Do Voters and Insiders Nominate the Same Sort of Candidates?
A Look at Legislative Vacancy Appointments in Illinois and Colorado

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Abstract: In Colorado and Illinois, local partisan vacancy committees are charged with appointing replacements for state legislators who die or resign in the middle of a term. This presents researchers with a rare opportunity to determine whether those elected officials selected by party elites differ in important ways from those chosen by voters. This particular study examines whether vacancy appointees – with less experience, fewer established ties to voters and groups, and less time to raise funds than their traditionally nominated colleagues – suffer in terms of funds raised and votes won in the next election cycle. In fact, vacancy appointees end up with more funds and higher vote shares, on average, than those nominated through traditional means. However, this advantage does not appear to be tied to party donor networks. These findings are suggestive that party elites are able to pick highly skilled politicians who are talented at fundraising, wooing voters, and impressing interest groups.

Introduction

The switch to direct primaries over a century ago promised to impose immense changes on the American political system. Elected officials, once considered the pawns of party bosses, were now seen as a more independent species of politician. By virtue of needing to campaign amongst primary voters and build their own networks of donors and endorsers, politicians in the era of the direct primary were considered more resistant to party pressures and better able to use their own judgment when evaluating political decisions. But this independence came at a cost, with candidates needing to apply more of their own effort and time to activities like fundraising and courting voters in order to win their party's nomination (Klinghard 2010).

To what extent are candidates selected by party elites politically advantaged relative to those nominated directly by voters? I examine this question through a study of partisan vacancy appointments in the Colorado and Illinois state legislatures. These are the sole two states in which the law requires that a vacancy in a state legislative seat be quickly filled by a party vacancy committee consisting of local party officers within the departing member's district. The party of the departing legislator is required to pick the successor, ensuring that the district remains in the same party's hands[1].

This paper builds on previous work (Masket and Shor 2013) examining the ideological fit of vacancy appointees to their districts. In this paper, I examine whether vacancy-appointed members are able to overcome some of their relative shortcomings (lack of campaign experience, shorter fundraising windows, lower voter name-recognition) thanks to their close ties to party elites. Specifically, I compare vacancy

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[1] http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/filling-legislative-vacancies.aspx

appointees with their primary-nominated peers in terms of fundraising prowess and electoral success. I find, somewhat surprisingly, that vacancy appointments do just as well, if not better, along these dimensions than their more conventionally nominated colleagues. I then investigate the legislative donation networks for each major party, ultimately determining that vacancy appointees are not atypically well situated within these networks and that these are not the reasons for the appointees' apparent strengths. I conclude that there is likely an important selection effect at work, with parties tending to appoint particularly skilled people to fill out legislative terms, overcoming their considerable challenges.

Parties and Networks

A substantial body of literature suggests that the United States essentially has candidate-centered politics (see, e.g., Sabato 1981, Wattenberg 1998). Parties exist, but they largely do so to serve the needs of officeholders and candidates (Mayhew 1974). They are, in the words of Aldrich (1995, 4), "endogenous institutions" that are "the creature of the politicians, the ambitious office seeker and officeholder." Candidates pursue and win their party's nomination simply by being better at the various skills and tasks necessary to prevail in primaries. Favorable press, strong public speeches and debate performances, and ample campaign spending will allow a candidate to prevail, regardless of whether party insiders want that candidate representing them or not.

In recent years, an alternative literature has moved to the fore, suggesting that politicians are the creatures of the party. Cohen et al. (2008) demonstrate that, since 1980, party insiders have managed to secure their choice of presidential nominees through the

strategic allocation of vital campaign resources like money, endorsements, and expertise. Masket (2009) and Dominguez (2011) show this same sort of insider control emerging in state legislative nominations and congressional primaries, respectively (see also Steger 2007). Even while parties may not take on the hierarchical forms once favored by the likes of Boss Tweed or Richard Daley (Mayhew 1986), they are nonetheless present and powerful, functioning more today as networks of activists, officeholders, donors, interest groups, media organizations, and other invested individuals and groups (Schlesinger 1985, Bernstein 1999, Koger *et al.* 2009).

These different research strains suggest different possibilities for vacancy appointees. If nominations are essentially candidate-driven, then the disadvantages resulting from being a vacancy appointee (which I explain further below) should be detrimental to the politician's political fortunes, limiting her access to funds and her ultimate reelection margin. Conversely, if the party maintains some control over the political environment, then we should expect the party to help vacancy appointees surmount their shortcomings by giving them access to vital party resources.

One important conflating factor is that of candidate quality. That is, a party may not need to exert great effort on behalf of a candidate if it is successful at recruiting one who is unusually good at fundraising, aligned with key activist groups, skilled at public speaking, etc. These skills are difficult to operationalize, and traditional measures of candidate quality, such as previous officeholding experience (Jacobson 2001), don't apply well at the level of state legislature, where few candidates have had much electoral experience at all. Nonetheless, it remains a possibility that parties appoint officeholders precisely because of their apparent skills as politicians. In this case, we would see

appointed officeholders doing relatively well in conventional performance measures (fundraising and vote shares) but not necessarily being atypically well connected to partisan fundraising networks.

The Vacancy Committee

Despite the general perception that direct nomination by party elites went extinct in the United States a century ago, there are many existing party procedures that still allow for party insiders to be highly influential in nomination contests or even to directly hand-pick nominees. When a vacancy occurs in a state legislature, for example, half the states have a requirement for a speedy special election to fill the vacancy, as is the practice for vacated U.S. House seats. In roughly a dozen states, though, the governor must appoint a replacement (similar to the practice for vacated U.S. Senate seats), and in another handful the county elected officials perform that job. In five states – Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and North Dakota – the replacement job falls to a political party. Only Colorado and Illinois have laws *requiring* that the appointed legislator be of the same party as the outgoing one (National Conference of State Legislatures 2011) and that a vacancy committee, consisting of local party officers and activists, perform the selection. Thus the party leaders in the outgoing legislator's district have a unique power and responsibility in these situations.

According to both states' by-laws, if a state legislator dies, resigns, or otherwise vacates a seat, the district central committee of the incumbent's party and legislative district must convene within 30 days of the vacancy to vote on a replacement. The size and composition of vacancy committees vary importantly across the two states. In Illinois,

the committees are small, often consisting just of the county chair in that legislative district plus two members of the county central committee[2]. (If the district spans multiple counties, chairs and central committee members from all the relevant counties are included, with their votes weighted by the proportion of their county that lies in the district.) By comparison, Colorado's vacancy committees are massive, consisting of dozens of local district and precinct officials elected in party caucuses[3]. Rep. Jonathan Singer (D) was appointed by a 50-member vacancy committee in Boulder County in 2012, and Sen. Kevin Lunberg (R) was appointed by a 128-member committee in Larimer County in 2009.

Replacement legislators are determined by majority vote of the committee. If the committee cannot reach a decision about a replacement legislator, the governor must make the appointment. The replacement legislator will serve the remainder of the previous incumbent's term and is eligible to run in the next election.

