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# Southern Racism and Reality: A Case Study

Dan Lasker, Class of 2010

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The notion pervasive in the popular media of the racist Southerner is a stereotype with serious implications. Despite recent evidence showing that slavery and even plantations were plentiful in the North into the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, people commonly ascribe a higher level of racist predisposition to individuals living in the South. This paper looks at the period between 1950 and 1970 to see if cities from the former Confederacy responded differently to the Civil Rights Movement as compared to cities from the former Union along two different segregation indices. The results show that while Southern cities had significantly higher levels of racial isolation, there was no significant difference in the way Southern segregation changed over the course of the Civil Rights Movement relative to the North.

## Introduction

Nearly 150 years after the end of the American Civil War, calls for secession<sup>1</sup> and celebration of the Confederacy<sup>2</sup> still find their way into our common culture. While racial integration has become the legal norm and tolerance socially expected, there is still a common acceptance by most that we are in no ways a “post-racial” society. We can all pull up images of modern day racist figures, and in popular culture, this caricature is often of a person from the South. While the Southern “good ol’ boy” clinging to the Confederate flag, which has been poked fun at by everything from the Dukes of Hazzard to Saturday Night Live, is a crude overgeneralization, it is a pervasive stereotype in our society. Uncovering whether or not this meme

has any roots in truth is an important undertaking if we are serious about moving past race.

This paper uses the Civil Rights Movement as a case study to see if the Southern cities responded differently than the North to the period of great social change in the 50s and 60s. Given the magnitude of the changes that the era brought about, it is easy to conceive of an area with more deep-rooted racial tension responding less dramatically than one in which more open minded people cling to the cause. Alternatively, it could be argued that the rise in legal measures to spread equality across races affected cities that had previously higher levels of racial tension more. Conveniently, the key events of the Civil Rights Movement (see Table 1) primarily fall directly in between 2 Census years, 1950 and 1970, so by comparing outcomes in 1970 with those in 1950 this paper should be able to get a picture of the short term impact of the Civil Rights Movement across

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<sup>1</sup> Linkins, Jason. “Glenn Beck: Secession or Suicide.” The Huffington Post. 16 April 2009. 2 May 2010. <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/04/16/glenn-beck-secession-or-s\\_n\\_187779.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/04/16/glenn-beck-secession-or-s_n_187779.html)>.

<sup>2</sup> Erdman, Shelby Lin. “Virginia governor declares April as Confederate History Month.” CNN Politics. 7 April 2010. 2 May 2010. <<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2010/04/07/virginia-governor-declares-april-as-confederate-history-month>>.

<b>Table 1: Civil Rights Movement Timeline</b>	
<b>1954</b>	* U.S. Supreme Court declares school segregation unconstitutional in Brown v. Board ruling.
<b>1955</b>	* Rosa Parks refuses to move to the back of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus as required by city ordinance; boycott follows and bus segregation ordinance is declared unconstitutional. * Federal Interstate Commerce Commission bans segregation on interstate trains and buses.
<b>1956</b>	* Coalition of Southern congressmen calls for massive resistance to Supreme Court desegregation rulings.
<b>1957</b>	* Arkansas Gov. Orval Rubus uses National Guard to block nine black students from attending a Little Rock High School; following a court order, President Eisenhower sends in federal troops to ensure compliance.
<b>1960</b>	* Four black college students begin sit-ins at lunch counter of a Greensboro, NC, restaurant where black patrons are not served. * Congress approves a watered-down voting rights act after a filibuster by Southern senators.
<b>1961</b>	* Freedom Rides begin from Washington, D.C., into Southern states.
<b>1962</b>	* President Kennedy sends federal troops to the University of Mississippi to quell riots so that James Meredith, the school's first black student, can attend. * The Supreme Court rules that segregation is unconstitutional in all transportation facilities. * The Department of Defense orders full integration of military reserve units, the National Guard excluded.
<b>1963</b>	* Civil rights leader Medgar Evers is killed by a sniper's bullet. * Race riots prompt modified martial law in Cambridge, Maryland. * Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers "I Have a Dream" speech to hundreds of thousands at the March on Washington.
<b>1964</b>	* Congress passes Civil Rights Act declaring discrimination based on race illegal after 75-day long filibuster. * Three civil rights workers disappear in Mississippi after being stopped for speeding; found buried six weeks later. * Riots in Harlem and Philadelphia.

