

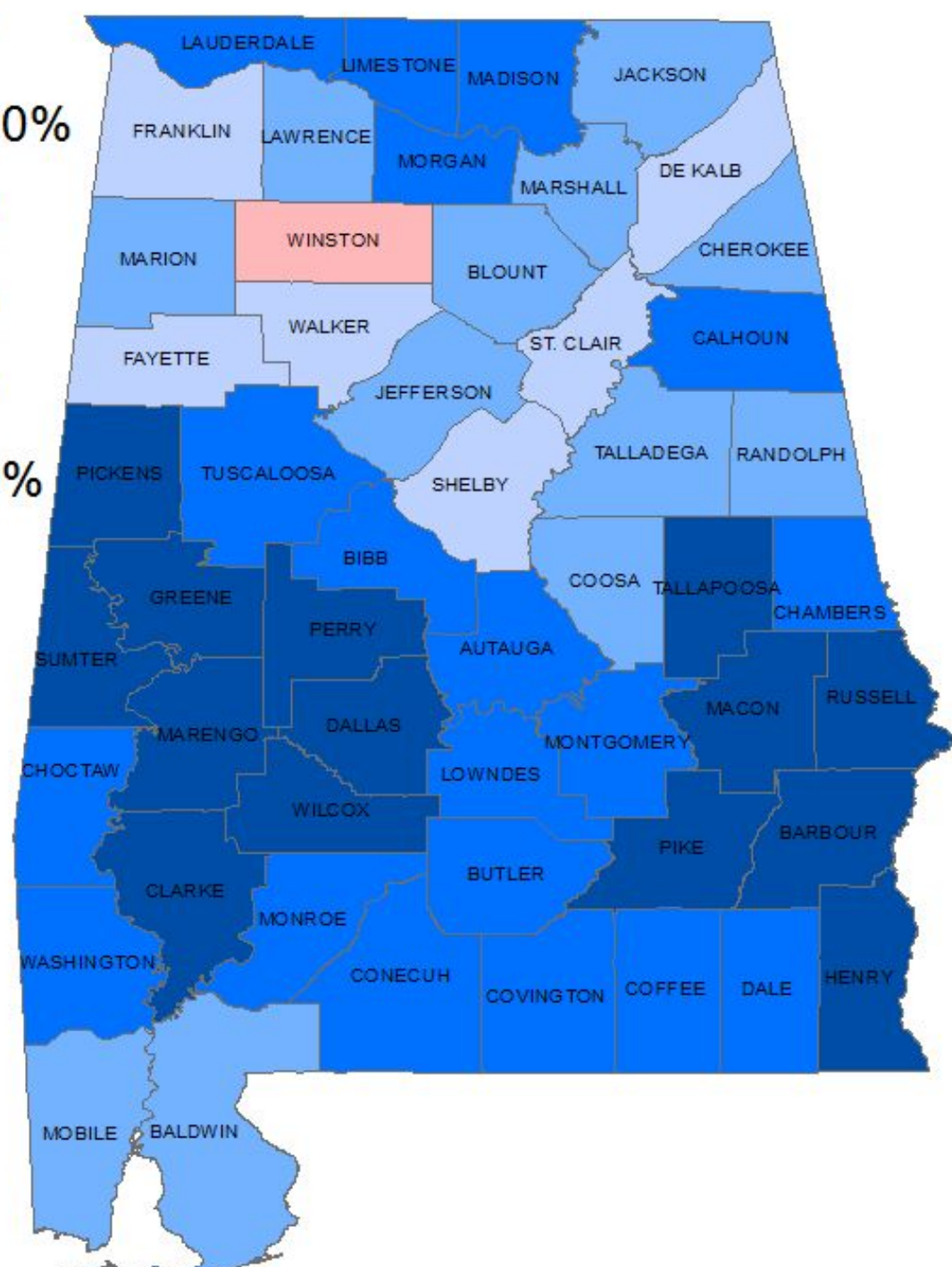
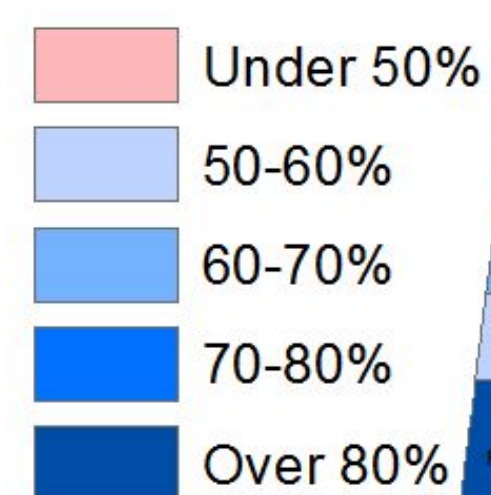
The Effect of Political Violence on Partisanship

