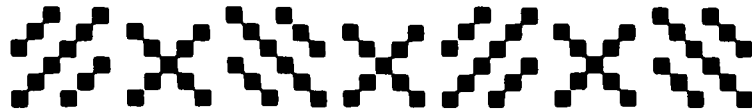


Searching for the Indiana Voter: A Review Essay

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Voting in Indiana: A Century of Persistence and Change. By Charles S. Hyneman, C. Richard Hofstetter, and Patrick F. O'Connor. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979. Pp. x, 298. Figures, maps, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliographical essay, index. Clothbound, \$18.50.)

Over the past century no state's electorate has been more fully mobilized or strongly partisan than Indiana's. The persistence of these characteristics belies attempts to explain them as responses to candidate personalities, particular clusters of issues, or dramatic events. Instead, they reflect the active and partisan orientations toward electoral politics that have characterized most Hoosier voters.

Voting in Indiana documents these aspects of the state's electoral scene. To do so it uses state- and county-level election results, and it supplements these with some exploration of sub-county (i.e., city and township) returns and data describing county office-seeking. Its use of aggregate-level voting and census materials to decode patterns of "persistence and change"

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locates this book squarely within an older but venerable tradition of election analysis.

While that tradition originated in the late nineteenth century, it reached its apex in the 1950s in the seminal work of V. O. Key, Jr.¹ Since the 1950s, however, political scientists have increasingly turned to analysis of survey data, or to "interviewing samples of the electorate" (p. 131), as these authors phrase it. That shift in emphasis reflected the growing influence of psychological approaches to the study of politics. In conjunction with the computer revolution, the refinement of sampling techniques, and the development of better statistical procedures to analyze non-interval data, this influence served to reorient the study of electoral politics. The older approach, which posed its questions of aggregate election returns, largely was displaced by a new line of inquiry that focused on how the individual voter arrived at the voting decision and on the psychological components of that decision.² Voting-behavior studies, in other words, displaced election studies.

Three decades of survey-based analyses of voting behavior have considerably advanced our knowledge of the individual-level dynamics underpinning party selection and voting decisions. But they have not summed to a better understanding of the linkages between these microlevel behaviors and the larger sociopolitical contexts within which they have been shaped. In fact, most survey-based investigations implicitly have assumed that for all practical purposes the macrolevel variables can be treated as constants. Yet even a simple comparison of the political attitude linkages that marked the mid-1950s with those that characterized the late 1960s and 1970s should lead us to wonder whether changing macrolevel contexts produced the observed differences. It is plausible to argue that the transformation of the organized political alternatives available to the public gave rise to changes in the microlevel behaviors contingent upon them. Exploring and explaining these across-level linkages surely must now be a high analytic priority.³

¹ Richard Jensen, "American Election Analysis: A Case History of Methodological Innovation and Diffusion," in Seymour Martin Lipset, ed., *Politics and the Social Sciences* (New York, 1969), 226-43.

² See, for example, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign* (New York, 1944). The *locus classicus* is Angus Campbell et al., *The American Voter* (New York, 1960).

³ Walter Dean Burnham, "The Politics of Crisis," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, VIII (Spring, 1978), 747-63. For the relationship between changes in political attitude linkages and changes in political contexts, see Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, *The Changing American Voter* (Enlarged ed.; Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

To address that priority we cannot depend exclusively on survey data. Such data are timebound, and scholars have available a relatively consistent time series of survey responses covering only three decades. Aggregate-level time series can be constructed for much longer periods and thus make possible a dynamic analysis across changing historical contexts. Analyses of aggregate data, then, must be viewed as indispensable to resolving an important analytic problem. Detailed studies that use such data, *if* well designed and executed, can make important contributions to the development and/or proper specification of theory. But that is a big if, and it is one that *Voting in Indiana* fails to satisfy.

On at least three major counts, this is a disappointing book. First, despite its avowed interest in persistence and change, it does not give the "attention to trends over time" that it claims (p. 237). Indeed, there is a curiously static quality to much of its description and discussion. True, there are presentations of data averaged for specified election sequences (e.g., the unnumbered data arrays on pp. 26-28); summary classifications for designated periods (e.g., Table V-1, p. 91, and Tables VI-1 and VI-2, pp. 100-101); and cross-sectional measures of association for different time points (e.g., Table XI-6, p. 187, and Figure XIII-1, p. 214). But nowhere do the authors present a *longitudinal* analysis of their data. Yet time-series analysis is the proper approach for detecting trends over time. While long a part of the technical arsenal of econometricians, the application of time-series analytic procedures to election data is by no means novel.⁴ More to the point, the failure to utilize longitudinal procedures simply prevents the authors from seeing important trends present in their data.

Second, the book is intentionally a descriptive and atheoretical exploration. The result of that strategic decision is a "roaming inspection of congruities and disparities of behavior" (p. 240). And emphasis must be added to the word *roaming*, for findings are reported in a remarkably diffuse fashion, unlinked either to theory or to other election studies. Consequently, the book is as heavy on data presentation as it is light on interpretation. And as one struggles through the opaquely phrased descriptions of these data arrays, the same questions recur. What do the data *mean*? What do they tell us of the

⁴ Walter Dean Burnham, *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (New York, 1970), 13-26; Paul Kleppner, *The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1979), 26-28.

operation of Indiana's electoral system? Even more importantly, what do they suggest of the individual-level behavior that shaped them? Where in this mass of data is the Indiana voter? How do we extract from these tables some sense of the Indiana voter's orientations toward electoral politics and political parties?

