

ECON 4640
Spring 2012
Seminar 4

Problem I: Voter behavior

1. What does the “standard model” say about the relationship between income and preferences for redistribution (or tax levels)? To what extent is this different for the different models we have studied in class (such as median voter, probabilistic voting, and citizen candidates)?
2. How does this change if voters have other regarding preferences, i.e. they also care about the well being of the average citizen?
3. Discuss the realism of the assumption in Lind (2007) that voters have group biased preferences. How does this change the results from question 2?
4. Discuss how this theory can be tested empirically. Pay particular attention to how we should measure inequality and what types of inequality should be measured.

Problem II: Women in politics (based on Exam 2006)

1. Explain why there would not be any difference between male and female politicians in a median voter model and why there may be such differences in a model with citizen candidates.
2. Explain why simply comparing districts with male and female leaders is insufficient to isolate the effect of the politician’s gender on politics.
3. Consider Chattopadhyay and Duflo’s (2004) study of policymaking at the local level in India. Recall that they use the fact that in a third of local assemblies, drawn at random, the position as head of the assembly (Pradhan) is reserved for a woman. Explain how Chattopadhyay and Duflo can use this to identify the effect of the politician’s gender on politics.
4. What are the observed differences between male and female politicians? To answer this, you may use the attached Table V from Chattopadhyay and Duflo’s paper.
5. How could you study the effect of politician gender using a regression discontinuity design?

6. In Norwegian municipal elections there is a system where voters can cumulate, i.e. give double votes, or cancel, i.e. give no vote, to individual politicians on each party list. This can be used to give the voters some control of the gender balance in the municipal council. In the 1971 election, there were organized campaigns to cancel male and cumulate female candidates in some municipalities, resulting in female majority in the council in a few places and substantially increased female shares.¹

- Discuss how this could be used as a tool to identify the effect of female representation in Norwegian municipal councils
- Discuss whether we can treat these organized campaigns as exogeneous shocks and to what extent they can be used to solve the problems discussed in 2.

¹See e.g. T. Skard: *Kvinnekupp i kommunene*, Oslo:Gyldendal, 1979, for further details.