

Monumental Effects: Confederate Monuments in the Post-Reconstruction South

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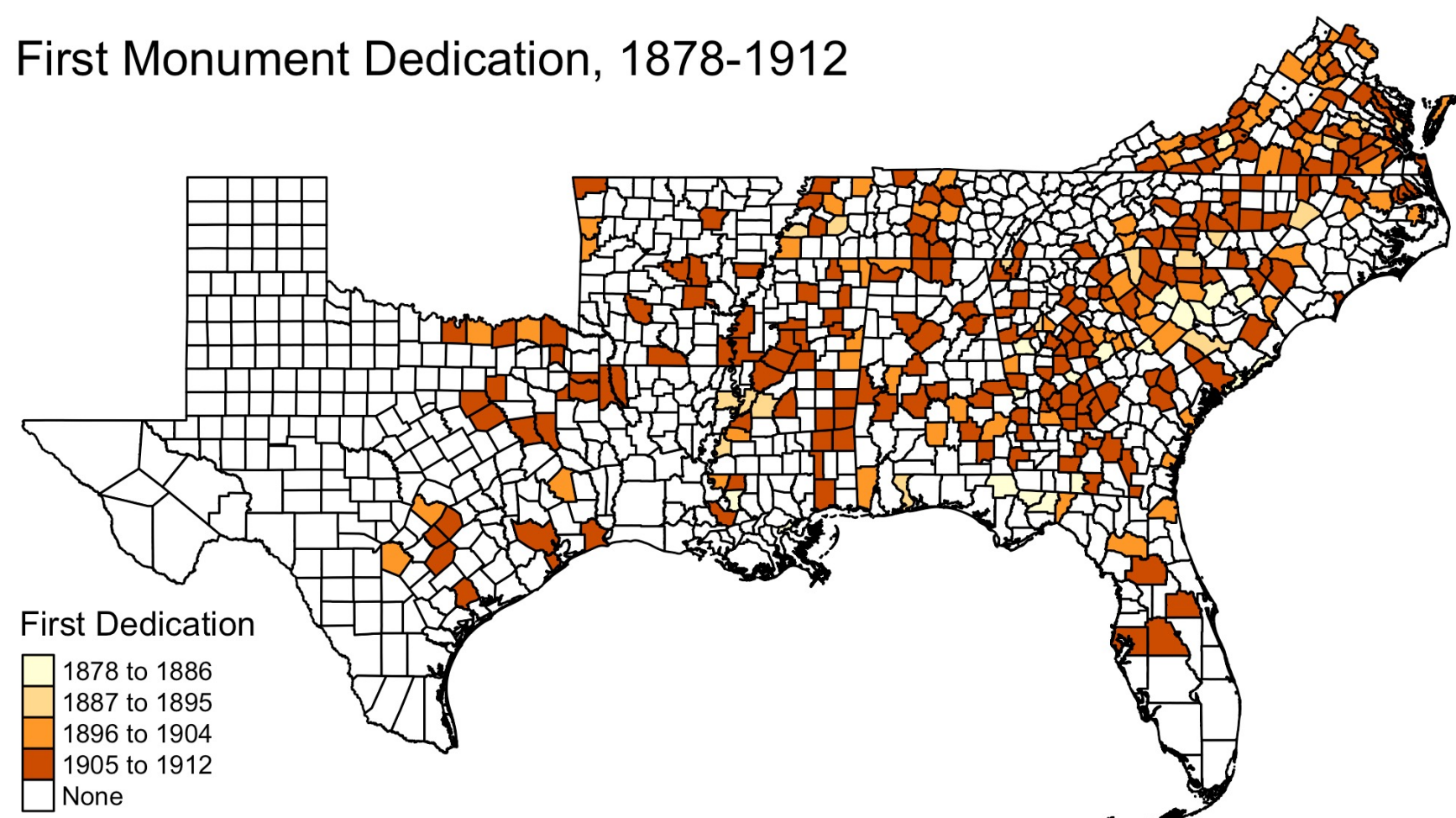
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Motivation

- Should Confederate symbols be removed?
- Supporters argue that monuments are potent symbols of racism
- Others rally around monuments, saying they are not inherently racist
- Monuments' historical effects crucial for understanding their place in society

First Monument Dedication, 1878-1912



Historical Background

- Reconstruction ends in 1877, ceding control of the south back to southerners
- Blacks disenfranchised, suppressed
 - Formally through restrictive voting laws
 - Informally through mob violence
- Whites culturally reassert themselves

The Lost Cause Myth

- Slaveholders were largely benevolent
- Civil War fought over states' rights
- The Confederate cause was noble, but doomed from the start
- The spirit of the Confederate cause must be kept alive at all costs

