Blacks, Whites, and the Voting Rights Act: The Politics of Contextual Change

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This research argues that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 produced dramatic changes in the racial, political, and legal contexts of the South. By guaranteeing the franchise to 3.5 million eligible black voters the VRA contributed to a change in the racial and political equilibrium of the 505 counties covered by the VRA. Within these counties, many Southern white voters responded to the mobilization of black voters by casting votes for Republican candidates in congressional elections. The change in white partisan voting patterns appears to be inversely related to socioeconomic status.

Introduction

Theories of context assert system level processes. Individuals respond to many aspects of their political environment which they have little control over. Any failure to recognize this simple fact is not only a failure to understand an important part of our social reality, but also almost necessarily results in a failure to make effective policy. This paper examines whites and blacks as political actors influenced by the political environment of the South, which means that the politics of race and the racial context play an important role in determining political behaviors.

Like Key (1949), we believe that race and the racial-political equilibrium of the South are important factors structuring the politics of the region. The racial equilibrium that existed prior to the Voting Rights Act produced one style of southern politics--the largely white politics of a single-party system. The Voting Rights Act did much more than extend guarantees of political participation to blacks. It directly influenced the behaviors of blacks and in the process changed the political context that had shaped the dominant political mode of the region since reconstruction.

Less easily anticipated, however, were the reactions of whites. Long accustomed to the exclusion of blacks from politics, white voters were affected immensely by passage of the VRA, as well. However, it was not strictly the VRA that affected whites; it was the activities of blacks. Suddenly, whites were moved to an entirely new political context.

Thus, the Voting Rights Act had both anticipated and unforeseen consequences. The passage of the VRA had the desired--and expected--effect of mobilizing blacks by guaranteeing them the franchise. To do this, the VRA mandated institutional change in the South, removing and revising many of the formal barriers that had been erected to black political participation. By removing the barriers to participation, the VRA set up new institutions and changed or modified old ones. With the easing of legal restrictions and with federal protections against intimidation, blacks found that they could more fully participate in the politics of the nation and the region.

Since the VRA changed only the institutional framework of southern elections, little of the VRA directly affected whites. Aside from forbidding whites to attempt to prevent blacks from registering or voting, there was little in the VRA to affect whites or provoke a change in white political behaviors.[1]

Nonetheless, white behaviors did change after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The reason for this, however, was not the VRA *per se*. Congress had enacted legislation to protect southern blacks many times since 1957--as it had also done in the post Civil War Congresses--without a wholesale effect on white behaviors in the region. Such previous attempts to legislate equal protection had failed to have an impact on white behaviors because they failed to have an impact on black behaviors. Political institutions were little changed; whites continued to enjoy political monopoly; their political behaviors and loyalties never faltered; and their "extra-institutional" tactics of vote denial continued.

The 1965 Act differed in that it enabled millions of blacks to share in the political processes of the South, which facilitated change in the political and racial equilibria of the region. Many whites, in efforts to stave off such changes, responded to this black mobilization by changing their own longstanding political behaviors. Thus, it was the changed racial, political, and legal context that the VRA produced that was the proximal cause of the change in white behaviors.

For whites and blacks alike, the change was sudden and quite dramatic. In a very short time the legal and social institutions of the South, and the political context of which they were part, were upset and even destroyed. Indeed, the changes brought about were so great that they could be compared to a change in political systems. Although the players remained the same, the game had changed. The racial balances in the electorate were altered, and, in this new political environment,

new political strategies became necessary for each race. Blacks had the problems and opportunities of a guaranteed vote, and southern whites faced competition for political power for the first time in 90 years. From this perspective, the reactions of blacks and whites to the VRA become more completely understandable, as both are involved in the politics of contextual change in the South as brought about by the VRA.

Methodology and Data

This research examines mobilization and partisan reactions of white and black voters in counties of the 'Deep South.' The Deep South includes those 505 counties which violated the statistical "trigger" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 but did not receive federal voting examiners.[2] We use county-level, general election results for Congress. These election results are available for total turnout as well as by party. Congressional elections offer interesting advantages in the study of white reaction to increased black voting. First, because Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it is likely that any reaction vented against the legislation would occur in the congressional elections. Second, prior to the Voting Rights Act, the southern congressional delegation was nearly solidly Democratic. If black voting rights triggered a partisan reaction among whites, then it should be comparatively easy to identify those new trends in the one-party dominant congressional elections.

We estimate black and white participation patterns for congressional elections from 1950 through 1980. Then we examine turnout and partisan voting patterns, by race, for this period. The 30 year time period permits an investigation of established trends prior to 1965, that is, prior to the shattering of the old racial equilibrium. This time frame also permits the observation of changes in participation patterns that occurred in the context of the new racial equilibrium.

We use ecological regression to obtain average probabilities that whites and blacks vote in each unique election.[4] These estimates may also be obtained for partisan turnout, by race. Finally, it is important to note that several estimation techniques were tested to determine the most valid and reliable results. The estimates obtained are very robust; each estimation technique produced extraordinarily similar results. For a more detailed explanation of our estimation techniques, please refer to the "Technical Note" below.

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The Pre-Voting Rights Act Equilibrium

Over thirty years ago V.O. Key argued that the politics of the South are explained by one critical factor: race. He maintained that the predominant consideration in the creation and continuation of southern political institutions had been 1) to assure the continued subordination of blacks at the local levels, and 2) to block any threats by outsiders (i.e., Northerners) to the southern style of politics and political arrangements. It is when the equilibrium in race relations is threatened that "the issue of the negro" comes to the fore in political discussion (Key 1949, 665-68).

Following the Civil War, white southerners began to fashion formal and informal institutions and mechanisms to exclude blacks from political participation and influence. Violence, trickery, intimidation, and various illegal and extra-legal means were frequently employed to keep blacks from the polls on election day (Lawson 1976, 6-8). But southern whites preferred legal and institutional means of perpetuating black disenfranchisement. Hence, restrictive and selectively enforced voter registration requirements were designed to preclude meaningful black participation.

