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*Parties, Rules, and the Evolution of Congressional Budgeting*

By

Lance T. LeLoup

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Parties, Rules, and the Evolution of Congressional Budgeting

Lance T. LeLoup

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PREFACE

The congressional budget process adopted in 1974 has been controversial and often messy. Both insiders and outsiders have derided its instability, its lack of controls, its improvisational nature, its contribution to unorthodox lawmaking, its failure to prevent deficits, and its encouragement of budgetary tricks and gimmicks—“blue smoke and mirrors”—to make it look as if Congress was doing something that it was not. But is that an accurate judgment, taking the longer view of its thirty-year performance? In fact, despite its many failures, the budget process has been an integral part of sweeping changes in Congress as an institution and in Congress’s legislative capacity. It has changed not only the way in which Congress budgets but also how major taxing and spending issues are negotiated between executive and legislative branches. The creation of “macrobudgeting” in Congress altered the way budget choices were framed and, with it, the kinds of coalitions that would organize to support or oppose those choices. Congressional budgeting rules have facilitated the increase of partisanship and the changing role of legislative parties and leaders.

Restructuring of the budget process in 1974 was first and foremost a change in rules and congressional institutions. Those budget rules continued to adapt and develop over time and affect other critical congressional institutions such as committees and parties. From the time the budget process was first implemented in 1975, the relationship between budget rules and congressional parties was a fascinating one. At the time, parties in Congress were not receiving much scholarly attention. In the 1980s, budget issues took center stage on the national policy agenda, and burgeoning deficits during an era of divided government restored interest in party control and budgeting. By the 1990s, the role of parties in Congress and the consequences of divided government were increasingly the subject of theory and research.

Scholarship on Congress has also changed in the past thirty years, from predominantly sociological approaches to economic approaches based on instrumental rationality. The “New Institutionalism,” both formal and historical variants, has fostered theoretical progress by focusing on legislative institutions and their consequences. Perhaps because of the influence of scholars such as David Mayhew and Richard Fenno, formal and nonformal approaches coexist more easily in congressional studies and allow a certain
theoretical and methodological pluralism. In taking a historical institutional approach to congressional budgeting, recent work on rules, parties, and divided government provided important insights.

My interest in this subject began when I was a graduate student at The Ohio State University, during the battles between President Nixon and Congress over the federal budget. Although I have periodically left the subject for long periods of time, my interest in it has never completely waned. The enactment of the Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 provided an opportunity to study institutional changes and policy results. After "soaking and poking" and interviewing Budget Committee members, I published The Fiscal Congress: Legislative Control of the Budget in 1980. Such interviews would be increasingly difficult to find. I went back to the Hill at the time of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings to study that fascinating experiment. Since then, I have long envisioned a study of the evolution of congressional budgeting. After various administrative posts and international research and consulting activities, this project finally came to the front burner in 2003. The premise of the book is that macrobudgeting fundamentally changed the way in which congressional budget choices were framed and enacted. Macrobudgeting not only increased the political stakes for the parties but also created a set of rules and procedures that strengthened party leaders, reflected in a steady increase in partisanship. With budgeting increasingly partisan, divided government has taken on increased significance as well.

The approach chosen to explain the evolution of congressional budgeting was to examine in detail landmark budget legislation since 1974, from the Budget Act itself to the recent Bush tax cuts. Each step in the progression allows an assessment of institutional changes, the role of parties, and relations with the president. The concluding chapter assesses congressional budget rules and party leaders and party voting, and it examines the consequences of divided government.

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Lance T. LeLoup
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CHAPTER 1

Macrobudgeting

Introduction and Overview

The evolution of congressional budgeting since the 1970s has been a significant component in changes in American national politics. From its traditional, fragmented authorization and appropriation process, congressional budgeting added a more centralized process focusing on large, multiyear taxing and spending packages. This has restructured congressional rules and institutions, changed the way Congress legislates, and enhanced congressional capacity to make decisions. It has altered how Congress negotiates with the president. Changes in budget rules and institutions have buttressed the foundations of party leadership in the House and Senate and have reinforced the trend toward greater partisanship in Congress. In doing so, it has elevated the consequences of divided party control of the legislative and executive branches in budgeting. This book examines major budget and deficit legislation enacted over the past thirty years, focusing on legislative rules and institutions, the role of partisanship, and the consequences of divided government.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, Congress made taxing and spending decisions in a piecemeal process through passing individual spending bills and tax bills, rather than producing a comprehensive budget like that of the president. In the face of growing conflicts with President Nixon, in 1974 Congress adopted a sweeping reform of its budget processes, allowing it to set its own broad priorities for taxes, spending, and the size of the deficit or surplus. The institutional creation of “macrobudgeting” in the form of budget resolutions and other comprehensive budget legislation changed the way in which Congress framed budget choices and enacted major budget policy. Now a handful of votes bundle many diverse issues and programs, setting the overall direction of national policy over the subsequent three, five, or even ten years. This was not a “clean” congressional reorganization, however. A new set of rules and procedures was superimposed on the old system,
resulting in a hybrid system with certain path dependencies from the earlier process. Nor was it a restructuring that took place all at once. Instead, congressional budgeting evolved through both informal adaptation and formal statutory and rules changes. New rules, institutions, and practices changed the legislative process, relationships between leaders and committees, and the look of budget legislation.

The evolution of congressional budgeting rules and institutions has affected partisanship and the strength of party leaders. While recent scholarship has recognized and provided theoretical explanations for the growth of partisanship in Congress, it has not emphasized the creation of macrobudgeting and budget process changes as a significant explanation of increasing party power. In changing how choices are structured, macrobudgeting has increased the stakes for parties, enhancing opportunities to define and build party reputation and encouraging message politics. Majority party control of budget legislation has become more centralized, and rules for floor consideration more restrictive.

The evolution of congressional budgeting, particularly reconciliation and other omnibus legislation combined with stronger congressional parties and enforcement rules, has had important consequences for the presidency. Despite mixed findings in the literature, this study suggests that party control of the legislative and executive branches has become increasingly significant for both budget outcomes and the nature of congressional-presidential bargaining. Rules changes that strengthen party leaders may also strengthen the hand of a president of the same party. Conversely, under divided control, presidents face a capable opposition, requiring new strategies and increasing reliance on extraordinary means of resolution. Supermajority institutions, the Senate filibuster and presidential veto, have been emphasized in a number of spatial models of the legislative process and gridlock. Changes in budget rules have eliminated the potential of a filibuster but increased the importance of the veto and veto bargaining under divided government. Budget summits, bipartisan commissions, and bargaining outside the normal channels have become more frequent and consequential. Divided government is characterized by longer delays in enacting the budget and increases the possibility of government shutdown.

