this robust result.

5.6.2 Robustness Checks

A number of robustness checks were performed. All observations affected by the staff strike in *The Times* in late 1978 and 1979 were excluded and the analysis performed again. This was not expected to yield different results and indeed it did not. The analysis was also performed again, excluding each individual year. In general the results hold. Certainly the direction and the substantive magnitude of the effects were consistent across every analysis. In roughly one year out of five the significance of the key independent variable changes; this is not surprising given the limited number of observations. This happens in both directions in the limited circumstances in which it does occur. Both the effect of new editorials in general sometimes becomes insignificant and also the effect of new negative editorials becomes statistically significant. These occur roughly as often and as seldom as each other. This is likely to be due to the limited size of the dependent variable rather than any matter of substantive importance owing to the consistent direction and magnitude of the effects. In any case p-values were never above 0.10 under any circumstances.

Finally, the data was aggregated into periods of six months to explore whether the cumulutaive effect needed more time to appear in another way. The results of this are in Appendix C, but no statistically significant relationship was observed.

A more serious issue concerns the methodology. This chapter has used editorials in *The Times* as a proxy for events of disunity. This chapter is not concerned with a media effect; nonetheless, it remains possible that the observed effect is a media effect and not the desired proxy. While there are good reasons to select *The Times*, it is possible that the newspaper does not capture Labour voters as much as would be ideal. *The Times* is not particularly widely read among the electorate. Another newspaper whose readership is more Labour-inclined might have both greater coverage of events of disunity and might be treated more seriously by Labour voters. If the effect observed is predominantly a media effect then a different result should be observed using a different paper. On the other hand, if *The Times* is a good proxy for events, then the paper used should not matter much for the overall results. *The Times* may be the best single proxy for events that are happening, but there are other broadsheets that will also be mostly accurate. If editorials in *The Times* works as a proxy for wider events then using another newspaper should lead to a substantively similar result if the other newspaper used was reputable.

Accordingly *The Guardian*, a traditionally left-leaning paper, was used as a robustness check and confirmation test. *The Guardian* was used for a number of reasons: it is a major

broadsheet newspaper that will report and comment on major events. It is a newspaper with long connections to the British political left and is widely read and respected there. If a media effect is driving the results we should expect to observe it here. *The Guardian* is a newspaper whose opinions we would expect to be heeded by Labour voters as it is of the same political 'tribe'. While *The Times* is relatively impartial by the standards of British newspapers, it is clearly not from the same political family as Labour voters and they may not give it the same weight. If, as expected, *The Times* is acting as a proxy for events this should not matter. If the effect stems from the media then the two newspapers should systematically differ.

Data for *The Guardian* was gathered for the period from 1963 to 1995. This is a slightly smaller collection of data than that used for *The Times* but the purpose of this portion of the thesis is to confirm that the findings of earlier in this chapter are robust, and this was the length necessary in order to obtain a meaningful size for the dependent variable. The gathered editorials behave in much the same way as those from *The Times* do over the time period. The same analysis and statistical tests were undertaken as with *The Times* – two bootstrapped regressions, the first with the entire sample and the second with that relevant to cohesion. The main two results are shown below – the basic model and the model with controls.

Table 5.9: Basic Models with DV Labour's poll change for *The Guardian*.

	(1) Complete dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.157	0.298*
	(0.109)	(0.139)
constant	−0.0626	−0.498
	(0.199)	(0.467)
N	387	141
R^2	0.004	0.017

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

These two tables confirm that editorials from *The Times* did indeed act as an effective proxy for events of disunity. Table 5.9 is substantively identical to the equivalent Table 5.4 for *The Times*. In months where events associated with disunity were already occurring, occurrence was associated with the party improving its performance in opinion polls. This was not however true in general for the whole dataset.

Table 5.10 similarly behaves as we would expect it to if the findings were robust. The number of editorials does indeed have the same results for *The Guardian* as it does for *The Times*. The only real exception is the significant result is for the entire dataset, which was not present before. The result, though, is substantively larger in the reduced cohesion related subset. Each of the control variables also behave as expected. Furthermore, all subsequent results performed with this data were substantively identical to the main results reported here. There was no statistical significance for data from *The Guardian* either for Conservative poll results. As previously discovered, the effect was not being driven by positive editorials for this data. The result was, again, being driven by negative editorials. While the actual coefficients differ, the data is different. The substantive interpretation is identical and, in any case, bootstrapped results are not directly interpretable.

Table 5.10: Complete Models, with DV Labour's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.218*	0.307*
	(0.102)	(0.150)
% change in Lab poll previous month	−0.320***	−0.330**
	(0.0614)	(0.108)
No. editorials previous month	−0.123	−0.199
	(0.118)	(0.143)
Treasury bond rate when in office	0.0235	−0.0733
	(0.0468)	(0.0747)
% govt lead when in office	−0.0392	−0.0660
	(0.0314)	(0.0519)
constant	−0.219	−0.199
	(0.293)	(0.574)
N	303	121
R^2	0.118	0.137

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

All of this suggests that *The Times* was an effective proxy. Another major newspaper, with ties to the party and its voters, recorded a virtually identical result. There therefore seems little reason to doubt that *The Times* was operating as stated. Finally, the data was aggregated into periods of six months to explore whether the cumulutaive effect needed more time to appear in another way. The results of this are in Appendix C, but no statistically significant relationship was observed.

5.7 Discussion

There are a number of possible, potentially inter-connecting, explanations for this counter-intuitive result, which contradicts previous results of analysis of cohesion as well as the author's own results with election studies, in addition to being contrary to the central hypotheses. These can be summarised as relating to the nature of the lack of cohesion, the nature of news coverage and the nature of the voters themselves. The differing time horizon, being much more short-term, that exists here that is not present in election studies may also play a role. These shall be discussed in turn.

The time horizon is undoubtedly important of the main results, and places this in a very different context from analyses that only look at one election. What this result does not tell us is that an increased lack of cohesion which is covered in a negative way helps a party in elections. Rather it is that this increased lack of cohesion helps the party in the next *opinion poll*. The superficial, observable correlation that Labour did very badly in 1983, the election at which it was most divided, remains. It is also still true, as election studies have found, that if an individual voter perceives a party to be less united, all other things being equal they are less likely to vote for that party. Opinion polls are very good predictors of election results, but they are not the same as them. There have been numerous 'misses' in opinion polls in Britain. The 1992 example stands out (see Crewe, 1992; Curtice & Semetko, 1994). Furthermore it is easier for voters to express approval or disapproval in a poll when it is not in itself effective than it is to do the same at a general election, when they may have to live with their choice for years. While a valid criticism, the results of Table 5.8 with the error-correction model and lagged results suggest that these results hold over a longer time horizon.

This is not to say that opinion polls lack worth. Opinion polls clearly can, and do, accurately record public opinion. We can empirically observe this through the accurate forecast of election results over decades in virtually every developed country. All this is to observe is that, while polling is often very accurate, it is not always accurate. It is possible, albeit quite unlikely, for it to have simply failed here.

It may also be that, while every effort was made to accommodate it, the impact of the polls on cohesion is too far back to be captured by a lagged variable. It may be that bad polls do not trigger actions, they trigger plans for future actions so the effect does not appear until well after the previous month it occurred, when the party might have begun to claw back lost ground in any case. These interpretations, based on the drawbacks of this sort of data

and analysis, cannot be completely dismissed. It must be noted that only negative editorials had an impact, which suggests something more specific than data deficiencies.

If we accept that the effect is real and not a data artefact, that suggests that voters think about and respond to cohesion differently at different points in the electoral cycle and that this effect comes into existence over the long run. If voters respond differently in actual elections from the way they respond between these elections that means that the factors that they use to answer the question of who they are going to vote for in an election and who they are going to tell someone they will vote for are different. Even if it is the same question, it means the factors are weighed differently.

The events covered in these editorials are diverse, but there are a number of consistent themes that continuously crop up. The most important of these is leadership within the party. This can either be the literal titled position as head of the party, or as a figure of great influence within the party that has an important impact on policy. This can be seen, for instance, in much of the career of Roy Jenkins, a senior Labour politician whose career in the party, both at cabinet and elsewhere, spanned most of the period under study. In battling uncompromisingly for Britain's entry to the European Communities, at the expense of his career in the party, he shows that though he did contest the leadership, much of the struggle for political leadership does not have to be for actual positions within the party (J. Campbell, 2014). If anything, Tony Benn's crusade to transform the Labour Party into a far-left political outfit was even more extreme in this area, and at least somewhat intersected with that of Jenkins (Powell, 2001). This sort of struggle may actually be useful to the party, in that it allows them to see that there are alternative perspectives at play in the party. This kind of struggle allows voters to rationalise away problems with a party and it provides them with means to dismiss the views and perspectives of politicians who they may not approve of. A left-wing voter in the 1970s may not like Roy Jenkins, but they can be reassured that this same party also has Tony Benn and Michael Foot as among its most senior members, who have a reasonable likelihood of overruling Jenkins. This means that large numbers of voters may not actually be primarily seeing division and strife, but the expression of views by senior figures in the party that they themselves hold. This in turn makes them more inclined to support the party.

Furthermore, formal leadership contests within a party are a somewhat rare event. They are occasions where it is not only tolerated but expected that individuals within a party may

argue with one another, sometimes ferociously. Voters may simply see this positively, adding to the vibrancy of the news coverage and media attention.

Nonetheless, these interpretations, while plausible, do not necessarily fully explain this phenomenon. They do not help to explain why it is the *negative* accounts of cohesion which are driving the statistical analysis – positive accounts have no specific impact. It is necessary to look elsewhere for why voters might react positively to negative coverage.

The second potential explanation for this result is what news coverage means in and of itself. If an event is covered in an editorial that generally means it is significant and newsworthy. That also means that the party is more likely to be in the news in a broader sense. An 'all publicity is good publicity' effect may come into play here. It may be that it is not so much that voters see the negative coverage and commentary of events and react negatively to it, but rather that voters are reminded as to the existence of the party; this results in a small increase in support which does not last. It may be that this provides a short boost but long term harm, as eventually voters come to perceive the party in a certain, largely negative way. Arguably, this would be similar to a 'priming' effect (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11; Zaller, 1992, p. 80). Priming refers to giving respondents prompts to think about a certain issue, which then causes that issue to be a more important factor for decision making when another, related issue is brought up. The respondent is 'primed' to think a certain issue is important. This works in a very similar way here. A lack of cohesion causes renewed attention on the Labour Party, and thus greater news coverage of it. Then when Gallup poll the respondent and ask who they would vote for if there was a general election tomorrow, they have had reason to think about Labour before the question is asked, and thus are more likely to pick them. This works differently than the simple idea that voters like vibrant parties. In this case, they have actually not given the party any specific thought whatsoever. They are merely reacting to its greater media prominence. This makes it somewhat more plausible as it does not require voters to view negative coverage positively.

This would explain the negative perception that voters have on the one hand. They do seem to be less likely to vote for parties that they perceive to be divided. It would also explain however why the results of this study would suggest that infighting is of benefit to Labour. They do indeed benefit – from the notice it provides. They cease to benefit and it starts to cause active harm if it is significant enough to change their overall perception of the party from united to divided.

A final, although related, possibility is a kind of reflexive defensiveness among certain kinds of voters. It might be that voters do not necessarily care about these events at all. Internal party bickering after all may not impact policy or even necessarily the management of parties. However, there are numerous Labour-identifying voters and there are certainly are lots of voters who think much of the media is biased against the Labour Party, an idea that has at least some supporting basis historically (Wilks-Heeg, Blick, & Crone, 2013). Naturally, a voter inclined to support the Labour Party and who thinks the media is biased against them, may be more sceptical of criticism directed at them from these biased sources. A good way of showing that you disapprove of such an action is to profess support for the party in its time of need and under such unfair criticism.

This may act as a kind of temporary 'underdog' effect, whereby people like to support someone they perceive as losing. However, voters may, when casting their ballots in the actual election, recognise that 'Underdogs may capture our hearts, but at the same time, we may recognize that underdogs are usually inferior to top dogs and thus may deserve their subordinate status. As a result, we do not typically predict that our beloved underdogs will actually prevail, and we may not actually support them over more successful social entities.' (Kim et al., 2008, p. 2553). In other words, just because the voters may feel pangs of sympathy for a struggling Labour Party and may want them, at some level, to succeed, that does not mean that will actually vote for them on the day. This would also account for why the positive reaction is limited to the cases where the lack of cohesion was most severe. It may simply require something of that magnitude in order to trigger the underdog effect in voters.

There is considerable coverage in the psychology literature on the underdog effect in this context. Much of this is experimental and observed pattern seems to correspond with what they found in lab settings. It is not controversial to suggest that contextual factors and perceived likelihood of success has an influence on how individuals perceive matters. This can be observed in conflict situations for instance, where the moral judgement that respondents had on Israel depended on whether the country was juxtaposed with the Palestinian Territories or with the entire Arab world. If Israel was predominantly portrayed as being in conflict with the much larger Arab World respondents had much more sympathy for the state than if it was portrayed as being predominantly in conflict with Palestine (Vandello, Michniewicz, & Goldschmied, 2011, p. 1175). However, individuals were also predisposed to like order, and ultimately support more dominant groups, particularly if they

are inclined to social dominance. Does and Mentovich demonstrated this in the case of sports teams (Does & Mentovich, 2016). This is in line with factors that govern the underdog effect. Being pleased with another's unlikely triumph over adversity is contingent on a number of factors, not least of which is deservedness (Allison & Burnette, 2009, p. 299). The underdog defeating the top-dog is only emotionally satisfying if the underdog is perceived to *deserve* it. If respondents were told that the underdog actually worked less hard than the top-dog their sympathy evaporated quite quickly.

Closer to political science, Goldschmied and Vandello found that if researchers reframed Barack Obama as an underdog candidate, as opposed to frontrunner, the level of respondents who were Democrats who reported that they would vote for him increased. However, manipulating this variable records much less success for those who thought of themselves as Republicans (Goldschmied & Vandello, 2009, pp. 28–29). This result is that the idea that underdogs which individuals already find sympathetic may be able to attract votes from those sympathetic voters that they would not otherwise receive. By contrast, underdogs that individuals do not find appealing are no more likely to be supported.

To take the case of the 1979–83 parliament and election cycle, the cycle with both the least cohesion and the weakest ultimate Labour election result in the election, there were numerous Labour identifiers who did not vote for the party. The British Election Study for that year records that 32% of respondents identified Labour as the party to which they felt closest to in that election, well above the 24% of respondents in the study who said that they had actually voted for them (see Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: Labour identification and whether the respondent voted Labour in the 1983 election (Data from British Election Study, Heath, Jowell, & Curtice, 1983).

	Labour vote	Other
Labour ID	838	392
	68.13	31.87
Other	99	2,626
	3.63	96.37
Total	937	3,018
	23.69	76.31

The implication of this for analysis here is that there were a considerable number of voters available who generally liked Labour, but were not voting for them. This gave Labour room to grow when the underdog effect kicks in, even if they are not voting for the party in an

actual general election. A hostile media climate or simply a bad series of events could give Labour the appearance of being an underdog relative to the Conservatives. There are certainly voters who sympathise with Labour who report that they are not voting for the party. These bad events leading to sympathetic voters supporting the party in its hour of need would not be a wholly new effect. Even within political science we can observe it as a kind of party specific 'rally around the flag' phenomenon – where support for political leaders increases if negative things happen to the country at large (J. R. Lee, 1977). However, the party failing to resolve the situation, or being seen as unwilling to resolve it –certainly some individuals at some points were not willing to make efforts at resolution – could try voters' patience and lead them to ultimately not support Labour in actual elections, as discussed above. Ultimately, we cannot measure whether the uptick in Labour polls is due to identifiers coming home to the party – that data does not exist. However, it remains significantly more likely than Conservative or Liberal voters being seduced by Labour only when in turmoil.

This is the most complete and plausible explanation for the failure of either hypothesis to materialise. It accounts for negative accounts being more influential than positive ones, and also why this may not be apparent in analyses of how people actually vote, as the effect was temporary and reverted to their actual preferences – for strong united parties – by the time of the actual general election.

If true, this has an important implication. It suggests that it takes considerable time for the negative effect of disunity – which we know from Chapter Three to be present – to filter from events into public evaluations. It seems that the electorate does not respond immediately and the building of such perceptions occurs over a longer term.

Other possibilities, while superficially plausible, either have significantly weaker empirical support or are impossible to test. For instance, the idea that *The Times* editorials may operate at a considerable delay seems plausible. This would mean that the problem has already been around the party for a non-negligible period of time. This, in turn, could mean that the party has already seen all of all of the damage that are going to receive and are likely to rise simply by default by the time an editorial is published. This is unlikely for three reasons. First, the polling trend has been explicitly controlled for in the data with an independent variable to account for Labour's previous polling. Secondly, the effect is only observed for those months where Labour is already engaged in infighting; it can only be seen when there is already more than one editorial about Labour that month. This suggests

that the issues are ongoing ones at the time. Thirdly, this is unlikely because the statistical analysis would have picked up an effect, if present, of Labour poll ratings being a good 'predictor' of the incidence of editorials in any case.

5.8 Conclusion

There does seem to be an effect of cohesion on the poll fortunes of the British Labour Party. However, it is not a negative one that had been hypothesised. Rather, the party seems to do better in polls after incidences that show low levels of cohesion. While there are several possible explanations for this effect, the most plausible is an underdog effect. Voters previously sympathetic to the Labour Party feel sorry for or solidarity with them and show their support in an opinion poll, but support that does not carry over into the much more important general election.

While this result can be over-analysed, and may be a product of the time it occurred, it is still very relevant. The Labour Party's current struggles with leadership and the direction of the party means that any result is likely to be of interest. This result is likely to be of little comfort to them.

This also provides evidence for the belief that public reaction to cohesion changes depending on the stage of the process that it occurs in. We can observe that voters definitively do not regard it as a positive when actually voting, but the story is different in the period between elections, when public sentiment can be measured by opinion polls, which suggests that voters do not think about party support in the same way at these different times.

Whether this effect can be observed in contemporary terms remains to be seen. This will be explored in Chapter Six.

6. Exploring the Causal Mechanism

6.1 Summary of Chapter

This chapter will first outline what has been found in the thesis so far. It will then discuss the importance of showing both that the causal mechanism really does work as described, and what is driving the effect observed. The chapter will then outline the dataset and methodology used to examine this. It will then show through descriptive statistics and ordered logit analyses that the causal mechanism operates as described. Following this, the chapter uses factor analysis to show that the reason why the causal mechanism operates as described is that voters associate infighting with the party leadership.

6.2 Introduction

This research project has established a number of findings. It has established that party infighting is associated with a reduced likelihood to vote for a party. It suggested a mechanism for why this might be happening – an association between cohesion and competent party leadership that voters might have. It then investigated this effect further. It first showed that there is little supportive evidence for the idea that the electoral effect of cohesion is a purely media generated effect. In other words, there is not much support for the idea that cohesion matters because the media tells voters that it should matter. However, there is support for the idea that actual events of disunity have at least some bearing on polls of parties.

What all of this has not overcome are issues with the research design of these studies. These other pieces of research are the products of their own particular time and place. While this cannot be helped with regards to the findings of Chapters Four and Five it is possible to verify the findings of Chapter Three in a new later context. This would help confirm the validity of those results.

More importantly, there remains an issue regarding establishing the causal mechanism. While this research has shown that there is certainly a correlation between infighting and party performance, it has not shown that this is due to the infighting itself. It remains possible that there are other factors that co-vary with both voting likelihood and infighting in parties. In order to fully determine the electoral impact of cohesion, this issue must be dealt with.

Using opinion poll data, it is possible to probe both of these issues and therefore to be able to dismiss them as concerns for this research project. This can be done by asking questions relating to the specific area of the necessary causal mechanism. Therefore, questions relating to whether the major parties are united, whether infighting makes respondents think differently about parties and whether infighting is a consideration when casting a vote must be considered. Additional analysis was also undertaken to further verify the role of the media for the causal mechanism.

6.3 Justification

6.3.1 Causal Process

One of the major issues with this research has been to establish a clear and definitive causal process. The results of Chapters Three, Four and Five have been suggestive but not definitive.

Chapter Three established, based on a variety of countries and elections in the 1980s and early 1990s, that if a respondent views a party as less united than other parties they are less likely to vote for it. They were also more likely to vote for a party that is clearly a competitor for the same votes. In all of the elections examined, this was either a major party for national office that was a realistic contender to head the government, an ideologically similar party or both. Party cohesion was clearly a separate variable.

However, Chapter Four established that while there did seem to be a link between volume of coverage and fortunes of parties in Canada, this was difficult to tease out. Particularly, negative coverage did not seem to specifically affect the fortunes of the Canadian Liberals. This means that the findings were much less clear than in Chapter Three. This suggests that while we know that when the public thinks parties are not united those parties did worse at this time, this is not purely a media-driven effect. This implies that it is the acts of disunity itself that drives this impression of unity, or lack of it, for voters.

Chapter Five examined this idea using a different methodology than for Chapter Three. It aimed to determine the long run impact of a lack of cohesion in Britain. It found, again, that the actual events of disunity did matter for the poll results of the Labour Party, but that it was at its most significant when the public had already been prompted to think about cohesion. Nonetheless, there was still support for the idea that it is events, rather than quantities of newspaper coverage, that determine public attitudes and electoral response to cohesion.

Putting these various results together, it seems to suggest that there is a public response to cohesion, but that this response and attitude is driven by actual events and not simply the coverage of them. However, the causal process here is still not explicit. In order to interrogate the exact mechanism, we must first determine explicitly what voters think about the unity of parties. While it seems very plausible that voters evaluate disunity negatively as it correlates with a reduced likelihood of voting for a party, it is possible that some other variable is causing those who do not think parties are united to cease voting for that party.

It remains possible that many voters regard disunity positively and are simply outnumbered. This should be easy to falsify. If voters do not regard disunity as negative, some other variable is covarying with both unity and vote choice, and disunity is not independently responsible for the effect it produces. While this is not expected, it must be explicitly ruled out for the causal process discussed throughout this research to hold true:

> ***H1:*** *The number of respondents whose evaluation of a party is worsened if they regard it as disunited is far greater than the number whose evaluation becomes more positive.*

Additionally to regarding disunity as negative, voters must also feel that it matters. They must feel that disunity matters to the extent that it should affect their vote. This is an idea that relies on political interest and sophistication.

Political interest among citizens is a fairly large area of research. Most of the research on the area is concerned with factors that predict differing amounts of political interest among the public. This usually amounts to whether the variation in political interest is a product of lifecycle or cohort effects (for instance, Glenn & Grimes, 1968; Prior, 2010), or based on fundamental characteristics like gender (Verba, Burns, & Lehman Schlozman, 1997). Others are concerned with the role that political interest in predicting other phenomena, such as value systems and support for authoritarianism (Duriez, Hiel, & Kossowska, 2005 is a good example of this research). However, there has been relatively little research on how political interest is developed.

Much of the research on what causes interest in politics is focused on what those interested use to acquire their information, i.e. the news media. The media is clearly extremely important to the dissemination of political information, leading to the idea of the 'mediasation' of politics (Stromback, 2008). Stromback and Shehata argue vociferously that exposure to news media is a good predictor of political interest, even if that exposure is not a uniformly good generator of later political interest among the public (Stromback & Shehata, 2010). Education is often thought to correlate extremely well with political interest, to the point of being recommended as a substitute for it in some analyses (Sniderman, Brody & Tetlock, 1991). Most importantly, consuming more news media does seem to be correlated with increased interest in politics in and of itself. For instance, those respondents who consumed more news media learned more about candidates' positions and became more interested as the campaign went on in the case of the US presidential

election of 2004 than those who did not (Drew & Weaver, 2006). This process of increasing consumption leading to more and more interest suggests that the direction of the effect runs in this direction rather than the reverse.

This does not mean that there is no relationship between news media consumption and political sophistication. Luskin found that interest and other motivational variables really matter to building a sophisticated understanding of politics, but that informational variables, like news media consumption and education levels, were in fact a relatively poor predictor of sophistication (Luskin, 1990). If true this means that it is extremely important to examine both the flow of information, as in Chapter Four, as well as receiving more information, in addition to the motivation that respondents have to receive that information. This acquisition of new knowledge to encourage political interest does seem to come from the media in many cases (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006), although it is affected by whether the environment is information rich (Fraile, 2013) and the quantity of information provided does not affect the public equally, with those that were information-poor in the beginning benefitting more (Ksiazek, Malthouse, & Webster, 2010). This view is not universally held, with Van Deth arguing that sophistication and knowledge is in fact associated with less engagement in politics (Van Deth, 2000). Gomez and Wilson find some evidence that less sophisticated voters cannot make economic judgments based on performance (Gomez & Wilson, 2001). If true, that would make the ability of voters to distinguish based on cohesion quite challenging, being a more complex basis for a vote than pocketbook voting. However, as previous chapters and literature suggest, this effect in spite of the difficulty, and that national context and institutions and other such indirect mechanisms matter for sophistication (Gordon & Segura, 1997), it is more reasonable to assume in this case that receiving information helps to build the sophisticated political understanding necessary for respondents to see cohesion as important.

