

Financial Capacity and Strategic Investors in an Era of Deregulation

Jesse H. Rhodes, Brian F. Schaffner, and Raymond J. La Raja
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

June 1, 2016

Why do individuals make political contributions? At present, the dominant answer to this question in political science is that people donate money in order to express support for a preferred political “team” and enjoy the emotional benefits of participating in politics (Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder, 2003). In other words, making campaign contributions is a form of consumption akin to the purchase of other non-investment experiences, such as going to the movies or taking a vacation. While this theoretical framework is counterintuitive, it makes sense of important facts – notably, that donors are unusually passionate about politics and have especially strong views about candidates (Francia, 2003; Francia et al., 2005; Panagopoulos and Bergan, 2006), but typically donate such modest amounts that they cannot possibly harbor expectations of returns on their investments.

However, while the “contributions as consumption” framework may help us understand what separates donors from non-donors, it is less useful in helping to explain why donors may differ from one another. For example, what accounts for the fact that contributors vary dramatically in terms of the types of candidates and organizations to whom they allocate their donation dollars? Rather than casting this information aside, we believe individual decisions as to where to allocate contributions may provide fresh insight into the strategies individuals are pursuing when they make contributions. Because different types of recipients – presidential candidates, congressional candidates, parties, PACs, interest groups, and so forth – vary dramatically in their ideological extremism, political objectives, and public visibility, decisions by contributors about the allocation of their donations likely convey considerable information about donors’ preferences and goals. Consequently, variations in contribution patterns may point to the existence of different types of donors, associated with distinct motivations and capacities.

In this article we take a first step toward characterizing different donor profiles based on where donors send their contributions. Using information on the targets and spread of individual contributions from the 2010 and 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies,

we use latent class analysis to identify different donor types, as well as explain why donors fall into one class or another. Our analysis indicates that there are four types of donors: Party-Oriented Donors, who contribute mostly to the political parties; Locally-Oriented Donors, who donate to races in their congressional district/state and to their political party; Group-Oriented Donors, who tend to give more to parties, PACs, and ideological interest groups; and Strategic Investors, who are especially notable for their tendency to donate to House and Senate candidates outside their congressional district or state.

Our analysis suggests important clarifications to popular and scholarly debates about the role of donors – particularly big donors – in American politics today. In an era of high and rising economic inequality, anxiety about the capacity of big donors with ideologically extreme views to exert inordinate influence over public officials is widespread (Schlozman and Brady, 2012; Gilens and Page, 2014; Overton, 2004). Our analysis shows that what really distinguishes extreme big donors is their ability and willingness to spread their contributions over a wide range of targets and, in particular, focus donations on out-of-jurisdiction House and Senate candidates. Small donors – who are much more numerous – are also extreme ideologically (La Raja and Schaffner, 2015), but financial constraints limit their ability to contribute to a wide range of targets, leading them to focus on contributing to presidential races and the parties. The real source of political inequality based on contribution amount, therefore, is the inability of small donors to act on their desire to influence a broader range of candidates and groups. Of particular note, wealthy donors are, through contributions, better able than other donors to secure “surrogate representation” from elected officials outside their congressional districts and states (Gimpel, Lee and Pearson-Merkowitz, 2008).

1 Latent Class Analysis as a Means of Categorizing Campaign Contributors

In this paper we use Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to discover underlying categories of donors from information about contributors' choices of recipients. Rather than chalking up variation in contributors' choices of recipients to simple variation in taste, we argue that it provides indications of more systematic differences among donors. Because contributors must make conscious choices both about where and how broadly to spread their contributions among a wide range of options, these decisions may convey important information about contributors' underlying preferences and strategies. Indeed, donors who make a point of contributing to out-of-jurisdiction House and Senate candidates may well be different from those who focus their political contributions on, say, presidential candidates or political parties; while donors who expend their donations on congressional candidates within their districts are probably distinct from those who contribute primarily to PACs or ideological interest groups. Of particular note, deliberate selection of more 'obscure' targets (out-of-jurisdiction congressional candidates, PACs, or interest groups) over more 'obvious' ones (presidential candidates, in-jurisdiction congressional candidates) implies greater financial means or a higher degree of interest and discernment - or both.

The latent class model attempts to stratify a number of observed, or manifest, variables by an unobserved latent variable, and thereby probabilistically group each observation into a latent class. This grouping process in turn produces expectations about how each observation responds on each manifest variable. Because the unobserved latent variable is nominal, the model effectively "sorts" observations into different types. Observations with similar sets of responses on the observed variables will tend to cluster within the same latent classes.

A nice feature of LCA is that, with a simple extension, the model permits the inclusion of covariates to estimate prior probabilities of latent class membership (Linzer, Lewis et al.,

2011). While in the basic model (without co-variables) each observation has the same probability of belonging to each latent class prior to observing responses on the observed variables, within this extension the prior probabilities are allowed to vary by individual as a function of included covariates. Inclusion of covariates thus enables a more accurate representation of the process by which individuals are sorted into classes.