**Major Budget Legislation**

For the past three decades, major macrobudgetary legislation was often the dominant focus of the national policy agenda. This study examines the adoption of what are arguably the most important of these:
• In 1974, Congress adopted the Budget and Impoundment Control Act (referred to as the Congressional Budget Act or the Budget Act) which restructured the congressional budget process and changed the nature of congressional choices. The implementation of the Budget Act through 1980 established patterns and precedents that would be consequential.
• President Ronald Reagan made his budget plan the centerpiece of his domestic agenda in his first year. Despite facing a Democratic House of Representatives, Republicans were able to create a cross-partisan majority and enact a sweeping package of tax cuts, defense spending increases, and domestic spending cuts. Subsequently, combined with an economic recession, the United States faced chronic budget deficits through the 1980s.
• In 1985, Congress adopted the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Reduction Act (Gramm-Rudman-Hollings), a controversial plan for mandatory deficit reduction, requiring across-the-board cuts if reduced deficits were not achieved. Although the mandatory approach would be abandoned five years later, the law also made several important changes in budget rules.
• In 1990, President Bush and the Democratic Congress negotiated for months to create a deficit reduction package that included new taxes. In addition to adopting the largest deficit reduction plan ever, Congress again changed the rules of the budget process.
• In 1993, under unified government for the first time in twelve years, President Bill Clinton and congressional Democrats narrowly enacted another contentious deficit reduction package, the most important domestic policy change in 1993. Not a single Republican voted for the budget.
• In 1997, following two years of confrontations and the longest government shutdown in history, Clinton and the Republican Congress did what was once thought impossible by agreeing on a balanced budget plan.
• In 2001 and 2003, President George W. Bush and the Republican Congress passed tax cuts of nearly $2 trillion over ten years, the largest since 1981. But by the middle of the decade, as in the 1980s, the United States faced large budget deficits projected to add up to more than $2.2 trillion by 2010.5

All of these enactments occurred in a certain political and economic context that helps explain the choices faced and the decisions made. But in addition,
changes in Congress as an institution help explain results. To help develop an explanation for the evolution of congressional budgeting, recent theory and research on rules and institutions, congressional parties, and relations with the presidency are explored in this chapter.

Research Approaches to Congress

Since the late 1970s, congressional scholarship has increasingly focused on instrumental rationality to explain the organization of Congress and legislative decisions. In formal approaches, scholars have developed deductive models focusing on structure-based equilibria. Institutions and rules have received considerable attention in these models but focus on different dimensions. A number of formal theories center on a spatial model of the legislative process, where members of the House and Senate are conceptualized on a left-right continuum based on policy preferences. The main institutional emphasis is on supermajority features of American politics—the presidential veto and Senate filibuster—which provide critical “pivot points” that determine whether policy can change from the status quo or whether gridlock occurs. In these models the role of political parties is minimal. Other formal theories suggest an enhanced role for political parties. David Rohde developed a theory of “conditional party government” based on intraparty unity and interparty conflict. Cox and McCubbins developed a theory of “limited party government” based on the model of the cartel. Formal theories have provided interesting and insightful ways of thinking about Congress, but critics have asserted that empirical testing and validation have been limited.

In nonformal approaches, the “new institutionalism” focuses on understanding a broad array of institutional arrangements and historical changes to explain developments in Congress. This is part of a larger community of scholars emphasizing historical-institutional explanations rather than deductive models based on policy preferences and strategic calculations. The analysis presented in this book follows this institutionalist tradition but finds formal theories helpful in suggesting possible causal relations. In turn, empirical evidence about congressional budgeting can contribute to scholarly debate on congressional decision making. The study presumes the importance of instrumental rationality, manifested in multiple member goals as Richard Fenno and other congressional scholars have suggested.

The remainder of this chapter takes an overview of budget rules and the development of macrobudgeting; it also looks at theories on the role of parties in the legislative process and research on the consequences of divided or unified control of Congress and the presidency.
Macrobudgeting, Rules, and Institutions

The Appropriations Process

From 1920 to the late 1960s, congressional budgeting was dominated by the appropriations process. Fenno’s classic analysis of the appropriations process in *The Power of the Purse* (1965) emphasized the strong norms of consensus and bipartisanship. The appropriations process was also characterized as “responsible,” allowing reasonable growth in government programs but providing a fiscally responsible brake on rapid expansion of government spending. The norms of fiscal restraint began to weaken in the late 1960s, and conflict between legislative and executive branches escalated over Nixon’s impoundment of (refusal to spend) monies legally appropriated by Congress. After a period of instability and growing deficits, the Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 was adopted. As chapter 2 will detail, the Budget Act created a congressional budget, a defined timetable, House and Senate Budget Committees, and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and it restricted the ability of the president to impound funds.

The enactment of the Congressional Budget Act in 1974 represented a mix of motives and interests, but a common goal was to increase Congress’s overall ability to shape budget totals. Republicans and fiscally conservative Democrats wanted a process that would restrain spending by making members go on the record in voting for a deficit. Liberal Democrats saw the new budget process as an opportunity to debate national priorities and make explicit comparisons and tradeoffs between, for example, health care and defense. Others wanted Congress to play a stronger role in shaping fiscal policy by having more direct votes on overall budget totals. For all of these various goals, a new means for voting on budget totals was created. The new process and institutions did not replace the authorization/appropriation process but rather were superimposed on the old system.

Macrobudgeting

As a result of these overlaid systems, congressional budgeting can be conceptualized as operating at two levels. Macrobudgeting—high-level decisions on total spending, revenues, deficits or surpluses, and relative budget shares, decisions often made from the top down—is the primary focus of this study. Microbudgeting—intermediate-level decisions on agencies, programs, and line items, usually made from the bottom up—remains a critical part of budgeting through agency requests and the authorization and appropriation
processes. Microbudgeting and macrobudgeting are related as parts are to the whole. Yet in terms of legislative decision making, an underlying hypothesis of this study is that macrobudgeting and microbudgeting are quite distinct, comprising a different set of legislative issues, dominated by different actors, and usually producing different divisions in roll-call voting.