These authors could not have tackled such questions with the statistical procedures they used. This limitation stands as the third overarching weakness of the book. The authors rely heavily on descriptions of percentages, averages, and cross-classifications, occasionally supplementing these with correlational techniques and a limited application of multiple regression procedures. But the bulk of the findings are reported in descriptive terms, too frequently without any easy-to-grasp summary measure of the behavior being investigated. That often obscures the point the authors want to convey, but even more seriously it sometimes prevents them from seeing important patterns that a more rigorous data analysis could have detected.

The heavy reliance on descriptive statistics has an even more disabling consequence: the book loses sight of the Indiana voter. Because these authors used aggregate data, they speak of counties (or other geographic units) and *not of voters*. In other words, they not only recognize the problem of ecological fallacy but allow their analysis to be paralyzed by it. It is true, as W. S. Robinson pointed out in 1950, that the correlation between two variables calculated across some set of geographic units cannot be presumed to be an accurate measure of the association between those variables among the individuals within those units.⁵ But it is also true, as others have shown since then, that ecological regression procedures can be used to generate unbiased estimates of the underlying individual-level relationships.⁶ The application of such techniques to the data base available to these authors could have produced an important analysis of voting behavior. That would have been especially likely had they used the opportunity to test hypotheses

⁵ W. S. Robinson, "Ecological Correlation and the Behavior of Individuals," *American Sociological Review*, 15 (June, 1950), 351-57.

⁶ Leo A. Goodman, "Ecological Regressions and the Behavior of Individuals," *American Sociological Review*, 18 (December, 1953), 663-64; Leo A. Goodman, "Some Alternatives to Ecological Correlation," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXIV (May, 1959), 610-25; Laura Irwin Langbein and Allan J. Lichtman, *Ecological Inference* (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1978); and Ray M. Shortridge, "Voting for Minor Parties in the Antebellum Midwest," *Indiana Magazine of History*, LXXIV (June, 1978), 117-34.

derived from the survey-based research of the past two decades. Such a study would have made an important contribution to our understanding of the ways in which macrolevel contexts shape microlevel behaviors. It would have deservedly earned a place at the cutting edge of the subfield.

But these authors have written a different book, the reading of which evokes a peculiar sense of *déjà vu*. Its research design, its statistical procedures, and even its quaint (and sometimes rococo) manner of expression remind one more of works published before 1950 than of those dating from the late 1970s. Still, because this is a book which reports a mass of information on important aspects of Indiana's electoral politics, it is only reasonable to assess it on its own terms. How well have these authors described the past and present patterns and trends of Indiana's electoral politics? What do they explain of the state's patterns of turnout and partisanship? More importantly, what clues do their data offer concerning that matrix of political and cultural expectations that shaped the electoral behavior of the Indiana voter?

Typically, evaluative essays of this sort summarize findings, praise or criticize, and perhaps suggest some unasked questions in the hope that someone at some later time will pursue them. But otherwise they do not contribute much to the accumulation of knowledge. In this instance, however, since I have access to much of the state- and county-level data that these authors explored, it is possible to probe the data either to supplement their descriptions or to pose new lines of inquiry.⁷ The objective of this somewhat unconventional approach is simple: to restore the Indiana voter to the study of the state's electoral politics.

We can begin by examining one of the hallmarks of the Indiana electorate—its high rate of mobilization. Two chapters of this book (chapters 2 and 13) are devoted to discussions of electoral turnout, and the topic also is dealt with at other appropriate points. That attention is merited, for, as these authors correctly surmise, since the 1870s the state's turnout rates have been among the highest in the nation.

⁷ The Indiana census and voting data are from larger files of state- and county-level data for all nonsouthern states covering the 1840-1972 period. In addition to data for presidential, congressional, and gubernatorial elections obtained from ICPSR, I have compiled files of county-level returns for two minor statewide offices for sixteen states, including those for secretary of state and state treasurer for Indiana. Since the analysis of the returns for federal and minor state offices produced quite similar results, throughout this essay I have opted to present the measures derived from the use of presidential and congressional vote returns.

But having said that, there is surely much more that we need to know about the long-term trends displayed by the turnout data. Because these authors never systematically examined the time-series data, they are either unable to detect discrete trends or they misidentify empirical breakpoints in the series. If we analyze the 1840-to-1978 data longitudinally, we can use the peak cutpoints to decompose the full time series into discrete turnout eras. Each of the two statistically independent approaches that I have used for that purpose point to four such eras in Indiana's turnout series.⁸ The years included in each of these are reported in Table I, as are the turnout means for each sequence and the regression slope and r^2 generated by regressing the turnout value on "time" for each of the indicated periods.