Southern whites had reason to fear the black ballot in several states, and felt threatened by it in ways that today are often forgotten. The southern black population contained about five million eligible voters, yet approximately 75% of eligible blacks were not registered in 1955 (Lawson 1976, 129) -- a time during which many of those who were registered still preferred the party of Lincoln, while others were not as yet firmly attached to the New Deal coalition (which, after all, was an abrupt turnabout from its antecedents). It was feared that the dominance of the Democratic party in the South might be threatened, and/or that blacks might hold the balance of power in southern politics, if they were guaranteed the right to vote (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1959, 31). The potential political and electoral power of blacks in areas of the South was substantial enough to alter existing legal and social arrangements; should blacks mobilize, the changes in local and regional political and social structures could be enormous. Accordingly, the strongest efforts by southern whites to disenfranchise blacks occurred in areas where blacks constituted a substantial portion of the population, and in which whites feared not so much a loss of their own control over the Democratic party as the rise to power of a black-dominated GOP (Key 1949, 540). Southern white behavior, in short,

was proportional to the size of the local black population.

The political system of the South prior to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 might be viewed as a system in equilibrium. The equilibrium was one of white dominance in southern political and social life; a balance kept in place by legal and institutional discrimination and the selective application of various protections, privileges, and different (or differentially applied) criteria for access to the instruments of political or social influence.

It is important to note, however, that the behaviors of southern whites were highly dependent upon the behaviors of southern blacks. The equilibrium was stable because blacks were effectively excluded from influence. However, should the black population take a voice proportional to their numbers, the equilibrium would be altered and the white populace would be forced to find a new response to the racial context. The key to the political behavior of the southern whites is found in the continuity of the mechanisms of black exclusion from politics. When those mechanisms ceased to keep blacks disenfranchised, the white strategy disappeared as well, and the political behavior of whites began to hinge directly on the political behavior of the blacks.

Contextual Change

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the most far reaching and effective statute of its kind. Among its provisions were a method for the automatic determination of whether discriminatory voting laws existed in jurisdictions; the suspension of local voting laws; pre-clearance by the Justice Department of new voting laws; and on-site federal voting registrars under certain circumstances. Because it had "teeth" that effectively negated the institutional mechanisms for black disfranchisement, the passage of the Voting Rights Act altered the equilibrium between the white and black populations. The removal of the institutional barriers opened paths to political participation for southern blacks that heretofore had been virtually insurmountable. Blacks responded by registering and voting in increasing numbers. Many whites, finding their institutional safeguards disabled, reacted by changing their behaviors in order to hold onto their political power.

Prior to the Voting Rights Act, southern whites did not always find participation in politics essential. Turnout in general elections was comparatively low because there was little meaningful party competition. The South was a one-party Democratic region, with many Demo-

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cratic congressional nominees finding themselves unopposed in the general elections. Very few blacks enjoyed the vote. Those that did probably exercised their vote in a non-threatening manner; with little choice on the ballot, the few blacks that voted did little more than affirm the candidates already chosen.

This white-dominated electoral situation changed in two ways after the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. First, the southern black population began voting in large numbers. A potential pool of 3.5 million black voters began to enjoy the franchise and exercise their political power. Second, the black population rewarded the Democratic Party with their support. Partially because the Democratic Party was primarily responsible for the passage of the VRA, and partially in response to Democratic platforms and programs of the New Deal, blacks began to assume Democratic allegiance in great numbers. Contrary to the fears of many Democrats, the VRA did not emancipate an opposition force, but helped swell the ranks of the Democratic Party in the South as never before. White southern Democrats, rather than finding a potent black Republican Party forming in the region, found blacks mobilizing largely within their own party. Not only was the balance of political power in the region shifting, but the balance of power within "the party" had also shifted; whites found that they had to respond to a tremendous change in the political system of the region. Accordingly, it is important to examine white reactions to the newly guaranteed black vote.

The civil rights initiatives of the 1960's, especially the Voting Rights Act of 1965, significantly altered the political behavior of blacks, who began voting in substantial numbers during this period. White turnout also began to increase following the VRA largely in reaction to the newly mobilized black electorate. Two factors are probably primarily responsible for the mobilization of whites. First, the VRA extended the vote to some whites who previously might have been excluded. The institutional and extra-legal mechanisms used to keep southern blacks from becoming powerful also excluded some whites (whose participation may have been considered undesirable), although the relative numbers of these were comparatively small. Second, the VRA and the subsequent black mobilization it permitted "shocked" a portion of the white electorate, mobilizing some white voters who did not participate in the 1950's and early 1960's.

Average turnout patterns do not completely reveal the change in the racial context from the previously existing equilibrium between

