



[Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey](#)

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## ***Ideology, Party and Interests in the British Parliament of 1841–47***

CHERYL SCHONHARDT-BAILEY\*

Building upon Poole and Rosenthal's NOMINATE technique and Kalt and Zupan's residualization approach, I seek to disentangle the influences of constituency interests, party and ideology on the votes of MPs in the famous Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. I argue that while the Conservative party shared a distinct ideology, it was also a coalition of two interests-based alliances. The non-Peelite Conservatives represented mostly (protectionist oriented) agricultural districts while the Peelites represented districts with more free trade leaning interests. Before 1846, Peelites voted according to a general Conservative ideology, but in 1846 an abrupt change occurred: the pivotal Peelites appear to have eschewed Conservative party unity and their own personal ideology in favour more of the preferences of their constituents. Repeal appears to have gained passage as these MPs switched from voting more as trustees to voting more as delegates.

### INTRODUCTION

In May of 1846 a British parliament consisting predominantly of landowners decided to forgo protection for agriculture by repealing the famous Corn Laws. This fundamental policy shift from protection to unilateral free trade has intrigued political scientists, historians and economists for a century and a half.<sup>1</sup> While Repeal was remarkable for many reasons, particularly relevant for this article is that it split the Conservative party for a generation. The Conservatives entered government in 1841 with a strong and (what appeared to be) unified commitment to protecting agriculture, and yet their leader, Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel, completely reversed this stance within five years. Some of his party (dubbed the 'Peelites') followed Peel by supporting his Repeal legislation, while the

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<sup>1</sup> P. E. G. Rohrich, 'Economic Culture and Foreign Policy: The Cognitive Analysis of Economic Policy Making', *International Organization*, 41 (1987), 61–92; D. A. Lake and S. C. James, 'The Second Face of Hegemony: Britain's Repeal of the Corn Laws and the American Walker Tariff of 1846', *International Organization*, 43 (1989), 1–29; T. J. McKeown, 'The Politics of Corn Law Repeal and Theories of Commercial Policy', *British Journal of Political Science*, 19 (1989), 353–80; C. Schonhardt-Bailey, 'Lessons in Lobbying for Free Trade in 19th Century Britain: To Concentrate or Not', *American Political Science Review*, 85 (1991), 37–58; I. McLean, 'Irish Potatoes, Indian Corn, and British Politics: Interests, Ideology, Heresthetics, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws', in F. McGillivray, I. McLean, R. Pahre and C. Schonhardt-Bailey, eds, *International Trade and Political Institutions* (London: Edward Elgar, 2001), pp. 99–145; I. McLean, *Rational Choice and British Politics: An Analysis of Rhetoric and Manipulation from Peel to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); R. Pahre, 'British Hegemony and the Repeal of the Corn Laws', in C. Schonhardt-Bailey, ed., *The Rise of Free Trade* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 481–502; D. Verdier, 'Between Party and Faction: The Politics Behind the Repeal of the Corn Laws', in Schonhardt-Bailey, ed., *Rise of Free Trade*, pp. 309–38.

rest remained firmly committed to protecting agriculture. Within a month of gaining passage of Repeal, the Peel government fell<sup>2</sup> and the Conservatives remained divided and for the most part out of office for decades to come. Historians have long debated why the Peelites reversed their stance on *the defining issue* of this parliament, and the extent to which the Conservative party was divided *prior* to Peel's motion to repeal the Corn Laws, without finding definitive answers.<sup>3</sup> The puzzle of the Peelites is important to political scientists because it raises the fundamental question of what motivates legislators – and especially, what motivates them to reverse their position on a crucial policy issue? At least three literatures lend insights into this question.

### *Modes of Representation*

Studies of political representation have for many years contrasted the 'delegate' and 'trustee' roles of legislators. Delegates are said to represent the interests (normally economic) of their constituents,<sup>4</sup> whereas trustees represent what they deem to be the national or wider public interest.<sup>5</sup> Painted in stark contrast, delegates are motivated entirely by the interests of their constituents, while trustees are motivated entirely by their own ideological predisposition. Yet, as some empirical analyses of roll-call votes attest, the reality is not so simple – indeed, legislative behaviour is the combination of constituency preferences and legislators' ideology.<sup>6</sup> The controversy rests in the methodology used to disentangle interests and ideology, and the interpretation given to legislator 'ideology'. Some maintain that once constituency interests have been properly measured, deviations in voting patterns reflect legislators' ideology, which can be interpreted as 'shirking'.<sup>7</sup> Others criticize this interpretation of ideology as synonymous with shirking (however measured), preferring to describe it as 'reputational capital' or a brand name which voters

<sup>2</sup> While Peel carried the repeal legislation in June 1846, he was defeated shortly thereafter on a coercion bill for Ireland, and resigned as prime minister. The real reason for his defeat was the Corn Laws, as opposition to the coercion bill was the act of retaliation against Peel from the protectionists. In July 1846 Lord Russell formed a Whig administration (in which Whigs, Radicals and Irish were in a minority) which lasted until the general election of 1847, after which the Whigs returned to govern with increased members.

<sup>3</sup> N. Gash, 'Peel and the Party System, 1830–50', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 1 (1951), 47–69; R. Stewart, *The Politics of Protection: Lord Derby and the Protectionist Party, 1841–1852* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971); W. O. Aydelotte, 'The Distintegration of the Conservative Party in the 1840s: A Study of Political Attitudes', in W. O. Aydelotte, A. G. Bague and R. W. Fogel, eds, *The Dimensions of Quantitative Research in History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 319–46; J. B. Conacher, *The Peelites and the Party System, 1846–52* (Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1972); W. D. Jones and A. B. Erickson, *The Peelites, 1846–1857* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972); R. Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1974).

<sup>4</sup> D. Mayhew, *Congress, The Electoral Connection* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974).

<sup>5</sup> R. L. Hill, *Toryism and the People, 1832–1846* (London: Constable, 1929); H. Eulau, 'The Legislator as Representative: Representational Roles', in J. C. Wahlke, H. Eulau, W. Buchanan and L. C. Ferguson, eds, *The Legislative System* (New York: John Wiley, 1962), pp. 267–86; R. H. Davidson, *The Role of the Congressman* (New York: Pegasus, 1969); E. Uslander, *The Movers and the Shirkers: Representatives and Ideologues in the Senate* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> L. E. Richardson and M. C. Munger, 'Shirking, Representation, and Congressional Behavior: Voting on the 1983 Amendments to the Social Security Act', *Public Choice*, 67 (1990), 11–34.

<sup>7</sup> S. Peltzman, 'Constituent Interest and Congressional Voting', *Journal of Law and Economics*, 27 (1984), 181–210; J. P. Kalt and M. A. Zupan, 'The Apparent Ideological Behavior of Legislators: Testing for Principal-Agent Slack in Political Institutions', *Journal of Law & Economics*, 33 (1990), 103–31; D. A. Irwin and R. S. Kroszner, 'Interests, Institutions, and Ideology in Securing Policy Change: The Republican Conversion to Trade Liberalization after Smoot-Hawley', *Journal of Law and Economics*, 42 (1999), 643–73.

use to assess and discipline their representatives.<sup>8</sup> A third group maintains that even if the economic interests of constituents could be perfectly measured, such models of legislative voting behaviour would fail to capture accurately roll-call voting because they ignore logrolling behaviour which serves to package these interests into structured (which may be deemed ‘ideological’) patterns of voting.<sup>9</sup>

In spite of the difficulties identified by these and other authors,<sup>10</sup> this article attempts to gauge the relative weights of constituency preferences and MPs’ personal ideology in the critical votes leading up to and including the Repeal of the Corn Laws in nineteenth-century Britain. While the findings are interpreted with caution, I conclude that an abrupt change occurred in 1846: MPs – and particularly the pivotal MPs – appear to have eschewed ideology in favour more of the preferences of their constituents. Repeal appears to have gained passage as some MPs switched from voting more as trustees to voting more as delegates.

### *Roll-Call Voting in the 1841–47 Parliament*

Within the vast multidisciplinary literature on Repeal is a subset of researchers<sup>11</sup> who have attempted to dissect the respective influences of ideology and constituency interests on the votes of MPs in the 1841–47 Parliament. Most of these authors have drawn upon Aydelotte’s pioneering data which sampled the roll-call votes of the 1841–47 Parliament.<sup>12</sup> Their work has sought, in part, to resolve a dispute between proponents of ideological explanations for Repeal<sup>13</sup> and proponents of interests-based explanations.<sup>14</sup> The former

<sup>8</sup> W. R. Dougan and M. C. Munger, ‘The Rationality of Ideology’, *Journal of Law & Economics*, 32 (1989), 119–42; Richardson and Munger, ‘Shirking, Representation and Congressional Behavior’; D. Coates and M. Munger, ‘Legislative Voting and the Economic Theory of Politics’, *Southern Economic Journal*, 61 (1995), 861–73.

<sup>9</sup> K. T. Poole and H. Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> J. E. Jackson and J. W. Kingdon, ‘Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Votes’, *American Journal of Political Science*, 36 (1992), 805–23.