1965	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to demand protection for voting rights; two civil rights workers slain earlier in the year in Selma.</li> <li>* Malcolm X assassinated.</li> <li>* Riot in Watts, Los Angeles.</li> <li>* New voting rights act signed.</li> </ul>
1966	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Edward Brooke, R-Massachusetts, elected first black U.S. senator in 85 years.</li> </ul>
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Riots in Detroit, Newark, New Jersey.</li> <li>* Thurgood Marshall first black to be named to the Supreme Court.</li> <li>* Carl Stokes (Cleveland) and Richard G. Hatcher (Gary, Indiana) elected first black mayors of major U.S. cities.</li> </ul>
1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee; James Earl Ray later convicted and sentenced to 99 years in prison.</li> <li>* Poor People's March on Washington -- planned by King before his death -- goes on.</li> </ul>

regions. After difference-in-difference estimation, there is no significant difference between the South's response to the Civil Rights Movement relative to the North in terms of segregation outcomes, which suggests that a regional difference in short-term response to the Civil Rights Movement is not justified by the data.

### Literature Review

While the segregation literature is extensive, papers dealing with historical case studies such as my own are harder to find. Nevertheless, a thorough literature review is useful to contextualize my method and results, even if my objective is less studied in the rest of the literature.

Logan, Stults, and Farley (2004) primarily focus on segregation between 1980 and 2000, providing an extensive amount of background on the roots of

segregation and how segregation is changing as the makeup of our country changes. More relevant for my time period is their unsupported assertion that social changes do not affect segregation patterns. By looking at a time period of some of the greatest social change in history, I can see if their assertion is correct.

Rhode and Strumpf (2003) show that models based on the assumption that residential choice depends solely on local public goods (Tiebout models) are not consistent with long-run segregation trends. This is important for my topic because it demonstrates that local public finance figures are not sufficient explainers of segregation outcomes as people who think that a lack of Tiebout sorting is to blame for segregation might claim. Therefore, if the South shows signs of having a different segregation differential between 1950 and 1970 it

cannot easily be swept away by an argument that a Tiebout model is actually the simplest way of describing what is going on.

Bayer (2002) makes an interesting case for why race itself may not be the sole driver of segregation, but rather that properly measured income, education, and immigration status data can explain away a lot of the perceived racially driven segregation. While Bayer's point has more to do with the limitations of large data pools (which unfortunately I am stuck with since I'm working with data from 60 years ago), he raises some interesting points about the complexity of how segregation emerges that could lend credence to my zero result. His controls primarily rely on fine-tuned Microdata that have only become available recently, but his intuition is important in contextualizing my results.

Card, Mas, and Rothstein (2007) builds off of Schelling (1971) in making the case that extreme segregation that marks many major US metropolitan areas is not the result of discriminatory institutions and practices, like real estate steering, but actually individual choices based in homophily, preference for like individuals. They show that once the black population eclipses a tipping point around the 13% mark, whites move out in great force, which will lead to increased segregation. Their intuition that segregation is the result of some tacit force beyond the control of institutions seems to suggest that my interaction coefficient should in fact be insignificantly different from zero. In the context of this and Bayer (2002) my null

results are more believable and explainable.

Tolnay and Beck (2002) puts the move of blacks from South to North during the twentieth century into context and works to portray the blacks who moved northward in a more accurate manner. While a large percentage of the black migrants were former sharecroppers pushed out by the demise of the plantation system, Tolnay makes the point that these migrants were also most likely to be the go-getters who tended to be relatively more skilled than their peers they were leaving behind. This notion lends credence to the difference-in-difference estimation method I later employ, as I am able to pull out regional effects from the data, all else equal, to get a broad picture of the differences in segregation between the North and South.

Collins and Margo (2004) uses a similar historical approach to the one I want to employ to see how the race riots of the 50s and 60s influenced property value outcomes. They use an interesting model in which their primary independent variable is a "riot index" that they regress on property values to find, in their eyes, that race riots drove down property values for blacks. While again, their results are largely predicated on a highly specialized data set and a complex riot index, they show the viability of a case study approach and the magnitude of the effect of the social upheaval during the 50s and 60s.

Massey and Denton (1993) uses a series of studies with data mainly from 1970-1980 to conclude that blacks faced a

near-apartheid situation of persistent high segregation, which was barely responsive to improvements in their socioeconomic standing. Unlike Hispanic and Asian minorities, who experienced substantially lower levels of residential separation than did blacks, blacks remained highly segregated even in metropolitan areas where they had relatively high income and education. Reductions in black-white segregation were found mainly in areas with small black populations, suggesting that population and black population (which is implicit to my indices) are both going to play a key role in segregation outcomes (Massey and Gross 1991).

Schuman et al. (1998) pulled data from the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research to portray the changing of racial attitudes around my time of interest. When national samples of whites were first asked by the Center in 1963 whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that "White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and blacks should respect that right," 60% agreed. When the question was asked in 1980 and 1996, the percentages of whites who agreed with that principle of segregation dropped to 34% and 13%, respectively. But segregation still persists, and this paper examines whether it persisted throughout the time period of social unrest differently in different parts of the country.

