"Let our ballots secure what our bullets have won:" Union Veterans and Voting for Radical Reconstruction and Black Suffrage.

Michael Weaver[*]
The University of British Columbia

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Abstract

During Reconstruction, Congressional Republicans transformed the Constitution by forcing ratification of the Civil Rights amendments, created new national powers to enforce those civil rights, and exercised war powers over the South for years. Yet, this "second revolution" was not inevitable. Republicans still needed to win the support of Northern voters. And in 1860, most Northerners didn't support abolishing slavery nationwide and even abolitionists considered civil and political rights for African Americans ill-advised. How did this racially conservative electorate nevertheless vote for the party of constitutional and racial revolution? This paper argues that Union veterans (over 20% of the Northern electorate) were pivotal in providing the votes that made these reforms possible. Using historical evidence and analyses of county-level enlistment and voting, I show that presence of veterans improved Republican performance in 1866–1868. Historiographical evidence suggests the war gave veterans new attitudes about race and commitments to "win the peace".

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[*]Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Political Science, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. email: michael.weaver@ubc.ca

Introduction

In 1869, the United States was in the midst of its "Second Revolution," and a Radical Congress passed the 15th Amendment, prohibiting the use of race as a criteria to deny suffrage, with the aim of enfranchising African American men. In the preceding years, Congress also passed the 13th, 14th amendments, ending slavery and creating for the first time the rights and protections of national citizenship. To secure these rights, they embarked on a massive expansion of federal powers: voting (i) to preserve a state of war and war powers against much of the South until 1871, which they used to force ratification of the Civil Rights Amendments; (ii) to produce new federal agencies like the Freedmen's Bureau that usurped state power by not only provided direct federal aid to citizens, but created schools and negotiated labor contracts (Downs 2015); (iii) to create the machinery to enforce these new civil rights, including new federal powers to oversee elections, appoint marshals and election supervisors, and try states or individual citizens for denying civil rights (Wang 1997) as well as provisions that permitted suspension of habeas corpus and deploying federal troops (Downs 2015). This "revolution" not only drastically altered the constitution by defining the content of citizenship and enlarging federal power, but also provided a legal and institutional framework for challenging forms of racial hierarchy within the United States.

This turn of events was unexpected for several reasons. Prior to the Civil War, there was weak support among Republicans to adopt sweeping changes on civil rights: Southern fears notwithstanding, Republicans made a tempered call for the restriction and gradual elimination of slavery and even those demanding immediate abolition did not necessarily support the inclusion of African Americans within the polity (Foner 1979). As late as 1865, many Republicans considered publicly campaigning on these issues to be "political suicide" (Wang 1997). Why, then, did they adopt these sweeping reforms in the following years?

Political scientists and historians provide several plausible answers. A large body of research attributes the emergence of new political rights to concessions by elites in the face of threats posed by mass mobilization (Collier 1999; Acemoglu and Robinson 2000; Przeworski

1

2009; Chenoweth and Stephan 2012). Another, consonant with classic explanations for the American Civil War (Moore 1967), argues that expansions of suffrage and concomitant rights are driven by elite factions seeking to build coalitions against their rivals (Ansell and Samuels 2015; Lizzeri and Persico 2004; Llavador and Oxoby 2005; Schattschneider 1960). Alternatively, political parties may legislate the expansion or contraction of political rights as a result of either electoral competition or ideological commitments to which groups belong in the polity (Teele 2018; Capoccia and Ziblatt 2010; Bateman Forthcoming). These last explanations find strong parallels in the historical literature. Historians have shown that Republican leaders worked to enfranchise African Americans, in part, to mitigate the great electoral threat posed by permitting Southern states to re-enter the Union with all-white electorates (Wang 1997; Valelly 2004). But at the same time, this was not merely a cynical ploy to win easy votes. Over the course of the war, Republicans had become more intensely committed to ending slavery (Foner 1988); when Southern recalcitrance after the war put these goals into jeopardy, Republicans reluctantly and fitfully adopted more radical measures (Downs 2015; Wang 1997).

While these accounts might explain why party leaders came to pursue a radical agenda, they all miss something more fundamental: regardless of what motivated Republican party leaders, why were voters willing to go along with this agenda and continue to vote them to office? In 1860, the vast majority of the white Northern electorate was unsupportive of abolition and broadly in favor of a racially exclusive conception of citizenship (see, e.g. Dykstra 1993; Bateman Forthcoming). In light of these limits and the *de facto* reversal of many of the gains of Reconstruction (Foner 1988), the ultimate victory of the Southern "Lost Cause" narrative in Civil War Memory (Blight 2001), and recent findings on the long-term persistence of racism (Acharya, Blackwell and Sen 2016) how did a racially conservative electorate come to embrace and vote for a party with a platform of constitutional and racial "revolution" at all?

In this paper, I propose an answer to this question. I start from a simple premise: war

is transformative (Mayhew 2005). Wars have been credited with driving state formation (Tilly 1990), democratization (Ticchi and Vindigni 2008; Ferejohn and Rosenbluth 2017), and redistribution (Scheve and Stasavage 2012) and civil wars in particular have produced durable political re-alignments (Dunning 2011; Wood 2008) and expansions of state power into new policy areas (Paglayan 2017). A key mechanism by which war has these effects is through its transformative effects on participants, particularly combatants. Wartime experiences lead combatants to experience attitudinal change (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015; Koenig 2015; Jha and Wilkinson 2017), acquire new organizational skills and capacities for violence (Jha and Wilkinson 2012), and to become politically active (Bellows and Miguel 2009; Blattman 2009).

Building on these insights and the historical literagure, I provide a mechanism for how popular support for this "revolution" was obtained. In short, I argue that Union Army veterans played a vital role in providing the requisite support for Radical Reconstruction. Because most of the Union Army and all of the electorate was comprised of white males, the large size of the Army meant that veterans were a large share of the Northern electorate in the years immediately following the war. Following Parker (2009), I contend that wartime experiences put veterans through an experience of political learning in which they were developed new positions on slavery and race and at the same time endowed them with new capabilities for organization.

Drawing on the historiography of the veterans and the war, I identify three ways in which wartime experiences shifted veterans' commitment to expanding civil right. First, direct experiences with slavery led soldiers to adopt abolitionist positions for both moral and strategic reasons and to understand the purpose of the war to be securing both Union *and* eradicating slavery ("Liberty"). Second, interactions with African Americans (and particularly those in military service) led many soldiers' to moderate racist attitudes and understand civil and political rights for (some) African Americans to have been earned through their contribution and sacrifice in the war. And third, given the immense suffering soldiers experienced and

saw during the war, they were motivated to ensure that there was a reason for their sacrifice and that the South would be punished. Thus, in 1865 and 1866, when a meaningful end to slavery and defeat of secessionists was threatened by the return of former Confederates to power in the South, the promulgation of "Black Codes", and widespread violence against freed people and their Northern allies, veterans were particularly keen to back the measures necessary to preserve the victory for which they had fought so hard and lost so much.

I make this argument through a combination of quantitative and historical evidence. First, I use novel individual-level data on Union Army soldiers to identify enlistment rates by county, and estimate the relationship between enlistment rates and support for Republicans and Black Suffrage referenda after the war. To address the possibility of pro-Republican and pro-Suffrage men selecting into the Army, I estimate the effects of enlistment using both differences-in-differences, lagged dependent variables, and a generalization of the synthetic control estimator. I find that counties with higher enlistment rates saw markedly stronger support for Republicans in the immediate post-war period and increased support for African American suffrage in Constitutional Referenda. While the effects are strongest for pivotal elections of 1864 and 1866—electing the Congresses that passed the Civil Rights Amendments and key civil rights legislation—the effects of enlistment rates on Republican vote-share persist several decades after the war, a testament to the links forged between veterans and the party.

Second, to address concerns about making ecological inferences, I provide historical evidence for the active involvement of Union veterans in campaigning for Republicans and defending Radical Reconstruction measures between 1866 and 1868, and estimate the post-bellum voting behavior for veterans and non-veterans. Finally, I draw on both the historical evidence and tests for hetereogeneous effects to develop and evaluate three mechanisms by which veterans' positions changed.

The plan of the paper is as follows. First, I elaborate on the political context in which Congressional Republicans came to pursue more Radical Reconstruction legislative. Second,

I develop an argument for why veterans could have been pivotal, focusing on three key mechanisms. Third, I explain the data and research design employed in my analyses. Finally, I provide both statistical and historical evidence or my central argument and each of the mechanisms.

Background

Why is it puzzling that voters backed the Republican Reconstruction agenda? While Republican lawmakers came to embrace the expansion and enforcement of civil rights, few Republicans advocated for expansive new civil rights and fewer for vigorous new federal powers of enforcement even as late as 1865. This was due both to a lack of commitment to a full conception of racial equality among legislators as well as a very real sense that these policies would be deeply unpopular.

On one hand, Bateman (Forthcoming) shows that there was a small, if vocal and energetic, faction within the Republican party prior to the war that pushed to remove racial qualifications for suffrage across the US. In several states, this faction succeeded in putting this issue up for constitutional referendum. However, this state-level activism does not necessarily imply widespread support for the agenda pursued during Reconstruction. First, all of the pre-war referenda failed to win majority support and usually were overwhelmingly rejected.[1] Second, these state referenda were over limited changes: they did not impose a change nationwide and in most states would enfranchise a tiny number of African Americans relative to the white population. And, in many cases, the referenda were motivated by abolitionists attempting to attack the ideological justifications for slavery (Bateman Forthcoming). It is not clear that commitments to suffrage would persist in the absence of slavery.

But more common was racism toward African Americans. In the preceding decades, both Democrats and Republicans had adopted a conception of citizenship rooted in white male

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[1]There is the complicated exception of Wisconsin in 1849, where a majority voted for suffrage in a referendum with very low turnout (McManus 1998).

5

republicanism: inclusion of all white men regardless of property was based on a conception of equality of status of white men and their superiority over others. This had led to the stripping of voting rights from African Americans in the preceding decades, and even the passage of laws that denied African Americans right to residence within states (Bateman Forthcoming; Dykstra 1993).

While Republicans were generally opposed to slavery, much of this was rooted in how slavery damaged the white male republic, not in a sense that African Americans were equal (Foner 1979). Conservative Republicans sought to avoid splintering the Union by coming down strongly *against* any sort of legal equality for African Americans. As Lincolns Attorney General Edward Bates put it: "That the great principle of the Republicans [was] negro equality [is] a down-right falsehood" (Wang 1997). More moderate Republicans, including Lincoln, wanted a slow transition away from slavery, were vague about what rights, if any, would be granted to emancipated slaves, and proposed to encourage the emigration of African Americans to colonies to address the "race problem." Even among the pre-war "radical" Republicans who pushed for immediate emancipation, there was no clear agreement that this would be followed by complete equality of rights between whites and blacks and they did not discuss using the Republican party as a platform to put black suffrage on the agenda. As abolitionist critics put it: the Republican Party, like the Democratic Party, was for "white men, not for all men" (Wang 1997).