<sup>11</sup> G. W. Cox, *The Efficient Secret: The Cabinet and the Development of Political Parties in Victorian England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); McKeown, ‘The Politics of Corn Law Repeal’; C. Schonhardt-Bailey, ‘Specific Factors, Capital Markets, Portfolio Diversification, and Free Trade: Domestic Determinants of the Repeal of the Corn Laws’, *World Politics*, 43 (1991), 545–69; C. Schonhardt-Bailey, ‘Linking Constituency Interests to Legislative Voting Behavior: The Role of District Economic and Electoral Composition in the Repeal of the Corn Laws’, *Parliamentary History*, 13 (1994), 86–118; I. McLean, ‘Interests and Ideology in the United Kingdom Parliament of 1841–7’, in J. Lovenduski and J. Stanyer, eds, *Contemporary Political Studies 1995, Vol. 1* (Belfast: Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom, 1995), pp. 1–20; I. McLean, ‘Railway Regulation as a Test-bed of Rational Choice’, in K. Dowding and D. King, *Preferences, Institutions and Rational Choice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 134–61; McLean, ‘Irish Potatoes, Indian Corn’; Verdier, ‘Between Party and Faction’.

<sup>12</sup> Of the 1,029 divisions that occurred during the lifetime of this parliament, Aydelotte sampled 186, or 18 per cent. Aydelotte biased his sample towards those divisions that were relatively well attended (i.e., in which 200 or more men participated) and were, in Aydelotte’s judgement, important and relevant to key problems of the day (W. O. Aydelotte, ‘British House of Commons, 1841–1847’ (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, n.d.)).

<sup>13</sup> C. Kindleberger, ‘The Rise of Free Trade in Western Europe, 1820–1875’, *Journal of Economic History*, 35 (1975), 20–55; Rohrich, ‘Economic Culture and Foreign Policy’; B. Hilton, *The Age of Atonement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); McLean, ‘Interests and Ideology’.

<sup>14</sup> J. A. Thomas, *The House of Commons 1832–1901: A Study of its Economic and Functional Character* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1939); W. R. Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism* (London: Frank Cass, 1941); G. M. Anderson and R. D. Tollison, ‘Ideology, Interest Groups, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws’, *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 141 (1985), 197–212; Schonhardt-Bailey, ‘Linking Constituency Interests’.

emphasize the loyalties and allegiances of MPs to the constitution, religion and/or political party, or their conversion to Manchester School liberal ideology (i.e., MPs as trustees), while the latter maintain that Repeal-minded MPs acted as conduits for free-trade interests that were created from industrialization (i.e., MPs as delegates).<sup>15</sup>

The answers that Cox, McKeown, Schonhardt-Bailey, McLean and Verdier give to the question of the sudden shift to Repeal in 1846 provide some of the building blocks for the present analysis. Cox's analysis of Aydelotte's data provides ample justification for an electoral connection in 1841–47,<sup>16</sup> although it does not investigate Repeal *per se* (nor is this the intent of his work). Inasmuch as he offers an explanation for Repeal, it rests on the presumed 'independence' of the Peelites.<sup>17</sup> Some historians have argued that the Peelites represented the epitome of independence from party and constituents' interests – in a nutshell, the ultimate trustees.<sup>18</sup> Cox's empirical support for this hypothesis is limited to the absence of a link between constituency influence and votes of Conservative MPs, but the existence of one for Liberal MPs.<sup>19</sup> His findings, unfortunately, do not distinguish between Peelite and non-Peelite Conservatives and so he provides no empirical support for the independence hypothesis.

McKeown, in contrast, focuses on the Repeal votes and finds that economic interests constrained the votes of MPs – though he maintains that the pace of changes in interests could not have been swift enough to cause the abrupt shift to Repeal. He attributes the shift to the Irish Repealers (who sought the repeal of the union in Ireland) and the Peelites, who converted not from any change in economic circumstances, but 'for their own reasons'.<sup>20</sup> Repeal thus becomes a peculiarity of British history. While McKeown's model also tests the effect of party affiliation on MPs' votes, he never integrates party and economic interests into a single model. Schonhardt-Bailey integrates party affiliation and constituency interests into a single model in which party affiliation is largely (though not entirely) an intervening variable between changes in constituency interests and MPs' votes. The shift to Repeal is said to hinge upon key changes in economic interests – namely, the diversification of landowners' portfolios to include more export-oriented interests and the geographic spread of export-oriented interests throughout Britain. Neither McKeown nor Schonhardt-Bailey, however, attempt to incorporate ideological motivations into their models.

McLean is concerned primarily with Peel's pivotal role in the Repeal process, and maintains that the Irish potato famine sparked the abrupt shift in Peel's change of mind. He argues that by merging the issue of famine relief with that of Repeal, Peel transformed the single dimension of Repeal to one of multidimensionality. He tests his multidimensionality argument on the votes of parliamentarians. He merges Aydelotte's and Schonhardt-Bailey's datasets, adding to it new measures for MPs' and constituency ideology (defined, for the most part, in terms of religious beliefs). He then focuses on just the Conservative votes on Repeal in an attempt to dissect the respective influences of interests (both personal

<sup>15</sup> Proponents of both the trustee and delegate interpretations can find ample evidence in historical documents for their arguments (see author's personal website).

<sup>16</sup> Cox, *The Efficient Secret*, pp. 148–65.

<sup>17</sup> Cox, *The Efficient Secret*, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> The concluding sentence from Jones and Erikson (which Cox also cites) summarizes this independence: 'For if there was one attitude that the Peelites popularized and made fashionable, it was that even the most mute back-bencher, when it came to a division, had a duty to vote his conscience and his sense of honor' (Jones and Erikson, *The Peelites*, p. 223.)

<sup>19</sup> Cox, *The Efficient Secret*, p. 159.

<sup>20</sup> McKeown, 'The Politics of Corn Law Repeal,' p. 378.

and constituency) and ideology (again, personal and constituency) on votes. His best-performing model for English Conservative MPs fails to account for the votes of fifty-five Peelites and twenty-seven non-Peelite Conservatives on the final reading of Repeal. He concludes that while both economic interests and ideology affected the votes on Repeal, ideology mattered more.

Finally, Verdier focuses on why Peel chose to endorse Repeal and so is less concerned with the decisions of other MPs. However, inasmuch as his 'political model' characterizes the Conservative party as internally divided between frontbenchers (who sought party aims) and backbenchers (who were motivated more by constituency pressures), he implicitly models the voting decisions of Conservative MPs. Drawing both from Aydelotte's and McKeown's data, he finds more support for a political model than an economic one. Similar to the analysis of this article, he detects an internal divide within the Conservative party that spanned issues other than Repeal and existed prior to 1846. While he chooses to characterize this divide as frontbench versus backbench, he notes that the minority of Conservative backbenchers who supported Peel were generally from large, urban boroughs and faced serious contests from Liberal challengers. This coincides with this article's depiction of Peelites as representing more free-trade leaning districts, with the rationale that Peelites were also more sensitive to electoral pressures than were non-Peelites. Yet, his work is limited in that he offers no measure for ideology; the empirical analysis (like McLean's) is limited to Conservative MPs; he applies an inappropriate model (ordinary least squares) to measure roll-call votes; and he obtains rather poor results (e.g.,  $r^2$  values ranging from 0.24 to 0.37).

As this brief survey reveals, no researcher of Repeal has yet attempted to analyse the combined effects of interests, party affiliation and MPs' personal ideology in a single model for both Liberal and Conservative MPs. Hence, while most agree that all these factors contributed to Repeal, theory has been limited by the empirical analysis. Moreover, no attempt has been made to place such an analysis of Repeal into the broader context of roll-call votes on other issues in the 1841–47 Parliament, and so any discussion of the dimensionality of this parliament, or of Repeal itself, has been constrained. And, finally, the empirical success of the models of these researchers has been limited at best.

This article seeks to advance the understanding of parliamentary voting in the 1840s in three ways. First, by applying Poole and Rosenthal's NOMINATE technique,<sup>21</sup> I improve upon Aydelotte's analysis of the underlying orientations of opinion (or dimensions) that divided MPs. Using Guttman scaling analysis, Aydelotte found that a single scale (dubbed the 'Big Scale') captured voting patterns in 120 of the 186 divisions sampled. Within this sub-set of 120, the single scale could then classify according to their votes 95 per cent of the 815 members. With NOMINATE, I find that one dimension classifies 89.5 per cent of the votes in *all* 186 divisions, and two dimensions classify 92.04 per cent of the votes.<sup>22</sup> Thus scaling techniques that rely on both deterministic *and* probabilistic models find a highly structured voting pattern (or low dimensionality) for this parliament, meaning that decisions on each roll call can be linked to decisions on other roll-call votes. While this

<sup>21</sup> K. T. Poole and H. Rosenthal, 'Patterns of Congressional Voting', *American Journal of Political Science*, 35 (1991), 228–78; Poole and Rosenthal, *Congress*.

<sup>22</sup> Another way to evaluate the fit of their model is to see how much NOMINATE improves on a benchmark model by estimating the proportional reduction in error (PRE) of NOMINATE over the benchmark (Poole and Rosenthal, *Congress*, p. 30). Here, the aggregate proportional reduction in error (APRE) for the first dimension is 0.692, and for the second dimension is 0.753.

structure is an abstraction, I argue that it provides a crude representation of the ideological positions of MPs.<sup>23</sup> I then attempt to refine this measure of ideology by adapting a version of Kalt and Zupan's 'residualization approach',<sup>24</sup> thereby dividing the NOMINATE scores into three components – party, constituency interests and a residual. The residual is argued to constitute an improved measure of MP ideology.

Secondly, I analyse the votes on, and leading up to, Repeal, using party, interests and ideology, and with this model I am able to account for 97 to 99 per cent of the votes.

Thirdly, my findings call into question the presumed 'independence' of the Peelites as they voted for Repeal. Indeed I show just the opposite – in so far as Peelites voted as trustees, they did so only up to 1846. Their conversion to Repeal did not demonstrate their commitment to beliefs independent of their constituents; rather, their conversion reflected a departure from voting more as trustees to voting more as delegates.

