HISTORICAL LYNCHINGS AND THE CONTEMPORARY VOTING BEHAVIOR OF BLACKS

Jhacova Williams*

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the extent to which the political participation of blacks can be traced to historical lynchings that took place from 1882 to 1930. Using county-level voter registration data, I show that blacks who reside in southern counties that experienced a relatively higher number of historical lynchings have lower voter registration rates today. This relationship holds after accounting for a variety of historical and contemporary characteristics of counties. Examining individual-level data show that lynchings are significantly associated with voting differences between blacks and whites yet this relationship does not exist for other minorities and whites. (*JEL* J15, Z10)

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"A lynching is much more than just a murder. A murder may occur in private. A lynching is a public spectacle; it demands an audience...A lynching is a majority's way of telling a minority population that the law cannot protect it."

- Aatish Taseer, *Anatomy of a Lynching* (2017)

I   Introduction

Political participation is one of the most fundamental ways in which citizens participate in the democratic process. In theory, it allows each citizen an equal voice in American politics and thereby an equal voice in American public policy. Yet more than fifty years following the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the political participation of blacks remains lower than that of whites in many elections in the United States.[1] Considering that blacks are underrepresented in political participation, thereby causing their interests to be underrepresented in American public policy, examining explanations for low voting activity among blacks can be used to inform policy.

In this paper, I propose an explanation that explores a setting that experienced violent racist acts in the past - the American South. Specifically, I ask whether historical racial animus continues to influence the voting behavior of blacks. Using historical lynchings, a general indicator of the extent to which a county was able to inflict violence on blacks (Jones, Troesken & Walsh 2017) to proxy racial animus, I test whether there exists a link between historical lynchings and the contemporary political participation of blacks.[2] Considering that historical lynchings were mechanisms for social control that discouraged a variety of activities among blacks including voting (Cook, Logan & Parman 2018, Dickerson 2003) recent findings of habit-formation and norm-based voting (DellaVigna, List, Malmendier & Rao 2016, Fujiwara, Meng & Vogl 2016, Gerber, Green & Shachar 2003) and the prevalence of political attitudes of Southern whites (Acharya, Blackwell & Sen 2016), it is plausible that past events continue to predict the political participation of blacks today.[3]

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[1]The Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibited voter-discrimination schemes that prevented blacks from participating politically (Christopher 1965). Figures 1 and 2 show that both voter turnout and voter registration of blacks has been lower than that of whites in Presidential and Midterm elections since the 1980s, the earliest time period in which the Current Population Survey separated race as black, non-Hispanic and white, non-Hispanic.

[2]Recent findings have argued that violence in political settings can create mistrust in the government which may cause individuals to avoid the political process (Blanco 2013, Jones et al. 2017). When viewed as a general indicator of violence, Jones et al. (2017) propose that lynchings would have a *"persistent and lasting effect on voter turnout"*.

[3]Acharya et al. (2016) find that white southerners who currently reside in counties with a higher

To investigate whether historical racial animus continues to influence the political participation of blacks, I combine county-level lynching data with contemporary voter registration data. After accounting for a variety of historical characteristics of counties, the results show that blacks who reside in counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of lynchings from 1882 to 1930 have lower voter registration rates today. Motivated by the possibility that this negative relationship may be due to contemporary measures of education, earnings, Republican party dominance in southern states, high incarceration rates of blacks, the paucity of polling places in counties, and institutional structures that remained after slavery, the analysis includes an additional specification that accounts for these potential mechanisms. The results remain virtually unchanged after the inclusion of these potential confounders.

An alternative explanation for the relationship between historical lynchings and the voting behavior of blacks is that geographic sorting during the Great Migration may have caused blacks with higher voting propensities to migrate away from violent southern areas while blacks who were less likely to participate in voting remained. Using data from the 1940 100% IPUMS-USA, I examine whether black migrants out of southern counties with higher lynching rates differ from individuals who did not migrate from these counties. I find no evidence of geographic sorting as a function of lynching rates which suggests that the relationship between lynchings and voting behavior of blacks is not explained by sorting.

Alternatively, counties with a relatively higher number of historical lynchings may have contemporary barriers that suppress the voting of blacks. For example, if counties that experienced more historical lynchings also have fewer polling places in areas where blacks live today, then the results may be an artifact of this phenomenon. To understand whether the paucity of polling places in black areas explains the relationship between lynchings and the voting behavior of blacks, I use data on polling locations.[4] I find no evidence that counties with a relatively higher number of historical lynchings have fewer polling places in areas where blacks reside.

prevalence of slavery in 1860 are less likely to vote for Democrat candidates, more likely to oppose Affirmative Action, and more likely to hold racial resentment towards blacks. DellaVigna et al. (2016) find that individuals are motivated to vote due to the social image received from family and friends. Gerber et al. (2003) and Fujiwara et al. (2016) show that voting is a habitual act based on previous voting conditions and experiences. Akee, Copeland, Costello, Holbein & Simeonova (2018) find an intergenerational transmission of voting behavior in that there exists a strong correlation between parents' prior voting propensity and their children's voting propensity in the future.

[4]Polling locations are obtained from the Secretary of State Offices in 2017 and reflect polling place locations in the 2016 Presidential Election.

After establishing that there exists a link between historical lynchings and the contemporary political participation of blacks, I turn to perform a number of falsification exercises. First, I estimate the relationship between lynchings and the contemporary voting behavior of whites. Considering that lynchings proxy racial animus in that lynchings can be viewed as a measure of violence that was inflicted on blacks (Jones et al. 2017), blacks were disproportionately lynched in my sample.[5] As such, there should not exist a relationship between lynchings and the contemporary voting behavior of whites. The estimates obtained from these exercises are close to zero and statistically insignificant. Second, I examine whether historical state executions of blacks predict the contemporary political participation of blacks. Considering that historical state executions were not substitutes for historical lynchings (Cook et al. 2018) in that executions were performed under civil authority whereas lynchings were extrajudicial killings that reinforced social control outside of the courts, one might expect historical state executions to have a different association with the contemporary political participation of blacks. The results for this exercise show that there does not exist a significant relationship between historical state executions and the contemporary voting behavior of blacks. In addition, the estimates from this exercise are close to zero. Finally, I conduct a placebo exercise by randomly distributing lynching rates across counties. The cumulative distribution of 500 replication estimates shows that the estimate obtained from the "true" data is uniquely different from the estimates obtained from this placebo exercise.

Next, I examine whether the relationship between lynchings and black political participation can be mitigated. For example, Tate (1991) found that blacks with higher income, more education, and stronger social ties to the black community were more likely to participate in voting. To investigate this, I interact lynching rates with county-level measures of earnings, education, and the black church member rate.[6] The results show that education and earnings do not change the relationship between lynchings and voting. However, the relationship between lynchings and political participation is mitigated by higher rates of black church members.

The final exercise of this paper examines the individual-level voting behavior of blacks and whites. The individual-level voting data are obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS) Voting and Registration Supplement. Using county and state identifiers of

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[5]Nearly 90% of the victims of lynchings were black.

[6]The black church member rate is the number of members that attend churches with predominate black congregations per black 10,000 population in 2010.

respondents, I assign each respondent a historical lynching rate based on his or her current residence. The results show that blacks who currently reside in counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of lynchings are less likely to vote in an election compared to their white counterparts who live in the same county.[7] To test whether similar differences in voting behavior exist in groups that were not directly affected by lynchings, I examine the relationship between historical lynchings and voting differences of other minority groups and whites.[8] The minority groups included are foreign-born blacks, Native Americans, Asians, and Hispanics. The estimates obtained from this exercise show that there does not exist a significant difference in voting between individuals belonging to minority groups and whites for higher rates of lynchings. This indicates that historical lynchings are significantly associated with voting differences between blacks and whites yet lynchings are not significantly associated with voting differences between other minorities and whites.

There are two main contributions of this paper. First, it adds to recent findings in economics by helping us understand how an initial shock that alters behavior can have a persistent impact (Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson 2012, Acharya et al. 2016, Nunn & Wantchekon 2011, Voigtländer & Voth 2012). Specifically, this paper extends Acharya et al. (2016) findings that the political behavior of whites today can be traced to the prevalence of slavery by examining how blacks continue to respond politically to racists acts in the past. Second, the paper increases our understanding of the determinants of voting by measuring the extent to which violent acts can deter the target group from voting in the future.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II provides the historical background and conceptual framework. The data description is given in Section III. The empirical framework, presented in Section IV, is used to motivate the empirical analysis to follow. Section V presents the results and Section VI concludes.

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[7]The analysis compares blacks eligible to vote in US elections with whites eligible to vote in US elections. The analysis does not use historical county-level data due to the decrease in sample size which decreases by more than 50%. The main results remain similar in magnitude with the inclusion of historical controls.

[8]Blacks were disproportionately lynched compared to other groups. Nearly 90% of the victims of lynchings in the data set were black.

