

Online Appendix

Media, Secret Ballot, and Democratization in the US

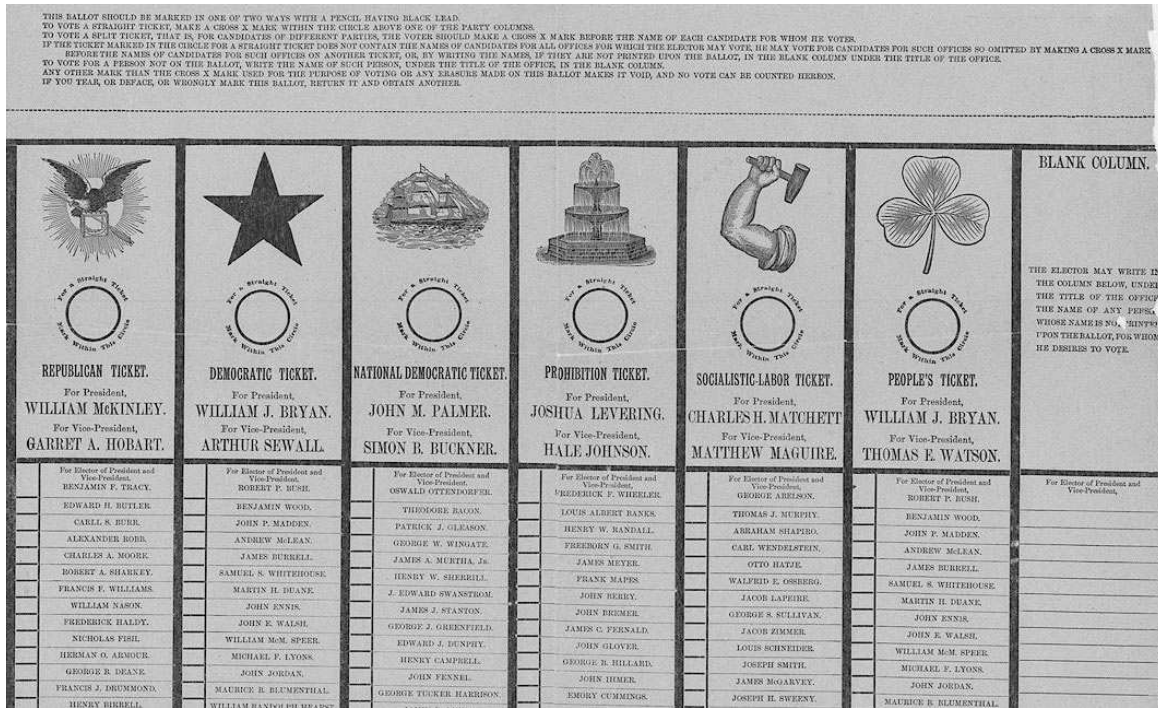
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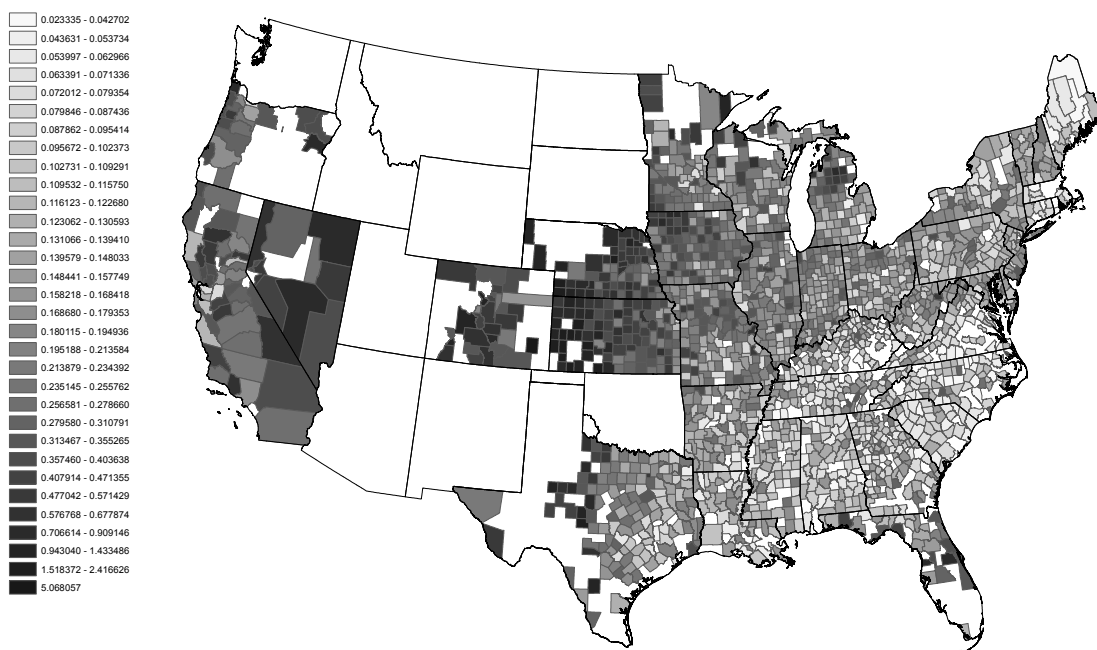
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Figure A2: An example of the state printed ballot



