

Ideological Insiders and Punishment of Coalitional Compromise

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Outline

- 1 Introduction
Motivation
- 2 The Electoral Cost of Coalition
The Mechanism
The Traditional Spatial Voting Perspective
The Heuristic Approach
A Spatial Model with Two Heuristics
- 3 The EITM Framework
Three Steps
- 4 Research Design
- 5 Findings and Conclusions
Empirical Results

Research Question

- ▶ Do voters in coalitional systems punish political parties for joining coalition governments?

The Literature

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 - It leads supporters to believe that parties have changed their policy positions, and in the new ideological landscape parties are farther away from supporters than they were.
 - Therefore, voters punish parties for ideologically moving away from them.

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 - they use legislative debate to differentiate themselves from their coalition partners. e.g., [Martin & Vanberg 2008](#), [Fortunato 2012 Ch4](#)
 2. In addition, they also know their partners will fight fiercely against the coalition cost, consequently
 - they use legislative institutions to prevent potential deviating activities. e.g., [Thies 2001](#), [Kim & Loewenberg 2005](#), [Martin & Vanberg 2013](#), [Carroll & Cox 2012](#)

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 - Do voters really punish parties for joining coalition and pursuing policy compromise?
 - If they do, who are those voters more or less likely to do so?

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The Electoral Cost of Coalition

- ▶ Why do voters punish parties for entering coalition governments?
 - Forming a coalition government always involves policy compromise making.
 - Policy compromise leads supporters to believe that parties have changed their policy positions, and in the new ideological landscape parties are farther away from supporters than they were.
 - Therefore, punishment.

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 3. With the renewed perceptions, voters know whether these parties have changed positions after joining coalition governments.
 4. They then simply calculate the ideological distance between their ideal points and parties’ new positions to decide whether to vote for it again or not.

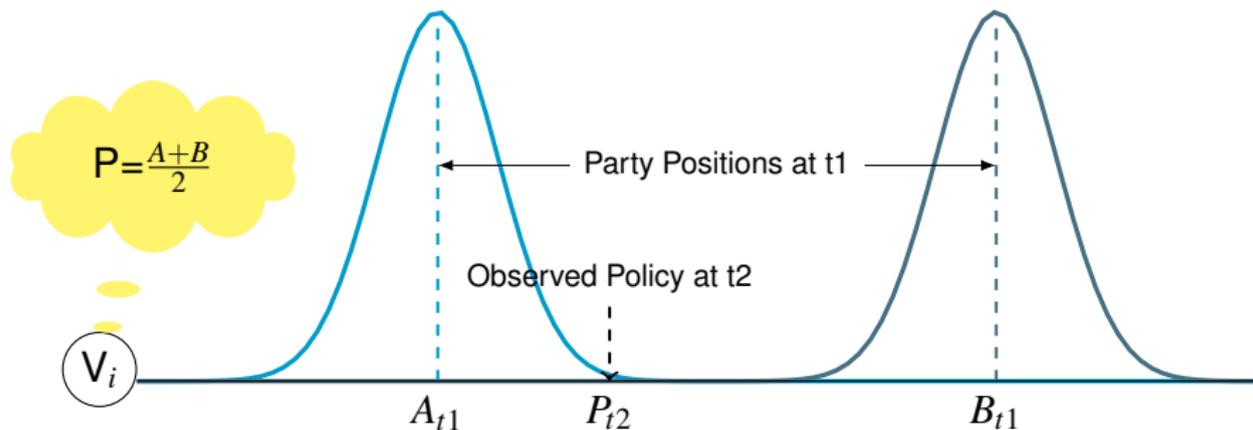
Coalition Participation and Electoral Punishment

- ▶ In short, electoral punishment occurs when voters' "calculation" tell them that political parties they support have shifted away from them, and moved toward their coalition partners.