II Historical Background and Conceptual Framework

Historical Background

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 forever changed the voting population in the South with Congress requiring Southern conventions to met and adopt new constitutions that included manhood suffrage (DuBois 1935, Foner 1988). With this enactment, more than one million blacks and more than 300,000 illiterate, poor whites were given the right vote (DuBois 1935). With the encouraged resistance to manhood suffrage by Northern Democrats, Union army commanders sought to protect any devices that would keep blacks from the polls (DuBois 1935). Also, officials from the Freedmen's Bureau "*advised Negros about registration and voting and disabused their minds of fears of taxation or military service or reenslavement*" (DuBois 1935). These measures of protection resulted in voter turnout among black men that ranged between 70% and 90% (Kent 2003) and restructured the South. Blacks voted for white Republican politicians who filled seats once held by Democrats as well as black men held political office for the first time. For example, blacks were 61% of the state delegates in South Carolina, 50% of the state delegates in Louisiana, and 40% of the state delegates in Florida (DuBois 1935).

While these elections were the most democratic ever seen in the South (DuBois 1935), some individuals were not pleased by this restructuring. Violent intimidation from the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the form of beatings, burnings, and lynchings was used to discourage blacks from voting (DeFina & Hannon 2011). During the Presidential campaign season of 1868, KKK members rode around on horses wearing white hoods and robes threatening blacks that if they did not vote for the Democratic ticket, they would be lynched (Dickerson 2003). In 1868, the KKK killed more than 2,000 blacks in Louisiana, two South Carolina legislators, and the President of the Union League, causing black voter turnout to be reduced by 20 percent between the 1867 and the 1868 election (Dickerson 2003).[9] These KKK terrorists' acts helped the south regain Democratic control in the statehouse in 1870 (Dickerson 2003).

While lynchings continued after the 1868 election, lynchings were not restricted to political intimidation. In fact, there exist three theories to explain lynching behavior. The first theory hypothesizes that blacks were lynched because they were seen as an economic threat (Beck & Tolnay 1992, Cook et al. 2018). By lynching blacks, whites vented eco-

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[9]The Union League was an organization that helped blacks register to vote and was headed by northern Republicans.

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nomic frustration due to inflation or decreases in cotton prices (DeFina & Hannon 2011) and instilled fear in blacks who could compete for jobs (Cook et al. 2018). The second theory hypothesizes that blacks were lynched because they were viewed as a social threat (Price, Darity Jr & Headen Jr 2008, Cook et al. 2018). Cook et al. (2018) state that whites feared losing their social status to blacks and used lynching as a way of maintaining social order. The third theory, Blalock (1967) power threat hypothesis, proposed that violence arouse when the dominant group perceived the subordinate group contested their political authority (Price et al. 2008). Figure 3 supports Blalock (1967) power threat hypothesis in that areas with higher percentages of black registered voters (per total registered voters) in 1867 also experienced more lynchings throughout the lynching time period.[10]

According to Allen, Als, Lewis & Litwack (2000), blacks were aware of lynchings that took place by the depiction of lynchings in newspapers and on postcards. Figure 4a presents a county-level mapping of the total number of lynchings between 1882 and 1930 and shows that some counties experienced as many as 25 lynchings during this time period with variation across counties and states.[11] Figure 4b presents the total number of lynchings normalized by black population in 1900.

Conceptual Framework

The foundational model of voting was developed by Downs (1957) where individuals vote when the benefit of voting exceeds the cost. Benefit is the probability that an individual's vote will make a difference in the outcome of an election times the utility received from the individual's favorite candidate winning the election, and the payoff an individual receives from exercising his social duty. Recent models have expanded Downs (1957) framework of voting costs to include logistical cost and information cost (Ashworth 2007, Charles & Stephens Jr 2013, Matsusaka 1995). The logistical cost of voting is the cost associated with the act of voting (i.e. traveling to the poll, waiting in line, etc.) and the information cost of voting is the cost associated with having limited information regarding a candidate or an election (Charles & Stephens Jr 2013).

Within this framework, the historical lynching environment raised the cost of voting for blacks because gathering information on elections as well as traveling to election polls

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[10]This figure is created using a binned scatter plot which controls for the percentage of black residents in 1860. OLS results can be found in Appendix Table B1.

[11]A map of lynchings is presented for county state pairs that have voting data separated by race namely Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

could lead to death for many blacks. Figure 5 demonstrates that lynchings were powerful messages sent to thousands of blacks that exercising their right to vote would be met with death (Fryer Jr & Levitt 2012).

Considering that cultural beliefs are viewed as decision-making heuristics or "rules-of-thumb" which are optimal when information acquisition is either costly or imperfect (Alesina, Giuliano & Nunn 2013, Nunn & Wantchekon 2011), general beliefs about the "right" action caused blacks to refrain from voting - thus allowing blacks to save on the cost associated with voting.[12] Within this environment, cultural beliefs about voting were beneficial to blacks and lowered their voting behavior patterns.

A natural question is why would one expect lower voter participation among blacks to be associated with events the occurred nearly 100 years ago. One explanation can be found in the cultural economics literature, which demonstrates that historic events have long-run impacts by permanently affecting culture or norms of behavior.[13]. For example, Nunn & Wantchekon (2011) showed that a culture of mistrust persisted in individuals whose ancestors were heavily targeted during the slave trade in Africa which continues to affect economic development in Africa over 400 years later. Mocan & Raschke (2016) analyzed whether a culture of racist and xenophobic feelings persisted in Germany following World War II, and found that people who live in states that provided above-median support for the Nazi Party in the 1928 elections have stronger anti-Semitic feelings today. Similarly, Voigtländer & Voth (2012) reported a strong positive relationship between violent attacks on Jews during the Black Death in 1348 and support for the Nazi Party in 1928, demonstrating a culture of anti-Semitic views that have persisted more than 500 years. Taken together, research in cultural economics has shown that cultural beliefs are sticky and are transmitted across generations (Alesina et al. 2013). It is plausible that past lynching events may have caused blacks to avoid the voting process altogether, creating a culture of voter apathy, and these voting norms may have persisted by being transmitted to subsequent generations.[14]

Additional evidence of the persistence of voting behavior can be found in the voting literature. Akee et al. (2018) found that there exists an intergenerational transmission of voting behavior in that there exists a strong correlation between parents' prior voting and their children voting in the future. Table B2 in the Appendix supports this result in that

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[12]Jones et al. (2017) state that exposure to violence in a political setting may generate fear and discourage voter turnout.

[13]For a more detailed discussion, see Nunn (2009)

[14]Due to the lack of voting data by race during the historical time period, this explanation cannot be tested.

there exists a positive and statistically significant association between parents' voting, registration propensities and their children's voting and registration propensities. Additionally, research has shown that voting is habit forming in that voting in one election increases an individual's propensity to vote in future elections. Gerber et al. (2003) used a randomized field experiment that randomly assigned individuals to treatment and control groups to isolate the causal role in voting. Individuals in the treatment group were encouraged to vote via mail or via face to face campaigning whereas individuals in the control group were not encouraged to vote. These authors found that this randomized change produced an increase in voting in the upcoming election and increased the likelihood of voting in the future. Fujiwara et al. (2016) also showed that voting is habit-forming by empirically disentangling habit formation in voting from other channels of voter persistence. These authors model rainfall, an unexpected and transitory shock, into the cost of voting and find that rainfall on election day decreases voter turnout in the current and future elections. In addition to the existence of cultural voting apathy, findings from the voting literature suggest that lynchings may continue to predict the political participation of blacks through the lack of habit formation in the black community.

A second explanation for the association between lynchings and contemporary voting behavior is possible. Rather than the transmission of cultural voting norms of blacks, factors that were associated with lynchings, as well as other historical events, may have persisted and affected the voting behavior of blacks today. For instance, Acharya et al. (2016) found that political attitudes of white southerners could be traced to slavery's prevalence over 150 years ago. Specifically, these authors report that white southerners who currently reside in counties that have a higher share of slaves in 1860 were also less likely to identify as Democrats, less likely to support Affirmative Action and have higher levels of racial resentment toward blacks. In this case, the voting behavior of blacks may be a reaction to or a result of the political attitudes of whites. If areas that historically had higher levels of racial animus toward blacks also have more whites with conservative political views, then blacks may avoid the political process assuming their votes will not be pivotal.

Additionally, the persistence of discriminatory practices may be the result of historical forces that continue to depress the voting behavior of blacks. For example, areas that discriminated against blacks more have experienced more lynchings. This discrimination may have persisted in education, voting resources, or police behavior which may predict the voting behavior of blacks today.

In my analysis, it is impossible to distinguish between the persistence of cultural voting

norms and factors, which affected lynchings, continuing to influence the voting behavior of blacks. While the analysis below will attempt to examine some of the possible explanations, it is beyond the scope of this paper to identify the exact mechanism through which this long-run association exists. Instead, this paper attempts to empirically estimate the long-run association between a proxy for racial animus and the voting behavior of blacks.

III Data Sources and Description

Lynching Measure

The lynching data are obtained from the Historical American Lynching Data Collection Project (Project HAL) and include all lynching victims' records in Southern counties from 1882 to 1930.[15] The Project HAL data include lynchings which meet the NAACP definition.[16] For each lynching record, the information includes the victim's name, race, gender, and alleged offense. The dataset also includes the county, state, month, day, and year that the lynching occurred.[17] To construct the lynching measure, the data are restricted to black victims and excludes lynchings carried out by black mobs. The lynching measure represents the number of lynchings of black victims that occurred in a county from 1882 to 1930.