### *When Ideology Matters Less*

Political scientists in a variety of subdisciplines have sought to establish the importance of ideas and ideology as causal factors in policy making.<sup>25</sup> The goal of much of this literature is to specify the conditions under which ideas or ideology become relevant for policy making. Often the supposition is that interests form the core of behavioural motivation, but that ideology can sometimes intersect with, or override this motivation. The interesting twist offered by this article is that I show how ideology was dissipated as a causal force, to be replaced in part by constituents' interests. Rather than identifying where ideology mattered, I demonstrate where ideology came to matter *less* in a crucial policy shift.

#### THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF

As the title of this article suggests, ideology, partisanship and constituency interests all most likely played a role in the progression to Repeal; however, the aim of this article is to disentangle these three causal factors in order to assess their relative importance in the final decision. I argue that while the Conservative party shared a distinct ideology – namely,

<sup>23</sup> Dimensions in roll-call votes are essentially abstractions that capture the structure of voting across a wide set of topics. Low dimensionality (particularly relative to the range of issues) can suggest a greater role for ideology. If, for instance, a high percentage of votes can be correctly classified with just one dimension, it is likely that a single left–right (liberal–conservative) ideological continuum is a good predictor of the votes. Further dimensions may capture other ideological divisions or may reflect cleavages in interests. Moreover, while an ideological dimension may reflect party loyalties, party may comprise just one element of this dimension. Hence, ideology and party are not necessarily synonymous.

<sup>24</sup> Kalt and Zupan, 'The Apparent Ideological Behavior of Legislators'.

<sup>25</sup> A few examples include P. A. Hall, ed., *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism across Nations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); J. Goldstein, *Ideas, Interests, and American Trade Policy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993); J. Goldstein and R. O. Keohane, eds, *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993); A. S. Yee, 'The Causal Effect of Ideas on Policies', *International Organization*, 50 (1996), 69–108; D.W. Drezner, 'Ideas, Bureaucratic Politics, and the Crafting of Foreign Policy', *American Journal of Political Science*, 44 (2000), 733–49; J. W. Legro, 'The Transformation of Policy Ideas', *American Journal of Political Science*, 44 (2000), 419–32; K. Nakano, 'The Role of Ideology and Elite Networks in the Decentralisation Reforms in 1980s France', *West European Politics*, 23 (2000), 97–114; J. I. Walsh, 'When Do Ideas Matter? Explaining the Successes and Failures of Thatcherite Ideas', *Comparative Political Studies*, 33 (2000), 483–516.

the defence of traditional British institutions such as the monarchy and the Protestant Establishment (including its property and privileges) – it was also a coalition of two interests-based alliances. One faction was the non-Peelite Conservatives, who voted to retain protection. The vast majority of these MPs represented highly rural and agricultural districts. The other faction was the Peelite Conservatives, who voted with Peel's motion for Repeal. Peelites represented districts with both agricultural interests and industry interests, though tending towards protectionism relative to the opposition Liberals. Hence the non-Peelite Conservatives represented districts with 'hard core' protectionist interests, while the Peelites represented districts with 'soft core' protectionist interests, wavering on free trade. Yet from 1841 to 1845, the Peelites voted with their Conservative colleagues to retain protection, with the aim of preserving Conservative party unity, and thereby, traditional British institutions – even though this conflicted with their representation of evolving free-trade interests. For Peelites, ideology and constituency interests were more likely to conflict, whereas for non-Peelite Conservatives, they were more likely to coincide. In 1846, Peel's introduction of the Repeal legislation shattered the ideology that was the glue of the Conservative party, leaving both factions to vote more according to the interests of their constituents.

To disentangle ideology, party affiliation and constituency interests, I employ a number of methodologies, but most notably Poole and Rosenthal's NOMINATE technique and Kalt and Zupan's 'residualization approach'. The intent is not to position ideology, party and interests in competing roles, but rather to estimate the contribution of these causal factors to the voting behaviour of parliamentarians as they approached the ultimate decision that in effect ended Peel's government. NOMINATE scores serve as a first cut into measuring MP 'ideology', while an adapted version of the Kalt and Zupan method is used to divide this measure into three contributing components – party, constituency interests and a residual which is argued to be a proxy measure of MP personal ideology.

The next section outlines the methodology that generates the measure of MPs' ideology as used in this article. The following section applies the NOMINATE technique to the 1841–47 Parliament, and discusses how the NOMINATE coordinates intersect with party groups and constituency interests. The section after that dissects the first dimension coordinate into party, constituency interests and MPs' ideology in order to (a) gauge the extent to which MPs voted as delegates or trustees in the repeal votes; and (b) present a rationale, based on empirical analysis, for the Peelites abruptly shifting their position from protection to free trade, thereby ensuring the passage of Repeal in 1846. The penultimate section explores the relevance of commonly used interpretations of ideology – that is, shirking and reputation-building – for the case of Repeal. A conclusion follows.

#### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO MEASURING IDEOLOGY, PARTY AND INTERESTS

Ideology is notoriously difficult to measure, and even more so when the political actors under scrutiny are in the domain of history. Yet because ideology lies at the heart of the puzzle of the Peelites, some measurement is required. This article draws upon two recognized approaches for measuring legislators' ideology. Neither method is, however, faultless.



## NOMINATE

Poole and Rosenthal's NOMINATE technique is said to improve upon alternative methods of analysing roll-call voting, such as factor analysis and multi-dimensional scaling.<sup>26</sup> It has, however, received some criticism.<sup>27</sup> While Poole and Rosenthal have addressed some of these concerns,<sup>28</sup> others remain unresolved. Hence, NOMINATE's finding of low dimensionality for the 1841–47 Parliament should be treated with some caution. None the less, it is also fair to say that as the cruder (but more transparent) Guttman scaling technique also revealed low dimensionality, outright scepticism is probably unwarranted.<sup>29</sup>

An analysis of dimensionality serves two fundamental purposes for this study. First, the primary dimension obtained from NOMINATE provides a crude measurement for MPs' ideology, which can then be dissected using the Kalt and Zupan method. Secondly, by knowing the structure of the overall voting pattern, we can evaluate the extent to which the ultimate repeal vote deviated from this structure.

### *Kalt and Zupan Method*

Kalt and Zupan have developed a technique for measuring the influence of ideology, particularly as distinct from constituency interests. Using a principal-agent perspective, the authors maintain that legislators who vote according to their ideology 'shirk' by failing to meet their obligations as agents of their principals (constituents/voters).

I adopt the basic Kalt and Zupan approach, but adapt it in a way that attempts both to address some of the criticisms levelled against the authors for including legislators' party affiliation as a predictor,<sup>30</sup> and produce discrete measures for interests, party and MP personal ideology. Specifically, I substitute the first dimension coordinates from NOMINATE for the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) rating, and then include four variables to measure constituency interests,<sup>31</sup>

$$\text{NOMINATE coordinate } 1 = f(\text{constituents' interests}) + \text{error}_1. \quad (1)$$

This produces a fitted value, which I call *constituency interests*, and a residual value ( $\text{error}_1$ ). The former can be thought of as that portion of the first dimension coordinate that is accounted for by constituency interests, while  $\text{error}_1$  retains elements of both MP ideology and party affiliation. Unlike Kalt and Zupan, I do not include the legislator's party affiliation in this first equation. Rather, I introduce MP party affiliation as a predictor of  $\text{error}_1$  in a second regression,

<sup>26</sup> Poole and Rosenthal, *Congress*, pp. 51–7; E. Voeten, 'Clashes in the Assembly', *International Organization*, 54 (2000), 185–215.

<sup>27</sup> K. Koford, 'Dimensions in Congressional Voting', *American Political Science Review*, 83 (1989), 949–62; C. Wilcox and A. Clausen, 'The Dimensionality of Roll-Call Voting Reconsidered', *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 16 (1991), 393–406; Jackson and Kingdon, 'Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Votes'; J. M. Snyder, 'Committee Power, Structure-Induced Equilibria, and Roll Call Votes', *American Journal of Political Science*, 36 (1992), 1–30; J. J. Heckman and J. M. Snyder, 'Linear Probability Models of the Demand for Attributes with an Empirical Application to Estimating the Preferences of Legislators', *RAND Journal of Economics*, 28 (1997), S142–89; T. Groseclose, S. D. Levitt and J. M. Snyder, 'Comparing Interest Group Scores Across Time and Chambers: Adjusted ADA Scores for the U.S. Congress', *American Political Science Review*, 93 (1999), 33–50.

<sup>28</sup> Poole and Rosenthal, *Congress*.

<sup>29</sup> Scores for the Aydelotte's 'Big scale' and NOMINATE's first dimension are, moreover, highly correlated, with a bivariate correlation of 0.82.

<sup>30</sup> Uslander, *The Movers and the Shirkers*.

<sup>31</sup> For details of these variables, see author's personal website.

$$\text{error}_1 = f(\text{MP party affiliation}) + \text{error}_2. \quad (2)$$

Equation 2 produces a fitted value for *party* and a residual value ( $\text{error}_2$ ). *Party* can be thought of as that portion of the first dimension that is accounted for by MPs' party affiliation. At the same time, however, MPs' party affiliation also reflects the partisan preferences of constituents. And so, at the parliamentary level, this variable captures MP party affiliation, but at the constituency level, it serves as a proxy for the partisanship of constituents.<sup>32</sup>  $\text{error}_2$  is, by definition, that portion of the first dimension coordinate that we cannot explain by interests and party affiliation but, by interpretation, it is a measure of *MPs' ideology*. Having stripped the first dimension coordinate of its interests and party components, we obtain a measure of MPs' ideology that is not simply a summary statistic for policy issue positions. This measure is not, however, unproblematic, as I discuss later.

