

*Defining Dixie:  
A State-Level Measure of the Modern Political South\**

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Despite volumes of research, there is little agreement on which states to include in the modern political South. In this paper, we analyze state-level demographic, political, public opinion, and policy outcome data to evaluate the distinctiveness of the eleven states of the old Confederacy. Next, we combine the public opinion and policy outcomes unique to the old Confederacy states to create an index of political southernness. Our scale of southernness suggests that the traditional definitions of the region need to be reevaluated. For example, we find that Oklahoma and Kentucky score high on our scale, while Tennessee, Virginia, and especially Texas are much less politically southern.

The South is an important part of American politics. Southern states have considerable influence on presidential elections (Black and Black 1992), congressional elections (Glaser 1996), congressional behavior (Black and Black 2002; Poole and Rosenthal 1997), and partisan realignments (Schreckhise and Shields 2003). Despite the significance of the region, there is no agreement on which states should be included in the modern political South.

Many scholars including Key (1949), Lamis (1984), and Black and Black (1987, 1992, 2002) analyze the eleven states of the old Confederacy. While this definition is historically significant, the South has transformed considerably since the Civil War. In response to these changes, Bullock and Rozell (2002) feature a chapter on Oklahoma in their edited volume on southern politics. Gray and Lowery (1999) include Kentucky, but not Oklahoma in a study of interest groups in the South, and Poole and Rosenthal (1997) add Oklahoma and Kentucky to their study of congressional roll call voting. Others rely on the U.S. Census classifications, including Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia in their definitions of the South (Glen and Simmons 1967; Rice, McLean, and Larsen 2002).

In some cases, these choices are well justified. Gaddie and Copeland (2002, 223) argue that “While Oklahoma was not a state at the time of the

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Civil War, many of the events and cultural factors that structure Oklahoma politics are distinctly southern.” According to Rozell (2002, 137), “Virginia has progressed enormously in the modern era, yet in many ways it remains a bastion of old-style southern politics.” However, in most situations scholars provide little discussion of why certain states are included (or left out) of their definitions of the South.

No matter what states are included in southern politics studies, researchers generally agree that the region is diverse. As Glenn and Simmons (1967, 179) observed, “The South may be the most homogenous region, but there are great differences even there, for example, between highly urbanized Texas and predominately rural Mississippi.” To further differentiate the region, states of the old Confederacy are often classified as part of the Deep South (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina) or Peripheral South (Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia).

Many have even implied a degree of southernness when writing about particular states. Key (1949, 229) notes that Mississippi “manifests in accentuated form the darker political strains that run throughout the South” and Black and Black (2002, 88) classify Texas as “the region’s least ‘southern’ state.” North Carolina seems to fall somewhere in the middle. Kazee (1998, 143) argues that North Carolina has “the traditional values of the Old South and the ‘entrepreneurial individualism’ of the New South,” and Black and Black (2002, 102) classify North Carolina’s Senate politics as having a “rawer and more persistently racist component than other Peripheral South states.”

In the end, scholars of southern politics have obtained a nuanced, qualitative understanding of the political South, but have not provided state-level quantitative indicators of political southernness. This presents significant problems because there is no commonly accepted standard of which states should be included in studies of the South. The problem is exacerbated when the South is included as a dummy independent variable with little justification for the boundaries chosen. If one study finds that the South is no longer distinctive, but uses the Census definition of the South to arrive at this conclusion, this finding is of limited utility to those who wish to understand the eleven states of the old Confederacy. In sum, our understanding of southern politics has been impeded because of the varying definitions of the South.

Before suggesting which states belong in the modern political South, we must first determine whether the old Confederacy states remain politically unique. In the next section, we review the literature on southern distinctiveness to better understand the factors that should be analyzed in our study.

### **Southern Distinctiveness**

In the *Mind of the South*, Cash (1941, 428-429) painted an unflattering picture of southerners highlighting characteristics such as “violence, intolerance, aversion and suspicion toward new ideas.” Near mid-century, advances in polling and quantitative research provided a more systematic appraisal of the region’s distinctiveness.