In what follows, we employ LCA to identify donor types based on the targets and spread of their political contributions. Based on assessment of the relationship between donor classes and responses on the recipient variables, we establish interpretations of the various donor types. We then investigate the relationship between selected covariates and the probability of membership in identified classes.

2 Data and Methods

The data for this project come from the 2010 and 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies. The CCES is a national stratified sample survey of more than 50,000 respondents administered biannually by YouGov. We analyzed data from two mid-term elections both to determine whether our observations about donor classes are generalizable. We focus specifically on mid-term elections in this paper since donor behavior in presidential election years is driven overwhelmingly by the presidential race (80% of donors in 2012 gave to a presidential campaign), whereas mid-term elections provide donors with a wider array of choices for their donations.

We restricted our analysis to individuals who indicated that they donated money to a candidate, campaign, or political organization in the past year. Thanks to the large sample size of the CCES and the inclusive nature of the question itself, we are left with a large number of reported donors in each election year – 13,699 donors in 2010 and 8,689 in 2014.¹

¹Of course, there is some question as to the extent to which individuals are accurately self-reporting their political contribution behavior. Unlike with turning out to vote, donating to campaigns is not generally a

To identify donor classes based on the identity and spread of contribution recipients, we used responses to more specific questions querying whether or not respondents donated money to a variety of potential recipients. We observed whether each donor reported contributing to a candidate for president, a candidate for Senate in the respondent’s state, a candidate for Senate in another state, a candidate for the House in the respondent’s state, a candidate for the House in another state, a candidate for state office, a political party committee, a PAC, or a political organization.

Table 1 shows the percentage of donors indicating that they had given to each source during each of the three years of our study. The table reveals that – with the exception of presidential candidates, who receive contributions from the overwhelming majority of donors – there is considerable variation in the extent to which each potential recipient is a target of donor contributions. While political parties receive contributions from 45% of donors, in-jurisdiction House and Senate candidates obtain contributions from just 22% - 31% of donors, while other potential recipients receive support from even smaller proportions of donors. The substantial variation in the degree of donor support for each of these recipient types points to the possibility that there are a variety of different donor classes, each with distinctive preferences as to recipients of contribution dollars.

The recipient groups presented in Table 1 are the manifest variables from which we derive our latent classes. In the two mid-term election years we examine in this paper, there are eight such indicators.

socially-desirable activity, so we do not necessarily expect individuals to over-report this behavior. Hill and Huber attempted to match respondents from the 2012 CCES to the Database on Ideology, Money in Politics, and Elections (DIME, Bonica 2013). Of the CCES respondents who reported making a contribution, 25% were successfully matched to the DIME database, but the match rate was 54% for those who reported giving \$300 or more. This is a fairly high match rate given that the DIME database is limited to donations that must be disclosed.

Table 1: Percent Giving to Each Target By Year

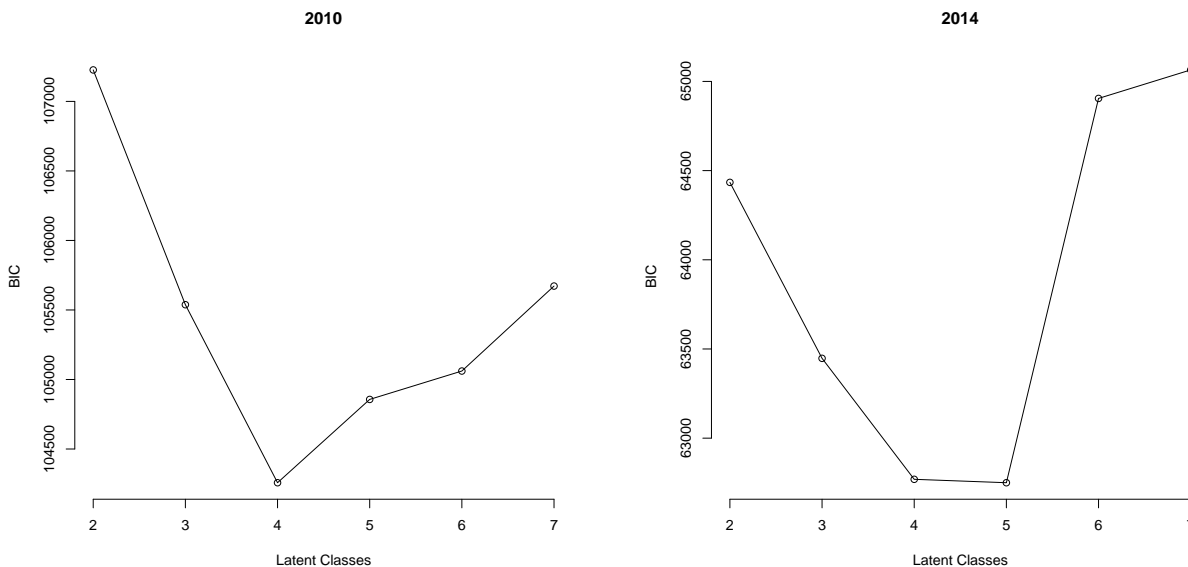
	2010	2014
Own House Member	27%	26%
Another House Member	17%	19%
Own Senator	31%	22%
Another Senator	24%	12%
State Office	23%	26%
Political Party	45%	45%
Political Group	23%	22%
PAC	14%	15%

2.1 Determining the Correct Number of Latent Classes

The first step in conducting latent class analysis involves determining the correct number of classes to be estimated by the model. With a large number of different combinations of giving patterns across our donation target variables, it is possible to estimate models with a large number of latent classes. However, as the number of classes increases, the gain in model fit is often minimal, and empty or very small classes with little analytic utility may be produced. Thus, a first step in the development of our model is to determine the optimal number of classes to estimate, so that both fit and parsimony are maximized.