Macrobudgeting or macrobudgetary legislation generally encompasses the following: (1) the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget (budget resolution), (2) omnibus reconciliation bills which include a range of taxing and spending decisions, (3) continuing resolutions and omnibus appropriations which fund agencies and programs if a regular appropriation has not been passed by the start of the fiscal year, (4) comprehensive tax bills that make major changes in future government revenues, (5) statutes limiting the national debt, and (6) major supplemental appropriations that cut across committee jurisdictions. Occasionally, a significant entitlement reform with severe consequences for spending can be considered macrobudgeting. Not included are other common congressional decisions including authorizing bills (annual, multiyear, or permanent) that provide the legal basis for agencies to exist and spend money, and individual appropriation bills that contain line items and detailed agency budgets. Also excluded from macrobudgeting are tax reform bills that restructure the tax code but do not make major changes in government revenues, such as the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

After the implementation of the Budget Act in 1975, macrobudgeting initially remained secondary to the traditional authorization/appropriations process. Budget totals in the final budget resolutions were largely the sum of actions taken earlier by the taxing and spending committees. Beginning in 1980, however, the budget process developed more teeth and became a more significant constraint on the decisions made by authorizing and appropriations committees and subcommittees. In addition, with the growth of entitlements, by 1980 only 40 percent of the total budget was funded by annual appropriations. This did not eliminate the importance of authorizations and appropriations; many important policy decisions are still shaped by executive and legislative branch actors at this level. A number of factors combined to strengthen macrobudgeting in Congress after 1980. The transition was fueled as much by informal adaptation of the rules, such as moving reconciliation to the beginning of the process (1981), as it was by formal rules changes adopted in 1975, 1985, and 1990.

Table 1–1 summarizes some of the key differences between microbudgeting and macrobudgeting in Congress.

Macrobudgeting changed the way budget issues are framed and increased the stakes for political parties. Once a budget resolution or omnibus spending bill is finalized and brought to the floor, members are confronted with an
up or down vote on a comprehensive bill with little chance to amend or obstruct. Dozens of complex issues are reduced to a single choice. These bills are often “must-pass” legislation. Although terms such as *gridlock* and *stalemate* are often used to characterize stalled budget negotiations, final approval of the national budget cannot be deadlocked for years as can other policy areas (welfare reform, prescription drug benefits, etc.). The need for government to have a budget serves as a *forcing mechanism*: Congress and the president must ultimately act to prevent default on debt, to prevent programs from shutting down, and to provide benefits that are guaranteed by law. On those occasions when funding expired and the government was forced to shut down, the political consequences were severe.

Macrobudgeting is not precise. Reducing deficits or shaping entitlement trends is like piloting a slow-moving supertanker. Decisions have long-term consequences that can take many years to reach fruition. Fiscal policy, the manipulation of taxing and spending totals to stabilize the economy, is the bluntest of policy weapons. Despite these limitations, macrobudgeting has increasingly dominated the agenda of national government since the 1970s.

### Formal and Informal Changes in Institutions

Changes in budget rules and institutions have occurred through formal statute and rules changes as well as informal adaptation and precedent. The
Budget Act was formally revised a number of times, most notably in 1985, 1987, and 1990. Other changes came through using the so-called elastic clause of the Budget Act which allowed changes to be made concerning “such other matters relating to the budget as may be appropriate to carry out the purposes of this Act.” One of the most important changes under the elastic clause was the decision to move reconciliation from the end of the process to the beginning of the process in 1981. This development fundamentally changed the nature of reconciliation from adjusting totals at the finish to shaping the budget at the start.

The most significant statutory overhaul of the Budget Act took place with the enactment of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Reduction Act of 1985 (better known as Gramm-Rudman-Hollings). It is best remembered for its mandatory deficit reduction procedures and the five-year fixed deficit targets, but it also made many important changes in budget rules. For the Senate, the 1985 act provided budget resolutions with a privileged position, protected against filibusters by limiting floor debate. The Byrd rule, adopted around the same time, imposed germaneness requirements on the Senate. Both of these rules changes imposed unprecedented limitations on the permissive rules of the upper chamber.

The budget process was formally amended again in 1987 and 1990. In 1987, Congress needed to alter the deficit targets enacted two years earlier and to respond to a Supreme Court decision that had rendered Gramm-Rudman-Hollings unconstitutional. In 1990, Congress scrapped the mandatory deficit reduction scheme and passed the Budget Enforcement Act. It imposed appropriations caps, introduced “pay-as-you-go” (PAYGO) rules requiring offsets for tax cuts or spending increases, and established “firewalls” to protect entitlements. Some of these provisions, such as appropriation caps and PAYGO rules, were allowed to expire by 2000.

These changes in rules and procedures and the way budget choices are framed have altered relations between Congress and the presidency and the nature of the legislative process. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, disputes were often resolved through budget summits involving a small group of legislators and negotiators for the administration. Changes in budget rules contributed to what Barbara Sinclair has described as “unorthodox lawmaking.” She notes that between 1987 and 1998, only 21 percent of House measures and 31 percent of Senate measures were not subject to at least one of the following: multiple referral, omnibus legislation, a legislative-executive summit, bypassing committees, post-committee adjustment, or a restrictive rule. Budget rules have also affected committee autonomy and the relationship between majority party leadership, committees, and subcommittees.
Party leaders’ influence in budgeting has been enhanced through a variety of means. One is the relationship with members of the House and Senate Budget Committees. Budget committees increasingly resemble the House Rules Committee as a leadership or a “control” committee. In a number of cases, task forces or ad hoc leadership groups write legislation. Budget resolutions, reconciliation bills, and omnibus budget packages are considered on the House and Senate floor under restrictive rules. Budget summits with the White House greatly limit the number of members who have a hand in shaping policy, and they are disproportionately top party leaders. Ratification of these agreements by rank-and-file members signals an acceptance by members of the leaders’ ability to represent the interests and reputation of the party. These changes in budget rules and institutions took place along with other organizational developments in Congress.

Additional Congressional Organizational Reforms

The late 1960s and 1970s were periods of significant internal reforms in Congress (primarily the House) focusing on the rules of the majority Democratic Party. Initial analysis of congressional reforms in the 1970s emphasized their decentralizing aspects, consistent with a view of members as individual political entrepreneurs seeking reelection and structuring the institution to foster that goal. Leroy Reiselbach broke down the thrust of the reforms into three broad categories: (1) democratization, weakening the grip of powerful committee chairmen; (2) ethics and openness, providing more transparency in the post-Watergate era; and (3) strengthening the caucus and party leaders.