I link the aggregated lynching data with population data from the 1900 Census.[18] The 1900 Census population data are obtained from the National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) and contain county-level measures for the black, white, and total population. The lynching and population data are used to construct the main explanatory variable, black lynching rate, which is the number of black lynchings per 10,000 black population in 1900. A lynching rate is constructed as the main explanatory variable as opposed to the number of lynchings since it more accurately captures the intensity of lynchings or

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[15]Southern counties include counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

[16]To be included in the lynching inventory, an incident must meet the following criteria: a) There must be evidence that someone was killed b) The killing must have occurred illegally c) Three or more persons must have taken part in the killing; and d) The killers must have claimed to be serving justice or tradition.

[17]Counties that are not listed in Project HAL are assumed to have zero historical lynchings. The results remain when these counties are excluded.

[18]Considering that the lynching data spans from 1882 to 1930, the year 1900 is nearly the midpoint of the period and is used to normalize the number of lynchings. The results are robust to using the black population in 1910, 1920, or 1930. See Appendix Table B3.

"threat of violence" by accounting for the number of blacks in an area.

County-Level Voting Measure

The voter registration data are obtained from the Secretary of State Offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina.[19] Ideally, the sample would include all counties in the former Confederate States. However, these are the only states in the former Confederacy, and in the lynching data, in which individuals are asked to identify their race when they register to vote. See Appendix for more information regarding voter registration data from the Secretary of State Offices.

The voter registration data are merged with population data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program (SEER) of the National Cancer Institute for the years 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012.[20] The SEER data contain county-level population counts by age and race. To focus on individuals who are of voting age, the data are restricted to population counts for individuals who are 18 or older. The registration and SEER data are used to construct the outcome measure, voter registration rate, as the county-level percentage of black registered voters per black voting age population. Similarly, voter registration rate among whites is measured as the percentage of white registered voters per white voting age population.[21]

Historical County Attributes

The primary source for historical measures in this study is the NHGIS which provides Census data from 1790 to the present. Proxies for historical institutional quality include the newspaper rate in 1840 and the year in which a county was formed (Grosjean 2014). To capture historical economic indicators, I include the average farm value, the proportion of

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[19]The data for Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and South Carolina are obtained for the years 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012 due to data availability beginning in many of these states in 2000. Voter registration data in North Carolina are obtained in 2004, 2008, and 2012 since North Carolina does not report race until 2002. The voter registration data in Florida are obtained from its Secretary of State Office in 2016. The method used for extracting voter registration for the years 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012 is explained in the Data Appendix.

[20]SEER data are used, as opposed to Census data, because population data from SEER can be extracted for Presidential years.

[21]Voter registration rate is more than 100% in some counties. The results to follow use voter registration as is. The results when voter registration rates are top-coded to 100 and when counties with voter registration rates that exceed 100 are removed from the sample can be found in the Appendix Tables B4 and B5.

small farms and land inequality in 1860 (Acharya et al. 2016).[22] Additionally, the propor-
tion of free blacks in 1860 is included to proxy norms about race (Acharya et al. 2016). See
Data Appendix for detailed information regarding historical controls.

Table 1 presents the Descriptive Statistics. Although Table 1 shows that the voter reg-
istration rate of blacks is close to that of whites with rates of 74.44% and 75.87% respec-
tively, this phenomenon is a result of high voter registration rates and voter turnout among
blacks in the 2008 and 2012 Presidential Elections.[23] While voter registration rates among
blacks (whites) exceed 100% in some counties, the result remains when these counties are
excluded from the sample or when they are top-coded at 100%.[24]

IV Empirical Framework

To estimate the relationship between historical lynchings and the contemporary voting
behavior of blacks, the baseline equation uses county-level voting registration data from
the Secretary of State Offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and
South Carolina.[25] I estimate the following equation:

$$voter\ registration\ rate_{cst} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 lynching\ rate_{cs}$$
$$+ \beta_2 X_{cs}^H + \delta_s + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{cst} \tag{1}$$

where c indexes counties, s indexes states, and t indexes years; $voter\ registration\ rate_{cst}$
is the percentage of black registered voters per black voting-age population; $lynching\ rate_{cs}$
is the number of lynchings of blacks from 1882 to 1930 per 10,000 black population in
1900.[26] X_{cs}^H represents the vector of observed historical county characteristics that vary
across counties. This vector includes factors that may have been determinants of lynchings,
namely economic, social, and political factors.[27] To account for economic indicators, I in-
clude the average farm value in 1860, the proportion of small farms in 1860, land inequality
in 1860, the average number of newspapers per total population in 1840 and the year in

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[22]Data on land inequality come from Acharya et al. (2016) as originally obtained from Nunn
(2008)

[23]The 2008 and 2012 Presidential Elections included the first African American Presidential
Nominee, Barack Obama.

[24]Voter registration rates of blacks exceeds 100% in 22 of the 957 counties in the sample.

[25]These are the only states in the former Confederacy that a) are included in the Project HAL
lynching dataset and b) are places where individuals indicate their race when they register to vote.

[26]This measure excludes lynchings performed by black mobs against blacks.

[27]See Section II for theories of lynchings.

which a county was formed. To account for social factors, I include the proportion of free blacks in 1860 to proxy norms of race (Acharya et al. 2016). Barriers to voting during the historical period included polling taxes and literacy tests. However, these barriers were instituted at the state-level in Southern counties. To proxy political barriers, I include the number of black illiterate men per 10,000 voting age population in 1910. This variable is included since it is reasonable to believe that barriers to voting were implemented differently in areas with smaller (or larger) shares of illiterate black voters. δ_s is the set of state fixed effects, γ_t is the set of year fixed effects, and ϵ_{ct} is the error term. Standard errors in Equation (1) are clustered at the county level. The main coefficient of interest, β_1, estimates the impact of one additional lynching per 10,000 black population in 1900 on the percentage of black registered voters per black voting-age population.

Given that the lynching rate in Equation (1) and some of the county-level characteristics do not vary across time, I estimate Equation (1) using pooled ordinary least squares by averaging variables that vary across time. Additionally, I estimate Equation (1) for each Election year separately. The results are robust to both specifications.

V   Results

OLS Estimates

Estimates of Equation (1) are reported in Table 2. The dependent variable, voter registration rate of blacks, is defined as the percentage of black registered voters per black voting-age population. Column (1) reports the results that account for state and year fixed effects. The baseline results show that for one additional lynching per 10,000 black population in 1900, the percentage of black registered voters per black voting-age population decreases by 0.682 percentage points and this result is significant at the 1% level. More specifically, a one standard deviation increase in the lynching rate is associated with a 3.2 percentage point (equivalent to a 4.3%) decrease in voter registration rates of blacks today. Column (2) presents the results from the baseline specification that includes historical controls as well as state and year fixed effects. The results show that a one standard deviation increase in the lynching rate is associated with a 2.5 percentage point decrease in the contemporary voter registration rate of blacks. This suggests that blacks who reside in counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of historical lynchings are less likely to register to vote today.

Motivated by the possibility that this relationship may be explained by additional con-

temporary characteristics of counties, I examine a number of potential confounders in Table 3.[28] Columns (1) - (6) accounts for each potential confounder by adding each confounder to the baseline specification.

Previous research has shown that education and earnings are positively associated with political participation (cite papers). As such, Columns (1) and (2) include education and earnings into the baseline specification respectively. The results show that there exists a positive yet statistically insignificant relationship between education and voter registration as well as earnings and voter registration.

Given that many of the states in my sample are Republican states, yet many blacks vote for the Democratic candidate, blacks may choose to refrain from voting in these states since they believe that their vote will not be pivotal in the election. Column (3) examines the extent to which the main result can be attributed to Republican party dominance by including a 4-year lag of Republican party dominance.[29] Republican party dominance is negatively and significantly associated with voter registration rates of blacks indicating that fewer blacks register to vote in areas where a larger proportion of residents voted for the Republican nominee in the previous Presidential Election. This suggests that blacks may choose not to register to vote in areas where their vote will not be pivotal - areas previously won by Republicans.

Because blacks have higher incarceration rates when compared to other racial groups and individuals cannot vote when they are incarcerated, Column (4) incorporates incarceration rate of blacks into the preferred specification.[30] The results show that the incarceration rate is negatively associated with voter registration rates yet this association is insignificant. However, the negative association supports the fact that individuals who are incarcerated, and convicted felons in some states, lose their voting rights.

The number of polling places, which has been shown to affect voter participation positively, can be viewed as a proxy for accessibility to voting. Column (5) includes the polling place rate into the preferred specification. The results show that the number of polling

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[28]See data appendix for a discussion of data sources for each variable.

[29]A 4-year lag is included so that Republican party dominance will not be correlated with the dependent variable.

[30]In Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina ex-offenders can register to vote after completion of their full sentence. In Alabama, ex-offenders can register to vote after completing their entire sentence except those convicted of murder, rape, incest, sexual crimes against children, and treason. In Florida, ex-offenders can register to vote 5 years after completing their sentence except those convicted of murder, assault, child abuse, drug trafficking, and arson. Ex-offenders convicted of these crimes can register to vote 7 years after completing their full sentence.

places is positively and significantly associated with voter registration rates of blacks. This indicates that easier access to voting, in the form of polling places, increases registration rates of blacks.

