

# Divided We Stalemate:

## Legislative Gridlock and the Tea Party in the U.S. House of Representatives

**Thomas Davis**

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

*Scholars of political science have long debated the efficacy of legislative output in times of unified and divided party governance. Scholarly literature on the issue has no resounding conclusion as to the effects of divided governance on legislative outputs, leading scholarly research to examine a caveat of different variables associated with gridlock. One possible variable contributing to legislative gridlock is the collective actions of intraparty caucuses. A quantitative analysis of Tea Party members in the U.S. House of Representatives under conditions of unified and divided government suggests that ideological caucuses do have an effect on legislative outputs. Quantitative analysis of varied roll call votes (procedural, passage and Senate related) on tax related bills suggests that in times of a divided Congress, Tea Party members vote differently on issues of tax policy. However, the presence of divided governance has not proven to be a strong indicator of divergent voting patterns among House Tea Party members. These findings suggest that gridlock will continue to be a product of a multitude of variables instead of the simple presence of divided governance.*

**C**oncerned citizens throughout the nation are growingly disappointed by the rise of legislative gridlock within the U.S. Congress; leading to the lowest approval ratings Congress has ever received (McCarthy, 2016). As legislative gridlock becomes more commonplace, many scholars of political science have reasoned that split party control of the Legislative branch has become an important indicator for discrepancies in legislative outputs (Cox & McCubbins, 2005). Terminology such as “unified,” and “divided” government is now commonplace in the scholarly literature as the two-party system has become increasingly polarized and less willing to pass

laws under bi-partisan support (Binder, 2003; Mayhew, 1993). This thesis attempts to explore and contribute to the unified and divided government debate by analyzing the House Tea Party as an example of how intraparty ideological caucuses may be an additional variable contributing to legislative gridlock.

To further explain the causes of legislative stalemate, this thesis will analyze tax policy roll call voting patterns amongst House Tea Party Caucus members under conditions of a unified or divided Congress. Passing legislation is an extremely complex accomplishment and there are a wide variety of factors pointed to by scholars that have partially explained the reason for gridlock. This thesis mere-

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Created by Thomas Davis, Department of Political Science, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona for his senior thesis project. Correspondence concerning this research paper should be addressed to Thomas Davis, Department of Political Science, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, (909) 263-6730. Email: SBDThomas@outlook.com

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ly offers an additional piece of evidence for contributing factors to legislative gridlock by examining the role of the House Tea Party Caucus during the 111th, 112th, and 113th congressional sessions. This additional piece of evidence will advance the scholarly literature on unified and divided governance and its effect on legislative gridlock by attempting to demonstrate that small ideologically driven caucuses are causing additional stress to the legislative process, thereby reducing legislative productivity.

The research question proposed by this thesis is, does the House Tea Party Caucus affect legislative output in times of unified or divided party control of The United States Congress? Given that passing legislation mandates a majoritarian vote, coalitions are constructed to both pass and prevent laws (Cox & McCubbins, 2005). Therefore, the collective actions of an ideologically driven intraparty caucus like the House Tea Party could have profound effects on legislative outputs. The logic behind this research question lies in the coalition strength of the House Tea Party; their strength in numbers can create profound political power that may lead to legislative inefficiencies. In the case of a divided legislature, it is reasonable to believe that ideological differences will increase the amount of times House Tea Party members will cast a vote against the majority of House Republicans, thereby satisfying their ideological extremism.

To successfully examine the research question and argument proposed, this thesis is composed of five separate sections. Firstly, a vast and in depth literature review of the scholarly debate on divided government provides foundational understanding and also defines the varied terminology utilized in this thesis. Secondly, the logic behind this thesis and the various hypotheses formulated to scientifically approach this research question are outlined. Thirdly, the methodology developed to test this research question and argument will be disclosed to fully understand how this quantitative study was formulated. Fourthly, the results of the various statistical tests employed in this thesis will be explained and interpreted to understand how it relates to the research question and argument proposed. Lastly, the conclusion section will explain the implications of the findings for both the scholarly community and the Tea Party itself.

## Literature Review

This literature review examines a wide range of scholars, both in the United States and abroad, that have spent considerable time and resources to studying gridlock (Baumgartner, Brouard, Grossman, Lazardoux, & Moody, 2014; Binder, 2003; Coleman,

1999; Colomer, 2005; Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Cox & McCubbins, 2007; Edwards, Barrett, & Peake, 1997; Fiorina, 1996; Hughes & Carlson, 2015; Mayhew 2005; Rogers, 2005; Thorson, 1998). The scholarly literature on gridlock, under the conditions of unified or divided party control, has been brought to center stage by David Mayhew (2005) and Sarah Binder (2003). Their seminal works have sparked a multitude of scholars from across the globe to study legislative gridlock in the United States. The expansive literature on unified and divided governance and its effect on gridlock have been inconsistent because of various foundational definitions, methodological discrepancies, and varying models of examination, but have converged on the acceptance of exogenous variables as alternative explanations for gridlock.

### *Gridlock Defined?*

A wide array of scholarly interest on the topic of gridlock has produced more confusion than understanding; this is most evident in the debate over terminology. Foundationally, the definition of gridlock has been debated amongst prominent scholars and the incoherent agreement on an absolute definition has produced inconsistencies in their findings. In a well-structured debate, the definitions have to be agreed upon by all parties to progress, but this condition has not been satisfied in the debate over legislative gridlock, thereby leaving the definition to be interpreted as scholars choose.

David Mayhew (2005) and Sarah Binder (2003) are the defining scholars in the debate over the effect unified or divided governance has on legislative gridlock. These two scholars have laid the groundwork for the debate for future scholarly work, but this is problematic because these two scholars cannot even agree on similar terms and definitions (Binder, 2003; Mayhew, 2005). Mayhew (2005) defines gridlock as a consequence of congressional inactivity in a variety of areas such as investigations and lawmaking. Binder (2003) argues that gridlock is the “share of salient issues on the nation’s agenda that is left in limbo at the close of a Congress.” Evidential in these two formative works is an apparent inability to agree to simple terms, and this has become problematic for scholars currently examining gridlock because as the terms and definitions change, so do the findings.

Other scholars in the arena define gridlock in a wide variety of ways, for example, David Jones (2001) argues that legislative gridlock is simply “how different partisan configurations affect the relative inability to enact significant proposals on the policy agenda.” Jones (2001) argues that gridlock

is a product of partisan polarization, which fits well with party models of legislative productivity. Additionally, scholars such as Tyler Hughes and Deven Carlson (2015) argue that gridlock is a simple delay in the legislative process, that gridlock is defined as the inability for committees and parties to pass laws on the legislative agenda due to procedural considerations. Manabu Saeki (2009) counters this definition saying that gridlock is simply “the inability to change policy.”

It is abundantly clear that gridlock in the scholarly literature is not well defined. Prominent scholars with the highest levels of interest and credibility cannot seem to agree to the terms associated with the debate itself, and this becomes problematic when examining the findings of fellow scholars. Followers of David Mayhew (1993) and Sarah Binder (2003) have attempted to redefine the term gridlock to expand its understanding, only to add more confusion to the debate. Further examination of the scholarly literature suggests that the disagreement on definitive terminologies shapes the methods and findings to be inconclusive and inconsistent. Years of study and findings conclude that scholars are interested in legislative gridlock as a system of inactivity, which gridlock is mostly concentrated around the activity of lawmaking and that gridlock is best explained by the result of various influences or variables. Gridlock is best defined when simplified to the reductionist definition provided by Saeki (2009), whereby gridlock is simply the “inability to change policy,” thereby useful and employed by this thesis.