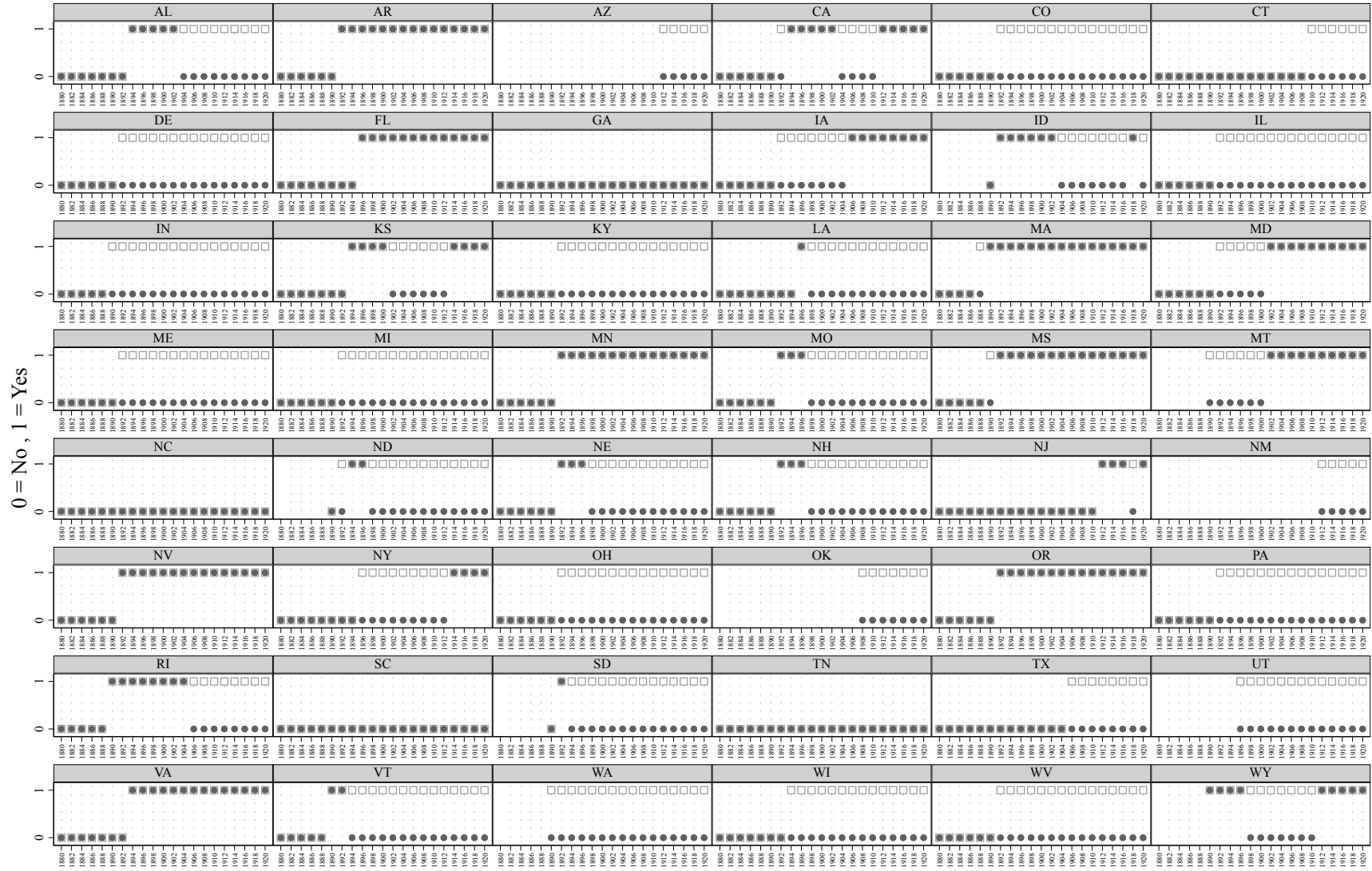
Note: The 1896 Presidential ballot, with party columns and party circles to cast a straight party ticket. Source: Smithsonian Institution via: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/vote/reform.html>