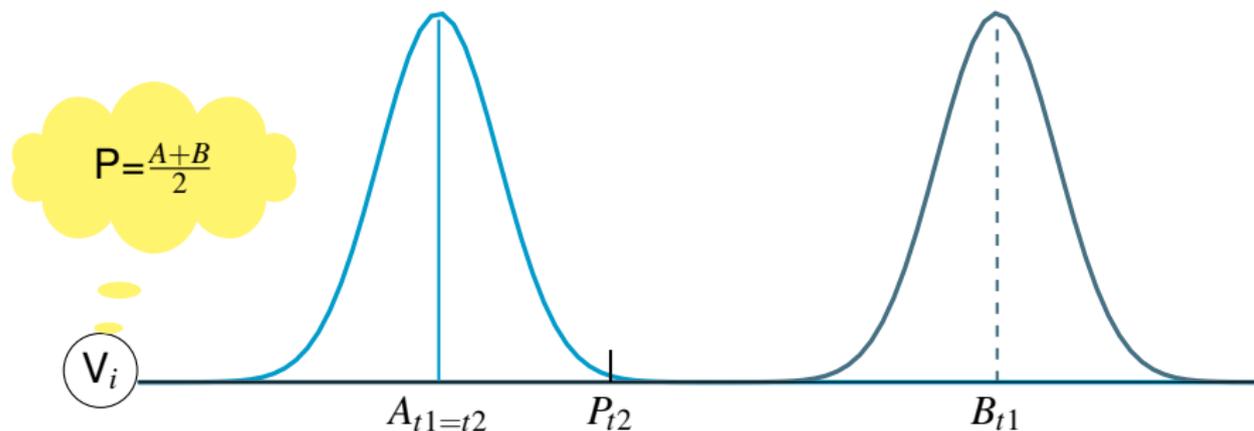
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- ▶ In short, electoral punishment occurs when voters' "calculation" tell them that political parties they support have shifted away from them, and moved toward their coalition partners.
- ▶ HOWEVER, whether voters could effectively renew their perceptions through this updating process is questionable.