whites and blacks. The eligible black population began participating in large numbers, and rewarded the Democratic Party for bringing about the VRA by voting for its candidates. As a consequence, some whites, traditionally the mainstay of the Democratic party in the South, began to move away from the more racially aware and increasingly racially mixed Democratic party and toward the more homogeneous Republican party (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Democratic Vote Share
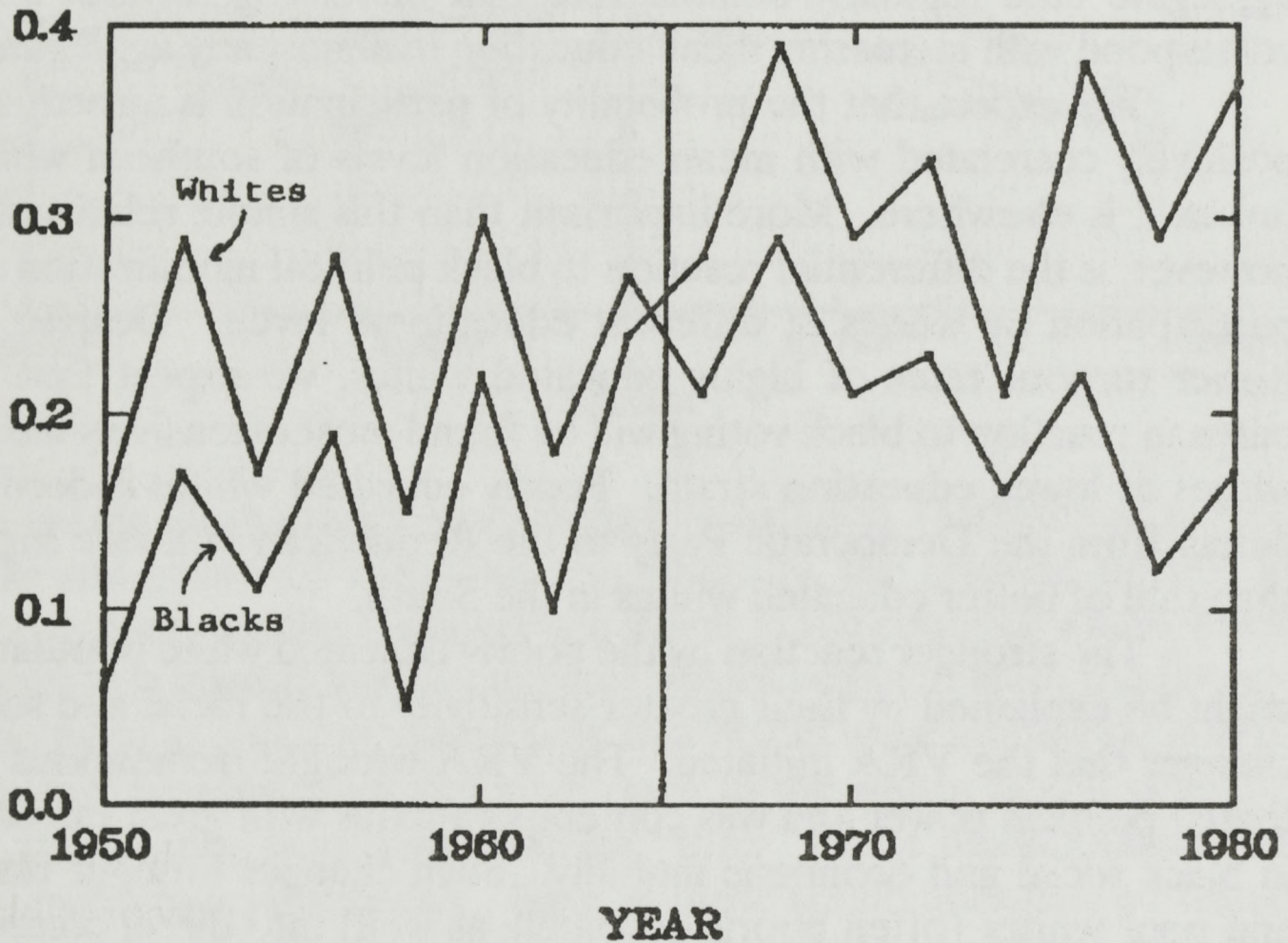
To a large extent, these changes set the process moving toward the new racial and political equilibrium we see today in the South. This is an interesting and dramatic reaction by a portion of the southern white population. The politics of the South had long been dominated by a mostly white Democratic Party. After blacks began to support the Democratic party in overwhelming numbers, many whites apparently considered the Republican alternative. Consequently, one of the outcomes of the new racial equilibrium was that it contributed to a partisan realignment of the South.

The Effects of Education

It is important to examine whether white reaction to black

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voting is conditioned by the former's education levels and socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic characteristics, especially education, are important predictors of voting behavior (Campbell, et al. 1960; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). The literature is replete with evidence that education is a strong positive influence on turnout. In any cross section of the public we find that voters at higher income levels vote more than those at lower income levels, and that people with more education are more likely to vote than those with less education. Similarly, studies of aggregate data regularly demonstrate that increasing turnout levels correspond with increasing mean education in almost any aggregate.

We expect that the probability of participation is directly and positively correlated with mean education levels of southern whites, just as it is elsewhere. More important than this simple relationship, however, is the differential reaction to black political mobilization and participation by whites at different educational levels. Despite the higher turnout rates of highly educated whites, we expect that the partisan reaction to black voting will be found most extensively among whites at lower education strata. Poorly educated whites indeed do defect from the Democratic Party to the Republican at a rate higher than that of better educated whites in the South.

The stronger reaction by the poorly educated white population might be explained by their greater sensitivity to the racial and social changes that the VRA initiated. The VRA wrought tremendous potential political power and was contemporaneous with great increases in black social and economic mobility. Such changes brought blacks and poor whites (often poorly educated, as well) into direct competition in numerous ways; the new political and social power of blacks was a greater challenge to the status of lower class whites than to the white upper crust of southern society. Thus, we present data on white partisan mobilization patterns, by race and education, for counties in the Deep South.[5] Off-year congressional (general) elections are used in order to control "coattail effects" that might distort partisan voting patterns in data from presidential elections.

Prior to the expansion of black political participation precipitated by the passage of the VRA, white support for the Democratic Party appears to have been related to education: support for Democratic candidates is lowest in those counties which have the highest average white education levels, and higher in counties where the whites are less well educated (see Figure 2).