### *Divided vs. Unified Governance: The Spectrum*

Just as the definition of gridlock has not been completely agreed upon, the debate over what divided and unified government is, becomes equally inconsistent. Prominent scholars have chosen to focus on a multi-branch approach of divided government (Baumgartner et al., 2014; Binder, 2003; Colomer, 2005; Edwards, Barrett, & Peake, 1997; Fiorina, 1996; Mayhew 2005; Rogers, 2005), while other scholars strictly focus on one branch (Coleman, 1999; Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Hughes & Carlson, 2015; Thorson, 1998). This wide range of approaches to the study of unified and divided governance and its effects on legislative gridlock, demonstrates the enormous spectrum under which scholarly research can deviate, thereby causing large inconsistencies in their findings.

David Mayhew’s (2005) formative work *Divided We Govern Party Control, Lawmaking, and Investi-*

*gations, 1946-2002* monopolized the scholarly debate on the effects of unified or divided governance on gridlock. Mayhew (2005) defines divided government along an inter-branch model by which there can be three conditions of governance. The party make-up of each chamber of the legislative branch as well as the White House is the foundation for determining unified or divided control (Mayhew, 2005). This model is replicated multiple times throughout the scholarly literature by scholars such as Binder (2003), Rogers (2005), and a wide variety of others (Fiorina, 1996; Edwards et al., 1997; Kelly 1993), demonstrating that divided and unified control of governance can be analyzed under the lens of inter-branch relationships.

Gary Cox and Mathew McCubbins offer a sporadically different approach to the study of legislative action (2005). As a competing area of focus, Cox and McCubbins argue that unified or divided governance can be best focused on in the context of intra-branch activities (2007). In agreement with their decision to focus on only one branch of government, there is a wide range of literature that focuses on the legislative branch as the sole lens by which unified and divided government should be studied. Scholars such as David Brady and Craig Volden (2006) extend the importance of the intra-branch debate of divided government. Intra-branch models have garnered substantial support in scholarly research, even being independently analyzed in prominent works focused on inter-branch studies, because the legislative branch is such an integral component of legislative gridlock. These two contrasting models demonstrate how diverse and exhaustive the literature on the subject of unified and divided governance is, which speaks to the complexity of unified or divided governance’s effect on legislative gridlock.

Evidently, the debate over unified and divided control of government has not been cohesive or exhaustive. Many scholars have chosen to focus on one of many models as a means to explain gridlock within the context of unified or divided control, but the same foundational definition problems exist in the debate about what model is most fruitful in isolating gridlock. Although this is problematic for finding consensus as to what model of divided or unified government is actually noteworthy of study, it demonstrates that the scholarly community is continually trying to investigate, research, and inform on the complexities of gridlock in the United States and abroad. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the party model focused on the division of the legislature has produced the most fruitful and promising results in isolating gridlock, thus framing the model utilized in this thesis.

### *Methodologies and Confounding Results*

Academic studies on legislative gridlock under conditions of unified or divided party control have not been an exception to the scientific discourse on methodology. Because methodological decisions are so vital to producing accurate results, many scholars in political science have taken considerable time to admonish fellow scholars for constructing poorly designed research methods (Binder, 2003; Saeki, 2009). This is most evident in the major debate between David Mayhew (2005) and Sarah Binder (2003).

David Mayhew's (2005) methodological decisions have been both contested and praised in the scholarly community (Binder, 2003; Coleman, 1999; Edwards et al., 1997; Howell, Adler, Cameron, & Riemann, 2000; Kelly, 1993). The significance of Mayhew's (2005) contribution to this scholarly debate was the use of a two-sweep approach in identifying legislation considered salient and lasting through time. However, large bodies of scholars have argued that the legislation has been cherry picked, but that the laws chosen are inherently biased by media and expert opinions (Binder, 2003; Kelly, 1993; Howell et al., 2000). Not only was bias an issue, but researchers such as Sarah Binder (2003) identified the problem of excluding legislation that was never passed by the legislature. In other words, under David Mayhew's (2005) research design, there was no denominator to create a percentage value for each congressional session's legislative efficacy (Binder, 2003). These methodological designs may seem trivial to the average layman, but the results of these research designs are substantially different, thereby emphasizing the importance of creating a strong methodological foundation when pursuing scientific research.

Building on the ideas and works of Sarah Binder (2003) and David Mayhew (2005), countless scholars have reevaluated or completely renewed the methodological choices made in the past to give more accurate and fruitful results. A defining example is a study conducted by William Howell et al. (2000), in which his research team utilized a similar approach to David Mayhew (2005), only to find that unified or divided control of the branches resulted in mixed significance on legislative outputs. These findings are contrary to Mayhew's and it suggests that if the data is utilized differently, then the results can also differ (Howell et al., 2000).

Although there will continue to be healthy scientific discourse on methodology, the importance is to note that research design is vital in producing sound and accurate conclusions about political phenomena. Scholars have debated for a substantial amount

of time as to what methods work best and what processes or branches should be included in the dataset. Just as the definition of gridlock and the spectrum of unified and divided government have been confusing and inconsistent in their terminology, it appears that methodology is also another ill-defined component of the unified and divided government debate. To counteract methodological discrepancies, this thesis employs established datasets provided by Poole-Rosenthal (2014), as well as data from the U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.). Simultaneously, this thesis uses methods similar to Poole-Rosenthal (2014) when collecting data on tax policies, thereby making the findings more methodologically consistent with other scholars.

### *Party and Spatial Models of Gridlock*

Conventional wisdom would conclude that divided governance was a necessary and sufficient condition for gridlock, but to explore this popular opinion, scholars have accepted two general models to isolate gridlock, they are the party and spatial models. Similar to the unending debate on terminology or methods, scholars deviate on what models are best suited for explaining and examining legislative gridlock in times of unified or divided party control.

Party models of governance emphasize the importance of legislative coalitions (Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Cox and McCubbins, 2007). In both *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*, and *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*, Gary Cox and Matthew McCubbins (2005) argue that legislative coalitions are the solutions to the inherent majoritarian obstacles outlined in the Constitution. Parties act as "legislative cartels" by which individual members sacrifice small amounts of power to party leaders for a wide variety of benefits such as a cohesive partisan legislative agenda, preferable committee assignments, and logrolling opportunities (Cox & McCubbins, 2005). This party model suggests that in an effort to overcome gridlock, party unity and party brand is key (Cox and McCubbins, 2005), thereby deterring party fracturing. This is supported by scholars such as John Coleman (1999), who argues that intraparty conflicts under unified or divided government conditions do have significance on legislative outputs. Gregory Thorson (1998) would agree with Coleman (1999) and Cox and McCubbins (2007) in that super-majoritarian parties have the clear advantage to passing partisan slanted legislation, and that divided control does, in fact, reduce legislative productivity. The party model is further supported by scholars such

as Tyler Hughes and Deven Carlson (2015) who find that divided governance allows for a greater delay in the passage of salient or impactful legislation. The party model holds fruitful results for isolating the effects of legislative gridlock, and it supports the conventional wisdom that unified or divided control governments do actually affect legislative outputs. Taken together, these scholars have seemingly produced a strong case for the party model as an explanatory factor of legislative gridlock; however, many other scholars have argued that parties play no role in solving gridlock and that individual preferences of pivotal voters are seemingly more important.

Spatial modeling of legislative preferences has been of common interest in recent academic scholarship. This model proposes that party control is a nominal contributor to legislative gridlock and that individual preferences of congressman and the president are the real sources of gridlock (Brady & Volden, 2006; Saeki, 2009). Taking into consideration the institutional factors that contribute to gridlock, such as the three-pivot voters (majority, cloture, and veto) (Brady & Volden, 2006), spatial models add considerable depth to the debate of legislative gridlock under unified or divided party control. Among the most prominent scholars in spatial modeling, David Brady and Craig Volden (2006) argue that legislative gridlock is the product of the inability to elect new members of congress with differing preferences. Other scholars in the spatial model argue that the pivotal voters are the most important in passing legislation, and therefore deserve the most attention (Saeki, 2009). The spatial model for explaining gridlock as outside the forces of unified or divided governance is counterintuitive to the findings other scholars and has thus sparked considerable debate about which model best isolates gridlock.

