

Jonathan Kastellec
“Panel Composition and Voting
on the U.S. Courts of Appeals Over Time”
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Web Appendix

Appendix A: Selecting and coding cases, party of appointing president and partisan control of the judiciary

This appendix describes how each of the various datasets used in the paper were compiled and discusses various coding procedures used in the analyses.

Partisan control of the federal judiciary

For each circuit and each year from 1925-2004, I collected the name and party of the appointing president of every active judge from the biographical database of the Federal Judicial Center, available at <http://www.fjc.gov/public/home.nsf/hisj>. I counted a judge as being active in a given year if he or she served at least six months in that year. Senior judges were not included. For example, if a judge took senior status in May 2003, she was not counted as having been active in 2003. The denominator in each of the proportion of Democratic appointees is *not* the size of the circuit (or appellate judiciary as a whole), but the number of active judges in a given year.

Panel composition rates

For the composition sample, I retained every case from the Songer database (from 1925 to 2002) that was heard by a three-judge panel. To extend the analysis to 2004, I incorporated the cases analyzed in Sunstein et al.’s (2006) that were decided in 2003 or 2004. The sample used in Sunstein et al. is also not a random sample of all cases; instead they take the

universe of cases in particular issue areas. If particular judges are assigned to particular issue areas (which may occur with senior judges who may decide to hear only certain types of cases Yoon (2005)), then extrapolating to the entire universe of cases in the Courts of Appeals may be problematic. As a validity check, I compared the estimated rate of various panel types given by the Songer data and the Sunstein et al. data in the years in which they overlapped significantly (1995-2002). The mean absolute difference in a single year was never larger than 4.5%, suggesting no systematic bias from using the Sunstein sample to measure panel composition rates.

Voting rates

As explained in the paper, for the sample of cases used to study voting patterns, I used only cases decided from 1961 to 2002 by three-judge panels in which the outcome was clearly liberal or conservative.

For the majority of the cases that appear in the Songer database, determining the direction of the court's decision is straightforward. In these cases, there is only a single issue in the case (i.e. CASETYP2 is coded as missing), and the direction of the court's decision is coded simply as liberal (DIRECT1 = 3) or conservative (DIRECT1 = 1). For these cases, I simply adopt the value of DIRECT1, with liberal decisions coded as 1 and conservative decisions coded as 0.

Coding the remaining cases is less straightforward. In about 34% of cases, the court's decision is coded as either non-ascertainable (DIRECT1 = 0) or mixed (DIRECT1 = 2). In addition, about 13% of cases are coded as having two issues (note that there is overlap between the cases where the court's decision on the first case type is either mixed or non-ascertained and cases with two issues). The decision on the second issue (DIRECT2) can also be coded as mixed or non-ascertainable.

For cases coded as having only a single issue (i.e. CASETYP2 is missing), all cases with

either mixed or non-ascertainable were excluded. For cases coded as having two issues, I chose to retain only those in which the direction of the outcome was coded as unambiguously liberal or conservative.¹ Thus, if outcome on the first issue was coded as missing or non-ascertainable, but the outcome on the second issue was liberal or conservative, the latter was used. Cases with a liberal coding on one issue and a conservative coding on the other, or vice versa, were excluded. (Such cases comprise less than 2% of the sample.)

As noted above, the Songer database only includes published opinions. Ideally, one could study both unpublished and published decisions over time, but the creation of such a database is infeasible given the lack of availability of unpublished decisions prior to the electronic reporting of decisions.

Party of the appointing president

The first step in coding the party of the appointing president in the Songer samples was to identify each judge that sat on the panel in a given case. The Songer database provides unique codes for every appellate and district judge that served on a case that appears in the database. Using these codes, information on appeals court judges' appointing president, party of the appointing president, home state and year of appointment was taken from the appeals court judges attribute database (Gryski and Zuk 2006); for district court judges, the same information was taken from the district court judges attribute database (Gryski, Zuk and Goldman 2006).

In a significant number of cases, either a judge from the Federal Circuit or a non-Article III judge (for example, one from the U.S. Court of International Trade) sat on a three-judge panel. In addition, in some cases a retired Supreme Court justice sat on a panel. These judges do not have Songer codes and are coded as missing. To obtain information about

¹Although they do not detail the specifics of their coding procedure, Songer, Sheehan and Haire (2000, 123) employ the same strategy to select a sample for analyzing variation in judicial voting across time, issue area and geographical region.

these judges, I examined the cases in LexisNexis, which (usually) lists the names of all the judges on a panel. I then used biographical database of the Federal Judicial Center to identify the judge's appointing president and the president's party.