Data

- Election-Year Panel, 1878-1912
- Confederate monument data from the Southern Poverty Law Center's "Whose Heritage?" database
- Voting data from Clubb et al. (2006)
- Jim Crow law data from Jones et al. (2012)
- Demographic data from US Census
- United Daughters of the Confederacy chapter data from annual meeting minutes
- Newspaper data from Gentzkow et al. (2011)

Key Takeaways

- Monuments dedicated from 1878-1912 affected behavior at the county level
 - Democratic Vote Share:** ↑
 - Voter Turnout:** ↓
 - Black Population Share:** ↓
- Political effects driven by counties with > median black population share**

Conceptual Framework

- Monuments signal promotion and acceptance of the Lost Cause Myth
- Promotion of Lost Cause further deepens racial divisions
 - Whites embrace distorted Lost Cause history, begin to vote accordingly
 - Blacks reject Lost Cause, but have little political recourse Post-Reconstruction
- Democratic Party majorities strengthen, Blacks vote less and may out-migrate

Identification Strategy

- Generalized Difference-in-Differences Design with staggered treatment (Two-Way Fixed Effects Model)

$$y_{ct} = \beta \text{Post}_{ct} + \gamma X_{ct} + \theta_c + \tau_t + \varepsilon_{ct}$$

- Control for social and economic factors, factors of monument demand
- Test parallel trends with event studies

Results

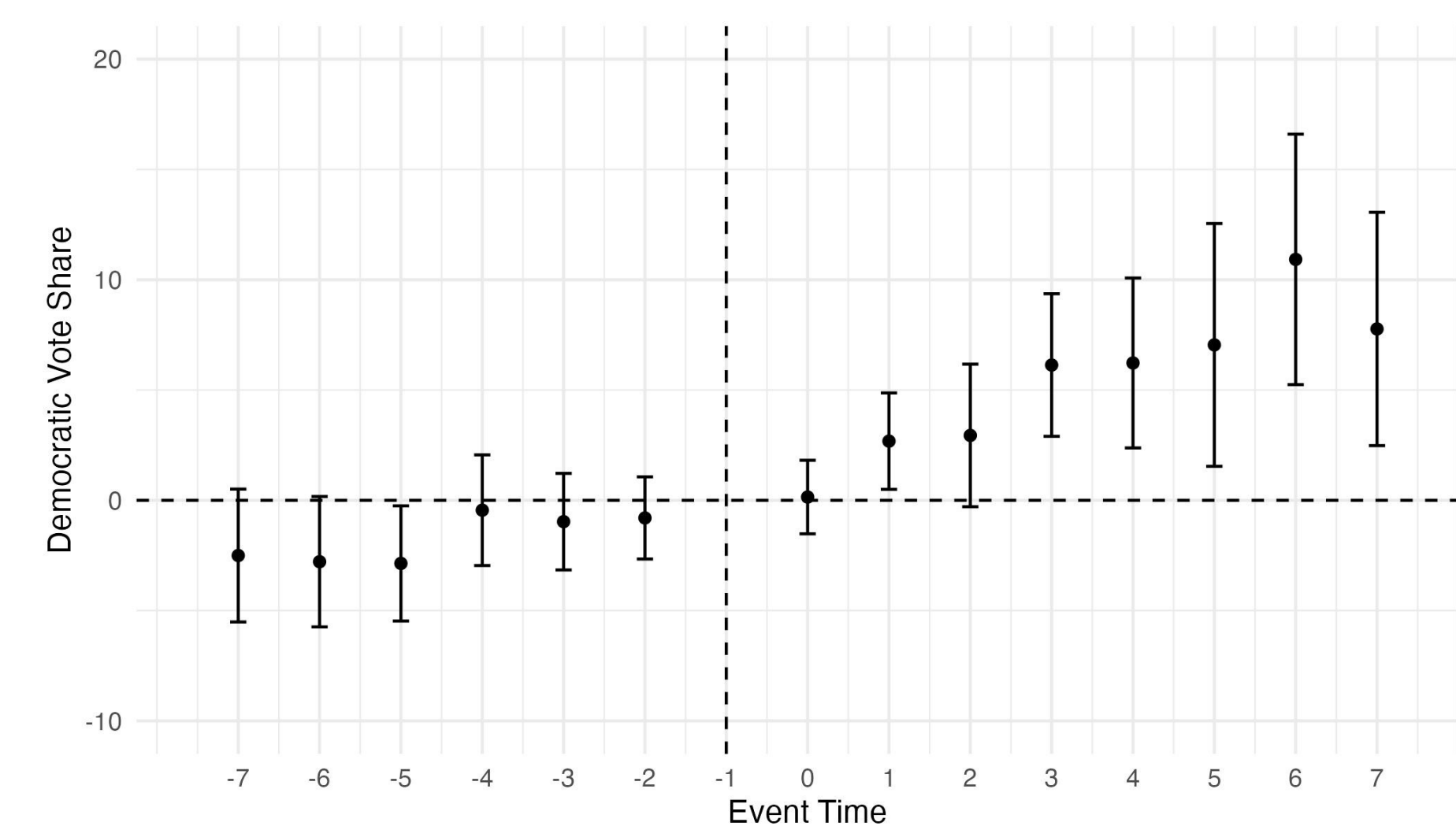
Dependent Variables:	Cong. (1)	% Dem (2)	Cong. (3)	Turnout (4)	% Black (5) (6)	
<i>Variables</i>						
Post	6.011*** (1.142)	3.858** (1.960)	-1.205 (1.122)	-3.359** (1.533)	-0.7960** (0.3138)	-0.8280* (0.4960)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Outcome Mean	70.64	70.64	47.19	47.19	32	32
<i>Fixed-effects</i>						
County Version	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newspaper-Year		Yes		Yes		Yes
Dem. Newspaper-Year		Yes		Yes		Yes
UDC-Year		Yes		Yes		Yes
Populist-Year		Yes		Yes		Yes
<i>Fit statistics</i>						
Observations	15,392	13,547	15,110	13,467	4,216	3,746
R ²	0.56472	0.74775	0.68363	0.83674	0.98684	0.99235
Within R ²	0.00451	0.03100	0.00019	0.11401	0.00245	0.13066

