

The Persistence of Historical Racial Violence and Political Suppression: Implications for Contemporary Regional Inequality

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ABSTRACT: In this article, we provide evidence on the link between lynchings and a range of political and economic outcomes. We show that lynchings are related to an intersection of racial and political motives that keep black Americans disconnected from the political process. This political and racial gradient to lynchings is related to public finance and redistribution within states and localities, with potential long-lasting implications for investments in financial and human capital for black Americans. We close by documenting regional inequality in economic well-being and the social safety net, linking the legacy of racialized violence and diminished political capital to persistently higher poverty and lowered investments in social and labor market policies, showing that a key goal of Southern Redemption policies and violence continues to play a role in black American life in the twenty first century.

KEYWORDS: Racial Violence, Lynching, Political Participation, Socioeconomic Outcomes

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Introduction

Lynching is commonly viewed as concurrent with the rise of Jim Crow, the erosion of black political and economic gains from Reconstruction, and a period of intense racial hostility. Recent historical scholarship by Loewen (2013), Jaspin (2008), Hagen et al. (2013), Beck et al. (2016), Kantrowitz (2012), and Cook, Logan, and Parman (2018) argues that lynching was only one piece of a larger pattern of racial violence in America in the late nineteenth century. This includes the ethnic cleansing of entire counties and the prohibition of black residents in “sundown towns,” wherein blacks found to be present after dark would face violent acts. In this article, we show that racial violence against blacks has contributed to between and within- region political and economic inequality. Black lynchings lead to historical black political and policymaker exclusion. And, those historical initial conditions are strongly associated today with diminished economic security. Such insecurity comes at a broader cost to society, and includes starkly higher levels of modern-day poverty and unemployment.

The academic study of lynchings extends back to the efforts of Ida B. Wells, the *Chicago Tribune*, the NAACP, Tuskegee Institute, and others in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries documenting lynchings and the conditions surrounding them at the turn of the century (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People 1919; Williams 1968). Based on these initial data collection efforts describing the characteristics of lynching victims and lynch mobs, economic conflict-driven theories of lynching emerged. Generally, lynching was viewed

as either a response to economic frustration (Hovland and Sears 1940) or a deliberate attempt to improve the economic position of whites relative to blacks (Raper 1933). The seminal work of Blalock (1967) emphasized conflict between groups as a response to threats to the majority group's power and resources posed by the minority group.

With improved data on southern lynching victims, Beck and Tolnay explored additional economic theories of lynching (Tolnay and Beck 1990; Tolnay and Beck 1992).¹ Consistent with earlier work, they document a positive correlation between black population size and the incidence of lynchings; they also demonstrate a higher prevalence of lynchings with declining cotton prices and increased inflationary pressure, adding support for an economic theory of lynchings. Lynchings, in this context, reduce competition from black workers for white jobs, via eliminating black workers via migration or intimidating black market entrants competing for jobs held by white workers. More recently, Hagen et al. (2013) and Beck et al. (2016) argue that mob formation, as opposed to successful lynchings, demonstrate that political factors were dominant considerations.

In addition to lynchings, other forms of racial violence were common. Examples include race "riots," where blacks were attacked en masse by whites, whitecapping, where whites would violently run blacks out of town and confiscate their property, and violence aimed at black political and religious leaders. Other acts of racial intimidation included church bombings, cross burnings, hangings in effigy, and other forms and threats of violence. Although lynching continues to be the primary measure of racial violence used by social scientists, it is important to

¹See Cook (2012).

note that other forms of racialized violence were common and featured many of the same aims as lynchings.

Lynching and Social Conflict

The most general theory of lynchings views these events as products of social conflict. One complication is that these frameworks center on control over resources, as in Caselli and Coleman (2013). Yet, lynching was most active after the disenfranchisement of blacks – this is less tractable given that the targeted group has little economic, social, or political power. Thus, the economic, social, and political theories specific to lynching have instead focused on mechanisms and channels that would lead to interracial violence, given the lack resource competition.