In 1966, the first set of elections following the VRA, white sup-

**Figure 2: Average Probability that Whites Vote Democratic
by County Mean White Education Level**
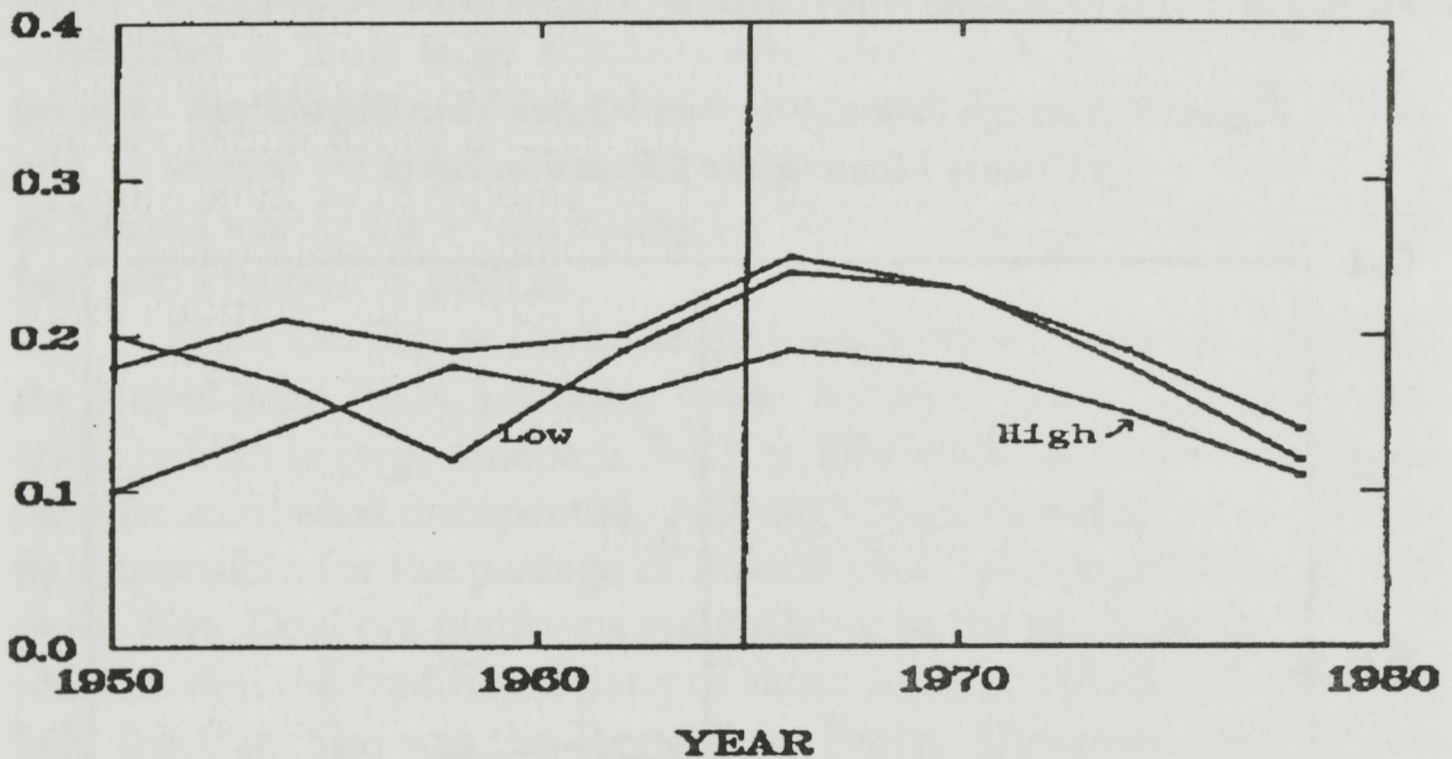
port for the DemocraticParty among all education (and income) levels peaks and goes into a decline. Significantly, the greatest decline in white support for the Democrats is found in the counties where white education is lowest. Poorly educated whites began to leave the Democratic Party at about the same time that blacks were mobilizing into it. Only two possible strategies were open to the whites troubled by the fact that blacks were now entering "their" party: demobilization or conversion to another party. Each of these possibilities may be tested by examining the change in support for Republican congressional candidates in the various counties, since demobilization should be evinced by a decrease in the number voting Democratic without a commensurate increase in the number of those voting Republican.

As shown in Figure 3, white voters in all educational categories became increasingly likely to support Republican congressional candidates starting in 1962, with the greatest increase occurring in the 1966 off-year elections. Further, the rate of white defection to Republican candidates is inversely correlated with white education levels: the Republicans gain the greatest increases in those counties where the means for white education were the lowest; Republican voting shows slower growth in counties in which whites were better educated, and white support for Republicans was already well established.

In general, the same patterns are found in the relationship be-

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tween income and the partisan vote split. The basic observation is one of a political "white flight" to the Republicans, with that tendency appearing where whites have low average income and education levels--and, not so coincidentally, where black populations are large.

Figure 3. Average Probability that Whites Vote Republican by County Mean White Education Level

YEAR
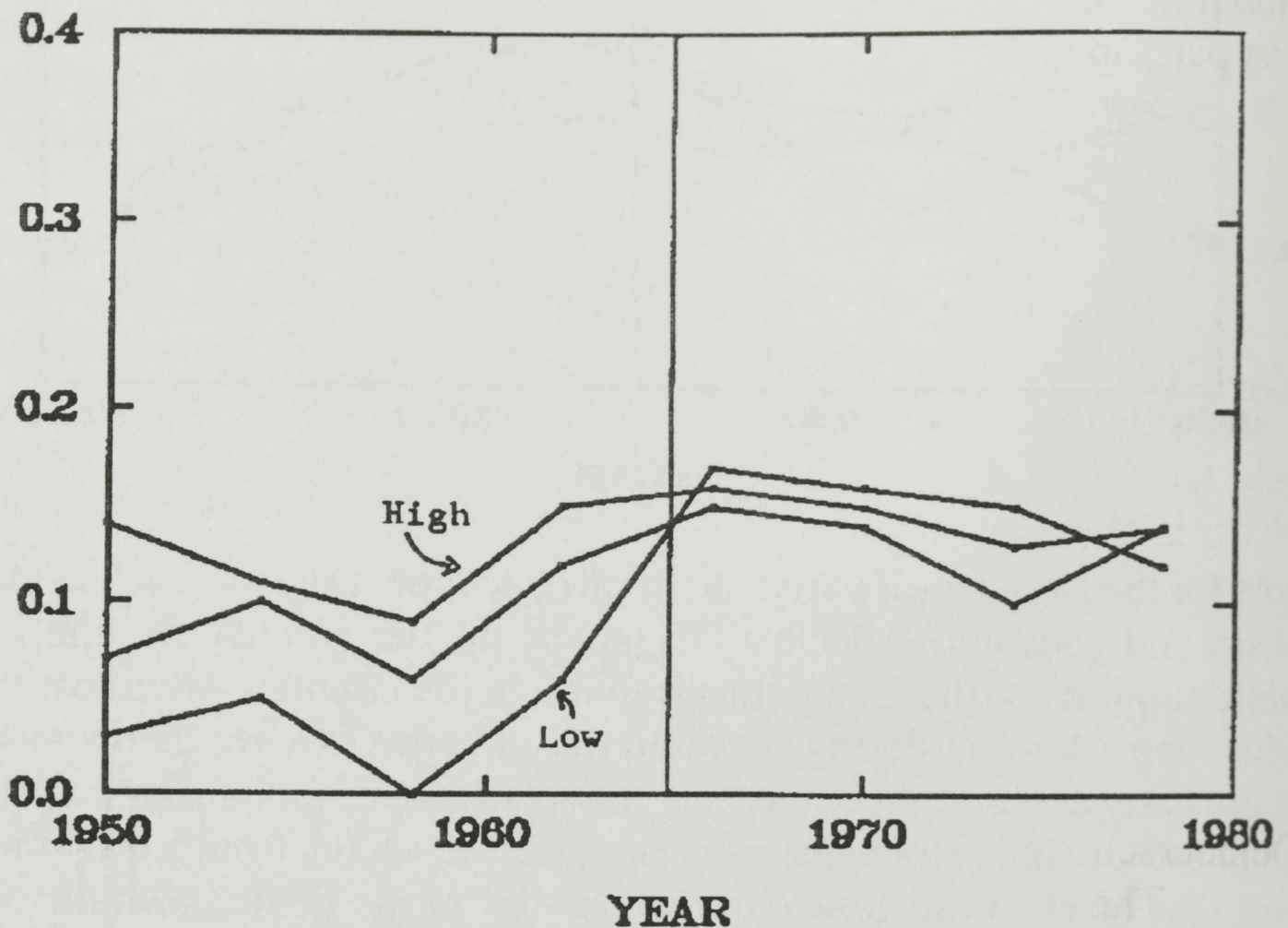
Generalizing from national as well as comparative findings, we expect that voters who possess comparatively high levels of education, income, and occupational status will participate in the greatest numbers and at the greatest frequencies over time. Low status individuals, in contrast, are often depicted as politically disaffected and alienated--and not prone to political activity of any sort. Almost universally we expect there to be a dramatic decline in participation rates as education, income, and social status decrease.