Figure A3: Media penetration in 1888



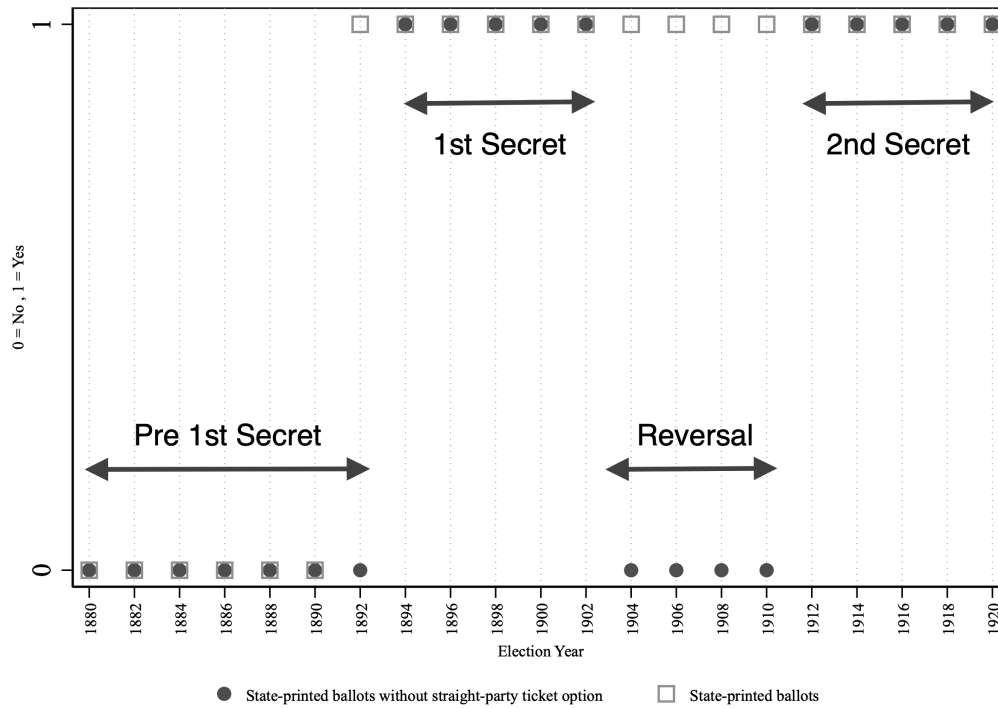
Note: Data at county level of the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888. State boundaries are in black.

Figure A4: Coding of the Secret Ballot



● State-printed ballots without straight-party ticket option □ State-printed ballots

Figure A5: Variable definition and possible stages of the electoral reform



Note: The figure shows the coding of the Secret Ballot with and without straight party ticket option in the case of California. Based on the periods highlighted with arrows, we defined three indicator variables: 1st Secret, Reversal and 2nd Secret.