Economic Theories of Lynching

The Theory of Labor Control, proposed by Tolnay and Beck (1992), positions lynching as a form of social control over black workers. The related Economic Competition model holds that, as southern white economic disadvantage coincided with stagnation in the southern economy throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whites and blacks began to compete for the same jobs, and lynchings occurred as a result (Raper 1933). These lynchings are explained by either a frustration-aggression model (Hovland and Sears 1940), a vent for labor market competition with blacks, or one in which lynching improves the economic position of whites (Raper 1933 Tolnay, Beck, and Massey 1992; Tolnay and Beck 1992).

Social Theories of Lynching

Social theories of lynching hinge on class relations. In the Status Competition model of lynching, lynchings are a product of competition between the class status of whites and blacks. When the

white population perceived their class status was threatened, they responded with violence/disenfranchisement of blacks (Tolnay and Beck 1995; Price, Darity, and Headen 2008). Even when white solidarity was threatened instead by white religious diversity, communities responded through collective violence against black residents (Bailey and Snedker 2011). In an extension, Smångs (2016; 2017) constructs a framework for understanding lynchings as a means of maintaining symbolic and social racial group boundaries. A key for these models is the fact that lynchings are reactive—responsive to the perception of deteriorating white status and used to reinforce a racial hierarchy. Similarly, Price, Darity, and Headen (2008) argue that lynching victims were more likely to be former slaves, thereby relating lynching to the social stigma of slavery.

Political Theories of Lynching

Political theories of lynching reflect fears of greater political participation by blacks. In the Power-Threat hypothesis, when two groups coexist with unequal access to political power and resources, the dominant group engages in a wide variety of methods, including lynching, to secure privileged access to those resources. As the political threat of blacks rises, so does the specter of lynchings (Soule 1992; Corzine, Creech, and Corzine 1983). A key for the political theory of lynching is that African Americans be viewed as a threat to whites. This competition for resources presumes that African American access to resources would inherently come at the detriment of whites

Measuring Lynching

The Historical American Lynching (HAL) Project is one of the most extensively verified, publicly available database on lynchings (Cook 2012). Spanning 1882 to 1930, much of the

existing empirical knowledge on lynching is closely tied to analysis of the HAL data. Lynchings in the database conform to the NAACP definition of lynchings, which requires a murder to meet the following criteria to be counted as a lynching: (1) there must be evidence that someone was killed, (2) the killings must have occurred illegally, (3) three or more persons must have taken part in the killing, and (4) the killers must have claimed to be serving justice or tradition. Many other lynching data sources contain racial violence that does not satisfy the NAACP definition.

The HAL database contains detailed information on 2,805 lynchings including name, race and gender of the victim, the race of the mob, the stated reason for the lynching, the date of the lynching and the county in which the lynching took place. These constitute the vast majority of the recorded lynchings: 88 percent of victims were black while only 6 percent of the mobs were black. Furthermore, of the 155 black lynch mobs, only 4 targeted white victims. Therefore, a large proportion of the lynching victims were black individuals who were the victims of interracial violence. White lynching victims were almost entirely victims of intraracial violence.

The distribution of lynchings over time is depicted in Figure 1 and reveal that lynchings peaked in the 1890s, with over 100 lynchings per year by the middle of the decade. The geographical distribution of lynchings across the southern states is also depicted in Figure 1. Two features of this map are worth noting. First, there is substantial variation in the number lynchings across counties within each state. Second, lynchings appear to be a rather rural phenomenon.

[Figure 1 here]

Violence Against Black Politicians

Before turning attention to lynching, it is important to describe broader aspects of racial violence concurring with lynching activity, as both stemmed from political sources. Beginning in the early 1870s, Southern whites began a wide-spread campaign to undo the Reconstruction process (Rable 2007, Lemann 2007, Woodward 1971). The eventual establishment of Jim Crow and de facto disenfranchisement after Reconstruction were not automatic; they required southern states to overturn congressional Reconstruction policies. Fitzgerald (2007), Rable (2007), and Lemann (2007) document that political arguments over "excessive" taxation were related to increasing Klu Klux Klan activity and overt acts of racial intimidation, many of which were aimed at black voters and officeholders.

