Social and Spatial Patterning in Minority Communities in Nineteenth Century America

Donald A. DeBats

Flinders University, Adelaide Australia
The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

Introduction

My work intersects with the theme of "racial and social segregation" in my efforts to identify and utilize data types that allow us to explore dimensions of segregation (social, ethnic and racial) in the American past. I am also interested in the scale at which such separation and segmentation occurred, a theme that will be pursued in the work ahead. Above all I am interested in using new data and the combination of that data with new technologies and new ideas to understand in new ways the political effects of such spatial patterning on American political development.

My central argument is that the combination of individual level social, spatial and political information opens unanticipated opportunities for our understanding of exactly this theme and the political consequences of such patterning. Of course that data combination is not universally available in the American past but when and where it is the social scientific study of society and politics enters a new dimension. Banished are the old statistical inference problems associated with aggregate data; all data is individual and all data can be aggregated up to whatever scale level is most analytically rich, removing the need – and limitations – of inferring between levels.

For many years I have worked with individual social and political information – linking tax and census and the individual political information preserved in the poll books of America's

– and Canada's – records of *viva voce* elections. Kentucky, like Virginia, had required oral voting since its founding; and as a slave state loyal to the Union, Kentucky was not subject to Reconstruction. One of the conditions of Radical Reconstruction was that secessionist states disallow oral voting in favor of the only known alternative, the ticket system, even though this provided no greater protection for the newly enfranchised freedmen and the change was, therefore, little discussed. The provisions of Radical Reconstruction in terminating Virginia's long and unchallenged record of *viva voce* voting, while it did nothing for the new black voters, has prevented us from understanding their political engagement as we would wish.

For theorists of modernity, the step which Kentucky took in enfranchising the former slaves – a step toward the "universality of access" to the ballot – unaccompanied by any steps toward the "privatization of electoral preferences," was surprising. It was apparently less so to those immersed in the reality of nineteenth century American politics, including the newly enfranchised freedmen who, it should be noted, made no known demand for secrecy in voting. Kentucky continuation of *viva voce* voting, gradually restricted to local offices, until the adoption of the Australian secret ballot in 1892, made it the only American state to switch directly from oral to secret voting.

There were only two modes of voting in America before the adoption of the secret ballot at the end of the nineteenth century: the party prepared ticket system and the *viva voce* system. Elections under the two systems were fundamentally similar: conducted in the open air, with crowds gathered to enjoy the spectacle, election officials seated on a raised platform, and voters ascending the steps to those officials, who would acknowledge them as legally qualified electors.

In states using the ticket system, political parties printed their own ballots and distributed them to likely voters who gathered at the polls on election day. The party tickets listed the party's candidates for each office being contested. These tickets were brightly colored and distinctively marked. This was done in part to check that the voter did not have a counterfeit ticket deceptively handed out by a splinter movement within the party or even by the opposition. But of course it was also done, in a broader sense, to allow observers to know each and every voter's political choices. Situated on the election platform, just past the officials who checked on the eligibility of each voter, was an urn or ballot box into which the voter deposited the distinctively marked and colored party ticket. Parties often hired local residents to loiter near the voting platform to record the name of the voters and "the color of their ticket." Sometimes election officials covertly recorded in code the partisan vote of each voter as revealed by the color of the ticket deposited.

The knowledge of each individual's vote conveyed visually in the ticket system was conveyed aurally in the *viva voce* system: where the content of the vote was not heard, it was seen in the colors and design of party tickets.

In an election held under *viva voce* law, each voter, once past the election official assessing eligibility, called out his choice for each office or an election official read out that set of decisions. Election clerks dutifully recorded all of that information, office by office, in the poll books. The only meaningful difference between elections under the ticket system and those conduced *viva voce* was, in the oral system, the legally-required production of poll books, as official records of every voter and his vote. Where they survive today, those books give to contemporary historians the same knowledge of the political choices of individuals that was known to all those who gathered as spectators to watch the electoral politics of

nineteenth century America. The fundamental similarities of the two systems of voting – that all voting, whether by ticket or by voice, was public and knowable – increases the significance of studies arising from the *viva voce* world where all of that once-public information is preserved.

To these political and social inventories I have referred to earlier, we added records from religious institutions, voluntary associations, and records such as boards of directors. This kind of analysis allowed new insights into the level of past electoral participation (far lower than generally believed), the extent of religious engagement (also far lower and far less female dominated than generally believed), and, much more recently, opened the way to addressing network and neighbourhood as fundamental features of past American politics.