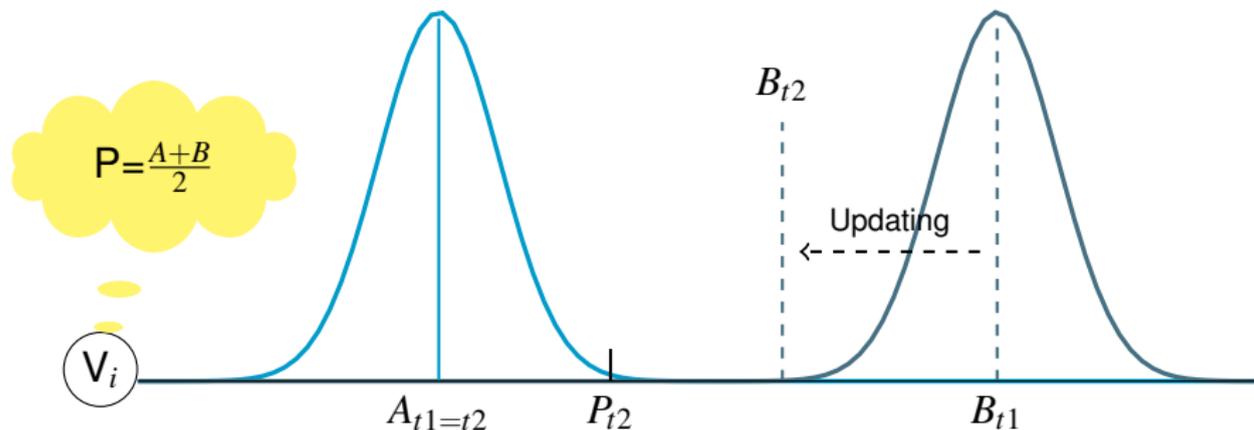
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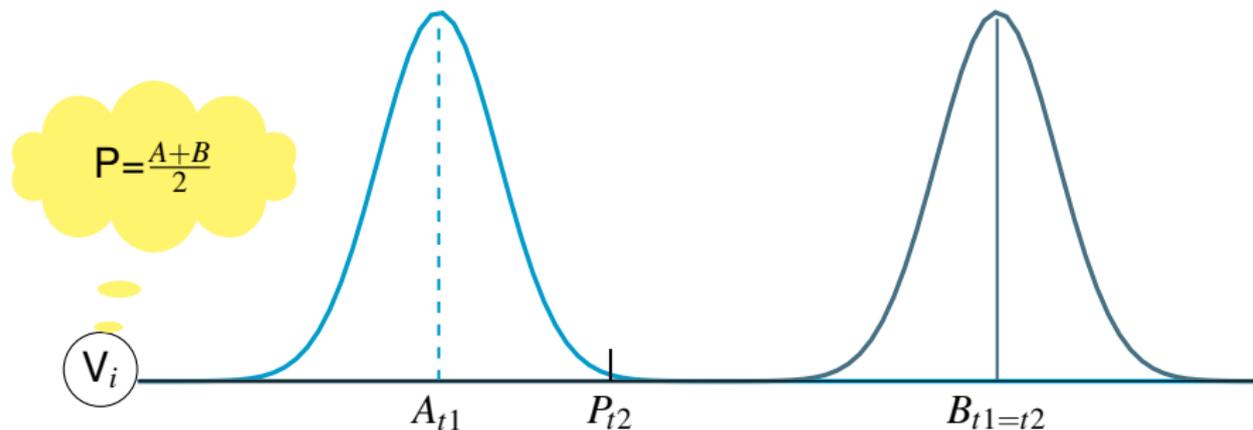
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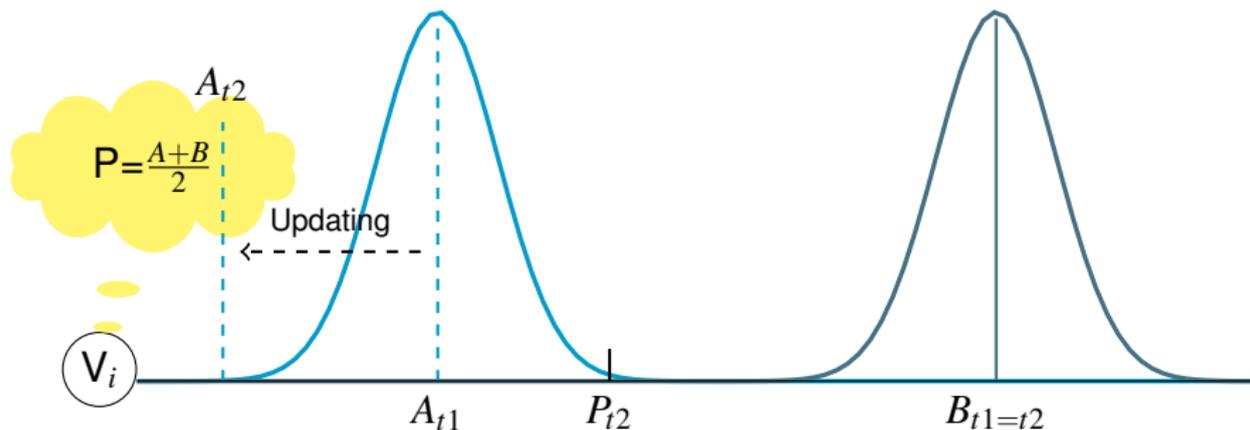
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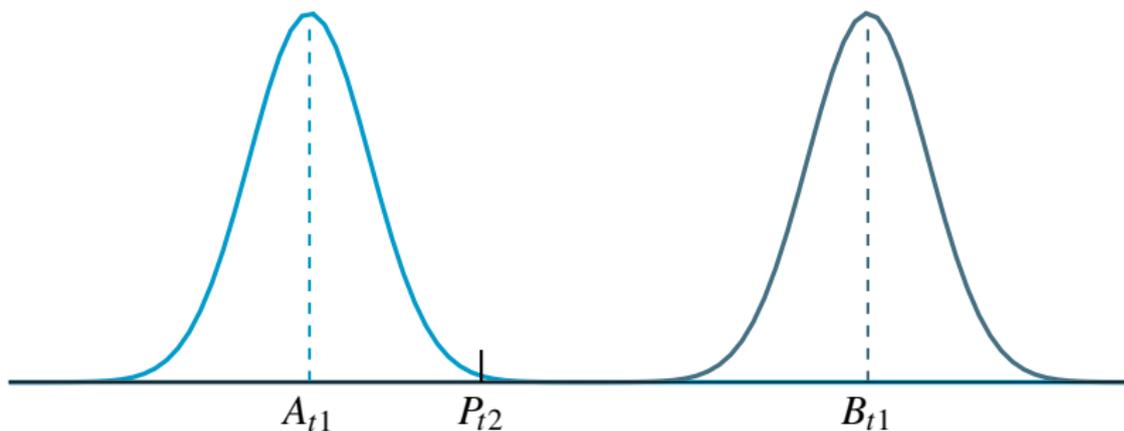