Researchers of American politics cannot seem to agree upon anything, it appears that they are not only widely differing in terminology and methodological considerations; they cannot seem to agree on what model explains or isolates gridlock best. This again is problematic because it offers multiple explanations to gridlock from different angles. In the aggregate, it appears that the scholarly community is again unable to come to a consensus on the best model to analyze legislative gridlock; this only heightens the perplexity of focus for future research. This thesis explores the actions of intraparty ideological caucuses by examining the House Tea Party; therefore, the party model of governance will be employed because it emphasizes the coalition forming ability that House Tea Party members have.

### *Additional Variables*

Analyzing the extensive scholarly research on the topic of gridlock under conditions of unified or divided party control has produced questionable results. It appears that most scholars have agreed that multiple variables are intricately intertwined with the variables of unified and divided party control, leading to the discovery of additional variables. Factors originating in the institutional framework of the United States branches, or variables outside the elitist system, have had varying effects on legislative gridlock and has thus led to discrepancies in the literature as to how unified or divided control have solitary causation for gridlock.

David Mayhew (1991) and Sarah Binder (2003) finally agree that outside variables such as the public mood or public opinion can be partial explanations for the passage of salient laws under conditions of unified or divided party control. These previously competing scholars converge to suggest that individual electoral incentives and institutional factors have tangible impacts on legislative productivity (Binder, 2003; Mayhew, 2005). However, Sarah Binder (2003) and David Mayhew (1991) are not the only scholars that suggest other variables as components of legislative gridlock, many in the scholarly community agree that electoral pressures, intraparty fracturing, party polarization, individual polarization of congressman, presidential policy agendas, and electoral outcomes have played substantial roles in legislative gridlock (Coleman, 1999; Colomer, 2005; Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Baumgartner et al., 2014; Brady & Volden, 2006; Edwards et al., 1997; Howell et al., 2000; Jones, 2001; Saeki, 2009). The convergence of the scholarly literature suggests that gridlock is far more complex than previously imagined. For this reason, this thesis examines the actions of the House Tea Party as an additional variable contributing to legislative gridlock under the conditions of unified or divided governance.

### *Conclusion*

Definitions are of vital importance to the debate on legislative gridlock, just as the terms and definitions change in the literature, so do their findings. It is best for future scholarly research to agree that the simplistic definition provided by Manabu Saeki (2009) may be the best definition of gridlock because it allows for a multiplicity of variables to be considered, therefore making the definition useful to this thesis. The debate over the effects of unified or divided governance on legislative gridlock has produced several models by

which scholars have examined gridlock. It is clear that there is no scholarly consensus as to which approach may be the most fruitful in explaining or solving legislative gridlock under conditions of unified or divided party control. However, simplicity is employed in this thesis by using an intra-branch approach, thereby eliminating variables from the Executive, making the quantitative analysis solely focused on the effect the House Tea Party has on the legislative productivity of the legislator.

Inconsistency in the scholarly literature is only furthered by the methodological choices made by scholars in the field. Even when utilizing similar data sets, it is clear that variations in research design have produced mixed results on the effects of unified or divided party control on legislative gridlock. Therefore, this thesis utilizes both established datasets as well as similar methods from prominent scholars to provide more consistencies in the scientific process. This thesis attempts to add an additional contributor to legislative gridlock by examining the voting behaviors of the House Tea Party Caucus on tax policies under the condition of a unified or divided government.

Party models and spatial models of studying gridlock have added considerable depth to the debate over the effects of unified and divided party control of government. These two models are fundamentally contrary to one another and suggest that scholars have yet again been unable to agree upon a single method to study gridlock. However, the collective actions of intraparty caucuses like the House Tea Party suggest that the party model will be of most use in this data analysis. Inherent in many scientific studies, additional variables causing the relationship examined in scholarly research have been equally problematic for political scientists examining gridlock within the conditions of a unified or divided government. It is clear that scholars do in fact agree upon one thing, gridlock is a product of multiple variables and conditions of a unified or divided government is but one of many variables that contribute to legislative gridlock.

## Hypotheses

According to scholars who study legislative gridlock, there are a wide variety of angles by which to examine legislative efficacy under conditions of unified or divided governance. What has been reduced from the scholarly discourse is that the causes of lackluster legislative efficiencies are due to a wide range of variables. This thesis aims to contribute to this scholarly literature by arguing that the collective actions of the House Tea Party are an additional factor that may raise the rate of gridlock within a divided legislature. Intraparty ideological caucuses are formed within the legislator to unite individuals with common interest and political philosophy in an effort to shape laws in their favor. The Tea Party is one of many ideologically driven caucuses in Congress that has been formed in an effort

### Hypotheses:

H1: There is a difference in House Tea Party procedural opposition votes within the condition of a unified or divided government.

H2: There is a difference in House Tea Party passage opposition votes within the condition of a unified or divided government.

H3: There is a difference in House Tea Party Senate related opposition votes within the condition of a unified or divided government.

H4: There is a difference in the way House Tea Party members vote with the majority of House Republicans on tax policies then they do on policies overall.

H5: There is a relationship between House Tea Party procedural opposition votes and the condition of a unified or divided government.

H6: There is a relationship between House Tea Party passage opposition votes and the condition of a unified or divided government.

H7: There is a relationship between House Tea Party Senate related opposition votes and the condition of a unified or divided government.

H8: Controlling for constituency demographics, there is a relationship between House Tea Party total opposition votes and the condition of a unified or divided government.

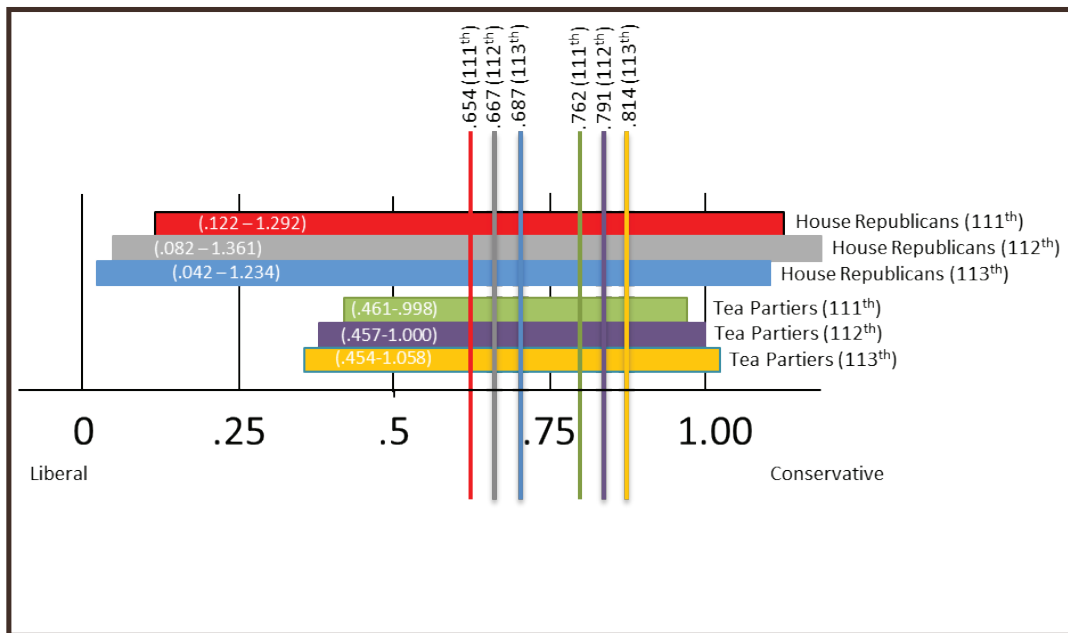
H9: House Tea Party members vote in opposition to House Republicans as one cohesive caucus.

to formulate and pass laws that are ideologically satisfying, therefore of central interest to this thesis.