Democratization was pushed by younger, more liberal Democrats who wanted to break down the hierarchical structures and existing power bases in the House, particularly committee chairmen. Reformers wanted to be able to attain positions of power and influence public policy earlier in their legislative careers. They accomplished this by weakening the seniority system, the practice of awarding committee chairmanships to the member of the majority party who had been on the committee the longest. Although seniority was still practiced in the vast majority of cases, both parties officially declared that criteria other than mere seniority would be used in selecting chairmen. In 1974, Democrats deposed three sitting chairs and replaced them with younger, more liberal, less senior replacements. Perhaps the most striking effect of reform at the time was the devolution of power from full committees to subcommittees. The Ways and Means Committee was forced to create subcommittees, reducing the power of Chairman Wilbur Mills (D-AR) who had abolished subcommittees in the 1950s.
In 1973, the Democratic caucus adopted the “subcommittee bill of rights,” which limited the discretion of the chair, allowing subcommittees to select their own chairmen, write their own rules, hire their own staffs, schedule their own sessions, and control their own budgets. The center of legislative action shifted from full committees to subcommittees. In 1970, only 35 percent of all bills were initially heard in subcommittee. By 1980, 80 percent of all initial hearings were held in subcommittee. The consequences for Congress of these reforms were criticized by a number of political scientists. Dodd and Oppenheimer argued that “subcommittee government created a crisis of interest aggregation,” weakening the ability of committees to compromise and broker and strengthening the role of interest groups.

The second thrust of reform reflected members’ concerns with low public evaluations of Congress in the Watergate era. Members pressed for open meeting (sunshine) requirements, greater financial disclosure, and ethics codes. The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 allowed television cameras in committee hearings for the first time, and later in the 1970s CSPAN began broadcasting gavel-to-gavel coverage of the House of Representatives. These changes also affected congressional performance, not always in ways intended by their advocates. Interest groups and the media took advantage of the greater transparency more than the general public. Members had less opportunity to trade votes, to help committee chairs, and to take a public position against the interest of the district in support of a broader national interest.

The third thrust of the reforms, increasing congressional capability by strengthening party leaders, would prove more potent in the long run in conjunction with other changes in the political environment. In 1973, the Democrats established the Policy and Steering Committee, consisting of the three top party leaders and twelve members elected by the caucus by region. In 1975, the caucus transferred the power to make Democratic committee assignments from the Ways and Means Committee to the Policy and Steering Committee. The Speaker was given the right to nominate Democratic members of the Rules Committee, making this committee, with control over the House agenda and rules for debate and amendment, loyal to the leadership. The Speaker was given greater influence in determining the referral of bills to committee, in creating special ad hoc committees, and in setting time limits on consideration. The leadership was expanded, increasing the number of regional whips. To strengthen party control of the most crucial committees, the Democratic caucus established supermajorities (as high as 2 to 1 plus 1), notably on the Rules and Budget Committees. Fewer reforms were adopted in the Senate, but several were significant. The vote needed to invoke cloture
during a filibuster was reduced from two-thirds present and voting to three-fifths of the constitutional membership (sixty votes). The majority leader was given more control over bill referrals and scheduling legislation in 1977. The numbers of standing committees and subcommittees were reduced and jurisdictions were clarified. These changes to strengthen party leaders in the 1970s would prove to be important in the post-reform Congresses of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.31

Why are congressional rules changed? Recent models of rules changes in the House of Representatives highlight competing explanations: control by the majority party or governed by changes in the ideological balance of power on the House floor. Cox and McCubbins have been at the forefront of the partisan explanation, arguing that the majority is able to “usurp the rule-making power of the House” to create rules and institutions that advantage party members.32 Eric Schickler has argued for a nonpartisan explanation based primarily on whether the ideological balance of House members’ preferences, as measured by the median member, moves toward or away from the majority party.33 The following section explores partisan and nonpartisan approaches to Congress more closely.

The Role of Parties in Congressional Budgeting

Responsive Parties Model

The role of political parties in American democracy has a long history. The founders, from Madison’s warning against the evils of faction in Federalist #10 to Washington’s farewell address, agreed that Americans should not break up into political parties. Yet within a few short years (in the 1790s) the first party system in the United States had developed. One of the more enduring perspectives on political parties in the United States is the responsible parties model. Based on an admiration for the Westminster system of disciplined British political parties, Woodrow Wilson was one of the early advocates of responsible parties.34 One can identify four characteristics of responsible parties.35 First, parties are specific in terms of policy promises. Second, once in office, parties act on and carry out their policy promises. Third, when out of power, parties act in opposition to, not in concert with, the party in power and develop policy alternatives. Fourth, there must be significant differences between the ideological positions of the parties. A famous articulation of the responsible party doctrine was a report issued by the American Political Science Association in 1950, Towards a More Responsible Two-Party
Responsible congressional parties would be programmatic parties with strong party discipline on roll-call votes. This normative view of political parties came under increasing criticism in the 1950s and 1960s as more empirical work revealed that such a model was unrealistic in the American context of separation of powers. A more realistic view of American parties characterized them as broad coalitions under a “big tent.”

By the 1970s, because of the emphasis on the reelection motive and the perceived autonomy of members, the role of political parties was minimized. In his landmark 1974 work, *The Electoral Connection*, David Mayhew wrote that “no theoretical treatment of the United States Congress that posits parties as analytic units will go very far.” By the mid-1970s, many scholars accepted the view that parties were relatively unimportant in analyzing Congress. Ironically, about the same time, the organizational changes discussed above were strengthening party leaders, and partisanship in voting began to increase in Congress.

**Electoral Changes and Party Polarization**

Much of the increase in partisanship in Congress can be traced to changes in the electorate and constituencies. Since the 1970s, congressional delegations of both parties have become more ideologically homogeneous and more distinct from each other. For a large part of the twentieth century, the Democrats were divided into northern and southern factions, coexisting by keeping civil rights legislation off the agenda. In many cases, the more ideologically conservative southern Democrats voted with Republicans, creating the so-called conservative coalition. At its apex in the 1940s and 1950s, the conservative coalition sometimes appeared on as many as one-third of the votes. The civil rights movement in the 1950s and the 1960s began a process of partisan realignment in the South. A number of conservative Democrats were gradually replaced by Republicans. Redistricting created a number of new black-majority districts that elected more liberal Democratic members. Ideological differences between northern and southern Democrats declined steadily after 1970.