Resistance to black enfranchisement and Reconstruction was particularly violent at the local level.

Violence became part of the Democratic electoral strategy by the early 1870s, which itself led to hegemonic Democratic control by the turn of the century. Concurrently, the federal security presence in the region dwindled, making violence a very real and efficient option to gain political control. The Violence visited upon officials ranges from threats of death to murder. For example, George Barber of South Carolina fled his home in Fairfield County, South Carolina over Ku Klux Klan (KKK) death threats in 1871. James Alston and his family were threatened by the Ku Klux Klan in 1869, and wounded by them two years later. Theophilus Steward of Georgia received death threats after he asserted that juries should involve both black and white citizens. Charles Caldwell of Mississippi was murdered in 1875, months after he escaped an armed mob by fleeing to Jackson, MS. Simon Corker of South Carolina was killed in 1876 by Democrats in the Ellerton riot—he was kneeling in prayer after being captured.

We draw on the results of Logan (2020) to investigate the relationship between black political participation, policy, and violence. Table 1 shows bivariate estimates of the relationship between political violence against black officeholders and Reconstruction era tax policy. They show that the likelihood of violence against a black official is well correlated with taxes per capita in 1870, where violence is defined as any act of overt violence or physical attack, as recorded by Foner (2014), spanning the Reconstruction era through 1880. In Panel A, the dependent variable indicates whether a black official was violently attacked in the county. Over all southern counties (columns I and II), a dollar increase in per capita taxes is related to an increased probability of violence against an official of over 4 percentage points in linear probability models, and more than 3 percentage points in probit models. This is substantively large, and given a baseline rate of violence of 10 percent among black officeholders, these results imply that a dollar increase in per capita taxes raised the likelihood of violent attack by more than 30 percent.

In Panel B of Table 1 the dependent variable is the number of violent acts against black officials. The results show that a dollar increase in per capita taxes was correlated with 0.09 more attacks on politicians over all Southern counties, and 0.115 in counties represented by black officials. The Poisson models show similar results.² The incidence rate for violence against officials is 17 percent greater in counties with one dollar more in county per capita taxes, and 12 percent greater when restricted to counties represented by black officials. Each additional violent act is correlated with a reduction in per capita taxes of 23 cents, rising to 42 cents when restricted to counties represented by black officials. The number of violent acts is not related to

² Coefficients of the Poisson are the natural logs of the ratios of incident rates.

1880 taxes, which had been reverted to lower levels after Southern Redemption. Importantly, we demonstrate that these core historical findings are robust to different model specifications.

[Table 1 here]

Lynching and Segregation

In testing the theories of lynching mentioned above, we turn to the results of Cook, Logan, and Parman (2018), the most recent, integrated approach to testing competing theories of lynching and segregation. Table 2 presents the main results, where the number of lynchings per county between 1882 and 1930 is regressed on a neighbor-based measure of segregation (Logan and Parman 2017) and the percent of households that were black in 1880. Since state fixed effects are included the estimates exploit the within-state variation in segregation and lynching only. A key advantage here is that lynchings in the HAL data come from years after the 1880 census used to measure segregation.

In general, a one standard deviation increase in the segregation measure is correlated with an additional lynching in a county, on average. This is a large effect given that the mean number of lynchings in a county ranges from 0.13 in Kentucky to 0.58 in South Carolina. The results of Table 2 suggest that segregation was strongly related to lynching at both the extensive and intensive margins in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most important, the results show that, conditional on racial composition, segregated environments were more likely to experience lynchings. The positive correlation between segregation and lynching points towards political theories of lynching, in which whites see blacks as a threat to political power.

