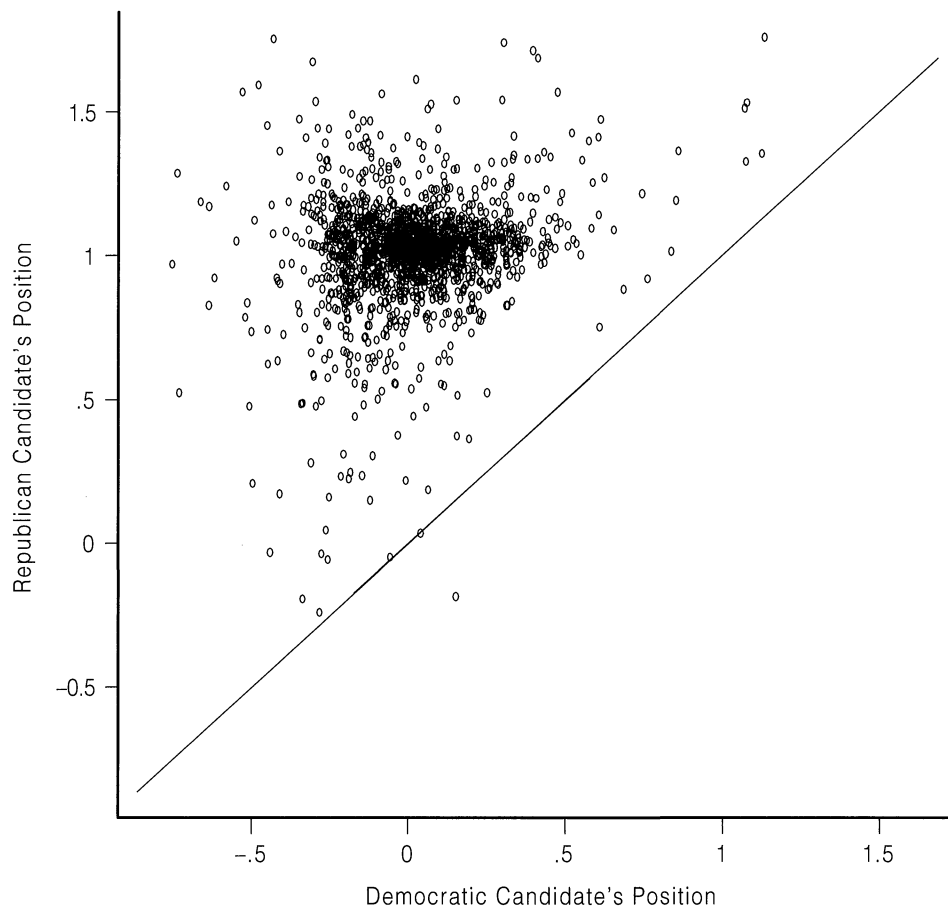


**FIGURE 4** Candidate Positioning, 1874–1996: Republicans vs. Democrats

candidates to take if they converged to the same positions within their individual races.

Democrats and Republicans locally have represented very distinct ideologies since the 1870s. In only two cases, out of the 1,814 races involving distinct opponents since 1874,<sup>16</sup> is there strong evidence of local convergence.<sup>17</sup> In

<sup>16</sup>We found 2,520 total races where a roll-call score was available for both candidates. Of these, 1,814 involved distinct pairs of candidates. The rest involved repeat contests between the same candidates. Analysis reported in this section is confined to distinct candidate pairs.

<sup>17</sup>These two cases are (1) Marcantonio vs. Lanzetta, New York 20th District, 1934 and (2) Stratton vs. Button, New York 29th District, 1970. Both cases illustrate the perils of doing this type of analysis when parties are allowed by state law to run fusion tickets or otherwise endorse each other's candidates. Marcantonio managed to garner the nomination of virtually every New York party at some point in his career, and the Republican Button also ran under the Liberal Party line in 1970.

Even though these are the only two clear cases of candidate convergence in our data set, inspection of Figure 4 reveals many cases of “near” convergence. Given measurement error, there may be even more “real” cases of convergence than we can document using this data set.

all other cases, the Democratic House candidates have always represented a position to the “left” of Republican House candidates. The most distinctive pattern in the figure is that the ideological stances of congressional candidates are highly concentrated around their own parties’ averages.

Another way to judge the divergence of local congressional candidates is to measure the change in ideology of a district’s member of Congress that occurs when partisan control of the seat changes hands. If candidates are not responsive to their districts, the ideological locations of candidates in districts will be a random draw from the pool of each party’s candidates. Thus the average change in ideology across all districts that experience party change will be the difference between the average ideology of all Democratic and Republican candidates. On the other hand, if candidates moderate to conform to local ideological tastes, then the ideological shift resulting from such replacement should be *less* than the average ideological distance between the parties.