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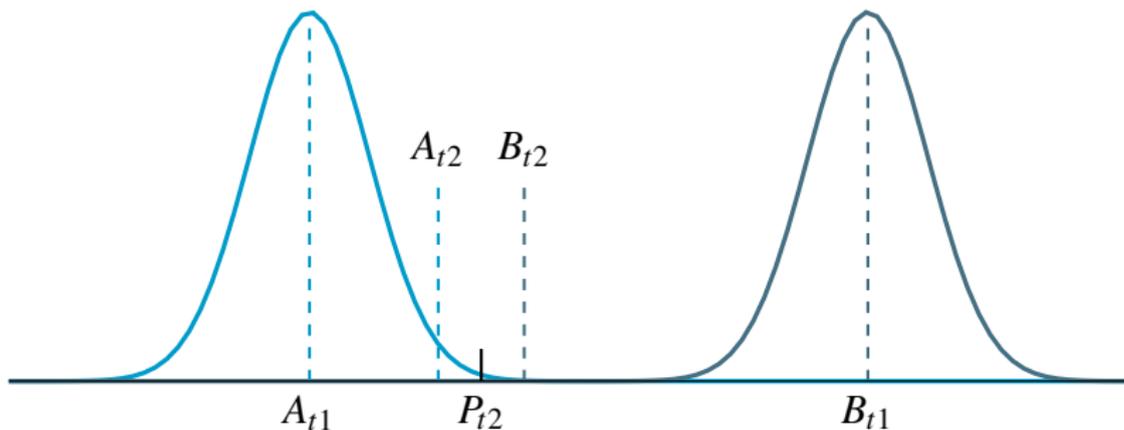
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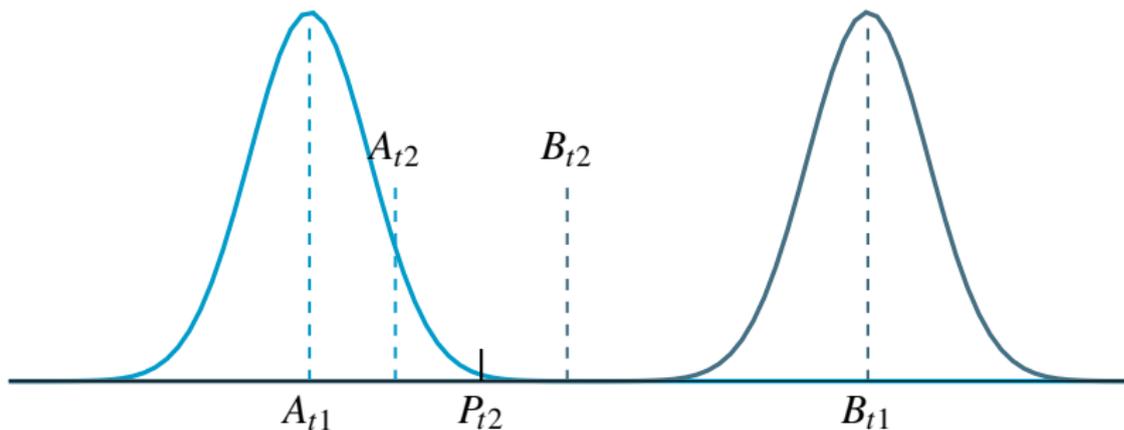
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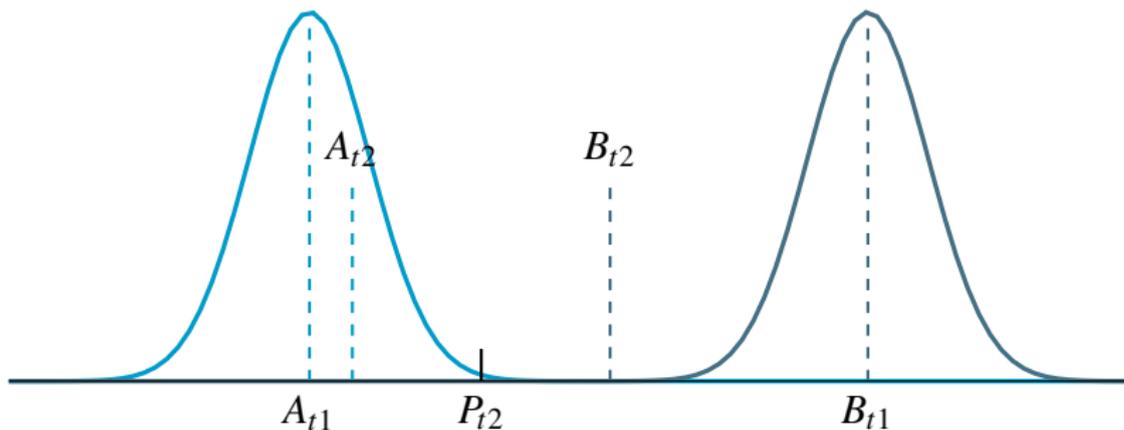