The increase in district partisanship has been reflected in party voting in Congress. Voting studies by Congressional Quarterly show a steady increase in the percentage of time that the average Republican and Democrat votes with his or her own party on a party unity vote (where a majority of Republicans oppose a majority of Democrats). In 1970, the average member voted with the party less than 60 percent of the time, but by 2002, the
figure was greater than 85 percent. The proportion of votes that qualify as party unity votes has increased as well. In the House in 1970, less than 30 percent of the votes found a majority of Republicans opposing a majority of Democrats. By the mid-1990s, after the Republican takeover of the House and Senate, as many as 70 percent of votes were party unity votes.

The degree of ideological homogeneity within parties and polarization between parties has been increasingly documented in recent years. The work of Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal based on analysis of roll-call voting over time has found that some 90 percent of all votes can be aligned on a single liberal-conservative dimension. Looking at the changing distribution of the ideology of members over time, both the Republican and the Democratic caucuses have become more unified since the 1970s, with fewer moderates in both parties. In 1968, a significant number of Democrats fell on the conservative side of the scale, while a number of Republicans fell on the more liberal side. By 1998, these outliers had all but disappeared. Aldrich and Rohde conclude that “the separation of each party from the other is almost the maximum possible.” This conclusion is reinforced by other evidence. Although voters remain more moderate in their ideology than candidates or elite groups of core supporters, there is a strong congruence between district ideology and candidate ideology. Using data from surveys of candidates by Project Vote Smart in 1998, Erickson and Wright found consistent and sharp differences in policy preferences among congressional candidates.

**Conditional Party Government**

Recent scholarship has placed more emphasis on the role of political parties in serving the interests of individual members and in terms of the development of institutions and rules to direct the legislative process. In particular, David Rohde developed the notion of “conditional party government” (CPG) which suggests that strong majority party leadership occurs when the parties are polarized and internally cohesive. His 1991 book on the post-reform House of Representatives argued that too much emphasis had been placed on reforms such as the subcommittee bill of rights that tended to decentralize power in the House and not enough emphasis on the reforms that strengthened party leadership, centralizing power. Rohde built on the earlier work of Cooper and Brady which argued that the degree of partisanship in Congress was a measure of the degree of polarization between the constituency bases of the two parties.

Conditional party government is premised on members having multiple goals, not just reelection. Because policy goals are also important, members
may be willing to take some electoral risks to achieve certain policy objectives. Party activists and elites within electoral constituencies tend to be even more polarized than other voters and tend to play a more crucial role in determining candidacies for Congress. As constituencies in the primary electorate for the two parties become more dissimilar, so do the preferences of the representatives that they elect.

This provides the basis for polarized congressional delegations and more powerful party leaders to promote the interests of the party. Rohde goes further with the argument, suggesting that during times of high intraparty cohesion and interparty conflict, more assertive leaders are recruited, and these leaders seek rules strengthening their hand.

The amount of preference homogeneity with legislative parties is reinforced by the amount of disagreement over preferences (preference conflict) between them. As conflict increases, the negative consequences of a legislative victory by one party increase for its opponents. . . . Members of the majority would have a lot more incentive to empower their leaders to prevent a minority victory. . . . These two considerations—preference homogeneity and preference conflict—together form the “condition” in the theory of conditional party government.49

When a party is ideologically diverse, such as the northern and southern wings of the Democratic Party for much of the twentieth century, rank-and-file members will generally oppose ceding significant amounts of power to the leadership. When those differences begin to disappear, the basis for stronger congressional leadership is established.

**Majority Party Leadership as Cartel**

Much emphasis in congressional scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s was placed on distributive politics where nonpartisan coalitions formed to support legislation that dispensed tangible benefits to congressional districts.50 Committees were modeled as autonomous units dominated by self-selection to promote reelection goals.51 That view was increasingly challenged in the 1990s. Party leaders can be conceptualized as agents that coordinate legislative activities and solve collective action problems of members while satisfying their individual goals.52 One of the strongest statements of this perspective was Cox and McCubbins, *Legislative Leviathan* (1993), based on the economic model of the cartel.
Our view is that parties in the House—especially the majority party—are a species of “legislative cartel.” These cartels usurp the power, theoretically resident in the House, to make rules governing the structure and process of legislation. Possession of this rule-making power leads to two main consequences. First, the legislative process in general—and the committee system in particular—is stacked in favor of majority party interests. Second, because members of the majority party have all the structural advantages, the key players in most legislative deals are members of the majority party, and the majority party’s central agreements are facilitated by cartel rules and policed by the cartel’s leadership.53

Cox and McCubbins challenged the largely accepted view of committee autonomy and independent decision-making power. In particular, they assert (as the title of their book implies) that parties have significant control over committee membership and that the preferences of committee members are not distinctive from those of the majority. As a procedural coalition, the majority party in the House has both active and latent influences, the latter encompassing the notion that the majority party constitutes committees to do its bidding. Their analysis begins by raising doubts about member self-selection, a key element of the committee-dominant perspective. Looking at data on committee assignments, they find evidence that the committee selection process is much more complicated than the mere accommodation of member requests. Examining various group ratings and measures of ideology, they found little evidence that committee members’ preferences were unrepresentative of the House.54

Cox and McCubbins’ model of “limited party government” is based on a view of the party as an organization that solves collective dilemmas of legislators. Individual legislators are still rational actors interested in reelection, but parties play a critical role in their reelection success depending on a party’s reputation with the voters. The public record of a party represents issue positions adhered to by substantial majorities of the party, and the reputation depends on citizens’ beliefs about those positions.55 Elected party leaders are induced to internalize the collective interests of the party. Individual members desire the institutional and policy stability that comes from having an established leadership team in place. The party structures are key to preventing the overturning of previous policies that might be caused by shifting majorities. They argue that the impact of party leaders on voting coalitions has been underestimated in the past because of overemphasis on rewards and sanctions from leaders rather than policy alliances created by leaders.
An increasingly important part of maintaining the party reputation is “message” politics and the message agenda: each party emphasizing issues where it is favored by voters and trying to reframe or spin issues where it is disadvantaged.56 Party positions and the message agenda become particularly important in negotiating highly visible deficit reduction plans and other major budget packages. The traditional appropriations process was characterized by bipartisanship since it allowed members of both parties to deliver tangible benefits to constituents and engage in credit claiming. It appears that the calculus changed with the advent of macrobudgeting. Major budget issues of taxes, deficits, and entitlements are encompassed in reconciliation and omnibus spending bills, with votes on these packages seeming to be of increasing electoral importance for members.