Long before Republican efforts to grant rights to African Americans, Democrats sought to mobilize voters by accusing Republicans of plotting to do precisely that. During the war, many Democrats pointed to the Emancipation Proclamation as evidence that Republicans sought to prosecute a costly war only for the benefit of raising African Americans above the "white man" (Dykstra 1993; Field 1982). At the end of the war, many Democrats opposed giving rights to African Americans, not only because they thought them inferior, but also because they saw Reconstruction as a form of lifting up "the negro" at the expense of the "white man" (Dykstra 1993; Field 1982). And to the extent that African Americans and

6

their rights (along with all other citizens) were given federal protections, Democrats argued that the civil rights amendments curtailed the rights of whites to locally determine who could have suffrage and the protections of citizenship (Wang 1997).

Established theory suggests that fears of status loss and inversion are strong movers of ethnic ideology, partisanship, and even violence (Horowitz 1985; Tajfel and Turner 1986; Horowitz 2001). Recent evidence shows that merely seeing a new minority on train platforms (Enos 2017) or being exposed to news that White Americans will be a demographic minority (Craig and Richeson 2014a,b) increase anxiety about racial threat and drives changing policy positions. These treatments pale in magnitude to the rhetoric and claims made by Democrats about the threat to white manhood posed by creating political rights for African Americans.

Consequently, a push for black suffrage was widely seen within the party to be "political suicide" (Wang 1997). In the end, Republican lawmakers *reluctantly* pursued the key elements of Radial Reconstruction. During the war, Republicans denied that they would seek such a revolutionary change. When Democrats sought to make black suffrage an issue in state elections, Republican candidates attempted to change the theme of the campaign and refused to take public stances on the issue, even when it was the subject of a referendum (Dykstra 1993; Field 1982; Dearing 1952). When they debated the extent of the rights embedded in the 14th and 15th Amendments and the subsequent enforcement acts, Republicans explicitly voiced concerns about backlash from the Northern public (Wang 1997). It was far from clear that the radical legislative agenda they ultimately undertook was possible given the risk of alienating the electorate.

Faced with weak Presidential Reconstruction and clear recalcitrance in the South, including the election of secessionists to state governments, the enactment of black codes, and violence against freed people, moderate Republicans acceded to the need to pursue these policies or else face the reversal of the gains made in the war (Foner 1988; Wang 1997). But this support took time to build. Despite pursuing the 14th Amendment, moderate Republicans were only willing to pass laws extending suffrage in territories and DC after winning

a convincing victory in the 1866 Congressional elections and as a compromise to stave off more radical demands (Wang 1997).

For moderate Republicans, 15th Amendment was thought to be completion of reconstruction: enough to protect the victory won in the war. But again, continued resistance led to need for enforcement acts. Faced with threat to securing the victories won in the war against erosion by southern Democrats, Republicans pursued an increasingly extreme agenda.

Given that this agenda lacked widespread public support, that Republicans themselves pursued it reluctantly, and that their primarily political rivals ran against them on these issues year after year invoking powerful messages of racial threat, how was it possible for Republicans to secure the votes needed?

Argument

I argue that the experience of military service made Union Army veterans more willing to support these measures and that they were pivotal given that veterans were a large share of the post-war electorate and more likely to participate in politics. After the war, veterans were a large share of the electorate. While it is impossible to measure this exactly, we can estimate this approximately from what is known about enlistment rates, mortality rates during the war, and the number of white male citizens in the post-war period. Given a series of assumptions (see Appendix B), by 1870, nearly 24 percent of eligible voters in the North were veterans.

There is good reason to think that these soldiers were politically active. Research on combatants in civil wars shows that combatants show higher rates of political participation postbellum (Bellows and Miguel 2009; Blattman 2009) and that compulsory military service in France increases electoral participation (Fize and Louis-Sidois 2018). Moreover, military experience drives more substantive political behavior such as undertaking risky

8

protest (Parker 2009), coordinating refugee movements (Jha and Wilkinson 2012), engaging in violence, and participation in revolution (Jha and Wilkinson 2017).

Why would we expect service in the Union Army to lead to greater support for civil rights legislation and enforcement? First and foremost, military service was a major, life-altering event for veterans (Costa and Kahn 2008). It removed many from their homes on farms and villages, embedded them in a hierarchical disciplinary organization, and exposed them to people and places far from home. Removed from their pre-war routines and thrust into new, and potentially intense, experiences, soldiers were primed for shifting political commitments.

There are three, interrelated mechanisms by which their wartime experiences may have led veterans to support the Radical Republican agenda: interaction or contact with African Americans, first-hand exposure to slavery, and wartime sacrifice motivating a desire to make the wars cost meaningful.

Interaction/Contact   One cause of veterans shifting positions on civil rights might have been interaction with African Americans. Most white Americans had limited or no inter-action with African Americans,[2] so it plausible that contact with black people might have produced greater empathy and new respect.

This is a clear application of the "contact hypothesis" (Allport 1954; Pettigrew et al. 2011). And while there is mixed evidence for contact as such producing more positive views of other groups, the evidence is much stronger for prolonged, intimate contact that is condoned and for a common purpose. Mo and Conn (2017), for instance, uses a regression discontinuity to show that arbitrary changes in propensity to work for Teach For America in minority and economically disadvantaged communities caused participants to harbor empathy for and less prejudice toward these groups. There are two key ways through which veterans might have experienced contact with African Americans while in the military.

First, Soldiers who spent time in the South became more likely to experience interactions

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[2](do a quick calculation using 1860 census data: fraction of population within census enumeration book that is black weighted by number of people who are white)

with enslaved and freed people. Even if they were not in contact with the same individuals for prolonged periods of time, soldiers likely had numerous interactions with African Americans over months or years. Soldiers presided over "contraband camps" in which freed people congregated at Union Army posts for safety (Hahn 2003). Between 200 and 300 thousand freed people worked in logistical and labor capacities for the Union Army (McPherson 2008, p. 144). While not all of these interactions were positive—Union soldiers often were unable or unwilling to protect freed people when on the march and many laborers were working under coercive contracts—in these interactions soldiers and freed people worked toward a common goal, defeat of the Confederacy (Hahn 2003). This cooperation toward a common goal was even more clear in the many instances in which enslaved or freed people alerted Union troops to Confederate troop movements and ambushes and revealed the location of arms and food caches meant for the Confederate military (Hunt 2010). And Union soldiers were well aware that this help could be costly: Army units came upon the mutilated bodies of people who had been killed and tortured for providing aid (Hunt 2010; Gannon 2011).

A second form of contact came through shared military service. During the Civil War, more than 180,000 African American men served in United State Colored Troops combat units (McPherson 2008). White Union soldiers knew of or fought alongside African American regiments. Though some were initially opposed to the creation of the United States Colored Troop regiments, this quickly changed (Manning 2007). Many came to respect the bravery and tenacity of African American men fighting for their freedom. Paralleling the ideology of "black republicanism" through which African Americans made claims to citizenship through their military service and sacrifice for the nation (Parker 2009), white Union veterans that fought alongside black units also came to believe that if African Americans could fight and die with them on the battlefield, they could also be equal as citizens (Hunt 2010; Gannon 2011).[3]

If this mechanism is relevant, we should expect to see the effects of enlistment are stronger

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[3]White opposition to black military service was premised on the same idea: military service was a republican virtue for citizens. To permit blacks to serve was to denigrate the status of white citizenship.

for volunteers who had more interaction with USCT units or civilian African Americans.

Anti-Slavery   Another wartime experience that may have made veterans more willing to accept Radical Reconstruction policies was their experience of slavery. Few Union soldiers came from slave states and thus had little experience of the reality of slavery. Even if racial prejudice didnt change, seeing slavery first-hand and understanding that they were fighting against it may have led soldiers to take stronger anti-slavery positions and to understand it as the purpose of the war. Black soldiers in the First and Second World Wars returned with greater outrage toward Jim Crow institutions and white racism after putatively fighting for "freedom" and experiencing more equal treatment in Europe (Parker 2009), and white veterans of the Second World War were more supportive of black civil rights, albeit no discernable change in prejudice (White 2016).

Like most of the antebellum Northern population, soldiers in the Union Army did not enter the war with the aim of ending slavery. Based on the diaries and letters of hundreds of Union soldiers, Manning (2007) and McPherson (1997) show that soldiers enlisted to "preserve the Union" and frequently averred that they were *not* abolitionists. But unlike most Northerners, soldiers fighting in the South had direct experiences with slavery. Through their exposure to slavery, most soldiers quickly were convinced that abolition was necessary for both strategic and moral reasons (Manning 2007). In diaries and letters, soldiers invoked specific incidents and practices of slavery in articulating moral objections and their belief that abolition was necessary.[4] Strategically, they came to see that slavery was the root cause of the war, that the persistence of slavery aided their enemy, and that only be ending slavery could the war be won and future conflict averted (Manning 2007).

More than just oppose slavery, soldiers came to view the end of slavery as one of the twin purposes of the war (McConnell 1992; Manning 2007; Hunt 2010; Gannon 2011; Janney 2013).

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[4]Soldiers thought that slavery eroded the virtues and civic institutions necessary for republican government; was unjustifiable in its brutality and violence; subverted appropriate gender roles as women and men worked in fields together; resulted in rape of slaves by slave owners, which was also infidelity in marriage and miscegenation; undermined the marriages and families of African Americans through sales; and produced circumstances by which parents and siblings owned and sold their children and siblings.

Manning argues that well before the Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln proclaimed that only "a new birth of freedom" would ensure the sacrifice of the war would not be in vain, many soldiers had come to view the conflict as fundamentally one for Union and Liberty. This invocation of "Liberty" was an explicit demand for a meaningful end to slavery. This conception of the war was deeply tied to Protestant beliefs about America as a "city on a hill." Only by removing slavery could America fulfill its promise; only by removing slavery could the promise of the Declaration of Independence be redeemed.[5]

If new commitments to end slavery helped drive veteran support for Radical Reconstruction, we should observe greater effects of enlistment for soldiers that had more exposure to slavery during their service.

Sacrifice Finally, because of the suffering and sacrifice they made during the war, veterans had more at stake in ensuring that victory in the war was meaningful. Experiments in social psychology show that making sacrifices for a cause can intensify commitments to that cause (Cialdini 2006, 75–80), and this is particularly evident in commitment within military units (Winslow 1999). And military service (Koenig 2015) and combat experience in particular (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015) has been shown to produce intense antipathy against former enemies and those who may have betrayed soldiers or their cause. In short, wartime suffering and sacrifice may have intensified Union soldiers commitment to ensuring a meaningful victory of Union and Liberty and to ensure that their Confederate enemies were not permitted to return to the antebellum status quo unpunished.

There is compelling historical evidence from diaries that veterans experienced both sentiments. Due to the unanticipated length and brutality, many soldiers came to see the war as God's punishment to the nation for the sin of permitting slavery. In this perspective, the was Union divided as punishment for slavery and the Union could not be re-attained without

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[5]Interestingly, while whites gave a moral account of how slavery came to be central to the war, black Americans and soldiers had a more complex narrative in which their strategically vital assistance helped win the war and that this made the Union embrace freedom as both necessary and right (Manning 2007; Gannon 2011).

ending the institution (Manning 2007).