Farley et al. (1997) countered that paper's assertion that segregation is improving dramatically by looking at the situation from the other side. He makes the case that while whites may be more

and more against segregation, blacks' demand for housing in all-white or overwhelmingly white neighborhoods is weak, which helps to maintain residential segregation. According to the analysis he and his fellow coauthors undertook, in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles, 65% of blacks would not move into an attractive, affordable home in an all-white neighborhood. The paper goes on to say that blacks typically explain their decision not in terms of racial solidarity, but rather of the cool reception and hostility they expect from white would-be neighbors.

Similarly, Ellen (2000) found that blacks who moved avoided census tracts in which less than 1 resident in 10 was black in favor of similar census tracts with greater representations of blacks. The absence of blacks from a neighborhood or a low representation of blacks is, apparently, an important signal to blacks not to seek new homes in that neighborhood. This factor could slow progress in regions with historically high levels of segregation.

In the most seminal work dealing with historical segregation, Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor (1999) build upon the finding in Cutler and Glaeser (1997) that segregation is bad for nearly every outcome variable for blacks and provide a thorough examination of segregation in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Even though historical contextualization was only a part of their lengthy paper that dealt more extensively with the ghetto, their data is the most cohesive set of historical segregation data available. The paper motivated my resolve to begin with 1950, instead of trying to do any additional

contextualization, as pre-World War II data for the South showed signs of being skewed by ward-based segregation practices. That is, government officials would draw ward lines to segregate their respective communities to garner favor among constituents. They also convincingly showed that dissimilarity and isolation indices are the most consistent measures of segregation and the easiest to come by, so they are the dependent variables in my model.

As I mentioned, this paper primarily looks at the difference between the two time periods that envelope the Civil Rights movement, which is most commonly appropriated the dates of 1954-1971. From a historical point of view this is an interesting period to study because any regional differences might be explained by one region's higher level of acceptance of the civil rights message or the changing times in general. Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor (1999) did some similar peering into regional effects over time as controls for their larger regressions, but they did not clearly define their regions and brought in no interaction term to capture the difference in outcomes between the regions. They did however show that there clearly were regional effects in 1970 and 1990.

### Data Description:

The data set used is a modified version of the data used by Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor (1999). Their overall data was drawn from 1890 to 1990 Census data. To be included in their sample, a city or MSA had to have ward or tract-level data available in a given year. In

1890, only cities with over 25,000 inhabitants had ward reports, so cities with less than 25,000 inhabitants were omitted. From 1900 onward, the population cutoff was 50,000. All cities sampled had both dissimilarity and isolation indices available. Tract reporting began with a select group of large cities in 1940 and 1950, with Census tracts being defined as geographic units containing 3000 to 5000 individuals. Because segregation measures are most meaningful when the black population is sizable, only cities or MSAs with at least 1,000 blacks were sampled. The number of cities in the sample increased greatly between 1950 and 1960 because tracts became ubiquitous and population growth brought a lot of MSAs over the selection threshold. While this disparity in data is not ideal for a case study like mine, I am confident that my difference-in-difference approach should resolve most of the selection issues.

Segregation is measured by both a dissimilarity index and an isolation index as is done in Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor (1999). The Dissimilarity Index was proposed by Duncan and Duncan (1955) and refined in Tauber and Tauber (1965) and represents whether or not blacks disproportionately reside in certain areas of a city relative to whites:

$$\text{index of dissimilarity} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^N \left| \frac{\text{black}_i}{\text{black}_{\text{total}}} - \frac{\text{nonblack}_i}{\text{nonblack}_{\text{total}}} \right|, \quad (1)$$

where  $\text{black}_i$  represents the number of blacks in area  $i$ ,  $\text{black}_{\text{total}}$  the total number of blacks in a city,  $\text{nonblack}_i$  the number of non-blacks in area  $i$ , and  $\text{nonblack}_{\text{total}}$  the total number of non-blacks in a city. The index ranges from 0 to 1, and can thought of as the percent of

the black population that would need to move to bring about an even distribution of blacks and non-blacks. That is, a dissimilarity index of 0.74 (the mean in Table 2) means that 74 percent of blacks would need to relocate to bring about an even distribution. This is a