Clearly, in the case of disunity, voters have to know of it and for it to affect their evaluations of parties. This needs to be established before the causal mechanism can be explored further. This leads to:

> ***H2:*** *Voters will have statistically different evaluations of the cohesion of different parties in the same election.*

However, they also need to care about it. In the absence of political interest there is no reason to expect voters really know about issues of disunity. Furthermore, as political

interest is correlated with political sophistication, there is also little reason for voters to even understand, if they did know of it, why issues of disunity may be worth being a consideration for who they vote for. Education is, at best, only an imperfect substitute for some information. As a proxy for political motivation, it must be included. Even if infighting is something they frown upon, political interest is needed to garner the political sophistication to understand why disunity may be a negative trait for political parties. Why disunity should be regarded as a negative occurrence for parties by voters has already been outlined in Chapter Two. In brief, it is because disunity affects party policy performance, the stability of the party leadership and perceptions of party competence. This leads to:

> ***H3:*** *Thinking negatively of disunity will be correlated with disunity being a factor in vote choice.*

> ***H4:*** *As political interest increases citizens become more likely to regard disunity as an important factor in determining how they vote.*

As cohesion is expected to be a valence issue – one that reflects the basic competence of parties and their ability to do the very basic aspects of their job – it is expected that this is likely to be most related to variables that discuss party leadership over anything else. This is because leaders are likely to be the source of, or at least the focus for, any manoeuvring within party ranks. While leadership evaluations and party cohesion are clearly different variables, this is likely to be the most significant relationship if party cohesion is most related to valence issues. It is important to know the answer to this question because it helps to ascertain why any effect present would appear. This will be undertaken using factor analysis. This helps to determine why this affect should work in an area of politics which we know something about.

> ***H5:*** *Respondents, if they associate cohesion with any variable at all, will associate it with variables that relate to party leadership.*

This chapter provides insight into the causal mechanisms linking party cohesion and voter choice in two ways. First, it shows that there is a definite link between the two that makes logical sense. If voters see party infighting as a negative thing to engage in, and they also report that it will affect their vote then it follows that party infighting is causing voters to shift their support to some other party. This shows that there is a causal mechanism to investigate.

Second, it examines the causal mechanism by providing insight into why the two may be causally related. There are numerous reasons why voters make the decisions that they do. Some of those reasons are related to the parties themselves. These explanations rely on various particular assumptions. If voters associate party infighting with one of these explanations, it would show that they think about party infighting and that issue in a similar way. This means that they can be thought of in a similar way. As already discussed, it is expected that party cohesion will be related to party leadership. If it is, that means that party infighting is causing voters to change their minds in the same way that we already know party leadership does.

6.4 Data

The first hypothesis uses the data from the election studies used in Chapter Three. The first method of testing the first next three hypotheses uses the opinion poll data, outlined in Chapter Three above. The poll data was gathered in Britain during January 2017.

In addition to the basic question of party unity, two further questions were commissioned. The second two questions were specifically aimed at providing a firm foundation for the causal mechanism. First, the result has been largely that cohesion affects parties negatively, but this could be due to other factors that co-vary with cohesion. As it has been posited throughout that cohesion directly affects the support that parties will receive in elections it must be first established that is indeed the case. This means that voters should, on the whole perceive lack of cohesion negatively, even if they do not change their vote based on it. This resulted in the following question, asked to all respondents:

> *If infighting is happening in a party, does it change how you view that party?*
>
> [SINGLE RESPONSE]
>
> 1. Yes, it makes me view them much less favourably
> 2. Yes, it makes me view them slightly less favourably
> 3. No, it does not make me them any differently
> 4. Yes, it makes me view them slightly more favourably
> 5. Yes, it makes me view them much more favourably'

While the results of other chapters would not predict that voters could perceive infighting positively, it remains possible that they could do so; therefore this must be included in any question. This question is constructed as a scale, so that responses to infighting from the respondent get progressively more positive as the number increases.

The third question is designed for the next step in the causal process, in order to capture whether or not cohesion actually affects votes for respondents, rather than simply changing their party evaluations without consequences. As it directly concerns voting behaviour, it was not asked to the whole sample, but merely to those respondents who reported that they intended to vote at the next general election. The question is as follows:

> *When casting your vote in an election, is infighting in political parties something that you consider when making your choice at the ballot box?*

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

1. Yes, infighting is the most important factor I consider when deciding how to cast my vote
2. Yes, infighting is one of several important factors I consider when deciding how to cast my vote
3. Yes, infighting is a minor factor I consider when deciding to cast my vote
4. No, infighting is not a factor I consider when deciding how to cast my vote.

This is also arranged as a scale. It does not make sense though to evaluate this variable as either positive or negative – either cohesion affects the likelihood of a respondent voting for a party or it does not. There cannot be varying degrees of a non-effect.

As both of these variables are clearly in a rank order an ordered logit analysis was performed. This allows us to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in being at one 'level' of the order over another.

Hypothesis four is examined using the election studies discussed in Chapter Three.

One of the advantages of using election studies is the individual level data. It is possible to look at individual respondents and determine whether, or not, an individual factor mattered for them. This, in turn, allows us to determine not only whether something matters to respondents, but exactly how it matters.

While cohesion is not relevant for vote choice in every single analysis, the overall lesson from the statistical analyses is that, in general, it is a relevant consideration. It is worth evaluating how voters think about cohesion. What areas do voters regard it as most similar to?

In order to examine this idea a factor analysis was undertaken. This reduces the number of variables into a smaller number of dimensions. Dimensions are groups of variables that the factor analysis finds are often associated together. While this technique is usually associated with reducing the number of variables for a subsequent analysis here it is being used to determine what 'kind' of area of vote choice voters associate party cohesion with (for a detailed discussion as to what this entails and the exact processes used see Jae-on & Mueller, 1978; Torres-Reyna, 2010; Vincent, 1971). Factor analysis is a good method to use here. It does not make or depend upon any prior assumptions about what variables 'should'

go together. Therefore, whatever the results are, we should expect them to avoid any preconceived notions that the researcher might have as to how voters think about cohesion.

While the use of factor analysis in this way is relatively unusual in political science as it is more often used for variable reduction, it is not unknown in other disciplines. Indeed, there is no reason why the use of factor analysis should simply be to reduce the number of variables in a model. Its uses in terms of linking disparate groups of variables together lend themselves to many uses and are used in such ways elsewhere, particularly in business and health sciences. In recent years this has been used to associate strategies pursued by Iranian agri-businesses (Moghaddaszadeh et al., 2015), predicting what factors businesses associate together to help make Taiwanese firms more ecologically friendly (Lin et al., 2015) and in helping determine factors that relate in stigma for gay men, with the ultimate goal of reducing HIV infections (Ha et al., 2014). It is also used in areas more closely related to political science, such as linking disparate opinions into coherent value systems (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004).

The number of factors generated was always restricted to four. This was done to make the data more manageable, and also prevented the emergence of insignificant factors with only a very loose relationship between the variables contained within.

As with the previous analysis, there remain some problems with the data that attention should be drawn towards. Even within a single country, not every election study has exactly the same questions; thus absolute direct comparability is not possible. Nonetheless, in general terms, questions on the same basic areas can be found from one election study to another. In general, variables that were used here included: party unity; vote choice; past vote choice; party identification; how close the respondent believed they were to the left–right position of the party; whether they believed the party to be extreme; social class; the respondent's perception as to how well the government is managing the economy; age; and gender. Additionally, some questions relating to party leadership were included if possible: whether the respondent regarded the party leader as doing their job well and whether they liked them personally.

This means that there should roughly be at least three distinct factors in any case that we would expect to emerge. We would expect that the variables relating to leadership will tend to be associated together in one factor. Similarly, we would expect vote choice, past vote choice and party identification to be associated together. Finally we also expect that

variables relating to ideology, both in the party and in the voter themselves, should also be in the same factor for analysis.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Descriptive Statistics

As we learned in Chapter Three that political interest seems to be related to evaluations of the levels of cohesion within parties, it also makes sense that it would be related to perceptions as to the actual impact of cohesion.

Table 6.1 – The view of infighting on public perceptions of the party and impact of infighting on likelihood to vote by political interest in Britain 2017, figures in percentages.

		Very Interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	Total
Infighting view	Much more negatively	28.8	27.3	27.4	23.1	26.9
	Slightly more negatively	42.8	38.1	33.3	15.7	34.3
	No difference	25.3	32.6	36.8	56.8	36.1
	Slightly more positively	2.2	1.7	2.0	1.3	1.8
	Much more positively	0.9	0.3	0.6	3.1	0.9
Infighting factor for vote	Most important factor	8.7	6.8	4.8	7.0	6.6
	One of several major factors	31.4	32.5	25.6	16.2	28.3
	Minor factor	25.3	23.1	23.7	13.5	22.1
	Not a factor	34.5	37.7	45.9	63.3	43.0

Table 6.1 is informative. First, it tells us that voters view lack of cohesion negatively, which provides further support for the suggestive results in Chapter Three. A party being disunited does not necessarily need to correlate with other factors that diminish party support; simply not having internal unity is sufficient for this. The difference is extremely clear. A total of 61.2% of respondents reported that a lack of unity made them think more negatively of a party, while a further 34.3% of respondents made them view a party slightly more negatively. By contrast, a mere 2.7% of respondents felt that a lack of cohesion made them think more highly of a party, with the remainder reporting that it made no difference.

The bad news for divided parties continues in the reports of respondents as to the impact of infighting on their vote. Only 43.0% of respondents reported that infighting would have no bearing on how they cast their vote in the next election. This means that more than half

of respondents report that it is a factor that has at least have some bearing on their decision. While only a relatively small 6.6% of respondents reported that it would the most important factor for their vote, that is still not a negligible number of voters. More significantly, 28.3% of voters regard it as a major factor on which they would base their decision. This means that while there a fair chance that it would not be ultimately the deciding factor, there remains a fair chance that it will be decisive. A further 22.1% of respondents report it to be a minor factor in their decision.

However, these numbers vary considerably with interest in politics. The biggest difference is between those expressing no interest in politics (roughly 15% of respondents) and the rest of the sample. Those expressing no interest at all were much likely to say that infighting did not change their assessment of the party. 56.8% of these respondents reported that it made no difference to their assessment of a party. This is more than double those of the very interested who report that it would make no difference, which stands at 25.3%. The same pattern can be observed, unsurprisingly, in reporting whether infighting affects the considerations of votes cast. Fully 63.3% of those respondents not at all interested reported that cohesion made no difference to how they cast their vote. Only 34.5% of the very interested agreed with this.

These numbers are not surprising and follow logically from one another. If those who are not politically interested do not feel, one way or another, that party cohesion affects their assessment of parties, then it follows that it will not be a consideration for them in casting their votes. If something does not change a respondent's opinion in the slightest, then it is extremely unlikely for it to be a factor at all in decisions that they make. A possible explanation for this might be found in the large number of the very uninterested respondents who did not have an opinion as to whether any of the parties were united or divided. This can be seen in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 - % of the subset of respondents without political interest who thought the parties were Neither United nor Divided, as compared to all respondents

		No interest in politics	Average respondent
Neither United nor Divided	Conservatives	42.1	26.4
	Labour	38.3	17.1
	UKIP	47.2	32.7

This tells us that considerably more respondents without interest – and therefore likely knowledge as well – thought the parties were not united or divided. As this is the midpoint on the scale, it is reasonable that these respondents simply picked an option that would enable them to avoid committing. After all, even in the abstract, it is difficult to allow something to affect your decision-making if one has no awareness of it as an issue. All other levels of interest behaved as expected.

Table 6.3 – Perception of party infighting versus likelihood of it affecting the vote, figures in percentages (Pearson chi2(12) = 456.1364, Pr = 0.000).

	Most important factor	One of several major factors	Minor factor	Not a factor	Total
Much more negatively	64.4	44.2	23.5	11.5	26.9
Slightly more negatively	17.8	42.8	49.7	23.4	34.3
No difference	13.9	10.9	24.1	62.3	36.1
Slightly more positively	1.0	1.6	2.1	1.8	1.8
Much more positively	3.0	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.9

Table 6.3 shows us that this relationship is explicit and, if anything, stronger than it appeared in Table 6.1. 64.4% of those who regard infighting as the most important factor for deciding their vote said that infighting made them think much more negatively of parties. The news does not get better for divided parties in other columns. A full 87% of respondents who said that infighting was at least one of several major factors for determining their vote said that infighting made them think more negatively of parties. Predictably, most of those who said that infighting made no difference as to how they thought of parties said that it did not affect their vote. The extremely small portion of those who say that infighting makes them evaluate parties more positively scatter evenly, and certainly are not a reliable source of votes. The Chi-squared for these variables is also highly significant. This seems to confirm Hypothesis Three. There is a correlation between those who evaluate infighting more negatively and those who are willing to base their vote on it.

This, however, is only suggestive. In order to provide more concrete verification of the hypotheses statistical analyses will have to be undertaken. The results of these are in section 6.5.3.

6.5.2 Knowledge and role of media

A series of t-tests were performed in order to ascertain whether voters could differentiate between the cohesion of parties. If there is a statistically significant difference between the evaluation of voters, overall, for one party over another that strongly suggests that the media plays a role. This is because voters are distinguishing between the parties on some criteria on a fairly low salience issue. They had to have some reason to make that distinction.

Information, obtained through the media, is easily the most likely source. If there is no media effect than it means that voters do not not have meaningful or systematic differences in opinion regarding parties. They may have different opinions than their neighbour, but without anyone informing anybody of events rise and falls in their estimation should simply balance out. If voters are not working with knowledge of these events, then there is simply no reason for their opinions of the parties themselves to alter and any such alterations that occur should balance each other out. This should be particularly true for an issue of comparatively low saliency like party cohesion. If voters have no information, there is simply no reason for them to change their minds even as different events happen to different parties.

Accordingly a series of t-tests were performed. All parties in the various election studies were taken, to determine whether the perception that voters had of their unity was systematically different from each other party. A summary of the results are in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 is clear. In twenty-eight out of a possible thirty-five pairs of relationship there was a statistically significant difference in how many voters saw one party as united versus how many saw one of their rivals in the same contest as united. This strongly suggests that the media is important. It suggests that once the public is made aware of an event of disunity that they incorporate it into their judgement of the party.

This is more evidence that the causal mechanism is operating as theoretically expected. Voters learn new information about parties; this, in turn changes their opinions of them which, in turn affects their likelihood of voting for them. This reinforces the relationships suggested by the descriptive statistics.

Table 6.4 – Statistical Difference in perceptions of disunity between parties

		Disunity	Significant difference
Australia	1987	Labor vs. Liberal	
		Labor vs. National	X
		Liberal vs. National	
	1990	Labor vs. Liberal	X
Netherlands	1989	PvdA vs. CDA	X
		PvdA vs. VVD	X
		PvdA vs. D66	X
		CDA vs. VVD	X
		CDA vs. D66	X
		VVD vs. D66	
New Zealand	1990	Labour vs. National	X
	1993	Labour vs. National	X
		Labour vs. Alliance	X
		Labour vs. NZF	X
		National vs. Alliance	X
		National vs. NZF	X
		Alliance vs. NZF	X
	1996	Labour vs. National	X
		Labour vs. Alliance	X
		Labour vs. NZF	X
		National vs. Alliance	X
		National vs. NZF	X
		Alliance vs. NZF	X
UK	1983	Labour vs. Conservative	X
		Labour vs. Alliance	
		Conservative vs. Alliance	
	1987	Labour vs. Conservative	X
		Labour vs. Alliance	X
		Conservative vs. Alliance	X
	1992	Labour vs. Conservative	
		Labour vs. LibDems	X
		Conservative vs. LibDems	X
	2017	Labour vs. Conservative	X
		Labour vs. UKIP	X
		Conservative vs. UKIP	X
Total			28/35

6.5.3 Cohesion and party performance

Test of causal process

In order to determine the causal process, as already outlined in the methodology, a series of ordered logit analyses were performed. The results of these are in Table 6.5.

The aim of these analyses was to further probe the processes suggested in the descriptive statistics, and to determine whether the findings there hold on further scrutiny.

Only the main results are reported here. In addition to these variables, age, gender, past vote, current vote intention, class, region of residence and state of housing tenure were also included, as all of these variables relate to vote choice. In general, they were not significant, but were included as controls. As they were not relevant for the main analysis they are not reported here. Reported variables include perceptions of unity of the three main parties, political interest, past voting turnout and ideology. In spite of the large number of variables there was no problem with multicollinearity in either model.

Perceptions of the importance of infighting were included in the analysis of whether it affected the votes of respondents, and vice versa. Reassuringly, these were significant, and quite strongly so. This strongly suggests that these variables are indeed associated together. These are substantively strong effects. This is not a statistically significant that is functionally meaningless. Both of these variables are scales, so for each further point on the scale that a respondent says that cohesion affects their vote, they were approximately only a third as likely to think that infighting was a good thing for a party to engage in. This number also holds true in reverse in the second model.

The table uses ‘infighting a good thing’, rather than the reverse, because the data was arranged on a scale, so the higher the number the more positively the respondent saw infighting. Arranging it in this direction means that most respondents are not clustered at the top of the scale, and that it requires movement to reach atypical values in the statistical analyses. The coefficients are odds ratios, which have been used elsewhere in the project. They can be interpreted as the change in probability of being in one category over another. The most interesting and informative results lie in the differences between these models. This, combined with the lack of multicollinearity, confirms that these are clearly different variables that are measuring different phenomena.

Table 6.5– Ordered logit results on attitudes to infighting. Coefficients are odds ratios.

	(1) Infighting a good thing	(2) Infighting a factor for vote
Infighting a Factor for vote	0.362***	
	(0.0246)	
Infighting a Good thing		0.319***
		(0.0257)
Con unity	0.954	1.002
	(0.0580)	(0.0598)
Lab unity	1.331***	1.058
	(0.0911)	(0.0719)
UKIP unity	1.102	0.978
	(0.0634)	(0.0556)
Lack of Political Interest	0.976	0.789**
	(0.0728)	(0.0596)
Voted 2015	1.326	1.137
	(0.286)	(0.246)
Voted EU ref	1.095	1.123*
	(0.0606)	(0.0621)
Right wing	0.945	0.918
	(0.0553)	(0.0536)
N	1145	1145
pseudo R^2	0.128	0.104

Exponentiated coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

In the first model in Table 6.5, a perception of the Labour Party being divided was associated with an increase in the odds of respondents believing that infighting is a good thing for parties to undertake, at odds of roughly 4:3. This is likely associated with virtually all of those very few individuals who actually reported that they valued infighting were actually voting Labour in the election. These individuals were merely correctly reporting what they knew to be true. They were effectively rationalizing their own behaviour in the ballot box retrospectively. Perceptions of disunity for any other party were not associated with any statistically significant effect.

In Model Two in Table 6.5 a different set of factors proved significant for analysis. None of the assessments as to whether respondents felt that the various parties were united or disunited were significant in this model. Rather, what seemed to be important was political interest and manifestations of that.

For each point less interested in politics respondents became they became less likely to regard infighting as a factor in which to base their vote, at an odds ratio of roughly 5:4. This means that the descriptive statistics, which suggested that this outcome might occur, seem to hold up even with the addition of control variables. Also significant in this analysis was whether respondent had voted in the referendum on whether Britain should leave the European Union. It was associated with increased odds of 6:5, an increase of 20%, of thinking infighting is an factor on which to base your vote. This was not true for voting in the 2015 general election though, which was not statistically significant. This may also be considered a measurement of political interest.

The pseudo r-squared results on both of these models are low. It is slightly higher for Model One, at 0.128, than it is for Model Two at 0.104. This means that these models leave considerable variation unexplained. But even if this is true, it matters little for the final analysis. The purpose of the models in Table 6.5 is to test to the significance of the variables. Most importantly, it is to verify that perceptions of the normative value of infighting is indeed meaningful to political parties – that this affects their results in elections in meaningful ways beyond just the court of public opinion, something that was indeed confirmed here.

6.5.4 What do voters associate with party infighting?

This section determines what areas, in general, voters associate party infighting with. This can provide an insight as to how they think about infighting, and ultimately what drives its impact.

As a reminder, this portion of the chapter is to establish why party infighting and voter choice are causally related. If voters associate it with one set of reasons as to why people make the decisions that they do, then it follows that they think about party infighting in a similar way that they think about that issue. This is useful for determining why the causal process works. If, for instance, voters associate party infighting with party leadership then a similar set of issues that we know cause voters to change their mind with party leadership are highly likely to be in play here as well.

Only the results for the Netherlands and New Zealand are reported here. The same analysis was performed for the British and Australian parties as well, and the results of these analyses can be found in the Appendix. There are little substantive differences between the four cases. This is in order not to repeat essentially the same results ad nauseam. A summary of the results in every case are in Table 6.20.

Netherlands

Table 6.6 – Factor analysis for PvdA

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
PvdA Unity	−0.1336	0.0457	0.0828	−0.3187	0.8716
Party vote 89	0.8449	0.1703	0.0440	0.1143	0.2421
Party vote 86	0.8302	0.1194	0.0247	0.0678	0.2913
Govt good at economy	−0.3673	−0.107	−0.0113	−0.0304	0.8526
PvdA ID	0.5251	0.0795	0.1213	0.1104	0.6911
Close LR to party	−0.5893	−0.0544	0.1287	−0.2357	0.5777
Female	0.0226	−0.0468	0.0435	−0.0585	0.9920
Age	0.0243	0.0148	1.0686	−0.0019	−0.1428
Sympathy for leader	0.5519	0.1348	0.0415	0.4929	0.4326
Leader effective	0.2798	0.0430	−0.0108	0.6184	0.5373
Father supp. Party	0.3161	0.0924	−0.0774	0.1191	0.8714
Middle class	−0.0780	−1.0170	−0.0091	−0.0188	−0.0409
Working class	0.1490	0.8658	0.0169	0.0301	0.2270
Eigenvalues	3.375	1.564	1.192	0.466	

Table 6.7 – Factor analysis for CDA

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
CDA Unity	−0.1032	−0.0867	−0.3477	0.0277	0.8602
Party vote 89	0.8578	0.0695	0.2216	0.0522	0.2076
Party vote 86	0.8383	0.0287	0.1754	0.0956	0.2564
Govt good at economy	0.2019	0.1191	0.4412	−0.0311	0.7494
CDA ID	0.5712	0.0455	0.1316	0.1862	0.6197
Close LR to party	−0.3706	−0.1341	−0.4542	0.0559	0.6352
Female	0.0810	0.0510	−0.1065	0.0166	0.9792
Age	0.0919	−0.0327	−0.0004	0.9986	−0.0066
Sympathy for leader	0.3482	0.0937	0.7033	0.0423	0.3735
Leader effective	0.2020	0.1495	0.7907	−0.010	0.3115
Father supp. Party	0.3849	0.1418	0.1272	0.0812	0.8090
Middle class	0.0606	0.8707	0.0674	−0.0196	0.2334
Working class	−0.0332	−1.022	−0.0842	0.0215	−0.0531
Eigenvalues	3.494	1.726	1.080	0.725	

Table 6.8– Factor analysis for VVD

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
VVD Unity	−0.1147	0.0212	−0.3566	0.0485	0.8569
Party vote 89	0.8576	0.0998	0.1204	0.0373	0.2386
Party vote 86	0.7476	0.1238	0.0683	0.1359	0.4026
Govt good at economy	0.1751	0.1427	−0.0303	0.4384	0.7559
VVD ID	0.5569	0.0766	0.1645	0.0495	0.6545
Close LR to party	−0.3469	−0.0809	−0.1123	−0.4982	0.6123
Female	−0.0387	0.0512	0.0520	−0.1554	0.9690
Age	−0.0776	−0.0397	0.0724	0.0781	0.9811
Sympathy for leader	0.3231	0.0946	0.4793	0.2842	0.5762
Leader effective	0.1354	0.0416	0.7968	−0.0022	0.3450
Father supp. Party	0.3068	0.0612	−0.0170	−0.0695	0.8970
Middle class	0.0573	0.9194	0.0388	0.0105	0.1499
Working class	−0.0940	−0.9652	−0.0108	−0.0357	0.0582
Eigenvalues	2.731	1.547	0.790	0.435	

Table 6.9 – Factor analysis for D66

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
D66 Unity	−0.0990	−0.0022	−0.3778	0.0740	0.8420
Party vote 89	0.0608	0.6787	0.1293	−0.1672	0.4910
Party vote 86	0.0870	0.7299	0.056	−0.008	0.4565
Govt good at economy	0.1530	−0.0154	0.0352	0.0221	0.9746
D66 ID	−0.0064	0.4812	0.0700	0.0441	0.7616
Close LR to party	0.0462	−0.2884	−0.1767	0.4607	0.6712
Female	0.0742	0.0960	−0.0577	0.1313	0.9647
Age	−0.0212	−0.1006	−0.0987	0.2835	0.8993
Sympathy for leader	0.0105	0.2668	0.4221	−0.3351	0.6382
Leader effective	0.0416	0.0829	0.8439	−0.0343	0.2780
Father supp. Party	0.0020	−0.0071	0.0503	−0.0643	0.9933
Middle class	0.8979	0.0146	0.0145	0.0046	0.1933
Working class	−0.9925	−0.0467	−0.0277	−0.0012	0.0120
Eigenvalues	2.038	1.659	0.839	0.288	

The Dutch results are quite consistent; the four factors that emerge are relatively clear, even if the order in which they appear does vary. There is a strong factor that emerges relating to class identity. Middle-class and working-class identifications, naturally are associated very

strongly together, with no other variable relating to them. A factor relating explicitly to vote choice, with little, if any, correspondence with any variable that we should expect to influence vote choice also being present except party identification, to a much smaller degree. A third factor had smaller levels of internal coherence, but seemed to be related to the evaluations of party leaders. These, unsurprisingly, corresponded together. The final factor varied, but was either essentially age without any other variables of importance, or, in the case of the CDA, a relationship between the government's economic management and how close the respondent was ideologically to the CDA (Factor 3 in Table 6.5).