Those who serve on a vacancy committee tend to be longstanding local party activists; the work is uncompensated but allows for an unusually large and immediate impact on the composition of state government. As duly appointed members of a party committee, as prescribed by both state and party rules, it seems fair to classify vacancy committee members as "party insiders," although that term is admittedly vague, and may well be part of a continuum. That is, a longstanding Illinois county party chair is likely more of an "insider" than a Colorado precinct captain first elected at the last caucus. Indeed, the latter may have more of an activist background, and thus may have a somewhat different perspective on what makes for a good legislator than do state party

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[2] Illinois Compiled Statutes (10 ILCS 5), Article 25, Section 6.
[3] Colorado Revised Statutes (2014), Title 1, Article 12, Section 203.

chairs, major donors, interest group leaders, and others who may legitimately share the label "party insider." Nonetheless, I take the view that vacancy committee members represent an important segment of the party and may be classified as elites.

Vacancy committee members face an interesting challenge in deciding on a replacement legislator. They are picking a legislator who represents their collective values, but they must also be mindful of the next election. As several state legislators to whom I spoke noted, party insiders pay particular attention to vacancy selections in moderate districts. If an incumbent communicates to the party leadership that she isn't terribly interested in her job and may not run for reelection, the party may encourage her to leave early, allowing the appointment of a more enthusiastic replacement who can earn some publicity and stature as an incumbent, rather than taking the chances of an open-seat election. Party leaders worry substantially less about vacancies in safer districts, which are likely to remain in the party's hands no matter who is appointed.

Vacancy committee members may certainly consider how well a potential legislator matches up with the priorities of her constituents or local primary voters, but there's no requirement that they do so. Indeed, as Denver Democratic Party chair Cindy Lowery remarked, "The Democrat in me feels like there's a little bit of concern that really the vacancy committee is not very representative of the people of the district." Former Colorado Republican Party chair Ryan Call similarly noted, "Sometimes through a vacancy committee you'll get somebody in there that probably would not have been elected had it been a full primary election or a general election" (Pelzer 2009).

It is reasonable to expect that Illinois vacancy committees, consisting of as few as three members, may appoint different sorts of lawmakers than do Colorado vacancy

committees, which contain scores of members. Colorado appointees must appeal to a broader range of interests and activists, and their "selectorate" may end up looking a great deal like a primary electorate in terms of preferences. Illinois appointees, by contrast, are truly hand-picked by just a few party leaders. If there are going to be important differences in the behavior and skill set of vacancy appointees and traditional nominees, those differences are more likely to be apparent among the Illinois set.

To convey a sense of the frequency of vacancy appointments, Figure 1 shows the number of legislative vacancies by year in the Colorado General Assembly and the Illinois State House. As can be seen, the pattern is somewhat variable, with record highs of seven in Colorado in 2006 and ten in Illinois in 2003. A typical year sees one or two departures from the legislature, although that number may be as high as ten or as low as zero.

Figure 1 here

Vacancy appointees begin their service in the legislature at a considerable disadvantage relative to their primary-nominated peers. Generally, while most had likely considered work as an elected official, they had no idea they'd be in office just a few weeks before it happened. Assuming they have any interest in remaining in office (an assumption that is borne out by the data, given that virtually all the appointees under study run for election in the following cycle), they have a great deal of political work to do in a very short period of time. They must immediately begin raising funds, reaching out to interest groups and activists not involved in their initial selection, and raising their visibility with voters who have never seen their names on a ballot. They additionally

must learn legislative procedures very quickly, whereas primary-nominated freshmen would have received more formal training before the legislative session began.

The expectation would be that the disadvantages faced by vacancy appointees would have a substantial negative impact on their political fortunes. Their legislative inexperience, even compared to other freshmen, would make it hard for them to deliver goods to alert constituency groups. Their low profile would make their next election campaign essentially like a first one. Their late start would mean fewer campaign contributions for the next election cycle. All in all, it would be an unenviable situation for an officeholder; she would essentially have all the responsibilities of incumbency without any of the advantages.

And yet, as I will demonstrate, vacancy appointees actually seem to do just fine relative to their primary-nominated colleagues. In the next section, I compare vacancy appointees with other officeholders in terms of fundraising prowess and electoral performance. I then offer some explanation for the results and some additional explanatory analysis.

Analysis of the Political Fortunes of Vacancy Appointees

In this section, I analyze campaign fundraising and electoral performance patterns among Colorado and Illinois state legislators. The Colorado dataset contains all the state legislators from 1996 to 2010 in both upper and lower chambers. This includes a total of 283 unique legislators, 52 of whom were vacancy appointments. The dataset for Illinois runs from 1996 to 2012, containing every member of the upper and lower chambers elected from those years. A total of 331 individuals served in the Illinois legislature

during these years; 49 of them were vacancy appointees. Table 1 lists two measures of political success for legislators: their share of total district two-party fundraising in their next election, and their share of the two-party vote in the next election. In both states, vacancy appointees yield almost exactly the same fundraising totals and almost exactly the same vote shares as traditional nominees do in the next election cycle. *t*-tests do not find any statistically significant differences in these measures across the appointed and traditionally nominated populations. Notably, these figures are very high for both groups in both states. To be sure, roughly a third of Colorado House members run uncontested each election, and the vast majority of Illinois legislators face either no or only token opposition in reelection campaigns. However, the results reported here are very similar when uncontested races are omitted and when the analysis is limited to just first-term legislators.

Table 1 here

These simple mean differences, of course, may be misleading, since vacancy appointments may be more common in certain types of districts and among certain types of legislators. In Tables 2 and 3 I run a series of fixed-effects regressions predicting the variables examined in Table 1, for Colorado and Illinois, respectively, with a number of important statistical controls. The two dependent variables are the share of expenditures in the next election and the share of the vote in the next election. The key independent variable is *vacancy*, measured as 1 for vacancy appointees and 0 otherwise. I additionally control for whether the member is a freshman, a Democrat, or a member of the upper chamber. Also included in this are estimates of legislators' ideal points, derived from analysis of their roll call votes (Shor and McCarty 2013). The ideal points are listed as

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legislator conservatism, as more positive numbers indicate more conservative voting behavior. The absolute value of each ideal point is treated as a measure of *legislative extremism.* I additionally use Tausanovitch and Warshaw's (2013) estimates of *district ideology* to control for how liberal or conservative districts are. I calculate the absolute value of each district's ideal point from the median district's ideal point in that session to determine *district extremism*. I additionally control for the candidate's vote share and the fundraising share in the district in the previous election cycle. Models are run as fixed effects regressions, controlling for year in the left columns and for year and district in the right columns.

Table 2 here

As the Colorado results in Table 2 demonstrate, vacancy appointees do not suffer any vote or fundraising penalty that is statistically different from zero, although those coefficients are negative across models. Freshman do tend to do better in their next election, although this is really just evidence of the typical "sophomore surge" often reported in congressional elections.