#### APPLYING NOMINATE TO THE PARLIAMENT OF 1841–47

Because the focus of this article is on one parliament, I use a static NOMINATE model rather than a dynamic one, and so legislators are assumed to have fixed coordinates. The roll-call votes used here include all of the divisions from the original Aydelotte dataset. However, as data on the economic composition of constituencies are not available for Scotland, Wales and Ireland, only English MPs (who cast at least twenty-five votes)<sup>33</sup> are included in the analysis. These limitations reduce the available number of cases from 590 to 483 MPs.<sup>34</sup>

As one dimension classifies almost 90 per cent of the votes (with a second dimension adding only marginal improvement), the analysis of this article focuses on the first dimension. The first dimension coordinates obtained from NOMINATE appear to reflect well the revealed preferences of MPs on the major issue that divided the parliament, free trade or protection.<sup>35</sup> The first dimension correctly classifies approximately 98 per cent of the votes in motions for Repeal in the years leading up to 1846, with about seven errors for each vote.<sup>36</sup> This success declines somewhat for the critical vote in 1846, where 95.8 per cent of the votes are correctly classified, the PRE is 0.905, and the errors climb to

<sup>32</sup> Overall partisanship by electors declined markedly from 1841 to 1847. An analysis of split votes (where electors in double-member districts split their votes between the two major parties, voting both for a Conservative and for a Liberal) and non-partisan plumping rates (where electors used only one of their two votes for a candidate when a candidate of the same party was available) reveals that the 1841 election was far more partisan than was the 1847 election (Cox, *The Efficient Secret*).

<sup>33</sup> The program used to generate the NOMINATE scores includes only those legislators who cast at least twenty-five votes.

<sup>34</sup> Owing to the considerable turnover in MPs during 1841–47, the Aydelotte dataset contains 815 MPs (i.e., the total number of MPs who sat at some point during the life of the parliament), while only 658 MPs sat in parliament at any one time (and only 656 after the disfranchisement of Sudbury in 1844). Hence the 590 English MPs (reduced to 483 after deducting those who failed to cast at least twenty-five votes) include members who sat for a short period and ones who sat for the entire parliament.

<sup>35</sup> A rank order list of MPs by the first dimension coordinates provides some support for trade policy as the underlying force to the first dimension: the three leading free traders – Richard Cobden, John Bright and Charles Villiers, who consistently voted for free trade – are at the top of the list, with Cobden in the lead. Conversely, protectionist MPs are at the bottom.

<sup>36</sup> Four critical motions for repeal are analysed, all of which reflected annual attempts by Charles Villiers, MP, to repeal the Corn Laws. The dates for these motions are 11 July 1842; 15 May 1843; 26 June 1844; and 10 June 1845. The percentage of votes correctly classified, PRE and errors for each division, are: 1842 – 97.5 per cent, 0.963 (7 errors); 1843 – 97.9 per cent, 0.972 (8 errors); 1844 – 98.0 per cent, 0.972 (7 errors); and 1845 – 98.3 per cent, 0.975 (5 errors).

seventeen.<sup>37</sup> In fact, the classification success of both dimensions falls somewhat over the course of the parliament, but particularly in 1846 and 1847.<sup>38</sup> It is plausible that a new policy issue (not captured by NOMINATE) began to replace trade policy. A study of voting patterns after 1847 could better resolve this uncertainty, as it would provide a longer time frame for gauging the dimensionality of roll-call votes. However, inasmuch as research has shown that party discipline was low in parliament *and* the constituencies from Repeal until the late 1850s,<sup>39</sup> any new issue dimension that could have replaced trade policy as the fundamental conflict would have done so in a period when party structure had shattered (particularly 1846–47). Moreover, the history of British politics offers no clear view as to what might have constituted a single underlying orientation of opinion (other than trade policy) at the time of Repeal and its immediate aftermath.

An analysis of the overlap of the first dimension with party affiliation reveals more. Roughly speaking, the parties split on the question of free trade, with the majority of Liberals favouring free trade and – at least until the intra-party split in 1846 – the vast majority of the Conservatives favouring protection. Hence, a simple density plot of the coordinates of MPs for the first dimension should reflect a Liberal cluster and a Conservative cluster. Figure 1 confirms this expectation, as a clear gap separates the Conservatives from the Liberals, thereby illustrating the overlap between party affiliation positions on trade policy and the first dimension.

A more refined party breakdown lends further support to this interpretation. Figure 2 shows a density plot of the spatial positions of MPs, but with a four-party classification – non-Peelite Conservatives, Peelite Conservatives, Whigs/Liberals, and Reformers.<sup>40</sup>

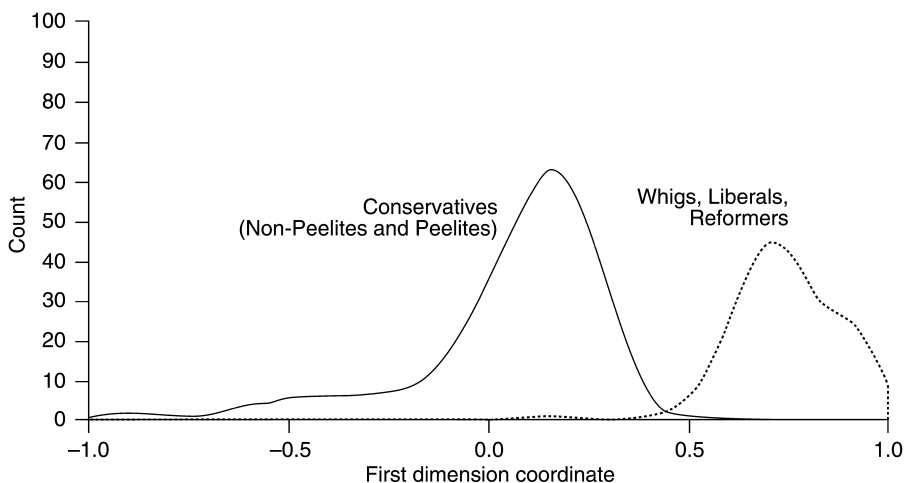


Fig. 1. Two-party distribution within NOMINATE's first dimension coordinate

<sup>37</sup> While their procedure allows the analysis of individual roll-call votes, Poole and Rosenthal note that their estimates of roll-call outcomes are less reliable than are their estimates for the spatial locations of legislators or the cutting lines. Hence, certain roll calls will exhibit a large number of misclassified votes while others will have few or no errors.

<sup>38</sup> There appears to be a decline in the classification success of both the one-dimensional and two-dimensional models over the course of the parliament. For further discussion, see author's personal website.

<sup>39</sup> Cox, *The Efficient Secret*.

<sup>40</sup> This classification is from Aydelotte.

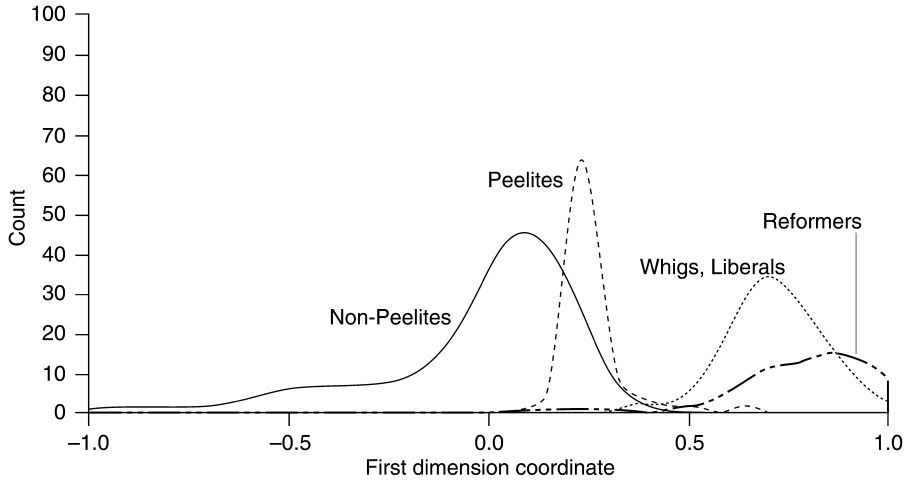


Fig. 2. Major party groupings within NOMINATE's first dimension coordinate

Along the first dimension, MPs divide into these four clusters: non-Peelite Conservatives, Peelite Conservatives, Whigs/Liberals and Reformers (the mean of the first dimension for each of these, respectively, is  $-0.032$ ,  $0.249$ ,  $0.712$  and  $0.788$ ).<sup>41</sup> Non-Peelite Conservatives are less tightly clustered (that is, they occupy more issue space) than any of the other three party categories. The Peelites are, in contrast, more tightly clustered with only a very slight positive skew, meaning that they occupied less issue space than the non-Peelite Conservatives. The first dimension coordinates of Liberals and Reformers are fairly evenly distributed, but – as expected – clustered near to the free-trade end of the spectrum.