TABLE I
Indiana Turnout Trends, 1840-1978

	Presidential Elections			Off-year Congressional Elections		
	Mean Turnout	b	r^2	Mean Turnout	b	r^2
1840-1900	88.1	+ .907	.501	79.4	+1.014	.478
1900-1928	81.3	-3.107	.820	69.1	-3.860	.910
1900-1916*	86.3	-3.170	.688	75.7	-1.579	.708
1928-1976**	72.7	- .886	.459	58.9	-1.590	.520
1928-1960	74.8	- .338	.064	62.7	- .826	.130
1960-1976**	69.7	-3.570	.924	52.8	-5.739	.920

* Congressional series extends to 1918

** Congressional series extends to 1978

The message of Table I is clear: while Indiana's turnout may now be "high" compared with that of other states, it is considerably lower than it used to be. Each succeeding era has witnessed a decline in the general level of mobilization. The

⁸ The time-series analysis used follows Burnham, *Critical Elections*, 13-14. Both longitudinal t tests and discontinuity coefficients were calculated separately for presidential and off-year congressional series. In isolating the key transition points the two procedures produced identical results. It is important to observe that the estimates of the size of the eligible electorate that were used to calculate turnout took into account the legal requirements that pertained in Indiana at each election. For the details on the procedures and census data used to make those estimates, see Paul Kleppner and Stephen C. Baker, "The Impact of Voter Registration Requirements on Electoral Turnout, 1900-16" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August-September, 1979), Appendix A.

high turnout means and reasonably steep positive trends that marked the nineteenth century gave away after 1900 to lower participation rates accompanied by steep negative trends.⁹ And it is important to notice that these negative trends set in before the 1911 imposition of personal registration or the 1920 enfranchisement of women.¹⁰ The New Deal produced a participation surge, as the authors point out (especially p. 113), but that tended to fade by 1940. As a result, while the longer 1928-to-1960 period again shows lower turnout means than its immediate predecessor, they are accompanied by relatively mild negative slopes. Developments since 1960, however, have been of a quite different order. Not only have the turnout means again declined, but their associated negative trends are steeper than those for any other period in the state's history.

What such data testify to is the across-time *demobilization* of the Indiana electorate. This began at the turn of the century, but its pace has become especially rapid over the past two decades. As we shall see below the longitudinal rhythm exhibited by the turnout data parallels rather neatly that displayed by other critical indicators of the performance of Indiana's electoral system.

However, the data in Table I provide still further insight into the character of the state's electoral turnout. Notice, for example, the difference in the size of the turnout means for presidential and off-year congressional elections within each time segment. As we would expect, the off-year means are consistently smaller than their presidential-year counterparts. The high stimulus normally associated with presidential campaigns tends to draw into the active electorate some citizens who would otherwise stay home. That much is hardly novel,

⁹ If we examine only the 1876-1892 elections, turnout was even higher: the presidential turnout mean = 93.4 percent, and that for off-year Congress = 84.1 percent.

¹⁰ *Voting in Indiana* (p. 27) notices this absolute decline, attributing it largely to the legal changes. But neither of these developments, nor both of them together, serves as a sufficient explanation. For a systematic empirical assessment of the role of voter registration laws see Kleppner and Baker, "Impact of Voter Registration Requirements." A shorter version of this paper will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*. The impact of female enfranchisement in Indiana was weaker than these authors presume. In fact, both the 1916-1920 presidential and the 1918-1922 congressional turnout declines were smaller than would have been predicted on the basis of the turnout trend over the five preceding elections of each type; for the Indiana data and those for all other nonsouthern states, see Paul Kleppner, "The Impact of Woman Suffrage on Measures of Voter Turnout, 1890-1930" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Atlanta, Ga., November, 1980).

and it accords with the observations of these authors (pp. 27-28). But notice further that the size of the difference between the two means increases substantially across time, from 8.7 for 1840 to 1900 to 16.9 for 1960 to 1976. The most recent period shows a difference between presidential and off-year turnout that is nearly twice the size of the corresponding nineteenth-century figure. This increase in the difference suggests that a smaller proportion of Indiana's voters now are regular participants than was the case much earlier. But these comparisons, or even more exact dropoff calculations, only point obliquely to such a change. Since the matter is important, it is one that we should pursue.

Voting-behavior studies have identified distinctive types of voters.¹¹ *Core* voters are those who can be expected to participate regardless of the stimulus levels associated with the election type or campaign activities. At the other extreme are *nonvoters*, those who regularly abstain regardless of the stimulus level. Between these extremes are *peripheral* voters, those who vote sometimes and whose likelihood of participating is a direct function of short-term stimuli. Of course, any electorate contains all three types of voters, but what is critical is the prevalence of core voters compared with peripheral and nonvoters. The higher the proportion of core voters, the more fully and consistently mobilized the electorate.

Comparison of the presidential and off-year turnout means in Table I suggests the possibility that the sizes of the peripheral and nonvoting components of Indiana's electorate have increased across time. But movement into and out of the electorate between types of elections is only one way to gauge the phenomenon. It is more revealing to observe movement between elections of the same type. Here we are concerned with estimating the probability that a voter who turned out in one presidential election repeated that behavior in the next. We can apply ecological regression procedures to county-level turnout percentages to recover this estimate of individual-level behavior. We can then apply that probability estimate to the observed turnout rate for the first election to derive the estimated proportion of those participants who cast ballots at the second trial.¹² In analogous fashion, we can develop estimates of nonvoters at the first election who balloted at the second, and of

¹¹ Angus Campbell, "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change," in Campbell et al., eds., *Elections and the Political Order* (New York, 1966), 40-62.