The results for Illinois (Table 3) are similar to those in Colorado. Vacancy appointees do slightly better in the first models and slightly worse in the second models, but these are minor differences that fail to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Vacancy appointees are doing no worse, and perhaps even slightly better, than their traditionally nominated and elected colleagues. The vacancy coefficients appear someone more positive in Illinois than in Colorado, but again, none of them approach traditional levels of statistical significance.

Table 3 here

Analysis of Partisan Legislative Donation Networks

How are vacancy appointees able to have such success, or at least not suffer political failures commensurate with their lack of experience? I investigate the possibility that vacancy appointees are protected through their ties to party funding networks. To do so, I have constructed a donation network for each party in each state using campaign fundraising records. These records consist of all donations to first-term legislators between 1996 and 2010 in Colorado and 1996 and 2012 in Illinois. In Colorado, I have limited the analysis to donations of $400 or greater[4]; for Illinois, I have included all donations. Using these records as an edge list, I converted them to a matrix with donors as rows and officeholders as columns. I then collapsed the two-mode network into a one-mode network of just officeholders. If two officeholders are connected, that means they share a common donor.

Figure 2 shows the Democratic incumbent network in Colorado. Isolates are not depicted. All nodes are colored in blue, except for the vacancy appointments, which are gray and labeled. Notably, the vacancy appointments do not appear to be terribly marginalized, and have some ties to others in the party structure. In an interesting example, Mark Ferrandino, a vacancy appointment in 2008 (the node can be seen in the upper-left of the graph), was elected Speaker of the Colorado House in 2012, and Daniel Kagan (at middle-left), appointed by vacancy in 2010, is now chair of the House Judiciary Committee -- hardly evidence of marginalization.

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[4] If a more inclusive data set is used, essentially every member is tied to every other member, rendering analysis of the network functionally impossible.

Figure 2 here

The Colorado Republican incumbent network can be seen in Figure 3, with all nodes in red except for vacancy appointments. Here, the vacancy appointments appear somewhat more marginalized, with only one (Rob Witwer in 2006) actually appearing attached to the network.[5] The rest were isolates and are thus not depicted in the image.

Figure 3 here

The networks for Illinois Democrats and Republicans can be seen in Figures 4 and 5, respectively. Vacancy appointees appear as hollow nodes. As in Colorado, the vacancy appointees do not seem to be clustered at the peripheries of the networks. Rather, they are often quite central, and appear to be well tied to party donation networks.

Figures 4 and 5 here

One simple test of the place of vacancy appointees in these networks is the calculation of network centrality scores. In Table 4, I have calculated the centrality scores for all legislators and pooled them together across parties and states to determine whether vacancy appointees and traditional nominees differed significantly in a simple *t*-test.

Table 4 here

The results suggest again that vacancy appointees do not appear to be suffering in any way financially. There is no statistically significant difference in the first three measures. In the last two, Bonacich power and average reciprocal difference, the vacancy appointees have statistically *greater* centrality in their party funding networks. This is suggestive that vacancy appointees may do better in fundraising and in elections thanks to their central role in party funding networks.

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[5] Witwer was appointed to replace his father in the legislature in 2005 and served only one full term after his 2006 election. Curiously enough, he later co-authored a book on party funding networks (Schrager and Witwer 2010).

To conduct a more robust test of whether vacancy appointees were well connected to their party networks in Colorado, I specified an ERGM (exponential random graph model) equation predicting the likelihood of an edge existing between any two legislators (Snijders *et al.* 2006, Cranmer and Desmarais 2011). I use eight different covariates to predict this likelihood:

1. *Vacancy*. This is a dummy variable that equals one for vacancy appointments in the term just prior to the election and zero otherwise. The variable is specified with a node factor attribute effect ("nodefactor").

2. *Upper chamber*. A dummy variable equaling one if the legislator was in the state senate and zero otherwise. This is specified with node factor ("nodefactor").

3. *Vote share in last election*. This is the share of the two-party vote received by the incumbent in the last election. In the case of vacancy appointments, it is the vote share received by the incumbent they replaced. It is specified with node covariance ("nodecov").

4. *Spending share in last election.* This is the share of funds spent by the incumbent in the last election. In the case of vacancy appointments, it is the spending share of the incumbent they replaced. It is specified with node covariance ("nodecov").

5. *Ideal point*. This is the estimated ideal point of the legislator based on her roll call voting behavior (Shor and McCarty 2013). It is specified by the absolute difference ("absdiff"), such that higher numbers equal greater ideological distance between legislators.

6. *District ideal point.* This is the estimated ideal point of the legislative district based on its votes in several elections (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2013). It is

specified by the absolute difference ("absdiff"), such that higher numbers equal greater ideological distance between districts.

7. *Year*. This is simply the year of the election. It is specified with node matching ("nodematch"), on the assumption that those elected the same year may be more likely to share donors.

8. *GWESP*. This stands for geometrically-weighted edgewise shared partner distribution. This term essentially measures homophily or "cliquishness," or the idea that "the friends of my friends are my friends" (Cranmer *et al.* 2011).

Table 5 shows the results of the ERGM equations for both parties in Colorado. The results here are somewhat contradictory, with the vacancy coefficient being statistically significant ($p \leq .05$) for both parties but negative for Democrats and positive for Republicans. This suggests that Republican vacancy appointees were somewhat more tied to party fundraising networks while Democratic appointees were less tied to theirs. Substantively, however, these are very small effects, affecting the likelihood of sharing a tie by only about two or three percentage points. Additionally, the ERGM models had difficulty converging, suggesting that the standard errors are unreliable; further work will be done on this analysis in future drafts of this manuscript. Goodness-of-fit diagnostics can be seen in appendix figures A1 and A2.

Table 5 here

I conducted the same analysis for Illinois (Table 6). Among both parties, the vacancy coefficients are negative, suggesting that vacancy appointees are somewhat less tied to their funding networks than traditional nominees. Neither of these coefficients is

statistically significant, however. Goodness-of-fit diagnostics can be seen in appendix figures A3 and A4.

Table 6 here

A final bit of analysis helps shed some light on how vacancy appointees are able to secure campaign resources despite not being particularly well connected to party financing networks. Table 7 compares all the Illinois and Colorado appointees in the dataset with the legislators they immediately replaced, both in terms of the share of the two-party vote and the share of two-party fundraising they garnered in the subsequent election.

Table 7 here

As the table demonstrates, vacancy appointees in the pooled sample vastly out-performed those who they were appointed to replace, both in terms of fundraising and vote shares. A *t*-test shows these differences to be statistically significant at the $p \leq .10$ level for the pooled sample. The results are largely driven by Illinois, where the differences are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Colorado's traditionally-nominated members modestly out-performed those who were appointed to replace them, but this falls short of statistical significance. This is probably the most direct comparison between vacancy appointees and traditional nominees that we can observe, since most important features about districts and elections are essentially controlled for. The traditional nominees and the vacancy appointees are facing very similar fundamental political environments, and the vacancy appointees are doing better. This suggests that the appointees are simply better at some basic political tasks, and those who select appointees are better at identifying those people than primary voters are. It also confirms

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the expectation that the effects would be more pronounced for Illinois, where a small handful of party insiders does the appointing.