The data provided by Sunstein et al. includes indicators for the party of each judge in each case.

References

Gryski, Gerald S. and Gary Zuk. 2006. "A Multi-User Data Base on the Attributes of U.S. Appeals Court Judges, 1801-2000." available at <http://www.cas.sc.edu/poli/juri/aurburndata.htm>, accessed 10 September 2009.

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Yoon, Albert. 2005. "As You Like It: Senior Federal Judges and the Political Economy of Judicial Tenure." *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 3(2):495-549.

1 Appendix B: Tabular reproductions of figures

This appendix presents tabular versions of each graph presented in the article. For each cell with three numbers, the middle number gives a weighted mean, bracketed by 95% confidence intervals. All confidence intervals are based on standard errors generated using bootstrap replications ($n = 1,000$). While the figures present estimates in terms of percentages, for convenience I represent them in the tables as proportions).

Year	Dem. Appointees	Dem. Majority	RRR	RRD	DDR	DDD	Mixed
1925	.42	[.34, .43, .52]	[.28, .36, .46]	[.14, .21, .28]	[.24, .32, .41]	[.07, .11, .16]	[.44, .53, .63]
1926	.42	[.28, .36, .44]	[.2, .29, .38]	[.26, .35, .45]	[.22, .29, .38]	[.04, .07, .11]	[.56, .64, .73]
1927	.35	[.24, .32, .4]	[.37, .47, .56]	[.12, .21, .3]	[.19, .26, .34]	[.04, .06, .1]	[.38, .47, .57]
1928	.35	[.22, .29, .37]	[.43, .52, .61]	[.11, .19, .27]	[.17, .23, .31]	[.03, .06, .09]	[.33, .42, .5]
1929	.26	[.18, .24, .32]	[.43, .52, .61]	[.16, .24, .33]	[.14, .21, .27]	[.02, .04, .06]	[.35, .44, .54]
1930	.26	[.13, .18, .24]	[.42, .5, .59]	[.24, .32, .41]	[.11, .16, .21]	[0, .02, .04]	[.38, .48, .57]
1931	.21	[.14, .2, .27]	[.41, .51, .6]	[.21, .29, .38]	[.14, .2, .27]	[0, 0, 0]	[.4, .49, .58]
1932	.19	[.12, .18, .25]	[.45, .53, .61]	[.2, .28, .36]	[.11, .18, .24]	[0, .01, .02]	[.37, .46, .55]
1933	.27	[.06, .11, .16]	[.32, .4, .48]	[.41, .49, .57]	[.06, .11, .16]	[0, 0, 0]	[.51, .6, .68]
1934	.30	[.14, .2, .27]	[.21, .29, .37]	[.42, .51, .59]	[.11, .17, .23]	[.01, .04, .07]	[.59, .68, .75]
1935	.35	[.19, .26, .34]	[.15, .22, .29]	[.43, .52, .61]	[.19, .26, .35]	[0, 0, 0]	[.71, .78, .85]
1936	.36	[.12, .19, .26]	[.17, .24, .32]	[.49, .57, .65]	[.11, .16, .23]	[0, .02, .05]	[.66, .73, .8]
1937	.43	[.22, .3, .38]	[.12, .19, .26]	[.44, .52, .6]	[.14, .21, .28]	[.04, .09, .14]	[.65, .73, .8]
1938	.58	[.42, .5, .58]	[.1, .16, .23]	[.27, .34, .42]	[.22, .29, .36]	[.14, .21, .28]	[.55, .63, .72]
1939	.61	[.46, .55, .63]	[.07, .12, .18]	[.25, .33, .41]	[.24, .31, .39]	[.17, .24, .31]	[.56, .65, .72]
1940	.68	[.55, .64, .71]	[.02, .06, .11]	[.23, .3, .38]	[.3, .38, .47]	[.19, .26, .33]	[.61, .68, .76]
1941	.70	[.58, .66, .74]	[.04, .09, .14]	[.19, .25, .33]	[.28, .36, .44]	[.23, .3, .38]	[.54, .61, .69]
1942	.71	[.64, .72, .79]	[0, .03, .06]	[.18, .25, .32]	[.29, .37, .45]	[.28, .35, .42]	[.55, .62, .7]
1943	.72	[.61, .69, .77]	[0, .02, .05]	[.21, .29, .36]	[.27, .35, .44]	[.27, .34, .42]	[.56, .64, .71]
1944	.74	[.67, .75, .82]	[.02, .06, .11]	[.13, .19, .26]	[.3, .38, .46]	[.29, .37, .45]	[.49, .57, .65]