The distinct spike in the Peelite distribution supports the contention that the Peelites thought about issues differently from non-Peelite Conservatives – and that they did so well before 1846.<sup>42</sup> Yet, the possibility remains that this distribution may instead be capturing a tautology. That is, the first dimension may simply be capturing MPs' votes in May 1846, and so the Peelites were distinct because they voted distinctly in 1846. Aydelotte's original Guttman scales can be used to test whether the Peelites and non-Peelite Conservatives exhibited distinct voting patterns on roll calls that were *unrelated to Repeal*. A two-tailed simple *t*-test for equality of means reveals that the scores of Peelites were indeed significantly different from those of non-Peelite Conservatives on sixteen out of the nineteen scales that were unrelated to Repeal.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the same test applied to

<sup>41</sup> Further investigation reveals that the content of the second dimension is the conflict over factory legislation (see author's personal website).

<sup>42</sup> A two-tailed *t*-test for equality of means for the Peelites and non-Peelites indicates that the difference is significant at the 1 per cent level.

<sup>43</sup> Not included in the total of nineteen are the Corn Laws scale, the Big Scale and the Conservative Party scale (for which, differences in the means of the two groups are statistically significant at the 1 per cent level). Differences in the means for the two groups in the Landed Interest, Religion, and Enlarged Canada Wheat scales are all statistically insignificant. Differences in the means for the Working Class Distress scale are significant at 5 per cent, while those for the remaining fifteen scales are significant at the 1 per cent level.

McLean's revised version of seven of these scales<sup>44</sup> shows that the differences between the two groups are, again, statistically significant.<sup>45</sup>

Figure 2 can be supplemented with contingency tables of constituency types and party affiliation to underscore the notion of parties as coalitions of interests-based alliances. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate that the Conservative party was forged from two alliances of economic interests.<sup>46</sup> The strident protectionists (non-Peelites) represented mostly agricultural districts with protectionist interests, while the moderate protectionists (Peelites) represented a mixture of agricultural and industry-oriented districts. From Table 1, it is clear that the Peelites, Whigs/Liberals and Reformers were all predominantly from boroughs while the non-Peelites were evenly split between county and borough districts. As this split depicts a rural/urban divide, Peelites were more likely to represent free-trade leaning interests than were non-Peelites. Table 2 lists districts according to their economic orientation, from 'most protectionist' to 'most free trade'. Once again, the vast majority of Peelites represented 'protectionist oriented' or 'neutral' districts (very similar to those represented by the free-trading Liberals and Reformers), while the vast majority of non-Peelites represented the 'most protectionist' and 'protectionist oriented' districts.

This configuration is consistent with the argument that the Peelites supported their fellow Conservatives as long as what was at stake was the long-term interest of party unity.<sup>47</sup> Protection, therefore, was subsumed within the broader Conservative party defence of traditional British institutions, even though it did not square well with the preferences of some of the Peelites' constituents. But, once voting for protection no longer served the Peelites' desire for party unity – as Peel's support for Repeal in 1846 foreclosed this outcome – their voting behaviour reflected their interest in more closely representing their constituents' preferences. For Peelites, this meant that protection ceased to form part of the bundle of traditional British institutions. In brief, the Conservative party was an

TABLE 1 *Association Between MP Party Affiliation and District Type*

District type	Non-Peelite Conservatives	Peelites	Whigs/ Liberals	Reformers	Total
County	140 (50.9%)	14 (15.4%)	21 (14.0%)	5 (6.8%)	180 (30.5%)
Borough	135 (49.1%)	77 (84.6%)	129 (86.0%)	69 (93.2%)	410 (69.5%)
Total	275 (100%)	91 (100%)	150 (100%)	74 (100%)	590 (100%)

<sup>44</sup> McLean, 'Interests and Ideology'.

<sup>45</sup> The differences in means for McLean's three revised Canada Wheat scales are significant at the 5 per cent level, while those for his remaining revised scales are significant at the 1 per cent level.

<sup>46</sup> Regressing the two blocks of Conservatives on four constituency interests variables obtains a weak but significant correlation. All the predictors except electoral reform are significant at 1 per cent and, overall, the model correctly predicts 75 per cent of the cases.

<sup>47</sup> Their voting behaviour on trade policy up to 1846 could even be described as adhering to a sense of 'false consciousness' (K. Bawn, 'Constructing "Us": Ideology, Coalition Politics, and False Consciousness', *American Journal of Political Science*, 43 (1999), 303–34).

TABLE 2 *Association Between MP Party Affiliation and District Economic Orientation*

District economic orientation	Non-Peelite Conservatives	Peelites	Whigs/Liberals	Reformers	Total
Most protectionist	106 (38.5%)	11 (12.1%)	18 (12.0%)	6 (8.1%)	141 (23.9%)
Protectionist oriented	116 (42.2%)	50 (54.9%)	67 (44.7%)	30 (40.5%)	263 (44.6%)
Neutral or mixed	33 (12.0%)	20 (22.0%)	32 (21.3%)	19 (25.7%)	104 (17.6%)
Free-trade oriented	14 (5.1%)	8 (8.8%)	20 (13.3%)	12 (16.2%)	54 (9.2%)
Most free trade	6 (2.2%)	2 (2.2%)	13 (8.7%)	7 (9.5%)	28 (4.7%)
Total	275 (100%)	91 (100%)	150 (100%)	74 (100%)	590 (100%)

ideological coalition that cut across two distinct interests-based alliances, and so was inherently unstable.

#### INTERESTS IN AN IDEOLOGICAL PARLIAMENT

In spite of a seemingly impressive ability to classify MPs' votes, the NOMINATE technique suffers from a number of problems in this context. First, while spatial positions revealed by NOMINATE are the product of votes by MPs on all divisions over the duration of the parliament, they provide no information on *why* MPs voted as they did. We know that their votes reveal a pattern but we do not know what explains the pattern of the first dimension. It is tempting to suggest that it must reflect the major conflict of the parliament, namely trade policy. But that is not enough: the aim here is to identify separately the contributions to explaining that pattern from MPs' ideology, party affiliation and constituency interests. To do this requires more detailed analysis to sort out the appropriate weights for these three influences.

#### *Dissecting Interests, Party and MP Ideology: The 'Errors'*

A very simple way to begin to identify the role for constituency interests in the critical Repeal division of 1846 is to study those seventeen MPs whose votes could not be correctly classified (by a one-dimensional NOMINATE model). Table 3 lists the seventeen MPs, along with their constituency, party affiliation, first dimension coordinate and four indicators of constituency economic composition. The first two indicators are measures of portfolio diversification by landowners, based on death duty registers and income tax return schedules. The greater the diversification, the more likely the MP was to vote for

TABLE 3 *Third Reading of Repeal: Errors in One-Dimensional Spatial Model*

Name	Constituency	Party	Coord. 1 score	Diversification (DD)*	Diversification (IT)†	District type‡	District econ. orient.§
<i>Voted No, predicted Yes (10)</i>							
Sir R. Vyvyan	Helstone	Conservative	0.019	-1.0	-	1	2
Lord J. Manners	Newark on Trent	Conservative	0.046	-1.0	0.9596	1	2
W. B. Ferrand	Knarborough	Conservative	0.063	-0.49	-	1	2
R. B. Sheridan	Shaftesbury	Conservative	0.108	-1.0	-	1	2
E. S. Cayley	Yorkshire	Liberal	0.148	-0.49	-0.2492	0	2
Lord Worsley	Lincolnshire	Liberal	0.223	-1.0	-0.4720	0	1
E. Heneage	Great Grimsby	Liberal	0.230	-1.0	0.8768	1	2
W. J. Denison	Surrey	Conservative	0.249	-0.37	0.2034	0	1
J. S. W. Drax	Wareham	Conservative	0.289	-1.0	-	1	2
J. Bell	Thirsk	Liberal	0.305	-0.49	-	1	2
<i>Mean</i>			<i>0.168</i>	<i>-0.784</i>	<i>0.2637</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>1.8</i>
<i>Voted Yes, predicted No (7)</i>							
Sir Frederick Thesiger	Abingdon	Conservative	-0.059	-	0.9293	1	2
H. Stuart	Bedford	Conservative	0.008	-0.75	-	1	2
W. S. Dugdale	Warwickshire	Conservative	0.009	-0.27	-0.1795	0	1
T. G. B. Estcourt	Oxford Univ	Conservative	0.009	-0.23	0.9417	1	2
J. Masterman	London City	Conservative	0.009	-0.54	-	1	3
W. T. Egerton	Cheshire	Conservative	0.013	-0.65	-0.1146	0	1
W. Beckett	Leeds	Conservative	0.015	-0.49	0.9729	1	5
<i>Mean</i>			<i>0.0006</i>	<i>-0.488</i>	<i>0.510</i>	<i>0.714</i>	<i>2.29</i>

\*Death duty register measure of portfolio diversification by landowners.

†Income tax returns measure of portfolio diversification by landowners.

‡Boroughs, 1; counties, 0.

§Most protectionist, 1; protectionist orientated, 2; neutral or mixed, 3; free-trade orientated, 4; most free trade, 5.

repeal.<sup>48</sup> The other two, district type and district economic orientation, are the same variables presented in Tables 1 and 2.

The errors in the upper section of Table 3 are protectionist MPs. According to a spatial model, they should have voted for free trade but failed to do so in 1846. Conversely, the errors in the lower section are free traders – but were designated as protectionists by their other votes in the 1841–47 Parliament. Comparing the means of the first dimension scores, we can see that the protectionist MPs averaged a considerably higher score than did the free traders – which is, of course, another way of illustrating the errors in predicting these votes. Notably, the protectionist errors are on average further from the cut point (i.e., the point that divides the Yea and the Nay votes) than the free trade errors – that is, they are ‘bigger’ errors. Yet the means of all four economic interest variables would place each group in the correct voting camp: the average scores for the free traders are all larger than those for the protectionists, which is what an economic interest model would predict. Because the groups are very small, we cannot say that the means are statistically significant<sup>49</sup> – however, as the story is consistent across all four variables, we can conclude that there is some further support for the role of constituency economic interests affecting the votes of these MPs.