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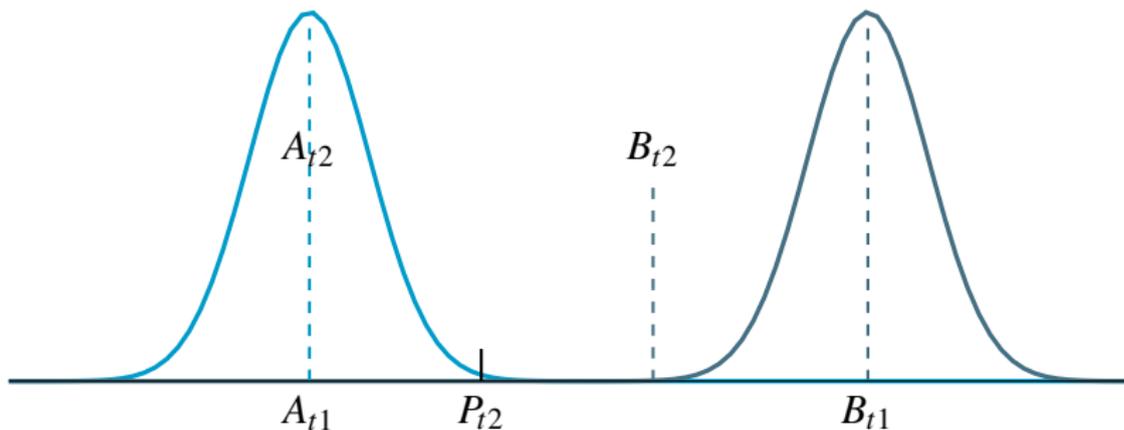
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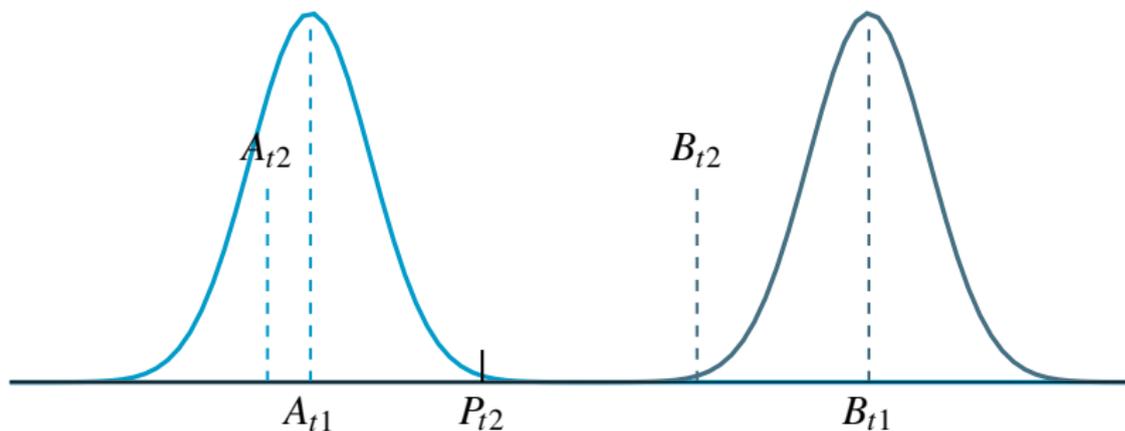
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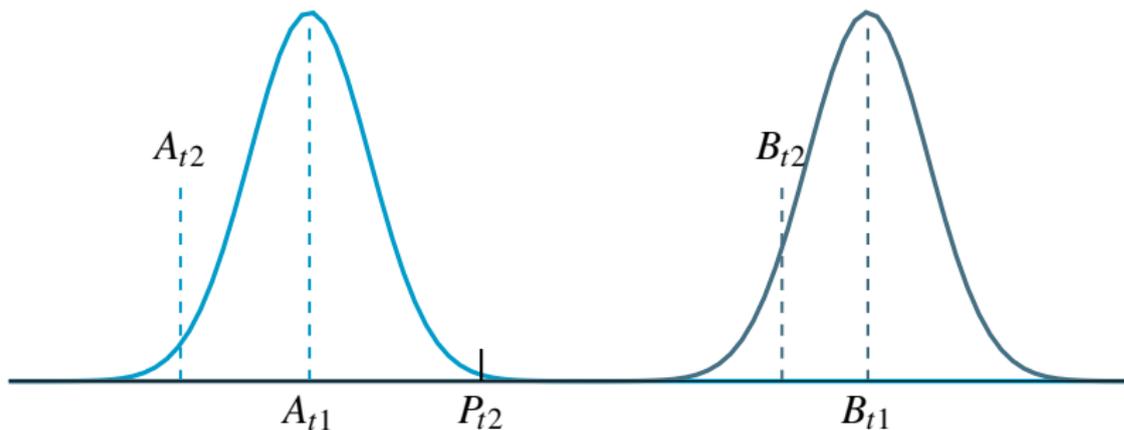