The results in the Netherlands primarily suggest two things. The first is that cohesion is, on the whole, evaluated separately from other factors. We can observe that the uniqueness scores for respondents evaluations of unity are high. The variable uniqueness scores are a measure, ranged between zero and one, that indicate how different the variables are from one another. If the uniqueness score is zero, then the variable has nothing whatsoever in common with any other variable measured. One tells us the reverse. D66's internal unity is the least distinct from these other factors, but even this scores 0.842. The VVD register a 0.857, the CDA a 0.86, and the PvdA 0.872. The numbers are quite close in value and suggest that this really is genuinely appraised differently. Indeed, aside from very specific kinds of variables, party cohesion tended to stand out as something particularly distinct. The only variables that were more distinct included how well the government is perceived to have managed the economy for those evaluating the CDA and PvdA only, and age and gender – demographic variables that we would not necessarily expect to systematically be related to other values.

The second suggestion from this is that while cohesion is not very related to any one factor, it seems to correspond most closely to the factor relating to party leadership. For all four parties the correspondence value for that factor was at least 0.3 (Factor 4 in Table 6.5, Factor 3 in Tables 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8). This is not especially high but is significantly above the almost negligible scores for any other factor. This suggests that, in the Netherlands at least, party cohesion is related to leadership evaluations, if it is related to any other area of politics at all in the minds of voters.

This is not a particularly strong relationship. Eigenvalues suggest that, with the exception of Factor 3 for the CDA (Table 6.6), the addition of this factor into any actual analysis would be less informative than simply adding the variables. This is because the eigenvalues for all other parties have a value of less than 1.

This makes intuitive sense. Party leaders are the most visible individuals within a party. What they do, who they interact with and how they do so, are likely to be one of the major areas which voters notice in their evaluations of any political party.

New Zealand

Table 6.10 – Factor analysis for Labour 1990

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.1917	−0.0722	−0.0566	0.4914	0.7134
Party vote 90	0.6989	0.1744	0.0561	−0.1959	0.4396
Party vote 87	0.6326	0.2315	0.0386	−0.0337	0.5437
Govt good at econ	0.1218	0.0269	0.0650	−0.1888	0.9446
Lab ID	0.7727	0.1498	0.0856	−0.0307	0.3722
Close LR to party	−0.2693	−0.1740	−0.0322	0.2710	0.8227
Female	0.0732	0.0255	−0.1171	−0.0114	0.9801
Age	0.0797	−0.0906	0.0375	0.3181	0.8829
Leader likeable	0.3360	0.6490	0.0811	−0.1269	0.4433
Leader competent	0.1881	0.5464	−0.0352	−0.0604	0.6612
Leader cares	0.1864	0.6154	0.0198	−0.0243	0.5856
Party strong govt	−0.2806	−0.2145	−0.0114	0.4996	0.6256
Father supp. Party	0.3716	0.0698	0.1282	0.0919	0.8321
Middle class	−0.0173	−0.0080	−0.6213	0.0509	0.6110
Working Class	0.1153	0.0384	0.7728	0.0048	0.3880
Eigenvalues	2.964	0.999	0.628	0.562	

New Zealand in 1990 behaves somewhat differently from what we have seen so far. The variables that that can be included are almost exactly the same as what was included in the Netherlands. The main difference was that the leadership questions were subtly different. Rather than asking whether the party leader was sympathetic and effective respondents were asked whether they found them likable, competent and whether or not they thought they cared. These differences may reflect differences in language. They were also asked was whether the respondent felt that the party was capable of providing strong government or not. This is a subtly different question that we might expect to work differently with the other variables. As one of the biggest effects of low cohesion is an inability for parties to do things and deliver to voters this may be expected to have a much more direct effect than strong leadership, which is more of a subset of this.

Table 6.11 – Factor analysis for National 1990

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Nat Unity	−0.2835	−0.1321	−0.0038	0.4343	0.7135
Party vote 90	0.7520	0.2374	0.0536	−0.1539	0.3516
Party vote 87	0.8123	0.1098	0.0441	−0.0504	0.3236
Govt good at econ	−0.0995	−0.0573	−0.0653	0.1119	0.9700
Nat ID	0.8033	0.1189	0.0673	−0.0014	0.3360
Close LR to party	−0.3191	−0.1175	−0.1090	0.2430	0.8135
Female	−0.0511	0.0114	0.1243	0.0351	0.9806
Age	0.2168	0.1424	−0.0788	0.0314	0.9255
Leader likeable	0.5362	0.5421	−0.0113	−0.1361	0.3999
Leader competent	0.3033	0.5645	0.0692	−0.1153	0.5713
Leader cares	0.2926	0.6173	0.0998	−0.0108	0.5233
Party strong govt	−0.1914	−0.1708	−0.0212	0.4959	0.6878
Father supp. Party	0.3467	0.0417	0.1746	0.0386	0.8461
Middle class	0.0962	0.0606	0.6759	−0.0170	0.5299
Working Class	−0.0621	−0.0406	−0.6909	0.0047	0.5171
Eigenvalues	3.590	0.958	0.564	0.399	

This was borne out. Unity for both Labour and National was included in Factor Four in each case, with little other than the capability of the party of providing strong leadership included with them. By contrast, the variables explicitly related to party leadership tended to be lumped together, and appeared largely in their own factor. The uniqueness of the unity variable however remains high, with almost identical scores of 0.713 for both parties. The eigenvalues too are low for the cohesion and leadership factor, and never surpass one.

Yet this result may not necessarily be particularly different from that of the Netherlands. It is certainly possible that party leadership is related to perceptions of unity because of the amount of control that leaders have in shaping events and in their ability to actually push policies through the party. It may be that this party-specific variable captures the essence of the same concept that party leadership does in other examples.

In 1993, the picture remains largely vague:

Table 6.12 – Factor analysis for Labour 1993

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.1985	0.0684	−0.0506	0.1265	0.9374
Party vote 93	0.7553	−0.0713	0.0213	0.0555	0.4208
Party vote 90	0.6864	−0.0472	0.087	0.0173	0.5188
Govt good at econ	−0.3471	0.0682	−0.1500	−0.2720	0.7784
Lab ID	0.7669	−0.0829	0.0711	−0.0118	0.3997
Close LR to party	−0.3661	0.0280	0.0271	0.0657	0.8601
Female	0.0835	−0.3148	0.7395	−0.0339	0.3459
Age	−0.0198	0.0666	−0.0637	0.3167	0.8908
Leader likeable	0.6202	−0.0465	0.0850	−0.1149	0.5928
Trust party	0.4253	0.0007	0.0229	−0.2896	0.7348
Father supp. Party	0.3186	−0.0582	0.0850	0.1864	0.8531
Middle class	−0.0557	−0.3532	−0.7255	−0.0389	0.3443
Working class	−0.0585	1.0660	−0.0016	0.0001	−0.1399
Eigenvalues	2.766	1.336	1.031	0.330	

Table 6.13 – Factor analysis for National 1993

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Nat Unity	−0.2894	−0.0550	0.0116	0.1211	0.8984
Party vote 93	0.7761	0.0727	0.0628	−0.1381	0.3693
Party vote 90	0.7192	0.0928	0.0627	0.3441	0.3519
Govt good at econ	0.5622	0.0637	0.1266	−0.3106	0.5673
Nat ID	0.8082	0.0602	0.0377	0.0709	0.3368
Close LR to party	−0.6021	−0.1008	−0.1206	0.1899	0.5767
Female	−0.1013	−0.4288	−0.6357	−0.0527	0.3991
Age	0.0498	0.0772	0.0427	0.4130	0.8191
Leader likeable	0.6015	0.0936	0.0308	−0.1447	0.6076
Trust party	0.5401	0.0924	0.0065	−0.2039	0.6581
Father supp. Party	0.3248	0.0911	0.0845	−0.0374	0.8777
Middle class	0.0568	−0.2923	0.8574	−0.0206	0.1758
Working class	0.0918	0.9484	−0.1226	0.0014	0.0771
Eigenvalues	3.547	1.265	0.989	0.484	

Table 6.14 – Factor analysis for Alliance 1993

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
All Unity	0.0416	−0.3157	−0.0540	0.0717	0.8906
Party vote 93	−0.0259	0.4324	0.3339	−0.0035	0.7008
Govt good at econ	0.0623	−0.4052	−0.1111	0.1617	0.7935
All ID	−0.0143	0.0711	0.9822	−0.0334	0.0289
Close LR to party	0.0527	−0.5628	−0.1349	0.1512	0.6394
Female	−0.2179	0.0786	0.0674	−0.6603	0.5058
Age	0.0007	0.1735	0.0582	0.1650	0.9393
Leader likeable	−0.0328	0.5598	0.1093	−0.0018	0.6736
Trust party	−0.0434	0.4072	0.2473	−0.0111	0.7710
Father supp. Party	−0.0041	−0.0291	0.0162	−0.1096	0.9869
Middle class	1.9479	−0.0075	−0.0041	0.0058	-2.7945
Working class	−0.1942	−0.0389	−0.0477	0.5633	0.6412
Eigenvalues	3.905	1.832	0.800	0.687	

Table 6.15 – Factor analysis for NZF 1993

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
NZF Unity	0.0156	0.0812	−0.0582	−0.2049	0.9478
Party vote 93	−0.0006	−0.0134	0.6428	0.1672	0.5587
Govt good at econ	0.1040	0.1725	−0.0231	−0.2372	0.9026
All ID	−0.0172	0.0195	0.5949	0.0743	0.6399
Close LR to party	0.0018	0.0511	−0.2074	−0.2885	0.8712
Female	−0.4554	−0.6254	0.0557	−0.0007	0.3984
Age	0.0387	0.0919	−0.0547	0.3516	0.8634
Leader likeable	−0.0425	−0.0804	0.3581	0.5080	0.6054
Trust party	−0.0999	−0.0240	0.3167	0.4911	0.6480
Middle class	1.0277	−0.0616	−0.0054	−0.0205	−0.0605
Working class	−0.3010	0.7766	0.0203	−0.0315	0.3049
Eigenvalues	1.618	1.299	1.018	0.385	

The variables used differ slightly again. Frustratingly, the variable relating to strong government was dropped in this election study. Instead, a variable relating to political party trust was included, another valence issue that may be related to party performance. There are some variables missing from Alliance and NZF. Neither include whether the respondent

voted for the party in 1990 as neither party existed then. The NZF data is also missing whether the respondent's father supported the party for similar reasons. We can, however, include this for Alliance as one of Alliance's constituent parties, Social Credit, was fairly important in the 1960s and 1970s even if it had faded by the 1990 election as an independent electoral force.

As in 1990, the relationship to leadership is relatively weak. It is strongest in Alliance and NZF where the factor that unity most relates to also includes the leadership question. While this is fairly strong for Alliance it is much less so for NZF, which likely reflects its very high uniqueness as a variable for that party. Both Labour and National are very difficult to evaluate. Unity and leadership are largely included with almost every other variable to make one very large factor. While this does not suggest any special relationship, it certainly does not argue against the overall trend. The uniqueness of the variable also continues to remain high.

These results differ from those of New Zealand in 1990. This suggests that the effect varies over time. This seems to be true even within the same parties.

Table 6.16 – Factor analysis for Labour 1996

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.1476	−0.0699	−0.1248	−0.1987	0.9183
Party vote 96	0.6991	0.0246	0.2514	0.0643	0.4434
Party vote 93	0.6297	0.0807	0.1184	−0.0068	0.5829
Govt good at econ	−0.2569	−0.1382	−0.4302	0.2534	0.6656
Lab ID	0.8632	0.0845	0.0013	0.0466	0.2457
Close LR to party	−0.4614	−0.0136	−0.4120	0.0006	0.6172
Female	0.0320	−0.0553	0.1995	0.0758	0.9504
Age	0.0396	0.0648	0.0479	−0.2663	0.9210
Leader likeable	0.3955	−0.0288	0.4434	0.2690	0.5738
Trust party	0.3124	−0.0190	0.0214	0.4758	0.6751
Father supp. Party	0.2804	0.2012	0.0346	−0.0026	0.8797
Middle class	0.0025	−0.5389	−0.1189	−0.0329	0.6944
Working class	0.1291	0.7426	−0.0179	−0.0293	0.4307
Eigenvalues	2.700	0.888	0.455	0.359	

Table 6.17 – Factor analysis for National 1996

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Nat Unity	−0.2601	0.0462	0.0846	0.2052	0.8810
Party vote 96	0.7145	−0.0297	0.0500	−0.1145	0.4731
Party vote 93	0.7163	−0.0543	0.0005	0.1602	0.4583
Govt good at econ	0.4747	−0.1026	−0.0774	−0.2419	0.6996
Nat ID	0.8214	−0.0828	0.0351	0.0771	0.3112
Close LR to party	−0.6679	0.1914	0.1678	0.0775	0.4831
Female	−0.0498	−0.0428	0.6957	−0.0034	0.5117
Age	−0.0147	0.0501	−0.0546	0.4536	0.7886
Leader likeable	0.7158	−0.0372	−0.1078	−0.1722	0.445
Trust party	0.6066	−0.0439	−0.0675	−0.3134	0.5274
Father supp. Party	0.2667	−0.1476	0.0375	0.1056	0.8945
Middle class	0.1379	−0.5000	−0.0256	0.0182	0.7300
Working class	−0.0959	0.7748	−0.0387	0.0261	0.3883
Eigenvalues	3.614	0.835	0.527	0.431	

Table 6.18 – Factor analysis for Alliance 1996

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
All Unity	−0.0161	−0.0646	−0.2758	0.0942	0.9106
Party vote 96	0.0866	0.6889	0.2072	−0.0958	0.4659
Party vote 93	0.0100	0.4493	0.1884	−0.0990	0.7527
Govt good at econ	−0.0887	−0.1189	−0.0937	0.6475	0.5499
All ID	0.0767	0.7598	0.0693	−0.0689	0.4073
Close LR to party	−0.1184	−0.1440	−0.4641	0.5100	0.4898
Female	−0.0459	−0.0337	0.1291	−0.1008	0.9699
Age	0.0402	0.0625	−0.1186	−0.1717	0.9509
Leader likeable	0.0816	0.2601	0.5932	−0.2371	0.5176
Trust party	0.0260	0.2918	0.4991	0.0073	0.6651
Middle class	−0.3073	−0.0468	−0.0881	0.1201	0.8812
Working class	1.2704	0.0336	0.0203	−0.0265	−0.6160
Eigenvalues	2.428	1.550	0.702	0.376	

Table 6.19 – Factor analysis for NZF 1996

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
NZF Unity	−0.1289	0.0793	−0.3482	0.0037	0.8559
Party vote 96	0.7265	−0.0075	0.2123	0.0594	0.4235
Party vote 93	0.3610	0.0417	0.0744	−0.1459	0.8411
Govt good at econ	−0.1507	0.1724	−0.0241	−0.2685	0.8749
NZF ID	0.7292	−0.0330	−0.0960	−0.0370	0.4567
Close LR to party	−0.2085	−0.0364	−0.3572	0.1269	0.8115
Female	0.0069	0.0148	−0.1159	0.052	0.9836
Age	0.1492	−0.0374	0.1464	0.3171	0.8544
Leader likeable	0.4817	−0.1275	0.4693	0.1057	0.5203
Trust party	0.5320	−0.0225	0.2058	0.0331	0.6730
Middle class	−0.0367	0.6571	−0.0330	0.0495	0.5633
Working class	0.0289	−0.6207	0.0313	0.0987	0.6031
Eigenvalues	2.097	0.862	0.361	0.219	

New Zealand in 1996 essentially confirms the same areas of significance as in 1993. Party unity remains a very unique variable in all models, but for both major parties its specific relationship with almost any other variable is very difficult to ascertain, as the factor it is most involved with includes almost all variables.

Alliance and NZF nonetheless record a very similar process to the Dutch parties, and clearly have a factor where unity and liking the party leader – used as an imperfect proxy for confidence – are related variables. All others behave as before and as expected. Even in these imperfect instances, the eigenvalues are below one. Once again, these results differ from 1993 and 1990, suggesting that these perceptions vary even within parties over time.

On balance, this means that New Zealand provides a less compelling case than the Netherlands for a strong association between leadership evaluations and perceptions of unity. Yet even in New Zealand, it remains the most plausible set of issues for unity to be related to. The fact that unity is largely evaluated separately from other areas continues to be a striking result.

6.6 Analysis

All four hypotheses were confirmed. Additionally, this analysis gives us a number of implications and areas worthy of further exploration for this whole area of research that are necessary to explore. These can be summarized as potentially party-specific effects, implications regarding the role of knowledge and motivation with the causal mechanism, and potential shortcomings and limitations with this kind of analysis.

In Hypotheses One, Two, Three and Four, the hypothesized causal process really does seem to be happening. These are set out again below:

> ***H1:*** *The number of respondents whose evaluation of a party is worsened if they regard it as disunited is far greater than the number whose evaluation becomes more positive.*
>
> ***H2:*** *Voters will have statistically different evaluations of the cohesion of different parties in the same election.*
>
> ***H3:*** *Thinking negatively of disunity will be correlated with disunity being a factor in vote choice*
>
> ***H4:*** *As political interest increases citizens become more likely to regard disunity as an important factor in determining how they vote*

There is a correlation between negative evaluations of party disunity and whether this is an important factor for the votes of individuals. This can be seen in both the simple descriptive statistics of Table 6.1 and in Table 6.5, where perceiving infighting as bad was heavily positively correlated in a more sophisticated analysis with using it as a basis for the votes of respondents. These results make it extremely implausible that there is some external variable that affects both perceptions of disunity and vote choice. This made still less likely be the results in Table 6.4, which show that voters really are evaluating parties differently which suggests a role for the media in informing people. It is known that if voters think about party infighting at all, they think of it negatively. It is also known that many voters regard infighting as an issue on which to base their vote. It is also known that those voters who regard party infighting as a factor in their vote are systematically more likely to view party infighting as something that makes them think more negatively of a party. Easily the simplest interpretation of all of these results is that infighting therefore causes the party's poll rating to fall.

This is further reinforced by some of the other results of Table 6.3. In particular, with one exception, individual assessments of the unity of parties does not seem to be correlated with either their assessment of whether party infighting is good or with respondents partially considering it when deciding who to vote for. This means that it is extremely unlikely that their assessments about cohesion are being influenced by their assessments of parties that they happen to dislike already. These results make it quite unlikely that because a respondent dislikes UKIP and felt that they were disunited that they would then retrospectively say that they regard infighting negatively and it is a factor for their vote when that respondent was never going to support UKIP in the first place; this was simply an excuse. The general lack of correlation between party assessments and cohesion generally provides more support for evaluations of cohesions to be causing poor evaluations of parties, rather than already poor party evaluations causing disunity to be looked on more harshly. The lack of an ideological effect further supports this view.

Political interest was found to be significant in this analysis, as was an obvious manifestation of political interest: voting in the Brexit referendum in June 2016. This provides support for the idea that information is an important factor for the evaluation of cohesion. In particular, the fact that political interest and turnout in the Brexit referendum were only significant variables for whether cohesion is a factor when choosing a party to cast a vote for is telling. First, only those with political interest would have a reasonable possibility of having followed a period of disunity sufficiently for it to have made more than a passing impression on them. Secondly it supports the findings of Chapters Four and Five. Political interest, and by extension political sophistication, correlating with infighting being a factor for the vote is consistent with it being the infighting itself that matters to voters. Well informed and politically sophisticated voters do not need reams of coverage to assess an issue. Once they are aware of a matter of political contention, they can assess it themselves. Those politically less sophisticated that may be more influenced by the extent of media coverage are the very same voters least likely to receive the information. This provides some evidence for the idea that it is political interest and sophistication that is driving attitudes to cohesion in all analyses.

The overall results of the factor analysis would suggest that party leadership seems to be a pertinent factor for the perception of unity. For a majority of parties in a majority of the elections covered, this was clearly and unambiguously the area which party unity is most related to for respondents. These fourteen cases demonstrate a clear relationship between

party unity and general leadership evaluations, with little else composing that factor for respondents.

In a further ten cases, the results of the factor analyses were ambiguous. In these cases party unity and leadership evaluations were related, but were also related to a variety of other variables as well. This makes it significantly harder to evaluate what exactly unity is specifically related to. In all of these cases unity appeared to be connected with variables that we already know are correlated with vote choice. These include past vote choice and party identification in most cases. It also included leadership evaluations in all instances.

There were three cases where party leadership did not seem to have a direct effect on evaluations. In New Zealand in 1990, where two of these cases occur, this seems to be because of the inclusion of a unique variable. In this election, a variable assessing whether the respondent thought the party was capable of providing strong government was included with the same factor as party unity. No other study assesses this. As this is one of the primary roles of party leaders, and quite similar to the relatively standard question asking whether the respondent thought the party leader was 'strong' this is likely related to leadership. But as the question does not relate directly to leadership, and because this question was the only systematically related variable here, both main parties in New Zealand in 1990 have to be classified as though unity is most related to an outside factor. The other case where unity did not have a relationship with leadership was the British Labour Party in 1987, where it seems to form the basis of its own factor. However, even here it still seems to have some relationship with broader factors relating to vote choice, in some of the other less relevant factors.

For every single one of these parties in every election party, unity was a relatively unique variable: it did not correlate especially with anything. This can be seen in the low eigenvalues. This does not suggest that cohesion and leadership are interchangeable; it strongly suggests that voters are evaluating it distinctly. Party cohesion is not a substitute for another, already known, aspect of how voters make the decisions that they do. Combined with the generally statistically significant results from the multinomial logit analyses, this provides fairly strong evidence of the impact of cohesion on the choices that voters make.

The relationship with leadership, above all else, suggests three things. First, it suggests a plausible causal mechanism for the results found. Party cohesion may be tapping into the

same set of valence issues that party leadership does among voters. As well as being important internally, party cohesion is absolutely essential for enacting policy as legislation through parliaments. It is difficult to envisage a party leader considered capable without an ability to manage that, even though other factors form part of evaluations of party leadership. This confirms our pre-existing theoretical expectations on how and why party leadership should affect vote choice, in addition to the fact that it does so.

Table 6.20– Area most predominantly associated with cohesion, by party and election

			Leadership	Ambiguous	Other
Netherlands	1989	PvdA	X		
		CDA	X		
		VVD	X		
		D66	X		
Britain	1983	Labour	X		
		Conservatives	X		
		Alliance		X	
	1987	Labour			X
		Conservatives	X		
		Alliance		X	
	1992	Labour	X		
		Conservatives	X		
		Liberal Democrats	X		
New Zealand	1990	Labour			X
		National			X
	1993	Labour		X	
		National		X	
		Alliance	X		
		NZF	X		
	1996	Labour		X	
		National		X	
		Alliance	X		
		NZF	X		
Australia	1987	Labor		X	
		Liberals		X	
	1990	Labor		X	
		Liberals		X	
		Total	14	10	3

The second finding of these results is the variance. Party cohesion, while usually relevant and usually related to leadership, does not always have this relationship. It does not always

have this relationship even for the same party in every case. While there is a general trend then, this suggests that context matters.

The third important implication of these findings is the general importance of cohesion as a variable in its own right. Party leadership is, at best, only loosely connected to cohesion. None of these results indicate a relationship anywhere near strong enough to warrant using party leadership as a substitute in future analyses.

Putting all of this together suggests both a causal process that follows logically and evidence for a reason for that causal process. Voters seeing party disunity as negative and a factor for their vote makes sense if this view is related to their view of party leadership, even if the two are not substitutes.

6.7 Conclusion

There seems to be clear confirmation for the causal relationship and it makes sense to exclude the possibility of another variable causing an effect on both cohesion and vote choice. There is clear and demonstrable evidence provided here that voters primarily see party infighting as a negative feature for parties. Furthermore, there is evidence that voters see party infighting as an area of at least moderate importance for their vote, and that these two variables are correlated. This strongly suggests that party disunity is a negative factor for voters when deciding between parties.

The entirety of the causal process has also been clearly mapped in the chapter. Disunity is associated with respondents evaluating parties more negatively and is also a factor that voters report themselves to be motivated by. The statistical significance of this relationship is also telling.

This chapter also established an important finding with regard to political interest, which was established to have an important role in this process. Political interest seems to be associated with evaluations of disunity, with those interested expressing clearer opinions, one way or another, than those who have no interest. This seems to be because of the role interest has in information gathering and the development of political sophistication; this is an unsurprising result, considering the results of other chapters.