Over the last 50 years, scholars have found that southerners tend to hold different positions on social and political issues than non-southerners. For instance, Glenn and Simmons (1967) found that southerners held more conservative opinions about religion, morals, political issues, international relations, and race between 1950 and 1961, and Hurlbert (1989) confirmed the persistence of these differences throughout the 1970s. In addition, Steed, Moreland, and Baker (1990) found regional differences in the issue positions of southern and non-southern party activists in 1984. During the 1980s and into the early 1990s, racial prejudice also remained higher in the South (Glaser 1996; Kuklinski, Cobb, and Gilens 1997). Finally, Rice, McLean, and Larsen (2002) found that southerners exhibit more conservative attitudes on issues including race, gender, religion, sex, and tolerance from 1972 to 2000.

With more conservative positions on social and political issues, it is not surprising that southerners classify themselves as more ideologically conservative. Using the standard seven-point ideological self-identification scale, Abramowitz and Knotts (2004) found that compared to northern whites, higher percentages of southern whites identified themselves as conservatives. Perhaps most importantly, this regional difference in ideology remained consistent between 1972 and 2000.

In addition to identifying regional differences on issue positions, many have suggested that the South is culturally unique. Reed (1974, 1982) argued that southern distinctiveness is displayed in table manners, support for corporal punishment in schools, faithfulness, and loyalty to family ties. Others have discussed the distinctiveness of religious conservatism in the South (Black and Black 2002; Green et al. 2003).

Despite evidence of regional differences, a few scholars suggest that the South is becoming less distinct. Bass and DeVries (1976) present evidence of declining regional differences and Beck and Lopatto (1982) find that weakening partisanship and a convergence of ideological positions make the southern electorate much like the rest of the United States. Applebome (1996) has even argued that the South is less distinct than before because the values, politics, and culture of the South are now influencing the rest of the country.

Nearly all of the research on southern distinctiveness has focused on individual attitudes aggregated to the regional-level (South/non-South) rather than attitudes aggregated to the state-level. Our focus on states is unique and it also allows us to consider policy outcomes, an important political component that is omitted from studies of southern distinctiveness. We know that Southerners think differently about politics, but we do not know if these differences translate into different policy outcomes.

In sum, we argue that the South has been poorly defined. There is no consensus on what states are southern, creating problems for scholars of southern politics and for people who want to understand the importance of region in American politics. We outline a plan for analyzing these factors and creating an index of political southernness in our data and methods section below.

### **Data and Methods**

To put these issues in context, we explore demographic and political differences between the eleven Confederate states and the remaining non-Confederate states. Next, we analyze a series of state-level public opinion and policy variables that scholars have suggested contribute to southern exceptionalism. We use a variety of sources for these variables including the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Norrander's pooled data from the Senate Election Study (2001), Gray et al.'s (2004) data on policy outcomes, and a few others (see Appendix for a complete list of variables and coding). For each variable, we test whether there are differences between the old Confederacy states and the non-Confederacy states. We group states into these two categories because this is the most commonly used definition of the South. Variables that exhibit statistically significant differences are then standardized and included in a scale of political southernness. Previous studies assume that the South is distinctive and use the South as a dichotomous independent variable to explain a variety of outcomes. Our approach is different. We use public opinion and policy measures to define the boundaries of the modern political South—in effect using the South as a dependent variable. This strategy allows us to determine which old Confederacy states exhibit southern characteristics. In addition, we identify old Confederacy states that no longer share southern attributes and non-Confederate states that should be considered in definitions of the modern political South.

We use states as the unit of analysis throughout this manuscript for three primary reasons. First, states are substantively important units in southern politics that have experienced increased responsibility and capacity in recent years (Stein 1999). Second, state boundaries provide convenient, easily understood, and frequently used lines of demarcation. We do not

doubt that southernness varies within as well as between states. If we were to define degrees of southernness within states, however, we do not believe the measures would be as useful. For instance, in an excellent article on political culture, Lieske (1993) argues that each county can be divided into one of ten subcultures. Unfortunately, his unit of analysis is so small that his measure has limited utility. Third, we study states because of our interest in policy outputs—measures that are only available at the state-level.