Considering Acharya, Blackwell & Sen (2015) found that slavery left behind formal and cultural institutions (i.e. black codes, racial violence, Jim Crow, etc.), which made it difficult for blacks to vote, and continues to affect voter turnout of blacks today, I include the slave rate in 1860 to serve as a proxy for these institutional structures. Column (6) accounts for the number of slaves per 10,000 total population in 1860. Contrary to Acharya et al. (2015), the number of slaves is positively associated with voter registration rates of blacks, and this association is significant at the 1% level. To examine the discrepancy between the results in Column (6) and the results in Acharya et al. (2015), I examine whether current shares of black populations can explain this difference. For example, if current shares of blacks who are of voting age are positively associated with the share of slaves in 1860, then this positive association may be the result of blacks being more likely to register in areas in which there are more "like-minded" individuals. While a simple method to examine this would be to control for the contemporary share of voting age blacks (i.e. the number of voting age blacks per total voting age population), the outcome variable, registration rates of blacks, is defined as the percentage of black registered voters per black voting age population. Hence, controlling for the contemporary share of voting age blacks would lead to simultaneous bias. As such, to examine whether this relationship explains the positive association between slavery and the contemporary voter registration of blacks, I employ two methods. First, I examine the relationship between the share of slaves and the share of voting-age blacks. Figure 6 depicts the scatter plot of these two variables and shows a positive association between the share of slaves and the current share of voting age blacks. Figure 7 shows the binned scatter plot which again depicts a positive association between the share of slaves and the share of voting-age blacks. The data points being tightly nested around the fitted line indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. The second method changes the main specification so that the outcome variable is instead the number of black registered voters rather than the black registration rate (i.e. it is not normalized by the black voting age population) and controls for the current rate of voting age blacks. The results can be seen in Table 4. The results show two facts. First, similar to Acharya et al. (2015), slavery is negatively associated with the number of registered blacks, and the current rate of voting age blacks is positively associated with the number of blacks registered to vote. Second, there does not exist a statically significant relationship between

slavery and current levels of registered blacks voters yet there exists a statistically significant relationship between the voting age blacks and the level of registered black voters. Taken together, Figures 6, 7 and Table 4 suggest that the positive coefficient seen in Table 3 Column (6) can be explained by blacks being clustered in areas the had a higher prevalence of slavery in the past.

The final column of Table 3 presents the specification which includes all potential confounders, historical controls, year and state fixed effects. The results show that for one additional lynching per 10,000 black population in 1900, the voter registration rate of blacks decreases by 0.4 percentage points and this result is significant at the 5% level. In summary, Table 3 shows that there exists a link between historical lynchings and the contemporary voting behavior of blacks.[31] Additionally, while the results are robust to the inclusion of the potential confounders, some or all of these controls are endogenous in that they could be affected by lynchings. As a result, the remainder of the analysis will use the baseline specification, seen in Column (2) Table 2, as the preferred specification. This specification includes historical controls and year, state fixed effects.[32]

Considering that the lynching rate and some characteristics of counties do not vary over time, the estimates from pooled ordinary least squares are presented in Appendix Table B8. Similar to the estimates obtained in Table 3, the pooled estimates show a negative and significant relationship between lynching rates and black voter registration rates. Similarly, estimating Equation (1) for each Election year separately indicates that there exists a negative and statistically significant relationship between lynchings and voter registration rates of blacks in each Election year.[33] See Appendix Table B9.

Migration Results

Next, I examine whether these results can be explained by geographic migration. For example, during the Great Migration, which lasted from 1916 to 1970, millions of blacks migrated away from southern states to northern and western states in search of better eco-

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[31] An additional specification uses lynching data from the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) which contain county-level lynching from 1877 to 1950. The results remain negative and significant and can be seen in the Appendix Table B6.

[32] Considering that the estimates obtained in Table 3 may be biased by unobservables, I examine whether selection on observables can be used to access the potential bias from unobservables (Altonji, Elder & Taber 2005, Oster 2017). The results show that selection on observables is unlikely and can be seen in Appendix Table B7.

[33] There are fewer counties in 2000 since North Carolina does not separate voter registration by race until 2002.

nomic and social conditions. If blacks who were more likely to participate in voting were also more likely to migrate away from violent southern counties, blacks with lower voting propensities remained.

Following Acharya et al. (2016), I use the 1940 100% sample obtained from the IPUMS-USA. This sample is unique in that it provides a respondent's current county of residence as well as the county of residence five years prior (Acharya et al. 2016) allowing for individuals who migrated from southern counties to be identified. Once identified, I can test whether migrants' individual attributes differ from individuals who remained in southern counties. For geographic sorting to explain the results, patterns of mobility out of southern counties would need to differ as a function of lynchings.

To examine whether geographic sorting explains the results, I restrict the data to blacks and estimate:

$$
\begin{aligned}
attributes_i =& \gamma_1 outmigration_i + \gamma_2 lynching\ rate_{1935i} \\
&+ \gamma_3(outmigration_i * lynching\ rate_{1935i}) \\
&+ \gamma_4 X^H_{1935c} + \delta_{1935s} + \epsilon_{ict},
\end{aligned}
\tag{2}
$$

where $attributes_i$ represents a respondent's wage, age, gender, education level, weeks worked, and rent; $outmigration_i$ represents whether an individual migrated out of a southern county.[34] This regression also includes historical controls based on a respondent's 1935 county of residence and his or her 1935 state fixed effects. The main coefficient of interest, γ_3, estimates differences between out-migrants' individual attributes and those who did not migrate as a function of the lynching rate. Table 5 shows the results from Equation (2). We see that out-migrants have lower wages, are older, are less likely to be female, are more likely to have some college experience, are more likely to be full-time, and have lower rent compared to individuals who "stayed" in southern counties with higher lynching rates. However, these estimates are close to zero and are statistically insignificant.[35]

Considering the data used in Equation (2) cover a small window during the Great Migration, I use data from Collins & Wanamaker (2014) to examine black male southern migrants and non-migrants during the peak of the Great Migration (1910 to 1930). Using data from Collins & Wanamaker (2014) support the results seen in Table 5 in that black

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[34]Southern counties include counties in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

[35]Females are less likely to be out-migrants compared to stayers in southern counties with higher lynchings rates and this relationship is statistically significant.

male migrants do not differ significantly from non-migrants on selected attributes and the estimates are close to zero. These results can be found in Appendix Table B10. Together, these findings suggest that sorting does not explain the relationship between lynching and the voting behavior of blacks.

Polling Locations

To examine whether counties that experienced a relatively higher number of lynchings have contemporary barriers that suppress voting, I consider one potential barrier - the paucity of polling places in black areas. That is, I examine whether counties with more historical lynchings have fewer polling places in areas where blacks live. If the number of polling places varies as a function of lynching rates and the proportion of blacks in an area, then my results may be a result of this phenomenon. However, if no relationship exists, then this exercise will strengthen the claim that historical lynchings, a proxy for historical racial animus, have had a long-run association with the voting behavior of blacks.

To examine this relationship, I obtain the GIS boundary census-tract map along with census-tract population data from the 2010 Census. Polling place data come from the Secretary of State Offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina and includes the name of each polling place, each polling place address, and county and state identifiers. Using an address locator from ArcGIS, each polling place address is geocoded into its equivalent latitude and longitude coordinate. As shown in Figure 8a, pairs of coordinates are overlaid onto the 2010 United States census-tract boundary map. Figure 8b shows an enlarged mapping of geocoded addresses in Louisiana and shows that the number of polling places varies across census-tracts.

Using this mapping, I tally the number of polling places that lie within the GIS census-tract and merge this dataset with the 2010 population data and the lynching data to be used in Equation (3).[36]

To examine whether the number of polling places varies as a function of the proportion

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[36]To merge the geocoded address (point) layer with the NHGIS census-tract boundary layer, I use the intersect tool in ArcGIS. The intersect tool takes two layers as input and returns the features that belong to both layers as output. Census-tract boundaries that do not contain any points from the point layer are assumed to have no polling places. The merged point and boundary layer file is aggregated to the census-tract level which yields the total number of polling places in each census tract.

of blacks and the lynching rate, I consider:

$$polling_t = \kappa_0 + \kappa_1 share\ black_t + \kappa_2 lynching\ rate_c +$$
$$\kappa_3(share\ black_t * lynching\ rate_c) + \kappa_4 population\ density_t + \epsilon_t \quad (3)$$

where $polling_t$ is the number of polling places per 10,000 population which varies across census tracts, $share\ black_t$ is the proportion of blacks which varies across census tracts, $lynching\ rate_c$ is the number of black lynchings from 1882 to 1930 per black population in 1900 which varies across counties, and $population\ density_t$ is the population per 100 land area which varies across census tracts.[37] The coefficient of interest, κ_3, measures the relationship between lynchings and the number of polling places as a function of the proportion black. Table 6 shows three facts. First, areas with a larger proportion of black residents have fewer polling places, yet the association is insignificant and the coefficient is close to zero. Second, areas that experienced a relatively higher number of lynchings in the past have fewer polling places today. This association is significant at the 1% level yet the magnitude of the estimate is negligible. Finally, there is no significant difference in the number of polling places as the proportion of blacks and the lynching rate vary. In fact, the magnitude of the main coefficient of interest, κ_3, is close to zero. In summary, Table 6 suggests that there does not exist evidence that counties that experienced a relatively higher number of lynchings have fewer polling places in areas where blacks reside.

Falsification Exercises

Next, I perform a number of falsification exercises. First, I consider whether there exists a relationship between lynchings and the contemporary voting behavior of whites. Considering that blacks were disproportionately lynched compared to whites following the American Civil War (Price et al. 2008) and lynchings are proxies for historical racial animus towards blacks, there should not exist a significant relationship between lynchings and the voting behavior of whites. Table 7 shows the results. Column (1) presents the estimates using the black lynching rate whereas column (2) presents the estimates using the white lynching rate. In both columns, the estimates are close to zero and statistically insignificant indicating that historical lynchings cannot be linked to the contemporary voting behavior of whites.

