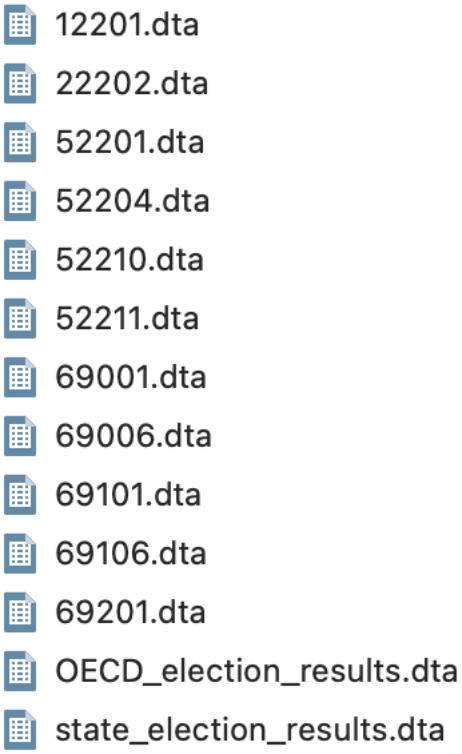
README File

"The Risk of Narrow, Disputable Results in the U.S. Electoral College: 1836-2020
Geruso and Spears
27 August 2023

Short summary. To produce all figures and tables in the paper, run 0_master_do_file.do. Every do file referred to in this README and every dataset called is provided in the packet.

1. DATA. Source datasets, do files, and all files referenced here are deposited in the replication packet.

1.1 Source data files needed to produce intermediate data and all Tables and Figures:



1.2 Descriptions of data files:

The datasets named with five-digit numbers (e.g., 12201.dta) are simulated election outcomes generated by various election models and previously published. No new election simulations were generated for this paper. Instead, each of these datasets was previously publicly released. In detail:

- 1XXXX.dta through 5XXXX.dta come from Geruso, Michael, Dean Spears, and Ishaana Talesara. 2022. “Inversions in US Presidential Elections: 1836?2016.” American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 14(1): 327–57.
- 690XX.dta come from simulations posted by the team at The Economist magazine: Gelman, Andrew, Merlin Heidemanns, and G. Elliott Morris. 2020. “State and national presidential election forecasting model.” https://github.com/TheEconomist/us-potus-model.
- 691XX.dta come from simulations posted by FiveThirtyEight: Silver, Nate. 2020. “FiveThirtyEight 2020 General Election Forecast.” https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2020-election-forecast/.
- 69201.dta corresponds to: Gelman, Andrew, Nate Silver, and Aaron Edlin, 2012. “What is the probability your vote will make a difference?” Economic Inquiry, 50(2): 321–326. This was shared with us for use in this project by Andrew Gelman.

Two additional datasets, described in the Appendix, are used to generate Tables A4 and A5. These are OECD_election_results.dta and state_election_results.dta. These give historical vote outcomes for US elections (US Senate and Governor) and OECD presidential elections.

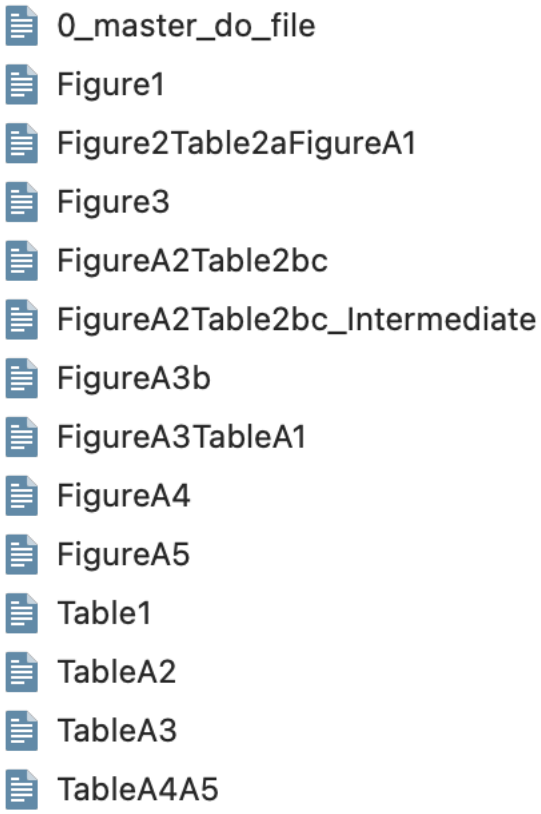
2. SOFTWARE AND COMPUTATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Stata.

- Code was last run with version 16 (MP - Parallel Edition, 64 bit, 2-core)
- We last ran this code on a MacBook Pro with the following specifications.

3. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS (STATA DO FILES)

3.1 List of all files in do_files folder:

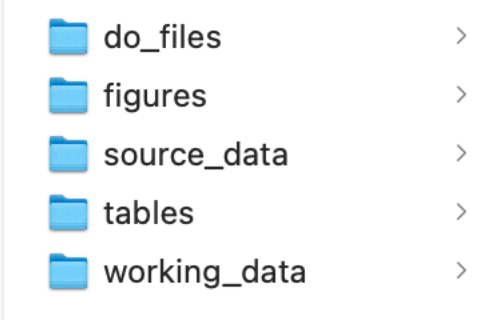


3.2 Description of do files:

- 0_master_do_file.do calls all other do files.
- FigureA2Table2bc_Intermediate.do produces intermediate datasets that are stored in working_data and used in FigureA2Table2bc.do
- The remaining do files produce the figures or tables that are contained in their names. E.g., Figure1.do produces Figure 1.

4. Instructions

1. Ensure that your folder structure matches this:
    a.
        i. do_files
        ii. figures
        iii. source_data
        iv. tables
        v. working_data



2. In 0_master_do_file.do replace `global directory "T:`c(dirsep)'recount"` with the folder in which you have placed the this folder structure (including the replication files in do_files and source_data) on your computer.
4. Run 0_master_do_file.do to make results in paper.