### Results

Table 1 presents eight demographic characteristics that we expect to vary between the Confederate and non-Confederate states. Our findings indicate that although southern demographics have changed considerably, differences related to racial characteristics and standard of living in the region persist. Confederate states had significantly higher percentages of black

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics in Confederate and Non-Confederate States (2000)**

Variable	Confederate (n=11)	Non-Confederate (n=39)	T Statistic
% Black	22.95 (8.15)	6.22 (6.14)	7.41***
% Hispanic	6.98 (9.35)	8.01 (8.90)	0.34
% HS Graduate	76.75 (2.50)	83.43 (3.59)	5.76***
Median House Value (\$)	94,100.00 (16,949.63)	155,497.44 (198,045.24)	1.02***
Median Household Income (\$)	37,335.91 (4713.95)	42,509.28 (6329.70)	2.51*
% Owner Occupied Housing	69.37 (2.56)	67.62 (5.03)	1.11
Persons per Square Mile	130.43 (69.00)	195.13 (279.83)	1.31
% in Poverty	14.71 (3.10)	11.16 (2.69)	3.74***

Note: Entries in first two columns are means with standard deviations in parentheses. The third column presents the absolute value of the T statistic, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001, two-tailed test.

citizens (22%-6%), lower proportions of high school graduates (77%-83%), lower median household incomes (\$37,000-\$42,509), lower average house values (\$94,100-\$155,500), and higher percents in poverty (15%-11%). Confederate states also had fewer Hispanic citizens, higher percentages of owner occupied homes, and fewer persons per square mile. However, none of these differences were statistically significant.

Next, we analyze electoral and partisan characteristics in Confederate and non-Confederate states by comparing the percent for Bush in 2000, partisan identification, party competition, party control, and House and Senate Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) scores. The partisan identification measure varies from 0-7 with strong Democrats coded 0 and strong Republicans coded 7. The Ranney Party competition index measures the level of party competition that exists across offices within a particular state. The scale varies from 0.5-1 where higher values indicate higher levels of party competition. The Ranney party control index varies from 0-1 where 1 equals perfect Democratic control, and 0 equals perfect Republican control. Finally, we analyze ADA scores to compare the voting records of members of Congress from the old Confederacy states to the voting records of members outside the region. To compute this measure, Americans for Democratic Action identifies 20 high profile congressional votes. Each time a member votes with the ADA's preferred position, they receive a 5. These numbers are then added together to produce a total ADA score that ranges from 0-100 with 100 indicating a more liberal voting record. Table 2 presents the results of this analysis.

The higher support for Bush across the Confederate states confirms the increasingly Republican nature of southern presidential voters. Averaged to the state-level, members of Congress from Confederate states were more conservative in both the House and Senate, but only the Senate ADA scores achieved statistical significance. On the other political measures, the Confederate states do not appear much different from the rest of the country. The Ranney Party Control Index is very close and the Ranney Party Competition index is identical between the two regions.

Next, we examined differences in public opinion in the Confederate and non-Confederate states (Table 3). Dating back to Cash's classic *Mind of the South*, scholars have demonstrated that Southerners hold different opinions than people in other parts of the country. However, there has been little empirical work that evaluates this assertion with state-level measures. Using Norrander's state-level public opinion database (2001), we perform difference of means tests between Confederate and non-Confederate states on the following public opinion issues: ideology, abortion legality, parental consent for abortions, government funding of abortions, capital punishment, affirmative action, environment spending, school spending, unemployed spending,

**Table 2. Electoral and Partisan Characteristics in Confederate and Non-Confederate States**

Variable	Confederate (n=11)	Non-Confederate (n=39)	T Statistic
% Bush 2000	54.30 (3.24)	49.35 (9.47)	2.74**
Partisan Identification	2.92 (0.20)	2.96 (0.28)	0.44
Ranney Party Competition Index	0.87 (0.05)	0.87 (0.08)	0.05
Ranney Party Control Index	0.54 (0.14)	0.47 (0.15)	1.42
U.S. House ADA Score	32.11 (11.30)	42.26 (28.35)	1.79
U.S. Senate ADA Score	31.82 (25.03)	52.18 (35.29)	2.16*

Note: Entries in first two columns are means with standard deviations in parentheses. The third column presents the absolute value of the T statistic, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001, two-tailed test.