Finally, this chapter established a link with a possible explanation for the effect observed throughout this project: political leadership. In a majority of cases, this was explicitly what voters associated disunity most with. In almost all other cases, the relationship was more ambiguous but leadership was still a factor. If voters think about these issues in the same way even if the disunity and leadership are not substitutes, that would go a great deal towards explaining why party disunity is such a negative trait for voters. It helps to confirm why the effect observed throughout this research project has been observed.

This means that we should bring together all aspects of this project and synthesise what has been uncovered. Exploring how this effect operates in the real world would also be valuable. This would allow us to determine what this project has contributed to the discipline and our understanding of why voters make the decisions that they do.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Summary of Chapter

This chapter concludes the thesis with a number of discussions. First is an overview of the findings of this thesis and what we have learned from this analysis. Second the hypotheses are discussed again. Third, it will consider the implications of the British general election in June 2017 for these results and determine what, if any, conclusions can be drawn from it for this project. Fourth, it will briefly discuss some methods and areas for further research into this area of party cohesion. Fifth, this chapter will discuss the implications of this project for the theoretical direction for the literature. Finally, this chapter will assess the implications of these results in the real world. What, if anything, can parties learn from this thesis in terms of strategy?

7.2 Project Summary

This project has confirmed several long-held suspicions on the role of party cohesion that had not previously been systematically confirmed. This is particularly true with regard to the role of voters' perceptions of infighting on likelihood of their voting for a party.

Chapter Two first explored the literature on party infighting. It confirmed that there were many competing explanations for the existence of party unity. It also confirmed that there was considerable variation in the causes of unity. Furthermore, it showed that the consequences of party unity are varied, while their impact on the public remains relatively underexplored in the discipline.

Chapter Three examined the public and electoral impact of party disunity using essentially every publicly available source as well as new data created for this project. It used data from four countries across eight elections to assess the impact of perceived party infighting among the voters themselves. The pattern was clear: descriptive statistics suggested that there was a link between seeing a party as divided and not voting for that party for every party in every election for which there was data. If that were not enough, this result was confirmed according to two kinds of statistical analysis. For most parties, in both the election studies and the modern opinion poll, seeing a party as divided was associated with a reduced likelihood of voting for them. While the bulk of this data is from the 1980s and early 1990s, the result is also confirmed in modern polling. It is also intuitive. While there are few firm laws in political science, there are general tendencies that largely follow from common

sense. This seems to belong in the same category. Once voters have decided that a party is divided they are less likely to support it. The degree may vary, but the existence of this relationship does not.

Chapters Four and Five were superficially similar in methodology but were examining different underlying processes. Chapter Four was concerned with the media and with volumes of coverage. It uncovered whether any effect observed was a product of media coverage and not of cohesion itself. If this were true it would mean that an effect of cohesion did not independently exist. This was a theoretically plausible explanation for the effect observed as the media is where the public receives much of their information about politics.

Chapter Five is concerned with the events of disunity itself. Using newspaper editorials as a proxy for important incidences of disunity, it aimed to ascertain whether the public was responding to these incidences. If they were, it would imply that voters respond to one of the three main explanations for why the voters are behaving in this way. Results of this chapter were mixed.

Chapter Six was concerned with the causal mechanism. It examined this from two angles, using the opinion poll and election study data that was first used in Chapter Three. First, it demonstrated using opinion poll data that the public perception of infighting is what is driving poll performance. It does this by showing that the public both sees infighting as negative and that this perception makes them think worse of the party. Second, it shows why voters think this. It did this by showing that the public generally links infighting to leadership evaluations over other issues that we know affect voter choice.

This study had two main issues, and much of the rest of this project has been undertaken in order to address these areas. One was methodological and the other theoretical. The first of these areas is that of the direction of the causal mechanism and the second is why this effect might be occurring.

In order to be sure of the direction of the causal mechanism, a number of steps were taken. First, lagged variables were included throughout Chapters Four, which addressed whether the electoral impact of disunity was a media-driven effect, and Chapter Five, which tested whether this was driven by the events themselves. If disunity was caused by poor results this should capture that effect if it was present. It was not. Second, this hypothesis was explicitly tested for in these chapters, with the chief independent variable and the dependent variable reversed. There was not anything worthy of reporting in that result

either. Third, it was possible that voters for a party simply decide their evaluations of a party's unity after having made their judgments of how they will vote. Accordingly they would give that party more favourable – and maybe less truthful – evaluations than those that they are not supporting. This possibility is also troubling. However, it can also be accounted for in analysis later by the precise probing of the causal mechanism that occurred in the opinion poll analysis in Chapter Six. This allows us to rule out this possibility. It does not make sense that voters would form their evaluation of cohesion retrospectively when they both view it as negative and also important for their vote.

The second major issue relates to exact causal process at work here. There are several theoretically plausible reasons why disunity may affect the electoral performance of parties. The observable effect could even reverse depending on which one was primarily responsible, although since the observed effect is negative we can rule out the possibility of a plurality of voters valuing a broad church within a political party. These explanations are diverse and partially dependent on what causes the disunity in the first place. It could be that voters care about cohesion because they fundamentally care about policy. This explanation is dependent on voters punishing a party for infighting because it hinders their ability to enact any policy change. Accordingly, this means that if the party is in government, we should expect infighting to affect their ability to implement their policies and manifesto. Naturally we would expect such an effect to negatively impact parties. The second possibility relates to party leadership. This is the idea that infighting affects more than simply whether a party implements its policies. It also, if severe enough, affects the personalities that will be carrying out those policies. If voters base some of their choice on leadership and the party's frontbench, then infighting should make them less certain of their choice. Third, related to the role of leadership, voters might care about this because of what a party is – a group of individuals with similar political ideals who come together in elections and in parliament to achieve their collective goals. This idea is quite heavily influenced by the notion of valence politics – where voters choose parties based on competence and not on issue agreement. This rests on infighting being such an egregious breach of a party's basic function that when it occurs, it looks like incompetence. This should duly cause electoral punishment for the party.

The problem with all of these possibilities is that they all rest on different foundations. It does not yield much new insight into why voters think the way that they do if we fail to at least provide some sort of suggestion as to why an effect is observed. This question

preoccupies a large portion of the second half of the project. First, in Chapter Four the prospect that we can indeed even look at these phenomena is explored. If any result observed is purely media driven then any theoretical implications for the impact of cohesion remain hypothetical. This is simply a product of negative media coverage. Chapter Four found no meaningful evidence for the hypothesis that voters care about infighting only due to the media. Second, in Chapter Six this is examined most explicitly. When examining what areas voters associate with infighting it seems that they relate it most often to questions of leadership and of competence. This suggests that cohesion and voter choice is related to those areas of evaluations, rather than the theoretical plausible area of policy.

To be absolutely sure that it is a negative perception of disunity that is causing this fall this was examined in several steps in Chapter Six. Here it was asked whether voters felt that disunity was a positive or negative characteristic for a party. They confirmed, and overwhelmingly so, that they felt that it was negative. They were also asked as to whether this would be a factor in determining what party they voted for in the general election. Not only did a solid majority of voters report that it would be a significant factor for them in deciding which party to vote for but also that this relationship was much stronger among those who saw infighting negatively. This result was confirmed with statistical tests. This shows that, for the voters themselves, it really is the infighting itself that is shaping their use of it to evaluate parties, rather than simply negative news coverage that happens to include infighting as a basis for its content.

The results of this project also highlight the uses and limitations voters make of the media and information for their evaluations. This has been hypothesized as being extremely important for evaluations, although the evidence for this idea has been mixed in the results of this project. It appears to be important in building perceptions. During the aforementioned exploration and confirmation of the causal mechanism, those more politically interested recorded by far the strongest effect of disunity on their vote. It is reasonable to believe that those who have an interest in something are more likely to be informed on the subject than those without such an interest.

However, examinations of the sources of this information have been less definitive on the power that the media has in this area. When the case of the Liberal Party of Canada – chosen due to variation in its volume of news coverage but with little variation in actual new events of disunity – was examined in Chapter Four, there was little evidence for the prospect that media attention on disunity alone was a good predictor of how a party would perform in

subsequent polls. There was some evidence that it affected the fortunes of other parties in the party system but, in general, it had little explanatory power for the performance of the Canadian Liberals. This was in spite of considerable variation in coverage of the matter and very high personal interest in the topic from citizens. This suggests that there has to be at least some event occurring for disunity to matter. Media interest and public interest alone are not sufficient for there to be a discernible effect on polls. The public will simply defer to other more pressing concerns, like the economy or corruption, when making their vote choice.

It therefore may make sense to ask what actually does drive this perception, if it is not simply driven and created by the media. The obvious answer to this is that it is driven by actual events. This means that the public is responding to direct, observable and individual occurrences of disunity. This proposition was tested in the case study of the British Labour Party in Chapter Five using newspaper editorials as a proxy for important events. The results of this analysis were not definitive. However, it does suggest that there is an effect of events of disunity on party votes. Crucially for the importance of the media, this was only seen when voters were already prompted to think about cohesion. It was not that each occurrence of disunity caused the party to perform worse. Rather, each occurrence caused the party to do worse *after the first one*. This suggests that it needs to appear on the agenda for it to matter to voters, so major systematic events have to be occurring. This result, in spite of being short-term, actually is not immediate. The findings here also suggested that the effect of disunity may vary depending on how pertinent it is to the actual vote. It seems that, at least in this case, disunity both hurts the party in actual elections but also gives them brief short-term boosts in support between elections. This is an important result. It corresponds with what is already known regarding issues in elections. Where possible, parties try to highlight issues they believe are their strengths and minimize emphasis of those on which their stance is unpopular with the public. This result provides some more support for this idea, if in reverse. If a negative factor for a party, in this case disunity, appears in an election contest then its traction does not appear immediately. Rather, it takes time for this to filter into the public awareness, which is what this finding suggests.

With findings in this area being suggestive rather than definitive, the causal mechanism was, finally, probed another way. First, it was ascertained that party disunity itself does, at least, seem to actually be causing the weaker election results as already discussed. Second, it tried to assess why this was happening in a more indirect way than the previous analyses. By

looking at what other areas voters associate disunity in a party with how this reaction came about can be determined. By looking at virtually every election study that asks a question on this matter it can be seen that, in general, opinions on disunity and opinions about the party leadership go together. Only rarely is there complete divergence. However, the data is clear that perceptions of leadership and that of disunity are not substitutes for one another.

Taken together, this means that we have learned several important things about party disunity and voters over the course of this project. First, we confirmed that disunity has palpable negative effects for parties in general. Second, we learned that this effect is due to the disunity itself, and not a negative media barrage and that we can trace the causal logic through individual voters. Finally, we learned where this effect of disunity likely originates for votes: it likely stems from leadership evaluations. This means that party disunity being a drain on a party's electoral fortunes is now longer just an intuitive result with some isolated empirical support. We now know both that this drag on parties definitely occurs in elections and, what is more, why this occurs. This means that are some useful areas for future research in the area of the electorate and party infighting that this project lays groundwork for.

7.3 Hypotheses

This project had a number of underlying hypotheses that it tested. It is worth visiting them. These were as follows:

> ***H1 –*** *As observable party cohesion falls, support for that party falls.*
>
> ***H2*** *– As observable party cohesion in a party falls, support for parties ideologically close to that party increases in a multi-party system.*
>
> ***H3*** *– As observable party cohesion in a party falls, support for parties not ideologically close to that party is unaffected in a multi-party system.*

There was at least some evidence for each of these hypotheses. Chapter Three explored all of these in some depth, and there was evidence of them too in other Chapters. Chapter Three, using nine elections and four countries and modern polling data, found that as voters perceive cohesion to be falling they become less likely to vote for that party. That is clear evidence for H1. It was clearly observed for both the election studies and in the modern polling data. Later chapters, while being somewhat ambiguous, add more evidence to this.

Chapter Five, which examined whether actual differences in cohesion impact the British Labour, found at least some evidence that it did. British Labour's poll ratings did fall after a time after the party started to engage in infighting. Additionally Chapter Six showed that it was the party cohesion that mattered most to voters, and that their responses in a poll only make sense in that context.

H2 and H3 are related, and both received some elaboration too in Chapters Three, and also in Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Three showed that in most elections there was a relationship between a voter thinking that a party was disunited and being more likely to support otherwise similar parties. There were a few consistent pairs of relationships that appeared in the data. Labour in New Zealand and the Alliance were consistently related, while in the Netherlands the CDA and VVD, on the right of the spectrum, and the PvdA and D66, on the left, were related. In Britain too there was a connection between Labour and the Alliance in particular. There was evidence of H3 too, in the seeming lack of connection and movement between parties that are very far removed from one another. For instance in New Zealand Alliance and NZF recorded no relationship with each other. This suggests that voters who saw Alliance as disunited were not any more likely to vote for NZF than those that did not. The parties were too far apart for that to be a relevant consideration.

This means that this thesis has provided real evidence that party infighting hurts parties, and also that one party's difficulty is not every party's opportunity. Only their traditional vote rivals will benefit.

7.4 British General Election 2017

This thesis has been made especially relevant by the results of the general election held in the United Kingdom on 8 June 2017. The result was relatively surprising and at first glance, goes against the findings of this thesis. The Labour Party was expected to do very badly in the election. This perception was based on several factors. The election of Jeremy Corbyn as party leader in September 2015 was perceived to be a disaster of nearly unprecedented levels for the party. He was criticized for being very far outside the policy mainstream, as sympathetic to terrorists and for simply not having achieved very much over a long parliamentary career (Ganesh, 2015). Subsequent events seemed to bear out that analysis. Labour immediately fell into a polling slump. At times they were as much as twenty percent behind the governing Conservative Party (Wells, 2017). Many MPs refused to serve on a frontbench when he was leader, and he was subject to criticism for his lacklustre campaign in the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU. In June 2016, Corbyn was heavily

defeated in a parliamentary party vote of confidence, and was subject to a leadership challenge, ultimately winning the support of the membership again (Pope, 2016). Election results throughout this time period seemed to bear out this assessment of impending doom. The party lost seats in the local elections of 2016 and 2017 – an unusual event for the main party of opposition in Britain. Furthermore the party lost the Copeland by-election in February 2017. This was a seat that Labour had held since 1935, the first by-election that a governing party had taken off the opposition in Britain since 1982 and the first by-election gain by the government without a defection, a significant change in the parties contesting the seat, or a majority of less than 3% since 1878 (Singh, 2017).

But in the general election, Labour gained ten percentage points in vote share, and made a net gain of 30 seats. This was the first time that Labour made a net gain of parliamentary seats since 1997. In spite of Labour's heavy divisions and the evidence of numerous opinion polls – including the poll used here for Chapters Three and Six – the party performed well in the contest.

This thesis is primarily concerned with the electoral impact of party cohesion; a contest where one of the major parties was so obviously divided, and failed to perform badly, is naturally a challenge to these findings. This is particularly true for the portions of the thesis that directly examine the British Labour Party. There are several plausible explanations for this discrepancy.

The first explanation lies in the behaviour of the Labour Party itself during this time period. Labour was clearly a very divided party in the period leading up to the election. Its divisions become much less obvious when the election is called. The party came together to fight the election as one during the campaign. This could mean several things. It could mean that as Labour had been divided for such a long period Labour has benefitted from a 'unity dividend'. Voters had become used to the party being divided, so seeing them as united was a new found positive which is associated with corresponding benefits. This is a possibility. It is impossible to test with current data available however, but with luck this possibility may be able to be explored in the 2017 British Election Study. Even if this were true, it is not particularly generalisable as a result. There are few parties as internally conflicted as Labour was during this time period, and this is a specific explanation for a specific problem.

The second explanation lies in the idea of public awareness of the problem of division. This theory holds that the public was simply not as aware on a conscious level of the divisions in

Labour. They knew Labour was divided, but it did not enter their consciousness in a meaningful way or as a substantive political matter. As Labour became considerably more united during the actual election campaign, this would mean that the public's serious consideration of the party for the election was when the party was mostly united. The public does not think about political issues all the time. It is quite possible that by the time they considered how they would vote, Labour was not the divided party it had been. This explanation would also account for the high rates of respondents who believed that the Labour Party was not united in the poll this thesis used in January 2017. Unfortunately, this is impossible to empirically test.

A third explanation examines the problem from another direction. This explanation holds that this election result is, in fact, not a problem for this thesis at all. Disunity was never at any point during this thesis held up to be a universal explanation of vote choice. It is but one of many factors which voters use to distinguish between the parties. Knowing this there are two possibilities that account for respondents knowing that the party was divided and voting for it in increased numbers anyway. One is that the issue never became salient during the election. It was overridden by other factors in the eyes of voters. This would mean that voters were aware of the situation, but it simply did not sway many people. This is consistent with the results of Chapter Three. Disunity as an explanation for voter behaviour accounted for some of the variation in voter choice, but certainly not all or even most of it. Of course, the 2017 election was so close that even a comparatively small impact of party infighting could have easily have meant that difference between the Conservative victory that actually occurred and a potential Labour triumph. This is the most plausible explanation as it best fits the findings of this thesis: cohesion negatively affected Labour even as other factors gave it an electoral lift.

Certainly the result does indicate that there is still more research needed to explore all of the nuances regarding party cohesion and voters. This election however is not necessarily a problem for these results. It merely illustrates that the situation is complex with many differing factors at work – an issue which this thesis has grappled with.

7.5 Areas for Future Research

There are a number of obvious directions for future research on this topic stemming from this project. Most of these come from issues with data availability. One of the big limitations that this project has had is the consistent lack of recent data even for the basic questions. The topic was in vogue for a period in the 1980s and 1990s in a few countries and then

researchers generally dropped their interest in it. Having more up-to-date sources of data would considerably help carry further research into this topic. This is particularly pertinent now that the topic is newly relevant in politics, with divisions in major parties right across the developed world taking centre stage. While the opinion poll data assembled here is useful, it simply conveys less information than that in the election studies which can more easily probe alternative hypotheses. With parties increasingly divided across some areas but not others, asking separate questions on this to respondents would help shed a more nuanced light on the causal mechanism and help answer precise questions as to the true impact of the effect and why it occurs more precisely than this project has been able to do.

Expanding the breadth of the data available would also be helpful to researchers in this area. There are several datasets that compare political parties across countries. This is an area that they tend to neglect. It is impossible to collate fully comprehensive data, but this project has indeed established that infighting is important to voters. Furthermore, it established that infighting is by and large evaluated by voters separately to other factors that influence voter choice. As existing research is already interested in what leads to infighting, this lack of data in a comparative framework is curious. There would certainly be interest, and not simply from comparativists who study cohesion directly.

Event data is already a phenomenon in international relations scholarship. There may be interest in compiling it for those studying politics and elections. Opinion poll data in countries like France, the United Kingdom and Germany has become considerably more extensive in the last few decades than it was before. This would facilitate the study of events in a quantitative way in real time a lot more easily than at present. While this project has endeavoured to provide a substitute for this for the British Labour case study in Chapter Five, it is not feasible for one researcher to recreate this data for more than one case. With computing advances and improvements in machine learning this data could soon be automatically collected, providing more depth to any project that looks at the fortunes of political parties between elections.

Another source of information, and one which would yield additional insights, would be qualitative work. This would involve a number of areas. Qualitative work would be informative for a number of reasons. It would be useful both in terms of probing party response to infighting and also voter evaluations.

First, it would involve speaking directly to party officials. Party officials are the front line for dealing with any incidents of disunity. They have to deal with any fallout from this behaviour. This means that they can provide a number of insights. In the first instance they can provide confirmation for what they do to control this behaviour. More importantly for this research, they can reveal what they expect to gain from this. In other words, they can tell us why they control this behaviour. This means that they can tell us what fundamentally motivates this behaviour. Is it that they want to help pass a legislative agenda, or do the electoral or leadership consequences feature more heavily in their evaluations? Party figures, particularly those who have engaged in infighting or are perceived to have, would also yield interesting insights. This would help determine how aware they are as to the general broader consequences of their behaviour beyond their own immediate advantage. Party behaviour is of interest because parties are self-interested. They want to do well in elections. If they fail to control this there should be consequences.

Second, it would be useful in terms of establishing exactly why voters have reached the evaluations they have. This research has established that there is at least a correlation between leadership evaluations and assessments of party disunity. What this does not tell us is precisely why voters have reached this conclusion. This kind of probing insight is simply not available from opinion polls as used here, particularly opinion polls with closed question options. This may mean that areas like focus groups may provide new insights. These are groups of citizens that discuss a topic in depth. This would allow future research to find out exactly how, and why, the evaluations that they have been reached and what, if anything, could be done to change it. Findings from this could inform future quantitative research into the area.

Another area for further research would be to use an experimental approach. This is fairly common in many areas of the discipline, such as gender evaluations of politicians (Sapiro, 1981). In these cases the researcher might present respondents with differing candidates or situations, changing only the gender, and attempt to determine what, if any, difference there is between evaluations of them. However, this is not the only area of Comparative Politics where this approach has been applied. It has been used to determine the effectiveness of efforts to increase voter turnout for instance (Gerber & Green, 2000). It has also been used to predict the effect of formal institutional rules. For instance, it has been used to determine the effect, on voters, of the relatively unusual two-round voting system that France uses in most elections (Blais et al., 2007). An experimental design correctly

designed would have a number of advantages. One of the problems with this project is that it is difficult to disentangle independent effects from the parties themselves. While this thesis has done its utmost to do so it is possible that some issues might remain. Voters already have specific opinions and preconceived notions with regard to various parties which makes any effect difficult to discern. This design, using random allocation of respondents and differing scenarios, in which cohesion is a varying factor, would help determine the existence of any immediate effect. Varying other characteristics, such as the kind of leader or the policies a party pursues, it could be possible to isolate any effect still further. This differs from the research in this thesis in a number of key ways; it is not a different method for similar results. There is a difference between reported response and actual response, the latter measured in the project. This methodology also could not evaluate the effects of volumes of media coverage, or the true effect of disunity of existing parties. What it could reveal, however, is the impact of changing party cohesion on a party, keeping all else constant.

An experiment could also provide useful information on the effect of media content. Holding the existence of disunity constant, a researcher could vary tone, and determine whether or not the kind of coverage matters. Virtually all of the actual news coverage analysed here, whether in Canada or in Britain, treated the topic negatively and were either implicitly or explicitly critical of parties engaging in infighting. While there are good reasons why infighting might be a bad thing for policy making and leadership stability, there are potentially positive aspects of the process as well. This would enable us to determine whether or not the electoral effect of infighting is affected by more than simply the existence of infighting without any reference to the media. This would help to definitively determine whether the media has any influence at all over the process by which disunity becomes a factor for individuals casting their vote.

7.6 Wider Theoretical Contribution

This thesis has made a number of concrete theoretical contributions to areas broader than party cohesion through its empirical analysis. They relate to how voters process information. First, this thesis has raised questions as to how voters acquire and process information. Second, this thesis has cast new light on how voters respond to adversity. Third, it provides some insight as to how voters think about issues within parties more generally. Each of these important general implications of this thesis shall be discussed in turn.

One of the most important of the findings of this thesis was that of Chapter Four. This showed that the media coverage was not necessarily associated with the development of wider perceptions of a party. This was an important result because it demonstrated that the electoral effect of cohesion was not media-driven. But it is important to examine the wider context. As Chapter Three discusses and shows, perceiving a party as disunited is associated with a reduced chance of voting for that party. This should show itself in any polls subsequently. In spite of this, Chapter Four shows us that there is no correlation between how much attention the issue had in the media and the opinion poll results of the Canadian Liberals. This was a result all the more unusual because of how much the public was paying attention to the issue.

Naturally this result has important broader implications for the effectiveness of media messages. Media messages, whatever their ideological stripe, did not noticeably change Canadian public opinion in the short run. Much of the current political discussion in the media has centred on the idea of political bubbles. In these places, individuals have their opinions shaped by their environment in profound ways and it is based on what information people are exposed to, which can change depending on where they live and what information they access. There has been considerable discussion of news media being in a bubble during the 2016 US presidential election (For instance Schafer & Doherty, 2017; Silver, 2017). These results raise questions regarding this process. All pervasive media coverage over a period of years on this issue did not lead to any particular changes for the Canadian Liberals. This means that there are limits to the effect that this environment can have in certain cases. This is only suggestive and requires considerably more analysis to define the scope of these limits.

Second, this thesis has shown that voters do not necessarily respond in rational ways when confronted with bad news. As already stated, party disunity is a bad thing for a party for a wide variety of reasons. Few good outcomes emerge for them. Most crucially electoral success has been shown here to be unforthcoming. Nonetheless, when that disunity occurs, the immediate response of voters seems to be to provide a small boost in support as in Chapter Five. This is an effect that is entirely driven by negative events. This suggests that voters, when confronted with negativity immediately rally to the party. After this, they may desert it upon more sober reflection. Rationally we should expect voters to receive information, process it dispassionately and react accordingly. In this case that should mean that at least some people stop supporting the party and no new voters are acquired. The

reverse seems to be happening. We already know that individuals do not always respond with complete rationality when confronted with gains and losses (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). This thesis has provided some evidence that this can apply more broadly. Voters may be actively defiant.