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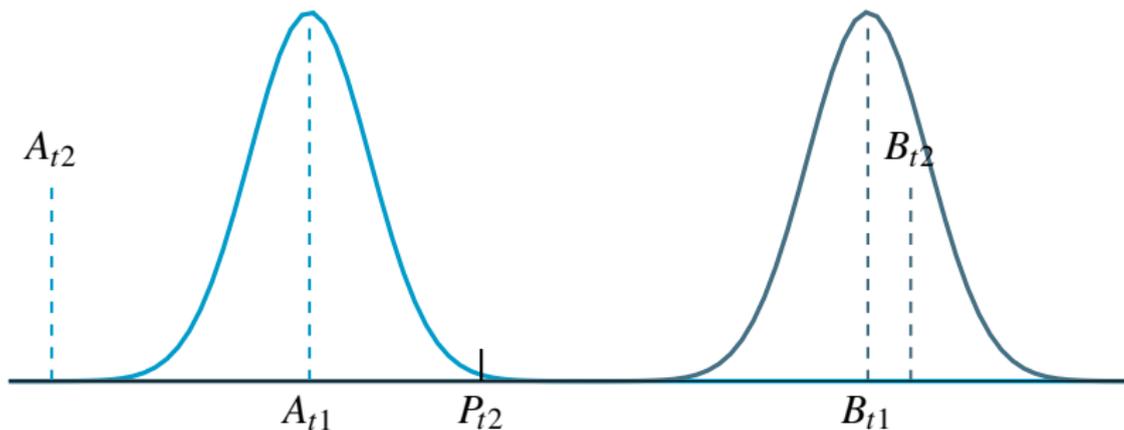
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- ▶ In addition, even if there is a way to do so, voters have to be incredibly informed and are unreasonably capable of doing complex calculation.
 - Unrealistic in Downs' (1957) perspective.