Second, I consider the relationship between historical execution rates and the contem-

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[37]Land area is measured in square miles.

porary voting behavior of blacks.[38] One difference between historical executions and historical lynchings is due process.[39] Historical executions were carried out under civil authority in that an individual was found guilty by his or her peers and sentenced to death. Historical lynchings, on the other hand, were carried out by mobs illegally. Additionally, lynchings could be viewed as additional methods of control outside the legal and standard institutions that were in place following the Civil War (i.e. black codes, Jim Crow laws) and were publicly displayed (Allen et al. 2000). Given this difference in due process, it is plausible that historical execution rates have a different relationship with the contemporary voting behavior of blacks. The results from this exercise are shown in Table 8. The estimate shows a negative yet statistically insignificant relationship between execution rates and the voting behavior of blacks. In summary, Table 8 suggests that the legacy of lynchings tend to linger and predict the political participation of blacks today whereas executions do not.

The final exercise randomly distributes lynching rates across counties. It is worth noting that the outcome and control variables are not randomly distributed. The cumulative distribution of this exercise repeated 500 times is shown in Figure 9. The figure shows two noteworthy points. First, the cumulative distribution shows that the range of estimates lie between -0.1 and 0.1. Second, the true estimate, indicated by the red vertical line, is uniquely different from the estimates obtained from this placebo exercise. In summary, this exercise shows that this relationship between lynchings and contemporary voting of blacks does not exist when lynching rates are randomly distributed across counties.

Heterogeneity

The analysis thus far has established that historical lynchings are negatively associated with the voting behavior of blacks. This section examines whether this relationship can be mitigated. For example, Tate (1991) found that blacks who had more education, higher incomes, and were more engaged in social activities that create strong social bonds between blacks (i.e. church attendance) were more likely to participate in voting.

I investigate whether the relationship between historical lynchings and the voting behavior of blacks varies as a function of education, earnings, and the black church member rate. Table 9 presents the results. Column (1) reports the estimates when the lynching rate is

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[38]Historical execution rates are defined as the county-level number of executions of blacks from 1882 to 1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. Execution data come from Espy & Smykla (1987).

[39]Cook et al. (2018) find that historical executions were not used as substitutes for lynchings.

interacted with the proportion of blacks with some college experience. While higher shares of black with some college experience or more appears to mitigate the relationship between lynchings and voter registration, this association is statistically insignificant. Column (2) shows that higher earnings do not change the relationship between lynchings and voting. However, Column (3) presents the results when the black church member rate is interacted with the lynching rate and show that a higher church rate mitigates the relationship between lynchings and voter registration. In conclusion, Table 9 shows that the relationship between lynchings and black voter registration rates is mitigated by higher rates of black church members which suggest that blacks with stronger ties to the black community, or even church community, will weaken the main results

Individual-Level Results

The last exercise of this paper uses individual-level data to examine whether cultural voting norms linked to lynchings exist for other minorities when compared to whites. I use individual-level voting data from the CPS Voting and Registration Supplement to examine differences in voting as a function of lynching rates. Participants in the CPS Voting and Registration Supplement are surveyed two weeks following a November Midterm or Presidential Election and indicate whether or not they voted in the most recent election. Additionally, participants provide their race, income, education, age, sex, marital status, county, and state of residence. I use Midterm and Presidential Elections from 2000 to 2014 which results in eight waves of CPS data. Individuals are assigned historical lynching rates along with contemporary county-level controls based on their county and state of residence.[40]

The estimates are reported in Table 10. Column (1) shows voting differences between blacks and whites as a function of lynching rates. The results show that blacks who reside in counties with higher lynching rates are less likely to indicate voting in a recent election compared to their white counterparts. It is worth noting that this result is marginally significant. Column (2) shows voting differences for other minority groups and whites. Minority groups include Native Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and foreign-born blacks. The result shows that minorities who live in counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of lynchings do not have voting behavior that is significantly different from that of whites who live in the same county. Taken together columns (1) and (2) of Table 10 show that

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[40]The analysis does not use historical county-level data due to the decrease in sample size. The sample size is reduced by more than 50%. However, the main results are similar in magnitude with and without historical controls.

while lynchings are negatively and significantly associated with voting differences between blacks and whites, this relationship does not exist for minorities in general and whites. This suggests that lynchings, an indicator of historical racial animus, successfully deterred the target group from voting in the future.

VI   Summary and Conclusion

Economists have shown that historical events can have long-run impacts by permanently changing culture or norms of behavior. This paper contributes to the literature in economics by understanding the extent to which historical racial animus can continue to influence the voting behavior of blacks. The results show that counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of lynchings have lower voter registration rates of blacks today. Specifically for one additional lynching per 10,000 black population in 1900, voter registration rates of blacks today decrease by nearly 0.6 percentage points. Further analyses suggest that this effect is unlikely to be driven by education, earnings, Republican party dominance, incarceration rates of blacks, institutions that remained after slavery, geographic sorting, or contemporary barriers to voting. Examining individual-level variation in voting shows that blacks who reside in counties with a relatively higher number of lynchings are less likely to indicate voting in a recent election compared to their white counterparts. However, this relationship does not exist between other minority groups, which were not heavily targeted with lynchings, and whites.

In addition to understanding the determinants of voting, this research has important policy implications. In 2013, a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was overturned. This provision required areas with a history of racial discrimination in voting to receive pre-clearance from a federal court to change election laws. Given that this paper documents the long-run association between historical lynchings and political participation today, these findings can be used to inform policies and laws that protect the voting rights of minorities. Additionally, this paper documents that blacks who reside in counties with a relatively higher number of lynchings are underrepresented in voting which suggests that their interests are also underrepresented in American policies.

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Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

Panel A: Outcome Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	N
Black registered voters (%)	74.448	18.813	17.222	324.740	957
White registered voters (%)	75.870	12.167	17.444	112.493	957
Panel B: Historical Controls					
Black lynchings	3.210	3.466	0.000	18.000	957
Black lynching rate (per 10,000 black pop)	3.793	4.780	0.000	33.482	957
Black population in 1900	11531.433	9252.469	432.000	60312.000	957
Average farm value in 1860	9.345	8.801	1.000	65.000	957
Proportion of small farms in 1860	0.381	0.198	0.023	1.000	957
Inequality of farmland in 1860	0.490	0.077	0.160	0.737	957
Free blacks in 1860 (per 10,000 pop)	117.797	198.534	0.000	1685.682	957
Average newspapers rate (per 10,000 pop)	0.119	0.407	0.000	4.854	957
County formation	1780.514	50.694	1664.000	1836.000	957
Slaves in 1860 (per 10,000 pop)	4503.055	1921.615	491.453	9085.114	957
Black illiterate men in 1910 (per 10,000 voting age pop)	4310.016	992.058	1501.534	7234.146	957
Panel C: Contemporary Controls					
Proportion of blacks w/ some college experience or more	0.277	0.109	0.101	0.696	957
Monthly earnings of blacks	2066.599	399.834	1151.000	5025.000	957
Black church member rate (per 10,000 pop)	188.926	126.405	0.000	942.249	957
Republican party dominance (4-year lag)	11.132	24.286	-77.000	72.000	957
Incarceration rate of blacks	129.773	182.351	0.000	1816.800	957
Polling place rate (per 10,000 pop)	5.030	3.296	0.798	25.707	957

Data Sources: Registered voters data and polling location data come from the Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina Secretary of State Offices. The lynching data come from the Historical American Lynching Project. The National Historical Geographic Information System contains the black population in 1900, the total population in 1840, the average number of newspapers in 1840, and the number of slaves in 1860. Grosjean (2014) provides the year of county formation. The average farm value, proportion of small farms, inequality of farmland and the number of free blacks in 1860 come from Acharya et al. (2016). The number of black illiterate men per voting-age population is obtained from the 1910 Census. Contemporary measures of population are obtained from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program. The 2000 Census provides the share of blacks (whites) with at least some college experience, the median age of blacks (whites), and the share married. The monthly earnings of blacks (whites) are obtained from the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 Census Quarterly Workforce Indicators. Republican party dominance is obtained from David Leip's Atlas in 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008. The incarceration rate come from Vera Institute of Justice in 2010. The black church member rate is obtained from the 2010 U.S. Religion Census. The black (white) registered voter rate is the percentage of black registered voter per black (white) voting age population. The lynching rate is the number of black lynchings per 10,000 black population in 1900. The average newspaper rate is the average number of newspapers per 10,000 total population in 1840. The polling place rate is obtained from county-level data from the Secretary of State Offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina. This rate indicates the number of polling places per 10,000 total population.