¹² For the technical details, see the works cited in note 6, above. And for the application of these procedures to county-level data to develop estimates of the components of the national electorate from 1840 to 1964, see Paul Klepp-

those who abstained at both elections. We can develop separate estimates for each of these categories of behavior across every successive pair of 1876-1972 presidential elections and then calculate means for designated time periods.

It is a relatively simple matter to translate the theoretical categories into operational terms that parallel these procedures. Core voters can be defined as those who voted at two successive presidential elections; nonvoters abstained at both; and peripheral voters cast ballots at one, but only one, of the two elections. The estimated sizes of these components of Indiana's electorate are in Table II. The table presents means of the estimates between successive pairs of presidential elections for

TABLE II
Estimates of the Components of the Indiana Electorate,
Presidential Elections, 1876-1972*

	Core Voters (%)	Peripheral Voters (%)	Nonvoters (%)
1876-1892	91.1	4.9	3.9
1900-1928	77.9	6.7	15.3
1900-1916	85.1	3.0	11.8
1940-1972	70.1	5.0	24.8

* Realigning elections are excluded from the calculations.

the time periods designated. Since by definition realigning elections involve considerable voter instability, these have been excluded from the calculation of the means. Thus, what we can observe are the relative sizes of the core, peripheral, and non-voting components of Indiana's electorate under the "normal politics" conditions of the state's (and the nation's) third through fifth party systems.

Not surprisingly, what the data reveal is a considerable contraction in the relative size of the core electorate. That shrinkage began at the turn of the century, accelerated during the 1920s with the enfranchisement of electorally inexperienced women, and has proceeded apace in the post-New Deal period. What is especially impressive (and alarming from the point of view of democratic theory) is that since 1940 the distribution has tended to become bimodal—the shrinkage in the size of the

ner, "Critical Realignments and Electoral Systems," in Kleppner et al., *The Evolution of American Electoral Systems* (Westport, Conn., forthcoming in 1981).

core has its parallel in a nearly corresponding increase in the size of the nonvoting component of the state's electorate.

What do such data suggest about changes in the electorate's orientations toward the voting process? They imply that low levels of psychological involvement are now much more broadly diffused than was the case in the nineteenth century, or even earlier in this century. They point out as well that the erosion of involvement levels is not solely a recent development, but one that originated at the turn of the century. The electoral-system transformation that occurred in Indiana (and elsewhere) in the mid-1890s had profound consequences. Not the least of these was to begin the process of reshaping citizens' attitudes toward electoral politics and toward the value of voting. Whatever sets of attitudinal linkages sustained the high involvement and correspondingly high mobilization levels of the late nineteenth century progressively decayed thereafter.

Why might this have been so? Why and how were those earlier linkages displaced? Why were they not replaced by other linkages that produced similar mobilization effects? These, of course, are the critical analytical questions that must eventually be confronted.¹³ But they are the types of questions that can be generated only when theory and data analysis are united and when the behavior of the Indiana voter is conceived as the proper focus of inquiry.

Of course, at no point has Indiana's turnout been uniform across its ninety-two counties. *Voting in Indiana* appropriately draws attention to within-state variations in turnout rates (especially pp. 28-37, 120-27). However, its efforts to give coherence to an impressive body of data fall short of the mark. The descriptive cross-classifications and labored explications simply do not serve to clarify the patterns. Indeed, in minor particulars the discussion tends to mislead somewhat. If we approach the data from a different angle, we can gain a much better view of two important matters that were of concern to these authors.

How much county-to-county variation in turnout was there? An examination of the cross-sectional turnout means and their associated coefficients of variability (V) enables us to respond to that question (see Table III).¹⁴

¹³ For an initial effort to do so, see Paul Kleppner, "The Demise of Ethnocultural Politics: Parties and Voters, 1896-1920" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, San Francisco, Calif., April, 1980).

¹⁴ The table presents presidential data, but the off-year congressional data show similar patterns. The coefficient of variability (V) is the ratio of the standard deviation of the distribution to its mean. It is a better measure for

TABLE III
Indiana Presidential Election Turnout, 1876-1972:
Cross-Sectional Indicators (by Counties)

	Measures of Central Tendency		Betas		
	Means	V (as %)	Population Change	Urbanism	R ²
1876-1892	94.0	3.28	-.232	-.391	.287
1900-1928	85.2	7.01	-.418	-.386	.542
1900-1916	90.0	6.78	-.513	-.380	.631
1932-1940	84.2	8.01	-.246	-.547	.546
1940-1972	76.9	8.17	-.218	-.576	.397
1940-1960	79.2	7.84	-.243	-.590	.427
1960-1972	74.8	9.23	-.173	-.516	.308

In one sense, and especially when compared with other states, what is striking is how little spread there is about any of these means.¹⁵ In light of the known differences in socioeconomic composition, partisan competitiveness, and the like across the state's counties, the turnout distributions are surprisingly tight. Even so, there is a clear pattern of longitudinal change: the value of the coefficient of variability for the most recent period is nearly triple its earliest size. So while the distributions remain more compact than in most other states, the general mobilization level has declined and as it has the spread about the mean has increased. Such a pattern of change indirectly suggests some longitudinal tendency toward socially distinctive turnout rates.