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Question

- What is the effect of political violence on partisanship?
- Evidence from an underexplored case: political violence during the American Civil War in Confederate Alabama.
- In Alabama, what was the effect of violence during the Civil War on post-war partisanship?

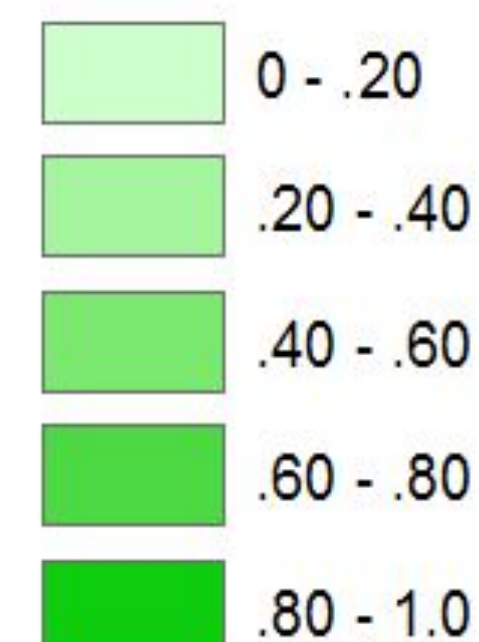
Average Democratic Presidential Vote 1880-1956