Table 2

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate	
	(1)	(2)
Black lynching rate	-0.682***	-0.524***
	(0.183)	(0.191)
Historical Controls	No	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	957	957
R-Squared	0.399	0.430

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 3

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Black lynching rate	-0.507***	-0.511***	-0.374*	-0.530***	-0.578***	-0.443**	-0.400**
	(0.192)	(0.193)	(0.194)	(0.194)	(0.164)	(0.183)	(0.171)
Some college experience or more of blacks	6.917						18.681***
	(6.215)						(5.798)
Monthly earnings of blacks		0.002					0.003
		(0.002)					(0.002)
Republican party dominance (4-year lag)			-0.199***				-0.125**
			(0.033)				(0.049)
Incarceration rate of blacks (per 10k pop)				-0.004			-0.005
				(0.004)			(0.004)
Polling place rate (per 10k pop)					1.504***		1.451***
					(0.227)		(0.227)
Slaves in 1860 (per 10k pop)						0.002***	0.001**
						(0.001)	(0.001)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	957	957	957	957	957	957	957
R-Squared	0.432	0.431	0.475	0.432	0.482	0.450	0.522

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 4

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

	Dependent Variable: Number of Black Registered Voters
	(1)
Black lynching rate	-634.308***
	(230.261)
Slaves in 1860 (per 10k pop)	-3.015
	(2.236)
Voting age blacks (per 10k pop)	4.720**
	(2.032)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	957
R-Squared	0.182

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable is the number of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Elections. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 5

The Association between Lynching Rates and Differences in Attributes between Migrants and Stayers

Out-Migrants vs. Stayers	(1) Log(wage)	(2) Age	(3) Female	(4) Some-College	(5) Full-time	(6) Rent
Outmigrant× Black lynching rate	-0.004	0.002	-0.004**	0.001	0.002	-0.997
	(0.006)	(0.030)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.815)
Outmigrant	0.500***	-0.447	0.075***	-0.000	-0.034**	26.361***
	(0.018)	(0.235)	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.010)	(2.955)
Black lynching rate	0.004	0.009	0.000	-0.001	0.001	-0.343
	(0.002)	(0.010)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.197)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	89,868	218,832	218,832	185,722	218,832	168,215
R-Squared	0.071	0.006	0.003	0.009	0.005	0.005

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. Data on the dependent variable come from the 1940 IPUMS-USA.

Table 6

The Association between Lynchings Rates and the Number of Polling Locations

Dependent Variable: Polling Locations	(1)
Proportion of Blacks	-0.119
	(0.112)
Black lynching rate	-0.003
	(0.001)
Proportion of Blacks × Black lynching rate	0.006
	(0.009)
Population Density	-0.006
	(0.002)
Constant	1.796
	(0.154)
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	11,712
R-Squared	0.081

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, number of polling locations, come from the Secretary of State Offices in AL, FL, GA, LA, NC, and SC. The proportion black and population density come from the 2010 Census.

Table 7

Falsification Exercises

	Dependent Variable: White Voter Registration Rate	
	(1)	(2)
Black lynching rate	-0.032	
	(0.092)	
White lynching rate		-0.023
		(0.055)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	957	957
R-Squared	0.506	0.506

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The white lynching rate is the number of white lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 white population in 1900. The dependent variable, white registered voters rate, is the percentage of white registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per white voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 8

The Association between Executions Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate
	(1)
Black execution rate	-0.128
	(0.240)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	957
R-Squared	0.416

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black execution rate is the number of black executions in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 9

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

Heterogeneity Analysis

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Black lynching rate*Some college experience of blacks	1.613		
	(1.392)		
Black lynching rate*Monthly earnings of blacks		-0.000	
		(0.000)	
Black lynching rate*Black member rate in 2010			0.003**
			(0.001)
Black lynching rate	-0.916**	-0.431	-0.884***
	(0.402)	(0.656)	(0.182)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	957	957	957
R-Squared	0.432	0.430	0.438

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table 10

The Association between Lynching Rates and Voting Propensity

	Dependent Variable: Voting Indicator	
	Blacks	Other Minorities
Black*Black lynching rate	-0.001+	
	(0.000)	
Black	0.010	
	(0.012)	
Other*Black lynching rate		-0.000
		(0.001)
Other		-0.123***
		(0.025)
Black lynching rate	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	35,034	30,267
R-Squared	0.044	0.048

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable is a voting indicator of whether or not an individual voted in an election. The dependent variable and individual controls come from CPS. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.
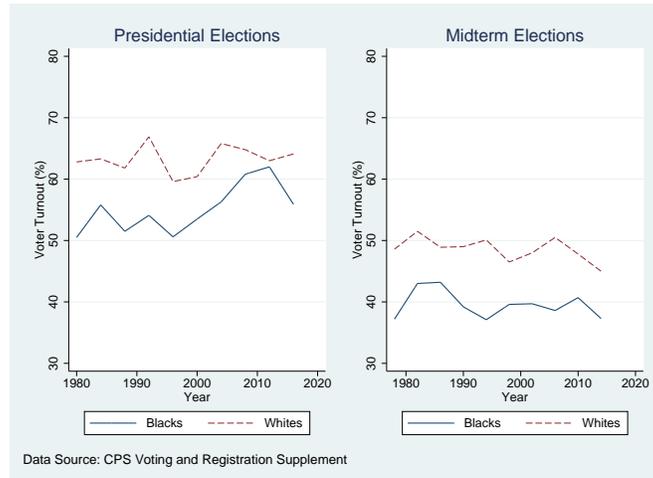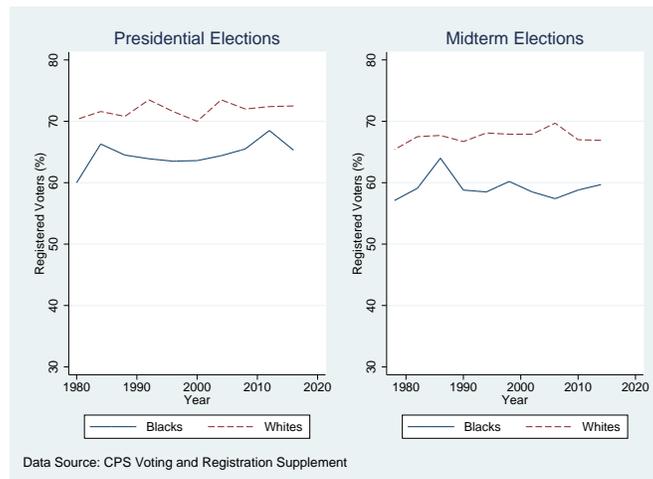
Figure 1
Voter Turnout by Race

Data Source: CPS Voting and Registration Supplement

Figure 2
Registered Voters by Race

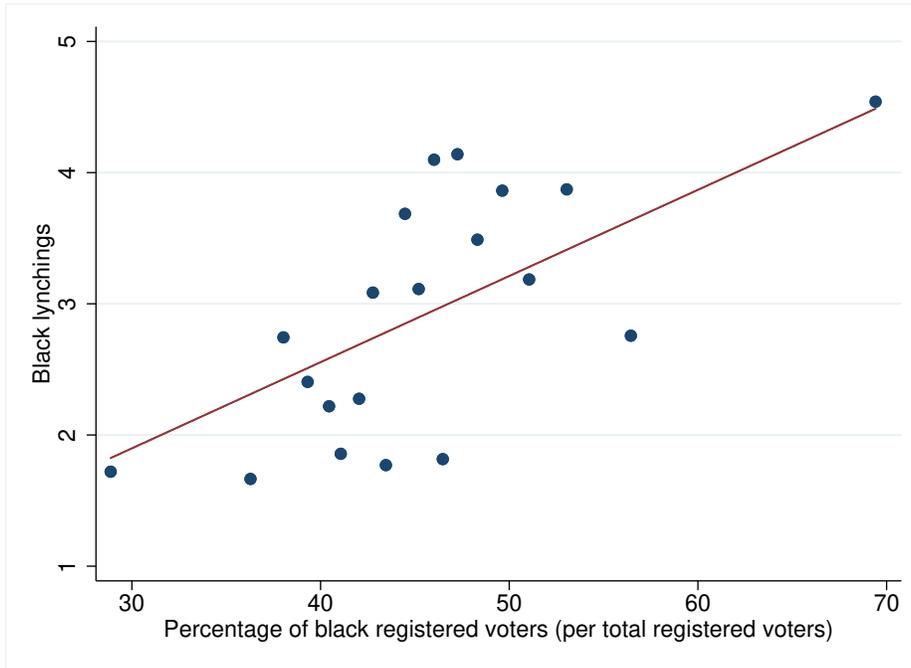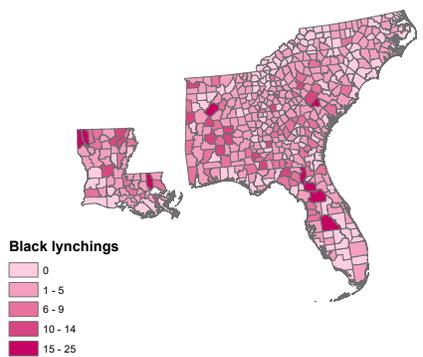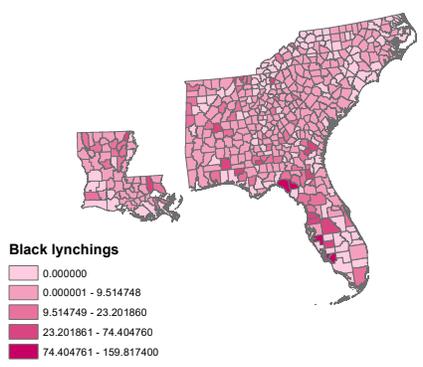Data Source: CPS Voting and Registration Supplement