Finally, this thesis shed light on how voters think about internal party politics. Chapter Six has told us that voters associate infighting with leadership and areas that relate to competence. Applying this finding more widely, it provides some insight as to voters' thinking on political parties. In the case of party infighting, voters prioritized the ability to implement policy positions as significant; they did not prioritise actual shifts in those policy positions. This is a very important result as this is one of the few areas of party politics where voters can make an explicit judgment on these lines. In this case, they clearly did not link disunity with ideology. Party disunity is clearly a problem with the internal workings of a party, but there are other areas of internal workings of parties that we expect to be of interest to some voters. These include party conferences, potential government coalition partners and who funds their activities. There is little reason to believe that voters would not respond to these issues in a similar way to their response to party cohesion. If true that has useful implications for political parties and helps them to better plan their activities.

7.7 Practical Advice for Parties

In addition to providing new insights into voter choice, this research yields insights that are valuable at a practical level for political parties. There are many things that political parties have very little control over: they cannot affect partisanship, nor in the short-run, can they do much to affect their perceived issue competences or the state of the economy. However, they do have control over their own internal conduct. This makes removing disunity one of the easiest ways for parties to improve their performance. It does not even need anyone else to change their behaviour.

This research would then suggest that carefully controlling dissent is by far the best approach for the party as a whole if there is no prospect of the party changing its course. Party managers, if concerned with the general health of the party, should not want to maximize short-term poll gains at the expense of election results, or boost individual legislators over the party as a whole. Maintaining total discipline is clearly the best strategy. However, it is not always feasible. This is where some of the insights gleaned from this project are useful to parties.

The party does not need to be concerned if disunity occurs during conferences or leadership campaigns. Instead they should embrace the broad church that is presented to voters. It certainly causes them no harm. The party should also take stock of their context. If they have no ideologically similar rivals they have little to worry about. This project suggests that voters will not cross too great an ideological distance on this ground alone.

These findings also suggest campaigning strategies for parties for whom infighting is an issue that is out of control. This is based on what infighting is associated with by the electorate in a country. They associate infighting with leadership issues and with competence. Parties with problems of infighting should, if at all possible, seek to downplay these issues. This research has established that these issues are at their most pertinent to the electorate if they are continuously mentioned. If the public is constantly reminded of leadership, they will be more likely to remember divisions in the party, which is a net negative for them. Similarly, competence and other valence issues are a bad idea to campaign on barring specific circumstances. They remind voters of the party's own failings. The main exception to this is if it is a government party, like the Canadian Liberals in the period studied, and their performance in general has been exceptional, this may still be a valid strategy. This is because a party in this situation can demonstrate to voters that this, clearly, did not have much an effect on how well the party did its job. However, given that the literature on party cohesion informs us that this does negatively impact their policy performance independently of their electoral performance this is not expected to apply to an enormous number of parties.

An alternative approach for parties in campaigns that have issues with disunity is to highlight issues of strength over personalities. Voters do not seem to have any particular associations between issue positioning and party infighting. This may be a useful way for parties to campaign if infighting is an issue that they have to contend with. It avoids the issues that we know the party is weak on while highlighting an area that may be a strength.

Similarly this project provides evidence for parties facing divided opponents that they should attack this weakness. It will yield dividends, even if this is not immediately apparent in the poll results directly after such attacks for that party.

This project also suggests that parties need not be overly concerned with a persistent hostile environment that has little basis in reality. While the negative coverage is doubtless unpleasant, it should not hurt the party in and of itself. The problem becomes when that

hostile source acquires real, solid facts regarding the internal conduct of the party. That is when the party, if it wants to avoid electoral damage, ought to intervene to try to influence what is worth covering. While doubtless difficult, this at least helps provides some direction for parties as to where they should concentrate their efforts.

Party disunity is certainly damaging for political parties, and the effect is direct. But it is avoidable, and the damage can be controlled when it is present. This thesis suggests that the basics matter for political parties, and they should not be ignored by the party. Voters do not ignore them.

Appendix

Appendix A

Predicted Probabilities for Election Studies expressed graphically

Australia

Fig. A.1 – Predicted probability of voting Labor in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

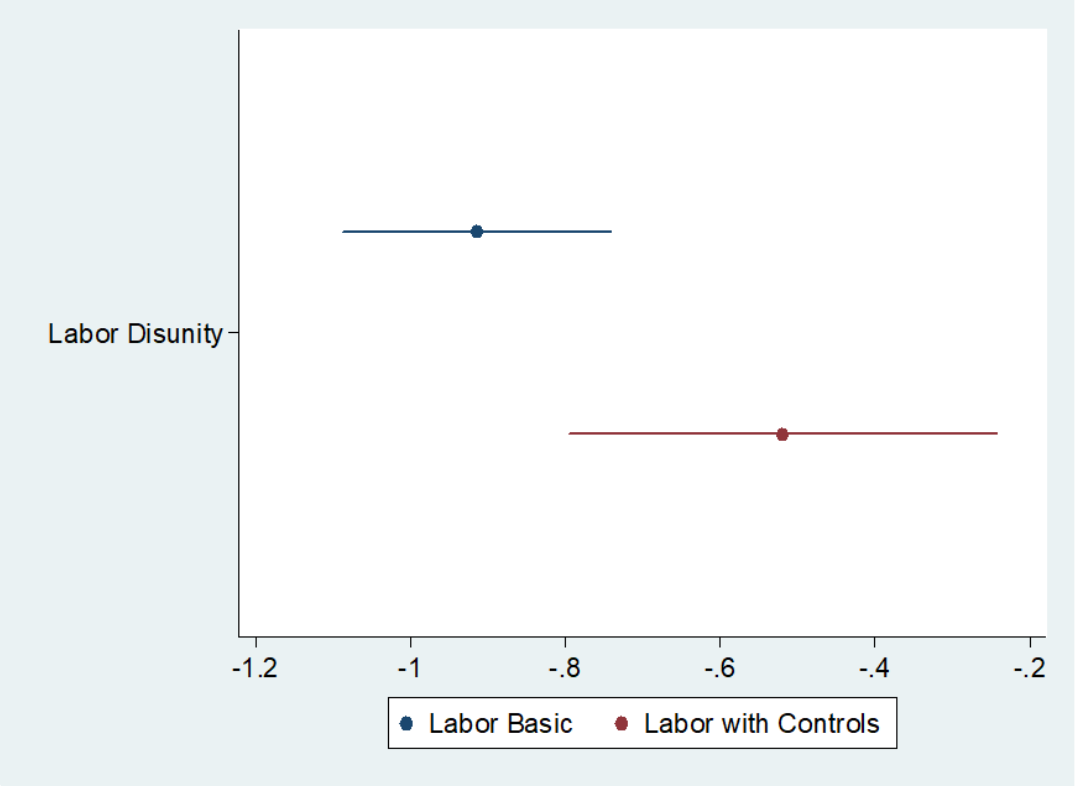


Fig. A.2 – Predicted probability of voting Liberal in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

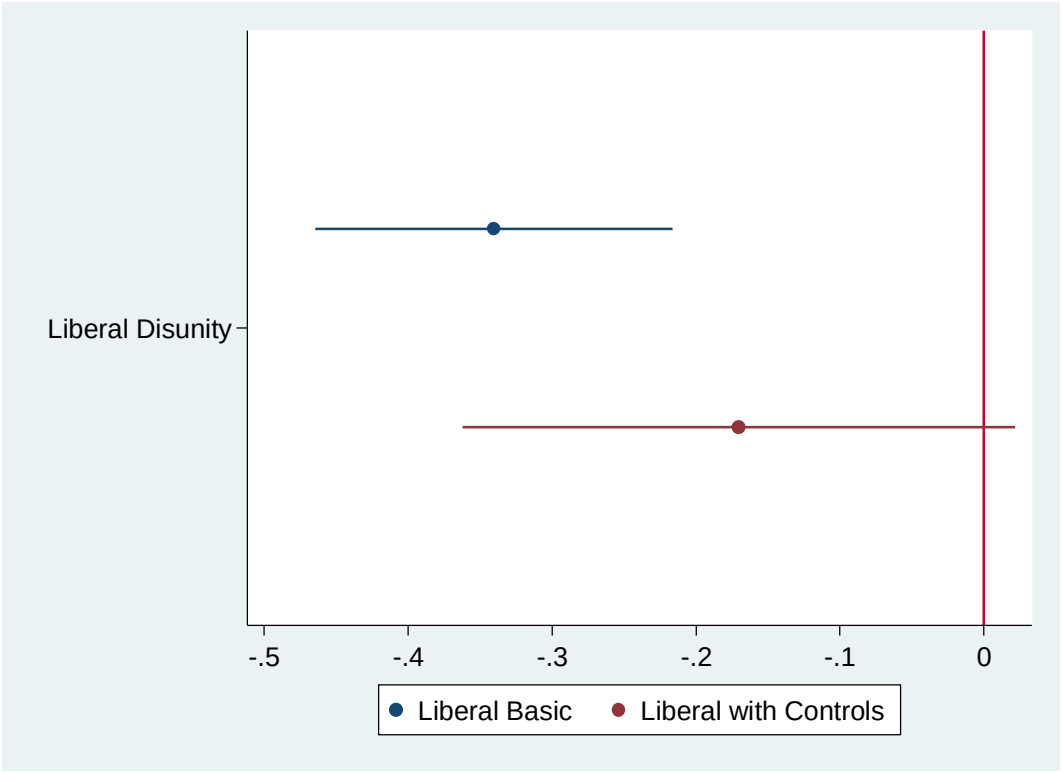


Fig. A.3 – Predicted probability of voting National in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

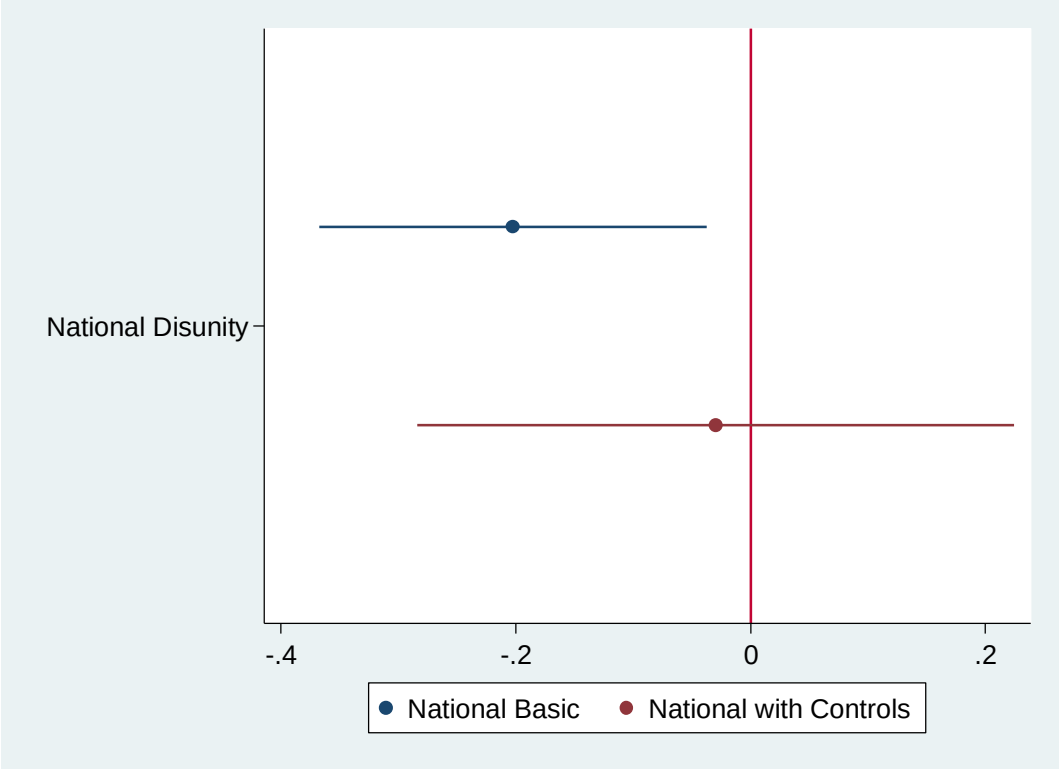


Fig. A.4 – Predicted probability of voting for Australian parties in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls

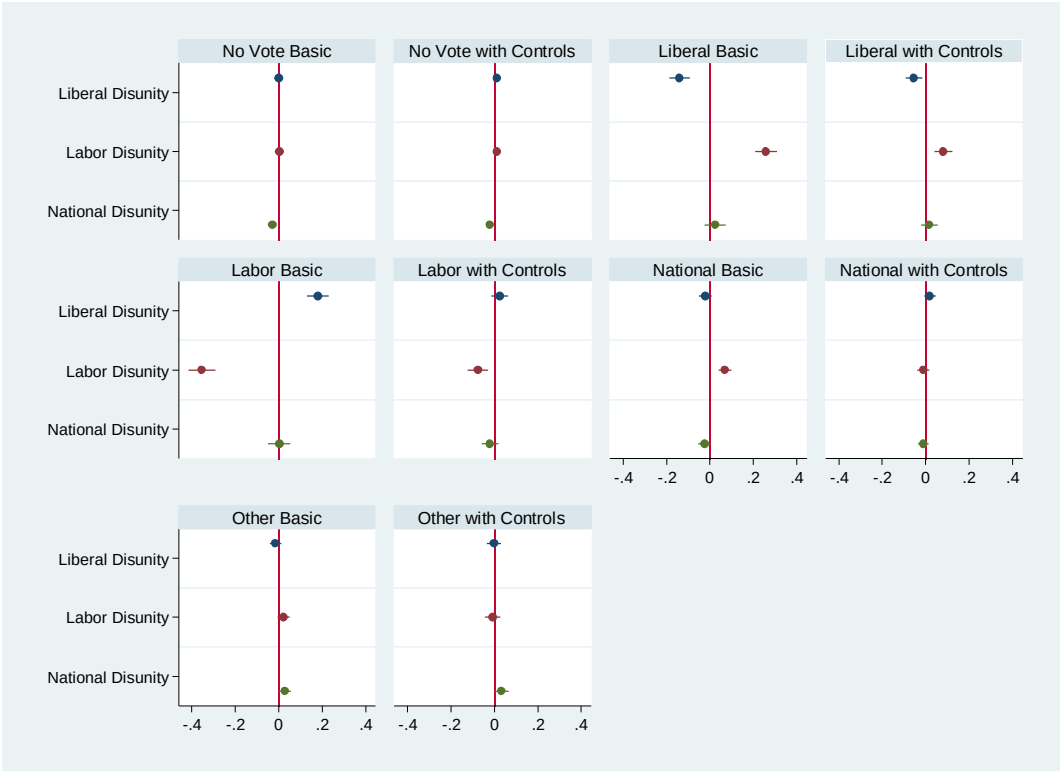


Fig. A.5 – Predicted probability of voting Labor in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

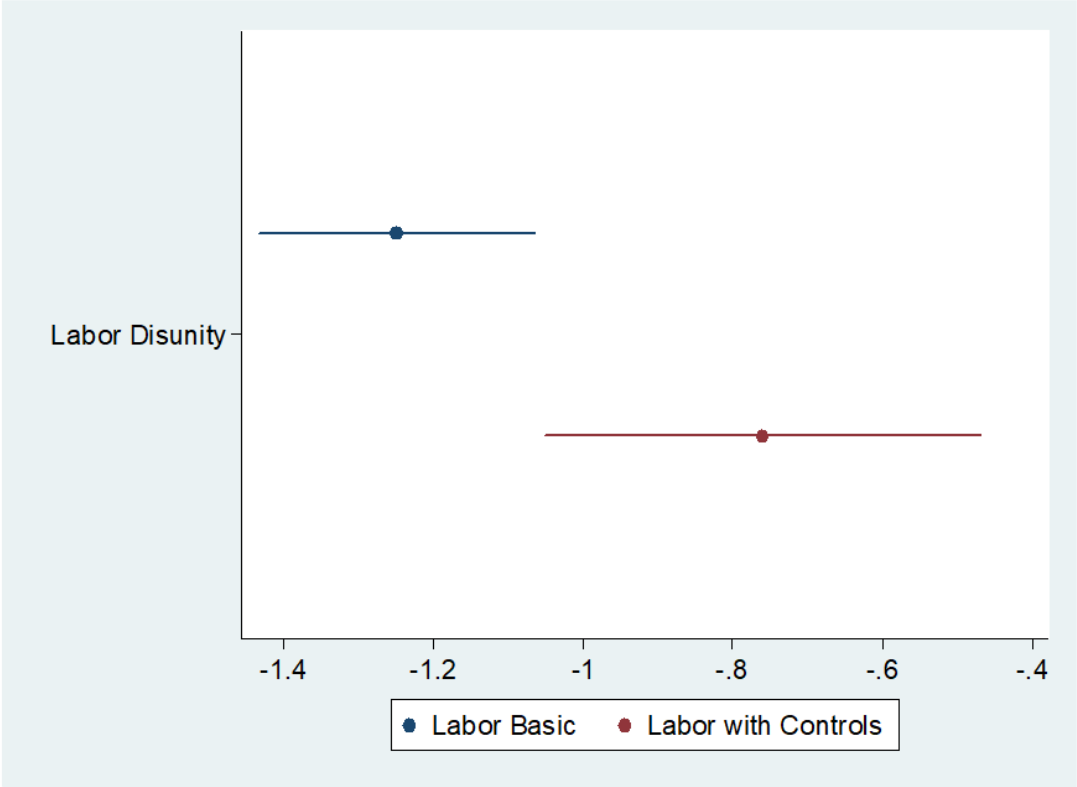


Fig. A.6 – Predicted probability of voting Liberal in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

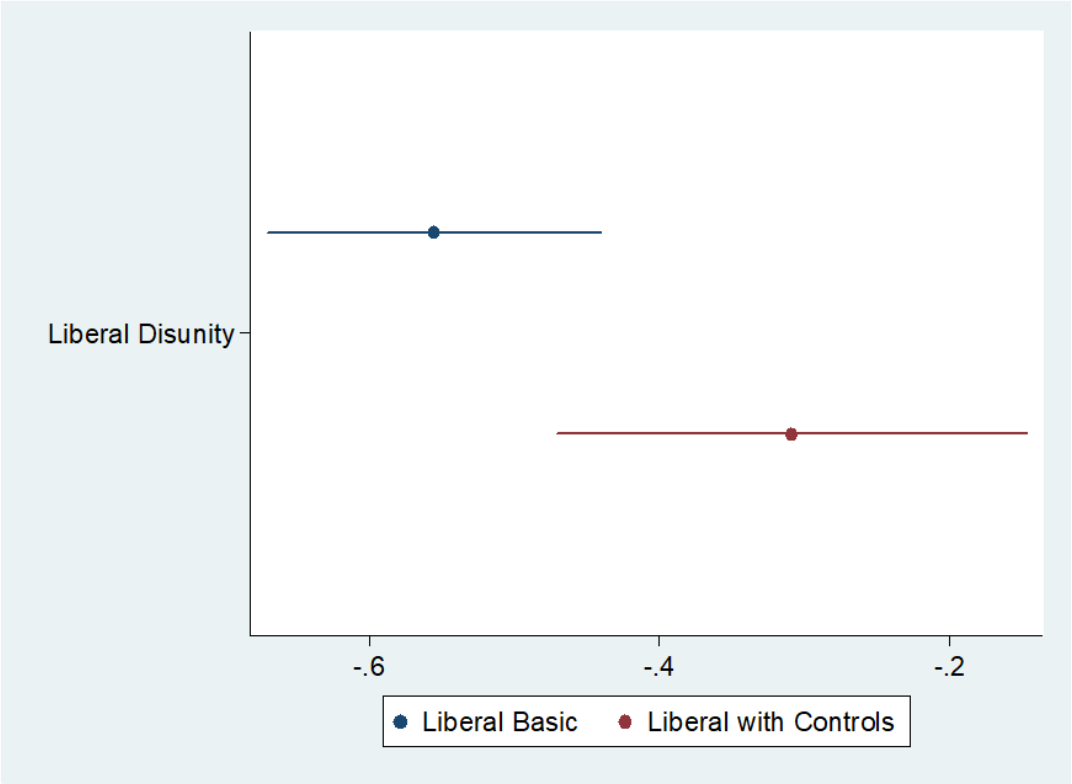
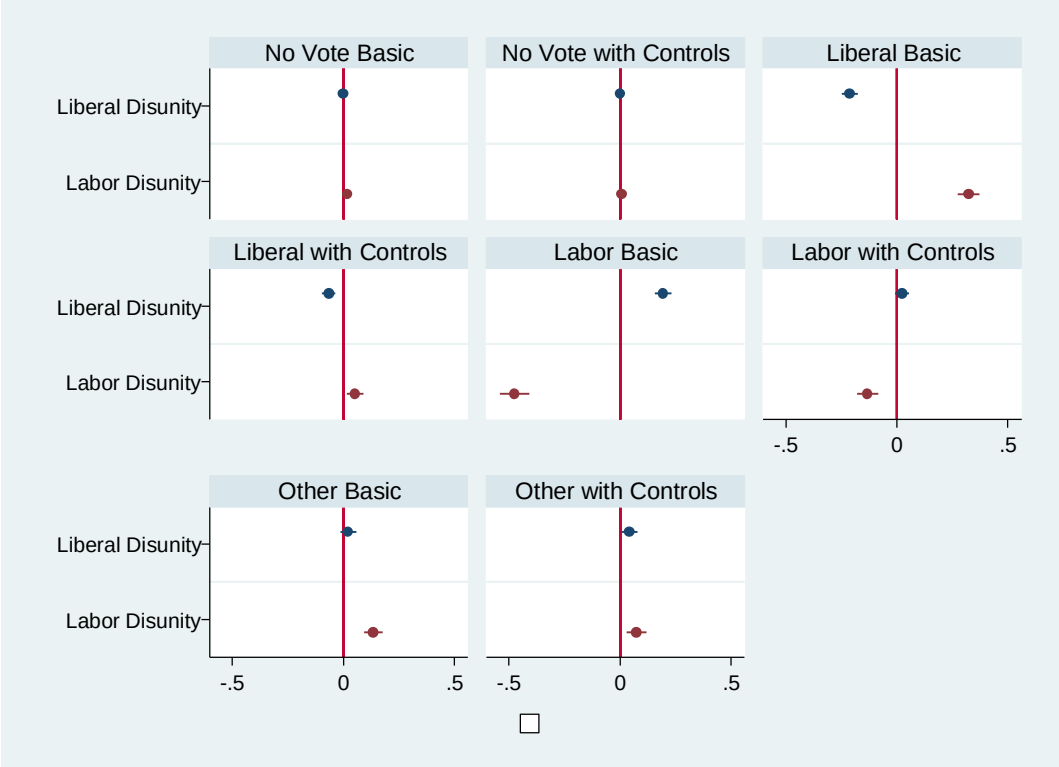


Fig. A.7 – Predicted probability of voting for Australian parties in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls



New Zealand

Fig. A.8 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

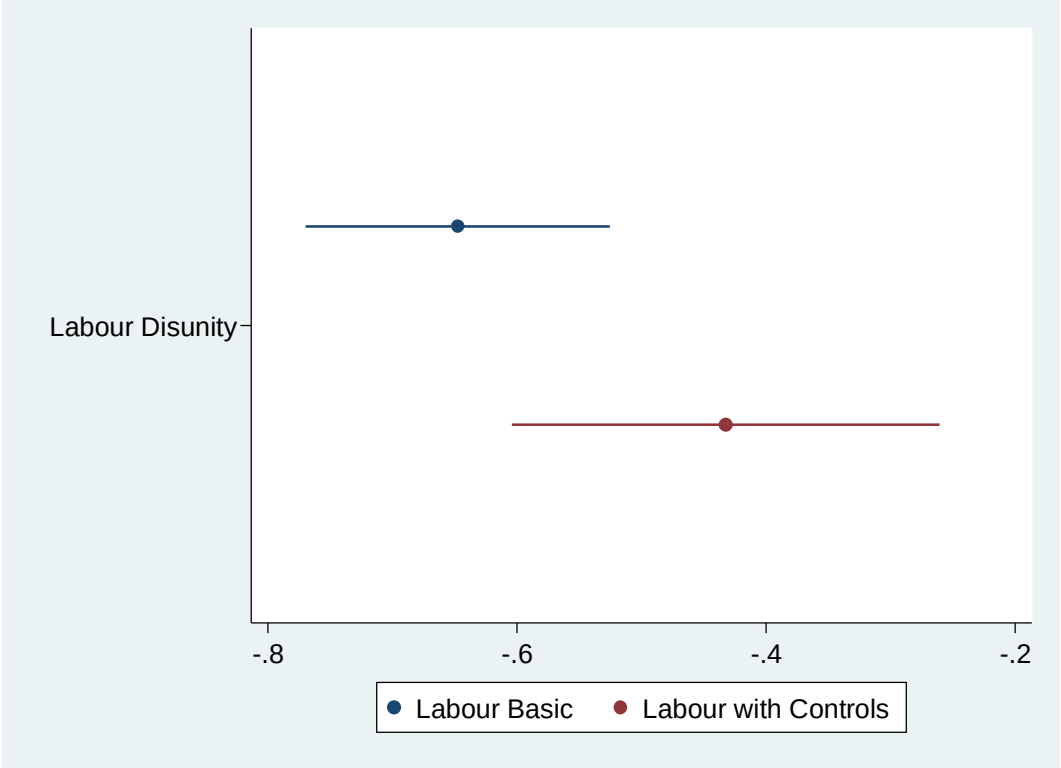


Fig. A.9 – Predicted probability of voting National in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