Veterans also were eager to ensure the South was punished. Dearing (1952) recounts numerous cases in which Republican candidates and former military commander alerted veterans to the threats posed by their former enemies and called upon them to vote as if they were still an army on the field of battle. On one hand, veterans organizations portrayed opponents of Reconstruction as coterminous with the enemy during the war. In a statement from GAR officers regarding the 1868 election, they warned veterans:

> Opposed to you are arrayed the late Confederate army of the South, and their more treacherous allies, the Copperheads of the North. ... But yesterday they were using the bullet to overthrow the government, to-day they are using the ballot to control it

Nathaniel Chipman, an officer in the National GAR offices reminded members of the organization that they were the bulwark against former Confederates seeking to seize "all the fruits of a glorious victory... To avert such a calamity is now part of the work before you, comrades."

And at the same time, Republicans and veterans' groups portrayed voting for Republicans as an extension of fighting in the war. The GAR publication *Great Republic* wrote: "Another victory at the ballot box .. as decisive and more emphatic than that won on the tented field must be achieved in '68." The veterans' newspaper *Soldiers' Friend* wrote: "you may ratify by your ballots the principles which you have manifested by your bullets." And the official campaign song of pro-Republican veterans included the refrain:

> We will vote as we battled in many a fight For God and the Union, for Freedom and Right Let our ballots secure what our bullets have won Grant and Colfax will see that the work is well done

> We whipped them before, we can whip them again We'll wipe treason out as we wiped slavery's stain; For traitors and slaves we've no place in our land as true,

loyal men to our colors we stand.

Both veterans and Republican politicians drew a connection between Radical Reconstruction and fending off efforts by the recent enemy to undo the aims of the war shared by veterans. To the extent that these sentiments drove veteran voting, we should expect to see that the effects of service are strong for veterans who saw more combat and suffering during the war.

Data

Veterans I measure enlistment rates using a novel database of Civil War soldiers: the Civil War Database (CWBD). Built for genealogical research, archivists created a relational database of soldiers, military units, and engagements by drawing on a wide range of sources including regimental and company muster rolls, publications by state Adjutant Generals, and unit and official Army histories. The data recorded on each soldier varies by state; for the states of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, and Connecticut, more than 90 percent of soldiers have their residence at the time of enlistment listed.[6] Based on the given residence, I match soldiers to counties within their state. I then compute the county-level enlistment rate by dividing the number soldiers matched to a county by number of military-aged males present in the county in the 1860 Census. Using this data, I create a measure of the fraction of military-aged (between the ages of 10 and 39) males in 1860.

This approach introduces some measurement error: it only measures the fraction of pre-war military aged males that enlisted and does not capture veterans as a fraction of the male population after the war. This is not a trivial problem: soldiers were more mobile than the rest of the population, and while many undoubtedly returned home, many did not (Lee 2012, 2008). Nevertheless, there are two key advantages of this approach. First, it is tractable.

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[6]Drawing on administrative records from the state Adjutant General on enlistments by county, I was also able to include data on Indiana. These records cover enlistments for all periods of the war except for a short interval between between October 1862 and the spring of 1863. This was a period of time between major troop calls, and as a result the data I use encompass more than 90% of all enlistments during the war.

Matching soldiers to their post-war location is a more difficult task, even assuming access to the complete census data and administrative records on the service of each soldier. Second, the pre-war measure is more amenable to design-based analyses: post-war distributions of veterans kept shifting and introduce the possibility of bias due to selection into residence in a county that would be hard to address.

Wartime Experience   Because the CWDB links individual soldiers to military units and unit-histories, it is also possible to measure the average wartime experiences of soldiers within counties. I create three sets of measures using this (and other) data.

- *Exposure to African American Soldiers* I measure exposure to African Americans in the military based on a soldiers units proximity to African American units. *(a)* Number of days in which a soldier's regiment saw combat in the same place and time as USCT (African American) regiments. *(b)* Number of day a regiment belonged to the same brigade[7] as African American regiments.

- *Exposure to Slavery*: I measure exposure to the institutions of slavery based on the geography of a soldiers units wartime deployment. I measure the amount of time units spent in each place using a digitization of Dyer (1908) that provides geographic location of Union Army units over time during the war (Nesbit 2012). Using this data, I created the following measures *(a)* Days spent in slave states[8] or spent in the Deep South.[9]. Days spent in places with high[10] *(b)* enslaved proportion of the population, and *(c)* concentration of slave ownership (Gini coefficient).[11]

- *Wartime Sacrifice*: This is measured as *(a)* regiment-level combat experience (in days

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[7]Brigades were larger military formations that coordinated the logistics and combat of groups of 2 to 5 regiments.

[8]In the Confederacy: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. In border states: Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia.

[9]Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina

[10]Above the median county in slave states.

[11]All measures derived from the 1860 Census.

of combat) and *(b)* regiment-level casualty rates (combat and non-combat deaths).

Each of these experiences might be determined by *when* soldiers enlisted. Thus, I regress individual-level exposure on dummies for enlistment month and use the residual before calculating county-level averages.

Elections   I measure support for Republican candidates and extending suffrage to African Americans using Congressional and Presidential election returns and the results of state constitutional referenda. I collapse county-level returns from *United States Historical Election Returns, 1824-1968* to 1860 boundaries, using areal interpolation (ICPSR 1999). Using this data, I examine elections from 1854 (the first year in which Republicans contested elections as a party) and 1920 (at which point most Civil War veterans were deceased). Several states held referenda removing racial restrictions on voting after the war, but in this paper I rely on data from Iowa (1857 and 1868) (Dykstra 1993), Wisconsin (1857 and 1865) (McManus 1998)[12], and Connecticut (1865).

Covariates   Finally, I employ a battery of economic and demographic covariates from the 1860 Census.[13]

Design

I identify the effect of wartime enlistment on votes for Republicans using variations on the differences-in-differences estimator. First, I employ a differences-in-differences strategy in

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[12]These referenda singly addressed the issue of removing the word "white" as a qualification for suffrage in the state constitution (Dykstra 1993; McManus 1998).

[13]*Demographic*: Logged total population, fraction of the population that is military-aged males, the ratio of military age males to females, fraction of the population belonging to religious denominations associated with abolitionism, fraction of females in the manufacturing jobs, fraction of men in manufacturing jobs, fraction of the population that was foreign born, fraction of the population that is black, fraction of the population that lives in an urban area, fraction of the population that is white, fraction of the population that was born in the South. *Economic*: logged manufacturing output, logged manufacturing output per capita, logged agricultural output, log agricultural output per capita, logged agricultural output per acre of a improved land, mean farm acreage, farm value per acre, agricultural property gini coefficient, military-aged males per acre of improved land, per capita agricultural output.

which counties are "treated" with enlistment once the Civil War starts. Unlike conventional differences-in-differences estimators, all counties saw some exposure to enlistment and enlistment rates are continuous. Thus, I estimate the effect of differing "intensities" of enlistment on the within-county shift in support for Republicans and removing racial qualifications for suffrage. This estimator is given in equation 1.

$$RepublicanVoteshare_{ie} = \alpha_i + \alpha_e + \beta EnlistmentRate_i * CivilWar_e + \epsilon_i + \epsilon_t \qquad (1)$$

In this equation, subscript i denotes the county, and e denotes the state-election.[14] $CivilWar_e$ is a dummy variable that is 1 if the election occurs in 1861 or later and 0 otherwise. $EnlistmentRate_i$ is the fraction of military-aged males in a county that served in the Civil War (between 0 and 1). The first difference (within counties) is imposed using county-level fixed effects (α_i). The second difference is obtained by the inclusion of state-election fixed effects (α_e). Because $EnlistmentRate_i$ is constant within counties and $CivilWar_e$ is constant within state-elections, only the interaction remains in the equation and is captured by the parameter β. Errors are clustered by both county and year. I estimate this equation using elections between 1854 and 1880, the first Presidential election after the conventional date of the "end" of Reconstruction.

This approach can plausibly reveal the causal effects of the presence of veterans, under two assumptions. The first is that the effects of veterans are additive. The second, and more heroic, assumption is that the trends in Republican vote-share in counties within the same state, but with different levels of "treatment," were parallel in the absence of treatment. I provide evidence that supports this second assumption below.

Second, I employ a different version of this differences-in-differences estimator. Rather than arbitrarily choosing when the "treated" period starts and ends, I estimate equation 2, which allows for the effect of enlistment to vary for each election-year compared to the

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[14]For example, one state-election would be the Massachusetts Congressional elections of 1860.

baseline of 1860, for all elections between 1854 and 1920. This has the added benefit of estimating when the effects of veterans was strongest, how long those effects lasted, as well as offering a test of the parallel trends assumption.

$$RepublicanVoteshare_{ie} = \alpha_i + \alpha_e + \sum_{y=1854}^{1920} \beta_y EnlistmentRate_i * Year_y + \epsilon_i + \epsilon_t \quad (2)$$

Finally, it could be the case that the parallel trends assumption does not hold. One way to address this problem would be to use a synthetic control (Abadie, Diamond and Hainmueller 2010). However, synthetic control methods are limited in three ways. (i) Synthetic control methods are limited to one treated case, whereas every county in my analysis is exposed in some way. We need to find the average effect, not the effect in one treated county. (ii) Synthetic control methods are built around binary treatments, but enlistment rates are continuous. (iii) Synthetic control methods do not have asymptotically derived standard errors.

I am able to address these problems and approximate the synthetic control approach in this case using two estimators that employ machine learning for causal inference. *Generalized random forests* (Athey, Tibshirani and Wager 2018) and *kernel regularized least squares* (Hainmueller and Hazlett 2014) estimate the effect of treatment conditional on covariates X for each observation x with specific values of X by comparing other cases in the same "neighborhood." Using different algorithms, these methods weight other observations that are "local" to x based on similarity. Thus, if X is a series of pre-treatment realizations of the dependent variable, both methods use weights to create "synthetic" cases that have similar pre-treatment trends for *each observation.* Thus, we can imagine that these methods approximately generalize the synthetic control beyond one case. Additionally, both methods permit the estimation of conditional *partial* effects (continuous treatments), average partial effects in the sample, and asymptotically unbiased standard errors for these average effects.[15]

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[15]For a more detailed explanation of these methods, see Appendix C.

When using these models, I include the following pre-treatment outcomes to create "synthetic controls": (a) The performance of the Republican party in every federal election (Congressional and Presidential) from 1854 to 1860.[16] (b) The performance of all predecessor parties to the Republican party (Whigs, Liberty, Free-Soil, and American parties) in every federal election between 1840 and 1860. (c) The performance of the Democratic Party in all federal elections between 1840 and 1860. (d) Indicators for the state in which the county is located.

Ecological Inference   Finally, these designs all test an argument about the experiences of individuals using aggregate data. The difficulty of drawing individual-level inferences from ecological data are well documented (Freedman 1999; Greenland 2001). However, it is possible to draw conclusions given key assumptions. If the fraction of men enlisted in service in each county was chosen at random, then it would be possible to draw inferences on individual-level effects. While enlistment rates were not at random, they are as-if random the under the assumptions required for causal inference described above (Greenland 2001). While we can neither observe nor condition on the joint distribution of exposure to enlistment with other attributes of military-aged males, the assumptions behind the first difference and synthetic controls balance on pre-treatment outcomes are that all unchanging covariates and all shared trends are held constant. If we believe that these designs prevent confounding by unobservables for the purpose of causal inference, then they also eliminate confounding of the joint-distribution of enlistment and individual-level attributes, making ecological inferences plausible.

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[16]For any county in which a given party did not compete in an election, I set their vote-share as 0 and add a dummy indicating the party did not compete in this county-election.

