

Political Competition

This is a description of a simple model of competition among parties hunting for voters based on Laver (2005). Given are n voters and m parties. Voters have a fixed position in a 2-dimensional opinion space and vote for the party that has an expressed position closest (using Euclidean distance). Parties can have one of 3 different strategies:

- Hunter: Did the previous adjustment of the party position increase number of voters? If so, repeat the move. If not, turn 180 degrees around and move forward in that direction
- Predator: If you are the largest party, do not change your position. If you are not the largest party, move your position closer towards the largest party.
- Aggregator: Position is the mean position of voters voting for the party last tick.

The positions of the voters are drawn from a normal distribution, as Figure 1 demonstrates how the parties, the squares, try to position themselves to get a large share of the voters (yellow dots) using one of the three different strategies. Figure 2 shows how the shares of the parties change over time.

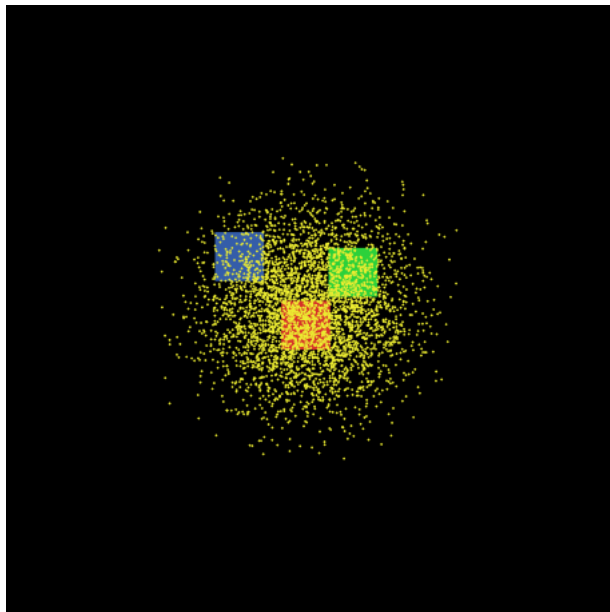


Figure 1: Representation of the competition between parties (squares) to get voters (yellow dots)

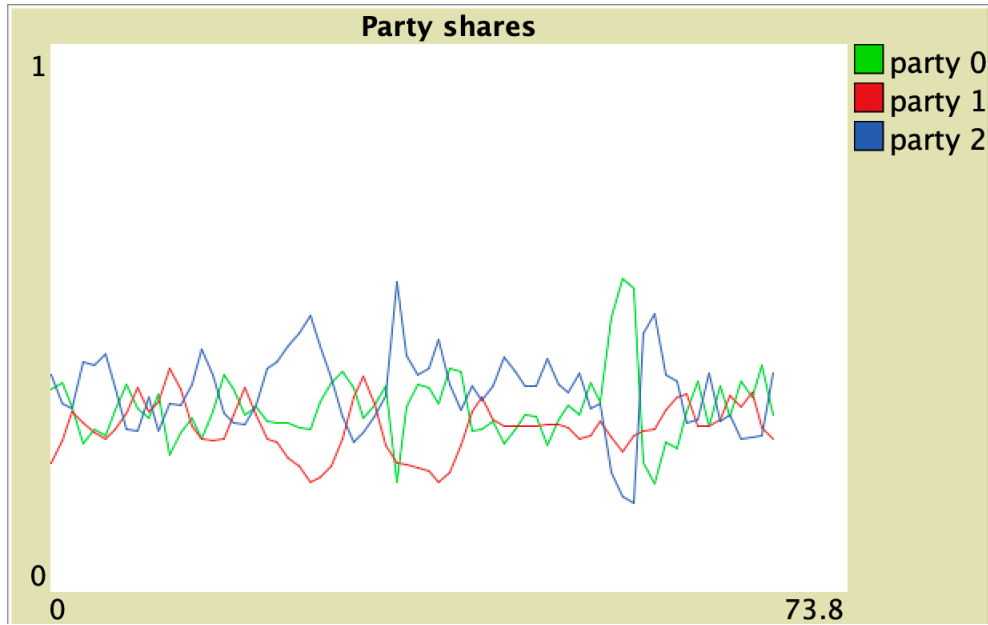


Figure 2: The share of the voters voting for party 0, 1 or 2 each tick, representing an election cycle, or polling event.

Reference

Laver, Michael (2005) Policy and the Dynamics of Political Competition. *American Political Science Review* 99(2): 263–281.