To accomplish this task, we conducted a search for the number of classes that provided the best model fit according to the Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC). The BIC is most appropriate for this task because it calculates the fit of a model accounting for the number of parameters being estimated. Thus, for two models that fit the data relatively similarly, the BIC will advantage the model estimating the smaller number of classes. For each year of our study, we estimated models searching for anywhere between 2 and 7 latent classes and then we plotted the BIC for each of these models. Figure 1 presents this plot.

Figure 1: BIC Values for Latent Class Models Estimating 2 through 7 Classes



Note: Figure shows the BIC value for each Latent Class model estimated depending on the number of classes estimated. Lower values of BIC indicate better model fit.

The BIC plots in Figure 1 reveal a consistent pattern across the two years. (Note that a smaller BIC value indicates a better fitting model.) The figure shows that adding additional latent classes to the model improves model fit up through the fourth latent class; however, including further latent classes results in significantly higher BIC values. The models with four latent classes also appear to meet face validity criteria, as each class is sufficiently large and meaningfully distinctive to justify inclusion. Thus, in the analyses that follow, we estimate four class models for each election cycle.

2.2 Co-variates for the Latent Class Analysis

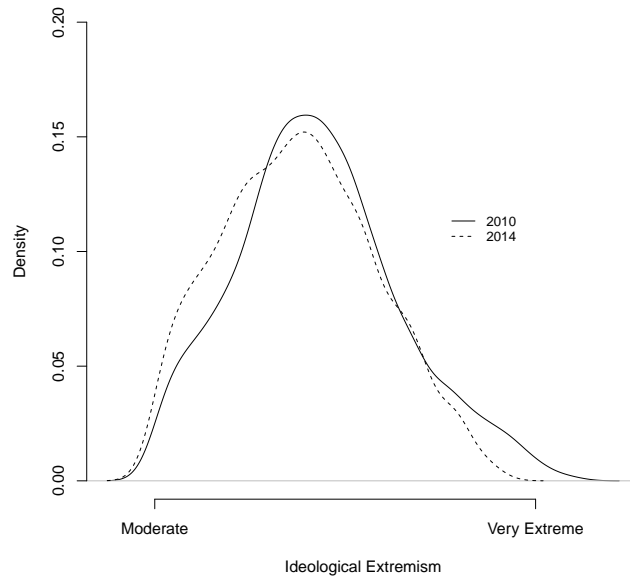
LCA allows us to simultaneously estimate the latent classes as well as a set of co-variates expected to determine selection into each class. As LCA is computationally intensive, these models generally include a limited number of co-variates. In our latent class regression model, we account for four covariates – a donor’s total self-reported family income, and her

ideological extremism, political engagement, and partisanship. We include these measures because they most directly capture the two factors that are most likely to impact donor strategies – motivation and capacity. In terms of motivation, we expect that donors who hold issues positions that are more extreme, who are more politically engaged, and who are more partisan will be more motivated to pursue highly strategic donation strategies that exhibit indications of discernment in the choice of recipients; while more moderate and less-engaged donors will adopt strategies that require less deliberation and thus result in the selection of more obvious recipients.

For our measure of ideological extremism, we eschew traditional ideology self-report questions and instead create an ideological scale based on responses to a large set of issue questions included on the CCES. Scaling issues provides us with a more direct measure of individuals' ideologies and also provides much more granularity on this measure. We use a two-parameter logistic item response model to create the issue-based ideology scale. The latent variable extracted from this model is standard normal (with a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1). We create our variable for ideological extremism simply by taking the absolute value of this variable. Thus, a value of 0 on the extremism variable would indicate that the individual's ideology is at the mean for all respondents in the CCES sample, and a value of 2 would indicate that he or she is two standard deviations more extreme than the average individual. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the extremism variable for each of the years included in our study.