Results

Did veterans vote for Republicans and Radical Republican policies during the critical elections from 1864 to 1868? First, I report the results of the difference-in-difference that uses equation 1. These appear in Table 1. Column (1) shows the main result: the shift in favor of Republicans was greater after the Civil War in places with more enlistment. The effect size suggests that a ten percentage point increase in enlistment would yield a 3.3 percentage point increase in Republican vote-share. Moreover, this effect is fairly precisely estimated and is highly significant. These results are robust to alternately excluding all elections with no Republican candidates (column 2) or including a dummy for county-elections which Republicans did not contest (column 1). The results are substantively unchanged.

These results are similar when using the "synthetic control." While the coefficients are smaller, Figure 2 clearly shows that in the years following the Civil War, counties with more veterans saw greater Republican victories in Congressional elections. As this approach explicitly balances on pre-war trends in Republican (and other party) vote-share, it provides a reassuring complement to the difference-in-difference which depends on a parallel trends assumption. These results show strong positive effects when including or excluding covariates and when imposing state fixed effects and not. The effects are strongest in 1866, the pivotal election in which Congressional and Radical Reconstruction won public support against the accommodationist approach of Johnson (Riddleberger 1979; Foner 1988).

With both the difference-in-difference and "synthetic control" estimates, it is possible to examine whether selection effects remain even after implementing each design. With difference-in-difference estimates, Figure 1 shows the effect of enlistment rates for each election year between 1854 and 1920. It is clear that there is no significant relationship between war-time enlistment and pre-war election results. This suggests there were no selection effects and also validates the parallel trends assumption underlying the identification using difference-in-difference. Figure 2 shows the effects of war-time enlistment on pre-war elections, using the GRF and KRLS. Again, there is no clear relationship between enlistment

and pre-war voting after re-weighting.

Interpretation

Observing greater support for Republicans and Radical policy positions in areas with more veterans might be compatible with other accounts that build on a story about partisan identity, clientelism, and party branding, rather than changing attitudes due to wartime experience. However, each of these alternative explanations has serious problems.

Selection Bias?   First, the most obvious concern is that enlistment was higher in places with lower racial prejudice and greater support for civil rights antebellum: the appearance of post-war support among veterans is due to selection effects, not war-time experiences. This is contradicted by diaries and letters that document wartime changes in positions among veterans (Manning 2007; McPherson 1997) Moreover, in the states I examine, there is a negative correlation between pre-war votes for Republicans and enlistment rates even prior to the adoption of an aggressive civil rights agenda.

Finally, while there was support for suffrage in antebellum referenda, the rate of support was much lower than in postbellum referenda (Field 1982; Dykstra 1993; McManus 1998).

Patronage not Policy?   Second, support for the Republican party may have been driven by patronage to soldiers and officers that overrode racial prejudice and opposition to legal equality. During the war, officers had strong incentives to become Republicans. Republican officers reportedly had higher rates of promotion and better access to lucrative positions while Democrats were passed over (Dearing 1952). Democratic officers often left or strategically switched party allegiances for career advancement. Veterans may have had similar incentives. Skocpol (1993) documents the tight connection developed between the Republican Party and Union Veterans regarding pension funds. The transfer of vast sums of money to veterans under the nations first major social welfare policy was managed by partisan appointees as a massive program for vote-buying.

But patronage does not explain either the content nor timing of support for Republicans. Two officers notorious for corruption and switching parties, Benjamin Butler and John Logan (Dearing 1952), both embraced some of the most Radical positions on Reconstruction both as leaders of veterans organizations and conventions and in their legislative careers in the House and Senate (Wang 1997). And while pension transfers to hundreds of thousands of veterans was undoubtedly an important driver of Republican votes, the size of and discretion in the pension program needed to buy votes was not achieved until the 1880s and 1890s. Skocpol estimates that less than 2 percent of living veterans in 1865 received a pension and only 5 percent did in 1870. Moreover, both parties sought to win veteran votes through pension legislation (at least through 1879) (Skocpol 1993) and in the immediate post-war period sought to buy veteran support through patronage jobs (Dearing 1952, 73–77).[17]

Veterans and Reconstruction Policy

By contrast, there is both statistical and historical evidence that veterans backed the substance of Republican Reconstruction policies.

First, I estimate the support among veterans for explicitly removing racial qualifications for voting. Restricting my focus to Iowa and Wisconsin, I am able to estimate the effect of wartime service on voting to remove racial qualifications in state constitutional referenda. With one antebellum (1857 in both IA and WI) and one postbellum (1865 in IA, 1868 in WI) referendum in each state, I employ two specifications in my analysis: difference-in-differences and lagged dependent variables, and measure support for suffrage as the fraction of yeses out of all votes cast in the election or as a fraction of all eligible voters. [18]

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[17]And while legislation that equalized enlistment bounties for veterans did pass in 1867, the size of the transfer was small and this legislation divided Republicans but gained unanimous Democratic support.

[18]Because these states held the second referenda in different years and in different contexts—alongside state (WI) versus federal (IA) elections—I include state fixed effects in both models.

$$\Delta Suffrage_i = \alpha_{state} + \beta EnlistmentRate_i + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

$$PostbellumSuffrage_i = \alpha_{state} + \gamma AntebellumSuffrage_i + \beta EnlistmentRate_i + \epsilon_i \tag{4}$$

The results of the LDV are reported in columns (1) and (2) of Table 2. The estimates show a positive effect of enlistment rates on support for extending suffrage to African Americans that is both substantively large (moving from the bottom to the top decile of enlistment implies an increase between 4 and 8 percentage points) and significant ($p < 0.01$). The differenced estimates in columns (3) and (4) are both larger (moving to the top from the bottom decile of enlistment implies between 6 and 10 percentage point increase) and more precisely estimated. Veterans, even when given the opportunity to split their vote in favor of Republicans and in opposition to African American suffrage, opted to endorse the expansion of civil rights that was part and parcel of the Radical Republican agenda.[19]

Veteran support for civil rights and similar Radical Reconstruction positions is also clear in the historical evidence. By the election of 1864, soldiers were strong supporters of emancipation. Despite claims by some historians (often based on the claims of Army officers such as former Army commander and Democratic Presidential candidate, George McClellan) that emancipation demoralized the Army and turned soldiers against Lincoln and the Republicans (see, e.g. Dearing 1952), this is contradicted by diaries and letters that show growing support for emancipation among soldiers (Manning 2007; McPherson 1997).[20]

Unfortunately, we lack evidence from diaries and letters from soldiers after the war. We must look at behaviors to infer whether veterans backed more expansive Radical Republican positions. One way to do this is to look at the largest veterans organizations and investigate their political positions. In the immediate aftermath of the war, a host of new veterans organizations that appeared. The largest of these included the Boys in Blue,[21] the Soldiers and Sailors National Union League (SSNUL), and—largest and most famous—the Grand

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[19]Connecticut also held referenda pre- and post-war: 1847 and 1865. I estimate the fraction of veterans in 1865 that voted in favor of the referenda using ecological inference estimators. This is possible for this referendum, because there are town-level records on veterans (and their survival), number of registered voters, and voting for suffrage extension. Using the methods developed by Imai, Lu and Strauss (2008) (and King (2013)), I find that 46.1 [s.e. 6.7] percent (32 [s.e. 3.4] percent) of veterans voted for (as opposed to against or not at all) suffrage, compared to only 17.4 [s.e. 3.6] percent (24.7 [s.e. 1.8] percent) of non-veterans.

[20]This was also borne out in the election returns: soldiers voting in the field returned a massive victory of Lincoln and Republicans, and anecdotally, troops on furlough to vote ran up vote-totals for Republicans at home (Winther 1944).

[21]This was distinct from the Republican party organization during the 1868 election.

Army of the Republic (GAR). While many veterans organizations were organized around service in specific units or for specific states and had a variety of political positions, these large national organizations all took strong positions that backed Radical Republican policies in the South and the Civil Rights amendments (Dearing 1952, p. ??).

This was manifest in their active role in the elections of 1866. The GAR, Boys in Blue, and SSNUL all organized locally for Republicans: holding parades and mass meetings, attending conventions, and maintaining campaign clubs. Founders and leading members of the GAR understood backing Radical Republicans as a vital role of the organization (Beath 1889; McConnell 1992; Dearing 1952). The thorough-going collaboration of Grand Army posts with Radical Republicans gave the organization a sharply political reputation.

In the weeks leading up to the 1866 elections, Republican-affiliated veterans held a large convention in Pittsburgh, attended by 25,000 former officer and delegates from local veterans' groups from all over the country. The Pittsburgh convention, with national attention, denounced President Johnson and collaboration with traitors, and backed Radical Republicans, their agenda, and ratification of the 14th Amendment (Dearing 1952; Cashdollar 1965). James Blaine—then a Republican in the House active in crafting civil rights legislation— claimed this convention "consolidated almost en masse the soldier vote of the country in support of the Republican party" and was vital to the successful ratification of the 14th Amendment (Blaine 1884).

Bolstered by the decisiveness of veterans in 1866, Republicans coordinated veterans' organizations across the country through a campaign organization they called the "Boys in Blue" (Dearing 1952). This political activism gave the GAR a strong reputation for Radical Republican politics. While this worried some GAR leaders who sought to make the organization politically neutral, many senior leaders—including the GAR commander in Indiana, Oliver Wilson—understood the political project of the war as the heart of the organization (McConnell 1992). And indeed, the GAR grew rapidly even with its public embrace of Radical Republican politics, and it quickly atrophied in the years following a

turn to (official) political neutrality[22] and the Republican success in defeating recalcitrant Southerners and Democrats in the elections of 1868. GAR leaders at the time and historians attribute this atrophy to the loss of motivation once the key political goals of Congressional Reconstruction were met. (Dearing 1952; McConnell 1992; Beath 1889).

Only possibility? The strong backing the largest veterans organizations gave Radical Republicans provides suggestive evidence that veterans supported the Reconstruction agenda of the party. But, it could have been the case that Union veterans had no option but to vote Republican, despite repugnance toward African Americans and expanded rights for them, because Southern Democrats backed secession and formed the Confederate government while Northern "Copperheads" and "Peace" Democrats had opposed the war and pushed for a negotiated peace with "traitors". Faced with the choice of voting for the party that won the war versus one that might represent the enemy, race and civil rights might have mattered little. But this argument faces many troubles.

First, it ignores the many "War Democrats" that backed the war and the Army, clearly backed a war to restore the Union, and the some that went so far as to collaborate with the Union Party in 1864. These Democrats formed an part of the coalition that elected Lincoln, were key supporters of Johnson (Riddleberger 1979; Foner 1988), and could claim to support the Union without embracing civil rights expansions.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, both parties suspected that service in the South and first-hand contact with freed people had *intensified* racism and opposition to civil rights and abolition among veterans (Dykstra 1993). This gave Democrats hope of splitting veterans from the Republicans by dividing support of the Union from civil rights expansions. They pursued this strategy in three ways. Democrats repeatedly accused Republicans of pursuing "social equality" for African Americans, warned that extending rights would erode

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[22]Despite official neutrality, John Logan (then national commander of the GAR and House Radical Republican) was explicit in private communications: "The organization of the GAR has been and is being run in the interest of the Republican party" (quoted in Dearing 1952). Moreover, Dearing finds that many local leaders of the GAR openly admitted that local Boys in Blue chapters were simply local GAR posts, and veterans enthusiastically took responsibility for Grants success.

the meaning of rights of whites. State Democratic parties backed slates of ex-officers candidates from so-called "soldiers parties," with names like the Union Anti-Negro Suffrage Party and platforms that praised white soldiers and denounced civil rights reforms (Dearing 1952, 66)(Dykstra 1993; Field 1982).