*Dissecting Interests, Party and MP Ideology: The Schism between Non-Peelites and Peelites*

The model presented earlier provides a more comprehensive way to assess the extent to which MPs voted as trustees and/or delegates.<sup>50</sup> Equations 1 and 2 dissect the first dimension coordinate into three variables – constituency interests, party and MP ideology. Figure 3 provides density plots of these three variables, along with the original

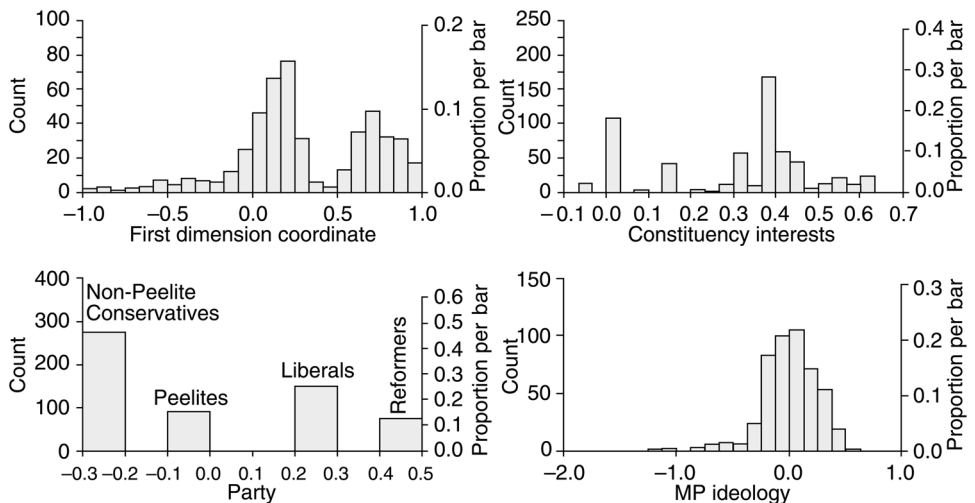


Fig. 3. First dimension coordinate separated into interests, party and (new) ideology

<sup>48</sup> Schonhardt-Bailey, ‘Specific Factors’.

<sup>49</sup> A simple test of means finds that just the death duty diversification variable is statistically significant at 1 per cent.

<sup>50</sup> Four other models of parliamentary voting were tested. For details, see author’s personal website.



first dimension coordinate. The bi-modal distribution of the first dimension coordinate reflects the two major-party divisions, with Conservatives on the left and Liberals on the right (as seen in Figure 1). Constituency interests is a more dispersed measure, but nonetheless illustrates a prominent clustering of free-trade oriented interests towards the right side of the graph. The party variable simply illustrates the four party subgroups (as components of the first dimension coordinate). Most revealing, MP ideology, once stripped of interests and party, begins to resemble a normal distribution, albeit with a negative skew. While it is tempting simply to assume that this residual term provides an adequate measure of MP personal ideology, it remains a logical possibility that it may be a consequence rather than a determinant of votes in parliament (and therefore cannot be considered to be exogenous in a model of voting behaviour). It is also conceivable that this variable reflects the pattern of ideological consistency imposed by the national parties. While it may be impossible to say with absolute certainty that this variable is an acceptable proxy for MP ideology, Figures 4, 5, and 6 help to clarify that this variable does indeed appear to measure a normal left–right ideological continuum, with *left* leaning towards *free trade* and *right* leaning towards *protection*.<sup>51</sup>

Figures 4 and 5 are density plots of MP ideology, with groupings for district type and district economic orientation. Both plots tell the same story: MPs from rural, agricultural districts (which opposed repeal most stridently) were to the ‘right’ in their ideological orientation, while MPs from districts with more urban/industrial interests (which viewed Repeal more favourably) were near to the centre, or slightly left of centre in their

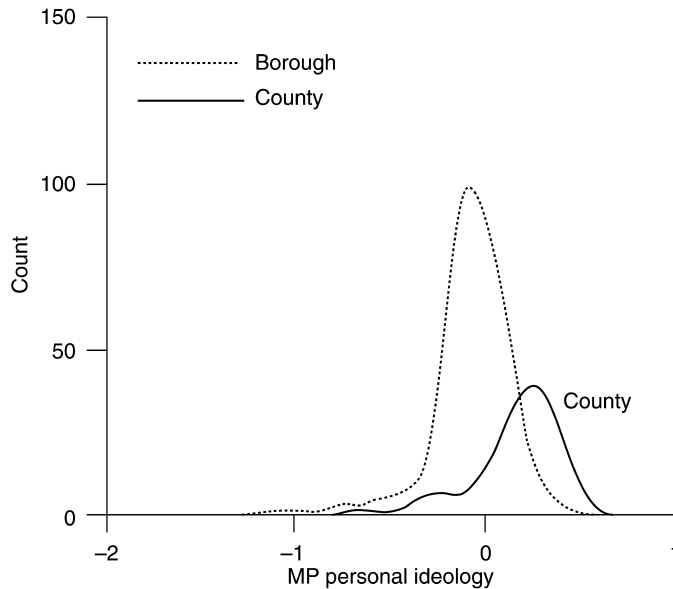


Fig. 4. New MP ideology by district type

<sup>51</sup> Hence, MP ideology differs from the first dimension coordinate in Figures 1 and 2, where parties situated towards one end of the spectrum supported protection and those to the other supported free trade. This transformation of the ideological spectrum is a feature of stripping the party component from the first dimension coordinate in order to arrive at a ‘purer’ measure of MP ideology.

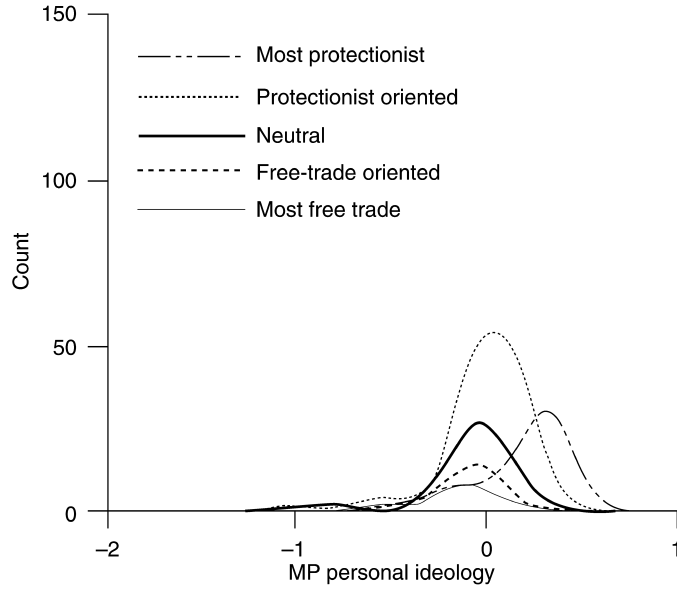


Fig. 5. New MP ideology by district economic orientation

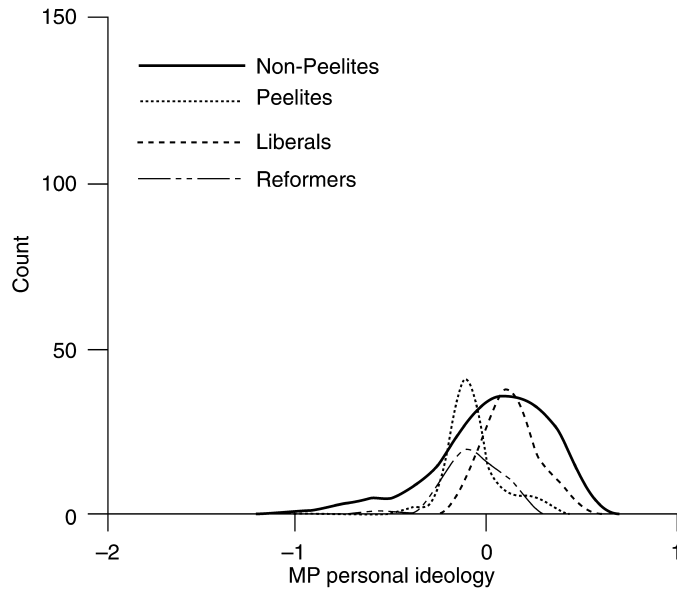


Fig. 6. New MP ideology by party affiliation

ideological orientation. That this measure coincides with the interests of constituents should be no surprise, as others have found that constituents tended to select like-minded MPs, and MPs, in turn, tended to select constituencies in which they could win.<sup>52</sup> Of

<sup>52</sup> Cox, *The Efficient Secret*, p. 151.