Discussion

The results presented above are somewhat contradictory. As we saw in the regression models, vacancy appointees are not at a substantial disadvantage in terms of the measures, including funds raised and votes won, that determine their future in politics. However, the ERGM analysis suggests that any advantages possessed by the vacancy appointees do not appear to be derived from their positions in their parties' respective funding networks; they are somewhat less connected compared to their traditionally nominated colleagues, although most of the time there appears to be no important difference at all.

What can explain this? These results, along with those presented in Table 7, are consistent with a selection effect: Local party elites are adept at picking skilled candidates. Indeed, the evidence suggests that vacancy candidates possess greater political assets than those nominated by voters do. They may simply be better able, either due to interpersonal skill or ambition, to raise money, to connect to voters, to build ties to activist groups, and to do other things important to a candidate's performance. It wouldn't be particularly surprising to learn that party insiders and officers, who know many of the politically ambitious people in a community through a variety of events and meetings, are far better able to detect these skills than the typical voter is.

It additionally appears that the size and composition of these vacancy committees is important, although this requires substantial extrapolation from just two cases. The

advantages of vacancy appointees over traditional nominees were greater and more detectable in Illinois, where just a few committee members make these appointments, than in Colorado, where scores of members do so. This is consistent with the notion that a small group of party elites can effectively pick a strong candidate, while Colorado appointees must appeal to a broad range of interests and committee members with highly variable commitments to and histories within the party.

It is quite possible that we wouldn't see such differences between appointees and traditional nominees among, say, U.S. Senators, where traditional nominees have typically been vetted over many years through many electoral contests. Anyone rising to that level of elected office likely has a great deal of political skill already. But at the level of state legislature, the quality of candidates will vary much more, and a state legislative party primary is such a low-participation and low-information race that voters may have next to no ability to adequately evaluate the skills that candidates might need in a general election. Party insiders selecting people for office in a vacancy appointment situation would simply have a greater ability to evaluate candidates and select for the needed skills.

None of this is to suggest that officeholders picked by party insiders are "better" than those elected by voters; there are a great many ways to approach such a question, and at least on matters of representation and ideology, there do not appear to be important differences between these different sorts of officeholders. However, if party leaders want their party to nominate candidates who are more skilled at actually winning elections, the evidence suggests that they should do the nominating themselves.