How much power do these ideologically driven caucuses actually have? According to Jeffrey Toobin (2015) of the New Yorker, the House Tea Party Caucus was actually able to force Speaker of the House John Boehner to resign. The Tea Party has been accredited with causing mayhem within the Republican Party, and this fringe caucus has garnered strong political capital to the point of dictating which bills would make it to the House floor for a vote, an honor and strategic skill previously left to the Speaker of the House to exercise (Toobin, 2015). With this abundant political capital, the voting behaviors of House Tea Party members on issues that are central to their platform deserve careful consideration and analysis. This thesis attempts to prove that the House Tea Party members will cast opposition votes on tax policies more often under the condition of divided governance, thereby resulting in increased legislative gridlock. The logic behind this argument is centered on the coalition building capacities of the House Tea Party, which will utilize their strength in numbers to stop policies that are not ideologically satisfying to them. Due to the ideological extremism of the Tea Party, it is reasonable to believe that House Tea Party mem-

bers will vote in opposition to House Republicans, in an effort to stop tax policies that are not ideologically satisfying to them; this phenomenon is believed to be heightened under conditions of a divided legislator because the House Tea Party Caucus is increasingly conservative in divided legislatures (“Table 1.9: Physical Representations of Averaged “DW-NOMINATE Scores” for House Republicans and House”). From this, the following hypotheses can be made: [see page 11] Collectively, these various hypotheses have substantial meaning for the question and argument presented in this thesis. Firstly, the hypotheses concerning the differences in opposition voting patterns under conditions of unified and divided governance are vital to establish that there is a difference in the way House Tea Party members vote against House Republicans within this specific condition (H1-H3: “Hypotheses:”). Establishing that they are different under the condition of a unified or divided government allows for further inquiry as to what explains these differences in voting patterns. Secondly, the hypothesis concerning differences in party-aligned votes on tax policy and party aligned votes overall is important because it will establish that House Tea Party members are voting differently from the party on tax policy, thereby giving reasonable pursuit to

**Table 1.9: Physical Representations of Averaged “DW-NOMINATE Scores” for House Republicans and House Tea Party Members**



discover if these patterns are due to the presence of a unified or divided legislator (H4). This leads to the next three hypotheses relating the opposition votes of House Tea Party members to the condition of unified or divided governance (H5 – H8). The importance of these hypotheses rests in the significant relationship between these two variables, if they are not significantly related, that would conclude that House Tea Party members do not vote against the party in relation to the partisan make-up of the legislature, thereby making void the question and argument presented in this thesis. Lastly, and of unmatched importance, is the hypothesis concerning cohesiveness in House Tea Party member’s opposition votes (H9). This hypothesis is of most importance because if House Tea Party members are voting as a cohesive coalition, then they are opposing laws as one cohesive entity, thereby establishing their ability to cause legislative gridlock.

Although nine individual hypotheses may seem exaggerated, they are necessary to fully isolate the effect House Tea Party members have on legislative gridlock within the conditions of unified or divided governance. The multiple tests utilized in this quantitative analysis build upon one another by providing supporting evidence for the use of other tests, which further support the argument in this thesis. To accurately test these hypotheses, four statistical tests were used to establish differences, relationships, and cohesiveness in House Tea Party voting patterns on tax policies. However, these tests cannot be conducted without data, therefore leading to an explanation as to how the data was collected and what methods were developed to answer the research question presented in this thesis.

## Methodology

For the purposes of this research, the analysis conducted is a hybrid of data analysis and case studies, giving the findings moderate to low external validity, but higher levels of internal validity in explaining the variation within House Tea Party voting patterns concerning tax related bills. The data sets utilized in this research is a combination of datasets derived from Poole-Rosenthal (2014), a research team which has compiled data on almost every congressional session in history, demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.), and in conjunction with an original dataset of House Tea Party roll call votes on tax policy. When synthesized, this thesis will aim to empirically establish the influence of the Tea Party caucus on legislative gridlock under conditions of a united or divided legislator.

This data analysis will aim to prove that House Tea Party members will vote against the majority of House Republicans on an issue center to the Tea Party platform, tax policy, under conditions of divided governance more often than in unified governance, thereby causing increased legislative gridlock. The independent variables in this research are unified and divided governance of Congress. If a party has majoritarian control in both chambers, then unified governance is fulfilled, if each party has a majority in only one chamber, this will be defined as divided governance. The dependent variable is gridlock, which is defined as the “inability to change policy” (Saeki, 2009). The conditions of unified and divided governance are vital to prove that House Tea Party

### Tables 1:1, 1:2, 1:3: Status of Tax Policies

	Table 1.1: Status of Tax Policies in the 111th Congress	Table 1.2: Status of Tax Policies in the 112th Congress	Table 1.3: Status of Tax Policies in the 113th Congress
Introduced	1,619	1,175	1,204
Committee Consideration	525	545	522
Floor Consideration	152	102	122
Passed One Chamber	145	92	114
Passed Both Chambers	66	34	25
Became Law	64	33	25



**Table 1:4: Partisan Makeup of the 111th, 112th, and 113th Congressional Sessions**

Congress	111	111	112	112	113	113
Chamber	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate
Republican	178	41	242	47	234	45
Democrat	257	57	193	51	201	53
Independent	0	2	0	2	0	2
Tea Party	48	—	71	—	70	—
United / Divided	United	United	Divided	Divided	Divided	Divided

roll call votes deviate from House Republicans on issues of tax policy more often under the condition of a divided government, thereby explaining the rise of legislative gridlock.

With the Tea Party being a relatively new political movement, it has limited the number of cases that can be included in this research. To include House Tea Party members into the dataset, only three historically recent congressional sessions are of use to this research. The 111th, 112th, and 113th congressional sessions have been specifically selected to accommodate the novice movement. These three congressional sessions include members of the U.S. House of Representatives that have publicly identified with the Tea Party, additionally, these three cases include conditions of a unified (111th) legislator as well as a divided (112th, and 113th) legislator. Moreover, the Poole-Rosenthal (2014) dataset has not been updated for the 114th Congress, thereby limiting the use of more recent congressional sessions. Lastly, these sessions are specifically under examination because public access to caucus membership is currently prohibited by law, thereby limiting the dataset to be governed by names listed in news articles, which are only available from 2011 and on.

Given that party polarization is integral to questions proposed in this thesis, the data sets created by Poole-Rosenthal are utilized for two purposes. The first purpose was to acquire the DW-NOMINATE scores for each individual member of the House Tea Party (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014). DW-NOMINATE scores are ideological scores of each congressman based on their roll call votes (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014). The DW-NOMINATE score is a numerical assignment from -1 to +1 that signifies the ideologi-

cal placement of each member, -1 being liberal, while +1 is conservative (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014) (Table 1.6 and Table 1.9). The second purpose was to acquire Party Unity Scores, which measures how each congressman votes in reference to their party (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014). If the individual member votes with 50 percent or more of the party, then the vote is considered a party aligned vote (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014). The roll call votes are then tabulated and divided to create a percentage score for each member (Poole & Rosenthal, 2014). The closer the score is to 100%, the more likely the member is to vote with the party. These two variables will be utilized to establish that House Tea Party members are more ideologically driven on average (Table 1.5) and that they differ in their unity scores than the majority of the Republican Party on average. In times of divided governance, the DW-NOMINATE Scores for the average House Tea Party member will expectantly increase (Table 1.6 and Table 1.9), while the Party Unity score will expectantly decrease (Table 2.2), thereby establishing the prevalence of greater difficulty in passing tax laws for House Republicans.