Democrats also worked with several veterans organizations (most notably, the United Service Society and White Boys in Blue) that were explicitly both patriotic and "anti-Negro" to win over veterans (Dearing 1952). During the 1866 campaign, Democrats worked to organize veterans, culminating in a rally in Cleveland in September of 1866. This small convention of about 3,000 backed President Johnson and Presidential Reconstruction, but also accepted letters of praise from former Confederates, like Nathan Bedford Forrest (at that very time active with the Ku Klux Klan). These allegiances opened Democratic veterans to accusations of consorting with rebels and traitors. During the 1868 election, Democrats organized their own veterans clubs: typically called the "White Boys in Blue." And if the name did not sufficiently indicate their position on the matters of race and Reconstruction, their slogans and placards reading "NO N****R VOTING" made it clear (Dearing 1952). Given that these groups, too, emphasized restoration of the Union and veterans benefits, it is plausible that they could have enticed veterans unsure of or opposed to extending suffrage away from Republicans.

But these efforts did not yield great success: Soldiers parties failed to win much support (Dykstra 1993; Field 1982; Dearing 1952); the 1866 convention in Cleveland was dwarfed by the pro-Radical Reconstruction soldiers convention in Pittsburgh; and while the United Service Society and White Boys in Blue were successful in some areas, they ultimately were much smaller and weaker organizations. In the years to come, these organizations disappeared, while the GAR lasted for decades to come (McConnell 1992; Gannon 2011).

Mechanisms

Contact

I evaluate the importance of contact by examining heterogeneity in the effects of enlistment on support for black suffrage across different experiences of contact with African Americans. On one hand, experiencing combat alongside African American units does not appear to have alter the effects of enlistment. But, the enlistment rates lead to higher support for suffrage when soldiers in a county spent more time in a brigade (the smallest potentially inter-racial unit in the Army) with USCT regiments (Figure A1).[23] This provides suggestive statistical evidence that inter-racial contact through military service led to increasing commitments to expanding civil rights for African Americans.

There is also historical evidence that veterans continued to draw upon wartime interactions with African Americans when considering issues of civil rights. While most diaries and letters ended with the war, there is ample documentation of the behavior of veterans within the largest, longest lasting, and most important Union veterans organization, the GAR(McConnell 1992; Skocpol 1993). Unlike almost all other social organizations in the 19th century, the GAR was integrated; not only did it include African American posts but individual posts were often integrated as well (Gannon 2011). And during Memorial Day ceremonies, white and black veterans paraded and attended sermons together at both black and white churches (Gannon 2011). When posts denied admission to black veterans, they frequently faced censure from other posts. This inclusion was repeatedly justified by appeals to the wartime service of African American soldiers. Thus, for years after the war, veterans within the GAR demonstrated commitment to forms of formal equality (albeit limited) for African Americans within the organization.[24]

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[23]This holds when using either USCT regiment-days or number of days with any USCT regiment in the brigade.

[24]Still, in 19th century America, there were limits to the white GAR members' notion of equality: other than in black posts, African American veterans only held symbolic offices and never held the highest state or national offices (McConnell 1992; Gannon 2011). And when African American posts in the South sought organizational help in fight lynching and the encroachment of Jim Crow, they did not find strong backing

Anti-Slavery

Expanding on the preceding tests, I also investigate heterogeneity in the effects of enlistment on support for black suffrage across differential experiences of slavery. The simplest test of this—days spent in slave states or in the deep South—yields mixed results. Figures A2 and A3 show that increasing time spent in these areas is associated with stronger effects of enlistment—up to a point. Both estimates show an inverted-U relationship in which the highest levels of exposure to slavery are associated with weaker effects of enlistment. Because of the limited sample size and extreme values of war-time experience might be due to small numbers of veterans within counties, it is difficult to know whether this relationship says something about the kinds of experiences of units that spent the most prolonged time in slave-holding areas, or whether it simply reflects lack of common support and noisy measurement.

Figures A4 and A5 measure exposure to slavery more directly as days spent in high-slave and high-plantation areas.[25] The evidence here is suggestive: enlistment rates lead to even stronger support for black suffrage in counties where veterans spent more time in high-slavery counties and more time in high-plantation counties (again, this relationship is much clearer where there is more support in the data and weaker when the estimates depend on extrapolation).

This statistical evidence that experience of slavery is important is matched by the historical record. Even into the twentieth century, veterans' organizations worked to ensure that textbooks endorsed their narrative of the war and strongly opposed attempts to incorporate a neutral or "Lost Cause" narratives in both textbooks and monuments. They engaged in a rivalry with adherents of the 'Lost Cause" by creating monuments to the war in order to preserve the Union and Liberty interpretation. Even those veterans who were willing to consider "reconciliation" with their former enemies made it clear that they nevertheless saw the cause of their aged rivals as fundamentally wrong and the eradication of slavery

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(Gannon 2011).

[25]High-plantation areas are those in which the concentration of slaves among slaveholders in a county is higher than the median across all counties in slave-holding states.

as the moral triumph achieved by the war (McConnell 1992; Gannon 2011; Janney 2013). Veterans' understanding of the war can perhaps be best summarized by a speech by, then congressman, William McKinley to a GAR convention in 1890:

> All we have ever asked is that the settlements of the war—grand settlements, made between Grant and Lee at Appomattox, and which were afterwards embodied in the Constitution of the United States —shall stand as the irretrievable judgment of history and the imperishable decree of a Nation of freemen.

Sacrifice

I look for heterogeneity in the effects of enlistment on support for black suffrage as a function of both unit combat experience and casualty rates. Enlistment has stronger effects when soldiers saw greater combat experience (Figure A6), and this heterogeneous is robust to both linear and kernel-based estimates. By contrast, the effect of enlistment does not appear to depend on unit-level casualty rates. This provides prima facie evidence that wartime sacrifice intensified veteran opposition to the South and desire to make the war's outcome meaningful.

The importance of wartime sacrifice is also evident by the behavior of veterans after the war. The threat of a resurgent Confederacy lead Republicans to repeatedly invoke the war: reminding voters of why it was fought, its immense cost in lives, and who had been the enemy—and that Northern Democrats had called for peace and negotiation. While the early historiography of this period often portrayed this rhetorical "waving the bloody shirt" as a cynical campaign ploy, this deeply misrepresents the context in which it occurred. Despite the limits to Republican commitments to true racial equality—by today's standards they were still deeply racist—they were deeply opposed to slavery and were invested in redeeming the promise of the victory that had achieved in war. The threat posed by a resurgent South and Democracy was existential (Downs 2015; Wang 1997; Foner 1988).

Veterans' commitments to "win the peace" are perhaps most evident in their response to the escalating conflict between the Republican Congress and President Johnson in 1867

that ultimately led to impeachment hearings. This conflict arose over Johnson's removal of Secretary of War (and ally of Radical Republicans) Edwin Stanton. When Stanton refused to abdicate his office, John Logan, then a high ranking officer within the GAR and Republican member of the House, organized local GAR cadres to provide armed protection to Stanton and Congressional Republicans (Dearing 1952).[26]

In the days to come, Congressional Republicans and national GAR leaders received numerous letters from state GAR leader and Governors of several states[27] indicating that tens of thousands of men were ready to mobilize to fend off an impending counter-revolution—effectively a coup against Johnson. While the numbers of men promised in these letters were likely exaggerated, they show that local leaders understood veterans were active supporters of Radical Reconstruction. Governor Fairchild of Wisconsin was more specific when he wrote to Logan stating that his office was overrun with veterans looking for some way to take a stand on this issue (Dearing 1952), and GAR posts throughout Illinois wired the state commander indicating their readiness to mobilize (Dearing 1952).

Ultimately, none of this violent mobilization came to pass, but it would be naive to think that state Governors and GAR leaders were simply hyperbolic. At the time of their writing, a war that had mobilized much of the population and taken an enormous toll of dead and wounded had just concluded, Federal troops occupied most Southern states and were fighting, in some places, a violent insurgency that targeted both Federal troops and freed people. At the very least, it appears that some veterans, veterans' organizations, and their leaders appeared willing to engage not just in voting but in violence to "win the peace."

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[26]Logan wrote to Chipman (head of the GAR in Washington, DC): "I hope you will quietly and secretly organize all our boys so that they can assemble at a signal that you may agree upon to report ... ready to protect the Congress ... This must be done quietly." They placed men with arms and ammunition in position around the Capitol to keep watch.

[27]Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Conclusion

How was it possible for legislators accountable to a racially conservative electorate come to produce the revolutionary legislative agenda of Radical Reconstruction that emancipated, extended civil and political rights to, and protected African Americans? I've argued that Congressional Republicans were able to back this agenda due in large part due to Union veterans. Veterans had, in the course of the war, acquired strong reasons to back the Reconstruction agenda and also formed a large share of the Northern electorate. Using differences-in-differences, lagged dependent variables, and "synthetic control"-type approaches, I show that counties with greater levels of enlistment saw sharper increases in support for Republicans in Congressional and Presidential elections after the war, with the strongest effects being in the pivotal election of 1866. This support for Republicans reflected actual commitments to the policies of Reconstruction: using the same design, higher enlistment rates were associated with greater support for black suffrage in state referenda in Iowa and Wisconsin. Finally, I use both historical evidence and tests for heterogeneous effects to show that three different aspects of war-time service led veterans to back more expansive civil rights: interaction with African Americans within the military, direct experiences with the institutions of slavery, and wartime sacrifice.

This is, of course, only part of the story. Once these laws were passed, how were they enforced? Where were African Americans able to enjoy the rights promised to them, and how? The translation of these *de jure* protections into reality in the South was a fraught and difficult enterprise. While this is a different story, it seems both occupying troops and African American veterans in the South may have played an important role in actualizing the rights promised by Northern Republicans (Hahn 2003; Downs 2015).

Additionally, what happened to this coalition of veterans? While Figures 1 and 2 show that higher enlist generated greater support for Republicans for several decades, Northerners' commitment to protecting African American rights eroded, and Blight (2001) suggests that a thorough capitulation to the "Lost Cause" took hold. How does this square with my

argument that veterans were supportive of civil rights? On one hand, Northern veterans participated in "Blue and Gray" reunions and the GAR paid little attention to the emerging institutions of Jim Crow and the spread of lynching—despite warnings and pleas from black GAR posts in the South (McConnell 1992; Gannon 2011). But on the other, the GAR continued to insist on spreading and defending its understanding of the war as one of achieving Union and Liberty—what Gannon calls "the Won Cause." Even if veterans were no longer a political force that meaningfully allied with African Americans, they were a bulwark against ascendant Confederates in the battle over America's cultural memory.

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Table 1: Effects of Enlistment on Republican Voteshare—Difference in Difference

	Dependent variable:		
	Republican Voteshare		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Enlist % X Post-war	0.336***	0.274***	0.248***
	(0.095)	(0.059)	(0.052)
GOP no content	included	dropped	dummy
Observations	8,580	8,006	8,580

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Data from Congressional and Presidential elections across 390 counties. Standard errors clustered by county and election year. All models include state-election fixed effects.