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Figure 1: Vacancies in the Colorado and Illinois State Houses, 1991-2011
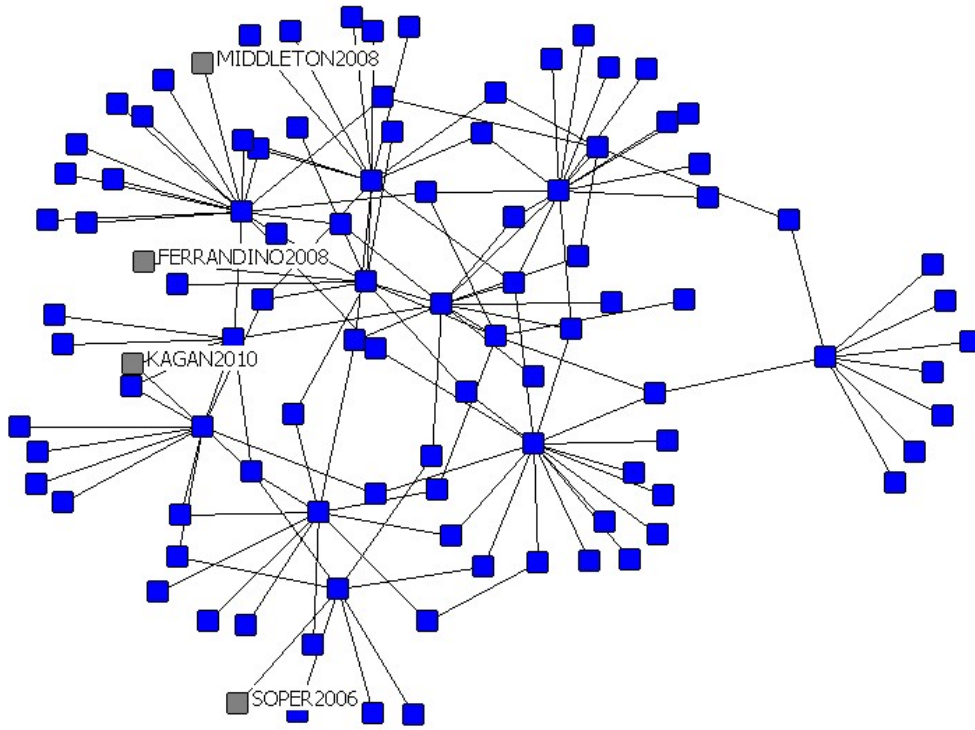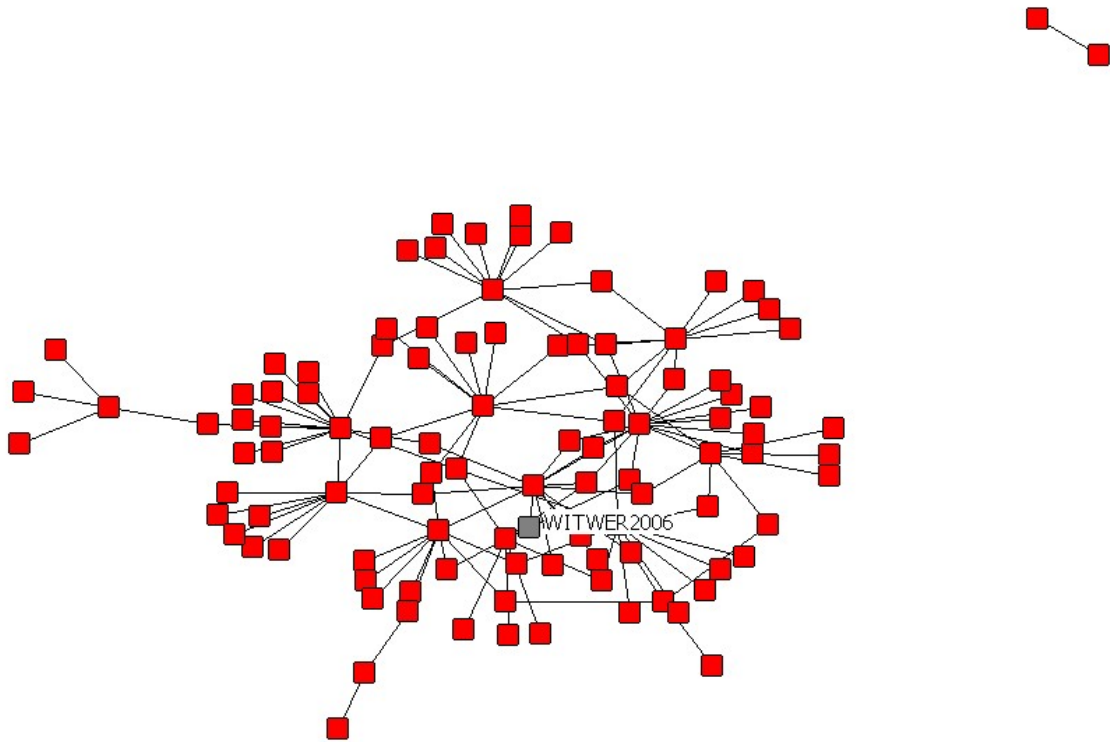
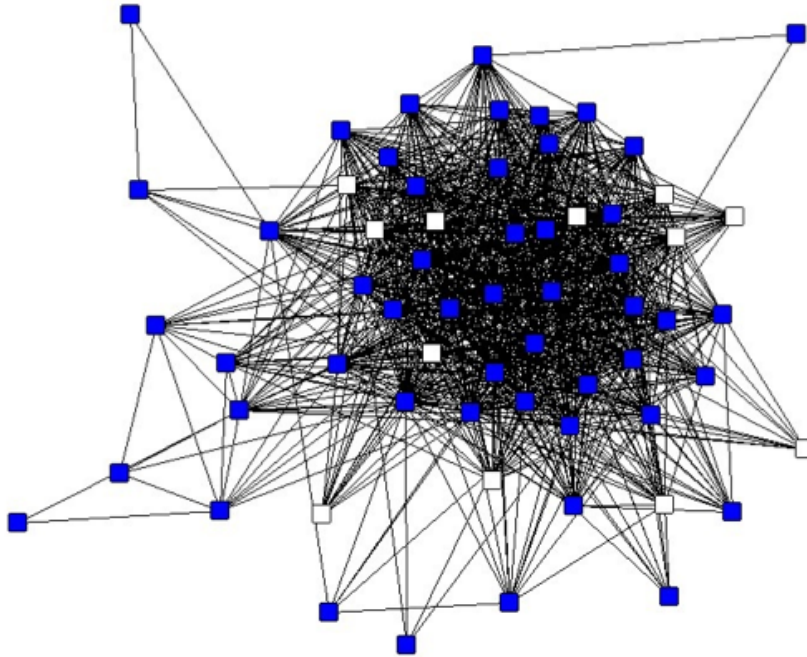<u>Colorado</u>
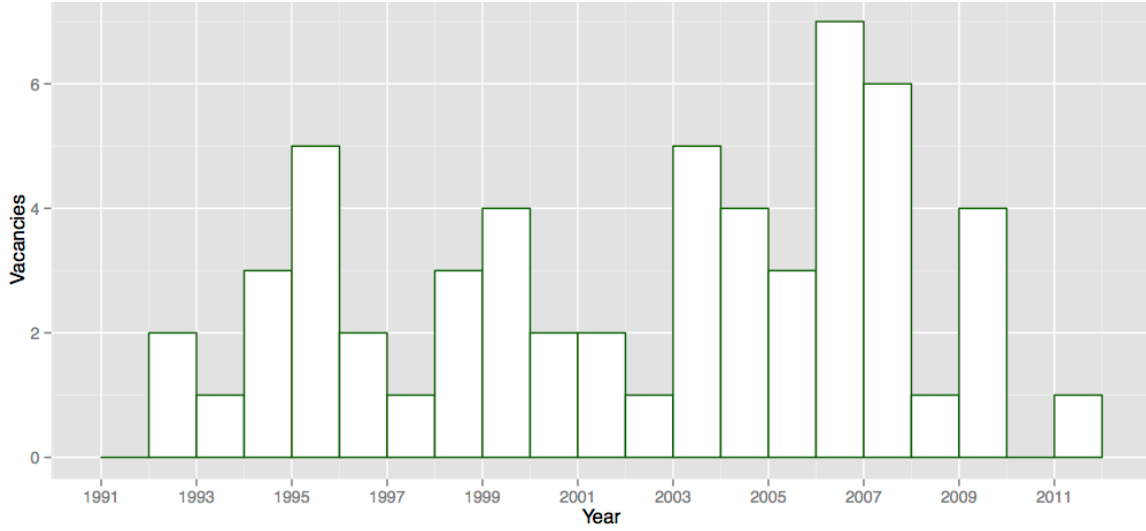
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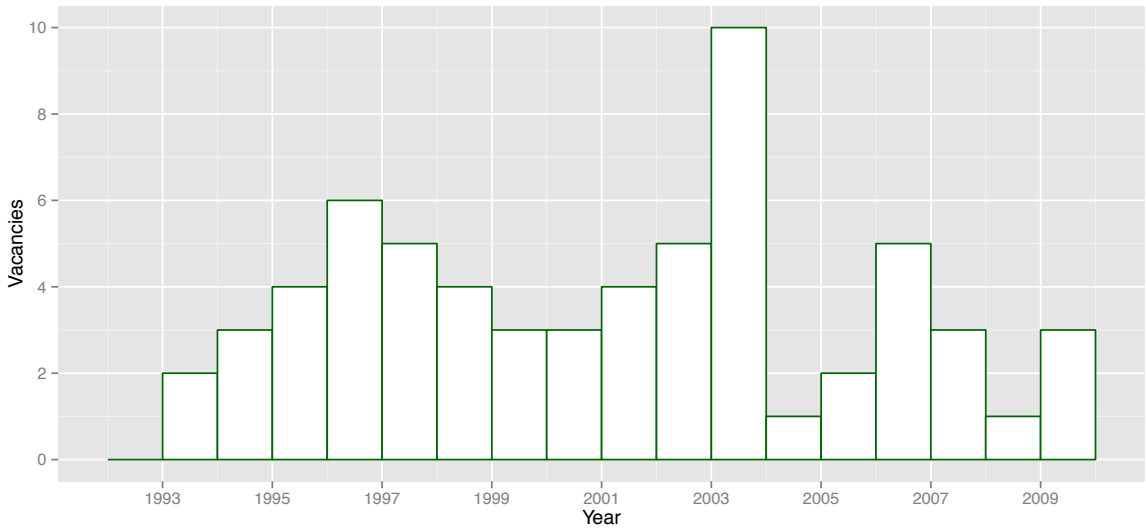
Figure 2: Colorado Democratic Legislative Donation Network