Additionally, data from the U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) was utilized to acquire demographic information on the various Tea Party Congressional districts. Some information that was taken from this data included statistics concerning racial demographics, median age, the unemployment rate, median and mean household incomes and educational attainments. These demographics were sought for hypotheses 8 which looked to control for additional variables that may be contributing to House Tea Party opposition votes. These control variables aid in isolating the effect of the independent variable analyzed in this thesis.

**Table 1:5: Comparison of Averaged “Party Unity Scores” for House Republicans and House Tea Party Members**

Congress	Republican Average Unity Score	Tea Party Average Unity Score
111	89.321	95.536
112	92.686	95.523
113	94.099	95.663

To discover if House Tea Party members are a contributor to gridlock, an original dataset was created to analyze House Tea Party members and their voting patterns on issues of tax policy. After cross referencing lists of congressman in the Tea Party published by CNN’s Shannon Travis (2011) and Drew DeSilver’s from the Pew Research Center (2015), each member was then added or removed from the appropriate congresses in which he or she was a part of. In total, these articles identify 189 House Tea Party members across all three congressional sessions. The 189 observations breakdown into 48 members during the 111th, 71 members in the 112th, and 70 members during the 113th. Although there is repetition because of incumbents, the growth in members from the 111th to the 112th is considerably large, which significantly adds to the political capital House Tea Party members had in these congressional sessions. With more votes, the unity of the House Tea Party caucus can become a considerably powerful voting bloc; therefore, conditions of divided governance should result in less party aligned votes on tax policies (Table 2.2).

After compiling all the names and demographic information for the respective districts, the codification for roll call votes commenced. Under similar logic used in Poole-Rosenthal’s Party Unity dataset (2014), roll call votes were coded by identifying individual Tea Party member’s votes on issues of tax

policy. Utilizing CONGRESS.GOV, a refined search for all tax related bills in the U.S House of Representatives produced a total of 3,998 results for the three congressional sessions of interest in this research (Table 1.1, Table 1.2, and Table 1.3). The search produced results including bills that were simply introduced up to bills that were passed to become federal law. For the purposes of this thesis, only policies that were not considered ceremonial in nature were included in the dataset. The determination of what search results were deemed ceremonial in nature was done so by reading the title of a bill. Ceremonial bills were usually titled as an honorarium to a statue or memorial of a given person, and since these votes do not make a “change in policy” (Saeki, 2009), therefore excluded the dataset.

Roll call votes were categorized into 3 distinct groups: procedural, passage, and Senate related. Roll call votes categorized as procedural were only codified if labeled as a motion to recommit. Motions to recommit are roll call votes for the extension of debate over a bill, which is a procedural vote and gives no advanced status to a bill in terms of becoming law. Roll call votes categorized as passage were roll call votes that dealt with the passage of a bill and included votes labeled as “on passage” and “on motion to suspend rules and pass”. Lastly, the Senate related category are roll call votes in which House members vote to adopt and pass Senate amendments made to

**Table 1:6: Comparison of Averaged “DW-NOMINATE Scores” for House Republicans and House Tea Party Members**

Congress	Republican Average DW-Nominate Score	Tea Party Average DW-Nominate Score
111	0.654	0.762
112	0.677	0.791
113	0.687	0.814

a House Resolution bill, or bills that were created through the joint resolution process. Roll call votes on the adoption of amendments introduced in the House were not included in the dataset. These three categories were created to identify if House Tea Party members have different voting patterns depending on the status of a bill.

After thoroughly examining a total of 400 individual roll call votes (Table 1.1, Table 1.2, and Table 1.3), the codification for each House Tea Party members vote was applied in the following pattern. If a House Tea Party member cast a party aligned vote (a vote with 50% or more of House Republicans), the vote is coded as “0.” If the House Tea Party member cast an opposition vote (a vote against 50% or more of House Republicans), the vote is coded as “1.” If the individual answered “present,” thereby abstaining from the vote, they were also coded as “1.” Commonly, many congressmen were not present to vote at all; these cases (although plentiful) were coded as missing. The decision to abstain from codifying absence was to accommodate exterior reasons for missing a vote, such as illness, which do not denote intentional aberration from party line voting.

Once the individual votes were coded, a summation for each congressional session was conducted to identify the total amount of times in which a House Tea Party member voted in opposition to House Republicans within each category (Table 1.8). Once the sum of opposition votes was identified, each total was then divided by the total amounts of votes in that category which was subsequently subtracted by 1 and then multiplied by 100. This formula produc-

es a negative percentage integer and is subsequently given an absolute value, resulting in a percentage score that denotes how often House Tea Party members cast party aligned votes (Table 2.1). The formula has been created to mimic the percentage scores of Poole-Rosenthal Party Unity Scores (2014), thereby making the scores comparable in this cross-congressional analysis (Table 2.2). This gargantuan dataset was developed to accurately answer the research question and various hypotheses presented in this thesis, and various statistical tests were employed to answer the questions presented, resulting in findings that raise additional questions for future research.

## Results

Three T-Tests were conducted to determine if the House Tea Party Caucus votes differently on tax policy under conditions of unified or divided governance. The first T-Test sets the independent variable as the presence of a unified or divided Congress, while the dependent variable is the amount of House Tea Party opposition votes, or votes against the majority of House Republicans on procedural type roll call votes. The independent samples T-Test produced a T value of 6.701 and a significance value of .000 (Table 4.1), meaning that there is a statistically significant difference between the presence of unified or divided governance and the way Tea Party members oppose House Republicans on procedural roll call votes. This test concludes that there is a 0% chance that this relationship is due to chance. It can be conclusively stated that there is a difference in the way House Tea Party members vote in opposition to House Republicans on procedural related roll call votes, within the condition of a unified or divided legislator. Therefore, hypothesis one is correct and confirmed.

The second independent samples T-Test sets the independent variable as the condition of unified or

**Table 2:1: House Tea Party Caucus Averaged “Tax Unity Scores” for Three Vote Categories**

Congress	Roll Call Vote Category	Tax Unity Score
111	Procedural	97.298
111	Passage	91.029
111	Senate Related	92.021
112	Procedural	99.688
112	Passage	93.760
112	Senate Related	73.611
113	Procedural	99.79
113	Passage	94.074
113	Senate Related	91.197

**Table 2:2: Comparison of Averaged House Tea Party Caucus “Party Unity Scores” and “Tax Unity Scores”**

Congress	Party Unity Score	Tax Unity Score
111	95.536	92.988
112	95.523	93.468
113	95.663	95.877

### Tables 4:1, 4:2, 4:3: T-Values and Significance

	Table 4.1: T-Test for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Procedural” Opposition Votes	Table 4.2: T-Test for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Passage” Opposition Votes	Table 4.3: T-Test for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Senate Related” Opposition Votes
T-Value	6.701	2.366	-1.223
Significance Value	.000	.019	.223

divided governance, and the dependent variable as the total amount of House Tea Party opposition votes cast on passage related roll call votes. The results produced a T Value of 2.366 and a significance value of .019 (Table 4.2). This means that this relationship is only 1.90% due to chance. There is definitely a statistically significant difference in the way that House Tea Party members vote in opposition to House Republicans on the passage of tax policy, under conditions of unified or divided governance, thereby con-

firmed hypothesis two.