This type of hard-won data opens the way to understanding how social neighborhoods formed (or did not form) and how they influenced the engagement of ordinary citizens in political life. Network analysis holds the same promise of understanding how patterns of American social separation and segmentation affected political development. In addition, network analysis applied to past politics creates an opportunity to connect the historian's interest and engagement with past politics to one of the most important and innovative developments in contemporary political science – the discovery and demonstration of the social logic of politics – past no less than present.

The addition of spatial data marks another important addition to the analysis being developed from the *viva voce* archive. Spatial data is of course useful for its visualization capacity in showing us distributions across a physical space. In much the same way that statistical analysis adds precision to a distribution, the spatial statistics that are now available with most Geographic Information Systems (GIS) add precision to our understanding of spatial

displays. In the work that I have done, the use of kernel density cores, has been particularly revealing in making clear the concentrations of populations, and the relationship of one population to another. It also helps us identify population concentrations that, when the locations of significant cultural institutions such as churches and schools are added, may help us identify communities. Perhaps more importantly, this kind of work also helps us answer the question of whether the behaviour of members of a social group is influenced by residence within the spatially defined cores of that group: whether, to use a classic political behaviour question, an Irishman votes the same or differently depending on whether he lives within or without an Irish community.

Once that physical space is geo-referenced – linked to today's spatial coordinates – all manner of contemporary typographical and infrastructure information can be added to that visualization. Given that much of this information may not reflect past realities, an even more attractive possibility is to overlay the modern information on an historical map. This technique preserves all of the detail of the historical map and ensures that the infrastructure and typography are historically relevant.

The Case Studies

I want to focus today on three of the case studies in which this type of analysis is underway: Alexandria, Virginia in 1860; Newport, Kentucky in 1874; and Garrard County, Kentucky, in the 1870s and 1880s. The data bases in all three cases are extensive, consisting of linked individual level records that include, in every case, at least one complete Federal manuscript census schedule for the whole of the city or county in question, joined to an array of local tax records, poll books, and spatial information. In various degrees the records of individual

members of each of the three locale's religious institutions and voluntary associations, whether financial, fraternal or voluntary have been joined to their records.

Most importantly, all of this linked individual level information is joined to records of individual places of residence in the GIS databases. As Ian Gregory and I recently noted in this regard,

> GIS can then present instantly on the screen a map showing the distribution of any variable or combination of variables in any of the chosen locational formats. This electronic display of information becomes an analytic tool, allowing the refinement of research questions, with answers displayed instantly…creat[ing] a display of information once visible only in paper form, drawn slowly and expensively first by cartographers and then by vector plotters. (Introduction to Historical GIS, p. 455.)

The key source for this spatial information differed for each case study: official plat maps (Newport), tax records (Alexandria), commercial landowner maps (Garrard County). In all three cases manuscript census records for individuals, the city and county tax records of individuals, and sometimes available records such as city directories and country mug books provided additional locational information.

Just as we were not able to link all individuals appearing on the plethora of social inventories surviving for these locales, so we were not able to provide locational information for all individuals these multiple records tell us were residents during our years of interest. Nevertheless, through a long slow, methodical, and painful set of protocols we were able to achieve quite good locational matches: 78 percent of Alexandria's 12,293 residents in 1860 (including 1192 slaves and 1388 free blacks); 88 percent of Newport's 13,779 residents in 1874; 74 percent of the 7,079 residents in the four of six precincts of Garrard County in 1880 which we have completed.

The ragged nature of our databases (eg files are of different lengths) results from the fact that in all instances we have the totality of each record, whether the individuals have been linked to other records or not, creating universal databases in terms of coverage. The Alexandria database contains13,307 names over a range of up to 52 variables, the even larger Newport database contains 18,533 individuals with a maximum of 48 variables per individual, while the Garrard database, still under construction, contains13,902 names and so far up to37 variables for each of those individuals. Together the three case studies have some information on 45,742 individuals.

Race and Neighborhood in an Antebellum Southern Commercial City

Alexandria, opposite Washington DC, was an antebellum slave town, sustained by commerce, black coal and also black lives. It was a commercial town, 79 percent white but deeply structured by race as we have shown in other papers. Its free black population was confined to the low-lying areas of the city, "the Dip" (also known as "The Bottoms" – again reflecting the low-lying and flood prone area of the city) and "Hayti." As Figure 1 shows, the two cores (one containing 60 percent of households with African-American heads and the other containing 60 percent of households headed by whites) overlap hardly at all, containing only 12.5 percent of the areas of the two cores but both of the central institutions of Alexandria's black population – Roberts Memorial (Methodist) Church and the Alfred Street Baptist Church.