Table A1: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Varying at county and presidential election year level					
<i>Full Sample of elections</i>					
-Turnout	0.697	0.202	0.030	1	17,793
-Split ticket voting	0.038	0.065	0	0.813	17,910
-Vote share dominant party	0.585	0.144	0.010	0.988	16,918
<i>Election pre and post first Secret Ballot</i>					
-Turnout	0.701	0.200	0.03	1	15,759
-Split ticket voting	0.036	0.063	0	0.813	15,827
-Vote share dominant party	0.588	0.141	0.010	0.988	15,034
Varying at district and congressional election year level					
<i>Full Sample of elections</i>					
-Gerrymandering Index	-0.501	1.022	-5.656	1.886	5,908
-Voter Intimidation	0.006	0.077	0	1	5,908
-Polsby Popper	0.314	0.161	0.002	0.756	5,908
-Schwartzberg	0.536	0.166	0.044	0.87	5,908
-Area to Convex Hull	0.755	0.119	0.171	0.983	5,908
-Reock	0.397	0.112	0.039	0.71	5,908
<i>Election pre and post first Secret Ballot</i>					
-Gerrymandering Index	-0.500	0.974	-4.673	1.771	5,302
-Voter Intimidation	0.007	0.081	0	1	5302
-Polsby Popper	0.314	0.16	0.002	0.756	5,302
-Schwartzberg	0.535	0.166	0.044	0.87	5,302
-Area to Convex Hull	0.755	0.116	0.171	0.983	5,302
-Reock	0.399	0.11	0.039	0.71	5,302
Varying at county level					
<i>Independent Variables</i>					
-Newspapers in 1888 (per thousand population)	0.211	0.216	0.023	5.068	1,969
-Wood-pulp potential (acres in 1880)	85,785	75,954	0	631,885	1,944
<i>Controls: Average of the values from 1880, 1884 and 1888</i>					
- Total Population	21,210	18,747	583	163,045	1969
-% Population in Places with 2,500 or + inh.	10.739	17.864	0	93.14	1,969
-% Population in Places with 25,000 or + inh.	1.921	10.143	0	92.966	1,969
-% White population	84.907	21.755	7.282	100	1,969
-% Male population	52.066	3.491	46.075	83.133	1,969
- Manufacturing Output Per Capita	41.9	59.112	0	666.203	1,969
- Farm Output Per Capita	48.058	25.057	0.879	340.792	1,969
- Foreign Born Population	2,267	4,285	0	51,269	1,969
- Literacy 1870*	0.784	0.253	0	1	1,969
Varying at district level					
<i>Independent Variables</i>					
-Newspapers in 1888 (per thousand population)	0.123	0.098	0.002	0.667	349
-Wood-pulp potential (acres in 1880)	748,819	811,783	0	5,383,054	349
<i>Controls: Average of the values from 1880, 1882, 1884, 1886 and 1888</i>					
- Total Population	163,099	9,910	79,825	219,884	349
-% Population in Places with 2,500 or + inh.	16.117	6.072	9.137	72.31	349
-% Population in Places with 25,000 or + inh.	4.814	5.209	0	70.553	349
-% White population	86.789	7.533	78.64	99.727	349
-% Male population	51.225	0.563	48.955	52.15	349
- Manufacturing Output Per Capita	64.429	21.196	43.352	230.579	349
- Farm Output Per Capita	46.67	4.13	20.935	77.674	349
- Foreign Born Population	17,498	3,663	11,947	65,378	349
- Literacy 1870*	0.744	0.253	0	1	349

Table A2: Alternative interpretations and newspapers

Dependent Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Newspapers per thousand population in 1888								
Total Population	-0.0000*** (0.0000)								
% Population in Places with 2,500 or + inhabitants		-0.0010*** (0.0004)							
% Population in Places with 25,000 or + inhabitants			-0.0013*** (0.0003)						
% White population				0.0009* (0.0005)					
% Male population					0.0153*** (0.0035)				
Manufacturing Output Per Capita						-0.0003** (0.0001)			
Farm Output Per Capita							-0.0006 (0.0005)		
Foreign Born Population								-0.0000*** (0.0000)	
Literacy 1870									-0.1144*** (0.0358)
Observations	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011	2,011
R-squared	0.3475	0.3344	0.3312	0.3309	0.3653	0.3308	0.3318	0.3399	0.3427

*Note: Cross-section of countries in 1888. All columns include state fixed effects. Standard errors clustered at the state level in parenthesis. ***
 $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Table A3: Alternative interpretations

Dependent Variable:	Voting Behavior						Electoral Strategies			
	Turnout		Split ticket voting		Vote Share Dominant party		Voter intimidation		Gerrymandering Index	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Secret Ballot NPO	-0.094*** (0.034)	-0.080** (0.032)	0.016 (0.013)	0.016 (0.013)	-0.011 (0.015)	-0.010 (0.017)	-0.0148 (0.0103)	-0.0151 (0.0098)	0.0363 (0.0887)	0.0787 (0.1022)
Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.093** (0.043)	0.038* (0.023)	0.063*** (0.022)	0.063*** (0.016)	-0.063** (0.030)	-0.048* (0.028)	-0.0028 (0.0043)	-0.0022 (0.0099)	0.0782*** (0.0270)	0.1249** (0.0514)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO	-0.005 (0.021)	0.003 (0.018)	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.006 (0.010)	0.010 (0.020)	0.011 (0.020)	-0.0090 (0.0101)	-0.0088 (0.0099)	0.0456 (0.0331)	0.0480 (0.0353)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.051 (0.073)	0.057 (0.070)	-0.002 (0.035)	-0.002 (0.032)	-0.004 (0.068)	-0.011 (0.067)	-0.0026 (0.0030)	-0.0030 (0.0027)	0.0119 (0.0261)	0.0106 (0.0243)
<i>Controlling using the interactions: (Secret Ballot NPO × Covariate)</i>										
<i>Where Covariate is:</i>										
- Total Population	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- % Population in Places 2,500+ inhabitants	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- % Population in Places 25,000+ inhabitants	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- % White population	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- % Male population	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- Manufacturing Output Per Capita	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- Farm Output Per Capita	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- Foreign Born Population	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
- Literacy 1870	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
County Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Congressional District Fixed Effects							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-specific time trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	15,738	15,738	15,810	15,810	15,015	15,015	5,282	5,282	5,282	5,282
R-squared	0.841	0.846	0.349	0.350	0.615	0.616	0.1142	0.1153	0.7657	0.7678