[Table 2 here]

Lynching and Voter Participation Among Blacks

In testing the political theory of lynchings, we examine how lynchings influence the political participation of blacks in two periods – the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) and the contemporary period. We begin by examining the relationship between lynchings and the VRA period for two reasons. First, the VRA eliminated barriers that prevented blacks from registering to vote. Prior to VRA enactment, voting barriers in the form of polling taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses lower black voter registration rates in southern states. For example, in 1940 voter registration among blacks was an estimated 151,000, roughly 3 percent of the 5 million voting age southern blacks (Garrow 1978, Williams 2020). Second, post-VRA enactment, many southern states saw increases in black voter registration. For instance, Cascio & Washington (2014) find that southern states, which previously had literacy tests, experienced a voter registration rate increase among blacks of 67 percent after VRA enactment. Considering the significance and effectiveness of the landmark VRA legislation (Byrne et al. 2005, Grofman and Handley 1998), examining whether historical lynchings continue to influence the political participation of blacks during the VRA period to understanding whether violent acts have lasting effects.

To investigate the relationship between lynchings and black voter registration during the VRA period, we draw on Williams (2020). Data on voter registration in the VRA period come from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (CCR).³ The CCR data include voter registration by race for southern counties pre- and post-VRA enactment.⁴

³ The CCR data can be found at <https://www2.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/usccr/subjlist.html?subjectid=75>.

⁴ Pre-registration data are from 1964 in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina and from 1962 in Georgia. Post-registration data are from 1967 in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina and from 1966 in Florida..

Figure 2 presents a binned scattered plot of the percentage of black voter registration rates and the number of black lynchings from 1882 to 1930.⁵ The figure shows that the overall voter registration rate among blacks increased significantly in the post-VRA period compared to the pre-VRA period. Black voter registration rates in counties with no recorded lynchings in the pre-VRA enactment period are roughly 38 percent compared to 56 percent in the post-VRA enactment period. Figure 2 supports two claims: (1) that the enactment of the VRA increased the overall black voter registration rate, and (2) counties with more lynchings have lower black voter registration rates in both the pre-and post-VRA enactment period. Specifically, in the pre-enactment period, one additional lynching is associated with a 2 percent decrease in black voter registration rates. In the post-enactment period, one additional lynching is associated with a 1 percent decrease in black voter registration.

[Figure 2 here]

The second period of voter participation that we examine is the contemporary period. Lynchings may be associated with black voter registration rates today for several reasons. First, considering the negative relationship between lynchings and black voter registration in the VRA period, it is plausible that these violent acts continue to reduce the political participation of blacks today. Jones et al. (2017) argue that, to the degree lynchings serve as a local proxy indicator for the risk blacks incur of exposure to violent acts for political reasons, lynchings would have “a persistent and lasting effect on voter turnout.” Second, norm-based voting theories suggest that blacks may have incurred disutility from voting during the historical lynching period. For example, Williams (2020) hypothesizes that during the lynching period,

⁵ The binned scattered plot controls for the number of black in 1900, the share of blacks who are of voting age during the VRA period and includes state fixed effects.

blacks developed cultural norms more aversive to voting in order to maintain their well-being and safety.

[Figure 3 here]

Figure 3 presents a binned scatter plot of the percentage of black registration rates and lynchings. The first figure presents the number of black lynchings from 1882 to 1930 on the x-axis, whereas the second figure shows the black lynching rate on the x-axis.⁶ Both measures of lynchings are negatively associated with black voter registration rates today. Specifically, for one additional lynching black voter registration rates decrease by 0.002 percent today and for one additional lynching per 10,000 black population in 1900, black voter registration rates decrease by 0.7 percent today. This suggests that lynchings continue to influence the voting behavior of blacks more than 100 years after lynchings peaked in the United States.

