

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began as a small graduate school project. A professor saw my interest in parties and elections and my curiosity about California politics and encouraged me to dig a little bit. So I dug. I was astounded to find that, as recently as the 1950s, California had nearly nonexistent legislative parties, and it appeared that most state legislative elections were going uncontested. I was interested, as was my professor, who encouraged me to find out more.

That professor, who later became my mentor, colleague, and friend, is John Zaller. Although he is primarily known for his work in public opinion, he had come to develop an interest in party organization right around the time I started graduate school. The little research project he was prodding me to pursue ultimately became the book you are holding now. His encouragement, his enthusiasm for the project, and the high standards he sets for his own work and for that of his students fueled my long but fascinating journey into the history of California's political parties and helped me develop a deeper understanding of my home state. John Zaller's mentorship remains my touchstone as I work with students of my own.

I had a stroke of good fortune when Jeff Lewis joined the UCLA faculty and, a few hours later, my dissertation committee. An innovative methodologist with an interest in California politics, he is also a gifted teacher who is generous with his time. This book has profited tremendously from Jeff's skills and knowledge. In particular, he devised several clever methods of obtaining, inputting, and interpreting roll call votes that allowed us to develop a dataset of every roll call vote ever cast in the California Assembly. Findings from this dataset lie at the heart of this book's analysis. Had it not been for Jeff, I'd likely still be entering the votes for 1851 by hand and looking around for 1852.

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