Yet southern whites in counties covered by the VRA proved different. The low status whites in these counties evinced a "white flight" mobilization--a pattern of reaction in which the environment induces large numbers of people to change their behaviors at the same time. Not only low status southern white voters began to support Republicans, but even those who were non-voters prior to the VRA began

to turn out for elections thereafter. And it is important to note that, as in any realignment, the party into which such non-participants mobilized was not the party they should be expected to affiliate with. Low status southern whites began to support Republican congressional candidates in fairly large numbers after the VRA; an unusually large number appeared to convert from long-time Democratic affiliations; and, in accord with a traditional realignment, many others were newly mobilized whites for whom voting for Republican candidates was their first participation in politics.

Note too that at the same time southern whites were fleeing to the Republican Party, southern blacks began to participate in Democratic politics in large numbers. Such an affiliation, as noted earlier, was likewise somewhat unexpected. Although the Democrats were primarily responsible for the passage of federal civil rights legislation, as well as for New Deal era platforms sympathetic to the plight of the poor, it remains that the traditional party of those southern blacks who already held the franchise was the Republican Party. However, since so few blacks in the South had participated previously in politics, the attachment of blacks in the aggregate to the Republican Party was considerably weaker than that of southern whites to the Democrats. While change of affiliation patterns occurred among citizens of both races, the change was most dramatic among whites. Among blacks, change was more a matter of mobilization of new voters into the ranks of the Democractic electorate than of party-switching by the franchised.

The new attraction that the Republican party held for southern whites, and for lower class, poorly educated whites in particular, may not have been due either to the Republicans' resistance to civil rights, or to the Democrats' support of civil rights. Other factors, especially social ones, seem to be more significant. For many years prior to the 1965 VRA the Democratic Party (excluding the southern delegation) had been sympathetic to civil rights programs. However, throughout the period before the '65 Act, whites in the South had remained steadfast Democrats, especially at the local level, in spite of their apparent differences with the national party over race issues. The defections to Republican candidates by whites do not begin until blacks increase their involvement within the Democratic Party. Hence, we think it fair to characterize the white reaction as one of "white fear" or "white flight," fueled by the change in the politics of the South, rather than by any change in the policy positions of the two parties. The Southern Republican Party had been available for some time; whites

simply did not choose to support it until blacks began to move into the Democratic Party. Thus, while it was the VRA that opened political participation to blacks in the South, it was the shift in the political and social context produced by a politically active black population that changed the behaviors of whites.

These general conclusions are buttressed by an examination of voting patterns of southern whites living in counties that were not covered by the 1965 Voting Rights Act. It is important and relevant to note that the average black population in these unaffected counties is 15% compared with nearly 30% in the VRA-covered jurisdictions of the Deep South. In these non-covered counties the general trend was for whites to remain loyal to the Democratic party, for Democratic electoral successes to continue further into the decade of the 1970's, and for Republican mobilization of whites to arrive later and with less overall success.

Figures 4 and 5 trace the Democratic and Republican voting of whites of various education levels in counties unaffected by the Voting