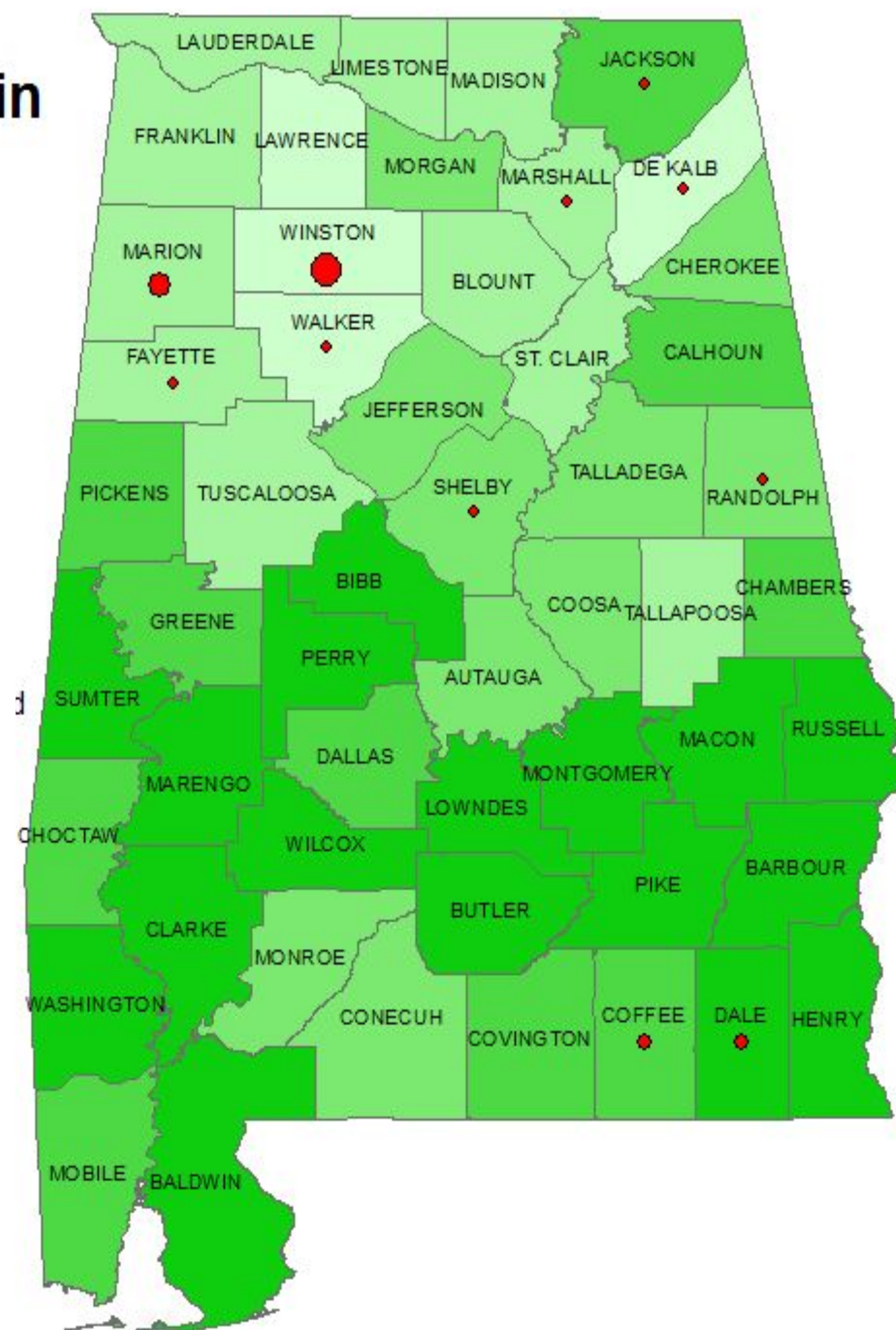
Theory

- Personalistic political violence during war against civilians resulted in rejection of Confederate (later Democrat) partisan identity
- Many potential cleavages (economic, Whig/Dem, secessionist) but deadly violence only took place across secessionist cleavages and so affected later partisanship
- Effects should be strongest when voting against Democrats is more costly

Percentage of Vote in Favor of Secession



Red circles indicate counties that experienced deadly incidents of political violence, with larger size signifying more incidents



IV: Personalistic Political Violence in Alabama during Civil War; 28 deadly incidents in 11 counties (collected by author from primary and secondary sources)