Clustered (County Version) standard-errors in parentheses
Signif. Codes: ***, 0.01, **, 0.05, *, 0.1

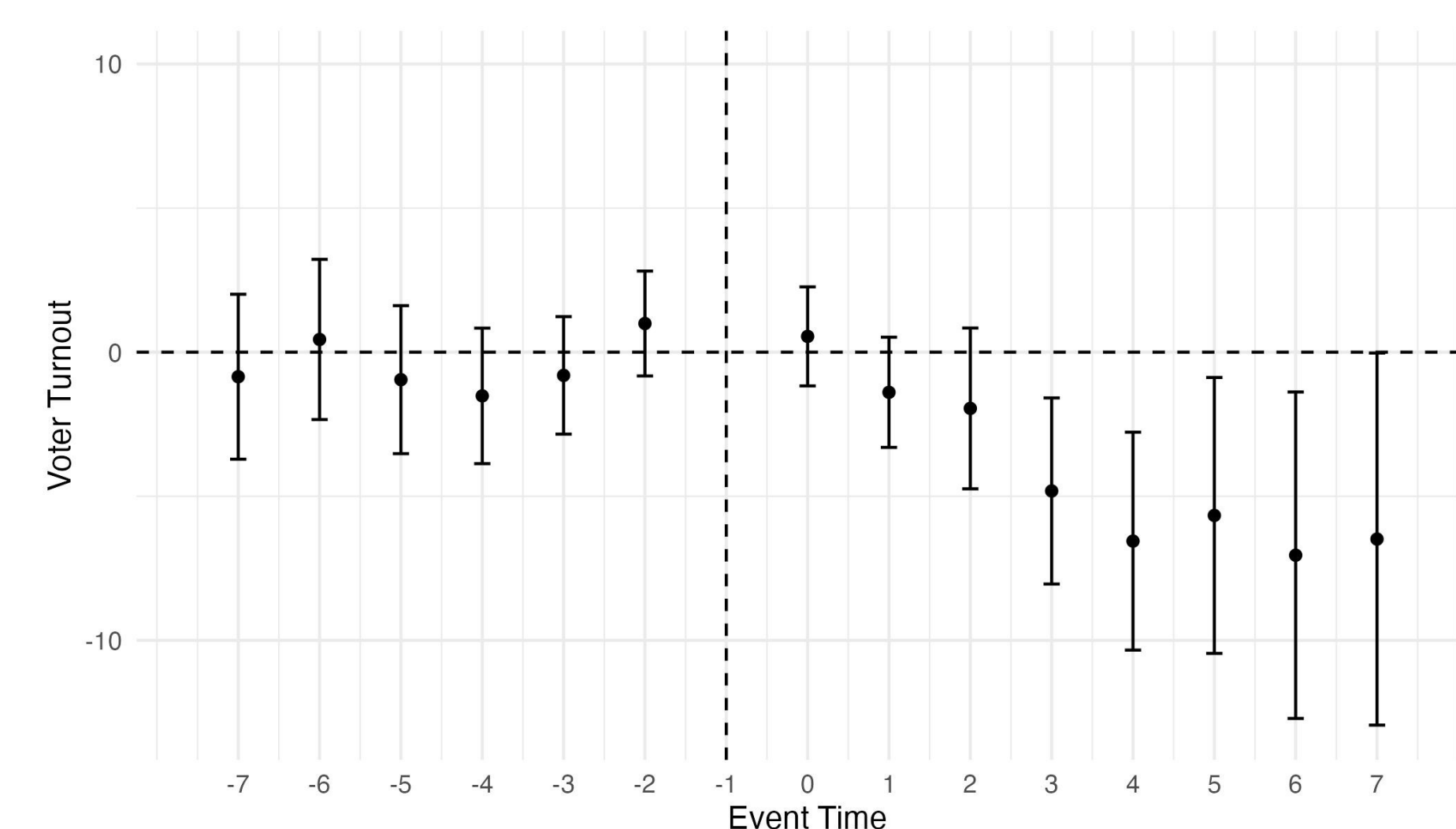
Full Paper Available Here:



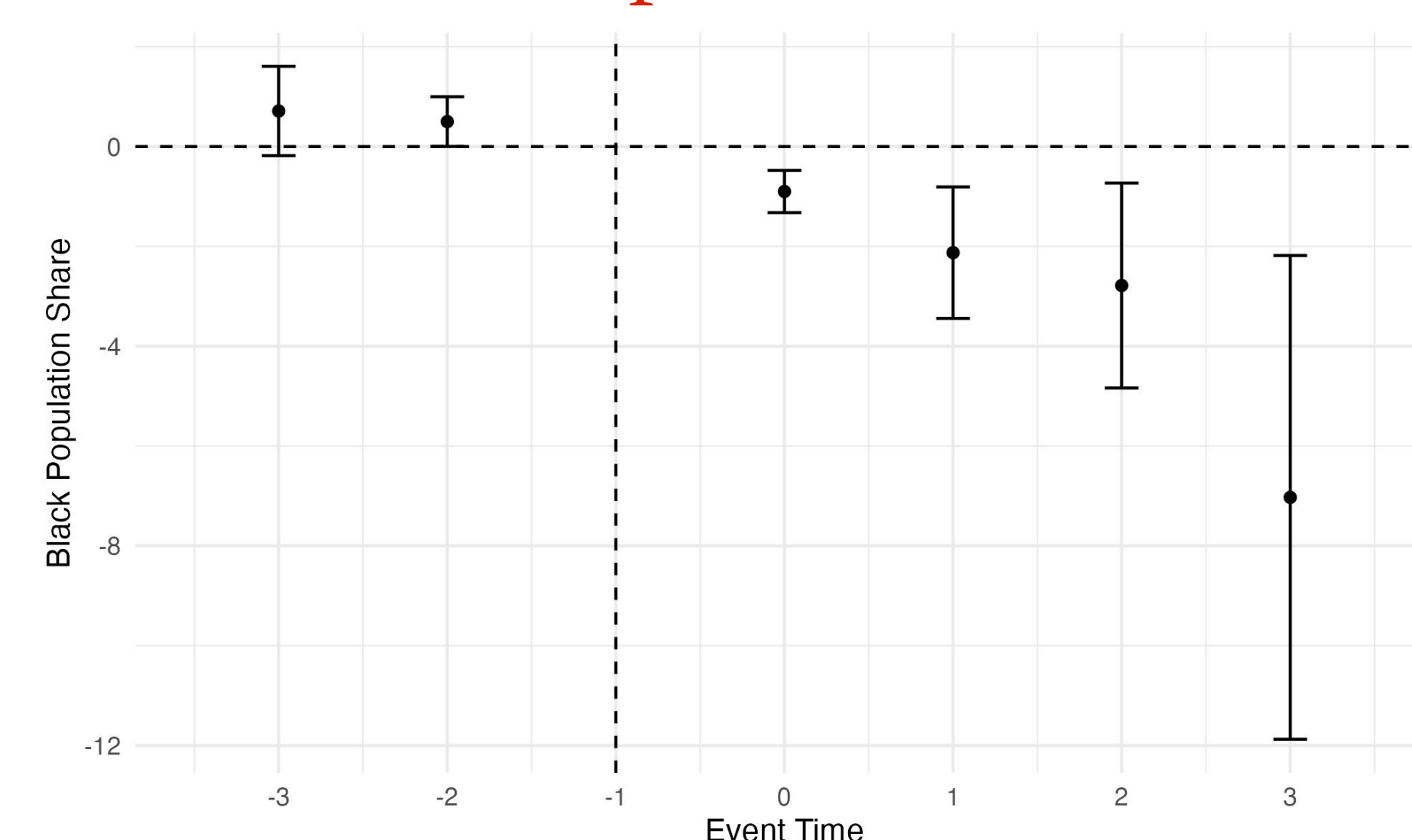
Democratic Vote Share



Voter Turnout



Black Population Share



Mechanism: Black Out-Migration?

- Subset by > or < median black pop. share
- Political effects occur in > median areas
- Out-migration occurs in < median areas