Figure 4: Average Probability that Whites Vote Democratic by County Mean White Education Level: Counties not covered by the VRA.
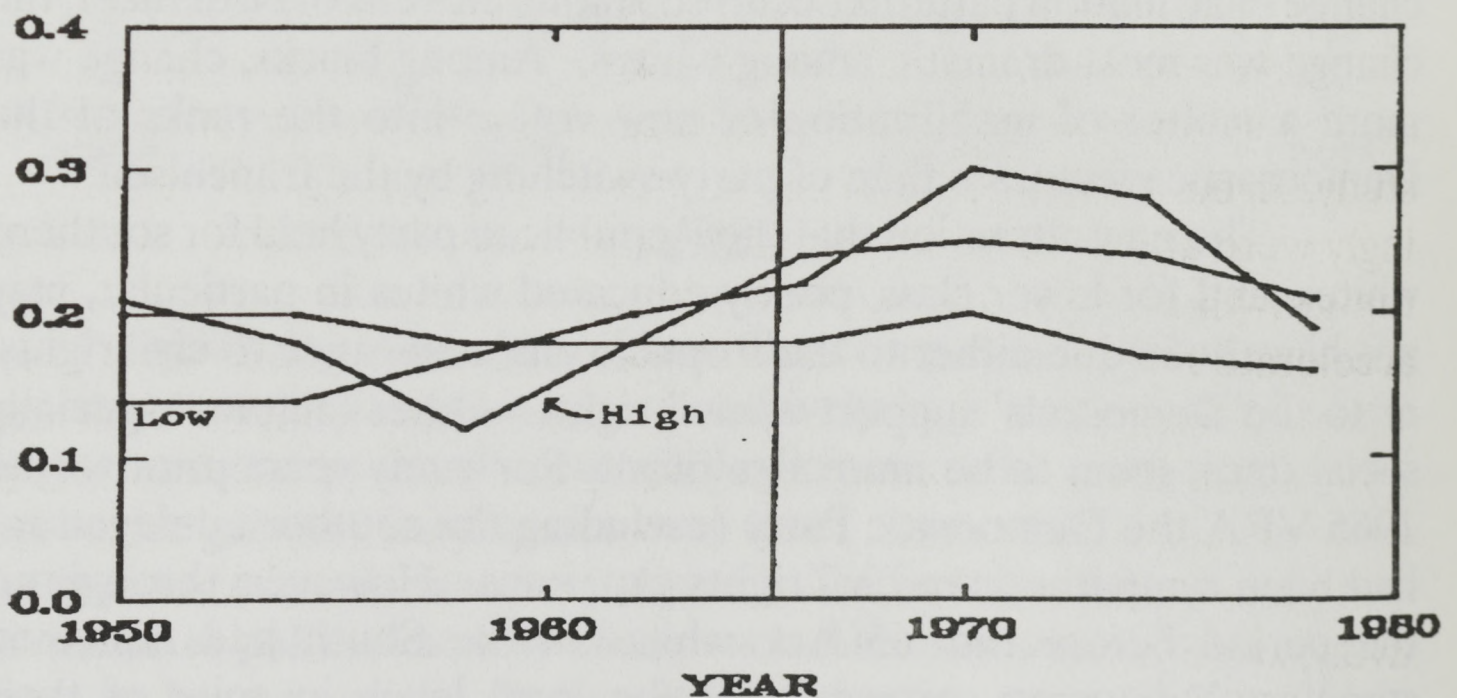
Rights Act. Comparison of these figures with the earlier figures for the VRA-covered counties shows, primarily, that the trend of defection to Republican candidates is significantly delayed for most education groups. Democratic party support among both high and low education whites in the non-covered counties continued to increase until the 1974 elections, for example, and its support from the middle education group continued to increase until the election of 1978.

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Figure 5. Average Probability that Whites Vote Republican by County Mean White Education Level: Counties not covered by the VRA.
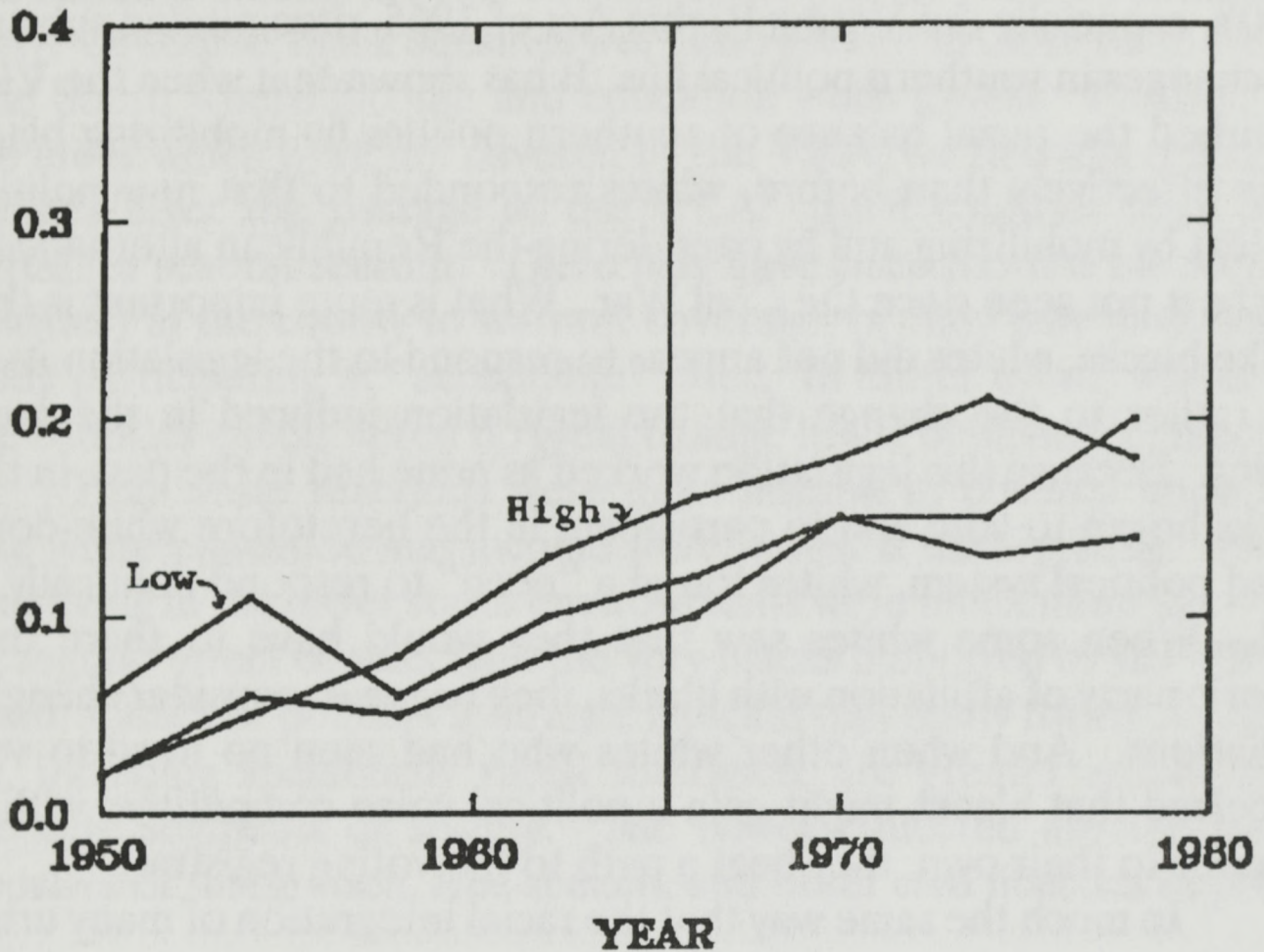
The ability of the Republican party to attract white voters in the south increased across the entire thirty year period included in this study. In both VRA-covered and non-covered counties, whites increasingly were attracted to the Republican party from 1950 on. However, the growth in attraction to the party, while always positive, does not accelerate as dramatically after 1965 in the counties that were unaffected by the VRA. In fact, with the exception of highly educated whites, there is a slight indication that the growth of the Republican party actually slows in the non-covered counties after the VRA. The differences between Republican voting in 1962 and in 1966, respectively, were not statistically significant in the counties that were not covered by the VRA, whereas much larger and statistically significant (at alpha <0.05) increases occurred in the covered counties. Although not a conclusive test, this difference in means suggests that there may be a different dynamic in the two types of settings. It does not mean that race was not an issue in the non-covered counties; it does mean that there was a less dramatic change in white voting patterns subsequent to the passage of the VRA.