Table 2: Effect of Enlistment on Support for Black Suffrage (IA and WI Referenda)

	Dependent variable:			
	(Vote %)	(Elig. %)	(Vote %)	(Elig. %)
	Pro-Suffrage		Δ Pro-Suffrage	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Enlistment (%)	0.320***	0.173***	0.433***	0.258***
	(0.098)	(0.064)	(0.118)	(0.081)
Constant	0.394***	0.424***	0.306***	0.354***
	(0.035)	(0.022)	(0.037)	(0.026)
Lagged DV	Yes	Yes	No	No
Differenced	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	131	131	131	131

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Data from state constitutional referenda across 131 counties in IA and WI. All models include state fixed effects. Standard errors are robust.

Figure 1: Effect of veterans on Republican Vote-share in federal elections for each year between 1854 and 1920
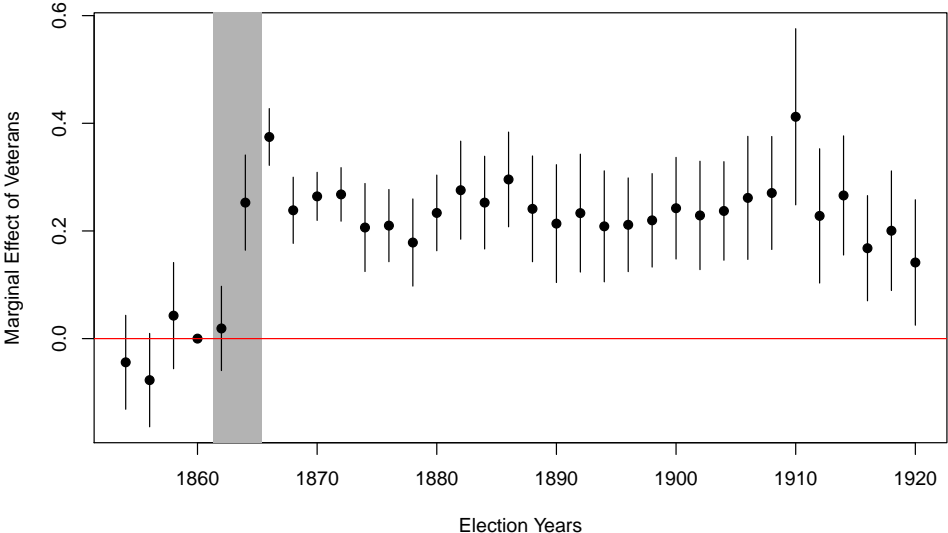

This figure plots the year-specific effect of enlistment rates on Republican vote-share for federal elections with 1860 as the reference year. The model includes county and state-election fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered by county and year. Bars show 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure 2: Effect of veterans on Republican Vote-share in federal elections for each year between 1854 and 1920 (Synthetic Control)
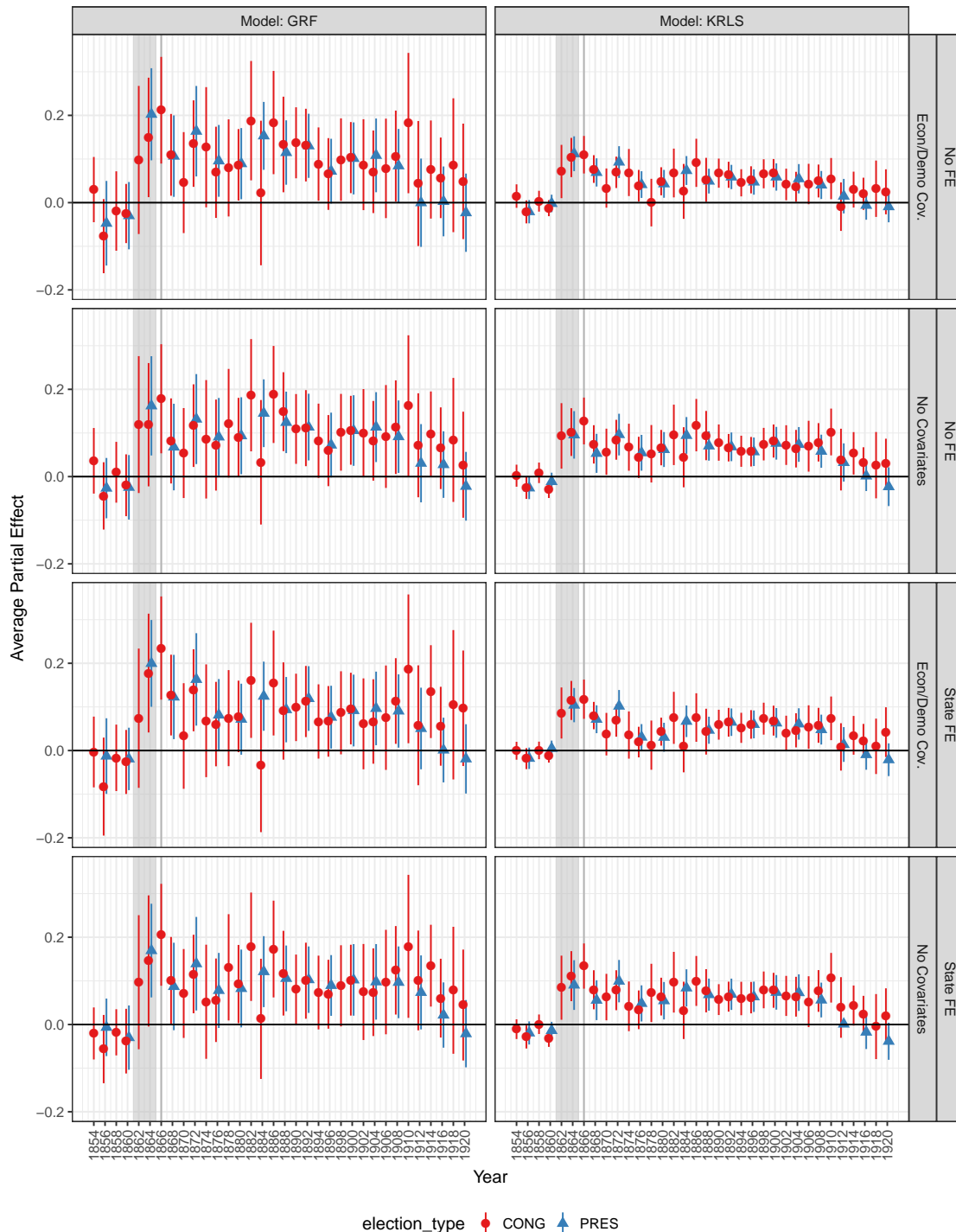
This reports the average partial effect of enlistment rates on Republican vote-share in federal election using KRLS and GRF to balance on pre-war vote-share for Republicans (and their predecessor parties) and Democrats in federal elections between 1840 and 1860. N is 376 counties. Average partial effects are reported for estimates that include/exclude state fixed effects and demographic and economic covariates. Bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals. The shaded area indicates the years of the Civil War, 1866 is highlighted with a gray line.

Supplementary Appendix

A   Additional Analyses

Figure A1: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Service in Brigades with USCT Regiments
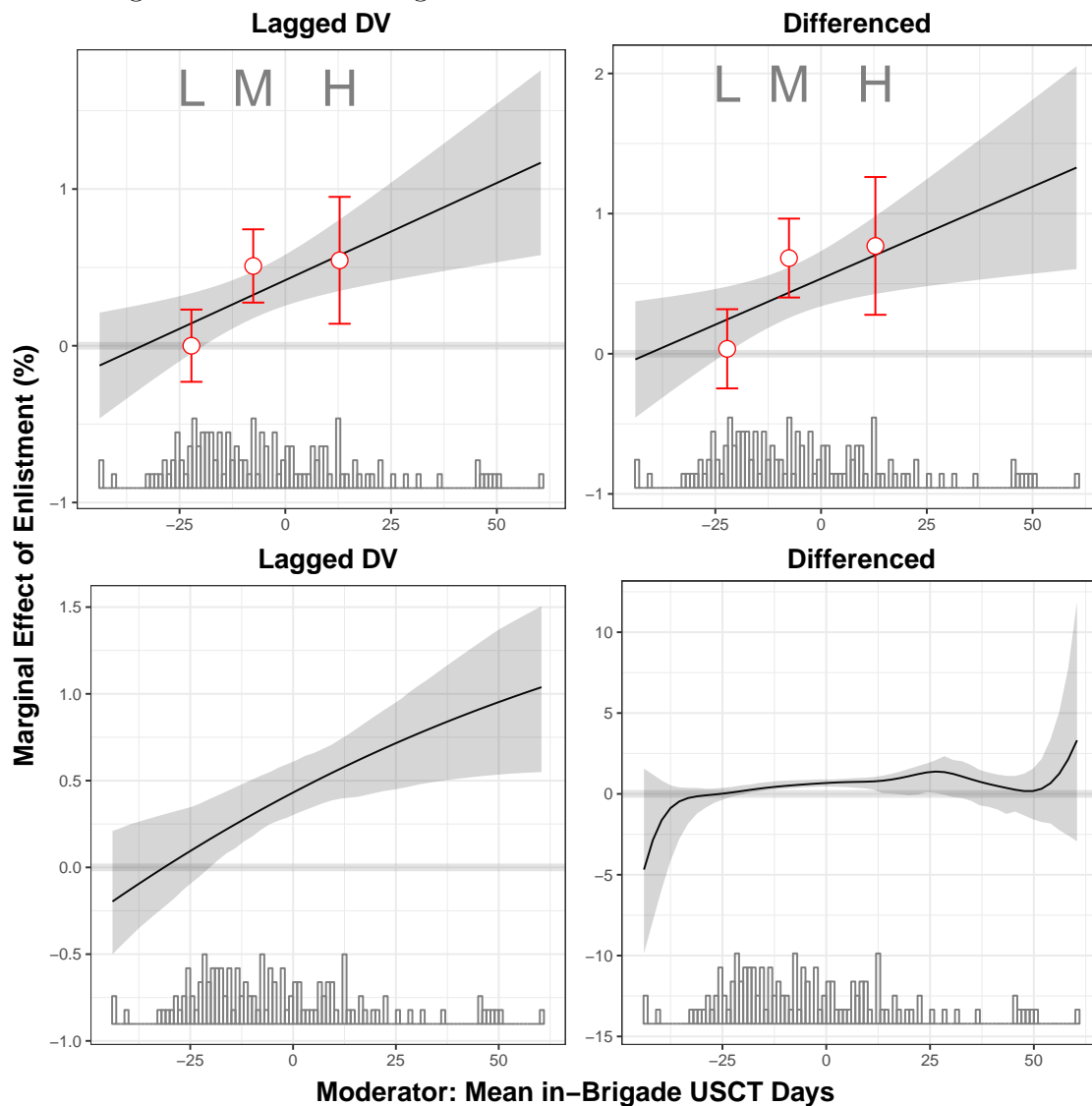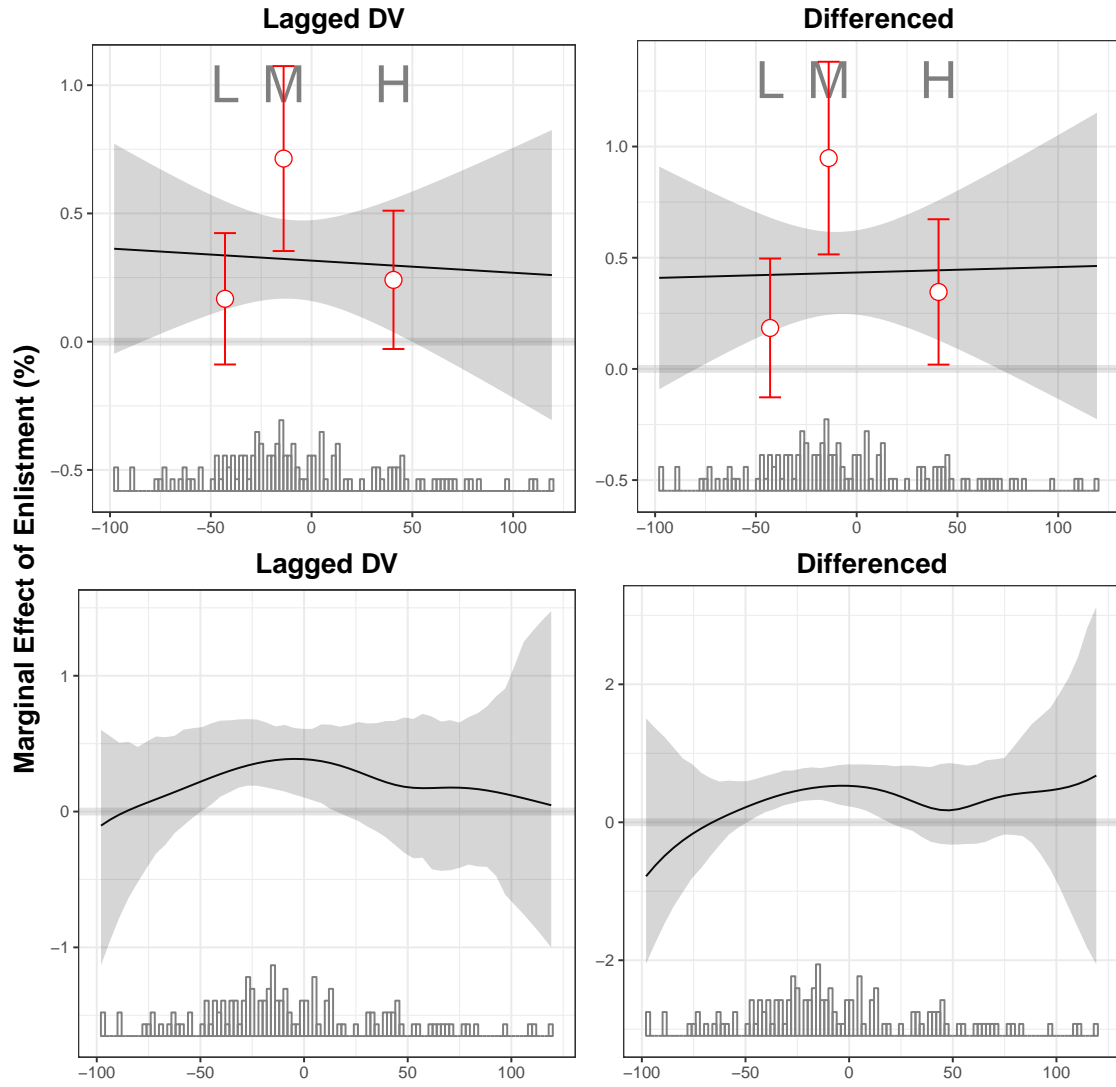