Nonpartisan Alternatives

Despite the evidence of growing partisanship in Congress, several scholars have developed theories of lawmaking that do not include party as a significant factor in determining outcomes. Keith Krehbiel’s “pivotal politics” theory is particular relevant since he applies it to the congressional budget process.57 Rather than party, the median preferences of legislators are the most important determinant of major policy change. The position of the median member of the House and Senate creates a crucial “pivot” point for determining whether changes in the status quo will occur. Divided or unified party control and the size of the majority make little difference in outcomes. In other words, in a spatial model of lawmaking, partisanship may simply be an artifact of preferences—that is, members on the left are Democrats, and members on the right are Republicans. Therefore, budget preferences may correlate perfectly with party. Krehbiel writes:

If so, then legislators’ party identification brings no marginal predictive power... beyond what a purely preference-driven theory, such as the pivotal politics theory, already captures. In other words, voting may be an instance of straightforward, individual preference revelation, independent of collective dilemmas, party persuasion, cajoling, and coercion.

...58

The problem, he argues, is that given current measures, it is impossible to determine whether party is in fact exerting an independent impact on voting despite the high levels of party voting observed. Measures of party unity in voting, he argues, should not be cited as support for the importance of par-
tisanship. A second element of his analysis of congressional budgeting concerns outcomes. He argues that if the party theorists are correct, one should observe “abrupt and large swings in policy whenever party control changes.” Instead, he observes that policy change is incremental, marginal at best, after a change in both party control of the presidency in 1992 and party control of the Congress in 1994. Finally, Krehbiel casts doubt on another aspect of the partisan theories—that members use party reputation as a “brand name” in their reelection bids.

As he acknowledges, in its quest for simplicity, the pivotal politics theory omits a number of elements of contemporary lawmaking: the role of parties, the multidimensionality of policy (particularly dramatic in macrobudgeting), agenda setting by party leaders, the dynamics of bargaining, and uncertainty concerning the consequences of budget changes on the status quo. Even if measures of party unity cannot disprove the pivotal politics theory, trends in party cohesion and party voting are important to an explanation of congressional budgeting. Also relevant are the role of party leaders in bargaining in order to craft successful budget packages, the stance taken by minority party leaders, the actions of party leaders in enacting budget bills, and the kinds of party messages they attempt to associate with the legislation. Comparisons between voting patterns on macrobudgetary measures, such as budget resolutions and reconciliation bills on one hand and appropriations bills on the other, will also help test the contention that the macro/micro distinction is significant.

Relations with the Presidency, Divided Government, and Budget Gridlock

Have the changes in congressional budget institutions and rules since the 1970s changed the relationship between Congress and the presidency in budgeting? It was the intention of many members of both parties to strengthen Congress vis-à-vis President Nixon and his successors as indicated in the floor debates at the time of the adoption of the Budget Act in 1974. It was passed by nearly unanimous majorities: 401–6 in the House and 75–0 in the Senate. Bipartisanship did not carry over into implementing the budget process and passing a budget, however, as we shall see in subsequent chapters. Reagan, Clinton, and the second Bush all appeared to be helped by congressional budget rules when party majorities in Congress were favorable. Conversely, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and Bush all served during some period of divided government and confronted a Congress capable of formulating
and enacting a budget and negotiating with the president over it. As recent scholarship on congressional parties provides some important perspectives on congressional budgeting, so too does recent research on divided government and gridlock.

**Consequences of Divided Government**

Concern with the perceived debilitative effects of divided government surged in the 1980s with increasing public rancor between Republican President Reagan and the Democratic House of Representatives. The term *political gridlock* entered the parlance of pundits and scholars. Much of the discontent with divided government was related to the federal budget and the burgeoning deficits. Divided government was blamed both for causing deficits and for the apparent inability of Congress and the presidency to do anything about them. Former Carter White House Counsel Lloyd Cutler asserted that budget deficits tended to be larger under divided government than under unified government: “In modern times high deficits have occurred only with divided government. . . . The correlation between unacceptably high deficits and divided government is much too exact to be a coincidence.”63 He received some support for his hypothesis in a study by McCubbins that linked deficits and divided government in the 1980s.64 McKenzie and Thorton also concluded that divided government inhibits the ability of government to reduce large budget deficits.65

The general debate over the consequences of divided government changed with the publication of David Mayhew’s *Divided We Govern* in 1991.66 Identifying significant legislation through a two-stage process, Mayhew found no meaningful differences in terms of legislative output under divided government versus unified government. Because this finding challenged existing assumptions and conventional wisdom, it stimulated theoretical and empirical work on gridlock and the consequences of divided government. Using a more stringent definition of significant legislation, Kelly found that, in fact, more important legislation is produced under unified government than under divided government.67 Another way to analyze the effects of divided government is to look at significant legislation that does not pass. Edwards, Barrett, and Peake did just that and found the divided government increases the probability that important legislation fails by 45 percent.68 Fiorina observed that Mayhew looked only at the supply of legislation by a given Congress, not the demand.69 In other words, Mayhew had produced a numerator in the form of significant legislation passed, but no denominator in terms of the agenda of potential enactments for a given Congress. Sarah
Binder developed just such a denominator in her analysis of legislative gridlock. Using editorials in the New York Times between 1947 and 1996, she constructed a data set that measured the systematic agenda for a given year. The data allowed her to measure gridlock as a ratio of major enactments as a percentage of the agenda. Her analysis found that there was a statistically significant relationship between divided government and gridlock.

Binder also found that partisan polarization contributes to gridlock and that policy change is less likely as the parties become more ideologically distinct. She also found that the greater the policy distance between House and Senate, the more likely is gridlock to occur. John Coleman added measures of party responsiveness and institutional features of American politics to his study of unified and divided government. By responsiveness he means whether unified or divided government is in tune with the public mood for more activism or less activism by government. He suggests that if parties are cohesive and the transaction costs of bargaining are lower within rather than across parties, unified government should produce more significant legislation. Greater intraparty factionalism, on the other hand, should tend to reduce legislative output. Using a range of measures of legislative output employed by previous studies—indicators of public mood and intraparty cohesion—he concludes that unified government is significantly more productive than divided government and is more responsive to the public mood: “Parties do, as party government theorists maintain, generate incentives to cooperation that help transcend some of the policymaking gaps created by the Constitution.”