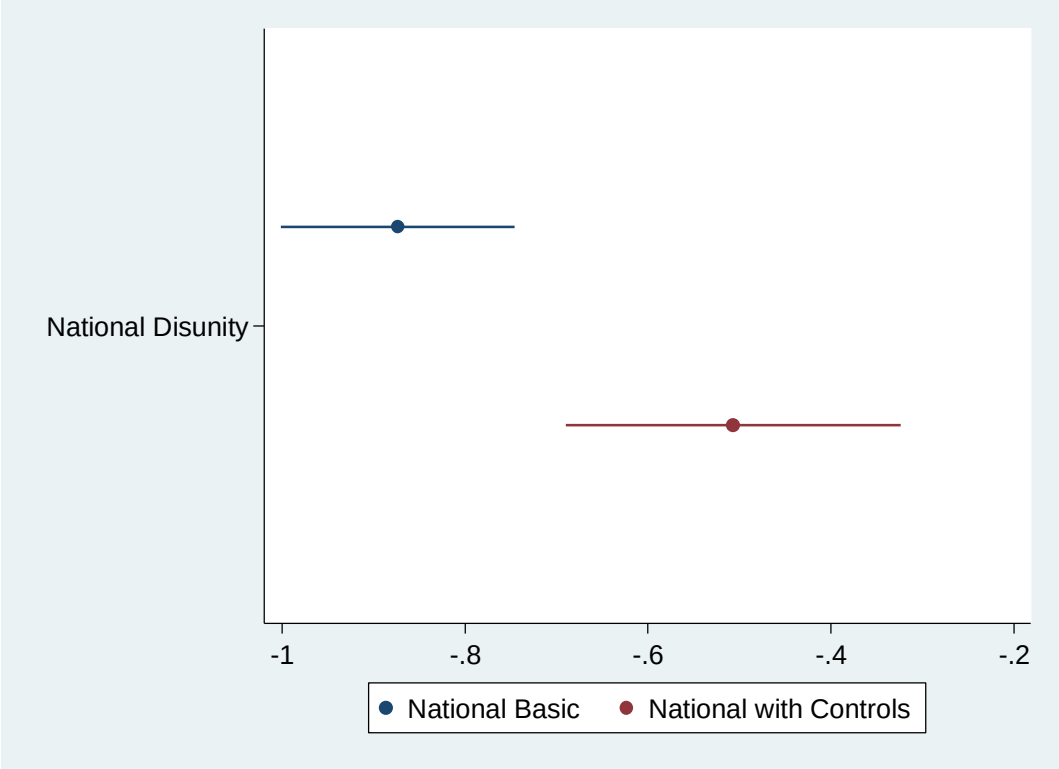


Fig. A.10 – Predicted probability of voting for NZ parties in 1990 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls

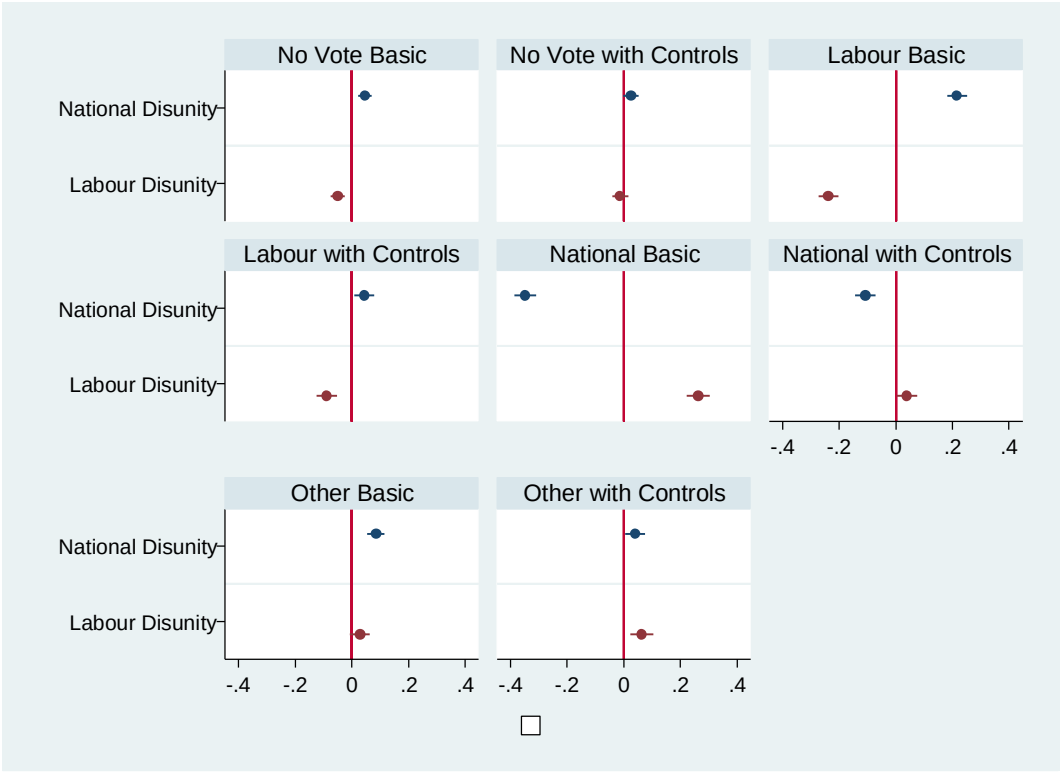


Fig. A.11 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1993 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

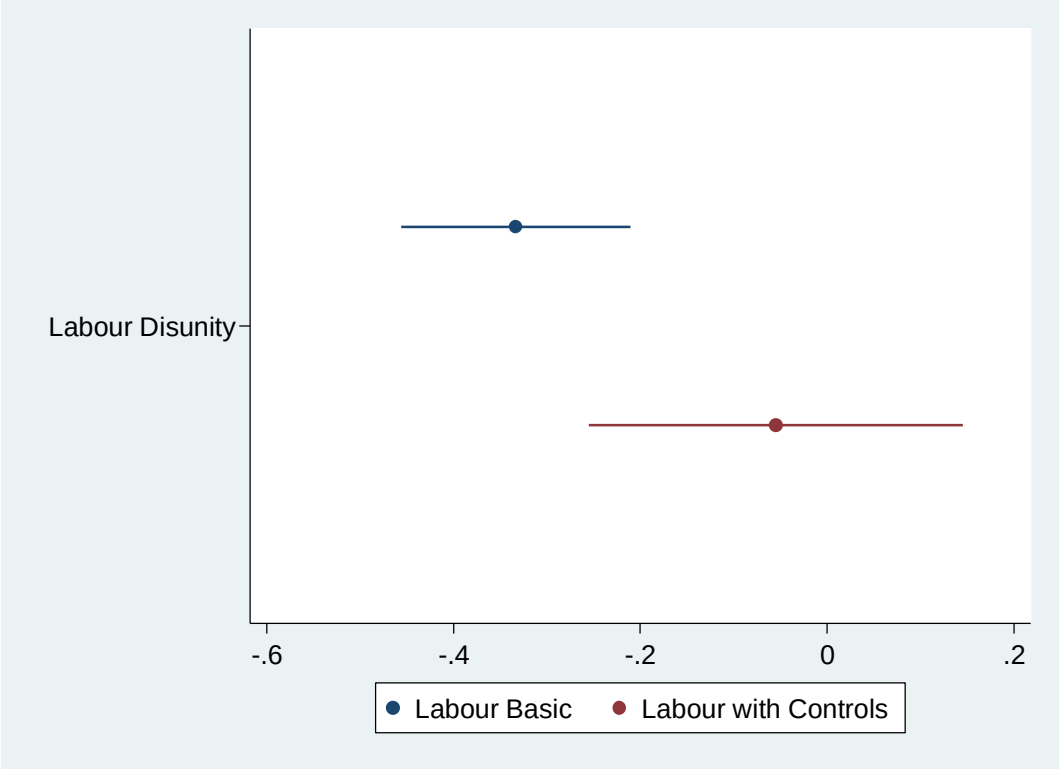


Fig. A.12 – Predicted probability of voting National in 1993 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

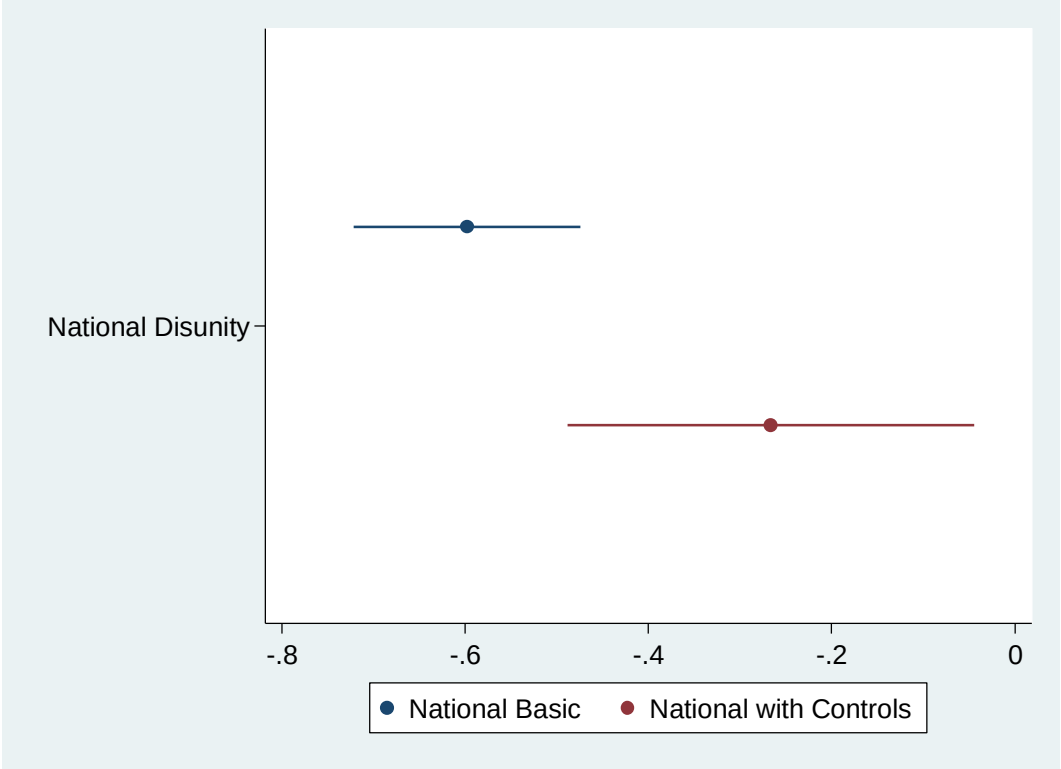


Fig. A.13 – Predicted probability of voting Alliance in 1993 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

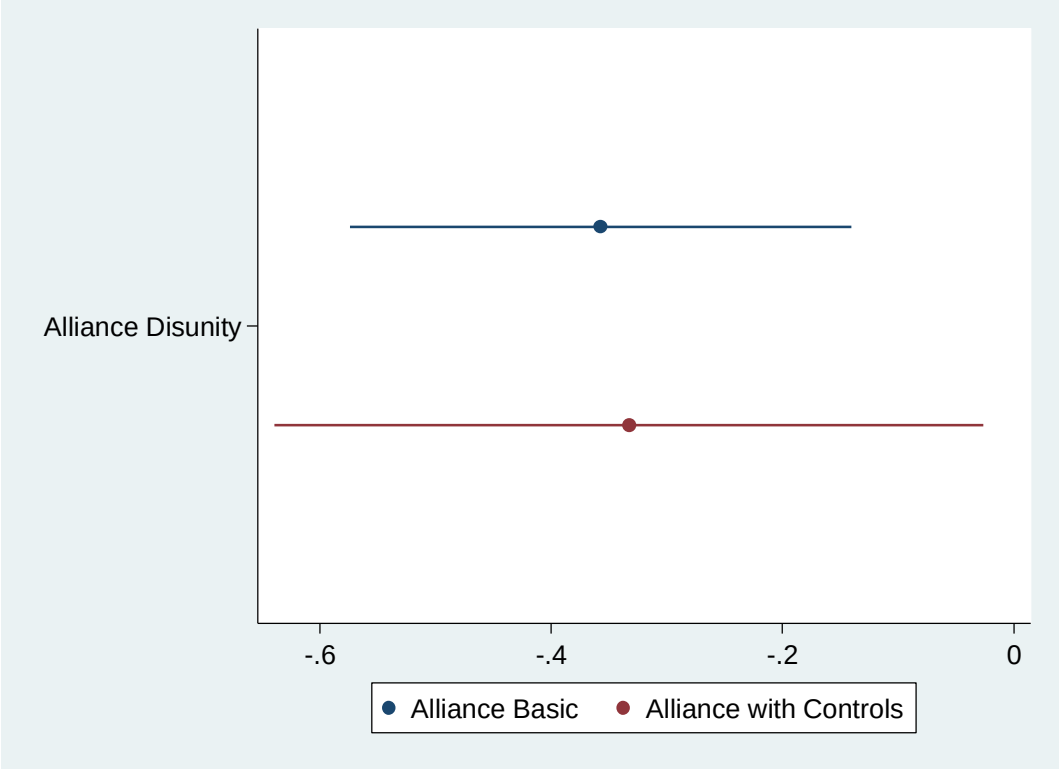


Fig. A.14 – Predicted probability of voting NZF in 1993 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

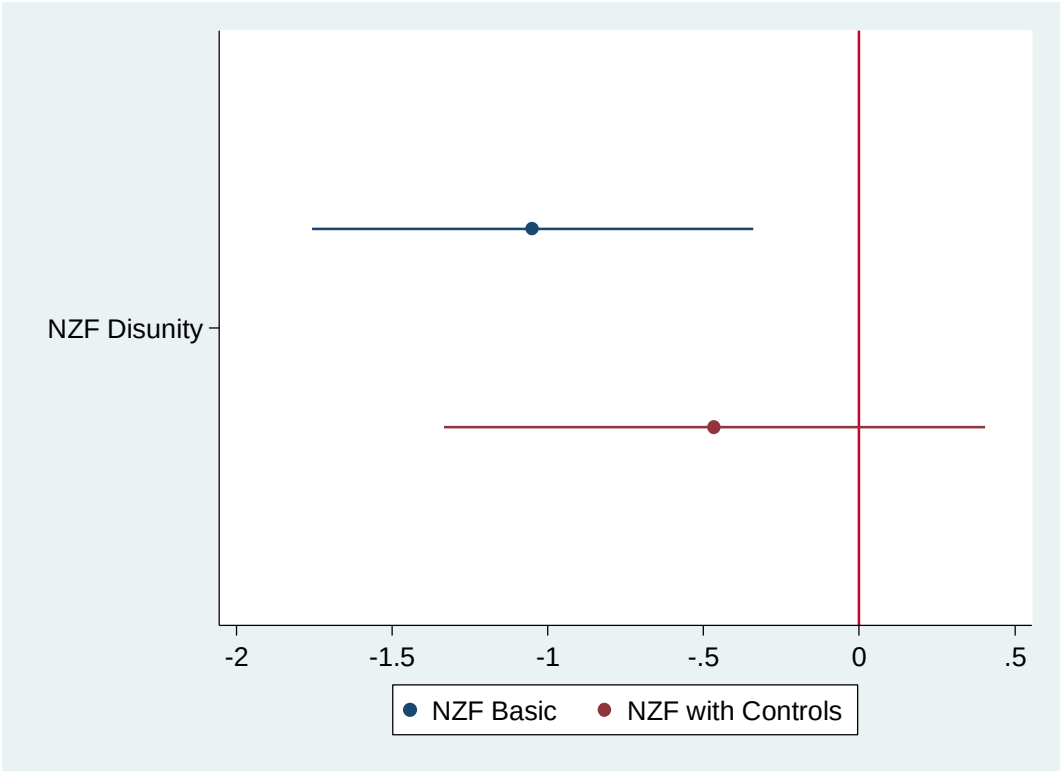


Fig. A.15 – Predicted probability of voting for NZ parties in 1993 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls

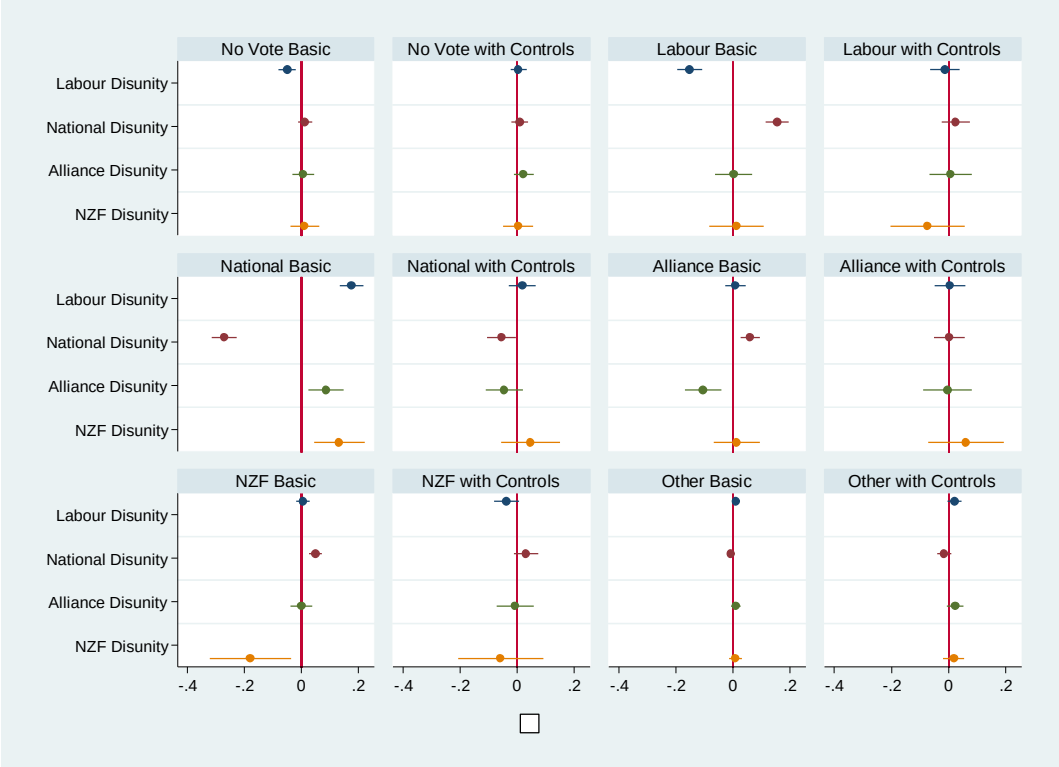


Fig. A.16 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1996 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

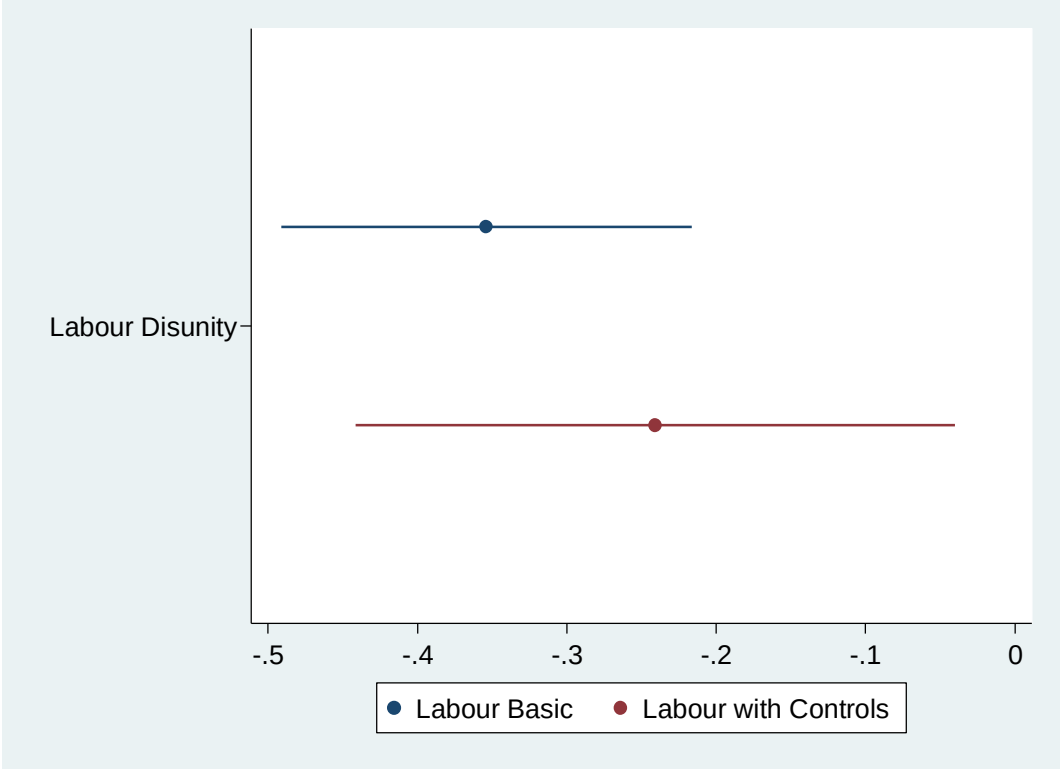


Fig. A.17 – Predicted probability of voting National in 1996 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

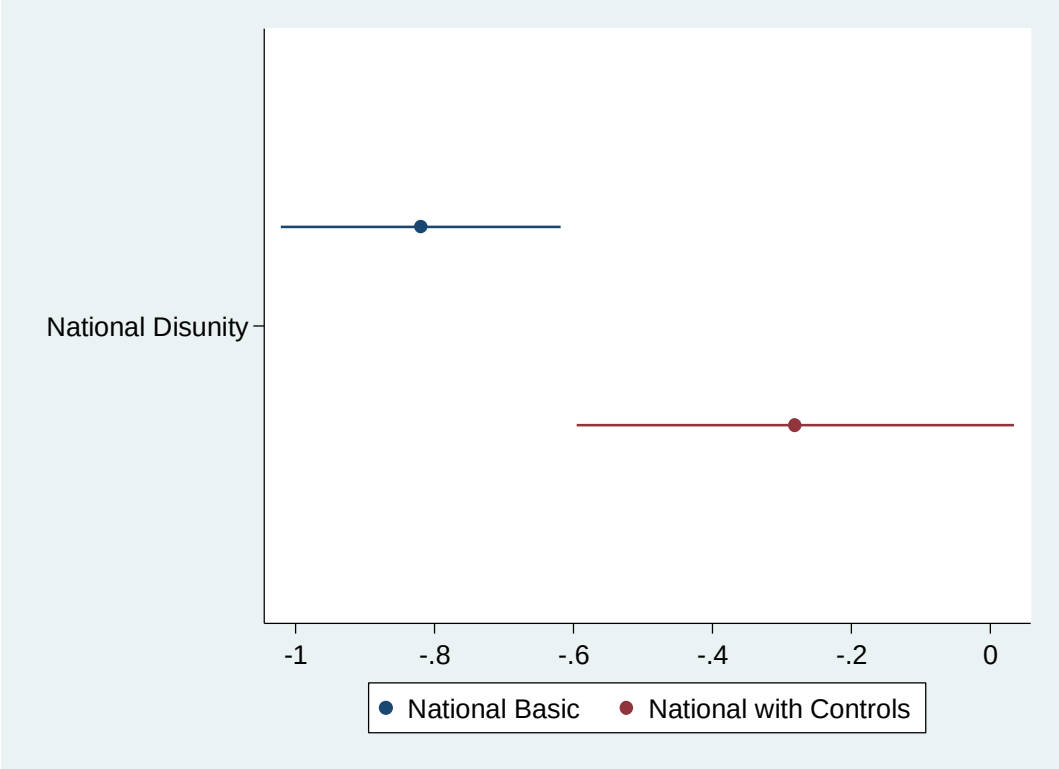


Fig. A.18 – Predicted probability of voting Alliance in 1996 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