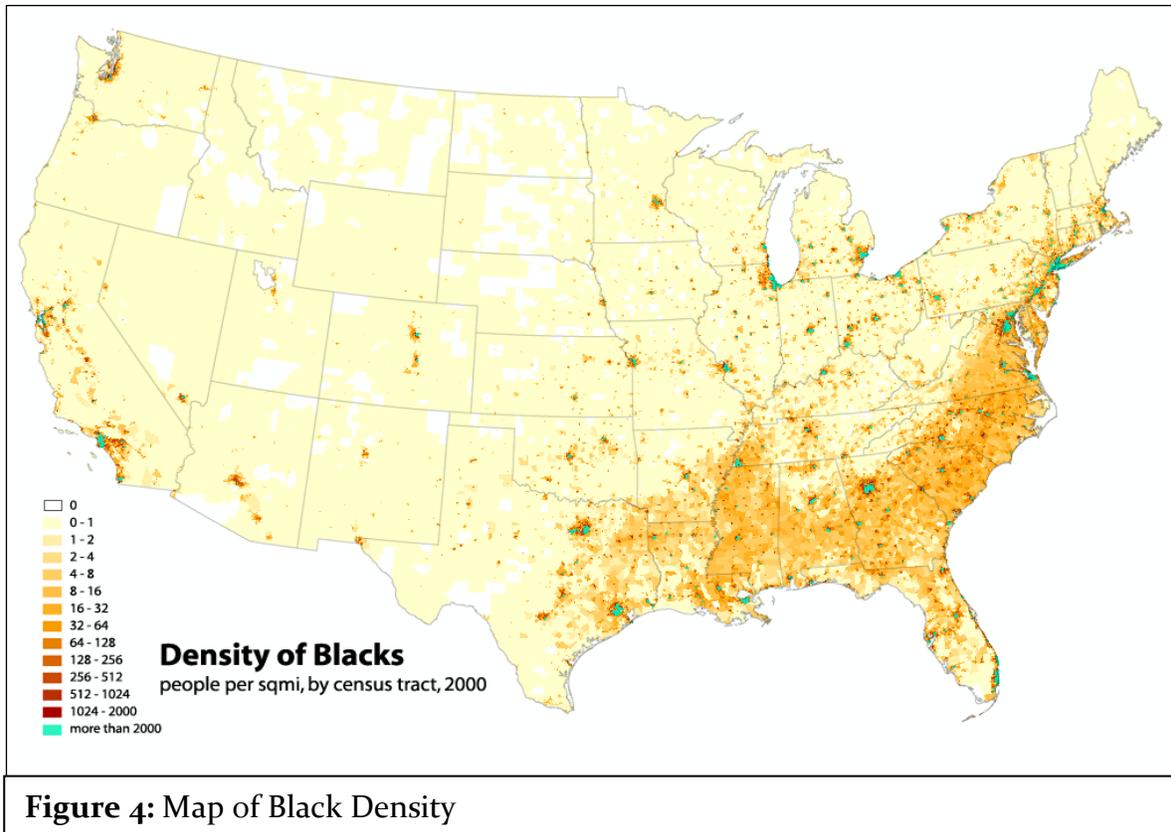
considerably high index (Massey and Denton 1993) and may point to some upward selection bias in the data sampling that I will discuss further later in the paper.

While the Dissimilarity Index can give an idea of the geographic densities of different populations, it cannot measure the level of contact that blacks and non-blacks have with one another. To get at the root of racial tension, it seems that such an Isolation Index would be more helpful since the Dissimilarity Index is more likely to be heavily influenced by people's homophilic preference

for a neighborhood with like peers, which may occur outside of race (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). Just because blacks and non-blacks do not live close to one another, it does not mean that they do not interact with one another (Blau 1977), so coming up with a way to quantify interaction is important. Using the model from Bell (1954) as Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor (1999) do, an isolation index can be constructed as:

$$\text{index of isolation} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N \left( \frac{\text{black}_i}{\text{black}_{\text{total}}} \cdot \frac{\text{black}_i}{\text{persons}_i} \right) - \left( \frac{\text{black}_{\text{total}}}{\text{persons}_{\text{total}}} \right)}{\min \left( \frac{\text{black}_{\text{total}}}{\text{persons}_i}, 1 \right) - \left( \frac{\text{black}_{\text{total}}}{\text{persons}_{\text{total}}} \right)} \quad (2)$$

<b>Table 2: Summary Statistics (388 observations)</b>		
Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.
Dissimilarity Index	0.740	0.103
Isolation Index	0.428	0.215
Former Confederate	0.291	0.455
Former Union	0.483	0.500
Former Border	0.047	0.211
Former Western Territories	0.174	0.380
Log Tract Size	2.413	0.856
Log Population	12.752	1.005
Note: Log Tract Size = ln (Size of City / Number of Tracts)		
Log Population is in 1,000,000s.		