Nonpartisan Explanations of Gridlock

An alternate explanation to partisan theories of gridlock is found again in the spatial models of Krehbiel and of Brady and Volden. Krehbiel argues that the supermajoritarian features of U.S. politics (two-thirds requirement for a veto override, sixty-vote requirement to break a filibuster in the Senate) make deadlock equally likely under divided or unified government. A similar analysis is provided by Brady and Volden in Revolving Gridlock (1998). Conceptualizing members of Congress as arrayed on a single dimension of preferences, gridlock occurs when the status quo is closer to the median members’ preferences than proposed alternative policies. Given this preference distribution, the major determinant of gridlock is the filibuster and the presidential veto. They assert that the impact of party need not be directly included in the model because its effect is subsumed in members’ preferences which change after elections. Gridlock does not depend on
whether the median member is a Republican or a Democrat. Based on their theory, strong parties actually expand the gridlock region.  

Budget deficits in the 1980s combined with supermajority institutions to create gridlock in several ways, they argue. First, with severe fiscal constraints, the concessions needed to sway the vote of pivotal members were eliminated. Second, packaging major budget decisions increased the difficulty of gaining a supermajority coalition that could move from the gridlock zone. Third, the increasing dominance of budget issues on the agenda helped extend gridlock to other policies as well. Fourth, the complexity of major budget packages themselves contributed to gridlock.

**Divided or Unified Government and Budgeting**

Whether party-influenced or purely preference-driven, it remains instructive to examine congressional and presidential bargaining positions in milestone budget legislation. If divided or unified party control of Congress and the presidency matters, it could be reflected in the processes of budgeting and in the content of policy. In terms of process, Sarah Binder has already found that divided government increases budget delay: it takes an average of forty-one more days to pass a budget resolution under divided government than under unified government. In addition, this study examines whether divided government is also related to omnibus appropriations and whether it increases the probability of government shutdowns. We can also examine whether the use of extraordinary means to resolve budget conflicts, such as interbranch summits and bipartisan commissions, are more common under divided government than unified government. Even though the federal budget, dominated by entitlements, is relatively inflexible, divided versus unified government could be reflected in the content of major budget packages. One would expect the content of deficit reduction packages in terms of share of the reduction coming from tax increases, entitlement reductions, or defense and domestic discretionary spending cuts to be different, depending on what party alignment exists.

To the extent that legislation is protected from filibuster by budget rules, the presidential veto emerges as the key supermajority institution. Cameron found that veto bargaining is not only more likely under divided government but also more likely with highly significant legislation. If this holds in budgeting, a veto or the threat of a veto in major budget packages is more likely to be used under divided government than under unified government. Congressional budget resolutions do not require the signature of the president, but they are binding only on subsequent actions by Congress. Even
though members chose the concurrent resolution (as opposed to the joint resolution that does require the signature of the president) as the vehicle for defining the parameters of the congressional budget, they recognized that all implementing legislation would require presidential approval. Reconciliation bills and omnibus taxing and spending packages carrying out the budget resolution can be vetoed by the president.

Summary and Plan of the Book

Congress makes different kinds of taxing and spending decisions, some at the macro-level and others at the micro-level. In the evolution of congressional budgeting, macro-level decisions have become particularly important since the 1970s. At that time, when the Congressional Budget Act was being enacted and implemented, scholarship on Congress and the presidency was significantly different than it is today. This chapter has examined various approaches and theoretical perspectives that relate to congressional budgeting. They suggest several foci that guide the examination of major budget legislation in the following chapters.

The first concerns congressional rules, institutions, and macrobudgeting. The primary hypothesis of this study is that the creation of macrobudgeting in Congress changed how policy choices were framed and enacted, affecting how Congress operates as a policymaker. The findings will suggest that budget rules and institutions have affected the nature of budget choices, the distribution of power, committee autonomy, the legislative process, and relationships with the executive branch. A second focus surrounds the changes in parties and partisanship related to congressional budgeting. The analysis will suggest that parties are important in explaining congressional budgeting and that budget institutions have empowered party leaders and contributed to the overall increase in congressional partisanship. A third focus concerns the relationship between Congress and the president in budgeting and the consequences of divided or unified control of national government. The results will suggest that divided government is important in explaining congressional budgeting outcomes.

The following chapters examine in more detail significant major budget legislation of the past generation. Following the evolution of congressional budgeting chronologically, each chapter examines the economic and political context, changes in budget institutions and rules, partisanship and the role of party leaders, the relationship of the president to congressional budget decision making, and the effects of party control of the legislative and executive
branches on budget process and outcomes. The concluding chapter integrates and assesses the earlier chapters and provides some additional data on trends in partisanship and the consequences of divided government over the period.

Specifically, chapter 2 examines budget reform and the budget process through 1980, chapter 3 the Reagan economic and budget plan in 1981, chapter 4 the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Reduction Act of 1985, chapter 5 the budget summit agreement adopted in 1990 during the Bush administration, chapter 6 the 1993 deficit reduction package enacted in the first year of the Clinton administration, chapter 7 the 1997 bipartisan balanced budget agreement, and chapter 8, the 2001–2003 tax cut packages enacted during the administration of George W. Bush. Inevitably, this list is not exhaustive—many important budget issues and conflicts during this period are not included. However, important developments between these particular years will also be discussed. Finally, in chapter 9, some thought is given to what the experience of the past thirty years might reveal about how (and whether) Congress and the president might be likely to deal with the huge budget deficits projected over the next decade.

The main goal of this book is to enable a better understanding of congressional budgeting and its relationship with broader developments in American politics. It is not a study of the budget policy per se, although some details concerning taxes, entitlements, and domestic and defense discretionary spending are essential to understanding the politics. The book is not intended to be normative or partisan in terms of judging the relative merits of presidential, legislative, or party positions or in prescribing what budget choices should have been made. Chapter 2 begins the analysis by examining congressional budgeting through the first part of the twentieth century, the adoption of the Budget Act, its initial implementation, and some precursors of macrobudgeting.
NOTES

Notes to Chapter 1

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21. The passage of the Medicare Act in 1965 had profound budgetary implications, including expansion of the program in the 1970s to include the disabled and other beneficiaries; and the rapid increases in health care costs made it one of the fastest-growing elements of the federal budget. Social Security, the largest entitlement program, also expanded rapidly in the 1970s through several huge election-year increases in benefits, and later by indexing benefits to inflation during a period of high inflation. Entitlements increased from $65 billion in 1970 to $267 billion in 1980, an increase of over 400 percent. Entitlements’ budget share expanded from 33 percent of outlays to 47 percent in that decade.
34. Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government* (1881).