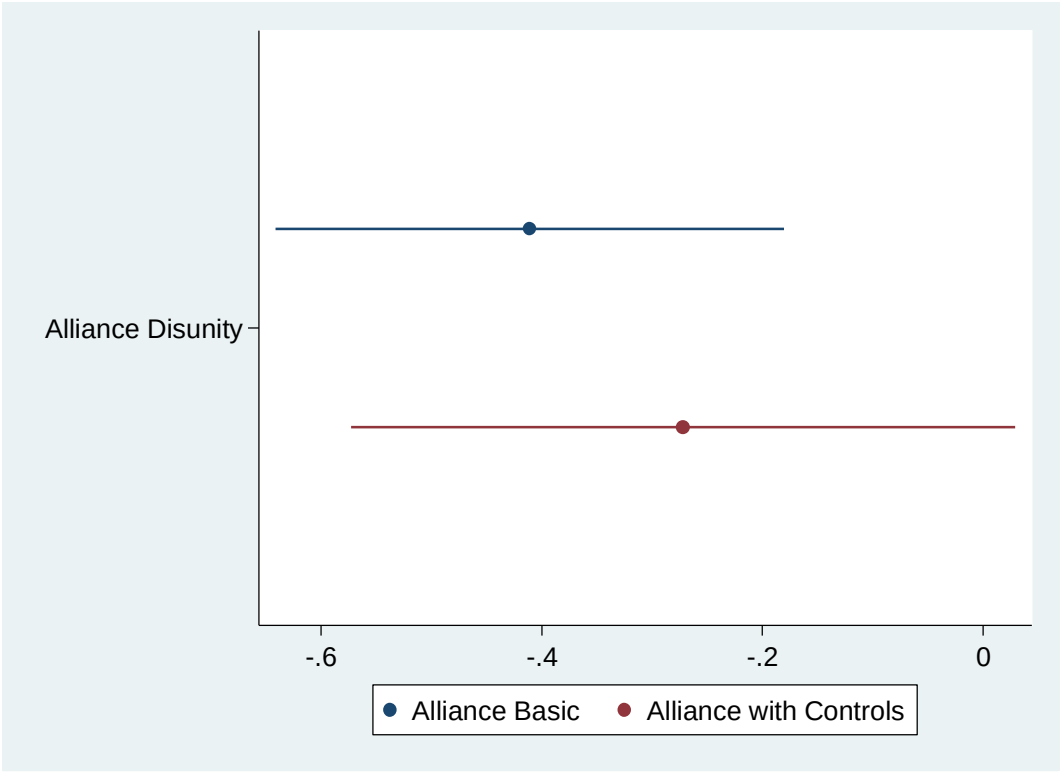


Fig. A.19 – Predicted probability of voting NZF in 1996 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

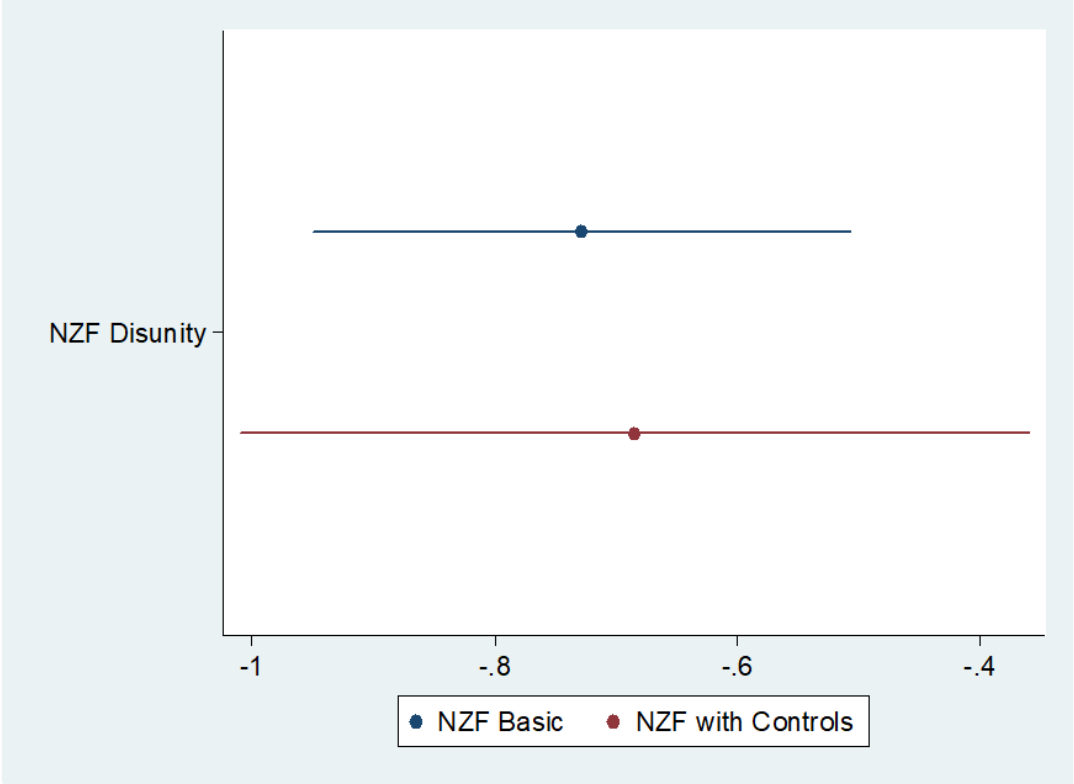
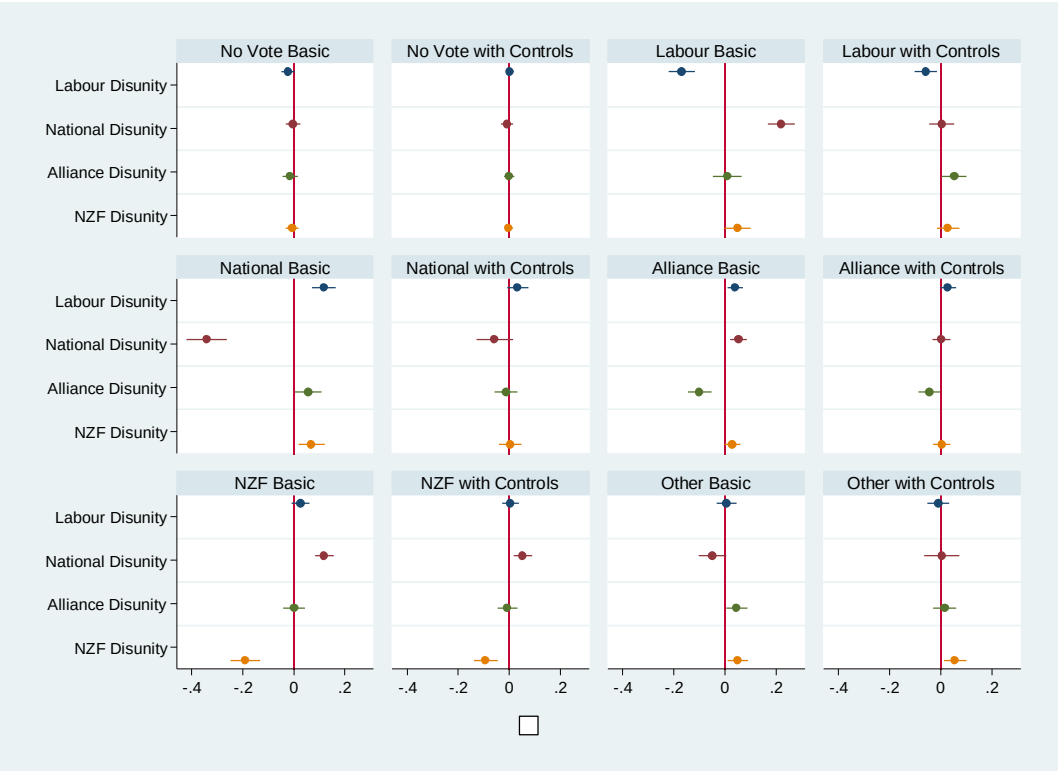


Fig. A.20 – Predicted probability of voting for NZ parties in 1996 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls



United Kingdom

Fig. A.21 – Predicted probability of voting Conservative in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

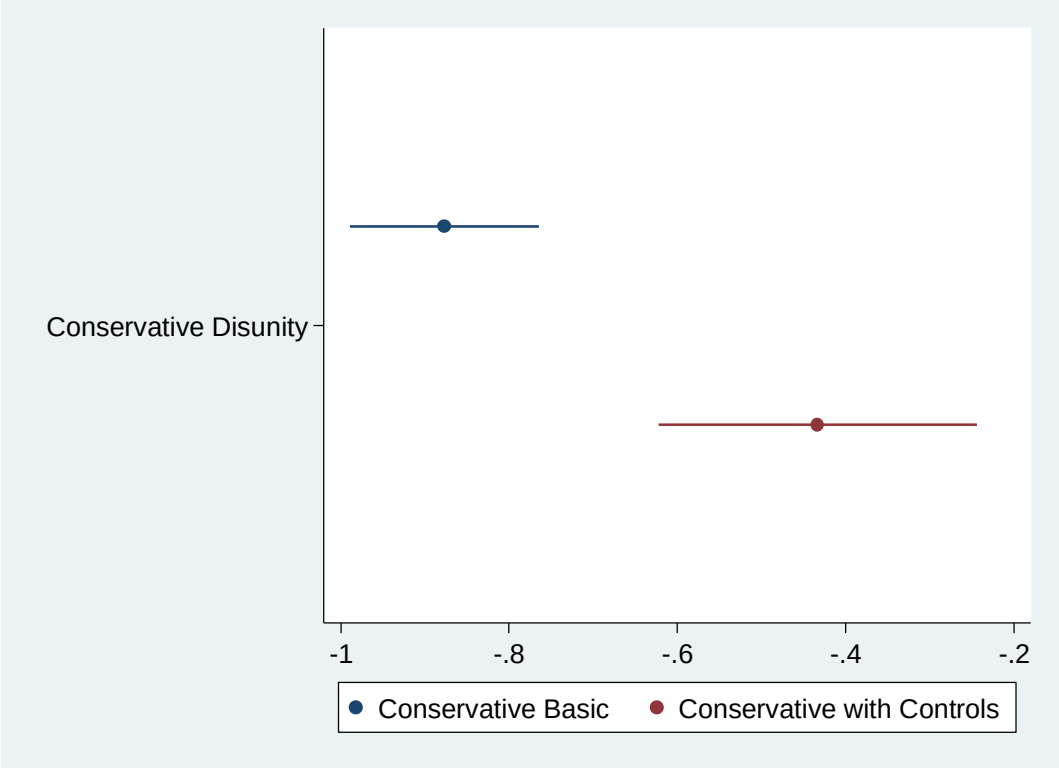


Fig. A.22 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

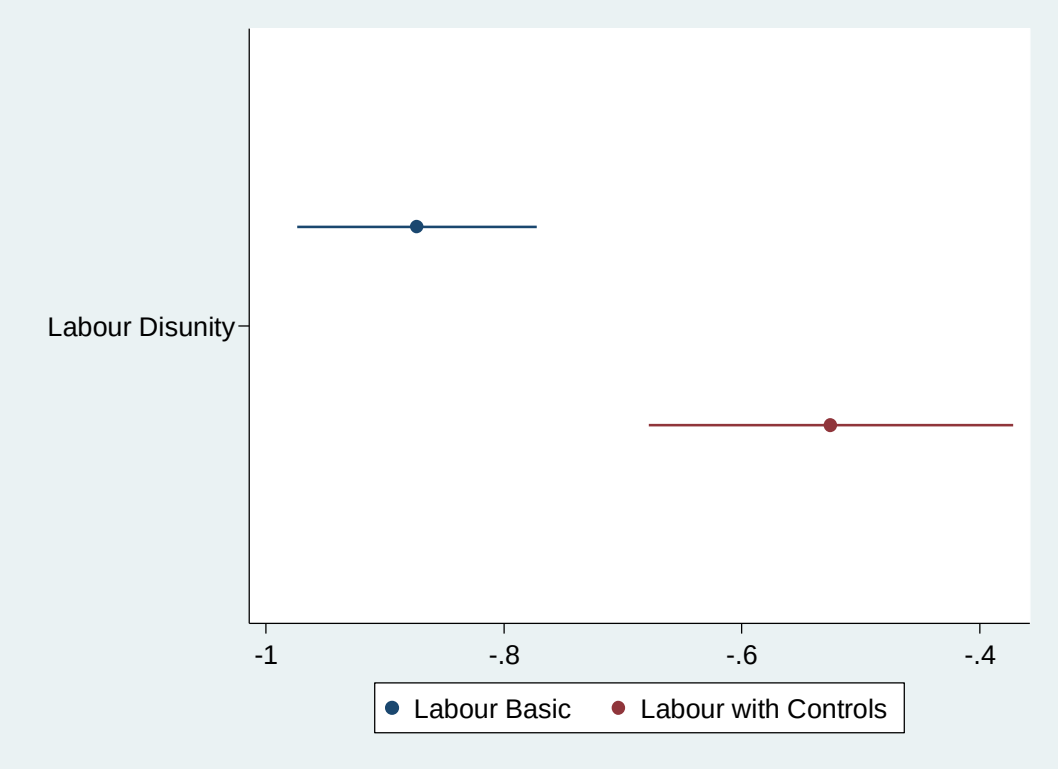


Fig. A.23 – Predicted probability of voting Alliance in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

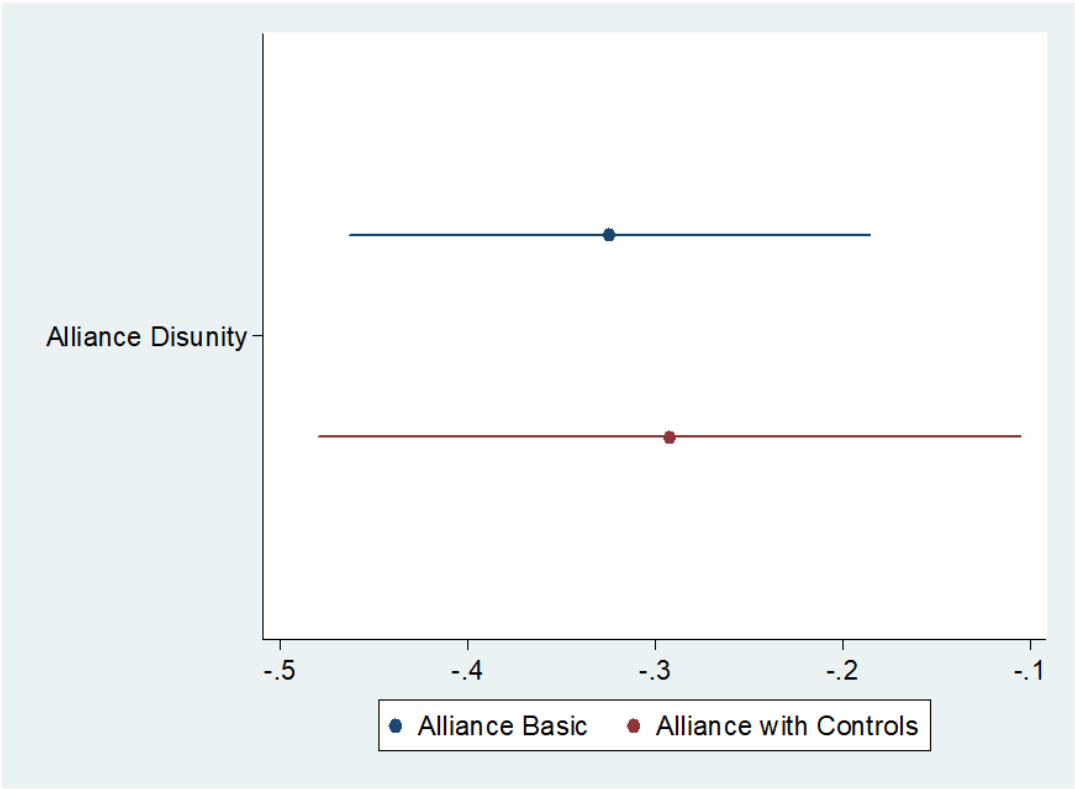


Fig. A.24 – Predicted probability of voting for UK parties in 1987 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls

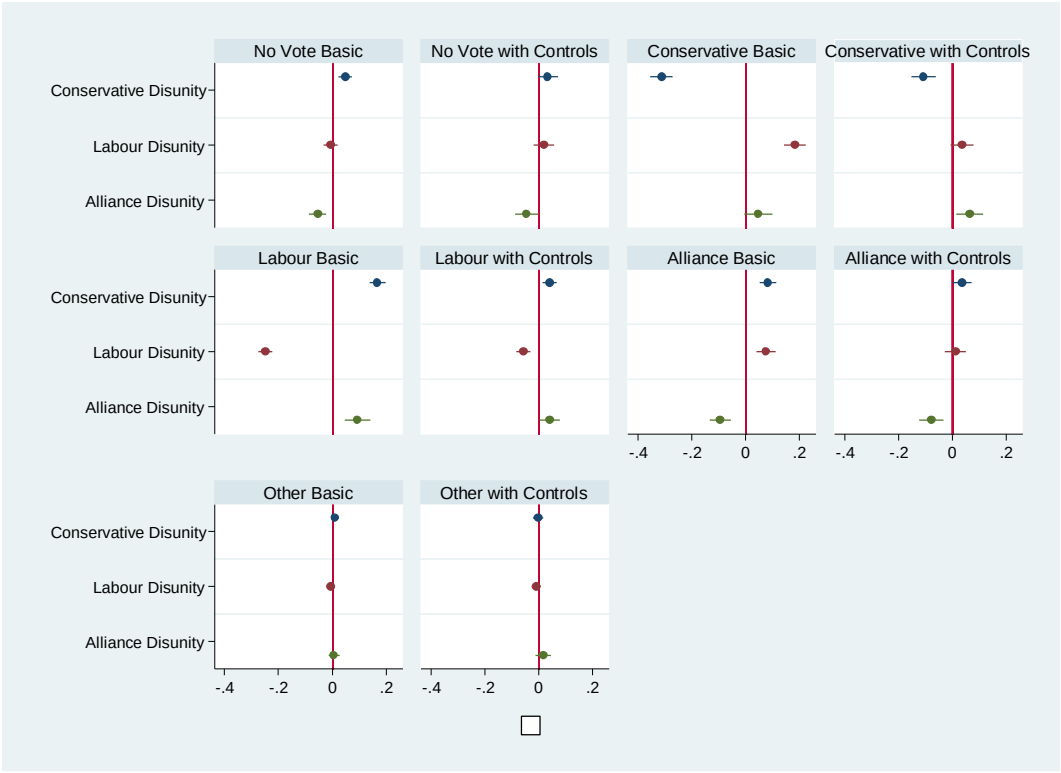


Fig. A.25 – Predicted probability of voting Conservative in 1992 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

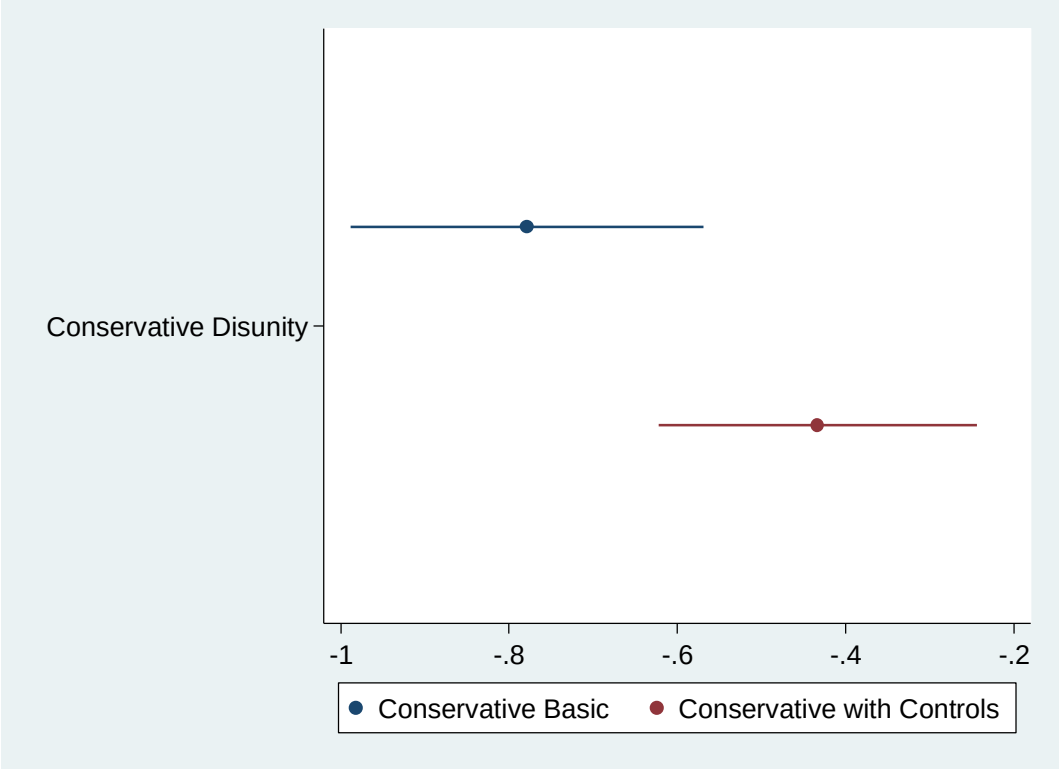


Fig. A.26 – Predicted probability of voting Labour in 1992 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

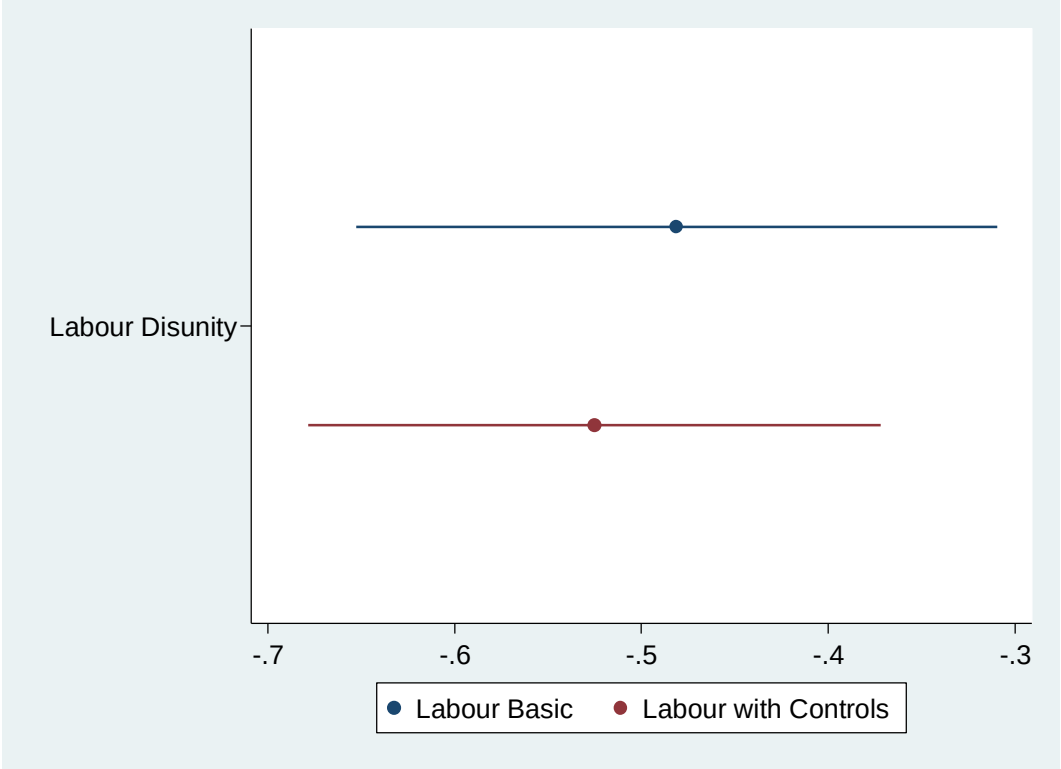


Fig. A.27 – Predicted probability of voting LibDem in 1992 when respondents feel the party is disunited, probit models, with and without controls