We also use a two-parameter logistic item response model to create our measure of political engagement. In this model, we include five component terms: (1) whether the respondent indicated that they are very interested in news about public affairs, whether the respondent indicated that they (2) worked for a campaign, (3) attended a local political meeting, (4) or put up a political sign during the past year, and (5) whether the respondent indicated that they had ever run for elected office. After scaling these measures, we have a scale of political

Figure 2: Distribution of Ideological Extremism Among Donors (2010 & 2014)

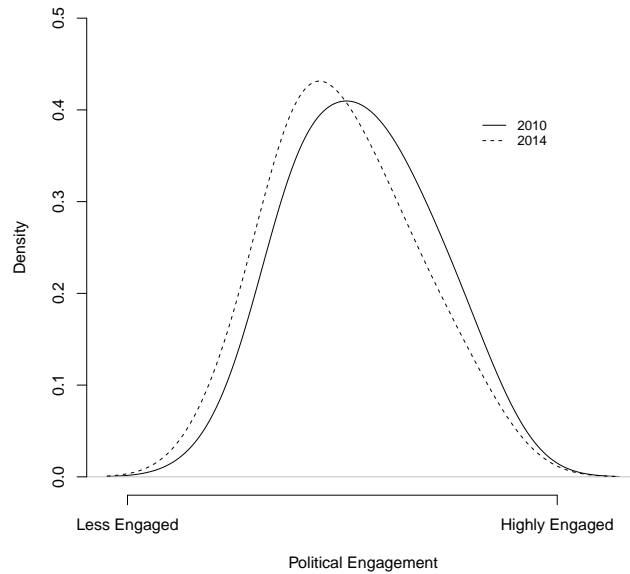


activity that is represented by the plot in Figure 3.

Additionally, we account for the partisanship of donors by including two dummy variables – one indicating whether the respondent identified as a Democrat and the other for whether the respondent was a Republican. Across the two election cycles that we examine, 48% of donors in the CCES were Democrats and 45% identified as Republicans.

Finally, a donor’s ability to act on strategic imperatives will be constrained by her capacity to give more money. Accordingly, we expect that income also influences donors’ latent class memberships. Because they can contribute larger sums, wealthier individuals are better positioned to spread their donation dollars over a wider variety of recipients. In contrast, less wealthy individuals may be constrained to focus their more modest contribution dollars on a narrower range of recipients. We thus expect family income to be positively associated with the probability of membership in donor classes characterized by greater diversity in the types of recipients. We use the CCES’s question about family income and code each individual as having an income equal to the lower bound of the income category that he chose.

Figure 3: Distribution of Political Engagement Among Donors (2010 & 2014)



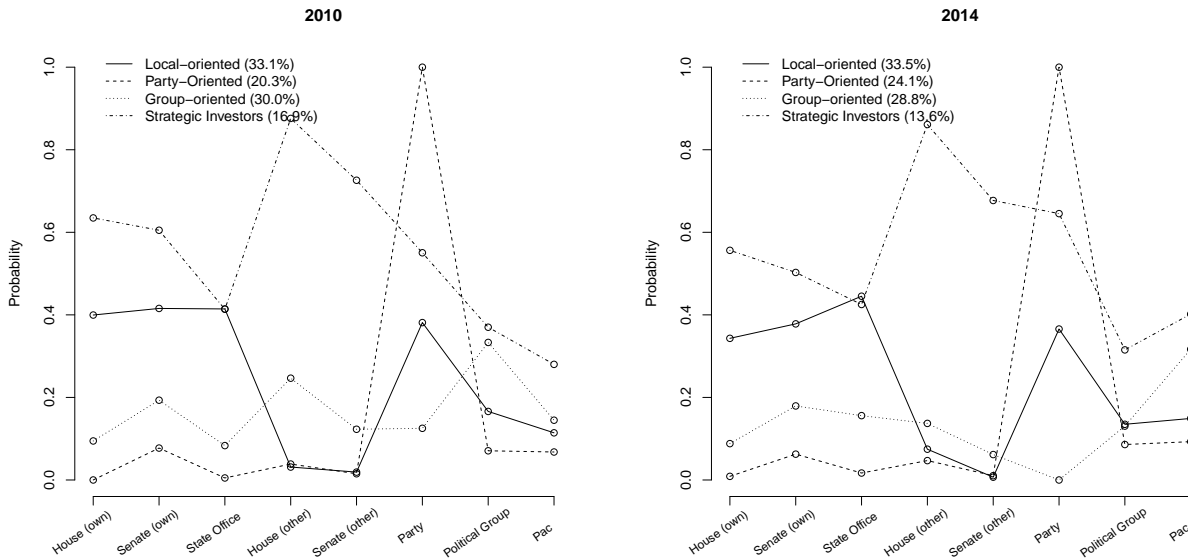
Thus, for an individual who said they earned between \$100,000 and \$120,000, we coded that individual as having an income of \$100,000. In 2010, the top income category in the CCES was \$150,000 and above. However, in subsequent surveys, the CCES added larger categories to the question, including \$150,000 - \$199,999, \$200,000 - \$249,999, \$250,000 - \$349,999, \$350,000 - \$499,999, and \$500,000 and above. Thus, our analysis of the 2014 donor patterns allows for a more fine-grained investigation of the role of very large incomes in affecting donor types.

3 Identifying the Four Donor Types

The first step in understanding the results from the latent class analysis is to examine the relationship between the classes themselves and the manifest variables used to partition class membership. In Figure 6, we present information characterizing the profiles of each of the four donor classes identified by the latent class model for 2010 and 2014 respectively. The

charts note the proportion of all donors allocated to each of the four classes, and plot the predicted probability that contributors in each class contributed to each of the potential recipient types.