AIDS spending, child care spending, and defense spending. On 5 of 13 measures, state level public opinion is statistically different in Confederate and non-Confederate states. Averaged across states, citizens in Confederate states held more conservative opinions on ideology, abortion legality, government funding of abortions, and affirmative action. Given the tradition of military service in the South, it is not surprising that citizens in old Confederacy states supported higher levels of defense spending than citizens in the non-Confederacy states. In general, differences were larger on social issues than economic issues, a likely result of a more traditional culture and the prevalence of conservative religions beliefs in the South.

Finally, we evaluate differences in policy outcomes between Confederate and non-Confederate states. Partly because of data availability, policy outcomes are notably absent in most treatments of southern politics. We utilize the Gray et al. (2004) measures for abortion, guns, TANF, and tax progressivity and add measures for gay civil rights (from Eshbaugh-Soha and Meier 2004) as well as education, welfare, and overall government spending (from Garand and Baudoin 2004). Although not exhaustive, we believe these indicators represent a broad cross-section of the types of issues state governments face.

**Table 3. Public Opinion  
in Confederate and Non-Confederate States**

Variable	Confederate (n=11)	Non-Confederate (n=39)	T Statistic
Ideology	3.84 (0.10)	3.47 (0.19)	6.13***
Abortion Legality	2.82 (0.16)	2.57 (0.26)	3.86***
Parental Consent	2.12 (0.16)	2.21 (0.26)	1.02
Government Funding of Abortions	3.31 (0.20)	3.08 (0.33)	2.88**
Capital Punishment	1.91 (0.19)	1.96 (0.23)	0.67
Affirmative Action	4.43 (0.22)	4.18 (0.21)	3.50***
Environment Spending	1.51 (0.06)	1.51 (0.10)	0.06
School Spending	1.37 (0.04)	1.42 (0.09)	1.95
Unemployed Spending	1.77 (0.10)	1.82 (0.10)	1.60
AIDS Spending	1.45 (0.07)	1.45 (0.08)	0.10
Child Care Spending	1.55 (0.06)	1.54 (0.09)	0.30
Defense Spending	2.11 (0.13)	2.32 (0.09)	5.03***

Note: Entries in first two columns are means with standard deviations in parentheses. The third column presents the absolute value of the T statistic, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001, two-tailed test.

Table 4 demonstrates that old Confederacy states pass different policies on some, but not all issues. Confederate state policy outcomes are significantly different on abortion, gay civil rights, health spending, and TANF, but not on education spending, guns, overall government spending, tax progressivity, and welfare spending. Much like public opinion, it appears that old Confederacy states are different on social issues, but not as different on economic issues. This congruence between public opinion and policy outcomes

**Table 4. Policy Outcomes  
in Confederate and Non-Confederate States**

Variable	Confederate	Non-Confederate	T Statistic
Abortion	-0.47 (0.68)	0.08 (1.05)	2.06*
Education Spending	5.15 (1.09)	5.03 (1.44)	0.26
Gay Civil Rights	-56.67 (30.54)	.12 (46.78)	3.79***
Guns	-0.37 (0.45)	0.05 (0.99)	1.38
Health Spending	1.18 (0.43)	.91 (0.35)	2.15*
Government Spending	14.40 (3.00)	15.93 (4.68)	1.02
TANF	-0.57 (1.05)	0.14 (.96)	2.12*
Tax Progressivity	-0.41 (1.08)	0.12 (0.96)	1.56
Welfare Spending	3.06 (0.76)	3.11 (0.96)	1.96

Note: Entries in first two columns are means with standard deviations in parentheses. The third column presents the absolute value of the T statistic, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < .001, two-tailed test. Confederate N = 11 for all variables. Non-Confederate N = 39 for Education Spending, Gay Civil Rights, Health Spending, and Government Spending; 37 for Abortion, Guns, TANF, and Tax Progressivity; and 33 for Welfare Spending.

is consistent with Erikson, Wright, and McIver’s (1993) argument that states tend to pass policies that are representative of public opinion in their state.