TABLE 4 *Motions for Repeal from 1842 to 1846*

Variable	11 July 1842	15 May 1843	26 June 1844	10 June 1845	15 May 1846
Constant	-23.076** (9.132)	-42.030*** (12.008)	-22.713*** (5.867)	-22.272*** (7.793)	-3.168*** (0.997)
Constituency interests	51.302** (21.418)	67.573*** (19.249)	48.587*** (13.306)	42.378*** (14.127)	12.636*** (3.268)
Party	25.681*** (7.522)	55.620*** (16.222)	20.924*** (5.055)	32.633*** (12.054)	24.621*** (4.020)
MP ideology	32.425** (13.397)	51.153*** (14.780)	30.086*** (8.642)	32.704*** (12.144)	2.101 (2.343)
Second dimension coordinate	-1.221 (1.906)	-1.974 (2.018)	-1.983 (1.343)	-0.846 (1.1459)	-7.673*** (1.604)
-2 Log Likelihood	14.12	29.52	24.74	19.60	66.29
% correctly predicted	99.27	98.94	98.86	98.27	97.32
Errors (observed Yeas)	1	1	1	2	5
Errors (observed Nays)	1	3	3	3	6
Number of cases	274	376	350	289	411

Note: Standard error in parentheses, \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

particular interest is the distinctly right of centre position of MPs from highly protectionist districts (Figure 5). From Table 2, we know that the vast majority of these MPs were also non-Peelites. In contrast, MPs from protectionist-oriented and neutral districts – many of whom were Peelites – tended to be positioned at the centre or slightly to the left of centre.

Figure 6 is also a density plot of MPs' ideology, but with party groupings. We see an ideological distinction between non-Peelites and Peelites, which undermines an interpretation of the residual as measuring the ideological *consistency* imposed by the Conservative party. Figure 6, moreover, provides an illustration of the core argument of this article. The Conservative party was a coalition of two distinct interests-based factions. While the Peelites shared the general ideology of the Conservative party (represented in Figure 6 as overlapping ideological space with the non-Peelites), they formed a distinct (left of centre) subset, which in turn was aligned with the interests of their constituents. Prior to 1846, their protectionist votes conflicted with a personal ideology that coincided more with constituents' interests. Meanwhile, the non-Peelite Conservatives, positioned to the right of centre, faced no such conflict between personal ideology and constituents' interests. Finally, it is worth noting a comparison between Figures 2 and 6.<sup>53</sup> In Figure 2, ideology, partisanship and constituency interests are intertwined, whereas in Figure 6, the effects of partisanship and constituency interests on the first dimension coordinate have been extracted, leaving what appears to be a purer measure of MPs' ideology. Figure 6 reveals, moreover, that MPs' ideology appeared to share a considerable amount of common space. Yet, even in this common space, Peelites retained a distinct ideological identity.

### *Regression Analysis of Repeal Votes*

From the model displayed earlier, we obtain our three key predictors of the Repeal legislation – constituency interests, party and MPs' ideology. To these predictors I add the second dimension coordinate from NOMINATE, as a way to test for the robustness of the key variables. Table 4 presents the results of logistic regressions for annual votes on Repeal leading up to and including the final vote in 1846.<sup>54</sup> For the final Repeal vote, the model correctly predicts all but five of the votes of the Peelites, which is no small task.<sup>55</sup> What is more intriguing is that MPs' ideology appears to have had little or no bearing on the Repeal vote, while constituency interests, party and the second dimension coordinate<sup>56</sup> are all significant at 1 per cent.

<sup>53</sup> Figure 6 resembles more closely a traditional left–right ideological continuum, while Figure 2 reflects more the partisan component of the first dimension coordinate.

<sup>54</sup> A model that follows the Kalt and Zupan method (by including party affiliation in the first and only regression) obtains the same overall percentage correctly predicted as Model 4 (discussed on the author's personal website), and results in no errors for the observed Yeas and eight for the observed Nays. This model was, however, considered inappropriate for reasons discussed above.

<sup>55</sup> Data limitations described earlier mean that this model actually explains seventy-seven of the eighty-two Peelites for whom I have data (see author's personal website).

<sup>56</sup> At first glance, the statistical significance of the second dimension coordinate is puzzling, as it clearly *lessens* the predictive success of the model in 1846 (the one-dimensional model misclassifies seventeen votes – with a PRE of 0.905 – while the two-dimensional model misclassifies twenty-two votes – with a PRE of 0.877). It is important, then, to ask whether there is a causal relationship between the apparent split between Peelites and non-Peelite Conservatives on the second dimension and the split on Repeal. In a nutshell, the answer is yes, but the direction of causality runs from the split on Repeal to the split on the second dimension. That is, hostility towards Repeal *shaped* the cleavage on the second dimension, *not* vice versa. For further discussion, see the author's personal website.

TABLE 5 *Estimated Effects of Constituency Interests and MP Ideology on Peelites and Non-Peelite Conservatives*

Variable	Peelites		Non-Peelite Conservatives	
	11 July 1842	15 May 1846	11 July 1842	15 May 1846
<i>Constituency interests</i>				
Probability of yes vote*	1.78e-06 (4.17e-05)	0.029 (0.035)	0.006 (0.071)	4.42e-04 (0.002)
Difference in probability of yes vote†	0.997 (0.017)	0.955 (0.059)	0.773 (0.334)	0.321 (0.181)
<i>MP ideology</i>				
Probability of yes vote‡	1.84e-06 (4.81e-05)	0.261 (0.256)	0.009 (0.094)	0.019 (0.076)
Difference in probability of yes vote§	0.984 (0.085)	0.573 (0.340)	0.767 (0.364)	0.033 (0.118)

Note: Standard error in parentheses.

\*Pr(yes) when MP ideology and second dimension coordinate are set to their mean values, constituency interests is set to its minimum value, and party is set to equal Peelite.

†The difference in the Pr(yes) when constituency interests is changed to its maximum value.

‡Pr(yes) when constituency interests and second dimension coordinate are set to their mean values, MP ideology is set to its minimum value, and party is set to equal non-Peelite Conservative.

§The difference in the Pr(yes) when MP ideology is changed to its maximum value.

The very strong performance of constituency interests and party in predicting the Repeal vote does not, however, suggest that MPs' ideology had no role to play in the progression to Repeal. From previous divisions on Repeal, we see a very dramatic shift in the role of MPs' ideology in 1846. From 1842 to 1845, the ideology of MPs is highly significant (at 1 per cent in 1843–45 and 5 per cent in 1842), as too are all the remaining variables except the second dimension coordinate. As a model, the variables explain 98–99 per cent of the Repeal votes. This suggests that the portions of the first dimension coordinate that can be attributed to (a) constituency interests, (b) party, and (c) MPs' ideology, *all* carried weight in the voting decisions of MPs, *until* the actual Repeal vote. In 1846, an abrupt change occurred: MPs' personal ideology appears to have had little or no influence in their decision. Rather, they were motivated more by the desire to further their constituents' interests. Repeal appears to have gained passage as (at least some) MPs switched from voting as trustees to voting as delegates.

The coefficient estimates from Table 4 may be used to conduct simulations that allow us to estimate the *substantive* effect of changes in key variables – particularly, constituency interests and MPs' ideology – on the simulated probability of a free-trade vote. Using the parameters from the logistic regressions from Table 4, 1,000 simulated sets of parameters are generated.<sup>57</sup> From these, two probabilities are calculated for each of the key variables, creating a set of probabilities for each faction of the Conservative party. The first is the probability of a vote in favour of free trade when MPs' ideology and the second dimension coordinate are set to their mean values, constituency interests is set to its minimum value, and the party variable is set equal to Peelite. This simulates the probability of a Peelite from a highly rural constituency (whose ideology and second dimension coordinate values are considered average) voting for free trade. The second simulates the change that results in the first set of probabilities when constituency interests is changed to its maximum value. This allows us to compare the probability of a free-trade vote from a Peelite representing a rural constituency with one representing an industrial, export-oriented district (all else held constant). Similarly, the probability of a free-trade vote is calculated for a Peelite whose ideology falls at the extreme left of the spectrum, with the remaining variables (constituency interests and second dimension coordinate) set at their mean values. As with constituency interests, a second probability then simulates the change that results when we consider a Peelite whose ideology falls at the extreme right of the spectrum (all else held constant). This same set of probabilities is replicated, but for the non-Peelite faction of the Conservative party. For simplicity, probabilities from just the early division and the final division are considered, with the results given in Table 5.<sup>58</sup>

From Table 5 we can see that, over the whole of the parliament, constituency interests and personal ideology weighed more heavily for Peelites than non-Peelites (as the differences in all the probabilities are greater for non-Peelites). This suggests that non-Peelites were driven more by the broader Conservative ideology (which viewed protection as a traditional British institution) than were Peelites, which is consistent with the argument of this article. Nonetheless, constituency interests and personal ideology also affected the votes of non-Peelites, but more so in 1842 than in 1846. In 1842, both variables

<sup>57</sup> G. King, M. Tomz and J. Wittenberg, 'Making the Most of Statistical Analyses: Improving Interpretation and Presentation', *American Journal of Political Science*, 44 (2000), 347–61; M. Tomz, J. Wittenberg and G. King, *CLARIFY: Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results, Version 2.0* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 2001) (<http://gking.harvard.edu>).

<sup>58</sup> The interpretations of the probabilities given below are consistent with those of the omitted years.

generate an increase in the probability of a free-trade vote of about 0.77, while in 1846, constituency interests generates an increase of just 0.32 and personal ideology a minuscule (and statistically insignificant) 0.03. It seems fair to say, then, that in the final 1846 vote, non-Peelites were affected in part by constituency interests but not at all by personal ideology.

For Peelites, it is clear that constituency interests had a very strong effect on voting behaviour for the duration of the parliament. Changing the orientation of the district from rural to industrial increases the probability of a Peelite voting for free trade from virtually zero to almost one. In contrast, the effect of ideology is very strong in 1842 (with a change from its minimum to its maximum value resulting in an increase in the probability of a free-trade vote from almost zero to almost one), but weak (and statistically insignificant) in 1846. This provides firm evidence in support of the contention that, as the influence of ideology dissipated in 1846, Peelites voted more as delegates.