We would have expected as much from the authors' discussion of the differences between urban and rural turnout rates. The finding that at the aggregate level turnout associates inversely with urbanism is not the "startling disclosure" (p. 121) that they imagine. Other studies, even some survey-based ones, have arrived at a similar conclusion.¹⁶ Neverthe-

these purposes than the standard deviation. That is so since V is a measure of relative dispersion and since we are interested in comparing the amounts of spread about different means for discrete time periods.

¹⁵ For illustrative comparisons, see the data in Kleppner, *Third Electoral System*, Table 2.10, p. 46.

¹⁶ Melvyn Hammarberg, *The Indiana Voter: The Historical Dynamics of Party Allegiance During the 1870s* (Chicago, 1977), 162, 176; Kleppner, *Third Electoral System*, 46; Samuel A. Kirkpatrick, David R. Morgan, and Thomas G. Kielhorn, *The Oklahoma Voter: Politics, Elections, and Parties in the Sooner State* (Norman, Okla., 1977), 74; Michael S. Lewis-Beck, "Agrarian Political Behavior in the United States," *American Journal of Political Science*, XXI

less, since it is the social factor to which they devote greatest attention, it merits consideration.

The data supporting their description of the patterned relationship between turnout and urbanism is much less conclusive than the authors suppose. The cross-classification of counties by urban-rural condition and by turnout (Table VII-1, pp. 122-23) is not particularly persuasive, especially in the absence of any summary measure of association. The greater problem, however, is that we have been given no way of knowing to what extent these patterns occurred because both turnout and urbanism were related to a third variable—population change. There are good reasons to suppose that population change would also be inversely related to turnout, and that it would be positively related to urbanism.¹⁷ Thus, the posited relationship may be partially, or wholly, spurious. Cross-classification of ninety-two counties is not the appropriate way to handle the problem. Multiple regression procedures provide a stronger approach, and the results of such analyses are presented in Table III.

The negative association between turnout and urbanism does not disappear when controlled for population change. Both variables show inverse associations with turnout. But the patterned relationships have not been constant over time. First, compare the relative sizes of the betas for the two variables within each time period, and then across time periods. Second, notice the total amounts of turnout variance (R^2) that the two variables together explain.

What observations can we derive from such comparisons? Together these two variables show a relatively weak association with nineteenth-century turnout. Of course, we might have presumed as much: when turnout averages 94.0 percent it is not likely that it varied much across any meaningful social categories. It is only when the general mobilization level declines that we can expect to see some stratification patterns

(August, 1977), 543-65; and Raymond E. Wolfinger and Steven J. Rosenstone, *Who Votes?* (New Haven, Conn., 1980), 30-34. Most of the analysts who refer to lower rural than urban turnout cite Campbell et al., *The American Voter*, chapter 15. But it is important to notice that that chapter reports no data on turnout.

¹⁷ On the inverse relationship between population change and turnout, see *Voting in Indiana*, Table A-III-4, p. 259. For every census year since 1870, urbanism and population change over the previous decade in Indiana have shown reasonably high correlations: e.g., 1920, $r = .676$; for 1930, $r = .686$. The value of the correlation turns downward after 1930, a fact that reveals much concerning the nature of the population shifts in the state over the past five decades.

emerge. One of the stratification dimensions that structured Indiana's turnout, at least in the 1930s, was a clear rural-urban distinction. The steep negative association between urbanism and turnout is a phenomenon dating from the 1930s. Moreover, the form of that association has not changed much since then, while its strength has declined. That pattern implies that the demobilization contagion—and especially since 1960—has spread as well to the state's rural areas.

Other indicators of the performance of Indiana's electoral system have exhibited similar patterns of longitudinal change. It is not feasible to discuss all of these here, but one merits particular attention: partisanship.

Indiana has long been "an arena of . . . intense combat between people who call themselves Democrats and people who call themselves Republicans" (p. 42). So it remains, at least when compared with most other states. Yet that statement misses an important longitudinal dynamic: the across-time erosion of party-vote linkages. Partisan identifications now guide the voting selections of fewer Hoosiers than earlier. This is the case whether we view vote selections at a single election or across adjacent pairs of elections.

Straight-ticket voting is a good indicator of the role of party identification as a cue to the voter's decisions. The more voters whose choices are guided by internalized senses of belonging to a political party, the higher the levels of straight-ticket voting and the lower the rates of ticket splitting. The difficulty lies in constructing a measure of those rates when we are confined to the use of aggregate data.