Historical Racial Violence and Contemporary Economic Security

The trajectory of economic progress for black Americans from the 1960s onward is connected in large part to the implementation of anti-poverty policies and labor market reforms. Since the Johnson administration's "Great Society" expansion of anti-poverty programs, the discourse surrounding the effectiveness of these programs has, in many instances, centered around perceived pathologies and behaviors ostensibly unique to black communities—including "moral hazard" concerns with respect to work effort and the provision of benefits (Darity et al., 2013; Mead, 2007; Murray, 1984; Russell, 2003; Stigler, 1965; Wilson, 2012). Decades after these expansions, research shows that black welfare clients face harsher sanctioning, including additional administrative barriers to receiving services (e.g., Fording et al., 2007; Moynihan et

⁶ The black lynching rate is the number of black lynchings per 10,000 black population in 1900.

al., 2014; Schram et al., 2009; Soss et al., 2011). Blacks are also more likely to reside in states that provide less cash assistance, as a proportion of their welfare programs (Hardy et al. 2019; Parolin 2019). Still, safety net expansions and labor market interventions have improved earnings, health, and overall socioeconomic well-being (e.g. Derenoncourt and Montialoux 2019; Dube 2019; Hoynes et al., 2016; Wherry & Meyer 2016).

Documented acts of racial violence could be linked to reduced contemporary economic development. Black lynchings, policy generosity, and economic well-being are all unevenly geographically distributed (e.g. Gundersen and Ziliak 2004; Hardy et al. 2018; Islam et al. 2015). As shown in Figures 4 and 5 and documented by Islam et al. (2015), persistent poverty is higher throughout the south and among black Americans. Administrative burdens, harsher sanctioning, and lower policy generosity may be related to the lingering effects of lynchings, including reduced public good provision and taxation, and depressed black voter turnout.

[Table 3 here]

In Table 3 we explore this potential link. We use state-level data on lynchings as well as modern-day state-level economic and policy information from the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research National Welfare Data (UKCPR 2020). We estimate linear probability models, finding that states with high levels of historical black lynchings have higher modern-day unemployment and poverty. Black lynchings are also strongly associated with lowered state-level policy generosity: these states are less likely to have enacted a supplemental refundable earned income tax credit for working poor families, and are also less likely to have minimum wages above the federal level. Finally, these states are less likely to allocate cash assistance within their welfare block grants—electing to spend on other, non-cash interventions.

These results are robust to the inclusion of controls for region, and it is noteworthy that southern region is a strong negative predictor of economic and policy outcomes, and that the lynching-economic and policy outcome link persists and remains strong. That this initial condition, the number of lynchings against blacks, yields a discernable pattern to contemporary economic well-being and policy outcomes, speaks to the enduring consequences of racial violence.

Conclusion

Lynchings against blacks in America have had quantifiable, negative impacts on local black political participation. Specifically, tax increases, which support the provision of public infrastructure and public goods, are associated with increased violent attacks on black officeholders. Black lynchings are also associated with increased segregation during the late 1800s, and are also associated with reduced black voter registration both before and after the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This reduction in participation, via racialized violence, can be traced to a series of depressed modern-day state economic and policy outcomes, including higher poverty and unemployment, and lowered economic policy generosity. Although the history of racial violence is often characterized as a social phenomenon divorced from a broader political economy, we provide evidence showing that black lynchings—a dominant form of racial violence—are strongly associated with both historical and contemporary political economy outcomes. Given this evidence, it suggests that that the legacy of racial violence has had consequences on the political and economic outcomes of black Americans that have persisted over multiple generations, and with potentially large negative externalities for a broader cross-section of society.

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Tables and Figures

-For-

The Persistence of Historical Racial Violence and Political Suppression: Implications for Contemporary Regional Inequality