The final independent samples T-Test conducted was to explore if there is a difference amongst House Tea Party members opposition votes on Senate related roll call votes concerning tax policy, under conditions of unified or divided governance. With the independent variable being unified or divided governance and the dependent variable as the total Senate related roll call opposition votes cast, the results of this T-Test are statistically insignificant (Table 4.3). Producing a

### Tables 1:7, 1:8: Status of Tax Policy Votes

Congress	Roll Call Vote Category	Table 1.7: Total Tax Policy Roll Call Votes for the Three Vote Categories	Table 1.8: Total House Tea Party Opposition Votes Cast on Tax Policies
		Total	Total Votes Cast Against Republican Majority
111	Procedural	39	38
111	Passage	74	312
111	Senate Related	20	75
112	Procedural	49	11
112	Passage	69	310
112	Senate Related	12	228
113	Procedural	47	7
113	Passage	82	345
113	Senate Related	8	49

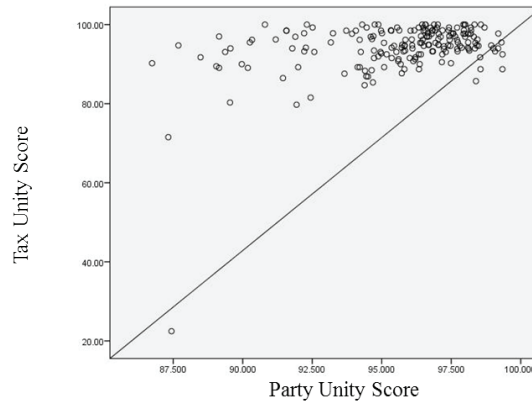
**Table 5:1 Pearson Correlation for “Party Unity Scores” and “Tax Unity Scores”**

	Table 5.1: Pearson Correlation for “Party Unity Scores” and “Tax Unity Scores”
Pearson Correlation	.378
Significance Value	.000

T Value of -1.223 and a significance value of .223, the results of this test are not statistically significant because the significance value does not equate to .05 or less (Table 4.3), thereby confirming the null for hypothesis three.

T-Tests are of importance to this thesis because they establish that House Tea Party members are casting opposition votes differently under the condition of unified or divided governance. As demonstrated in Table 1.1, Table 1.2, and Table 1.3, a significant reduction in the amount of tax policies introduced and passed to become law occurred. Although T-Tests do not explain the reduction in legislative efficacy, these results prove that House Tea Party members are in fact differing in their procedural and passage roll call votes on tax policy in the presence of a unified or divided legislator. These promising results man-

**Table 5:2 Scatterplot (x-axis: “Tax Unity Score,” y-axis: “Party Unity Score”)**



date further statistical tests for discovering if House Tea Party members are stopping tax legislation from passing under conditions of unified or divided government. The statistically different voting patterns presented here are examined later to determine if the conditions of unified or divided governance directly affect House Tea Party roll call votes on tax policy.

To view differences in House Tea Party members voting on tax policies and voting behavior overall, a correlation between Poole-Rosenthal’s Party Unity Scores (2014) and the replicated Tax Unity Scores developed in this original dataset is conducted (Table 1.5, Table 2.1). With a resulting Pearson Correlation

**Tables 6:1, 6:2, 6:3: Regression and Significance**

	Table 6.1: Regression Relating “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Procedural” Opposition Votes	Table 6.2: Regression for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Passage” Opposition Votes	Table 6.3: Regression for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Senate Related” Opposition Votes
Beta Coefficient	-.683	-2.058	.341
Significance Value	.000	.019	.223
R-Square	.193	.029	.008

score of .378 and a significance value of .000 (Table 5.1), this correlation is statistically significant and there is 0% probability that this relationship is due to chance, thereby confirming hypothesis four. This result demonstrates a moderate difference in the way House Tea Party cast party aligned votes on tax policy versus their overall party aligned votes. For every one unit increase in Poole-Rosenthal Party Unity scores (2014), there is only a subsequent .378 unit increase in the replicated Total Unity score (Table 5.1). The substantial difference in party aligned votes proves that House Tea Party members willingly vote differently with the party on tax policies than they do overall, thereby reinforcing the argument that House Tea Party members do have substantial political power, giving them the opportunity to cause gridlock under the conditions of unified or divided government.

This correlation furthers the argument that House Tea Party members vote differently than establishment Republicans in an effort to satisfy their ideological needs thereby increasing the chances of gridlock. Although party unity is generally high amongst

House Tea Party members (Table 1.5), the moderate difference in party aligned voting patterns on tax policy and on policies overall suggests that House Tea Party members are willing to vote differently on issues central to the Tea Party platform. The scatterplot on Table 5.2 demonstrates how House Tea Party members differ on Poole-Rosenthal's Party Unity Score (2014) and the Tax Unity Score. House Tea Party members may be using their power as a legislative coalition in an effort to receive tax policies that are conducive to their ideologically extreme members and constituents, thereby causing legislative gridlock.

With statistically significant results from previous tests, three separate regressions were conducted to determine if House Tea Party opposition votes on tax policies are related to the conditions of a unified or divided legislator. The independent variable for each subsequent regression is the condition of a unified or divided legislator, while the dependent variables will change between three categories of roll call votes on tax policies (procedural, passage, and Senate related). Table 6.1 demonstrates the results of the regression

### Tables 3:1: Descriptive Statistics for House Tea Party Constituency Demographic Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Variation	Range
White Populace	.781	.116	.593
Black/African American Populace	.113	.106	.547
Hispanic/Latino Populace	.139	.120	.512
Asian Populace	.038	.046	.305
American Indian/Alaskan Native	.009	.025	.233
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	.001	.001	.005
Other Populace	.030	.029	.140
Unemployment Rate	5.786	1.464	7.700
Median Income	57151.789	12557.424	61028.000
Mean Income	77384.568	17657.972	77403.000
High School Graduate +	88.611	3.803	16.000
Bachelor's Degree+	30.117	9.291	43.4
Median Age	38.324	3.679	23.2

testing for the relationship between House Tea Party procedural tax policy opposition votes cast with the conditions of a unified or divided legislator. With a Beta Coefficient of  $-.683$ , the presence of divided governance causes occasions of procedural vote opposition to decrease (Table 6.1). The presence of divided governance causes a  $.683$  decrease in the amount of times Tea Party members vote opposing House Republicans procedurally (Table 6.1). With a Significance value of  $.000$ , this test is statistically significant and there is a  $0\%$  chance that this relationship is due to chance. However, the R-Square value for this test is only  $.193$  (Table 6.1), meaning that this model only predicts  $19.30\%$  of the variation between votes in the dependent variable. With such a low R-Square Value, this test concludes that the condition of a unified or divided government is a poor predictor of changes in procedural opposition voting behavior amongst House Tea Party members. Although this model has poor explanatory power, neither the original hypothesis nor the null hypothesis was affirmed; instead, the results actually offer alternative explanations than originally assumed in hypothesis 5. These alternative explanations are best explained

by additional variables such as demographics of the various House Tea Party constituencies, as well as institutional factors that may contribute to the inverse relationship found in the Beta Coefficients.