1945	.75	[.66, .75, .82]	[.01, .04, .08]	[.14, .21, .28]	[.29, .38, .47]	[.29, .37, .45]	[.51, .59, .67]
1946	.76	[.75, .82, .88]	[0, .02, .05]	[.1, .16, .23]	[.32, .4, .48]	[.34, .42, .5]	[.48, .56, .65]
1947	.76	[.64, .72, .79]	[.01, .05, .1]	[.16, .23, .3]	[.22, .29, .37]	[.34, .42, .5]	[.45, .53, .61]
1948	.76	[.67, .74, .81]	[.01, .05, .09]	[.14, .21, .28]	[.25, .33, .4]	[.34, .42, .5]	[.46, .54, .62]
1949	.78	[.69, .76, .83]	[0, .03, .06]	[.14, .2, .27]	[.28, .36, .44]	[.33, .41, .49]	[.48, .56, .64]
1950	.81	[.76, .81, .87]	[.01, .02, .05]	[.11, .16, .22]	[.24, .32, .4]	[.42, .49, .58]	[.4, .48, .56]
1951	.83	[.77, .83, .89]	[.02, .06, .1]	[.06, .12, .17]	[.25, .32, .4]	[.43, .51, .59]	[.36, .44, .52]
1952	.84	[.79, .84, .9]	[0, .01, .03]	[.09, .15, .2]	[.23, .31, .39]	[.45, .53, .62]	[.36, .45, .54]
1953	.84	[.79, .84, .9]	[.01, .03, .06]	[.07, .12, .18]	[.24, .32, .39]	[.44, .53, .61]	[.36, .44, .53]
1954	.75	[.79, .85, .9]	[0, .01, .03]	[.09, .14, .2]	[.43, .52, .6]	[.26, .33, .41]	[.58, .66, .73]
1955	.69	[.58, .67, .75]	[0, .03, .07]	[.23, .3, .39]	[.27, .35, .43]	[.24, .32, .4]	[.57, .65, .72]
1956	.61	[.51, .59, .68]	[.04, .09, .14]	[.24, .32, .4]	[.24, .32, .4]	[.21, .28, .35]	[.55, .63, .71]
1957	.55	[.39, .47, .55]	[.12, .18, .25]	[.26, .35, .43]	[.21, .28, .36]	[.13, .19, .24]	[.56, .63, .7]
1958	.50	[.36, .45, .53]	[.13, .21, .28]	[.27, .34, .42]	[.23, .3, .38]	[.09, .15, .2]	[.57, .65, .72]
1959	.45	[.29, .36, .44]	[.2, .27, .35]	[.29, .37, .45]	[.15, .21, .28]	[.1, .15, .21]	[.5, .58, .66]
1960	.41	[.22, .29, .37]	[.25, .34, .42]	[.29, .37, .45]	[.16, .22, .29]	[.03, .07, .11]	[.52, .6, .68]
1961	.39	[.28, .33, .38]	[.26, .31, .36]	[.3, .36, .42]	[.21, .26, .31]	[.05, .07, .1]	[.55, .61, .67]
1962	.49	[.35, .41, .46]	[.13, .17, .22]	[.36, .42, .48]	[.27, .32, .37]	[.06, .09, .12]	[.69, .74, .79]
1963	.49	[.37, .43, .49]	[.11, .15, .2]	[.36, .42, .47]	[.28, .33, .39]	[.07, .1, .13]	[.7, .75, .8]
1964	.51	[.45, .51, .57]	[.08, .11, .16]	[.32, .38, .43]	[.34, .4, .45]	[.08, .11, .15]	[.72, .78, .82]
1965	.55	[.51, .57, .63]	[.04, .07, .11]	[.3, .36, .42]	[.36, .42, .48]	[.1, .14, .18]	[.73, .78, .83]
1966	.57	[.5, .56, .62]	[.03, .05, .08]	[.33, .39, .45]	[.33, .39, .46]	[.12, .16, .21]	[.73, .78, .83]
1967	.62	[.64, .7, .75]	[.02, .04, .07]	[.21, .26, .32]	[.39, .46, .52]	[.19, .24, .3]	[.66, .72, .77]
1968	.67	[.73, .78, .83]	[.03, .05, .08]	[.13, .17, .21]	[.4, .47, .53]	[.24, .31, .37]	[.57, .64, .71]
1969	.69	[.71, .77, .82]	[0, .02, .04]	[.16, .21, .27]	[.37, .43, .49]	[.27, .34, .41]	[.58, .64, .71]
1970	.62	[.62, .69, .75]	[.03, .06, .09]	[.2, .25, .31]	[.34, .4, .46]	[.23, .29, .35]	[.59, .65, .72]
1971	.56	[.52, .58, .64]	[.04, .08, .13]	[.27, .34, .4]	[.32, .39, .45]	[.13, .19, .25]	[.66, .73, .79]
1972	.53	[.42, .49, .55]	[.12, .17, .22]	[.28, .34, .4]	[.34, .41, .48]	[.05, .08, .12]	[.69, .75, .81]
1973	.53	[.52, .58, .64]	[.07, .1, .13]	[.26, .32, .38]	[.4, .47, .54]	[.06, .11, .16]	[.73, .8, .85]
1974	.51	[.44, .5, .57]	[.09, .12, .17]	[.31, .38, .44]	[.33, .39, .45]	[.07, .11, .16]	[.7, .76, .81]