Figure 3: Colorado Republican Legislative Donation Network
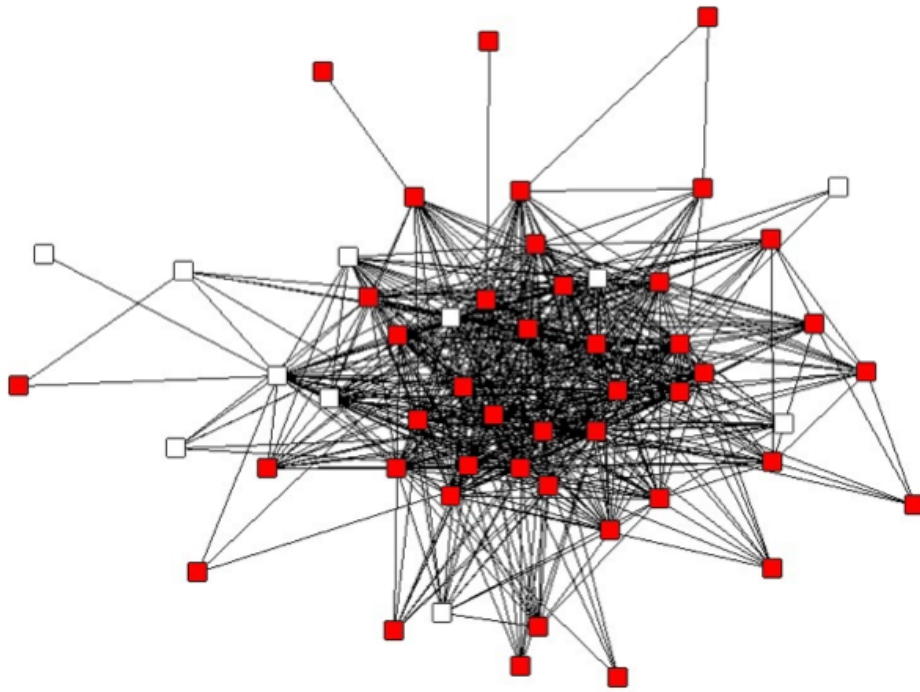
Figure 4: Illinois Democratic Legislative Donation Network

Figure 5: Illinois Republican Legislative Donation Network

Table 1: Measures of Fundraising and Electoral Success in Colorado

		Share of Funds Raised in Next Election	Share of Vote Won in Next Election
Colorado	Traditional nominees	77.2%	68.0%
	Vacancy Appointees	75.4%	71.5%
Illinois	Traditional nominees	81.7%	90.0%
	Vacancy appointees	81.9%	91.4%

Table 2: Predicting Fundraising and Electoral Performance in Colorado, 1996-2010

| Variable | Fixing Year | | Fixing Year and District | |
	Share of Expenditures	Share of Vote	Share of Expenditures	Share of Vote
Vacancy	-7.362	-2.328	-8.216	-1.945
	(4.101)	(3.282)	(5.854)	(3.396)
Freshman	5.969*	4.941**	2.901	1.901
	(2.334)	(1.868)	(3.734)	(2.166)
Democrat	6.460	3.324	10.485	3.626
	(5.146)	(4.119)	(9.991)	(5.795)
Legislator conservatism	2.756	2.448	1.697	3.254
	(2.928)	(2.343)	(5.397)	(3.131)
Legislator extremism	-0.266	1.472	9.469	3.878
	(2.939)	(2.352)	(5.795)	(3.361)
Upper chamber	-18.602	-17.659	10.991	-0.631
	(12.580)	(10.068)	(11.851)	(6.874)
District conservatism	4.433	2.514	-277.407**	-183.848***
	(4.643)	(3.716)	(91.239)	(52.922)
District extremism	21.878***	28.212***	-143.005	-76.033
	(5.857)	(4.688)	(129.722)	(75.244)
Share of vote in previous election	0.103	0.270***	0.588*	0.805***
	(0.075)	(0.060)	(0.242)	(0.141)
Share of spending in previous election	0.336***	0.125*	-0.097	-0.252**
	(0.064)	(0.051)	(0.162)	(0.094)
Constant	34.837***	29.730***	62.641*	44.097**
	(4.821)	(3.858)	(26.483)	(15.361)
Observations	566	566	566	566
R-squared	0.186	0.261	0.331	0.562

Notes: Cell entries are fixed-effects OLS regression coefficients, controlling for year (left columns) and district and year (right columns). Standard errors appear in parentheses, with asterisks indicating statistical significance. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$, ***$p \leq .001$.

Table 3: Predicting Fundraising and Electoral Performance in Illinois, 1996-2012

Variable	*Fixing Year* Share of Expenditures	Share of Vote	*Fixing Year and District* Share of Expenditures	Share of Vote
Vacancy	0.754	0.0450	-2.171	-5.164
	(3.544)	(4.407)	(3.903)	(4.852)
Freshman	4.862*	6.742*	4.318	6.684*
	(2.167)	(2.699)	(2.361)	(2.939)
Democrat	0.244	2.948	-2.142	6.420
	(1.869)	(2.329)	(4.077)	(5.279)
Legislator conservatism	-2.137	-3.226	1.205	-4.425
	(1.730)	(2.152)	(3.083)	(3.876)
Legislator extremism	-1.025	3.108	1.831	6.801
	(2.255)	(2.807)	(3.700)	(4.610)
Upper chamber	-3.104	-3.009	-5.493*	-2.324
	(2.185)	(2.794)	(2.440)	(3.129)
District conservatism	-0.168	5.243	-3.086	-6.628
	(3.449)	(4.332)	(15.38)	(19.33)
District extremism	0.0141	3.786	-15.890	-5.480
	(4.782)	(5.969)	(12.970)	(16.690)
Share of vote in previous election	0.157**	0.254***	0.131*	-0.001
	(0.0515)	(0.0643)	(0.060)	(0.075)
Share of spending in previous election	0.148*	0.162*	-0.0670	0.135
	(0.0608)	(0.0758)	(0.069)	(0.085)
Constant	64.24***	43.32***	90.18***	55.11***
	(4.765)	(6.134)	(6.078)	(7.604)
Observations	529	525	529	525
R-squared	0.101	0.187	0.002	0.111

Notes: Cell entries are fixed-effects OLS regression coefficients, controlling for year (left columns) and district and year (right columns). Standard errors appear in parentheses, with asterisks indicating statistical significance. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$, ***$p \leq .001$.

Table 4: Centrality Measures in State Party Legislator Networks

Centrality measure	Vacancy appointees	Traditional nominees	Statistically significant?
Betweenness	6.8	14.9	No
Eigenvector	0.07	0.08	No
Degree	16.1	12.0	No
Bonacich Power	3,362	2,391	Yes
Average Reciprocal Distance	26.4	19.3	Yes

Table 5: ERGM Analysis of Incumbent Ties in Colorado Donation Network

Variable	Democrats	Republicans
Edges	-8.566***	0.998**
	(0.199)	(0.366)
Vacancy (nodefactor)	-0.404***	0.802***
	(0.113)	(0.228)
Upper chamber (nodefactor)	0.634***	1.327***
	(0.155)	(0.330)
Share of vote in last election	0.013**	-0.018*
(nodecov)	(0.004)	(0.008)
Share of spending in last election	-0.011***	0.028***
(nodecov)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Legislator ideal point	0.874**	-1.680***
(absdiff)	(0.260)	(0.246)
District ideal point	-2.630***	1.968*
(absdiff)	(0.237)	(0.885)
Year (nodematch)	0.786***	0.177
	(0.235)	(0.277)
GWESP	11.723***	0.728*
(fixed at zero)	(0.199)	(0.366)
AIC	1966	886
BIC	2023	940
Degrees of freedom	4,005	3,003

Notes: Cell entries are ERGM coefficients. Standard errors appear in parentheses, with asterisks indicating statistical significance. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$, ***$p \leq .001$.