Table 6.2 visualizes the results of a second regression relating the independent variable of unified or divided government and the dependent variable of House Tea Party passage opposition tax votes. A Beta Coefficient of  $-2.058$  demonstrates that with a condition of divided governance (Table 6.2), there is a subsequent  $2.058$  decrease in the overall amount of times that House Tea Party members vote in opposition to House Republicans. The  $.019$  significance value means that there is only a  $1.9\%$  chance that this relationship is due to chance, making this test statistically significant (Table 6.2). With an R-Square value of  $.029$  (Table 6.2), this test model only predicts  $2.9\%$  of the variation in the dependent variable. The resulting low R-Square Value concludes that the condition of unified or divided governance is a poor predictor of House Tea Party opposition voting behavior. This model mimics the results of the previous tests in that it offers alternative explanations than the original assumption presented in hypothesis 6. This alternative

**Tables 6:4: Regression for “Unified/Divided Governance” and “Total” Opposition Votes While Controlling for Constituency Demographics**

Variable	Beta Coefficient	Significance Value	R-Square
Unified/Divided Governance	-2.443	.017	.124
White Populace	-111.418	.053	.124
Black/African American Populace	-119.032	.034	.124
Latino Populace	-14.403	.058	.124
Asian Populace	-105.463	.074	.124
American Indian/Alaskan Native	-141.396	.024	.124
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-613.511	.228	.124
Other Populace	-108.259	.134	.124
Unemployment Rate	1.165	.023	.124
Median Income	.000	.122	.124
Bachelor’s Degree	-.110	.247	.124
Median Age	-.315	.060	.124

explanation is again most likely rooted in constituency pressures as well as institutional factors, which would be considerable contributors to House Tea Party opposition votes during a unified legislator.

A third regression relating the independent variable of unified or divided governance with the dependent variable of total House Tea Party Senate related roll call opposition votes, was statistically insignificant. With a Beta Coefficient value of .341 (Table 6.3), the presence of divided governance causes a .341 unit increase in votes against the party. This means that the presence of divided governance causes Tea Party members to vote against House Republicans .341 more times on Senate related tax policy votes. Along with an R-Square value of .008, this model can only predict .8% of the variation in the dependent variable, making this an extremely poor predictor of House Tea Party opposition votes. The significance value for this test is .223, which is well below the .05 threshold, making this model statistically insignificant, resulting in a confirmation of the null for hypothesis 7.

With the condition of unified or divided governance giving only small explanatory power behind House Tea Party opposition voting patterns, a regression controlling for multiple demographics of the various House Tea Party constituencies, yields mixed results (Table 6.4). With an independent variable of unified or divided governance and the dependent variable set as the summated opposition votes cast by House Tea Party members, only three demographic variables yielded statistically significant results (Table 6.4). Meanwhile, three demographic variables yielded results approaching significance (Table 6.4). Demographic variables that resulted in significant results were the Black/African American populace, American Indian/Native Alaskan population, and the unemployment rate (Table 6.4). Demographic variables that are approaching significance include the White population, Latino population, and the median age (Table 6.4). The addition of control variables suggests that when constituency demographics are accounted for, House Tea Party members vote more unified with House Republicans under the condition

of a divided legislator. A Beta Coefficient of -2.443 signifies that the presence of divided governance decreases the overall House Tea Party opposition votes cast by 2.43. However, with an R-Square value of .124, this model only predicts 12.4% of the variation in the dependent variable, making it a poor predictor of House Tea Party opposition votes. These results demonstrate an alternative explanation than originally presented in hypothesis 8. These findings suggest that House Tea Party opposition votes may be most due to the institutional factors inherent in the legislator, and therefore only partially due to the conditions of a unified or divided government.

Results from these regressions are counterintuitive to the hypotheses presented in this thesis. The original hypotheses predicted that divided governance would cause House Tea Party members to vote against the majority of House Republicans more often in an effort to satisfy their ideological preferences, but the opposite is found in these results. The two statistically significant regressions on procedural and passage roll call votes demonstrate that House Tea Party members are willing to vote against the Republican Party more often under conditions of unified governance (Table 6.1, Table 6.2). These slight variations in voting patterns amongst House Tea Party members are examples of how caucuses use their coalitions to inhibit legislation from passing until it reaches their ideological preferences. That the conditions of a unified legislator add stressors upon the party, causing increasingly fractured voting behaviors within the party which is counterintuitive to what was argued in this thesis. This is most evident when controlling for demographic variables, which significantly increases the House Tea Party member's unity with the Republican Party under the condition of divided governance. However, to determine if the House Tea Party is portraying characteristics of a legislative coalition, a Cronbach's Alpha score can demonstrate if they exhibit cohesive opposition voting patterns, thereby giving more credence to the argument that they have an effect on legislative outputs.

To determine if House Tea Party members are voting as a cohesive block, a Cronbach's Alpha Test was conducted by testing the summation of House Tea Party opposition votes in all 3 categories of tax policy roll call votes. The test results produced a Cronbach Alpha Score of .274 (Table 6.4). This insignificant result suggests that House Tea Party members are not voting cohesively opposing House Republicans on roll call votes concerning tax policies. Therefore, the House Tea Party opposition voting patterns are due to a variety of other influences, thereby confirming the null for hypothesis 9.

**Table 6:5 Cronbach's Alpha for House Tea Party "Total" Opposition Votes**

Cronbach's Alpha	.274
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With such a low Cronbach Alpha Score (Table 6.4), the argument that the House Tea Party has a direct effect on legislative gridlock is not credible. Although there are statistically significant results relating House Tea Party opposition voting patterns to the conditions of a unified or divided legislator, these differences prove that divided governance raises the occurrences of party aligned votes. However, the inability for House Tea Party members to vote as a cohesive bloc diminishes the argument that they are causing legislative gridlock. Unified and divided governance does make House Tea Party members vote more or less with the Republican Party respectively, but the lack of unison voting patterns amongst House Tea Party members suggests that there are a plethora of other conditions that serve as alternative reasons for legislative gridlock on tax policy.

## Conclusion

Since David Mayhew's (2005) seminal work on the effects unified and divided governance has on legislative gridlock, countless scholars have attempted to offer alternative explanations for the reducing legislative efficaciousness of the U.S. Congress (Binder, 2003; Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Fiorina, 1996, Rogers, 2005). The ongoing scholarly debate is best exemplified by the research and findings presented in this thesis. Central to the mission of this thesis was to contribute an additional explanatory variable for legislative gridlock; that the actions of the Tea Party contribute to legislative gridlock under conditions of unified or divided governance.

To discover if the House Tea Party was, in fact, causing legislative gridlock as a result of a unified or divided legislature, this thesis proposed nine individual hypotheses that served as building blocks to isolate the relationship between House Tea Party opposition votes, and the conditions of unified or divided governance. Using a case study and data analysis methodological hybrid, House Tea Party roll call votes concerning tax policies were collected and coded from the 111th, 112th, and 113th congressional sessions. Additionally, datasets from Poole-Rosenthal (2014) were utilized in conjunction with U.S. Census Bureau Data (n.d.). This comprehensive data set allowed for employment of multiple statistical tests that aided in answering and denying the research question and argument presented in this thesis.

Using IBM's SPSS, four statistical tests were utilized to prove the various hypotheses presented by this thesis. Firstly, T-Tests were utilized to demonstrate that for procedural and passage type roll call

votes, House Tea Party members do significantly differ in their opposition voting patterns under the condition of a unified or divided legislature; thereby confirming hypotheses one and two, while confirming the null for hypothesis three. Secondly, a correlation between Poole-Rosenthal (2014) Party Unity Scores and the Tax Unity Score concludes that there is a statistically significant difference in the way House Tea Party members vote along party lines on tax policy and on policy overall, thereby confirming hypothesis four. Thirdly, regressions were employed to validate that there is a significant relationship between House Tea Party opposition votes on procedural and passage type roll call votes on tax policy, resulting in alternative explanations for hypotheses five and six while confirming the null for hypothesis seven. Fourthly, another regression was used to relate total House Tea Party opposition votes while controlling for demographics of the House Tea Party constituencies, resulting in a significant relationship, but concluded in an alternative explanation than originally assumed in hypothesis eight. In total, the statistically significant regressions resulted in counterintuitive findings, suggesting that party aligned voting patterns rise during divided government; these alternative explanations suggest that hypotheses five, six, and eight and were accurate in assuming that a relationship between House Tea Party opposition votes and the condition of a unified or divided government existed, but the relationship was counterintuitive to the original argument presented in this thesis. However, these findings exhibit low R-Square values, meaning that the condition of a unified or divided legislator is only a partial contributor to House Tea Party opposition votes, and that the model has poor explanatory power. Lastly, a Cronbach's Alpha test was utilized for measuring cohesiveness in House Tea Party opposition votes, which resulted in an insignificant test result, thereby confirming the null for hypothesis nine.