To determine which states were the most (and least) politically southern, we computed a scale of political southernness by indexing each of the significant measures from Tables 3 and 4. Because these measures are on different scales, we standardized the variables to allow for comparison (abortion policy was already standardized). Next, we made the more southern position the higher value by multiplying the Z-scores for opinions about defense spending and the policy outcomes related to abortion, gay civil rights, and TANF by a negative one. Finally, we summed the Z-scores to create a measure of political southernness. The total scale has a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.67 (public opinion alpha = 0.86 and policy outputs alpha = 0.75)

suggesting that these measures are reliable and appropriate for scaling. The first column of Table 5 presents the total score, the second column displays the southernness ranking using only public opinion variables, and the third column presents the results using only policy outcome variables. In each column, the eleven states of the old Confederacy are in bold print.

As expected, most of the old Confederacy states are bunched near the top of each of the three columns. Many of the Midwest states grouped in the middle of the scale and the New England states are at the bottom (Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont). Moving to specific states, the scale suggests that Bullock and Rozell (2002) are correct—Oklahoma contains many southern qualities. Oklahoma ranks as the 9th most southern state on the total scale, the 5th most southern on public opinion and the 15th most southern on policy outcomes. Kentucky also appears near the top of the scale (6th most southern)—higher than the old Confederacy states of Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Virginia and Texas.

The placement of four old Confederacy states (Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, and Texas) also deserves discussion. Despite rapid urbanization and in-migration since the early 1970s, Florida ranked as the 10th most southern state, higher than we expected. Like Texas, Florida has received large numbers of Latino immigrants but the influx of Cubans in Florida may shape public opinion and policy outcomes in a more conservative direction. Tennessee (ranked 14th) scored lower than we expected. While Memphis and Nashville may fit many people's stereotypical notions of the South, much of East Tennessee sympathized with the Union during the Civil War. Perhaps due to its regional diversity, Tennessee ranked lower on our list. Virginia, the 16th most politically southern state, is now dominated by northern Virginia—an area that has more in common with Washington, DC, than with the old Confederate capital of Richmond. Demographic changes in northern Virginia probably explain why public opinion in Virginia ranks as the least southern of the eleven states of the old Confederacy. Not surprisingly, Texas (22nd most southern) ranked very low on our index of political southernness. Our data suggest that Black and Black (2002, 88) are correct that Texas is the region's least southern state. The ranking of Texas also highlights the importance of including policy outputs in studies of southern distinctiveness. Texas looks fairly southern based on public opinion, but with the addition of policy outcomes Texas ranks much lower on our scale. Lamis (1984) was certainly correct when he deemed Texas "A world unto itself."

Finally, we would caution against using the Census definition of the South in future studies. Delaware scored 30th on our scale of political southernness and Maryland ranked 36th. Certainly not surprising to students of the region, Delaware and Maryland share few political characteristics with states in the modern South.