Figure 4: Patterns of Targeting Donations for Three Classes of Donors



Note: Figure shows the probability of giving to each type of candidate/group depending on membership in each latent class.

As the figure indicates, each of the four donor types is characterized by a distinctive contribution profile. One class, which we label Party-Oriented Donors, is characterized by its focus on donating overwhelmingly to the political parties. Members of this class have very high predicted probabilities of donating to political parties, but low predicted probabilities of contributing to any other potential recipients. Party-oriented donors make up 20% of all donors in 2010 and 24% in 2014.

A second class, which we dub Locally-Oriented Donors, is distinctive for the tendency of its members to donate to congressional candidates within their district/state, though members in this class also are inclined to donate to the political parties. Locally-Oriented Donors comprise about one-third of all donors in both election years.

We find a third class of donors who tend to give relatively more to organizations than to candidates. We identify this class as Group-Oriented Donors. The consistent pattern with this group is that they have a higher probability of giving to political groups and PACs than they do of giving to candidates. Group-Oriented donors made up about 30% of all donors in 2010 and 2014.

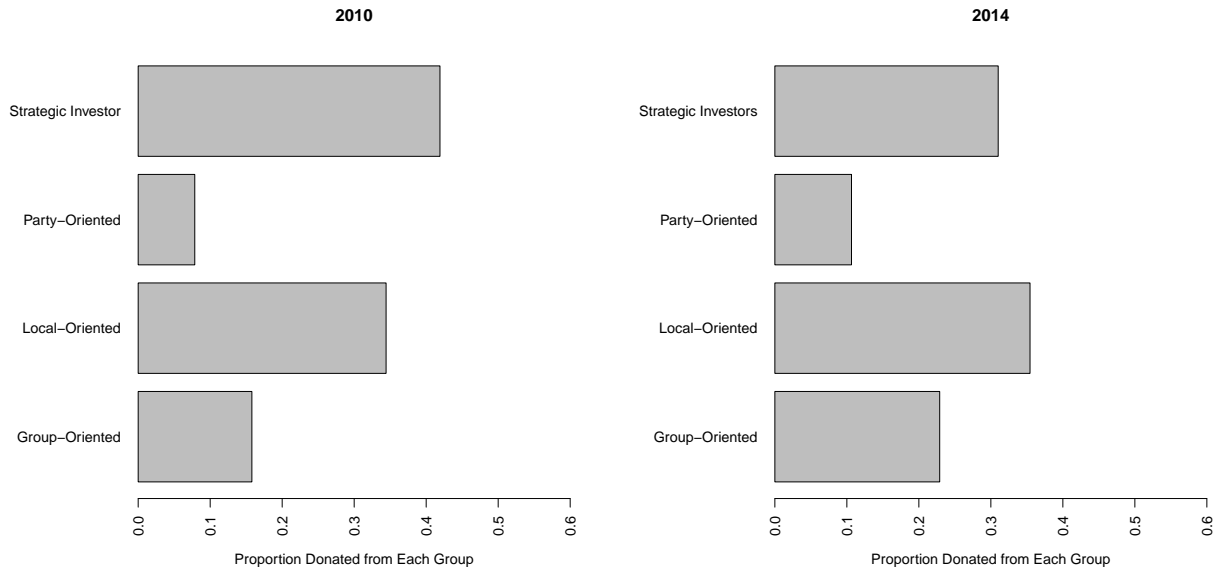
Finally, the latent class model identifies a class of donors we label Strategic Investors. This contributor class – while the smallest of the three classes – is distinctive for the extent to which its members contribute to all eight potential recipient types. Additionally, like Group-Oriented Donors but unlike Nationally-Oriented and Locally-Oriented Donors, Strategic Investors have relatively high predicted probabilities of contributing to political groups and PACs. However, what really differentiates Strategic Investors is their singular tendency to contribute to congressional candidates outside their district/state. Whereas Party-Oriented Donors, Locally-Oriented Donors, and Group-Oriented Donors generally ignore these potential recipients, Strategic Investors have very high predicted probabilities of contributing to them. Because they concentrate contribution dollars on less-obvious targets located outside their home turf, Strategic Investors display a high degree of discernment in making donations.

While Strategic Investors only account for about one-sixth of all donors in the CCES data, our analysis reveals that they are disproportionately comprised of medium and large donors. Thus, the relatively small share of this class as a proportion of all donors belies the significance of their contributions in the financing of contemporary campaigns. Figure 5 shows the proportion of all funds that CCES donors reported giving in each year that came from each of the four donor types.² The potential influence of Strategic Investors is clear from this graphic. In 2010, despite accounting for just 17% of all donors, Strategic

²In order to control for extreme outliers, we capped each individual's reported total donation amount at \$100,000 before summing these values.