One approach is to take a party's percentage of the two-party vote for each of the contested offices, and then to calculate its mean percentage across those offices and the variance about that mean. The variance measure serves as a crude indicator of split ballots. Walter Dean Burnham has calculated this measure for Indiana's statewide contests from 1880 through 1968. His data show virtually no variance across offices in presidential years through 1892, a slight increase (to 1.28) for the 1900-1920 period, and then a further increment (to 1.39) for the 1940 through 1968 elections.¹⁸ The difficulty with the measure, however, is that at best it taps net party crossovers and it confines attention to the two-party option. The authors of *Voting in Indiana* used correlational techniques

¹⁸ Burnham, *Critical Elections*, 195-96. The variance across offices for the 1960-1968 period is 1.46. Rolloff data exhibit a similar longitudinal pattern and reach a high of 5.1 percent for the 1960-1968 sequence.

(Table X-2, p. 166, and Tables XI-4 to XI-6, pp. 186-87) to get at the problem. But correlations, too, measure only net change and are especially insensitive to relatively uniform shifts across the units of analysis.

The better tactic is to calculate regression estimates of the transition probabilities between offices. This approach is analogous to that described for the calculation of turnout probabilities between elections, except here we are concerned with estimating the probability that a voter who cast, say, a Democratic ballot for president voted for that same party's candidate for Congress. This approach enables us to generate estimates of gross crossovers and to distinguish a Democrat-to-Republican (or Republican-to-Democrat) switch from movement to a minor party or to nonvoting for the second office.¹⁹ The disadvantage is that to measure split-ticket voting fully the estimates must be calculated between every possible pair of offices. For present and practical purposes, however, I will confine attention here to the estimated crossovers between two offices—president and Congress. Further, the data presented here cover only the estimated rates of switching between the two major parties (see Table IV).

TABLE IV
Estimated Proportions of Split Ballots:
Votes for President and Congress, 1876-1972

	Democratic President Republican Congressman	Republican President Democratic Congressman
1876-1892	1.5	1.9
1900-1928	2.1	4.0
1900-1916	2.9	4.7
1932-1940	4.3	5.2
1940-1972	1.4	4.1
1940-1960	0.1	4.3
1960-1972	3.3	4.0

Two observations are pertinent. First, the rates of major-party switching between these two offices are not impressively

¹⁹ This is so since the variables are measured as "party turnout"; that is, the vote cast for each party for each office is calculated as a proportion of the eligible electorate. Moreover, the multiple regression equations used to generate the estimates took into account the four options available to the voter: supporting the Democrats, the Republicans, minor parties, or abstaining. The technical details can be followed in the literature cited in note 6, above.

high at any point. Second, the rates for both parties are now considerably higher than they were in the late nineteenth century. In fact for both parties the "normal politics" conditions of 1960-1972 show rates that are closer in size to the 1932-1940 realigning period than they are to the 1876-1892 sequence.

If the capacity of standing party attachments to guide voter selections across offices has declined, what of party identification as a cue to voting behavior from one election to the next? When partisan feelings are intense and widespread, we expect considerable stability in party-vote selections between adjacent elections. As the strength of partisan sentiment decreases and becomes less widely diffused across the electorate, instability measures will show a corresponding increase. When that occurs we witness a systemically significant erosion in party-vote linkages. The resulting electorate is one whose collective decision is more susceptible to short-term forces and less securely anchored in long-term partisan attachments.

Some of the more original and potentially insightful sections of *Voting in Indiana* focus on this question of longitudinal partisan stability. Departing from their usual practice, here the authors link their data exploration to theoretical constructs derived from the voting-behavior studies. The result (see pp. 174-84) is a more cogently structured and potentially useful discussion than those in some other sections. Unfortunately, their key measure—an index of party-voting instability—suffers from an operational flaw. They measure instability as the arithmetic change between election pairs in each county's share of the two-party vote cast for a particular party. They then construct their instability index by calculating the mean of these changes across a designated series of election pairs (1948-1968). Thus, their instability indices "are *net* changes in the percentages of votes given to a party's candidates from one election to the next" (note 2, pp. 276-77, emphasis added). But does *net* change appropriately measure instability? If a county shifted by twenty percentage points toward the Democrats between the first and second elections, and then swung back to the Republicans by twenty percentage points between the second and third elections, its instability measure would be *zero*. Another county that registered shifts in the same partisan direction of, say, one percentage point across each of the two election pairs would have an instability index value of *two*. The wild gyrations of the first county surely give evidence of much greater party-vote instability than the minuscule, but incremental, shifts that marked the second case. But the instability

index calculated by these authors would mask that reality. What captures it is an indicator of *gross* change, the amount of shift between election pairs irrespective of the direction of the shift. If correctly measured such an instability index could be fruitfully used for some analytical purposes. However, if we are concerned with the extent to which standing party attachments guide current vote selections, there are even more appropriate techniques. Two of these will be employed here.

First, we can develop an aggregate-level estimate of the "normal" partisan vote division and determine its efficacy in explaining the variance of the current vote. A party's normal vote can be defined as the mean of its percentage of the total vote across the four elections immediately preceding the one whose vote serves as the dependent variable. Thus, the estimator cycles forward but always includes four elections. It includes an equal number of presidential and off-year contests, so that whatever differences exist between election types can be expected to cancel out. It includes two elections of each type to average out any unusual short-term forces that might be associated with a single contest. If past partisan performances shaped current vote divisions, then the normal-vote estimator should explain a high proportion of the variance of the dependent variable.²⁰

The second approach, while statistically independent of the first, is logically analogous. It involves the use of party turnout percentages and multiple regression procedures to estimate the conditional probability that voters who supported a party at one presidential election repeated that behavior at the next. Each of these estimates is then translated into proportions of the electorate by multiplying it by the observed party turnout rate for the first election. In this way we obtain for each election year the estimated proportion of the electorate that voted Democrat (or Republican) at both elections. We can then sum the proportions of vote repeaters for each party and view the total proportion of the electorate whose partisan selections remained stable across two presidential elections.