November 2020

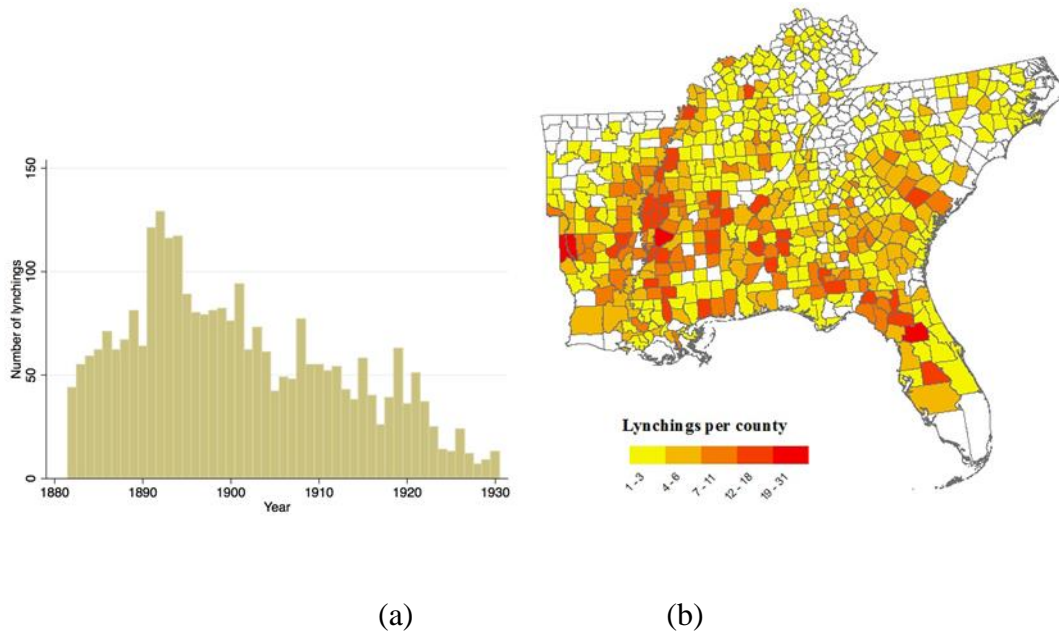


Figure 1: Segregation, Lynching, and Racial Population Shares. (a) Number of lynchings by year, 1882-1930; (b) Lynchings per county, 1882-1930; Source: Project HAL Data. Note that Virginia is not included in the lynchings data

Table 1. Political Violence Against Black Officeholders and Reconstruction-Era Tax Policy

	I	II	III	IV
Panel A: ANY VIOLENCE				
	All Counties		Only Black Officials	
	OLS	Probit	OLS	Probit
Per Capita Taxes in 1870	0.0411*** (0.00758)	0.0334*** (0.00909)	0.0396** (0.0166)	0.0476** (0.0227)
Change in Per Capita Taxes, 1870-1880	-0.0967*** (0.0295)	-0.0988*** (0.0371)	-0.140* (0.0765)	-0.163 (0.0996)
Per Capita Taxes in 1880	0.0284** (0.0128)	0.0315** (0.0127)	0.0593 (0.0486)	0.0625 (0.0516)
Panel B: NUMBER OF VIOLENT ACTS				
	All Counties		Only Black Officials	
	OLS	Poisson	OLS	Poisson
Per Capita Taxes in 1870	0.0934*** (0.0148)	0.158*** (0.0282)	0.115*** (0.0344)	0.114*** (0.0308)
Change in Per Capita Taxes, 1870-1880	-0.226*** (0.0580)	-0.585*** (0.135)	-0.414*** (0.159)	-0.432*** (0.145)
Per Capita Taxes in 1880	0.0395 (0.0252)	0.359*** (0.119)	0.0761 (0.102)	0.158 (0.152)

Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 N= 825 for all counties. N= 311 Black Officials. All regressions include state fixed effects. Probit results are transformed to marginal effects. Results from Logan (2020) control for a rich set of factors, including presence of slavery, crop composition, and plantation size.

Table 2: The Correlation of Segregation with Number of Lynchings per County

Method	Negative Binomial		Poisson		Probit		Tobit	
Dependent Variable	Number of Lynchings							
Percent Black	5.390*** [0.591]	3.969*** [0.686]	4.775*** [0.344]	3.534*** [0.403]	1.448*** [0.235]	0.936*** [0.288]	17.22*** [2.563]	12.22*** [3.094]
Percent Black ²	-4.275*** [0.677]	-3.067*** [0.737]	-3.519*** [0.366]	-2.512*** [0.401]	-1.347*** [0.296]	-0.875*** [0.332]	-11.79*** [3.045]	-7.421** [3.394]
Segregation Index		4.637*** [1.256]		4.360*** [0.865]		1.370*** [0.423]		13.40** [5.201]
Segregation Index ²		-5.116*** [1.656]		-4.760*** [1.096]		-1.725*** [0.612]		-14.67** [7.141]
Constant	0.240 [0.157]	-0.419* [0.235]	0.307*** [0.0927]	-0.321** [0.158]			0.0805 [0.690]	-1.624* [0.942]
State Fixed Effects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Observations	786	783	786	783	786	783	786	783

Standard errors in brackets. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results from Cook, Logan, and Parman (2018) control for a rich set of factors, including presence of slavery, crop composition, and plantation size.