Table 6: ERGM Analysis of Incumbent Ties in Illinois Donation Network

Variable	Democrats	Republicans
Edges	-22.536***	-4.300***
	(0.155)	(0.867)
Vacancy (nodefactor)	-0.018	-0.033
	(0.113)	(0.130)
Upper chamber (nodefactor)	-0.169*	0.909***
	(0.078)	(0.111)
Share of vote in last election (nodecov)	0.003	0.002
	(0.002)	(0.003)
Share of spending in last election (nodecov)	0.009***	0.020***
	(0.002)	(0.003)
Legislator ideal point (absdiff)	-0.275*	-1.125***
	(0.118)	(0.279)
District ideal point (absdiff)	0.860***	1.328***
	(0.187)	(0.303)
Year (nodematch)	0.908***	1.041***
	(0.130)	(0.139)
GWESP (fixed at zero)	20.586***	-0.516
	(0.155)	(0.477)
AIC	3689	1817
BIC	3744	1866
Degrees of freedom	3,081	1,596

Notes: Cell entries are ERGM coefficients. Standard errors appear in parentheses, with asterisks indicating statistical significance. $*p \leq .05$, $**p \leq .01$, $***p \leq .001$.

**Table 7: Performances of Vacancy Appointees and Those They Replaced**

	Mean vote share for vacancy appointee	Mean vote share for replaced incumbent	Mean fundraising share for vacancy appointee	Mean fundraising share for replaced incumbent
Colorado	71.7	72.6	75.2	79.2
Illinois	81.1**	70.9	82.6**	61.2
Pooled	74.7*	71.4	78.0*	71.9

Note: Asterisks indicate that the number for the vacancy appointees is statistically significantly different from the number for the members they replaced in a two-sampled *t*-test. *$p \leq .10$, **$p \leq .05$, ***$p \leq .01$, two-tailed.
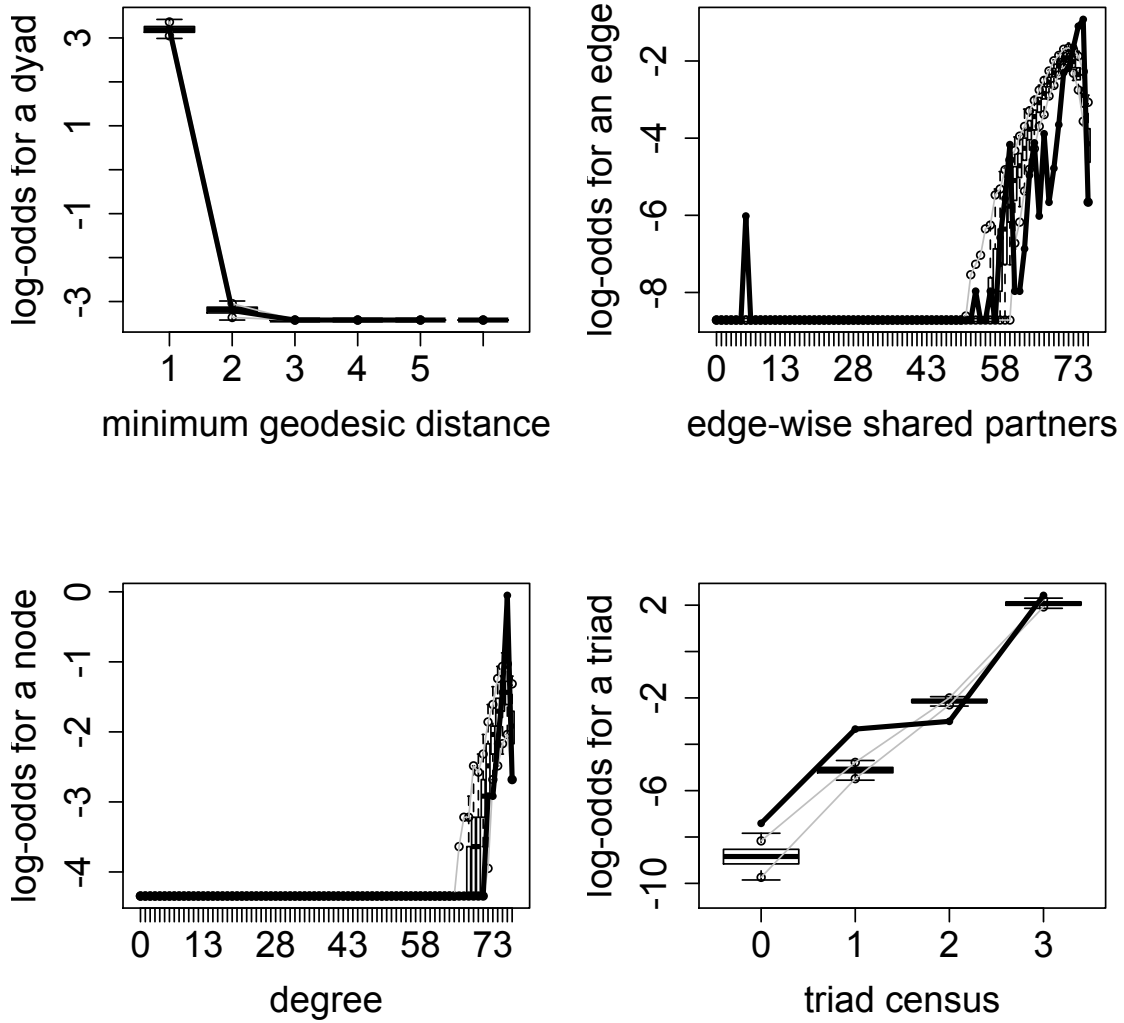
Appendix Figure A1: Goodness-of-Fit Diagnostics for Colorado Democratic Legislative Donation Network Analysis
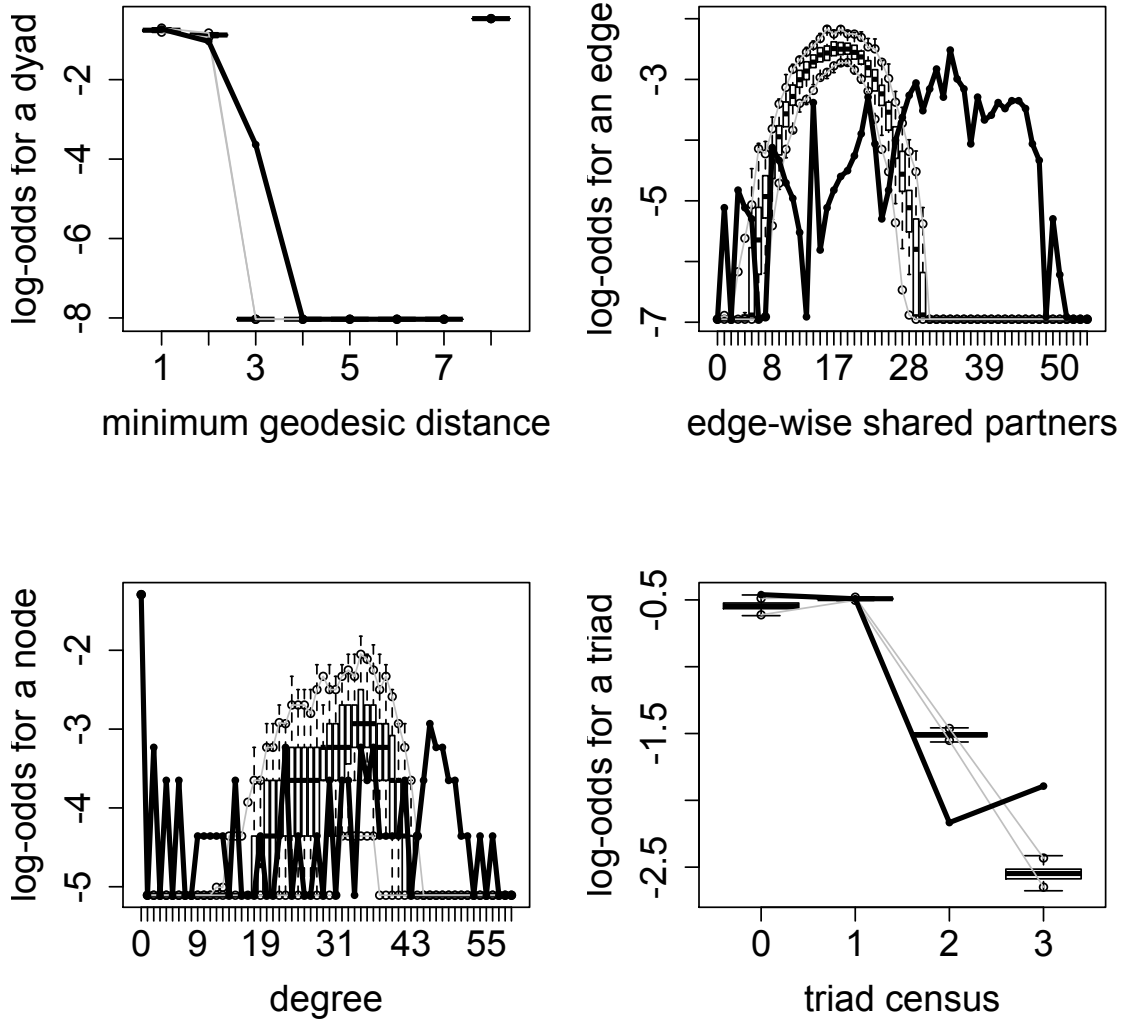