This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in brigades alongside USCT regiments on support for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.

Figure A2: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Service in Slave States
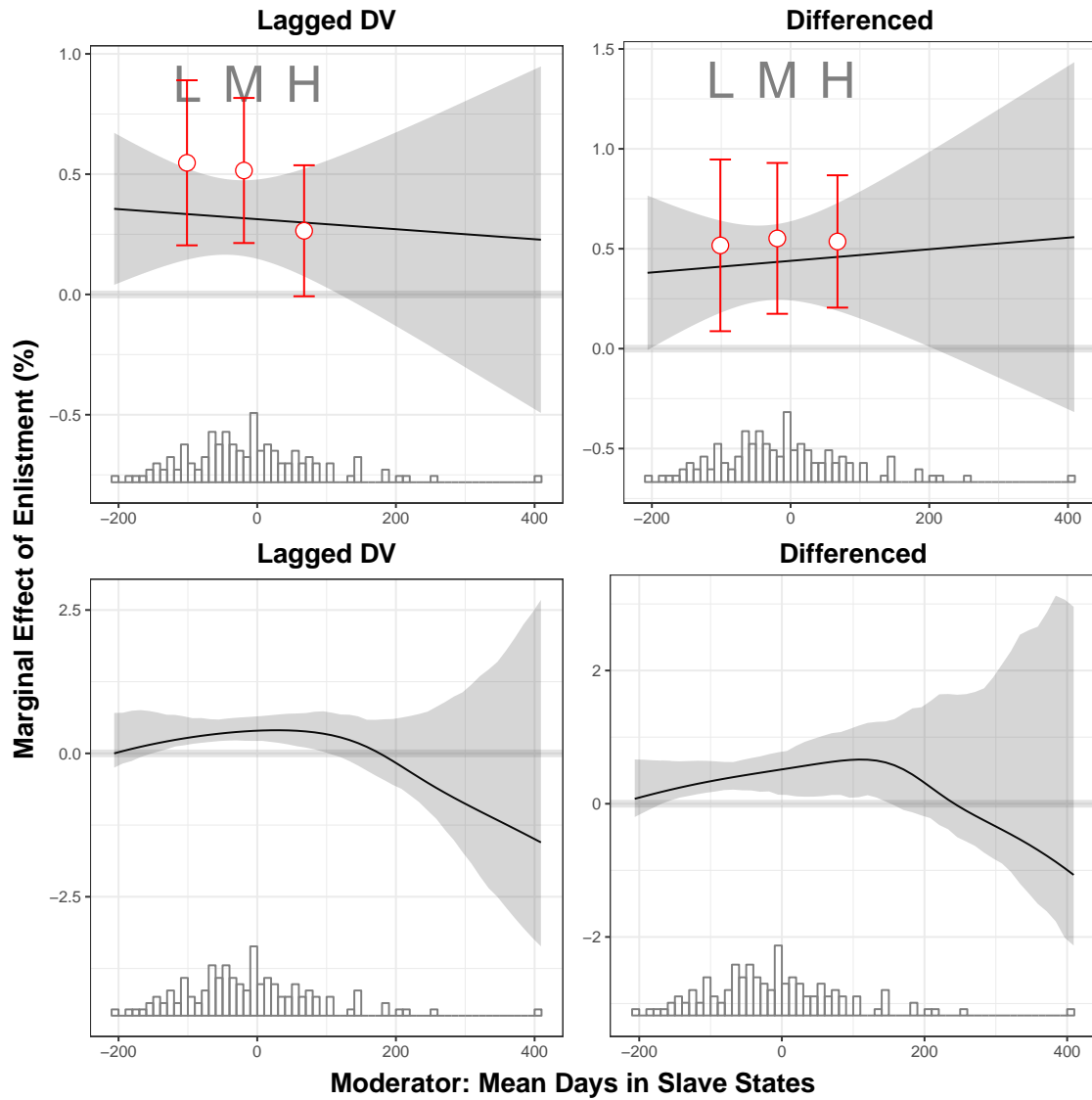
This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in slave states on support for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.
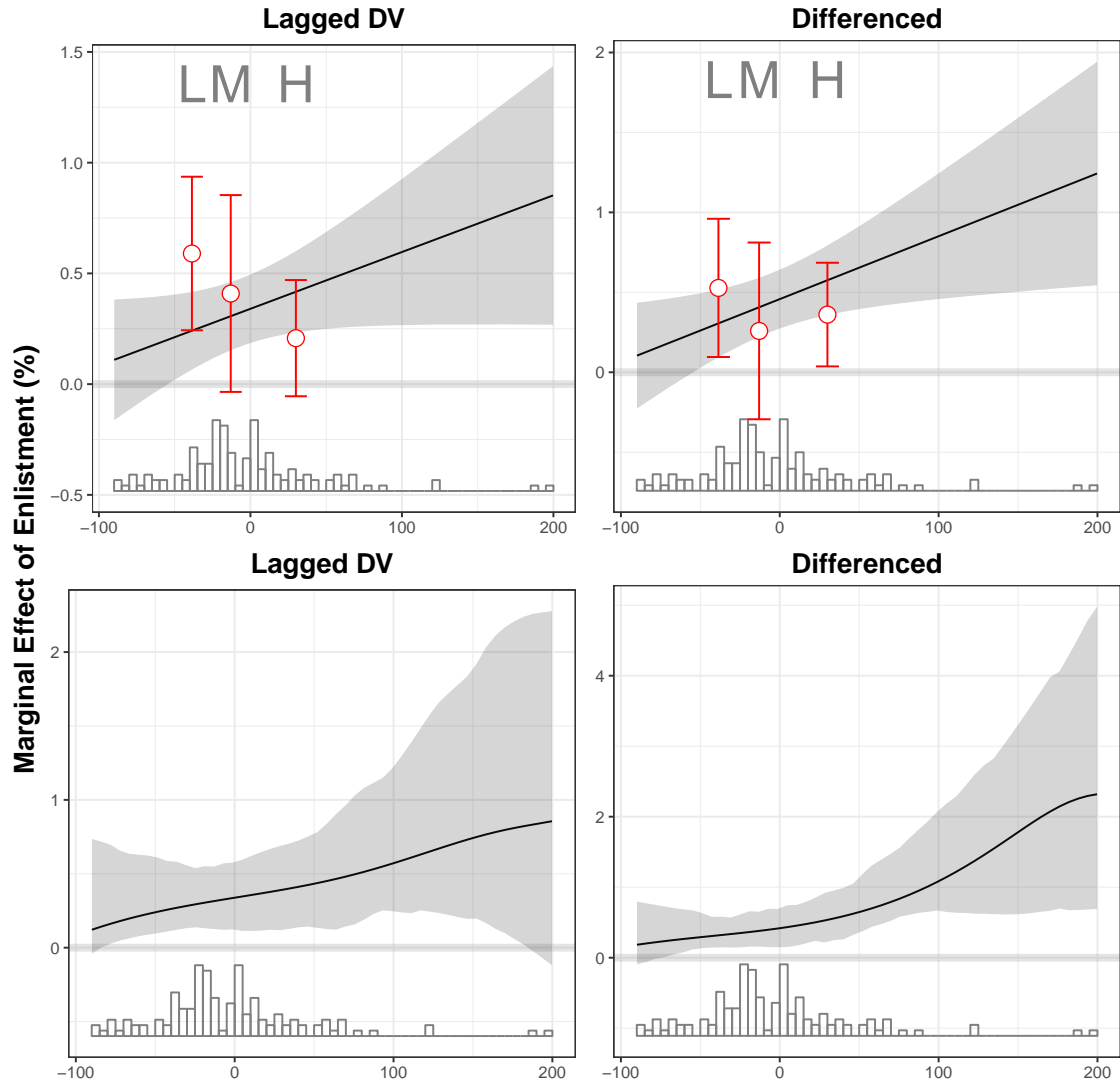
Figure A3: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Service in the Deep South