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Figure 3
Binscatter Plot of Voter Registration in 1867 and 1868 and Black Lynchings
(County-Level)
Note: Controls for Percentage of Blacks in 1860
Voter registration data source: John Clegg based on tables in (Hume & Gough 2008)

(a)
Black Lynchings

(b)
Black Lynchings per 10k Black Pop. in 1900
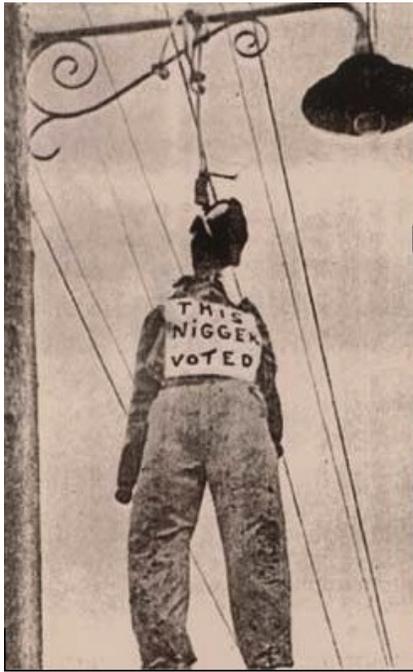
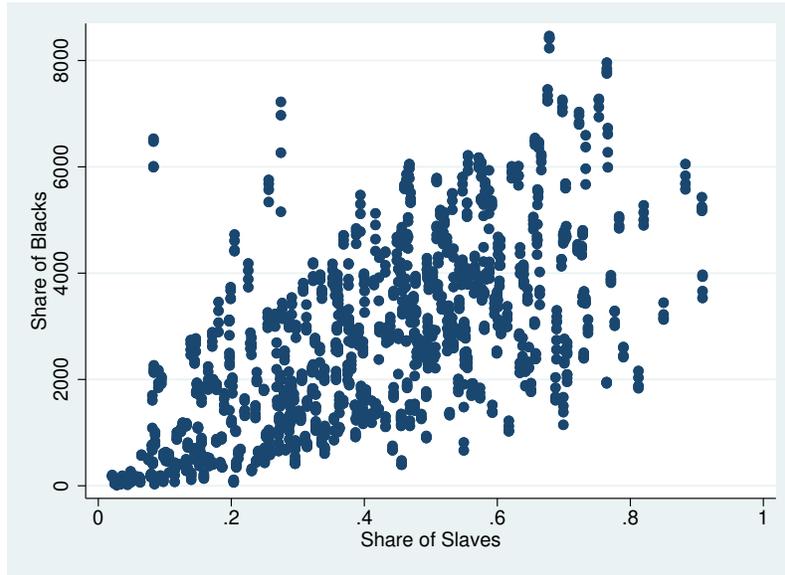Figure 4
Map of Lynchings

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Figure 5
Lynching Message

Figure 6
Scattered Plot of Contemporary Share Black and Share Slaves in 1860
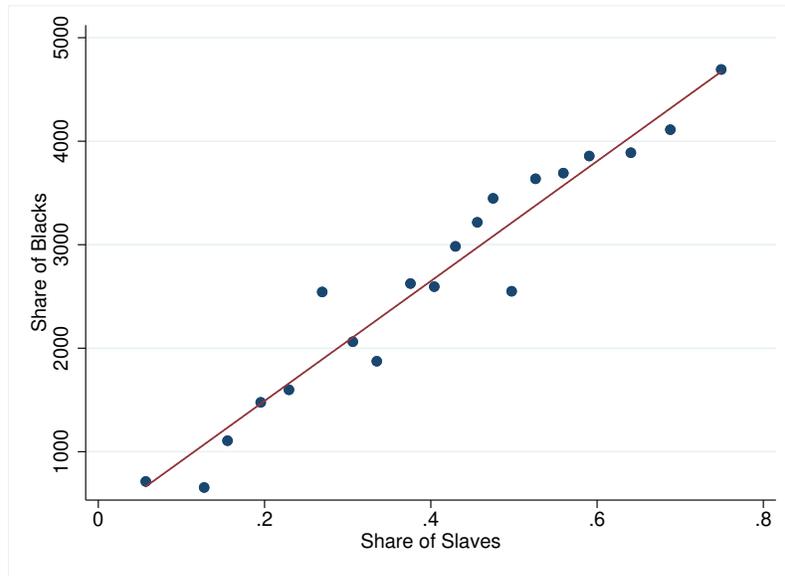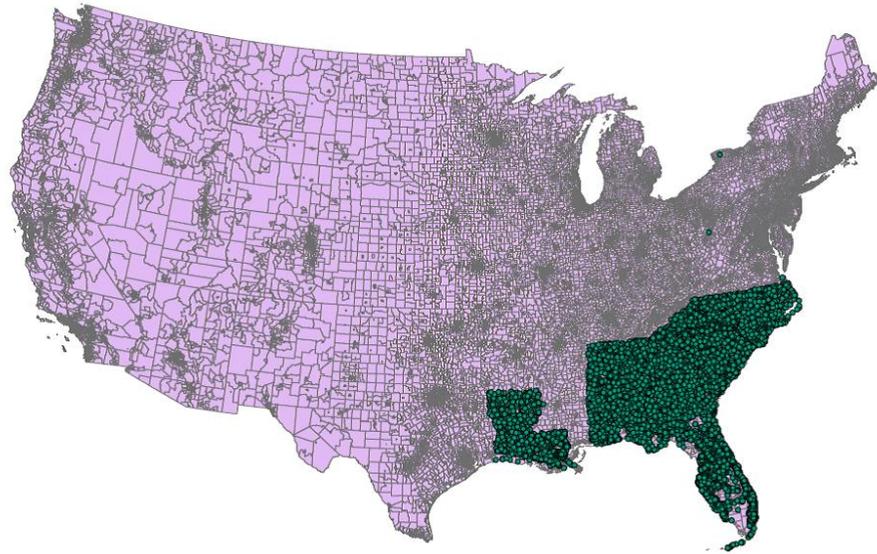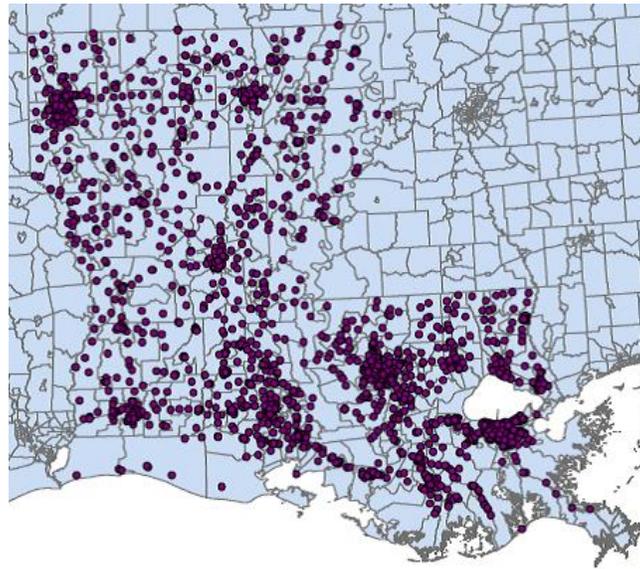

Figure 7
Binned Scattered Plot of Contemporary Share Black and Share Slaves in 1860

(a)
Polling Place Locations Geocoded
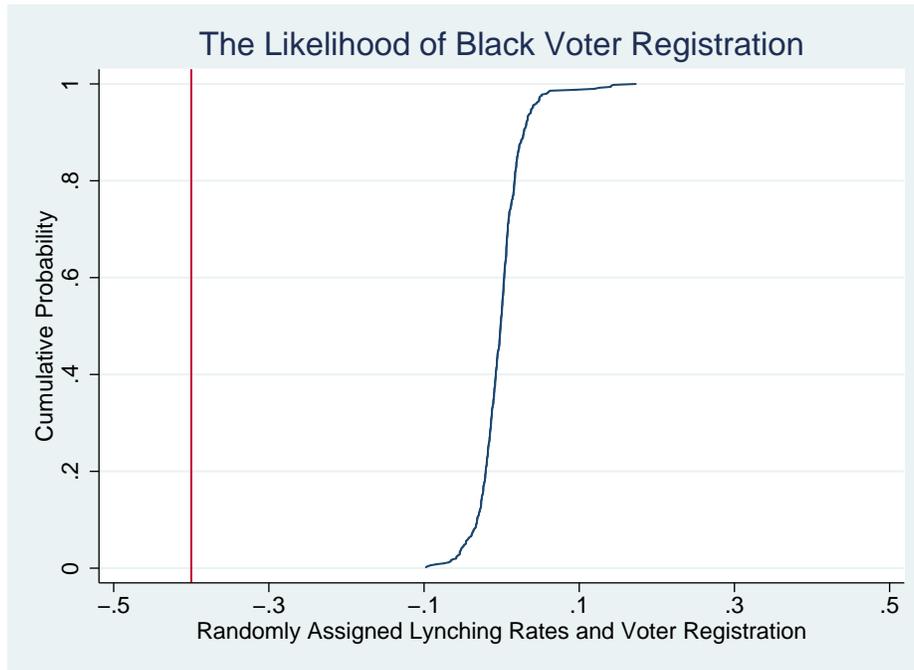

(b)
Louisiana Sample Enlarged

Figure 9
Cumulative Distribution

Appendix A: Data Appendix

The Alabama Secretary of State Office reports the number of black (white) registered voters at the county-level for active and inactive voters separately on its website in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012. The Alabama Secretary of State Office website is http://www.alabamavotes.gov/Voterreg.aspx?m=voters. Inactive voters are voters who have not voted in four years in their county whereas active voters are voters who are not on the inactive voters list. I use the number of active black voters as the measure of registered black voters and define the measure of registered white voters similarly.