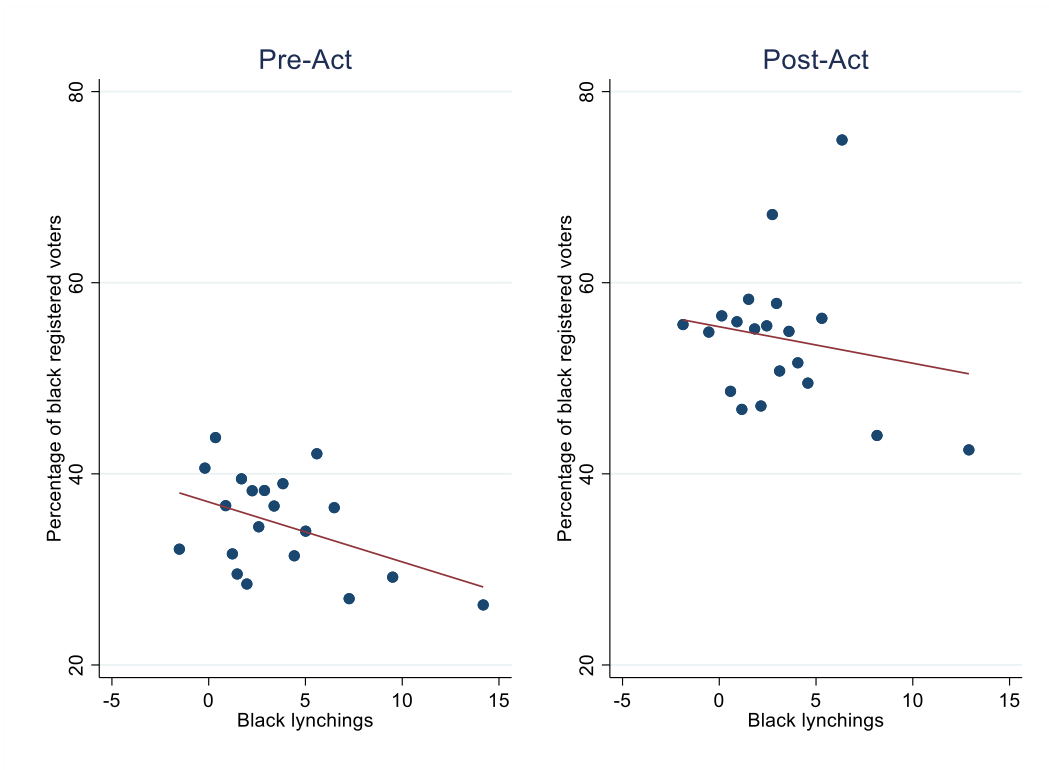


Figure 2: Historical Lynchings and Black Voter Registration during the VRA period