In the aggregate, the data analysis conveys a less than promising answer to the research question presented in this thesis. Although the majority of the results were significant, the voting patterns among House Tea Party members on tax policy serve as a poor explanatory variable for the increased gridlock in Congress. With such poor explanatory power, it would be overzealous to suggest there is any relationship between the actions of the House Tea Party, and the rise of legislative gridlock under the condition of a unified or divided legislature. Furthermore, the disunities in opposition voting patterns exhibited by House Tea Party members suggest that the argument that intraparty ideological caucuses have an effect on legislative gridlock holds no

truth. However, the implications of these results are not only limited specifically to the House Tea Party, but this thesis may spark new interest in the role these ideological caucuses may have on gridlock within the unified or divided government debate.

The implications of this thesis for future scholarly work lies in the actions of House Tea Party members before a bill goes to the floor for a vote. If the Tea Party was truly successful in ousting speaker John Boehner (Toobin 2015) because of their collective actions, then future scholars should examine what the Tea Party is doing outside the public sphere. More specifically, future scholarly work should focus on the collective actions of House Tea Party members in committee, to see if the House Tea Party actually resembles a coalition that aims to only bring bills to the floor that satisfy their ideological preferences. This future work can also be within the unified and divided government debate by proposing that divided governance in the legislature will increase or decrease the amount of time the House Tea Party actually stops a bill from receiving a roll call vote.

Most importantly, what implications do the findings in this thesis have for the Tea Party? The Tea Party Caucus is essentially a sham. Members of the House Tea Party Caucus may be more ideologically extreme in their legislative preferences, but their inability to cast opposition votes on tax policies as a cohesive voting bloc suggests that they are still unwilling to divert from the Republican Party. Although there are variations in House Tea Party votes on tax policy overall when related to the condition of a unified or divided legislator, their inability to vote as a cohesive coalition to publically oppose tax policies from passing demonstrates that the Tea Party is possibly more a campaign strategy than an actually politically powerful entity (Cox & McCubbins 2005). Within the context of a unified or divided Congress, the actions of the House Tea Party Caucus exhibits little to no influence on legislative gridlock, implying that the original argument in this thesis holds no weight and instead suggests that House Tea Party collective actions outside of roll call votes may hold more fruitful results.

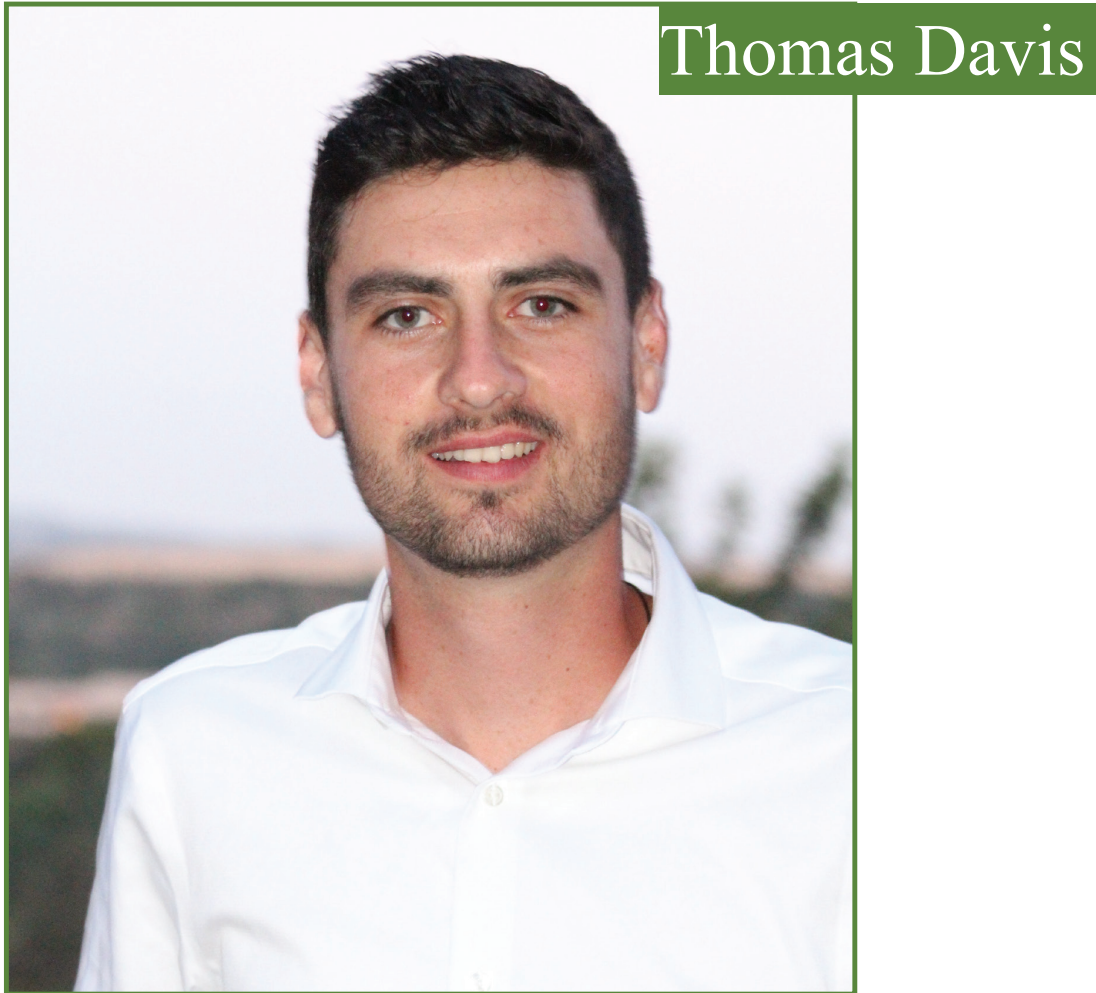
**Table 3.2: Descriptive Statistics for House Tea Party Voting Patterns on Tax Policies**

Voting Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Party Unity Score	95.579	2.705	12.605
Summated Procedural Opposition Votes	.295	.673	3.000
Summated Passage Opposition Votes	5.089	5.239	36.000
Summated Senate Related Opposition Votes	1.853	1.662	7.000
Summated Total Opposition Votes	7.237	6.122	39.000
Procedural Tax Unity Score	99.291	1.618	7.690
Passage Tax Unity Score	93.201	6.892	46.380
Senate Related Tax Unity Score	84.737	13.642	50.000
Tax Unity Score	94.249	6.819	77.550

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Thomas Davis has graduated Summa Cum Laude from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona with a bachelor's degree in political science. Thomas was previously published in the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona Undergraduate Journal of Political Science, Spring 2016 Issue. He is currently a seminarian discerning his vocational call to the Roman Catholic Priesthood. His ongoing formation in the Diocese of San Bernardino has awarded him the opportunity to pursue various graduate degrees in the areas of philosophy, theology, and divinity. He now spends his days studying, praying, and serving God and the people of the Diocese of San Bernardino.

Email: [SBDThomas@outlook.com](mailto:SBDThomas@outlook.com)