Investors accounted for approximately 40% of the total funds contributed. In 2014, strategic investors accounted for 30% of all money given by individuals, despite making up just 14% of all donors.

Figure 5: Proportion of Total Funds Donated by Each Class of Donors



Note: Figure shows the proportion of total funds contributed by each donor type in each election cycle.

4 Explaining Donor Types

We now turn to examining the factors that are associated with donor types. First, Table 2 shows the predicted probabilities of membership into each donor type based on an individual's party identification. Several patterns in this table are of note. First, donors who do not identify with either political party are overwhelmingly classified as local-oriented donors. Second, while Democrats and Republicans have a similar probability of being strategic investors and group-oriented donors in 2010, there were some distinctions when it came to the other two classifications in that election cycle. In particular, Democrats were more likely

Table 2: Effect of Partisanship on Donor Class Membership

Party	Strategic Investor	Party-Oriented	Local-Oriented	Group-Oriented
2010 Election				
Democrat	.139	.258	.226	.377
Republican	.170	.179	.322	.329
Independent	.116	.077	.599	.207
2014 Election				
Democrat	.166	.355	.196	.284
Republican	.099	.349	.339	.214
Independent	.077	.200	.577	.147

than Republicans to be classified as party-oriented donors while Republicans are more likely than Democrats to be identified as local-oriented donors. This pattern likely reflects that fact that the Republican donor class largely sees the party establishment as too moderate and chooses to give directly to preferred candidates instead, a dynamic that does not exist on the Democratic side of the spectrum (see La Raja and Schaffner (2015), Chapter 2).

In 2014, the major partisan distinction was in terms of the strategic investors and local-oriented classes. In particular, Democrats were more likely to be strategic investors in 2014, while Republicans were more likely to be local-oriented in their giving patterns. Perhaps part of the reason for this change among Republicans is due to the fact that were the incumbent party in Congress (and in many state governments) in that election cycle.

While the partisan patterns are noteworthy, our primary interest is in examining whether membership in one or another latent donor class is closely related to both to the impetus to act strategically and the financial capacity to do so. We expect that ideological extremists and those donors who are more politically engaged will prefer to extend their influence to a broader range of ideologically-congruent recipient types, while less-engaged moderates will

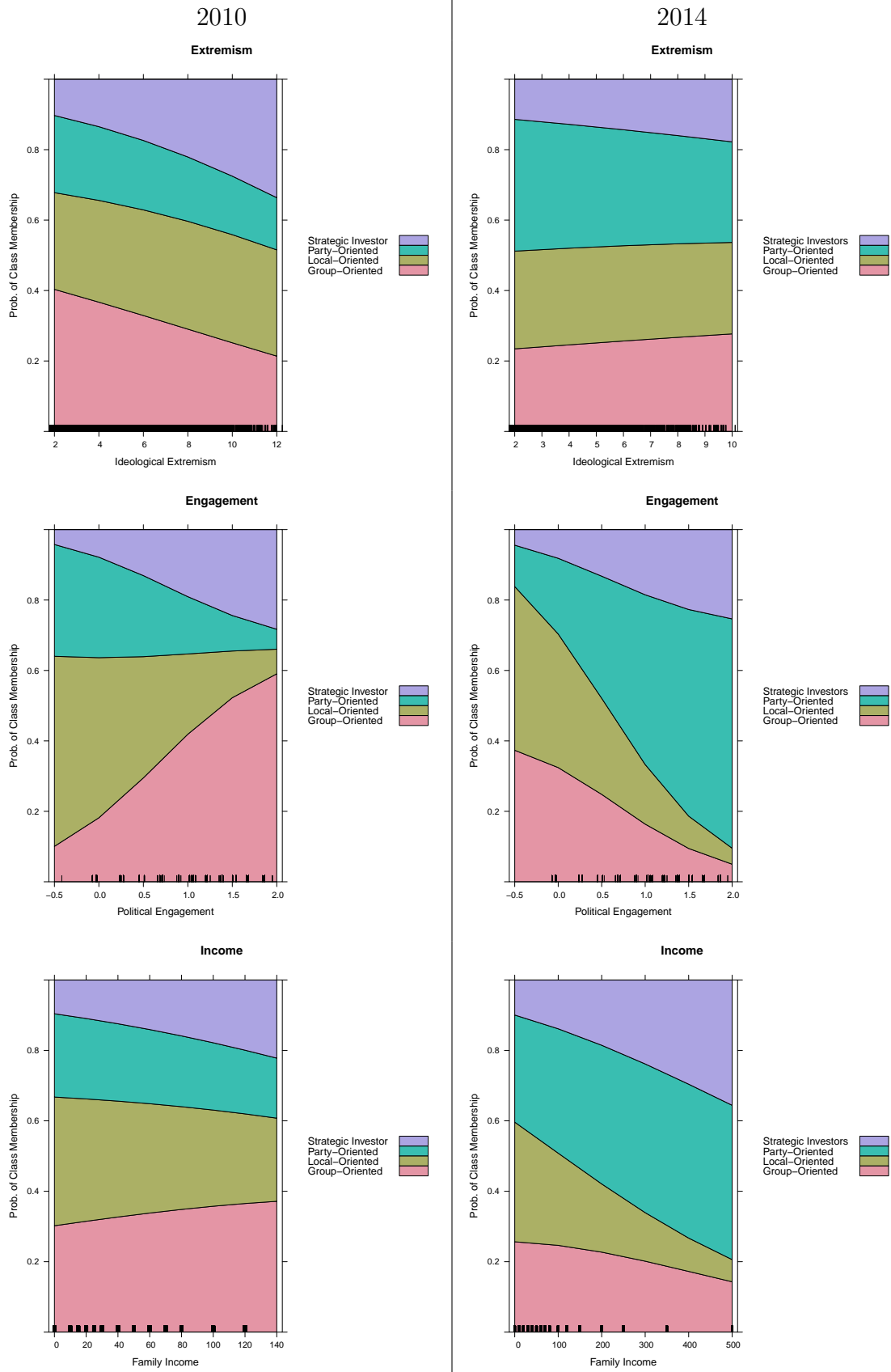
be inclined to focus their contributions on more local recipients. All things being equal, therefore, we anticipate that ideological extremism and political engagement should be associated with membership in the Strategic Investor class and possibly the Group-Oriented Donor class, while ideological moderation and less engagement should be associated with membership in the Nationally-Oriented Donor and Locally-Oriented Donor classes.