I have applied both of these approaches to Indiana data for each presidential election between 1876 and 1972.²¹ The results

²⁰ Construction of this aggregate-level normal-vote estimator follows Hammarberg, *The Indiana Voter*, 155. For the survey-based insights underlying its construction and use, see Philip E. Converse, "The Concept of a Normal Vote," in Campbell et al., *Elections and the Political Order*, 9-39.

²¹ I have replicated both procedures for off-year congressional elections and for contests for secretary of state and state treasurer for presidential and off-year elections separately. The relevant contours of those results parallel the ones reported in Table V.

for each election have then been used to calculate the means reported in Table V.

TABLE V
The Longitudinal Decay of Partisanship,
Presidential Elections, 1876-1972

	Normal Vote r^2		Party Transition Estimates*		
	Dem	Rep	Dem	Rep	Total
1876-1892	.858	.861	43.3	41.6	84.9
1900-1928	.826	.712	33.7	33.6	67.3
1900-1916	.902	.740	35.5	32.3	67.8
1940-1972	.795	.797	30.6	37.6	68.2
1940-1960	.828	.827	31.3	40.1	71.4
1960-1972	.729	.739	30.3	33.5	62.8

* Voters making same party choice in two consecutive elections, expressed as proportions of the eligible electorate.

Both techniques produce results whose longitudinal patterns are quite similar. The capacity of standing party attachments to structure current vote outcomes has clearly declined across time in Indiana. However, the series do not display tidy patterns of linear decay. The immediate post-1900 sequences show a continuing tight fit between the normal vote and the current Democratic distribution. But that occurs as the Democrats' mean share of the participating electorate fell by 5.6 percentage points from its nineteenth-century level. That suggests that the stability of the coefficients reflects the fact that the Democrats has been reduced to a hard core of unwavering supporters. Similarly, while the coefficients for both parties during the 1940-1960 period nearly approximate their 1876-1892 counterparts, they occur within a context marked by generally lower rates of mobilization.

The party transition estimates tell the story even less ambiguously, especially in the "total" column. The proportion of the electorate whose partisan attachments are strong enough to produce a vote for the same party at two successive presidential elections has declined by 22.1 percentage points from 1876-1892 to 1960-1972. A large share of that decline dates to the 1900-1916 period. And while in Indiana the New Deal period stimulated turnout, increased competitiveness, and reinvigorated partisanship, it only temporarily (and not very dramatically) arrested the long-term decay of party-vote linkages.

If Indiana's electoral system functioned as a system, we might expect these two dimensions of change to be interrelated.

Further, we might expect an across-time change in the patterned relationships exhibited by the social predictors of both party-vote instability and turnout. While the authors of *Voting in Indiana* did not choose to discuss the matter, their appendix presents some evidence pointing in these directions (see the turnout correlations for 1920 to 1960 in Table A-III-4, p. 259). The arrays in Table VI provide further confirmation.²²

First, notice the changes in the sizes of the means of the dependent variables across time periods. With the exception of muted countercyclical movement associated with the New Deal realignment, the value of the instability index has increased over time while the mobilization level has declined. The result is an Indiana electorate that now is much less fully mobilized and more unstable in its party-vote selections than earlier, and especially more so than in the late nineteenth century.

Next, notice the relationships between the independent variables and the instability index. During the 1876-1892 period, as turnout and per capita wealth increased, the value of the instability index declined, but the youth and competitiveness measures registered only trivial effects. Indeed, even all of these variables in tandem explain only a relatively small proportion (16.9 percent) of the variance of the instability index. But after the turn of the century, the variables account for decently sized proportions of the total variance, and both turnout and competitiveness display steeply negative associations with the instability index. That is, as we would generally expect, high turnout and high competition produced low instability rates. Tight competitiveness probably stimulated both high turnout and high party-vote stability.²³ But unlike the figures for the nineteenth century, the youth measure shows a positive association with instability, and the earlier negative association with wealth fades. The 1940-1960 sequence displays even

²² The instability index used has been operationalized as the mean of the gross change between each election pair falling within the designated time period. Per capita wealth is the per capita assessed value of real and personal property, and it is a weaker measure than the median income indicator that is available in post-1940 censuses. The youth measure prior to 1920 is the percentage of the total male population below twenty-one years of age, and in and after 1920 the proportion of the total population below that age. Competitiveness is an interval-level index calculated for each county as 100.0 percent minus the absolute difference between the Democratic and Republican percentages of the total vote. The higher the value of the index, the stronger the competition between the parties. The index for each county for each election was then used to calculate means across the designated election sequences.

²³ The data in Table VI, Panel B, for the same sequences offer support for that observation.