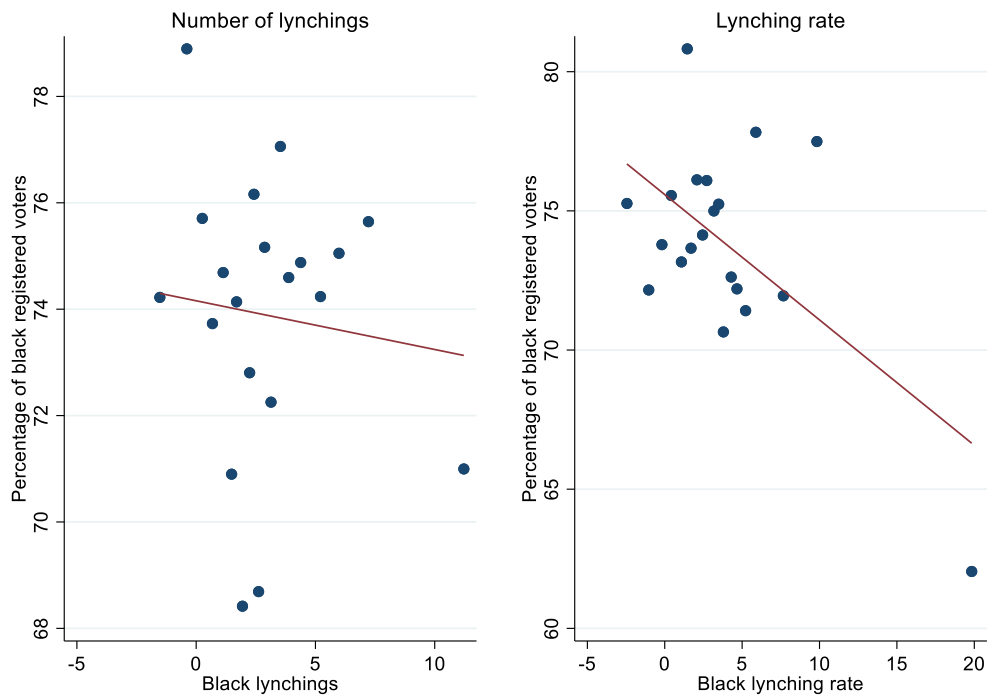


Figure 3: Historical lynchings and contemporary voter registration among blacks

Table 3. Historical Lynchings and Contemporary State-Level Economic and Policy Outcomes

VARIABLES	Labor	State EITC	Higher Minimum Wage	% Basic Assistance	Unemployment Rate	Gross State Product	Poverty Rate
High Lynching Level	-0.4235*** (0.048)	-0.5754*** (0.053)	-0.3632*** (0.056)	-0.0232 (0.018)	0.9038*** (0.247)	274,974.0250*** (45,989.278)	2.3022*** (0.360)
Medium Lynching Level	-0.1697*** (0.044)	0.0417 (0.049)	-0.1221** (0.052)	-0.0542*** (0.017)	0.6721*** (0.230)	166,601.8002*** (42,783.824)	0.8373** (0.335)
South	0.1261*** (0.042)	0.0572 (0.047)	0.1017** (0.050)	-0.0380** (0.016)	0.3675* (0.219)	-105167.9702*** (40,655.369)	2.3068*** (0.318)
West	-0.0647*** (0.020)	-0.2260*** (0.022)	0.0841*** (0.024)	0.0146* (0.008)	0.4918*** (0.104)	70,937.8689*** (19,246.323)	0.8861*** (0.151)
Northeast	0.2853*** (0.042)	0.0653 (0.046)	0.3033*** (0.049)	0.0293* (0.016)	0.6127*** (0.217)	166,931.8418*** (40,270.211)	-0.3815 (0.315)
Constant	0.3112*** (0.030)	0.6481*** (0.033)	0.3868*** (0.036)	0.2963*** (0.011)	4.8230*** (0.157)	181,362.7036*** (29,183.151)	10.8576*** (0.228)
Observations	931	931	931	637	931	931	931
R-squared	0.231	0.299	0.184	0.120	0.044	0.045	0.302

Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. Data on welfare basic assistance, commonly interpreted as cash assistance, are drawn from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for 2002-2014. Other dependent variables are measured at the state level and are drawn from the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research national data set over 2000-2018. Labor is defined as states with both a supplemental state EITC program, as in column 2, and a state minimum wage above the federal level, as in column 3. Data on lynchings by state and race from 1882-1968 were obtained from Tuskegee University Archives, posted at <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingsstate.html>. A state with “low lynching levels” is defined as having between 0-10 lynchings; medium lynching level is defined as between 11-50 lynchings; high lynchings are defined as between 51 and 539 lynchings. Midwest is the omitted region category. Alaska and Hawaii are excluded from the analysis.