1975	.46	[.36, .42, .48]	[.14, .18, .23]	[.34, .4, .46]	[.27, .33, .39]	[.05, .09, .13]	[.67, .73, .78]
1976	.46	[.35, .42, .48]	[.12, .17, .22]	[.35, .42, .48]	[.29, .35, .41]	[.03, .07, .11]	[.71, .77, .82]
1977	.41	[.28, .34, .4]	[.17, .22, .27]	[.38, .45, .51]	[.24, .29, .35]	[.02, .05, .07]	[.68, .74, .79]
1978	.47	[.35, .41, .48]	[.17, .22, .28]	[.3, .36, .43]	[.29, .35, .41]	[.04, .06, .09]	[.65, .72, .77]
1979	.49	[.39, .45, .52]	[.14, .18, .23]	[.31, .37, .43]	[.28, .34, .41]	[.07, .11, .15]	[.66, .71, .77]
1980	.63	[.57, .64, .69]	[.04, .06, .09]	[.24, .3, .37]	[.38, .45, .52]	[.13, .18, .23]	[.7, .76, .81]
1981	.64	[.6, .66, .72]	[.03, .05, .07]	[.24, .29, .35]	[.37, .43, .5]	[.18, .23, .3]	[.66, .72, .79]
1982	.59	[.58, .64, .69]	[.04, .07, .1]	[.24, .29, .35]	[.39, .45, .51]	[.15, .19, .24]	[.68, .74, .79]
1983	.56	[.51, .57, .63]	[.06, .09, .12]	[.29, .34, .4]	[.35, .41, .47]	[.12, .16, .21]	[.7, .75, .8]
1984	.55	[.47, .52, .57]	[.06, .09, .13]	[.33, .39, .44]	[.32, .38, .43]	[.11, .14, .18]	[.72, .76, .81]
1985	.51	[.47, .53, .58]	[.08, .11, .14]	[.31, .37, .43]	[.32, .37, .43]	[.11, .15, .2]	[.69, .74, .79]
1986	.43	[.39, .45, .5]	[.1, .13, .17]	[.37, .43, .48]	[.3, .35, .41]	[.06, .09, .12]	[.73, .78, .82]
1987	.42	[.37, .43, .49]	[.13, .17, .22]	[.35, .4, .46]	[.32, .37, .43]	[.03, .05, .08]	[.73, .78, .82]
1988	.40	[.36, .41, .46]	[.17, .22, .26]	[.32, .37, .42]	[.29, .34, .4]	[.04, .06, .1]	[.66, .71, .76]
1989	.38	[.38, .43, .49]	[.15, .19, .23]	[.33, .38, .44]	[.31, .36, .42]	[.04, .07, .1]	[.7, .74, .79]
1990	.35	[.3, .35, .41]	[.17, .22, .26]	[.38, .43, .49]	[.22, .27, .32]	[.06, .09, .12]	[.65, .7, .75]
1991	.32	[.23, .28, .34]	[.2, .24, .29]	[.42, .48, .53]	[.19, .23, .28]	[.03, .05, .08]	[.66, .71, .76]
1992	.29	[.2, .25, .3]	[.18, .23, .27]	[.46, .52, .58]	[.16, .21, .26]	[.02, .04, .06]	[.68, .73, .78]
1993	.27	[.19, .24, .29]	[.31, .36, .42]	[.34, .4, .45]	[.16, .21, .27]	[.01, .03, .05]	[.55, .61, .66]
1994	.32	[.16, .2, .25]	[.25, .3, .35]	[.44, .5, .55]	[.12, .16, .21]	[.02, .04, .07]	[.61, .66, .72]
1995	.33	[.22, .27, .33]	[.23, .27, .33]	[.4, .45, .51]	[.18, .23, .28]	[.02, .04, .07]	[.63, .68, .73]
1996	.35	[.25, .3, .36]	[.16, .21, .26]	[.43, .49, .55]	[.21, .26, .31]	[.02, .04, .07]	[.7, .75, .79]
1997	.37	[.33, .39, .45]	[.17, .22, .26]	[.34, .39, .45]	[.28, .33, .38]	[.03, .06, .08]	[.67, .72, .77]
1998	.43	[.31, .37, .42]	[.15, .19, .23]	[.39, .44, .5]	[.23, .28, .33]	[.06, .09, .13]	[.67, .72, .77]
1999	.44	[.31, .36, .42]	[.18, .23, .27]	[.36, .41, .47]	[.24, .3, .35]	[.06, .09, .13]	[.65, .71, .76]
2000	.50	[.35, .41, .46]	[.12, .16, .2]	[.38, .44, .49]	[.26, .31, .36]	[.07, .1, .14]	[.69, .74, .79]
2001	.52	[.4, .46, .52]	[.16, .21, .25]	[.28, .33, .39]	[.27, .33, .38]	[.09, .13, .18]	[.6, .66, .71]
2002	.51	[.38, .44, .49]	[.1, .14, .18]	[.37, .42, .48]	[.25, .31, .36]	[.09, .13, .17]	[.68, .73, .79]
2003	.45	[.35, .4, .44]	[.15, .19, .22]	[.37, .42, .46]	[.28, .33, .37]	[.04, .07, .09]	[.7, .75, .78]
2004	.42	[.27, .33, .4]	[.17, .22, .28]	[.38, .45, .51]	[.21, .27, .32]	[.03, .07, .1]	[.66, .71, .77]