where, again,  $black_i$  represents the number of blacks in area  $i$ ,  $black_{total}$  the total number of blacks in a city,  $nonblack_i$  the number of non-blacks in area  $i$ ,  $nonblack_{total}$  the total number of non-blacks in a city,  $persons_i$  the total number of people in a tract, and  $persons_{total}$  the total number of people in a city. The intuition behind the model is that a small number of blacks are going to be less isolated, on average, than a larger black population simply because there are fewer blacks to be isolated with. By starting with the percentage black of the area occupied by the average black and then subtracting the percentage black of the city as a whole, the index can eliminate the effect coming from the overall size of the black population in the city. The indexing denominator makes it so that the adjusted index ranges from zero to one. Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor

(1999) say that a city has a ghetto if the Dissimilarity Index is greater than 0.6 and the Isolation Index is greater than 0.3. Looking at the means in Table 2, this means that the average city in my sample has a ghetto. Other summary statistics show the disparity between the number of Former Union cities (48.3%) and Southern cities (29.1%).

With the Cutler, Glaeser, and Vigdor data at my disposal, I went through all of the cities and determined whether each was formerly in the Union, in the Confederacy, or a Border state based on the geographic boundaries on the map in Figure 3. If none of the above (i.e. the city was in a state colored white in Figure 3) I dropped the data for the purposes of this study due to my focus on the difference between cities in Former Union and Confederate states.

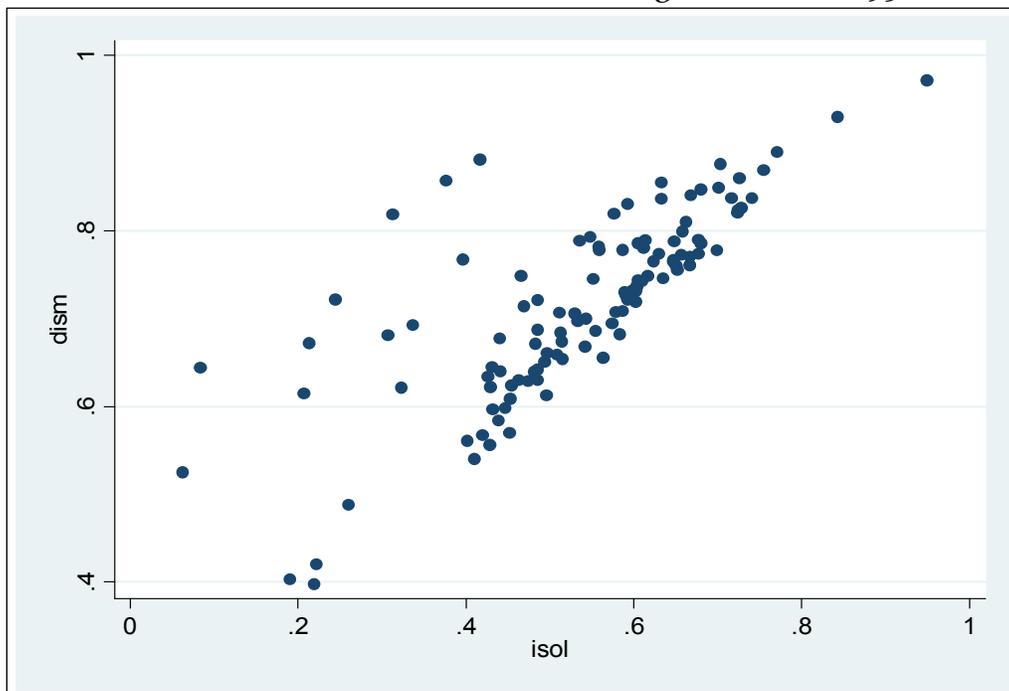


Table 5: Dissimilarity Index Trends			
	Former Union	Former Confederate	Former Border
Dism 1950	0.729 (0.128)	0.746 (0.090)	0.757 (0.095)
Dism 1960	0.753 (0.092)	0.717 (0.105)	0.759 (0.074)
Dism 1970	0.767 (0.096)	0.711 (0.109)	0.756 (0.092)
Note: Standard deviation listed in parentheses			

Table 6: Isolation Index Trends			
	Former Union	Former Confederate	Former Border
Isol 1950	0.406 (0.215)	0.600 (0.123)	0.583 (0.100)
Isol 1960	0.365 (0.205)	0.526 (0.156)	0.483 (0.240)
Isol 1970	0.411 (0.206)	0.526 (0.154)	0.439 (0.288)
Note: Standard deviation listed in parentheses			

Table 6 shows the movement in the isolation index for all 3 geographic areas. Former Border States here show a dramatic decrease of 0.144 in terms of isolation index from 1950 to 1970. Former Union states again show an *increase* in

segregation, as the isolation index increases by 0.005. The Isolation Index for Former Confederate states falls by 0.074. It is interesting to note that in 1950 Former Confederate states had an Isolation Index nearly 0.20 greater than Former Union states. So while the two converged between 1950 and 1970, the



**Figure 7:** Isolation and Dissimilarity Indexes – Former Confederate states

high levels of isolation in the South could not be overcome. It is important, however, to keep in mind that the isolation index more or less measures the percentage of a population that is black. With this in mind, the high initial level of isolation in the South could simply reflect more blacks living in the south at that time and the trend over time could merely reflect migration patterns.