All things are not equal, however: after accounting for ideology and engagement, donors vary considerably in the amount they are able to contribute to campaigns and political groups. Because the ability to donate large amounts facilitates the spread of contributions across a diverse array of recipient types, we anticipate that individuals who contribute more should be more likely to be members of the Strategic Investor class, and possibly the Group-Oriented Donor class; while those who make smaller donations should be more likely to be members of the Nationally-Oriented Donor and Locally-Oriented Donor classes.

Since estimating the effects of these variables across four classes in three separate years produces a large number of coefficients, we present the full estimates from our models in the appendix to this paper. In this section, we show the practical implications of these coefficients in terms of predicted probabilities of class membership. Figure 6 shows the influence of each of these three variables – extremism, engagement, and income – on the probability of belonging to the four different donor types.

The top row of plots in Figure 6 shows the relationship between ideological extremism and the predicted probability of being in each class of donors. In 2010, ideological extremism does have an important effect on determining class membership. In particular, more ideologically extreme donors are more likely to fall into the Strategic Investor donor class in 2010, with inclusion in the Group-Oriented donor class becomes less likely with increasing extremism. In 2014, the relationship between extremism and donor class membership is much less pronounced, though there is still an increasing probability of being a Strategic Investor as one becomes more ideologically extreme.

Figure 6: Effect of Donor Capacity and Extremism on Being a Strategic Investor



Note: Plots are the probability of being in each donor class depending on values of the covariates listed. Rug plots along the x-axis show the distribution of observations for each

Much more important in structuring donor class membership is our measure of political engagement – a measure of how interested and involved in politics each donor is. Increasing political engagement has a dramatic effect on one’s probability of being in each donor class, and the pattern is not entirely consistent across the two election cycles. One pattern that is consistent in both years is that increasing levels of political engagement increase the probability of being a Strategic Investor. Donors with low levels of political engagement are quite unlikely to be Strategic Investors but about one-in-four of the most political engaged donors are strategic investors.

Another consistent pattern across both election years is that donors with lower levels of political engagement tend to be much more Local-Oriented in their donation behaviors. Again, this is consistent with our expectations since local politicians are the most obvious targets for donations, and may attract contributions from individuals who are not otherwise particularly engaged in politics.

Inconsistent across the two election years we examine is the relationship between engagement and membership in the Group-Oriented and Party-Oriented donor classes. In 2010, donors with higher levels of political engagement were more likely to be Group-Oriented in their donation behavior and less likely to be Party-Oriented. However, the opposite pattern presents itself in 2014, with more engaged donors giving more money to parties.

While political engagement clearly structures what type of donor an individual is, capacity to donate is also an important influence, particularly in 2014. Note that the availability of higher income categories in 2014 may be part of the reason that we see more dramatic effects in that year compared to 2010. In both years, increasing income is associated with a higher probability of being a Strategic Investor while richer donors are less likely to be locally-oriented in their donation behavior. The effects of income on being Party- or Group-oriented donors is much less pronounced in both election cycles.

Thus, the Strategic Investor group appears to represent a class of donors that lies at the

intersection of wealth and high engagement/motivation. When donors are more engaged and have the capacity to donate more money, they tend to give in a strategic way, investing not only in local candidates and organizations, but even moreso in elections in other districts and states. In contrast, donors who lack the capacity to give large amounts of money or who are less politically engaged tend to focus much more on their own elected representatives when making their political donations.

5 Discussion

Individual donors play a central role in funding American political campaigns and organizations, yet to this day their motivations are not well understood (Barber, 2016). The dominant paradigm conceives of political donors as “consumers” of politics, who contribute primarily as a means of self-expression and entertainment (Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder, 2003). While this perspective sheds light on many aspects of contributor behavior, it obscures others, particularly the factors underlying the considerable variation in donors’ choices of targets for contributions.