Table 1: Estimates corresponding to Figures 1 and 2.

	Panels				Judges				Republicans	
	DDD	DDR	RRD	RRR	DD	DR	RR	DD	DR	RR
1961-1965	[.41, .49, .57]	[-.39, .44, .48]	[.37, .42, .47]	[.3, .37, .45]	[.43, .48, .52]	[.42, .45, .48]	[.38, .42, .47]	[.37, .42, .47]	[.38, .42, .45]	[.33, .37, .41]
1966-1970	[.3, .36, .42]	[-.33, .37, .42]	[.27, .32, .38]	[.18, .3, .44]	[.33, .36, .39]	[.35, .38, .41]	[.28, .34, .39]	[.32, .36, .41]	[.27, .31, .35]	[.23, .3, .38]
1971-1975	[.34, .44, .54]	[-.38, .43, .48]	[.39, .44, .49]	[.36, .45, .54]	[.38, .43, .49]	[.39, .43, .47]	[.4, .45, .51]	[.37, .42, .47]	[.38, .41, .45]	[.4, .44, .49]
1976-1980	[.37, .48, .58]	[-.36, .41, .46]	[.38, .43, .48]	[.3, .36, .43]	[.41, .47, .54]	[.39, .42, .46]	[.38, .44, .5]	[.33, .38, .43]	[.39, .43, .46]	[.32, .36, .4]
1981-1985	[-.38, .46, .53]	[-.41, .46, .51]	[.31, .36, .41]	[.35, .44, .53]	[.41, .45, .5]	[.43, .46, .49]	[.32, .37, .42]	[.38, .43, .47]	[.32, .35, .39]	[.38, .44, .49]
1986-1990	[.33, .43, .54]	[.33, .37, .42]	[.32, .36, .41]	[.24, .29, .35]	[.38, .44, .5]	[.36, .39, .43]	[.35, .4, .44]	[.29, .34, .38]	[.32, .36, .39]	[.26, .3, .33]
1991-1995	[.29, .42, .57]	[-.27, .33, .38]	[.28, .31, .35]	[.23, .28, .33]	[.34, .42, .5]	[.32, .37, .41]	[.3, .34, .38]	[.23, .28, .34]	[.29, .32, .34]	[.25, .28, .31]
1996-1999	[.36, .48, .6]	[-.31, .37, .43]	[.24, .28, .32]	[.21, .26, .33]	[.41, .48, .54]	[.33, .37, .41]	[.28, .33, .37]	[.3, .35, .41]	[.25, .28, .31]	[.24, .27, .31]
2000-2002	[.42, .52, .63]	[.29, .35, .42]	[.26, .31, .36]	[.21, .28, .36]	[.43, .5, .56]	[.34, .38, .43]	[.29, .34, .39]	[.27, .33, .39]	[.27, .3, .33]	[.25, .3, .34]

Table 4: Estimates corresponding to voting rates presented in Figures 4 - 6.