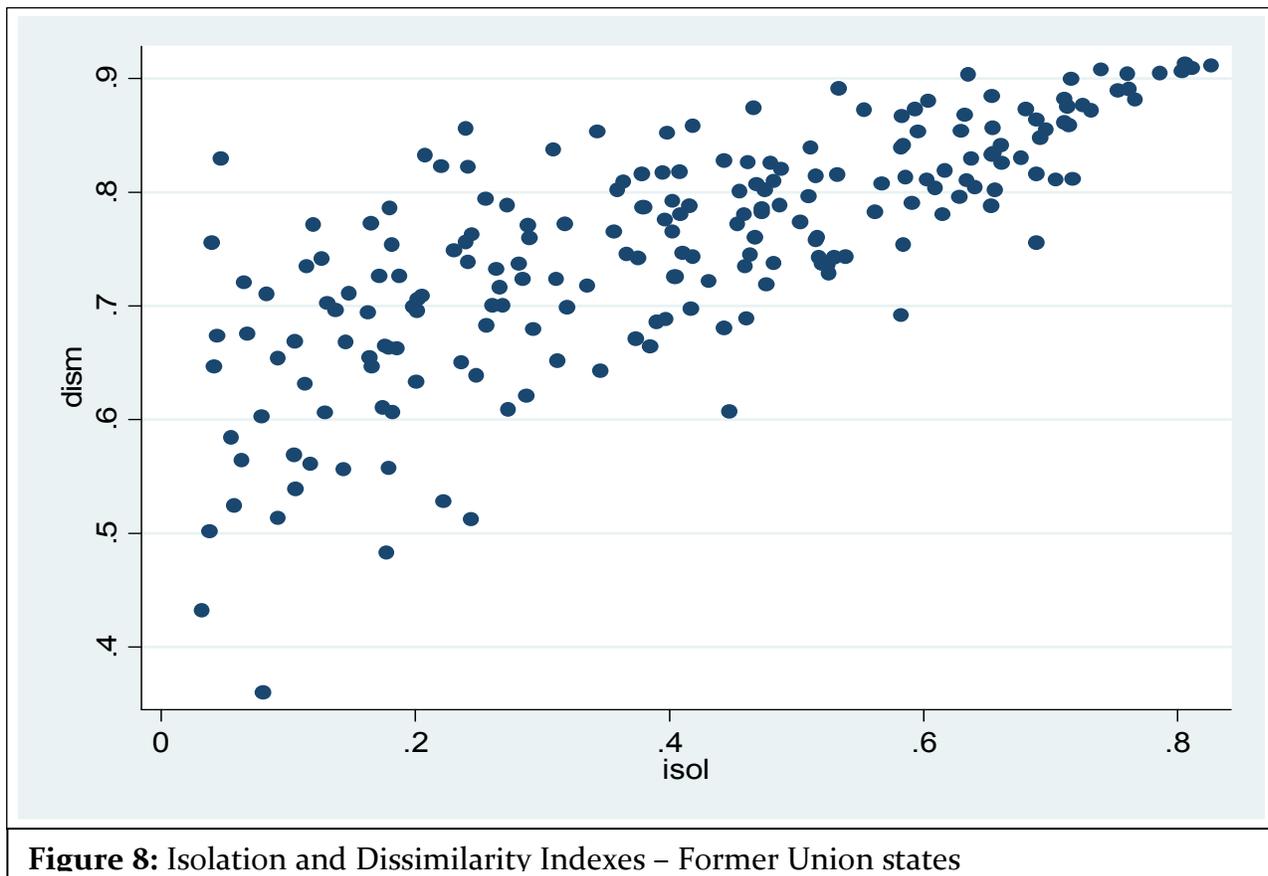
Figures 7 and 8 are included to map the difference between Former Confederate states and Former Union states. Former Confederate states tend to have a higher Isolation Index relative to their Dissimilarity Index while Former Union states tend to have a higher Dissimilarity Index relative to their Isolation Index.

### Econometric Approach and Results:

Since implicit racial tension is hard to quantify, I use a model where two different measures of segregation serve as my dependent variables to try to capture racial division through segregation outcomes, which have been empirically shown to have negative consequences for blacks (Cutler and Glaeser 1997).