54. Ibid., 73.

55. Ibid., 110.


Notes to Chapter 2

4. Barry Weingast, “A Rational Choice Perspective on Congressional
Notes to Chapter 2  227

5. Wallace 1960, 8.
17. Ibid., 143.
18. Ibid., 499.
19. Ibid., 141.
22. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 429.
29. Ibid., 438.
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36.  HR 10961, 93rd Cong., 1st sess.
39.  Ibid., 73.
45.  This conclusion is based on comparing ratings by Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA) for Budget Committee members by party to the mean ratings for the Republican/Democratic caucuses. Ratings are as published in *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports*, 1975–1980.
47.  From personal interviews with members of the House Budget Committees; see LeLoup 1980.
48.  The votes on conference reports and second resolutions generally produced very similar partisan divisions.
53.  Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, section 301(b)(2).
54.  For data on the numbers and reasons for waivers, see LeLoup 1980, 139–140.
61.  See Kowalcky and LeLoup 1993, 22, for a more complete listing of Treasury actions.
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63. Ibid., H26343.
64. HR 5369, H. Rept. 96–472.
67. See Kowalcky and LeLoup 1980, 24–25, for a more complete list of amendments.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. A cross-partisan majority is defined as the situation in which voting divisions largely follow party lines, but enough members of one party vote with the other party to make a majority. See Charles Jones, *The Presidency in a Separated System* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), 30.
5. White and Wildvasky 1989, 75.
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25. Former CBO Director Rudolf Penner once recounted an episode when he was explaining the congressional budget process to a visiting delegation from the Peoples Republic of China. When asked what happens when the House and Senate disagree over economic assumptions, Penner replied that conferees vote on which ones to accept. When the translator relayed the answer, he was instructed to ask again by the perplexed Chinese. When the reply was the same, another translator was brought in and asked the question for a third time. When the reply was again the same, the delegation shrugged their shoulders and walked out of the room.


28. Ibid.


32. White and Wildavsky 1989, 137.


44. Ibid., 42.

45. Ibid., 43.


47. Barrett 1984, 178.


49. White and Wildavsky 1989, 249.


56. Ibid., 61.

57. White and Wildavsky 1989, 621n53.


61. Final votes on House and Senate passage of appropriation bills in 1981 were compiled from *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports*. Three of the Senate votes were on conference reports because initial passage was by voice vote.

62. PL 94–344.


Notes to Chapter 4

3. Ibid.
17. This account is taken in part from an interview by the author with Representative Richard Gephardt, June 1986.
22. Ibid.
23. Interview with the author, June 1986.
24. This section is based on the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Reduction
27. Interview with the author, June 1986.
37. Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General of the United States v. Mike Synar, Member of Congress et al., 106 S.Ct. 3181 (1986).
38. For example, the Congressional Research Service prepared a constitutional analysis of four of the most questionable provisions. See Congressional Record (Oct. 24, 1985): E4793–95.
39. The District Court provided its views on this issue so that the Supreme Court could take them into account during review and so that delay would not result if it were necessary to remand the case.
40. Bowsher v. Synar at 10 (slip opinion).
42. The text of the economic bill of rights was reprinted in Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, (July 11 1987): 1531–33.
Notes to Chapter 5

5. A look at interest group ratings (ADA, ACA) of NEC members who served in Congress reveals that there were significant ideological differences between the Republican and Democratic members.
9. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 129.
20. Ibid., 132.
27. LeLoup and Shull 1993, 197.
Notes to Chapter 6  235

31. The Bush administration sought contributions from Middle East allies such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and others to defray the cost of the buildup and, eventually, the Gulf War. In the end, nearly $50 billion was raised, enough to cover the costs of the war.
33. Ibid., section 13133.
36. OMB estimated the increase at $22 billion, CBO at $27 billion; see Reischauer 1990, 232.
41. Ibid., 229.
48. Ibid., 22.
49. Ibid., 34.

Notes to Chapter 6

20. Ibid., 2127.
21. Ibid., 2122.
22. These were the figures used by Democrats during the floor debate and generally the figures reported by major news outlets such as *Congressional Quarterly, New York Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*.
26. Robert Keith and Edward Davis, “Budget Process Changes in the House-
Notes to Chapter 7

27. Ibid., 16–17.
28. Ibid., 18–23.
30. Ibid., 15.
34. Keith and Davis 1993, 6.
36. Ibid., 80.

Notes to Chapter 7

10. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 15.
16. OMB, Budget of the United States Fiscal Year 1998, 29.
24. Clay Chandler, “Playing the Social Security Card; Clinton Using Fear to Bury the Balanced Budget Amendment, Critics Say,” The Washington Post (Feb. 24, 1997): A8. In an effort to illustrate their concern about the balancing the budget, and knowing that the measure would undoubtedly fail, Senate Democrats introduced a balanced budget amendment that exempted the Social Security Trust Fund from budget calculations.
25. H.J. Res. 159.
35. Ibid., 1305.
Notes to Chapter 8

29. Ibid., 932
40. CNN/Gallup Poll of 1,019 adults with a margin of error of ±/− 3 percent; cited in ibid.

Notes to Chapter 9

8. Ibid., 202.
9. Ibid., 198.
10. Ibid., 224.
12. Votes on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget, final passage in the House and Senate. In the years when there was a first and second resolution before 1982, the first resolution is used. When there was a voice vote in the Senate, the roll-call vote on the conference report is used. In years when no budget resolution was passed, such as 2002, the data point represents the mean value of the prior and subsequent year.
13. See Meredith Watts et al., Legislative Roll-Call Analysis. The Rice index is the absolute value of yea votes minus nay votes for a party divided by the absolute value of yea votes plus nay votes for the party. It varies between 100 (unanimity) and 0 (party members equally divided).
It was subsequently learned that the Bush administration prevented higher cost estimates from being revealed to Congress or the public.

16. Quoted in ibid.


20. For much of the nineteenth century, budget surpluses were actually seen as more dangerous economically than deficits. See Robert A. Wallace, Congressional Control of Federal Spending (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960).


23. Ibid., 57.


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