DV: Democratic Vote Share in Post-Reconstruction Presidential Elections

Unit: Matched Counties

Matching

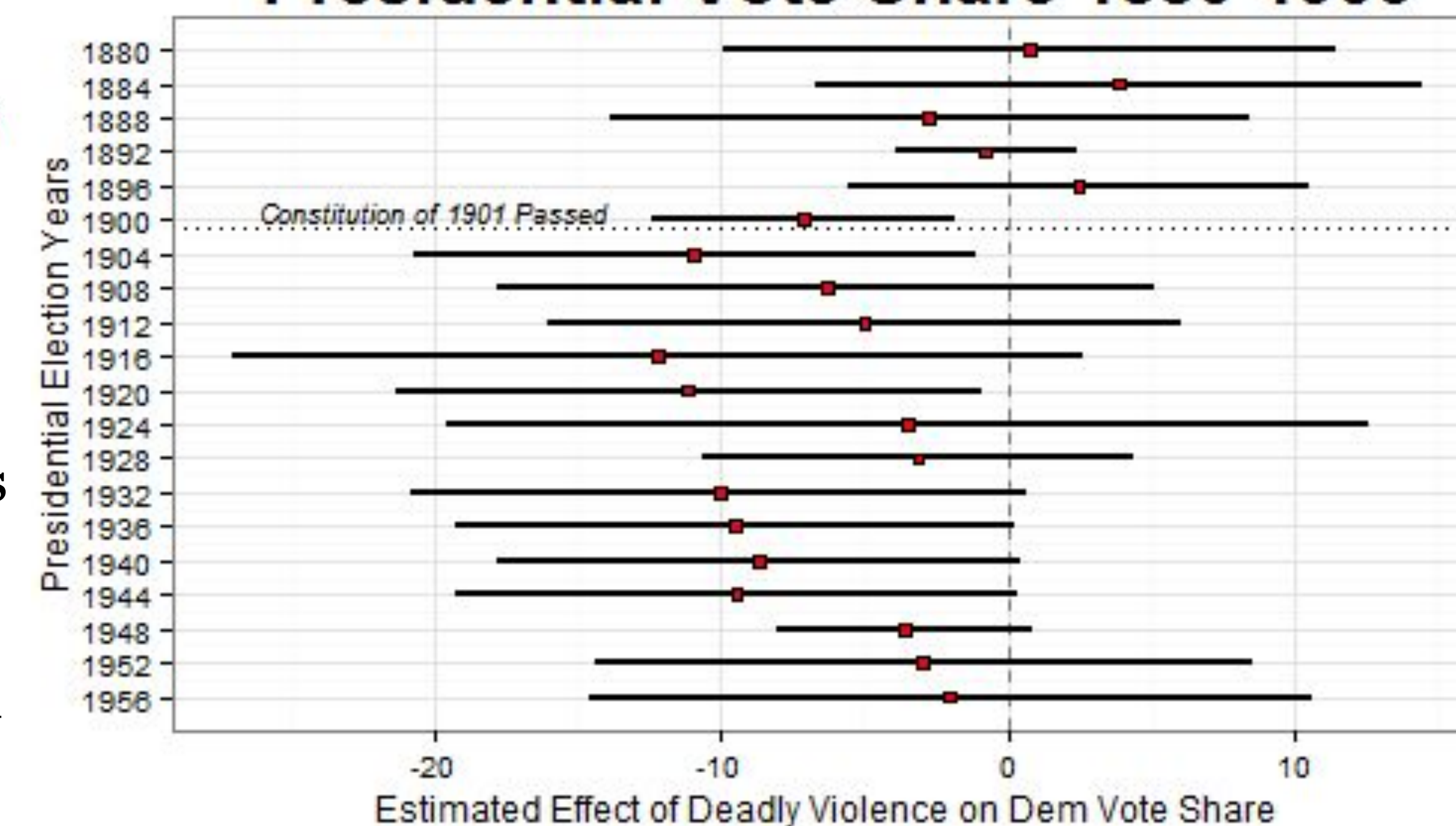
The preferred match used the percentage of votes for secession, the number of slaveholders per-capita, and the per-capita value of farms according to the 1860 census. Genetic matching via GenMatch (Sekhon 2013)

Covariate	Before matching			After matching		
	t stat.	Mean Error	KS p-value	t stat.	Mean Error	KS p-value
secp	-2.9	-98.307	0.02	-1.29	-12.869	0.37
slaverp	-7.84	-483.91	0	-1.11	-58.239	0.4
farmvcap	-5.68	-739.37	0	-1.34	-121.11	0.38

Results

- Effect grows in strength as impact of Reconstruction fades; strongest after 1901 with new, franchise-limited constitution
- Strength varies in part with national politics, but consistently negative and often significant at 95% two-sided CI
- Effect dissipates over time due to generational turnover and partisan realignment

Effect of Violence on Democratic Presidential Vote Share 1880-1956



Conclusion

- General support for theoretical expectations
- Potential answer to the puzzle of pockets of Republican support in the "Solid" South
- Similar patterns appear in other Southern states including Arkansas and North Carolina
- Could also apply in more recent conflicts and elsewhere internationally