This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in deep South on support for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.
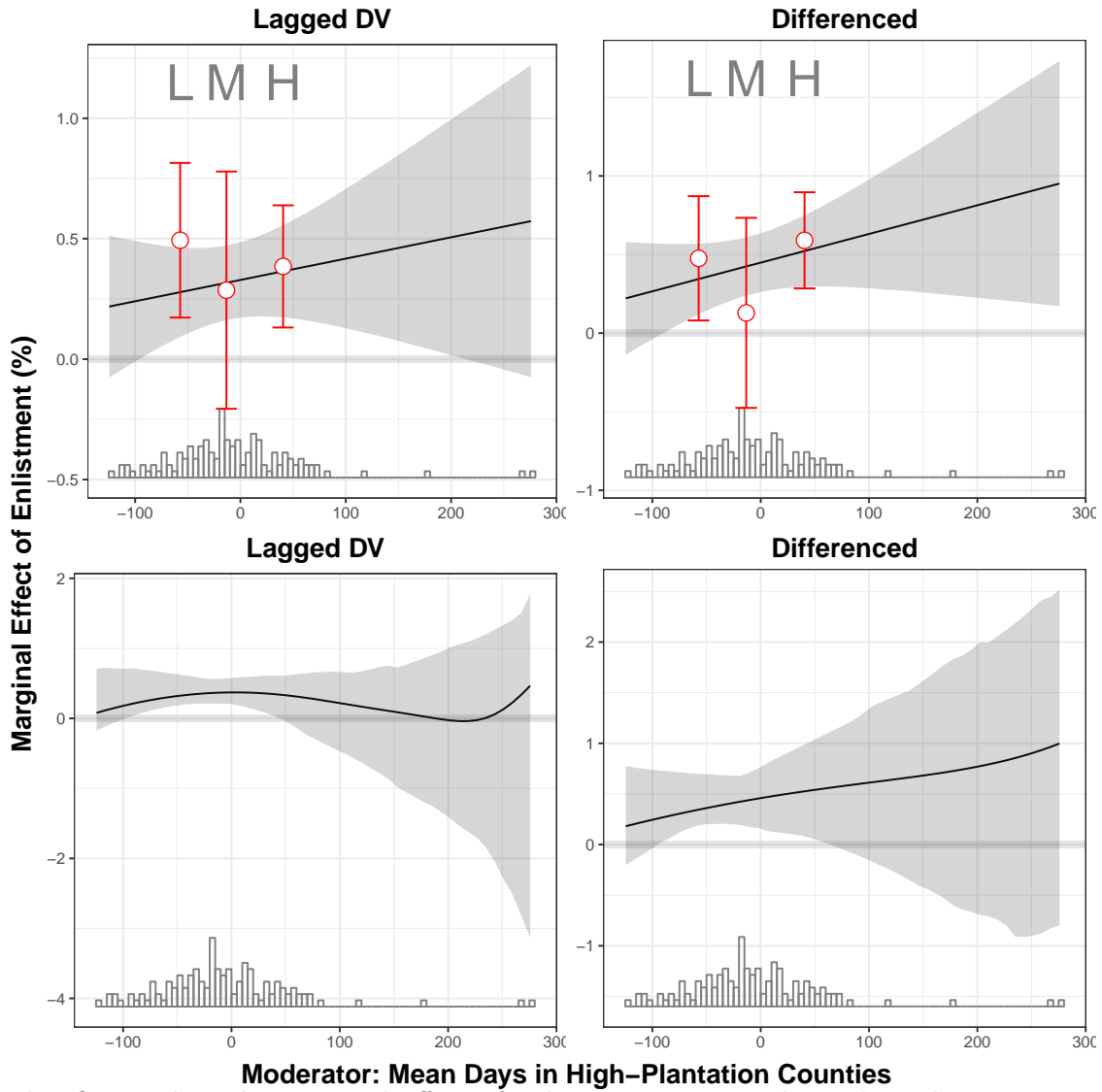
Figure A4: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Service in High-Slaveholding Counties
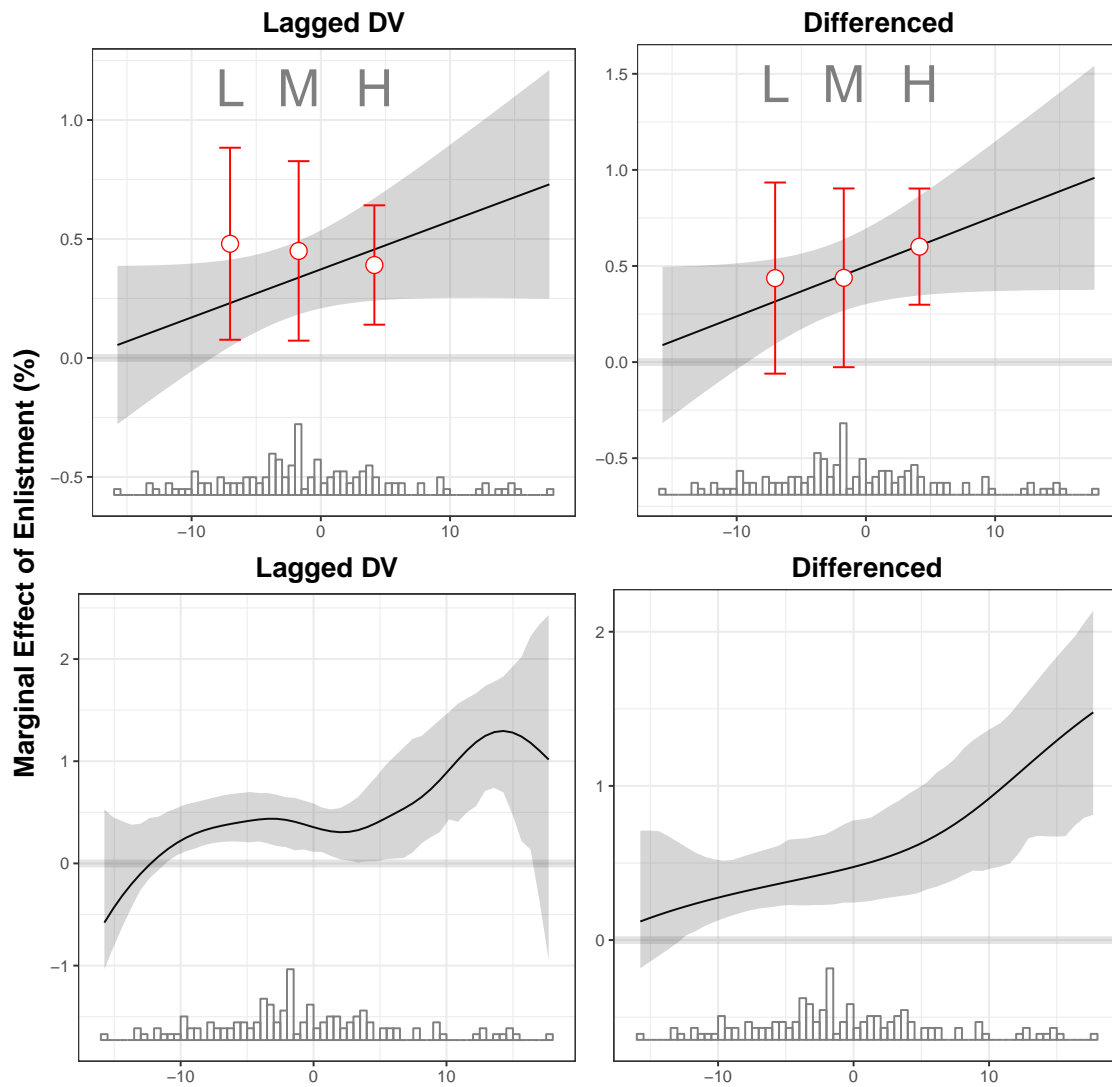

This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in counties with above-median enslaved populations for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.

Figure A5: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Service in High-Plantation Counties

This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in counties with above-median concentration of slave ownership for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.

Figure A6: Marginal Effect of Enlistment Rates on Votes for Black Suffrage Conditional on Combat Experience

This figure plots the marginal effect of enlistment rates conditional on days spent in combat for Black Suffrage in the Iowa and Wisconsin state constitutional referenda in 1857, 1865, and 1868.

B   Veteran Population

I start with the number of men who served in the Union Army. Army records suggest there were approximately 2.1 million men serving (this accounts for 2.6 million enlistments, subtracting approximately 500,000 reenlistments). I assume that all of surviving men were born or had become citizens by 1870. Of these, 180,000 were African Americans and another 55,000 were from Confederate states. Subtracting these gives a total of 1.865 million men. Deaths due to combat and disease in the Union Army were approximately 360,000.[1] Assuming that the fatality rate is the same for Northern white troops as for Southern whites and the USCT, this suggests that 17.1 percent of Northern white soldiers died.[2] This gives approximately 1.545 million veterans after the war. Census records in 1870 show that there were 6.465 million naturalized white men in Northern states over the age of 21. This gives an estimate that 23.9 percent of the eligible voting population in states outside the Confederacy were Union veterans. In reducing soldier numbers due to re-enlistment, accounting for USCT and Southern Union soldiers, and calculating the distribution of deaths, I chose numbers that would deflate the overall count of white veterans in the North.

C   Design

Generalized random forests   Developed by Athey, Tibshirani and Wager (2018), generalized random forests was developed to estimate heterogeneous effects across different values of covariates. If X_i is a set of covariates and W_i is a continuous or binary treatment, generalized random forests estimate $\theta(x)$, or the effect of W on Y for a set of values of X. This is done by generating weights that define the closeness of other observations to i within the space defined by X. These weights for the closeness of case j to case i are $\alpha_j(x_i)$. The sum of $\alpha_j(x_i)$ across all j is 1. Whereas many methods generate these weights using kernels which is subject to the curse of dimensionality, generalized random forests use random forests (repeated iterations of regression trees) to assign weights. In this case, θ is the locally weighted linear partial effect of W on Y.

$$\hat{\theta}(x_i) = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} \alpha_j(x_i)(W_j - (\sum \alpha_j(x_i)W_j))(Y_j - (\sum \alpha_j(x_i)Y_j))}{\sum_{j=1}^{n} \alpha_j(x_i)(W_j - (\sum \alpha_j(x_i)W_j))^2}$$

So, the average partial effect across all cases is

$$\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{Cov(W_i, Y_i | X = X_i)}{Var(W_i | X = X_i)}$$

Kernel regularized least squares   Developed by Hainmueller and Hazlett (2014), this method also focuses on estimating the local partial effect of W on Y conditional on X, using similarity weights to condition on X. In this case, rather than using regression trees, this method employs a Gaussian kernel to determine which cases are closest to a particular

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[1]Though, this is likely an underestimate. See Hacker (2011).

[2]If anything, death-rates are much higher for African American regiments.

value x. Like generalized random forests, these local partial effects can be averaged and the authors derive asymptotic standard errors for these average partial effects.

In these cases, there is no reason to use panel data. Instead, I estimate equation 5 on a county cross-section separately for each election between 1854 and 1920. Here, i is a county, s is a state, and e is a state-election.

$$RepublicanVoteshare_{ie} = \theta(x)EnlistmentRate_i + \epsilon_i \tag{5}$$