Goodness-of-fit diagnostics

Goodness-of-fit diagnostics

Goodness-of-fit diagnostics
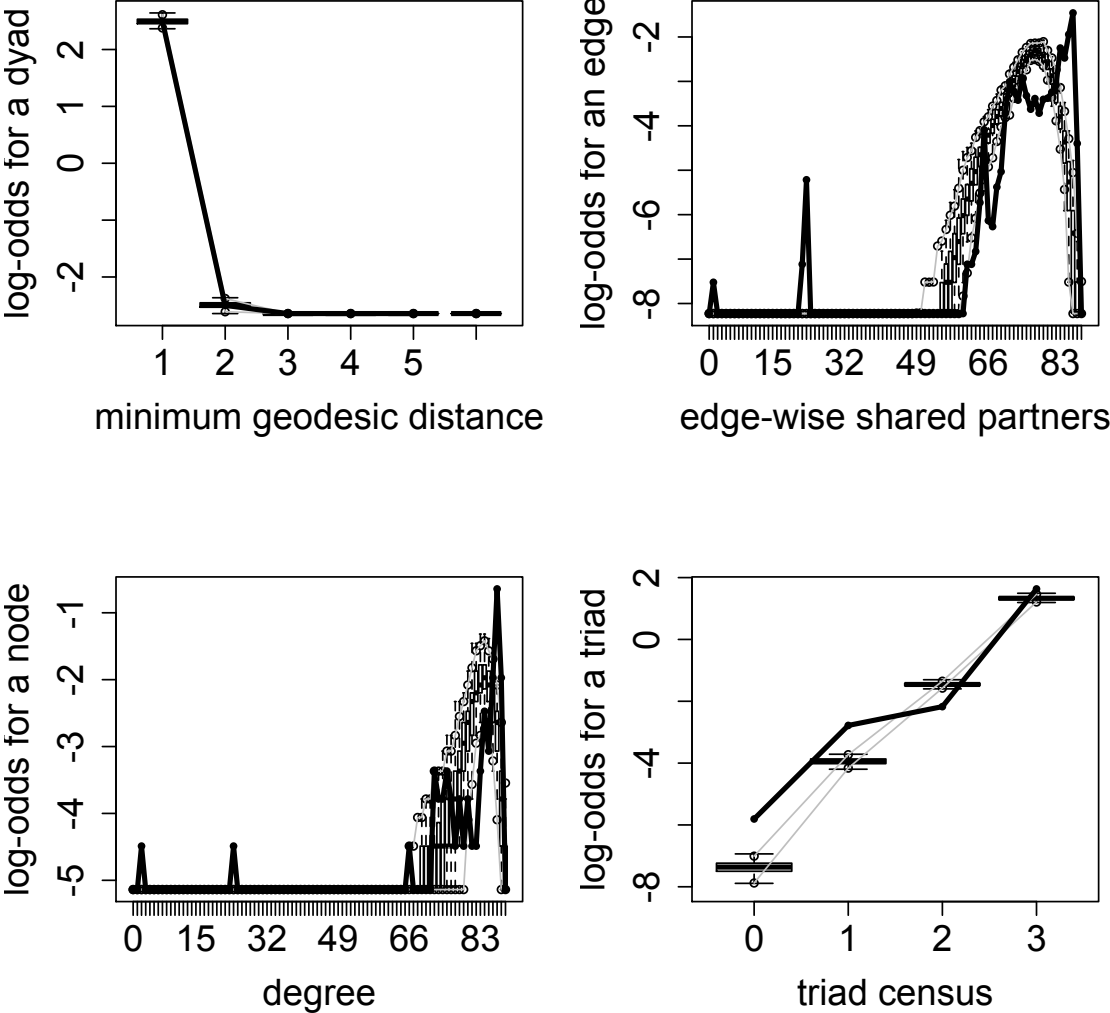
Appendix Figure A4: Goodness-of-Fit Tests for Illinois Republican Legislative Donation Network Analysis

Goodness-of-fit diagnostics