Coalition Participation as a Heuristic

- ▶ Instead of being highly informed and capable of doing complex calculation, a recent study suggests that voters use heuristics to help them comprehend the ideological landscape. [Fortunato & Stevenson 2013](#)
 - Voters know joint-governing process involves policy compromise.
 - Voters then take coalition membership as a heuristic with which they tend to perceive cabinet parties ideologically more similar.

Coalition Heuristic and Electoral Punishment

- ▶ Building on the above finding, Fortunato (2013) argues that voters punish coalition participation because they prefer conflicts among cabinet parties over compromises.

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- ▶ Building on the above finding, Fortunato (2013) argues that voters punish coalition participation because they prefer conflicts among cabinet parties over compromises.
 - Unrealistically assuming voters are all alike in their distaste of policy compromise in a system where compromise is hardly to be avoided.

Research Question

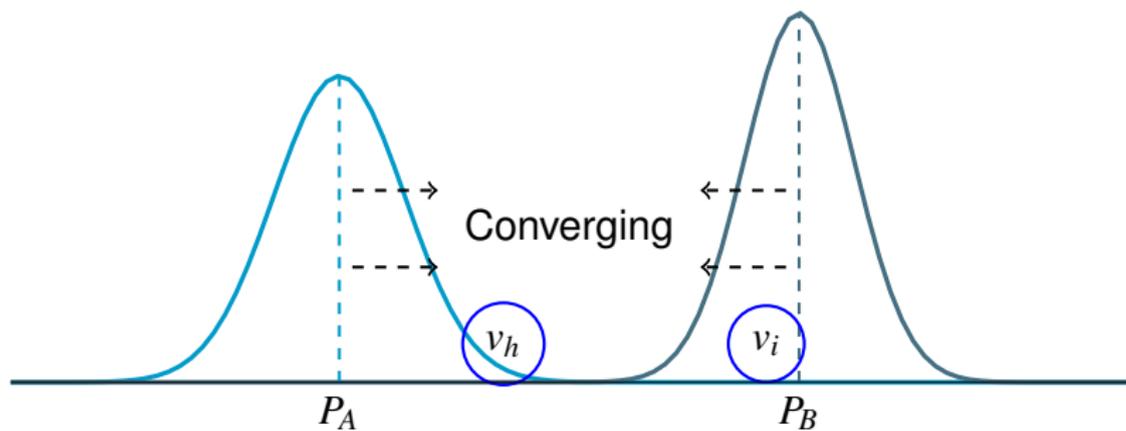
- × Do voters really punish political parties for joining coalition governments and pursuing compromises?

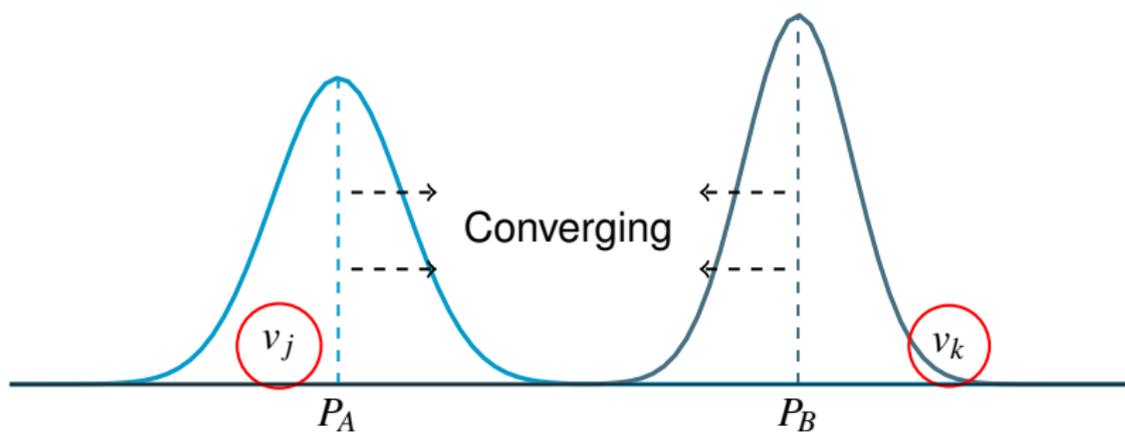
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- × Do voters really punish political parties for joining coalition governments and pursuing compromises?
- ✓ Who are more or less likely to punish parties for joining coalition governments and pursuing compromises?