*Note: The unit of observation in Columns 1 to 6 is a county-presidential-election-year, while in Columns 7 to 10, the unit of observation is a district-congressional-election-year. The sample period includes all the elections pre and post the first adoption of the secret ballot. Secret Ballot NPO is a dummy variable that is one when the state has adopted the voting secrecy at year t with a paper ballot that does not allow for a straight party ticket option. Newspapers in 1888 refers to the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888 at the county or congressional district level. Outcome variables are defined in section 4.2. Robust standard errors clustered at state level in parenthesis; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Table A4: Race between the adoption of the Secret ballot and the Secret ballot without a straight-party ticket option

Dependent variable:	Voting Behavior			Electoral Strategies	
	Split ticket Voting	Turnout	Vote Share Dominant Party	Voter intimidation	Gerrymandering Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Secret Ballot NPO	0.0110*** (0.0037)	-0.1055*** (0.0064)	-0.0080 (0.0066)	-0.0097 (0.0119)	-0.1876** (0.0754)
Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.0822*** (0.0105)	0.0710*** (0.0198)	-0.0706*** (0.0191)	-0.0015 (0.0034)	0.0912*** (0.0212)
Secret Ballot	-0.0101*** (0.0023)	0.0437*** (0.0041)	0.0016 (0.0040)	-0.0054 (0.0071)	-0.0124 (0.0440)
Secret Ballot × Newspapers in 1888	-0.0087 (0.0065)	-0.0105 (0.0130)	0.0044 (0.0110)	-0.0013 (0.0023)	-0.0229* (0.0139)
Election year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Congressional District Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
State-specific time trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	15,810	15,738	15,015	5,282	5,282
R-squared	0.2953	0.8165	0.6059	0.1064	0.7659

*Note: The unit of observation in Columns 1 to 3 is a county-presidential-election-year, while in Columns 4 and 5, the unit of observation is a district-congressional-election-year. The sample period includes all the elections pre and post the first adoption of the secret ballot. Secret Ballot NPO is a dummy variable that is one when the state has adopted the voting secrecy at year t with a paper ballot that does not allow for a straight party ticket option. Newspapers in 1888 refers to the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888 at the county or congressional district level. Outcome variables are defined in section 4.2. Robust standard errors clustered at state level in parenthesis *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

A.2 Threats to identification

We now turn to a discussion of the identification issues in the estimation of equation (5) and its analog at the district level.

A.2.1 Omitted time-varying confounding factors and potential anticipation:

Even when using only the first adoption of the secret ballot discussed in Section 5.1, state legislatures do not adopt electoral reforms randomly.

One natural concern here is that there could be omitted time-varying factors closely related to our outcome variables that also independently influenced the adoption of the vote secrecy in the first place. To address this concern, we propose three validation exercises to support our identification strategy.

First, if there are omitted factors that could explain the adoption of the reform, we would expect differences in the pre-treatment period or anticipation effects before the year of adoption. As shown in the main text, this is not the case.

Second, if the omitted confounding factors are the consequence of the idiosyncratic evolution of each state adopting the electoral reform, our results could be driven by these trends. We take this possibility seriously and therefore include in all our specifications state-specific linear time trends ($\rho_s \cdot t$).