The number of black (white) registered voters in Florida were obtained from the 2016 voter statistics files provided by the Florida Secretary of State Office. These files contain individual records that include the registration date, race, birth date and county of residence for registered voters in 2016. The Florida Secretary of State Office removes individuals who have passed away from its voter files. To compute the number of registered voters in 2000, I aggregate the number of registered voters with a registration date on or before 2000 at the county-level. Similarly, the number of registered voters in 2004, 2008, and 2012 is computed.

The Georgia Secretary of State Office reports the number of black (white) registered voters at the county-level for females and males separately on its website in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012. The Georgia Secretary of State Office website is http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/elections. I compute the total number of black registered voters at the county-level by summing the number of black (white) female and black (white) male registered voters.

The Louisiana Secretary of State Office reports the number of black (white) registered voters at the parish (county) on its website in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012. The Louisiana Secretary of State Office website is http://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVotings.

The number of black (white) registered voters from North Carolina are obtained from voter statistics files provided by the North Carolina Secretary of State Office in 2004, 2008, and 2012. It is worth noting that the North Carolina Secretary of State Office does not report voter information separated by race until 2002. These files contain the number of registered voters by county, race, and age. Summing across age groups in each county for blacks and whites separately gives the number of black and white registered voters.

The South Carolina Secretary of State Office reports the number of white and non-white registered voters at the count-level on its website in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012.

The South Carolina Secretary of State Office website is https://www.scvotes.org/data/voter-history.html. The number of nonwhite registered voters is used to represent the number of black registered voters.

Information on the number of daily, weekly, and triweekly newspapers in each county is obtained from the 1840 Census and the newspaper rate is defined as the average number of daily, weekly, and weekly newspapers per total population in 1840. The year in which a county was formed is obtained from Grosjean (2014) as originally obtained from the National Association of Counties. The proportion of slaves is obtained from the 1860 Census and is defined as the number of slaves per total population in 1860. The average farm value in 1860, the proportion of small farms in 1860, land inequality in 1860, and the proportion of free blacks in 1860 are obtained from Acharya et al. (2016) as originally obtained from the 1860 Census with the exception of land inequality which was originally obtained from Nunn (2008).

The contemporary measures in the study come from a variety of sources. The county-level proportion of blacks (whites) with at least some college education is obtained from the 2000 Census. The county-level monthly earnings for blacks (whites) for the years 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012 are obtained from the Census Bureau's Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI). County-level lagged Republican party dominance data are obtained from David Leip's Atlas of US Presidential Elections.[41] Party dominance is defined as the percentage of votes awarded to the Republican Presidential Nominee minus the percentage of votes awarded to the Democratic Presidential Nominee for the years 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008.[42] For example, in DeKalb County, if the Republican Presidential Nominee was awarded 58% of the votes and if the Democratic Presidential Nominee was awarded 42% of the votes in 2000, then the party dominance in DeKalb County in 2000 is 16%. The incarceration rate of blacks is obtained from the 2010 Vera Institute of Justice which reports the number of black individuals in jail per 10,000 county residents. The number of black church members is obtained from the 2010 U.S. Religion Census.[43] The U.S. Religion Census classifies black churches as churches with the largest historically black denomina-

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[41]Lagged party dominance is used so that party dominance will not be correlated with the outcome variable.

[42]Kent (2003) finds that voter turnout is lower when one party is dominant since the outcome appears to be certain argues that party dominance accounts for declines in voter turnout more than race, election laws, or economic class.

[43]Tate (1991) finds that voting propensity is higher for blacks who attend church.

tions.[44]. The black church member rate is defined as the number of members who attend black churches per 10,000 black population in 2010. The number of polling places is obtained from the Secretary of State Offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina. This data represent polling locations in the 2016 Presidential Election.

Appendix B: Supplemental Material

Table B1
The Association between Voter Registration Rates in 1867/1868 and Historical Lynching Rates

	Dependent Variable: Black lynchings (1)
Percentage of black registered voters in 1867 and 1868	0.066
	(0.020)
Percentage of black residents in 1860	-0.028
	(0.022)
Constant	2.095
	(0.590)
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	364
R-Squared	0.209

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. The dependent variable, black lynchings, is the number of lynchings that occurred in a county from 1882-1930 in which the victim was black and the mob was white. Voter registration data come from John Clegg and are based on tables in (Hume & Gough 2008). The percentage of black residents in 1860 come from the 1860 Census. Note that free colored and slave populations are used to compute the number of black residents.

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[44]The list of blacks churches include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the Church of God in Christ, the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., the National Missionary Baptist Convention, Inc., and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.

Table B2

The Association between Parent and Child's Political Participation

| | Dependent Variable: | |
	Vote	Registration
Parent's Voting Indicator	0.450***	
	(0.013)	
Parent's Registration Indicator		0.332***
		(0.023)
Constant	0.251***	0.093***
	(0.011)	(0.013)
Number of observations	7,290	1,155
R-Squared	0.145	0.151

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. The data come from the 2000-2014 CPS via the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.

Table B3

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates
Normalizing with Different Years

| | Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Black lynching rate (in 1910)	-0.466***		
	(0.067)		
Black lynching rate (in 1920)		-0.089**	
		(0.039)	
Black lynching rate (in 1930)			-0.042***
			(0.015)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	957	957	957
R-Squared	0.439	0.426	0.423

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1910, 1920, or 1930. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B4

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

(Rates Converted to 100)

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate
	(1)
Black lynching rate	-0.528***
	(0.190)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	957
R-Squared	0.531

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B5

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

(Rates Less than 100)

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate
	(1)
Black lynching rate	-0.483**
	(0.200)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	912
R-Squared	0.518

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B6

The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates (EJI Data)

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate
	(1)
Black lynching rate (EJI)	-0.295**
	(0.116)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	957
R-Squared	0.427

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The lynching data are obtained from the Equal Justice Initiative and contain the number of lynchings from 1877-1950. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1877-1950 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B7

Using Selection on Observables to Access the Bias from Unobservables

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
No controls effect	Controlled effect	Coeff. set from psacalc	Ratio: $\frac{\beta^F}{(\beta^R - \beta^F)}$
-0.682***	-0.524***	[-1.059, -0.400]	3.330
(0.183)[0.399]	(0.191)[0.431]		

 Notes: Column (1) shows the coefficient from the model that includes no controls (together with standard errors in parentheses and R-squared in brackets). Column (2) shows the coefficient for the model that includes all explanatory variables. Columns (1) and (2) both include state and year fixed effects. Column (3) reports the identified set using psacalc provided by Oster (2017). The identified set displays the main coefficient of interest, lynching rate, using psacalc for the model with no controls and the model with all explanatory variables respectively and excludes zero. Column (4) shows the ratio building from Altonji et al. (2005). See Table 1 for a full description of controls.

Table B8
The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates
(Pooled Data)

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate
	(1)
Black lynching rate	-0.521***
	(0.192)
Historical Controls	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes
Number of observations	255
R-Squared	0.542

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters averaged across the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B9
The Association between Lynching Rates and Black Voter Registration Rates

	Dependent Variable: Black Voter Registration Rate			
	2000	2004	2008	2012
Black lynching rate	-0.392*	-0.547***	-0.500**	-0.658***
	(0.229)	(0.187)	(0.237)	(0.198)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	192	255	255	255
R-Squared	0.590	0.563	0.228	0.478

 Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. The dependent variable, black registered voters rate, is the percentage of black registered voters in the 2000, 2004, 2008 or the 2012 Presidential Election per black voting age population. See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

Table B10

Lynching Rates and Differences in Attributes between Migrants and Non-migrants

Linked Census Data (1910 to 1930)

Out-Migrants vs. Stayers	(1) Earnings 1928	(2) Earnings 1960	(3) Age	(4) Own Home	(5) School	(6) Literate	(7) Employed
Outmigrant × Black lynching rate	-0.008	-0.006	0.194	-0.008	0.003	0.014**	0.003
	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.169)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Outmigrant	0.051*	0.077*	-2.228***	0.097***	-0.041	-0.054	0.081**
	(0.030)	(0.042)	(0.744)	(0.031)	(0.042)	(0.033)	(0.036)
Black lynching rate	0.003	0.007	-0.061	0.006**	0.004	-0.004	0.001
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.080)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Historical Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	1,177	894	2,041	2,041	1,353	2,041	1,199
R-Squared	0.129	0.162	0.020	0.019	0.024	0.008	0.031

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses and are clustered at the county level. The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings in a county from 1882-1930 per 10,000 black population in 1900. Data on migrants come from Collins & Wanamaker (2014). This data link southern black male migrants and non-migrants from the 1910 Census to the 1930 Census. The dependent variables are as follows: Column (1) real earnings score based on Lebergott (1964), Column (2) real earnings score based on IPUMS (1960), Column (3) age, Column (4) indicator for owning a home, Column (5) indicator for attending school, Column (6) literacy indicator, and Column (7) employment indicator. Dependent variables are based on information contained in the 1910 Census.