The basic model I employ is a difference-in-difference model where:

$$\text{Dissimilarity}_{c,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{FormerConfederate}_c + \beta_2 * \text{PostCivilRights}_t + \beta_3 * (\text{FormerConfederate}_c * \text{PostCivilRights}_t) + \epsilon_{it}$$



Or

$$\text{Isolation}_{c,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{FormerConfederate}_c + \beta_2 * \text{PostCivilRights}_t + \beta_3 * (\text{FormerConfederate} * \text{PostCivilRights})_{c,t} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

With either segregation index as the dependent variables, the parameter estimate  $\beta_1$  can be interpreted as the ceteris paribus effect that being in the South has on segregation.  $\beta_2$  can be seen as the ceteris paribus effect of moving from 1950 to 1970 on segregation.  $\beta_3$  is the difference-in-difference estimator, the coefficient of interest. It says whether or not the period from 1950-1970 (which was dominated by the Civil Rights Movement as Table 1 shows) affected segregation differently for the South than for other areas.

Table 9 shows the regression of the Former Confederate dummy, the Post Civil Rights dummy, and the interaction of the Former Confederate

dummy and the Post Civil Rights dummy on the Dissimilarity Index. As you can see, none of the coefficients are significant, except for the constant, which is statistically significant at the 1% level. Of note is the fact that there is no sign of the South responding less to the changes from 1950 to 1970 in comparison to the North, as the coefficient corresponds to 3.2% less black people having to move in the South to create an equal distribution relative to the North. Since this coefficient is not statistically significant, it goes against my initial supposition of cities in the former Confederacy responding less favorably to the Civil Rights Movement than Former Union cities. It implies that there is no statistically significant difference between segregation responses across the regions and, if anything, the South improved slightly more than the North did in terms of segregation across this time period.

	Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Conf. Interval
FormerConfederate	-0.022	0.016	[-0.053, 0.009]
PostCivilRights	0.020	0.015	[-0.009, 0.049]
FormerConfederate*PostCivilRights	-0.032	0.024	[-0.080, 0.016]
Constant	0.745***	0.009	[0.727, 0.763]

Table 10 shows the regression of the Former Confederate dummy, the Post Civil Rights dummy, and the interaction of the Former Confederate dummy and the Post Civil Rights dummy on the Isolation Index. This time, the Former Confederate dummy was statistically significant at the 1% significant level. The coefficient means that a city in a former Confederate state has on average, a 14.8%-point higher

level of isolation, *ceteris paribus*. While this does not say anything about a difference in segregation outcomes across the Civil Rights Movement (as again, the interaction term coefficient is insignificant), it does point to a possible reason for the stereotypical perception of the racist Southerner: there does seem to be historically more racial isolation in the South (in part because of the larger black population).

	Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Conf. Interval
FormerConfederate	0.148***	0.030	[0.090, 0.206]
PostCivilRights	0.019	0.028	[-0.035, 0.074]
FormerConfederate*PostCivilRights	-0.037	0.046	[-0.127, 0.054]
Constant	0.395***	0.017	[0.361, 0.430]

With no significant difference-in-difference estimates emerging from my initial specification, I added 2 controls to see if my zero result would still hold: Log of Population and Log of Tract Size, with population in millions and tract size equal to the area of the city in square miles divided by number of tracts in year *t*.

Table 11 shows the regression of the Former Confederate dummy, the Post Civil Rights dummy, the interaction of the Former Confederate dummy and the Post Civil Rights dummy, Log Tract

size, and Log Population on the Dissimilarity Index. The Former Confederate dummy was statistically significant at the 5% level with a coefficient that corresponds with the South having a 3.1%-point lower level of dissimilarity on average relative to the North, *ceteris paribus*. Log Tract Size was positive and statistically significant, not surprising considering that smaller tracts seem intuitively more likely to have higher levels of dissimilarity since small neighborhood clusters, which generally are filled with similar residents, carry more weight. Log Population and the

constant term were also significant, while the difference-in-difference

estimate become even less significant with the addition of the controls.

<b>Table 11: Difference-in-difference Estimation for Dissimilarity with Controls</b>			
	Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Conf. Interval
FormerConfederate	-0.031**	0.015	[-0.060, -0.002]
PostCivilRights	0.004	0.013	[-0.021, 0.031]
FormerConfederate*PostCivilRights	-0.017	0.022	[-0.059, 0.026]
Log Tract Size	0.031***	0.008	[0.016, 0.046]
Log Population	0.055***	0.006	[0.043, 0.068]
Constant	-0.031***	0.095	[-0.220, 0.156]

Table 12 shows the regression of the Former Confederate dummy, the Post Civil Rights dummy, the interaction of the Former Confederate dummy and the Post Civil Rights dummy, Log Tract Size, and Log Population on the Isolation Index. As in Table 12, the coefficient on the Former Confederate dummy is significant at the 1% level, suggesting that, on average, a city in a former Confederate state has a 17.4%-point higher level of isolation than a state in

the North, *ceteris paribus*. The coefficients on Log Tract Size and Log Population are significant and positive once again. Most interestingly, the difference-in-difference estimator is once again statistically insignificant, as it has been for all of the regressions. This suggests that cities from Former Confederate states did not, on average, have different segregation outcomes between 1950 and 1970 relative to cities in Former Union states.