**Table 5. Ranking the Political South**

	Total		Public Opinion		Policy	
	State	Score	State	Score	State	Score
1	<b>Arkansas</b>	11.24	<b>Arkansas</b>	9.03	<b>Mississippi</b>	4.75
2	<b>Alabama</b>	10.59	<b>Alabama</b>	6.88	<b>Louisiana</b>	4.43
3	<b>Louisiana</b>	10.55	<b>Louisiana</b>	6.12	Utah	3.98
4	<b>Mississippi</b>	9.39	<b>South Carolina</b>	5.93	<b>Alabama</b>	3.71
5	<b>South Carolina</b>	9.07	Oklahoma	4.96	<b>North Carolina</b>	3.51
6	Kentucky	7.34	West Virginia	4.84	<b>South Carolina</b>	3.14
7	<b>Georgia</b>	7.15	<b>Georgia</b>	4.79	<b>Virginia</b>	3.01
8	<b>North Carolina</b>	6.79	Kentucky	4.75	Kentucky	2.59
9	Oklahoma	6.46	<b>Mississippi</b>	4.64	<b>Georgia</b>	2.36
10	North Dakota	4.96	<b>Tennessee</b>	4.07	Idaho	2.35
11	Utah	4.45	<b>Texas</b>	3.55	<b>Arkansas</b>	2.21
12	Idaho	4.33	<b>North Carolina</b>	3.28	<b>Florida</b>	2.06
13	<b>Florida</b>	4.19	Wyoming	3.19	Michigan	1.94
14	<b>Tennessee</b>	4.14	North Dakota	3.18	North Dakota	1.78
15	South Dakota	3.64	South Dakota	2.82	Oklahoma	1.50
16	<b>Virginia</b>	3.61	Nebraska	2.52	Ohio	1.43
17	Wyoming	3.20	<b>Florida</b>	2.13	Missouri	1.08
18	Nebraska	3.16	Idaho	1.98	South Dakota	0.83
19	West Virginia	2.87	Missouri	1.39	Kansas	0.78
20	Missouri	2.47	Kansas	1.27	Pennsylvania	0.75
21	Kansas	2.05	<b>Virginia</b>	0.60	Nebraska	0.64
22	<b>Texas</b>	1.63	Pennsylvania	0.48	Indiana	0.40
23	Pennsylvania	1.23	Utah	0.47	Iowa	0.39
24	Indiana	0.74	Indiana	0.34	Wisconsin	0.17
25	Michigan	0.72	Wisconsin	0.12	Delaware	0.16
26	Ohio	0.64	Iowa	0.05	<b>Tennessee</b>	0.07
27	Iowa	0.44	Minnesota	-0.17	Wyoming	0.01
28	Wisconsin	0.29	Ohio	-0.79	Montana	-0.31
29	Montana	-1.39	Montana	-1.08	Arizona	-0.33
30	Delaware	-2.01	Michigan	-1.22	Illinois	-0.49
31	New Mexico	-2.80	New Mexico	-1.58	Maryland	-0.64
32	Arizona	-3.12	Nevada	-2.01	Maine	-0.91
33	Illinois	-3.57	Delaware	-2.17	Oregon	-0.98
34	Minnesota	-4.09	New Jersey	-2.76	New Mexico	-1.22
35	Maine	-4.23	Arizona	-2.79	Colorado	-1.33
36	Maryland	-4.75	Illinois	-3.08	<b>Texas</b>	-1.92
37	Colorado	-4.76	Maine	-3.32	West Virginia	-1.97
38	Nevada	-4.93	Colorado	-3.43	Massachusetts	-2.02
39	New Jersey	-4.97	Maryland	-4.11	New Jersey	-2.21
40	Oregon	-5.46	Connecticut	-4.47	Washington	-2.43
41	Connecticut	-7.15	Oregon	-4.48	Connecticut	-2.68
42	Washington	-7.81	New Hampshire	-4.66	Rhode Island	-2.81
43	New York	-8.20	New York	-5.22	Nevada	-2.92
44	Massachusetts	-8.33	California	-5.35	New York	-2.98
45	California	-8.82	Washington	-5.38	California	-3.47
46	Rhode Island	-9.10	Rhode Island	-6.29	Minnesota	-3.92
47	New Hampshire	-9.57	Massachusetts	-6.31	New Hampshire	-4.91
48	Vermont	-14.20	Vermont	-7.13	Vermont	-7.07

\*Eleven states of the old Confederacy in bold; Hi and AK are excluded because of missing data.

### **Conclusion**

This paper rests on a simple proposition: the South has been poorly and inconsistently defined and this lack of consistency has limited our ability to explain southern politics. In order to provide a better measure of the modern political South, we began by evaluating the distinctiveness of the old Confederacy states. Next, using the characteristics unique to the old Confederacy, we created a measure of political southernness to obtain a better definition of the modern political South.

Our data suggest that the old Confederacy states are unique in some ways, but perhaps not as much as in the past. Aggregated to the state level, residents of the old Confederacy states are more likely to be conservative, believe abortions should be illegal, oppose government funding of abortions, oppose affirmative action, and support defense spending. We found that four of our policy outcomes were different between the Confederate and non-Confederate states: abortions, opposition for gay civil rights, support for health spending, and TANF appropriations.