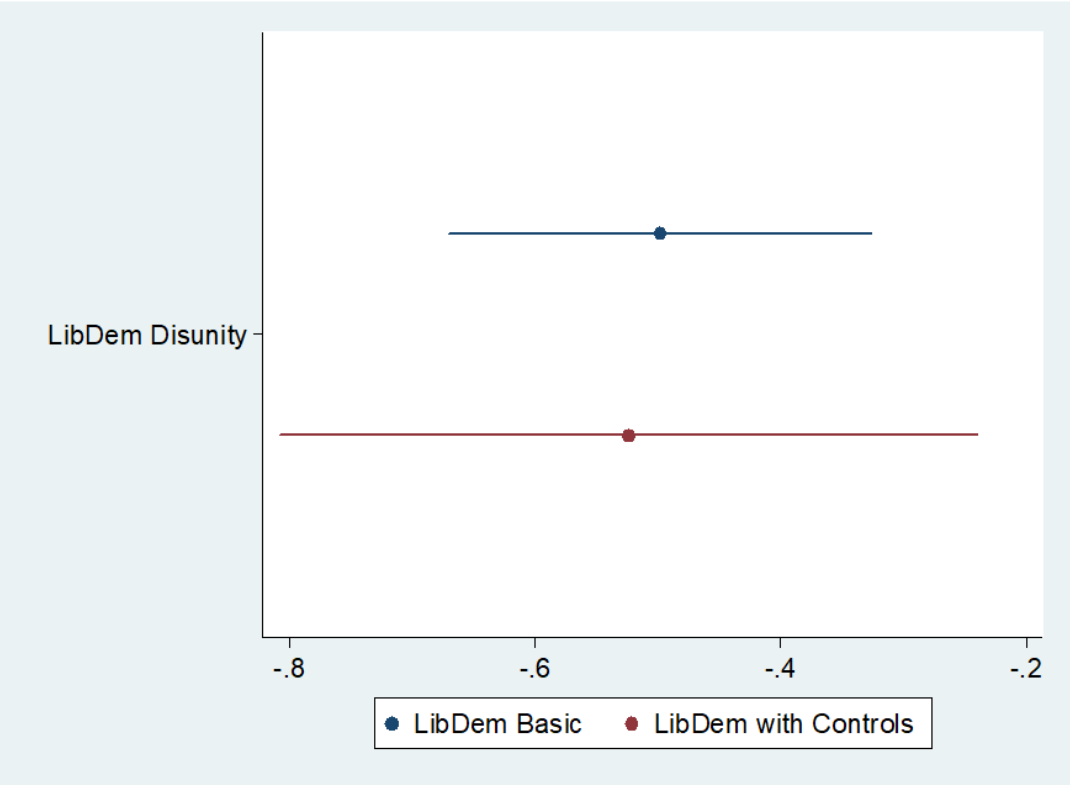
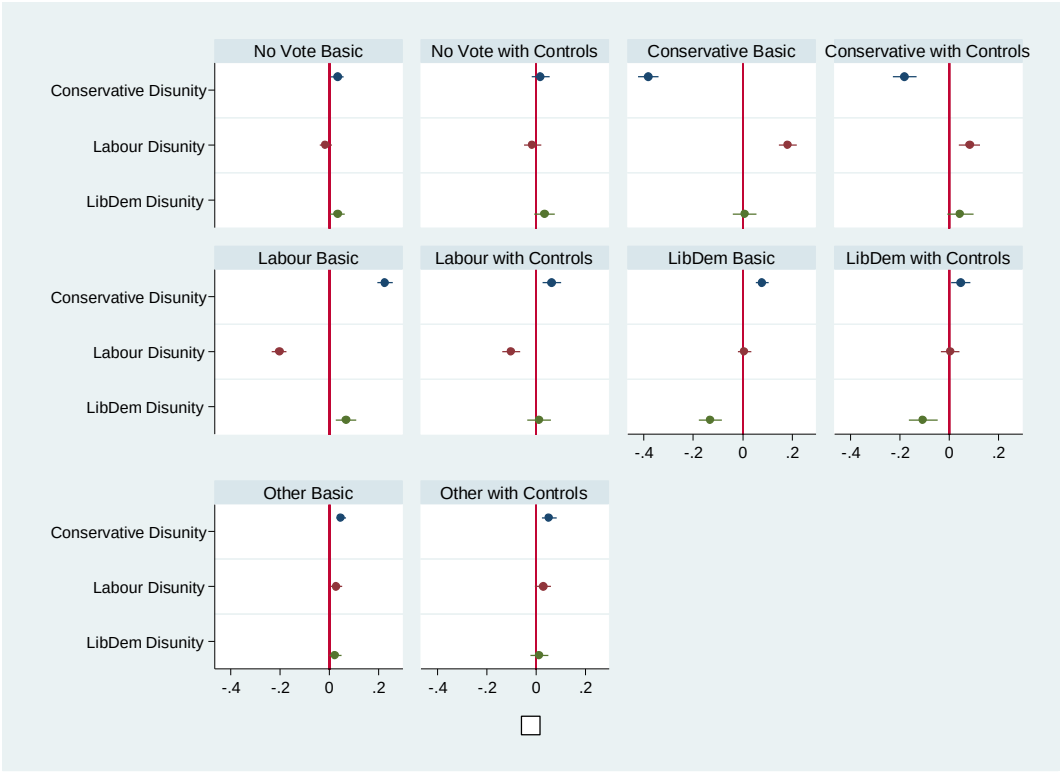


Fig. A.28 – Predicted probability of voting for UK parties in 1992 when respondents feel the party is disunited, multinomial logit models, with and without controls



Appendix B

Guardian Robustness Checks

Table B.1: All models, with DV the Conservative's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	−0.0130	−0.00568	−0.0854	−0.0668
	(0.0924)	(0.105)	(0.150)	(0.165)
% change in Con poll previous month		−0.234***		−0.126
		(0.0564)		(0.104)
No. editorials previous month		−0.0136		−0.00670
		(0.106)		(0.129)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.00695		−0.0316
		(0.0321)		(0.0572)
% govt lead when in office		−0.00586		0.00269
		(0.0110)		(0.0213)
constant	−0.0511	−0.146	0.172	0.349
	(0.167)	(0.272)	(0.457)	(0.594)
N	387	385	141	140
R^2	0.000	0.055	0.002	0.019

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table B.2: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total positive editorials

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total positive editorials	0.144	0.156	0.141	0.0282
	(0.365)	(0.391)	(0.386)	(0.451)
% change in Lab poll previous month		−0.324***		−0.334**
		(0.0617)		(0.111)
No. positive editorials previous month		−0.0618		−0.170
		(0.118)		(0.145)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.0171		−0.0943
		(0.0462)		(0.0735)
% govt lead when in office		−0.0391		−0.0643
		(0.0316)		(0.0521)
Constant	0.0340	−0.0865	0.0396	0.437
	(0.183)	(0.273)	(0.330)	(0.424)
N	387	303	141	121
R^2	0.000	0.112	0.001	0.120

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table B.3: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total negative editorials

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total negative editorials	0.173	0.240*	0.303*	0.326*
	(0.121)	(0.111)	(0.150)	(0.158)
% change in Lab poll previous month		−0.321***		−0.333**
		(0.0614)		(0.108)
No. negative editorials previous month		−0.119		−0.195
		(0.118)		(0.145)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.0220		−0.0795
		(0.0466)		(0.0742)
% govt lead when in office		−0.0390		−0.0652
		(0.0314)		(0.0521)
constant	−0.0587	−0.209	−0.432	−0.142
	(0.195)	(0.290)	(0.442)	(0.542)
N	387	303	141	121
R^2	0.004	0.118	0.016	0.138

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Appendix C

Aggregated British Data Results

Table C.1: Basic Models with DV Labour's poll change

	(1) Complete dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0131	0.0306
	(0.0368)	(0.0401)
Constant	0.00270	-0.0976
	(0.166)	(0.201)
N	68	53
R^2	0.001	0.008

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C.2: Complete Models, with DV Labour's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0609	0.0792
	(0.0984)	(0.116)
% change in Lab poll previous month	0.511***	0.442*
	(0.152)	(0.173)
No. editorials previous month	-0.0223	-0.0308
	(0.112)	(0.132)
Treasury bond rate when in office	0.00857	0.0134
	(0.0241)	(0.0273)
% govt lead when in office	-0.0100	-0.0167
	(0.0261)	(0.0305)
Constant	-0.0609	-0.146
	(0.160)	(0.180)
N	68	53
R^2	0.306	0.291

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table C.3: All models, with DV the Conservative's poll change

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total editorials	0.0336	-0.0542	0.0504	-0.0490
	(0.0450)	(0.0630)	(0.0471)	(0.0689)
% change in Con poll previous month		0.733***		0.684***
		(0.0999)		(0.108)
No. editorials previous month		0.0376		0.0358
		(0.0625)		(0.0647)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.00897		0.00891
		(0.0103)		(0.0108)
% govt lead when in office		-0.00248		-0.00300
		(0.00743)		(0.00912)
Constant	-0.115	-0.0596	-0.211	-0.0696
	(0.150)	(0.140)	(0.165)	(0.155)
N	68	68	53	53
R^2	0.013	0.487	0.034	0.492

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table C.4: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total positive editorials

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total positive editorials	0.0326	0.0408	0.0642	0.0528
	(0.147)	(0.143)	(0.162)	(0.152)
% change in Lab poll previous month		0.513**		0.443*
		(0.157)		(0.180)
No. positive editorials previous month		0.0285		0.0338
		(0.0459)		(0.0522)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.00840		0.0131
		(0.0258)		(0.0293)
% govt lead when in office		-0.00949		-0.0159
		(0.0267)		(0.0311)
Constant	0.0192	-0.0545	-0.0410	-0.128
	(0.141)	(0.160)	(0.162)	(0.183)
N	68	68	53	53
R^2	0.001	0.301	0.003	0.283

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table C.5: Revised model, with DV Labour's poll change and key IV total negative editorials.

	(1) Complete Dataset	(2) Complete Dataset	(3) Cohesion relevant subset	(4) Cohesion relevant subset
Total negative editorials	0.0118	0.0306	0.0263	0.0372
	(0.0396)	(0.0791)	(0.0437)	(0.0837)
% change in Lab poll previous month		0.511***		0.441*
		(0.154)		(0.175)
No. negative editorials previous month		0.00913		0.0103
		(0.0847)		(0.0927)
Treasury bond rate when in office		0.00830		0.0130
		(0.0248)		(0.0283)
% govt lead when in office		-0.00963		-0.0162
		(0.0264)		(0.0310)
Constant	0.0111	-0.0482	-0.0689	-0.117
	(0.157)	(0.161)	(0.190)	(0.181)
N	68	68	53	53
R^2	0.001	0.302	0.006	0.284

Standard errors in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Appendix D

Complete Factor Analyses

Australia

Table D.1 – Factor analysis for Labor 1987

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.2473	0.0106	−0.0848	0.1973	0.8926
Party vote 87	0.8141	0.0950	0.2029	−0.1113	0.2747
Party vote 83	0.7934	0.0906	0.0462	−0.0430	0.3584
Govt good at econ	0.4309	0.0037	0.2322	−0.1850	0.7262
Lab ID	0.8782	0.1233	0.1229	0.0171	0.1982
Close LR to party	−0.4473	−0.0668	−0.0959	0.3855	0.6377
Age	0.0910	−0.0093	−0.0442	0.1399	0.9701
Female	−0.0294	−0.0432	−0.0438	0.0636	0.9913
Lab extreme	−0.1596	0.0674	0.0192	0.4131	0.7990
Leader effective	0.4859	0.0071	0.2980	−0.1990	0.6355
Leader cares	0.4078	0.0248	0.6015	0.0290	0.4704
Leader likable	0.3566	0.0572	0.5513	−0.0688	0.5610
Father supp. Party	0.4266	0.0835	0.0313	0.1113	0.7976
Middle class	−0.1638	−0.5606	0.0097	−0.1496	0.6364
Working Class	0.0640	1.2322	0.0132	−0.0095	−0.5227
Eigenvalues	3.909	1.781	0.478	0.405	

Table D.2 – Factor analysis for the Liberals 1987

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lib Unity	−0.1871	0.0333	−0.0811	0.1748	0.9267
Party vote 87	0.7902	0.0700	0.1376	−0.0847	0.3445
Party vote 83	0.8156	0.0606	0.0744	0.0028	0.3256
Govt good at econ	−0.3892	0.0165	−0.0641	0.2466	0.7834
Lib ID	0.8742	0.0956	0.1062	−0.0397	0.2138
Close LR to party	−0.3582	−0.0706	−0.1083	0.4009	0.6942
Age	0.0918	−0.0517	0.3020	0.0389	0.8962
Female	−0.0113	0.0075	0.0404	−0.1123	0.9856
Lib extreme	−0.0977	−0.0376	−0.0735	0.4303	0.7984
Leader effective	0.4162	0.0628	0.4679	−0.1474	0.5822
Leader cares	0.1989	0.0332	0.6200	−0.0103	0.5749
Leader likable	0.1811	0.0459	0.6500	−0.0302	0.5417
Father supp. Party	0.3227	0.1184	0.0519	−0.0015	0.8791
Middle class	0.0841	0.9979	0.0028	0.0112	−0.0031
Working Class	−0.0692	−0.7096	−0.0749	0.0709	0.4810
Eigenvalues	3.327	1.435	0.828	0.386	

Table D.3 – Factor analysis for Labor 1990

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.0191	−0.3360	−0.1267	0.1367	0.8520
Party vote 90	0.0777	0.8363	0.1047	0.0168	0.2833
Party vote 87	0.0676	0.7953	0.0859	−0.0807	0.3490
Govt good at econ	0.0147	0.2829	0.2134	0.0404	0.8726
Lab ID	0.0850	0.8831	−0.0055	−0.0674	0.2084
Close LR to party	−0.0292	−0.2297	−0.0123	0.5427	0.6517
Age	−0.0274	−0.0543	−0.1204	0.3507	0.8588
Female	−0.0306	−0.0105	−0.0746	−0.1648	0.9662
Leader favourable opinion	0.0337	0.6285	0.4644	−0.0795	0.3818
Leader like	−0.0092	0.3447	0.5460	−0.0024	0.5830
Lab extreme	0.0093	−0.1520	−0.1305	0.1872	0.9247
Father supp. Party	0.0566	0.3615	−0.0431	−0.0694	0.8594
Middle class	−0.3019	−0.1840	0.1848	−0.0336	0.8397
Working Class	2.2369	0.0175	−0.0002	−0.0015	−4.0039
Eigenvalues	5.180	3.260	0.476	0.457	

Table D.4 – Factor analysis for the Liberals 1990

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lib Unity	−0.2262	0.0419	−0.2322	0.1298	0.8763
Party vote 90	0.8126	0.0579	0.1262	0.0089	0.3203
Party vote 87	0.8294	0.0941	0.0480	0.0536	0.2981
Govt good at econ	−0.2666	0.0034	−0.0810	−0.0311	0.9214
Lib ID	−0.7031	−0.1443	−0.1675	0.0286	0.4559
Close LR to party	−0.2979	−0.1090	−0.0227	−0.0970	0.8894
Age	0.1394	−0.0017	0.0111	0.5192	0.7109
Female	−0.0243	0.0432	0.0031	−0.1875	0.9624
Leader favourable opinion	0.4691	0.0716	0.5651	−0.0020	0.4554
Leader like	0.2517	0.0949	0.5153	0.0178	0.6618
Lib extreme	0.1592	−0.0474	0.1750	0.0009	0.9418
Father supp. Party	0.3003	0.1475	0.0200	−0.2410	0.8296
Middle class	0.1056	0.7858	0.0260	−0.0691	0.3659
Working Class	−0.0925	−0.8534	−0.0325	−0.0461	0.2599
Eigenvalues	2.967	1.255	0.453	0.377	

United Kingdom

Table D.5 – Factor analysis for Labour 1983

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.1948	0.0164	−0.3838	0.0901	0.8064
Party vote 83	0.7608	0.0495	0.1880	−0.0103	0.3833
Party vote 79	0.7769	0.0777	−0.0696	−0.0295	0.3846
Govt good at unemp	−0.3908	−0.0857	−0.0083	0.3209	0.7369
Lab ID	0.8360	0.0962	0.1312	−0.0795	0.2683
Close LR to party	−0.3330	−0.0437	−0.0587	0.3606	0.7537
Lab extreme	−0.3555	−0.0231	−0.1249	0.1978	0.8184
Female	−0.0170	−0.0575	0.0995	−0.0624	0.9826
Age	0.0688	0.0459	−0.1261	0.3031	0.8854
Leader is team leader	0.3419	0.0240	0.5076	0.0024	0.6249
Leader effective	0.3761	0.0469	0.3292	−0.1686	0.7196
Father supp. Party	0.3492	0.1337	0.0359	−0.1381	0.8399
Middle class	−0.0995	−0.6656	−0.0135	0.0167	0.5466
Working Class	0.3327	0.4868	0.0046	−0.0048	0.6523
Eigenvalues	3.220	0.666	0.414	0.296	

Table D.6– Factor analysis for Conservatives 1983

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Con Unity	−0.2809	−0.0168	0.5405	0.0667	0.6243
Party vote 83	0.7873	0.0693	−0.1040	−0.1108	0.3523
Party vote 79	0.7659	0.0698	0.0164	0.0318	0.4073
Govt good at unemp	0.5720	0.0464	−0.1371	−0.1377	0.6330
Con ID	0.8100	0.1301	−0.0833	−0.0773	0.3140
Close LR to party	−0.3796	−0.0146	0.0619	0.2039	0.8103
Con extreme	−0.3555	−0.0575	0.0767	0.5150	0.5993
Female	0.0630	0.0463	0.1809	−0.0338	0.9600
Age	0.1992	−0.1484	0.1868	0.1015	0.8931
Leader is team leader	0.4822	−0.0402	−0.2866	−0.0856	0.6764
Leader effective	0.2673	0.0760	−0.2741	−0.0191	0.8473
Father supp. Party	0.3159	0.1896	−0.0828	0.0557	0.8543
Middle class	0.1331	0.5404	−0.0124	0.0860	0.6827
Working Class	−0.2043	−0.6189	0.0097	0.1014	0.5648
Eigenvalues	3.387	0.676	0.438	0.280	

Table D.7 – Factor analysis for Alliance 1983

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
All Unity	−0.2607	−0.1072	0.0161	0.0146	0.9200
Party vote 83	0.4060	0.2824	0.0131	−0.1188	0.7412
Party vote 79	0.3856	0.2981	0.0403	0.1504	0.7383
Govt good at unemp	0.6184	0.4454	0.0663	0.1249	0.3992
All ID	−0.1828	−0.2397	0.2607	0.1969	0.8024
Close LR to Libs	−0.6012	0.4976	−0.0303	−0.0006	0.3900
Close LR to SDP	−0.6920	0.5736	0.0730	0.0469	0.1846
All extreme	−0.1320	0.0457	−0.0541	0.0707	0.9726
Female	0.0574	0.0146	0.0606	0.0528	0.9900
Age	0.0162	−0.0701	−0.0552	0.4605	0.7797
Jenkins is team leader	0.0786	0.0460	−0.0337	−0.0655	0.9863
Steel is team leader	0.2873	0.2041	−0.0714	−0.0119	0.8705
Jenkins effective	0.2262	0.1425	−0.0079	−0.1024	0.9180
Steel effective	0.2978	0.0995	−0.0100	−0.0347	0.9001
Father supp. Party	0.0744	0.0193	0.0418	0.3930	0.8379
Middle class	0.0031	0.0133	0.4769	−0.0350	0.7712
Working Class	−0.0500	−0.0014	−0.7185	0.0636	0.4772
Eigenvalues	1.895	1.094	0.842	0.489	

Table D.8 – Factor analysis for Labour 1987

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.2419	−0.2384	−0.0451	0.5059	0.6267
Party vote 83	0.7744	0.2234	0.0293	−0.1379	0.3305
Party vote 79	0.7849	0.1021	0.0737	0.0587	0.3647
Govt good at unemp	−0.2974	−0.1857	−0.0859	−0.1019	0.8593
Lab ID	0.8547	0.1795	0.0795	−0.0568	0.2277
Close LR to party	−0.4165	−0.1812	−0.1358	0.0422	0.7735
Lab extreme	−0.3756	−0.1488	−0.0055	0.2319	0.7830
Female	−0.0031	−0.0721	−0.0522	−0.1291	0.9754
Age	0.0033	−0.1431	0.0467	0.0997	0.9674
Leader effective	0.2591	0.6552	−0.0117	−0.0540	0.5005
Leader unifier	0.4759	0.4117	0.0552	−0.1650	0.5737
Leader strong	0.2767	0.7177	0.0208	−0.0533	0.4050
Father supp. Party	0.3803	0.0414	0.1594	0.0926	0.8197
Middle class	−0.1026	0.0095	−0.5728	0.0531	0.6584
Working Class	0.3265	0.0510	0.4654	0.0342	0.6730
Eigenvalues	3.866	0.820	0.453	0.322	

Table D.9 – Factor analysis for Conservatives 1987

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Con Unity	−0.2293	−0.2184	−0.0262	0.3849	0.7509
Party vote 83	0.7624	0.0668	0.0652	−0.1248	0.3944
Party vote 79	0.7484	0.1111	0.0236	0.1187	0.4130
Govt good at unemp	0.4524	0.0231	0.0384	−0.1958	0.7550
Con ID	0.7977	0.0725	0.0993	0.0111	0.3484
Close LR to party	−0.4934	−0.0673	−0.0197	0.1347	0.7335
Con extreme	−0.4373	−0.0154	−0.0105	0.2403	0.7507
Female	0.0570	0.0224	0.0242	0.2237	0.9456
Age	0.2229	0.0646	−0.1016	0.2016	0.8952
Leader effective	0.1867	0.6691	0.0285	−0.0458	0.5145
Leader unifier	0.5834	0.1222	−0.0589	−0.2090	0.5975
Leader strong	0.0795	0.5399	0.0258	0.0098	0.7014
Father supp. Party	0.3263	0.0839	0.2885	0.1216	0.7885
Middle class	0.0743	0.0361	0.6018	0.0050	0.6310
Working Class	−0.2044	−0.0257	−0.4191	0.0811	0.7754
Eigenvalues	3.314	0.701	0.604	0.385	

Table D.10 – Factor analysis for Alliance 1987

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
All Unity	−0.0392	−0.0812	−0.1356	−0.0795	0.9672
Party vote 83	0.7060	0.1406	0.1193	0.0621	0.4637
Party vote 79	0.5862	0.0686	0.0920	0.0422	0.6414
Govt good at unemp	−0.1844	−0.0901	−0.1134	0.1522	0.9219
All ID	0.7770	0.1169	0.1116	0.0687	0.3654
Close LR to party	−0.1966	−0.1130	−0.0872	−0.0310	0.9400
All extreme	−0.0705	−0.0612	0.0235	−0.0891	0.9828
Female	−0.0003	−0.0158	0.0329	0.0851	0.9914
Age	0.0193	−0.0151	0.1165	0.0058	0.9858
Owen effective	0.1096	0.2749	0.2019	0.6662	0.4278
Steel effective	0.1608	0.1244	0.7218	0.1974	0.3987
Owen unifier	0.0819	0.9680	0.0117	0.1556	0.0319
Steel unifier	0.1354	0.6572	0.3687	−0.1138	0.4008
Owen strong	0.1447	0.2887	0.1113	0.4862	0.6469
Steel strong	0.1585	0.1290	0.6011	0.0255	0.5963
Father supp. Party	0.1392	−0.0207	0.0875	0.0122	0.9724
Middle class	0.0571	−0.0115	−0.0837	0.1590	0.9643
Working Class	−0.0790	0.0316	0.0738	−0.2531	0.9232
Eigenvalues	2.837	1.114	0.734	0.693	

Table D.11– Factor analysis for Labour 1992

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Lab Unity	−0.1988	0.0243	−0.3959	0.1147	0.7900
Party vote 92	0.7609	−0.0447	0.2138	−0.0524	0.3706
Party vote 87	0.8266	−0.0714	0.0114	−0.0369	0.3102
Govt good at econ	−0.1275	0.0282	−0.0965	−0.0036	0.9736
Close LR to party	−0.4362	0.0766	−0.1662	0.0831	0.7694
Lab extreme	−0.1703	−0.0242	−0.1173	0.5043	0.7024
Female	0.0075	0.0220	0.0358	0.2016	0.9575
Age	0.1123	0.0334	−0.1237	0.1676	0.9429
Leader strong	0.2624	0.0060	0.5558	−0.0367	0.6209
Leader cares	0.2445	0.0021	0.3583	−0.2338	0.7572
Leader for all classes	−0.3612	0.0324	−0.2714	0.2168	0.7478
Father supp. Party	0.3679	−0.0838	0.0592	0.0461	0.8520
Middle class	−0.0367	1.2199	−0.0025	−0.0010	−0.4896
Working Class	0.3512	−0.2182	0.0155	0.0618	0.8250
Eigenvalues	2.537	1.490	0.578	0.266	

Table D.12 – Factor analysis for Conservatives 1992

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
Con Unity	−0.2776	0.3475	0.0862	0.0597	0.7912
Party vote 92	0.8176	−0.2288	0.0362	−0.0207	0.2774
Party vote 87	0.7588	−0.1349	0.0665	0.1703	0.3727
Govt good at econ	0.1735	−0.1376	−0.0251	−0.0294	0.9495
Close LR to party	−0.4564	0.3815	−0.0893	0.0034	0.6382
Con extreme	−0.3613	0.4371	−0.0694	0.0881	0.6658
Female	0.0200	0.0078	0.0667	0.0469	0.9929
Age	0.1116	−0.0092	−0.0154	0.7139	0.4775
Leader strong	0.3338	−0.4587	−0.0403	0.0122	0.6764
Leader cares	0.3416	−0.6109	0.0902	0.0336	0.5008
Leader for all classes	−0.5269	0.5670	−0.1064	−0.0198	0.3892
Father supp. Party	0.3252	−0.0683	0.1864	−0.0363	0.8535
Middle class	0.0827	−0.0422	0.5361	0.0476	0.7017
Working Class	−0.1890	0.1890	−0.4859	0.1162	0.6790
Eigenvalues	3.532	0.629	0.526	0.347	

Table D.13– Factor analysis for the Liberal Democrats 1992

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
LD Unity	−0.0508	0.3779	−0.1026	0.0257	0.8434
Party vote 92	0.6266	−0.1340	−0.0396	0.0679	0.5833
Party vote 87	0.7493	−0.0088	0.0234	0.0023	0.4380
Govt good at econ	−0.1186	0.0435	−0.0070	0.0501	0.9815
Close LR to party	−0.1306	0.2883	0.0363	0.1227	0.8835
LD extreme	−0.0054	0.2285	0.0175	−0.0395	0.9459
Female	0.0521	0.1115	0.0381	0.0528	0.9806
Age	−0.0003	0.0195	0.7584	−0.0084	0.4244
Leader strong	0.1420	−0.4641	0.0109	0.0106	0.7642
Leader cares	0.0728	−0.5412	−0.1215	0.0345	0.6859
Leader for all classes	−0.0755	0.4145	−0.0642	−0.0524	0.8156
Father supp. Party	0.1055	−0.0701	0.1348	0.0799	0.9594
Middle class	0.0244	−0.0872	0.0746	0.4928	0.7434
Working Class	−0.0621	−0.0231	0.0649	−0.5786	0.6566
Eigenvalues	1.327	0.736	0.635	0.597	

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