<b>Table 12: Difference-in-difference Estimation for Isolation with Controls</b>			
	Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Conf. Interval
FormerConfederate	0.174***	0.028	[0.119, 0.229]
PostCivilRights	-0.009	0.025	[-0.057, 0.040]
FormerConfederate*PostCivilRights	-0.035	0.041	[-0.116, 0.045]
Log Tract Size	0.035	0.015	[0.006, 0.064]
Log Population	0.126***	0.012	[0.102, 0.150]
Constant	-1.299***	0.180	[-1.654, -0.945]

## Discussion

The goal of this paper was to see if former Confederate cities responded differently to the Civil Rights movement than Northern cities in terms of segregation outcomes. While I will discuss several reasons why my difference-in-difference estimation method is not flawless in trying to make a causal statement about segregation across the Civil Rights Movement, it is important to consider the possibility that, in the context of my result continually being insignificant from zero, the South responded as well or even more favorably to the Civil Rights message than the North did. It certainly had some ground to make up with regards to racial isolation, so the consistently insignificant and slightly negative coefficients may be close to the truth. What they mean, however, must be put into context.

The primary problem in making a causal statement about the impact of the Civil Rights Movement across geographic lines is the fact that “racism” is not something that can be measured. Segregation seems to be a reasonable enough proxy for racial tension, and has been shown to be bad for black outcomes (Cutler and Glaeser 1999), but it is also influenced by countless other factors (Bayer 2002) so it is far from perfect. One such other factor is the fact that segregation change is predicated on people changing homes, so while people may be eager to sort in a Tiebout model after hearing the message of Civil Rights, real people do not just up and relocate. Moving is usually driven by some external factor, and once someone has decided to move, then and only then, can that person even begin to think about neighborhood choice. I did not extend my time period, however, because opening up the time series to other decades would open it up to countless other drivers of segregation outcomes. It is fortunate that the Civil Rights

Movement fit nicely in between two Census years, but even so, it would be foolish to think that the Civil Rights Movement would be the sole driver of outcomes even while it was in progress, as things do not happen in a vacuum.

Another issue to consider in that same vein is the limited nature of difference-in-difference estimation. Bertrand, Duflo, and Mullainathan (2004) say that most difference-in-difference papers should not be trusted because they rely on many years of data and focus on serially correlated outcomes. They claim that almost all these papers ignore the bias in the estimated standard errors that serial correlation introduces, which is especially troubling because the independent variable of interest in difference-in-difference estimation (usually some historical event) is itself very serially correlated, which will only exacerbate the bias in standard errors. To illustrate the severity of the issue, they randomly generated placebo laws (to serve as historical pivot points) and used OLS to compute the difference-in-difference estimate of its "effect" as well as the standard error for this estimate. They found the standard errors to be severely biased: with about 20 years of data, difference-in-difference estimation finds an "effect" significant at the 5% level for up to 45% of the laws which, by the nature of the experiment, in reality had no effect. If anything, this bolsters my insignificant finding as the model seems designed to want to find significance in the difference-in-difference estimator. In that context, finding a consistently insignificant result seems to conclusively show that there

was no statistically significant difference in segregation outcomes across the Civil Rights Movement between cities in Former Confederate states and Former Union states.

## Conclusion

While finding statistical significance is often the goal going into an academic paper, the lack thereof in this paper is perhaps just as interesting. Popular culture and Bertrand, Duflo, and Mullainathan (2004) would seem to suggest a significant difference-in-difference estimator emerging, but the data does not agree. There is no clear difference between the change in segregation outcomes between cities in the former Confederacy versus cities in the former Union during a period of great social change and I think that this result is important enough to be considered when we as a culture collectively develop stereotypes based on where someone is from.

One takeaway point from this study that I think could be useful for future work is the high level of significance on the Former Confederate variable in the Isolation index regression. It seems that while historical dissimilarity trends are relatively close between the North and South, the South systematically has a higher Isolation Index so it could have potential as an instrumental variable in a future 2SLS model where percentage of a city that is black is not, on its own, suitable as an instrument. Otherwise, I hope this paper can provide some clarity on the murky issue of how this country is still divided along Civil War lines, if it still even is.

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