Additional Heuristic

- ▶ Voters believe that parties in coalition government are ideologically converging (the first heuristic).
- ▶ Punishment is conditioned on an additional heuristic – whether voters see themselves ideologically locating in between coalition parties.
 - For “insiders”, their updated perceptions of parties are not only converging, but also moving toward their own ideal points.
 - Voters perceived a closer distance to parties they support, therefore less likely to punish.
 - For “outsiders”, their updated perceptions of parties are not only converging, but moving away from their own ideal points.
 - Voters perceived a farer distance to parties they supported, therefore more likely to punish.





Hypotheses

- ▶ H1: Ideological insiders (who locate in between a party dyad) are less likely to punish parties in coalition government than ideological outsiders.

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- ▶ Three Steps:
 1. Unifying theoretical concepts and applied statistical concepts.
 2. Develop behavioral and statistical analogues.
 3. Unite theoretical and statistical analogues in testable theory.

Step I

- ▶ Theoretical concept: *Decision Making*
 - An individual voter decides whether to punish a party or not.
 - Such a decision involves calculation of certain benefits and costs.

- ▶ Statistical concept: *Discrete Choice*
 - The decision is a dichotomous action: voter can either punish the party (i.e., being abstain or vote for other parties), or reward the party (i.e., vote for it again)

Step II

- ▶ Behavioral analogue: *Decision Theory*, which involves utility calculation (marginal decision rule).
- ▶ Statistical analogue: *Discrete Choice Model* (i.e., probit or logit)
- ▶ Voter_{*i*}'s unobserved utility and his decision to punish party_{*j*} can be written as:

$$Y^* = \beta' X + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{and } Y = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } Y^* < 0 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Step III

- ▶ Given the earlier discussion, a united model can be shown as:
 - $\Pr(y_i = 1) = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \delta_i Z_i$
 - X_1 = ideological insider/outsider
 - Z_i = other control variables

- ▶ Empirical expectation → $\beta_1 < 0$

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Data and Measurements

► Data:

- Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES), 1981-2006.
- Unit of analysis: individual - party dyad.

► Variables:

- DV: Vote choice change. (1=change, 0=else)
- IV: Ideological insider/outsider (1=insider, 0=else)
- Controls: Political interest, Insider X Interest, Government satisfaction, Party identity, Perceived distance (respondent-party, respondent-dyad), Age, and Gender.

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Table : Coalition Participation and Electoral Punishment

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Inside Supporters	-0.144** (0.055)	-0.312** (0.070)	-0.197** (0.095)
Political Interest	0.114 (0.072)	0.141 (0.094)	0.248* (0.107)
Insider X Interest	-0.205* (0.094)	-0.206* (0.097)	-0.224+ (0.133)
Government Satisfaction	-0.687** (0.030)	-0.681** (0.037)	-0.461** (0.042)
Voter-Party Distance		-0.015 (0.016)	-0.023 (0.022)
Voter-Dyad Distance		.049 (0.035)	0.063+ (0.037)
Party Identifier			-2.286** (0.062)
Age	-0.019** (0.002)	-0.019** (0.002)	-0.014** (0.002)
Gender	-0.085+ (0.045)	-0.122* (0.055)	-0.181** (0.062)
Constant	2.503** (0.281)	2.707** (0.225)	2.868** (0.340)
No. of Years	6	6	6
No. of Party Dyads	114	114	114
No. of Observations	10292	7167	7167
Log-Likelihood	-6052.923	-4120.707	-3355.03

+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Conclusion and Discussion

1. There is an electoral price for entering coalition government.
 - It comes mainly from those “outside” party supporters.
 - “Inside” voters prefer to see parties they support to join coalitions.
2. The finding has implications on political elites’ behavior in coalitions.
 - It echoes Martin and Vanberg’s (2008) study, suggesting that these “outside” supporters are exactly those who political elites want to communicate with.
 - The size of “inside” supporters may condition a party’s strategies of forming/joining coalitions with other parties.

Thank You.

Table : List of Election Years and Coalition Parties in the Sample

Election Year	Coalition Parties
1981	CDA, VVD
1982	CDA, PvdA, D66
1986	CDA, VVD
1989	CDA, VVD
1994	CDA, PvdA
1998	PvdA, VVD, D66
2002	PvdA, VVD, D66
2003	CDA, LPF, VVD
2006	CDA, VVD, D66