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Conclusions

This paper has suggested that the voting rights legislation of the 1960's, especially the Voting Rights Act of 1965, precipitated substantial changes in southern political life. It has shown that when the VRA disturbed the racial balance of southern politics by mobilizing blacks more effectively than before, whites responded to that new political context by mobilizing and by considering the Republican alternative in numbers not seen since the Civil War. What is quite important is that, unlike blacks, whites did not appear to respond to the legislation itself, but rather to the change that the legislation induced in the social setting. Because this legislation worked as none had in the past, in that blacks began to vote and to participate in the heretofore white-dominated political system, whites found a "need" to respond politically, as well. When some whites saw that they would have to share their historic party of affiliation with blacks, they began to consider changing affiliations. And when other whites who had seen no need to vote perceived that blacks might gain a political voice competitive with or superior to their own, they beat a path to the voting registrar.

In much the same way that the racial integration of many urban neighborhoods initiated white flight to suburbia, the racial integration of the Democratic party and electoral politics in the South initiated a white flight to Republicans. In each case--the opening of neighborhoods and the opening of the ballot box--the enactment of effective legislation eliminated barriers to blacks and thus permitted new behaviors (selection of neighborhood and voting). In neither case did the legislation itself alter the behaviors of whites; rather, whites responded to the changed environment.

Further evidence that whites responded to the changed political context and not to the Act itself is found in the variation of white behaviors according to the social and economic status of the county of residence, and in the much less dramatic changes that occurred in the areas unaffected by the VRA. If such change owed simply to the Act itself, then white behaviors should be invariant over various social settings. If, on the other hand, political and social context matter, then there should be some variation in the intensities of change in white behaviors across social environments. And indeed, this is what was found.

Substantial variation in white political behavior was found as the educational (and financial) status of their environment changed.

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Whites resident in socioeconomically advantaged counties showed markedly less change in their political behaviors over time than did those residing among the less educated and poorer parts of southern society. Of course, black densities were also greater in those same areas of the South where income and education were lowest. Further, in those areas which were not covered by the VRA, we find less reaction by whites after the passage of the VRA. Such counties were not covered for several reasons. There may have been too few blacks (or minorities) in the county to warrant coverage, or they may have been already participating at "acceptable" rates. In either event, whites in those counties encountered no great change in the behaviors of blacks.

That white reactions were most intense in covered counties where white education and income were lowest is unsurprising. First, whites living in the lower status environments were much more likely to have regular direct contact with the very blacks mobilized by the VRA. Second, studies of political tolerance indicate that many forms of tolerance, including specifically racial tolerance, are greater among the more elite segments of society. The better educated are the most supportive of integration, free speech, and other civil liberties in principle.

Living in a high status environment thus may act in several different ways to reduce the white fear reaction to blacks exercising voting rights. Psychologically, education and income insulate people from the lower classes of society by erecting social barriers and feelings of separation, and hence the "separateness" may reduce perceptions of threat. In addition, education in particular is known to increase social and political tolerance. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, high income and education areas are likely to contain the fewest blacks; not only are there social and psychological differences due to status, but there are real economic barriers that act to perpetuate residential segregation patterns that will further keep the classes apart.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Analyses and data such as those which underlay this research often prompt concerns related to ecological regression and the technical requirements of regression estimation methods, especially problems of heteroskedasticity.

Analyses of aggregate data almost uniformly elicit concerns about the "ecological fallacy," the notion that any assertion that individual level behaviors follow patterns identified in the aggregate may be an incorrect inference. In general, the validity of any inference to aggregates smaller than that used in the analysis is not

assured. However, one may legitimately use the analyses to deduce properties at the same level of aggregation (or greater). Thus, just as one may deduce county-level properties from individual level data, one may also make state level expectations from county data. But the reverse is not necessarily valid. The research presented in this paper uses county level data to make only county level inferences.

A related but more pressing concern revolves around the fact that measures such as county means and proportions will mask both considerable variance in individual behaviors and county characteristics. A county where every resident has just 12 years of education has the same mean as a county in which educations are uniformly distributed across an interval of 9 to 15 years, even though the two counties obviously are very different.

In addition, all counties weigh equally in any regression where the county is the unit of analysis. However, different counties will have different population sizes and should sometimes not be considered equals. Just as computing a grand mean will sometimes require that differentials among components be accounted for, so, too, regression analyses will sometimes require the various units to contribute differentially to the regression estimates.

What one should do in these various circumstances will depend upon the substantive uses to which the analyses are to be put. Several alternative systems for dealing with the special problems of aggregated data have been developed. For example, where the data are heteroskedastic, one may weight the cases by an inverse function of the number of cases at each point on the relevant independent variable, or by a moving average of cases in a fixed interval around each point on the independent axis. The problem of masked variation sometimes may be partially controlled by weighting cases in a regression by the within-county variance on a relevant indicator. Finally, weighting by the population size of counties is useful in certain upward aggregation problems.