Finally, it may be the case that the initial conditions for each county and particular trends of our outcome variables explain the results. For instance, the secret ballot could have been adopted in places with high vote shares for the dominant parties or in areas with high levels of turnout that also differed in terms of other characteristics. In that scenario, the initial conditions and pre-adoption trends will invalidate the parallel trend assumption. To address this concern, we control for pre-adoption outcomes. In particular, we estimate (the specification is analogous when using the data at the congressional district level):

$$(10) \quad y_{c,s,t} = \delta_c + \delta_t + \alpha \cdot SecretBallot NPO_{s,t} + \beta \cdot (SecretBallot NPO_{s,t} \times Newspapers_{c,t=1888}) + \gamma \cdot (PreAdoption y_{c,t=1888} \times t) + \epsilon_{c,s,t},$$

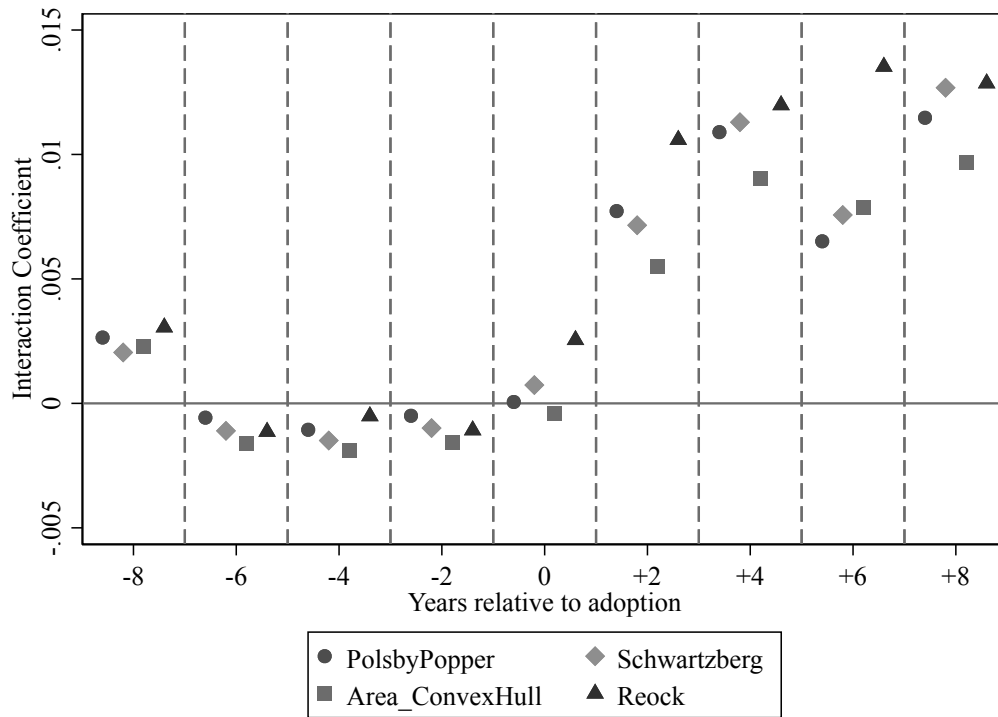
where $PreAdoption y_{c,t=1888}$ is the arithmetic average of the outcome variable $y_{c,t}$ during the elections when there was no ballot reform in any state (i.e for $t \in \{1880, 1884, 1888\}$). Similarly, in regressions using congressional elections, the pre-period average is over $t = \{1880, 1882, 1884, 1886, 1888\}$

Table A5: The possible role of county or congressional district pre-conditions

Dependent Variable:	Voting Behavior						Electoral Strategies			
	Turnout		Split ticket voting		Vote Share Dominant Party		Voter Intimidation		Gerrymandering Index	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Secret Ballot NPO	-0.094*** (0.034)	-0.095** (0.037)	0.016 (0.013)	0.024* (0.012)	-0.011 (0.015)	-0.007 (0.015)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.010)	0.036 (0.089)	0.034 (0.087)
Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.093** (0.043)	0.072** (0.032)	0.063*** (0.022)	0.060*** (0.020)	-0.063** (0.030)	-0.052* (0.029)	-0.003 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.004)	0.078*** (0.027)	0.070** (0.034)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO	-0.005 (0.021)	-0.014 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.001 (0.010)	0.010 (0.020)	0.011 (0.020)	-0.009 (0.010)	-0.009 (0.010)	0.046 (0.033)	0.046 (0.032)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.051 (0.073)	0.053 (0.067)	-0.002 (0.035)	-0.000 (0.033)	-0.004 (0.068)	0.004 (0.067)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	0.012 (0.026)	0.007 (0.027)
Avg. dependent variable from 1880 to 1888 _c × t	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
County Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Congressional District Fixed Effects	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-specific time trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	15,738	15,738	15,810	15,810	15,015	15,015	5,282	5,282	5,282	5,282
R-squared	0.841	0.854	0.349	0.399	0.615	0.619	0.114	0.114	0.766	0.766