#### MPS' IDEOLOGY: SHIRKING OR REPUTATION BUILDING?

A lively and on-going debate in the legislative studies literature contrasts 'bad' ideology with 'good' ideology.<sup>59</sup> For some, legislators who serve their own ideological preferences instead of the preferences of their constituents are labelled as (bad) 'shirkers'.<sup>60</sup> For others, ideology serves a (good) reputational purpose inasmuch as legislators who vote against their established (ideologically based) reputations do themselves a disservice by devaluing that reputation.<sup>61</sup> This study provides some insights into the strengths and limitations of both interpretations of ideology by providing a relatively simple case with which to explore the interplay between ideology and constituency interests.

The case of mid-nineteenth century Britain is unusual in that it is one of the few examples of a political environment in which a single issue is dominant. Politics in the 1840s most definitely revolved around trade policy: the election of 1841 was characterized largely as a mandate on trade policy (with the Conservative party standing for protection); the overriding issue of the 1841–47 Parliament was the Corn Laws; and Repeal caused the ultimate demise of the Peel government and the disintegration of the Conservative party. This single-issue dominance allows us to simplify the interests of constituents according to their preferences on trade policy (as, for example, in Table 2). Let us further assume that the trade policy preference of the median voter can be defined by an aggregate measure, derived from 'district economic orientation' (from Table 2).<sup>62</sup>

It is almost certain that the median voter in non-Peelite Conservative constituencies favoured protection. This means that non-Peelite Conservatives were not 'shirkers', as they consistently voted for protection throughout the parliament. However, these MPs were also

<sup>59</sup> Richardson and Munger, 'Shirking, Representation and Congressional Behavior'.

<sup>60</sup> Peltzman, 'Constituent Interest and Congressional Voting'; D. Nelson and E. Silberberg, 'Ideology and Legislator Shirking', *Economic Inquiry*, 25 (1987), 15–25.

<sup>61</sup> Dougan and Munger, 'The Rationality of Ideology'; Richardson and Munger, 'Shirking, Representation and Congressional Behavior'.

<sup>62</sup> This sets aside differences between the geographic constituency and the election constituency (R. F. Fenno, *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1978); Uslander, *The Movers and the Shirkers*), as well as questions arising from the limited franchise. Aggregate measures of constituency interests include those of the disenfranchised, and if these were found to differ from those of the franchised, may introduce a bias to the measurement of constituency interests. Such a bias is, however, unlikely as the interests of the disenfranchised (which include free-trade-oriented industrial workers and protectionist-oriented rural labourers) may very well simply mirror those of the franchised (namely industrial capitalists and landowners).

wedded to a Conservative ideology in which protection was considered a fundamental British institution. And, moreover, the Conservative party's reputation for defending protection was critical to the 1841 election. It is, therefore, impossible to be certain about what motivated the protectionist votes of non-Peelite Conservatives, as a Conservative ideology and constituency interests point in the same direction. Moreover, a concern for maintaining their reputations as true defenders of 'Conservatism' may have figured in the 1846 vote, as these MPs saw their leader and the rest of their party defect to free trade. In short, these MPs may have been voting as simple delegates for the duration of the parliament, or may have been motivated by a broader Conservative ideology. What is very clear is that they were *not* shirking.

The preference of the median voter in Peelite constituencies is less certain, but in all likelihood was borderline protectionist, with some leanings towards free-trade. As such, it is a stretch to characterize a free-trade vote in 1846 as 'shirking'. Indeed, the notion of shirking is virtually meaningless in a context of a median voter who is situated very near (if not at) the point of indifference. But to characterize Peelite voting as reputation building is no more helpful, as an ideological reputation suggests constancy in voting – not an abrupt reversal. The most appropriate interpretation of Peelite voting behaviour (subject to the limitations of econometric testing)<sup>63</sup> is as described earlier, that before 1846, Peelites voted according to a general Conservative ideology, but in 1846 their votes reflected a median voter who was leaning towards free trade.

Finally, this case points to two general limitations of both the shirking and reputation-building interpretations of ideology. First, neither interpretation is conducive to an understanding of why legislators abruptly *change* their votes. In the case of Repeal, the source of change stemmed from the instability inherent in a Conservative party that, while sharing a general Conservative ideology, was the marriage of two distinct interests-based alliances. That is, Peelite conversion to free trade came from a conflict between a Conservative ideology and constituents' interests which eventually erupted when their leader moved for Repeal. Without examining how interests intersect with ideology it is impossible to understand an abrupt reversal such as Repeal. Hence, where the task is to explain shifts in voting patterns (particularly for issues such as trade policy where interests are highly charged), a focus strictly on ideology (defined either as shirking or reputation-building) has severe limitations.

Secondly, the quantity measure of shirking suggested by Kalt and Zupan – namely, the absolute value of the ideology residual – can result in misleading findings where the direction of interests is of fundamental importance. Comparing this measure across party groups, it appears that non-Peelite Conservatives demonstrated far more shirking than Peelites, Whigs/Liberals and Reformers, as we obtain measures of shirking for each party group of 0.235, 0.144, 0.141 and 0.139, respectively. This would suggest that non-Peelite Conservatives were even more protectionist than their constituents desired, while the rest were more closely aligned with the interests of their constituents. In Kalt and Zupan's view,

<sup>63</sup> The motivations of MPs are invariably difficult to capture from roll-call analysis. Ideally, researchers would use content analysis to evaluate the written and verbal explanations given by MPs for their positions. While these too may have their own limitations, the combination of roll-call analysis and content analysis should provide a better understanding of the motivations of MPs as they face the cross-pressures of constituency interests and ideology. Indeed, very recent content analysis of the 1841–47 Parliamentary Debates reveals that the arguments that Peelites invoked to explain their votes did indeed change abruptly in 1846 (C. Schonhardt-Bailey, 'Conservatives Who Sounded Like Trustees But Voted Like Delegates' (unpublished, London School of Economics, 2002, posted on the author's website)). The content of this change is entirely consistent with the argument set forth in this article.



non-Peelites should therefore have lost electoral support as a consequence of their shirking. But, in fact, non-Peelite Conservatives were marginally more successful than Peelites in the general election of 1847,<sup>64</sup> which suggests that non-Peelites may even have gained support from maintaining their protectionist *reputation*. Hence, such a simple quantitative measure of shirking can, in cases where extreme views are likely to generate support, mislead. Thus, if we accept that non-Peelite Conservatives *were* shirking, the presumption that shirking is an electoral liability would require reconsideration.

## CONCLUSION

This article has sought to answer the puzzle of the Peelites by characterizing the Conservative party as a coalition between two interests-based alliances, with a shared concern for retaining traditional British institutions. Non-Peelite Conservatives, who represented mostly agricultural districts, had no motivation to follow Prime Minister Peel as he moved for Repeal: both their Conservatism and representation of rural constituencies pointed towards retaining a firm commitment to protection. Peelites, who represented districts with comparatively more free-trade leaning interests, faced a conflict between their concern for Conservatism and their representation of constituents who were either borderline protectionists or leaning towards free trade. Prior to 1846, they voted in accordance with Conservatism. But in 1846, when their leader foreclosed the option of retaining party unity, Peelites shifted from voting as trustees to voting more as delegates.

More broadly, this article has sought to develop a methodological framework for disentangling the influences of constituency interests, party and personal ideology on the roll-call votes of legislators. It applies widely recognized (though not necessarily universally accepted) methodologies such as the NOMINATE technique and the Kalt and Zupan residualization approach in a way that allows us to gauge the relative influences of interests, party and ideology on MPs in the votes leading up to and including the final third reading of Repeal. Yet, as the British case and its data are obviously historical, one might question whether the analysis presented here is generalizable to other, more contemporary legislative settings. Certainly, nineteenth-century British parties were less cohesive and constituency interests were less complex than in contemporary Britain – but these are only differences of degree. And, certainly, the historical setting made the ideological climate in 1846 unique – but not so much as to prevent contemporary observers from drawing parallels between intra-Conservative party cleavages on Repeal with those on the European Union. Moreover, this article has shown that the ideological make-up of the 1841–47 Parliament can be largely understood within a contemporary left–right continuum. Hence, just as other non-American applications of the NOMINATE method have demonstrated,<sup>65</sup> while legislative settings may differ considerably, the methodologies applied to study them have much in common.

What remains certain is that the findings of this article call into question some of the

<sup>64</sup> In a cross-tabulation of party affiliation and the electoral fate of MPs in the 1847 election, 49 per cent of non-Peelite Conservatives were returned to parliament (with or without a contest) while 45 per cent of Peelites were similarly returned. And similarly, where a contest occurred, 67 per cent of non-Peelites won while 64 per cent of Peelites won.

<sup>65</sup> S. Hix, 'Nations vs Parties vs Ideology: Voting Behavior in the European Parliament, 1994–2000' (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 2000); A. Noury, 'Ideology, Nationality, and Euro-Parliamentarians' (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 2000); Voeten, 'Clashes in the Assembly'.

historiography of nineteenth-century trade policy which tends to view the conversion to Repeal by Peelites as a statement of independence from party and constituents; rather, the message here is that Peelites shifted their votes in order to match more closely the free-trade leaning preferences of their constituents. The findings also point to the need to understand the interplay between ideology, party *and* interests as motivations for roll-call voting behaviour. The progression to Repeal, and indeed Repeal itself, cannot be understood without reference to all three influences.