All of these strategies were tested in the development of this research. Because county data are used in the research, population sizes were readily available. For some indicators (such as income, education, or age), the within-county variance is either directly calculable or at least estimable from the census reports, which allows variances or estimated variances to be used as weights where central tendencies are used in the regressions. And heteroskedasticity easily can be handled with one of the internal weighting systems.

However, repeated estimates using these various techniques show little impact of any weighting system. No weighting scheme made a statistically significant difference in the regression estimates. The counties of the South run a full range of black densities, from near zero to nearly all black. The incomes of both blacks and whites also show considerable variance across the South, as does education, although the latter varies somewhat less than income. Finally, the large sample sizes included in the various estimates may possibly help mitigate the impact of some weighting systems.

NOTES

[1]Although the VRA probably permitted the registration of some poor whites who were either disfranchised by the existing white power structure or voluntarily withdrew from participation.

[2]Briefly, according to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a jurisdiction is practicing "massive discrimination" if it has some method of voter qualification required for registration *and* either 50% or more of the jurisdiction's eligible voting age population did not vote in the 1964 presidential election *or* were unregistered in 1964. A total of 565 counties violated this statistical trigger, including all the counties in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia, and approximately one-third of the counties in North Carolina.

If the above criteria are violated and the U.S. Attorney General receives 20 "meritorious" complaints by citizens alleging vote denial, federal voting examiners can be sent to that jurisdiction to supervise voting registration. While 245 of the 565 counties in violation qualified for federal examiners, the Justice Department sent them to only 60 counties. Therefore, this sample includes the 505 southern counties which violated the statistical trigger but did not receive federal examiners.

[3]We use off-year congressional elections in order to avoid possible distortions. The Republican Party has been competitive in the South for the Presidency in the post-World War II period. Accordingly, we avoid the potential 'pull' in Presidential election years.

[4]We use ecological regression (Goodman, 1953) to obtain average probabilities that blacks and whites participate. The total population in each county must be composed of a certain proportion which is white. The dependent variable examined is turnout defined as the proportion of total votes cast in a county relative to the total eligible voting age population in that county. This proportion also can be calculated for partisan share of the vote. Turnout must be composed of a certain number of votes being cast by the white population and the black population in each county. In other words, total turnout is composed of black votes relative to the eligible voting age population $(B/E)_i$ and white votes relative to the eligible voting age population $(W/E)_i$ in each county. Therefore, turnout may be counted as those proportions satisfying $T = (B/E)_i + (W/E)_i$ and an accounting model for this relationship across counties may be written as

(1) $T + p_1 B_i + p_2 W_i$,

where, T = turnout measured as a proportion,

$\quad\quad B_i$ = the black population in the county measured as a proportion,

$\quad\quad W_i$ = the white population in the county measured as a proportion,

$\quad\quad p_1$ = the average probability that a black participates in election t,

$\quad\quad\quad\quad$ and,

$\quad\quad p_2$ = the average probability that a white participates in election t.

It must be true that total turnout in each county is composed of a certain proportion of blacks and whites casting their ballots on election day. Obtaining estimates for the average probability that a black and a white $(p_1$ and $p_2)$ participate in the election produces an estimate of the participation rates for those two racial groups.

Since the black population (B) and the white population (W) are expressed as proportions, equation 1 can be rewritten into the following form

$\quad\quad$ (2) $T = p_1 B_i + p_2 (1-B)_i$.

After algebraic manipulation, equation 2 is rewritten as

$\quad\quad$ (3) $T = p_2 + (p_1 - p_2)B_i$,

which is isomorphic to a simple bivariate linear regression equation of the form

$\quad\quad$ (3I) $Y = a + bx$,

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estimates for p_1 and p_2 are unbiased and retain all the statistical properties of the estimators. The same procedure produces average probabilities for partisan share of the vote by blacks and whites by substituting 'turnout' with Democratic votes or Republican votes measured as a proportion.

Equation 3 seeks to identify the average probability, p_1 and p_2, that blacks and whites, respectively, turn out to vote. Algebraically manipulating equation 3 into a form which is isomorphic to a standard bivariate regression model produces unique estimates for p_1 and p_2. Collecting samples of counties makes it possible to obtain estimates for p_1 and p_2 for each unique election.

The southern counties can be grouped together into cross-sections, by election year. From this sample of counties we can obtain the average probabilities (p_1 and p_2) that blacks and whites participate in each election under study. These probabilities can then be plotted across time to observe variations in black and white patterns of participation generally, as well as under certain specific conditions.

[5]In order to measure the effect of education on mobilization we estimate equation 3 for the Deep South counties sorted into 'high,' 'medium,' and 'low' white education categories for each election year. We create the education categories by finding the median white educational level for the Deep South counties for each election year and adding one standard deviation above and below the average. Thus, the 'low' education category includes those counties ranging from the minimum to one standard deviation below the median. The 'medium' education category includes those counties falling within one standard deviation below and above the median. Likewise, the 'high' education category includes those counties which range from one standard deviation above the median to the maximum.

Two caveats must be mentioned. First, it is necessary that there are a sufficient number of counties in each category for each election year. This condition is met; N does not fall below 64 for any category in any election year. Second, the model cannot perform well if the variation in the independent variable (percent black county population) is lost. For instance, if the high white education counties have very small black populations, then there is insufficient variation in the independent variable to obtain the probabilities. Fortunately, these problems appear to occur only in a very few elections. Never does the correlation coefficient between percent black and white educational level (or income level) exceed .5; and only in a few cases is it greater than .4.

Equation 3 can produce estimates for black and white turnout and partisan vote share based upon income levels. Just as with white educational level, we sorted these counties by white income levels based upon their standard deviations. They generally show the same pattern as for education.

One may question why white education and income levels are analyzed separately. Indeed, a better indicator of SES would be to combine these into one SES variable, divided into high, medium, and low categories. While this is desirable, it is not practical. While white income and educational level tend to move together, there are frequent instances when n < 30 when following the dual requirement of one standard deviation above and below the mean for the "high" and "low" categories.