Our southernness index suggests that Kentucky and Oklahoma display many characteristics of the modern political South. In addition, we find that the old Confederacy states of Tennessee, Virginia, and Texas share fewer characteristics in common with the modern political South. Our results suggest that definitions of the South based on regional lines drawn more than 150 years ago should be reevaluated.

These findings have important implications for future research. Despite a number of excellent studies of southern distinctiveness (Glenn and Simmons 1967; Rice, McLean, and Larson 2002; Steed, Moreland, and Baker 1990), no one has established whether southern states produce different policies than other states. Using a variety of policy outcome measures, we find that old Confederacy states generally pass different social policies, but their economic policies mirror states outside the region. We encourage researchers to test this proposition by considering additional policy areas over multiple years.

Finally, we hope scholars who use the South as a dichotomous variable in their research will carefully consider which states they classify as southern. Although researchers frequently rely on Census classifications or dated definitions such as the eleven states of the old Confederacy, our scale of southernness cautions against the use of these traditional classifications. If we accept the proposition that the South is not just a place on a map, but rather a dynamic, rapidly changing region characterized by a unique set of opinions and government outputs, then future work can benefit from a more nuanced understanding of the region. The South has changed, and so should the way we define it.

**APPENDIX**  
**Data and Sources**

Variable Name	Range	Higher # Indicates	Source
<b>Demographics</b>			
% Black	.3-36.3	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
% Hispanic	.7-42.10	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
% HS Graduate	72.90-88.30	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
Median House Value	70,700-1,333,300	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
Median HH Income	29,696-55,146	Higher HH Income	U.S. Dept of Commerce
% Owner Occup. Housing	53-75.20	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
Persons/Square Mile	1.10-1134.40	More people/sq. mile	U.S. Dept of Commerce
% in Poverty	6.50-19.90	Higher %	U.S. Dept of Commerce
<b>Political Characteristics</b>			
% Bush 2000	31.91-67.76	Higher Bush support	Leip (2004)
Partisan Identification	2.35-3.44	More Republican	Norrander (2001)
Ranney Party Comp. Index	.67-.99	More competition	Bibby & Holbrook (2004)
Ranney Party Control Index	.17-.74	Democratic control	Bibby & Holbrook (2004)
U.S. House ADA Score	0-95	Liberal	Americans for Dem. Action
U.S. Senate ADA Score	0-100	Liberal	Americans for Dem. Action
<b>Public Opinion</b>			
Ideology	3.05-4.01	Conservative	Norrander (2001)
Abortion Legality	2.23-3.27	Never legal	Norrander (2001)
Parental Consent	1.69-2.68	Oppose strongly	Norrander (2001)
Gov't Funding of Abortions	2.54-3.62	Oppose strongly	Norrander (2001)
Capital Punishment	1.49-2.44	Oppose strongly	Norrander (2001)
Affirmative Action	3.71-4.90	Gov't not help	Norrander (2001)
Environmental Spending	1.32-1.69	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
School Spending	1.17-1.60	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
Unemployed Spending	1.59-1.98	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
AIDS Spending	1.29-1.59	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
Child Care Spending	1.36-1.71	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
Defense Spending	1.96-2.49	Less spending	Norrander (2001)
<b>Policy Outcomes</b>			
Abortion	-2.05-1.80	Less restrictions	Gray et al. (2004)
Education Spending	2.60-8.70	More spending	Garand & Baudoin (2004)
Gay Civil Rights	-.92-97	More support	Eshbaugh-Soha & Meier (2004)
Guns	-.96-3.34	More gun control	Gray et al. (2004)
Health Spending	.40-1.90	More spending	Garand & Baudoin (2004)
Government Spending	10.80-37.30	More spending	Garand & Baudoin (2004)
TANF	-1.90-2.00	More assistance	Gray et al. (2004)
Tax Progressivity	-1.89-1.95	More progressive	Gray et al. (2004)
Welfare Spending	1.20-5.20	More spending	Garand & Baudoin (2004)

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