*Note: The unit of observation in Columns 1 to 6 is a county-presidential-election-year, while in Columns 7 to 10, the unit of observation is a district-congressional-election-year. The sample period includes all the elections pre and post the first adoption of the secret ballot. Secret Ballot NPO is a dummy variable that is one when the state has adopted the voting secrecy at year t with a paper ballot that does not allow for a straight party ticket option. Newspapers in 1888 refers to the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888 at the county or congressional district level. Outcome variables are defined in section 4.2. Robust standard errors clustered at state level in parenthesis; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1*

Figure A6: Event study estimates for each measure of Gerrymandering



Note: Outcome variables are defined in Figure 1

Table A6: Results based on different measures of Gerrymandering

Dependent Variable:	Polsby Popper	Schwartzberg	Convex Hull	Reock	Gerrymandering Index
Secret Ballot NPO	0.0238* (0.0128)	0.0154 (0.0107)	0.0048 (0.0154)	0.0037 (0.0118)	0.0787 (0.1022)
Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	0.0207** (0.0099)	0.0181* (0.0092)	0.0189** (0.0078)	-0.0010 (0.0061)	0.1249** (0.0514)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO	0.0082** (0.0040)	0.0058 (0.0038)	0.0070 (0.0045)	0.0068 (0.0042)	0.0480 (0.0353)
Pre Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	-0.0011 (0.0023)	-0.0012 (0.0026)	0.0001 (0.0029)	-0.0011 (0.0030)	0.0106 (0.0243)
<i>Controlling using the interactions: (Secret Ballot NPO × Covariate)</i>					
<i>Where the covariate is:</i>					
- Total Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Population in Places with 2,500 or + inh.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Population in Places with 25,000 or + inh.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % White population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Male population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Manufacturing Output Per Capita	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Farm Output Per Capita	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Foreign-Born Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Literacy 1870	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-specific time trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,282	5,282	5,282	5,282	5,282
R-squared	0.8038	0.8398	0.7188	0.6491	0.7678

*Note: The unit of observation is a district-congressional-election-year. The sample period is pre and post the introduction of the first secret ballot. Secret Ballot NPO is a dummy variable that is one when the state has adopted the voting secrecy at year t with a paper ballot that does not allow for a straight party ticket option. Newspapers in 1888 refers to the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888 at the county or congressional district level. Outcome variables are defined in Figure 1. Robust standard errors clustered at state level in parenthesis; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Table A7: Southern counties had more concentrated media and lower literacy rates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Dependent variable	Literacy in 1870	Newspapers 1888	County has at least two partisan outlets	Herfindahl Index based on number of newspapers	Herfindahl Index based on newspapers' circulation
South	-0.0634*** (0.0133)	-0.0542 (0.0408)	-0.4699*** (0.1014)	0.2092*** (0.0451)	0.1921*** (0.0444)
<i>Additional Covariates fixed at 1888:</i>					
- Total Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Population in Places with 2,500 or + inh.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Population in Places with 25,000 or + inh.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % White population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- % Male population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Manufacturing Output Per Capita	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Farm Output Per Capita	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Foreign-Born Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1,891	2,034	2,034	2,034	1,976
R-squared	0.7546	0.2531	0.5052	0.4808	0.4403

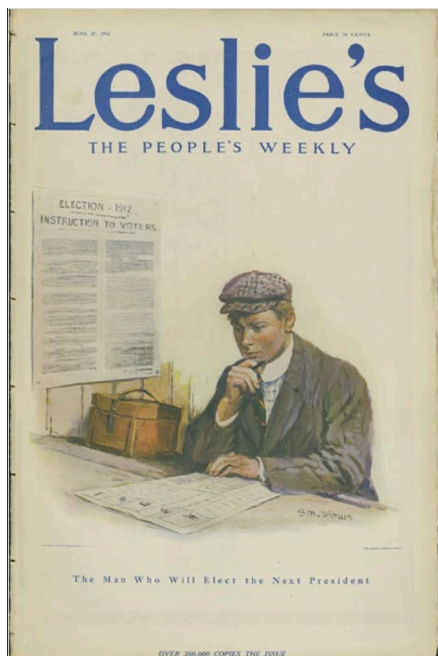
*Note: Cross-section of counties in 1888. South is a dummy variable equal to one for the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Standard errors clustered at the state level in parenthesis. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Table A8: Comparing the role of the media in South vs. Non-South states