TABLE VI
Predictors of Partisan Instability and Turnout:
Indiana, 1876-1972

A. Regression of Instability Index on Demographic and Political Variables*						
	1876- 1892	1900- 1928	1900- 1916	1940- 1972	1940- 1960	1960- 1972
Per Capita Wealth	-.103	.081	.067	.220	.226	-.085
Youth	.059	.235	.114	.248	.347	.033
Turnout	-.135	-.455	-.305	.046	-.069	-.020
Competitiveness	.015	-.255	-.204	.073	.070	-.180
R ² =	.169	.642	.495	.086	.136	.027
Mean of Dependent Variable	1.9	4.1	3.6	7.0	3.8	12.4

B. Regression of Turnout on Demographic and Political Variables*						
	1876- 1892	1900- 1928	1900- 1916	1940- 1972	1940- 1960	1960- 1972
Per Capita Wealth	-.112	.155	.154	.189	.216	.070
Youth	.119	-.026	-.052	.046	.071	.060
Instability Index	-.108	-.356	-.168	.022	-.032	-.013
Competitiveness	.186	.202	.198	.471	.496	.309
R ² =	.334	.719	.721	.547	.594	.394
Mean of Dependent Variable	94.0	85.2	90.0	76.9	79.2	74.8

* Partial betas controlled for the effects of other itemized variables and for percentage urban and proportionate population change.

steeper positive associations between instability and youth and wealth measures, but the turnout and competitiveness associations erode and the total variance explained drops below its 1876-1892 level. In the most recent period the predictive efficacy of these variables is virtually trivial: they explain only 2.7 percent of the total variance, and only competitiveness serves as a statistically robust predictor—of low instability, in this case.

In some respects the 1960-1972 profile of associations resembles its nineteenth-century predecessor: few steep slopes, no youth effects, and a low proportion of explained variance. That might prompt a suggestion that this dimension of Indiana's electoral system has come full circle. But such a suggestion

would miss the critical point: the mean instability index is now 6.5 times larger than it was during the 1876-1892 period. Moreover, while in the nineteenth century the spread about the mean of the instability index was relatively wide ($V = 45.3$ percent), it is now quite compact ($V = 14.3$ percent). Thus, the message conveyed by these comparative data is reasonably clear: the high instability rates of the most recent period do not show steep and powerful social associations precisely because they are relatively uniformly diffused across the Indiana electorate. Party-vote instability has become a contagion that permeates all components of the electorate, and one whose further spread is only mildly constrained by lingering party competition. That the state's competitiveness levels also display post-1960 signs of decay points to an ongoing, and perhaps epidemic, erosion of party-vote linkages.²⁴

The changed contours of the turnout associations convey a similar message. In the nineteenth century the participation norm was widely diffused among Indiana's voters. Aggregate turnout rates, accordingly, were not depressed by youth effects or by low levels of per capita wealth. And they were only slightly stimulated by high competition and party-vote stability. The directions of the age and wealth associations changed in the early twentieth century, and the stimulating impact of the political variables increased slightly. By the most recent period, however, only competitiveness remains as a statistically robust predictor of turnout, as even high wealth levels fail to stimulate, and youth measures fail to depress, participation. Combine these observations with two additional ones: the R^2 for the equation nearly approximates its nineteenth-century level, but the turnout mean is almost twenty percentage points below the 1876-1892 period. Taken together such data point to a simple, if alarming, conclusion: the abstention rates of most of the components of Indiana's electorate have tended to become increasingly similar. As turning out was the norm of the state's nineteenth-century electorate, turning off seems well on its way to becoming its late-twentieth-century replacement.

These longitudinal patterns of turnout erosion and partisan decay should rightly alarm policymakers and democratic theorists. The viability of democratic politics depends upon the manifest consent of the governed. As the latter grow increasingly doubtful—if not cynical—of their collective efficacy to influence policy, withdrawing from the active electorate be-

²⁴ For 1960-1972 the mean competitiveness index = 79.3; this compares with 83.8 for 1940-1960, and with 88.0 for 1876-1892.

comes a rational and nearly inevitable response. What stimulates that growing doubt is a corresponding change in the roles played by the only political institutions through which most citizens can articulate their interests—political parties. As party-policy linkages have become murkier over the past two decades, and as party organizations have withered, it is small wonder that party-vote stability has decreased and no longer serves to stimulate participation.

The broad outlines of the patterns displayed by Indiana's electoral system over the past century have their counterparts in other states and on the national level. In this Indiana is not behaviorally distinct. But there is a difference that is potentially of considerable importance. The absolute levels of mobilization and party-vote stability still remain higher in Indiana than in most other states. Scholars will be able to discern why that might be so only after they have available a series of comparably designed state-level studies. But to enrich our knowledge of the past, and thus to inform our present policy approaches, such studies must unite data exploration with theory. They must also use appropriate statistical procedures to bridge the gap between aggregate-level data and individual-level dynamics. For only by doing so can they give focus to the most important element of any electoral system—the behavior of its voters. Analysts who integrate these approaches into a longitudinally analytic framework will seize the opportunity to produce benchmark studies, an opportunity sadly bypassed by the authors of *Voting in Indiana*.