Our approach yields a much more nuanced view of campaign finance by showing how differently-situated donors pursue divergent contribution strategies. Rather than being an undifferentiated mass of political “consumers”, the donorate is comprised of a variety of different donor groups characterized by great variation as to where they allocate contribution dollars. These different classes, in turn, differ in their relationships to politically-important variables such as ideological extremism and donor fiscal capacity.

Equally, if not more important, our analysis provides new insights on contemporary debates about the role of campaign contributors in the United States’ highly unequal, and extremely polarized, political system. A popular political motif today is that big donors with extreme views are dominating the American political system, and using contributions

to make elected officials less responsive to the preferences of moderates (Hacker and Pierson, 2005; Bonica et al., 2013). An implication of this view is that empowering smaller donors would help encourage elected officials to become more responsive to the moderate majority (Green et al., 2015; Malbin, Brusoe and Glavin, 2012). The reality is somewhat more complex. As previous work has shown, both small and large donors are equally polarized, suggesting that empowering smaller donors would not facilitate moderation in American politics (La Raja and Schaffner, 2015). Rather, and as this paper reveals, what really differentiates big and small donors is their respective capacity to act on their views. Engaged and ideologically extreme big donors are fiscally positioned to behave as Strategic Investors, and thus make contributions to a wide range of recipient types. In contrast, engaged and extreme small donors are constrained from acting on their desire to spread their contributions more widely, and as such must content themselves with contributing to a narrower range of targets. In other words, what really differentiates big and small donors is the capacity of big donors to pursue “surrogate representation” from candidates and groups outside their congressional district and state.

Our findings suggest that, rather than empowering small donors, it is arguably more important to limit the outsized influence of Strategic Investors in political campaigns and organizational development. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court’s recent decision in *McCutcheon v. FEC* – which struck down aggregate limits on campaign contributions – imposes a serious, and perhaps insurmountable, obstacle to reforms of this type (Elias and Berkon, 2013). Until such time as public officials or justices of the Supreme Court are willing to reinstate limits on total contributions, extreme big donors will be able to wield outsized influence due to their capacity to contribute to such a wide range of candidates and groups that share their political commitments.

References

- Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M de Figueiredo and James M Snyder. 2003. “Why Is There so Little Money in US Politics?” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(1):105–130.
- Barber, Michael. 2016. “Donation Motivations Testing Theories of Access and Ideology.” *Political Research Quarterly* p. 1065912915624164.
- Bonica, Adam, Nolan McCarty, Keith T Poole and Howard Rosenthal. 2013. “Why hasn’t democracy slowed rising inequality?” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27(3):103–123.
- Elias, Marc E and Jonathan S Berkon. 2013. “After McCutcheon.” *Harv. L. Rev. F.* 127:373.
- Francia, Peter L. 2003. *The financiers of congressional elections: Investors, ideologues, and intimates*. Columbia University Press.
- Francia, Peter L, John C Green, Paul S Herrnson, Lynda W Powell and Clyde Wilcox. 2005. “Limousine Liberals and Corporate Conservatives: The Financial Constituencies of the Democratic and Republican Parties*.” *Social Science Quarterly* 86(4):761–778.
- Gilens, Martin and Benjamin I Page. 2014. “Testing theories of American politics: Elites, interest groups, and average citizens.” *Perspectives on politics* 12(03):564–581.
- Gimpel, James G, Frances E Lee and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz. 2008. “The check is in the mail: Interdistrict funding flows in congressional elections.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2):373–394.
- Green, Donald P, Jonathan S Krasno, Costas Panagopoulos, Benjamin Farrer and Michael Schwam-Baird. 2015. “Encouraging small donor contributions: A field experiment testing the effects of nonpartisan messages.” *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2(02):183–191.

- Hacker, Jacob S and Paul Pierson. 2005. *Off center: The Republican revolution and the erosion of American democracy*. Yale University Press.
- La Raja, Raymond J and Brian F Schaffner. 2015. “Campaign Finance and Political Polarization: When Purists Prevail.” *University of Michigan Press* .
- Linzer, Drew A, Jeffrey B Lewis et al. 2011. “poLCA: An R package for polytomous variable latent class analysis.” *Journal of Statistical Software* 42(10):1–29.
- Malbin, Michael J, Peter W Brusoe and Brendan Glavin. 2012. “Small Donors, Big Democracy: New York City’s Matching Funds as a Model for the Nation and States.” *Election Law Journal* 11(1):3–20.
- Overton, Spencer. 2004. “The donor class: campaign finance, democracy, and participation.” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* pp. 73–118.
- Panagopoulos, Costas and Daniel Bergan. 2006. “Contributions and contributors in the 2004 presidential election cycle.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(2):155–171.
- Schlozman, Kay Lehman and Henry E Brady. 2012. *The unheavenly chorus: Unequal political voice and the broken promise of American democracy*. Princeton University Press.