Dependent variable:	Voting Behavior					Electoral Strategies				
	Split ticket Voting		Turnout		Vote Share Dominant Party		Voter intimidation		Gerrymandering Index	
States in the sample:	South (1)	Non-South (2)	South (3)	Non-South (4)	South (5)	Non-South (6)	South (7)	Non-South (8)	South (9)	Non-South (10)
Secret Ballot NPO	-0.0190** (0.0085)	0.0256*** (0.0034)	-0.1774*** (0.0183)	-0.0533*** (0.0051)	0.0176 (0.0160)	-0.0207*** (0.0052)	-0.0218 (0.0443)	-0.0043 (0.0034)	-0.0972 (0.1618)	0.0443 (0.1175)
Secret Ballot NPO × Newspapers in 1888	-0.0768** (0.0315)	0.0725*** (0.0185)	-0.1545 (0.0939)	0.0625** (0.0250)	0.0547 (0.1123)	-0.0684*** (0.0184)	-0.0102 (0.0165)	-0.0003 (0.0009)	0.0757 (0.0690)	0.0804** (0.0382)
Observations	4,309	11,501	4,461	11,277	4,241	10,774	1,536	3,746	1,536	3,746
R-squared	0.2601	0.4080	0.7888	0.8015	0.6758	0.5260	0.1492	0.0913	0.7793	0.7469
County Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Congressional District Fixed Effects							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-specific time trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Note: The unit of observation in Columns 1 to 6 is a county-presidential-election-year, while in Columns 7 to 11, the unit of observation is a district-congressional-election-year. The sample period includes all the elections pre and post the first adoption of the secret ballot. Secret Ballot NPO is a dummy variable that is one when the state has adopted the voting secrecy at year t with a paper ballot that does not allow for a straight party ticket option. Newspapers in 1888 refers to the total number of daily and weekly newspapers per thousand population registered by 1888 at the county or congressional district level. Outcome variables are defined in section 4.2. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

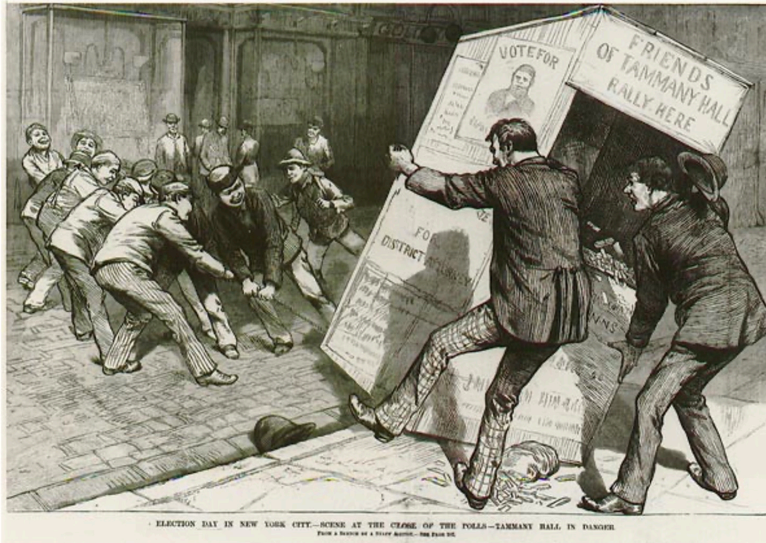
Figure A7: Informing the electorate about the reform



Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, later renamed *Leslie's Weekly*, was an American illustrated literary and news magazine founded in 1855 and published until 1922.

Leslie's "The Man Who Will Elect the Next President" pictures an upwardly mobile workingman contemplating a blanket ballot on Election Day, 1912.

Figure A8: Informing about corruption and electoral misconduct
Tammany Hall & Thomas Nast



By the 1860s, New York's Tammany Hall had become the most notorious political machine in America.

Led by Mayor William Marcy "Boss" Tweed from 1867 to 1871

Tammany based its power on patronage, payoffs, and the predictable outcome of elections in which violence and intimidation were the norm

In this 1887 election scene from *Leslie's*, two Tammany operatives attempt to reclaim their street booth from a surprise attack.

How a Cartoonist Brought Down a Political Boss: Thomas Nast and Tammany Hall