The extent to which the free black population of Alexandria was segregated from the white population was even more remarkable given the very considerable spatial compression of Alexandria. Fully 44 percent of the land in the city limits was unoccupied; that land was

owned and held overwhelmingly by commission merchants, the city's commercial elite, and

their widows. This pattern reflects the rentier economic mindset that dominated the city's

elite and militated against the development of a successful industrial base. The stipulation

that town land had to be developed was widely ignored in a commercial world where

conservative commerce values extended to the provision of accommodation as well as the

sale of coal and slaves. The compression of the city, typical of commercial cities, increased

Alexandria's density and made renting a far more likely proposition than home ownership for

white workers.

The compression of Alexandria also inhibited the development of spatial neighborhoods

within the white population. While the significance of slave labor, and the absence of an

industrial base, decreased the attractiveness of Alexandria to European immigrants, there was

a significant Irish-born presence in the town that made up eight percent of the total white

population and 14 percent of the eligible voters. That population, however, was spread across

the city. There was no single core of the Irish-born population of the city: a search for that

core using our GIS based data and kernel density core methodology shows not a single core

but several small pockets of Irish residents scattered across the cityscape.

Our church membership data show that Alexandria's Irish were Protestant as well as

Catholic, but of the Irish for whom information on religious association is available, 83

percent were Catholic. Neither Irish Catholics nor Irish Protestants formed a residential core

in the city. They were scattered and intermingled like the larger group of which they were a

part and indeed the white population generally. But of course many Irish were not associated

with any church: our data shows only 13 percent of adult Irish-born females were members of

a church and only 21 percent of males. It is interesting that among Irish immigrants to Alexandria, that religious involvement was higher amongst males than females.

Alexandria had only a single Catholic church, St. Marys, which served that city wide Catholic population, Irish and well as non-Irish. Despite the dispersed and mixed nature of Alexandria's Irish, St. Mary's was an important cultural center which provided a boys' school (St. John's Academy) and hosted the Young Catholics' Friend Society. This association thrust St. Mary's into a somewhat controversial position in the election of 1859 with a renegade Democratic candidate for Congress alleging that the School was mobilizing Catholic men to oppose William Smith, the candidate of the regular Democratic Party because of Smith's earlier alignment with the local Know-Nothings and his deeply anti-immigrant views. But indeed in the election, Catholic voters did vote against Smith, 91 to 76, with those Catholics associated with St. Johns turning in a heavy vote for the Opposition candidate while those Catholics associated only with St. Mary's church voted heavily for Smith. But this was a rare occurrence as was the nativist issue emerging in the midst of an election campaign; Catholic voices from St. Mary's and St. John's insisted that neither was operating to create a "Catholic vote."

The state and national election of May 26, 1859, was a significant contest in Virginia, the last Congressional election before the looming presidential contest that would split the nation. It was also an election which, at a state level (governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, member of the Virginia House of Delegates), marked the last best chance of the Opposition Party to resist the hegemony of an assertive and aggressive Democrat Party increasingly under the influence of hard-line defenders of slavery. As a commercial town and a town that depended economically on the coal trade with northern ports, Alexandria was a conservative

center, traditionally Whig and in the 1859 contest, 60 percent Opposition. Even Alexandria's slave-holders shared this view, voting 130 to 55 for the Opposition against state-rights Democrats.

Alexandria's Catholics, however, were marginally Democratic, and indeed were the only significant social group which supported (narrowly) the Democrats in the entire city. But this support was highly individualized: it was not the reflection of an Irish neighbourhood coming out to vote for a political cause. Figure 2 shows the residential location of the core containing 60 percent of the Irish Catholic population of Alexandria and the location of that population in relation to St. Mary's church.

Two features are evident: first we can see visually that there the Catholic church was separated physically from the Irish Catholic population which overlapped with the amorphous white population concentrated in the center of Alexandria's commercial core. St. Mary's was an old church, built in 1818, but with no particular reference to the place of residence of its Irish members who were 42 percent of its members; St. Mary's was the *city's* Catholic church. Second, perhaps as a reflection of the overlap of all groups within the white dominated areas of Alexandria, the participation and partisanship of the Irish Catholics who lived in the cores identified in Figure 2 differed little as from Irish Catholics living elsewhere in the city. This suggests then that a social group's political distinctiveness was shaped by the extent to which that group was spatially isolated.

All of this suggests that although separation and segregation were fundamental features of the lives of Alexandria's black population, this was not the case for whites who lived intermingled in the compressed housing arrangements of a commercial city, renting and not

owning and engaging in politics more as individuals than as members of a spatially and culturally mobilized group.

Immigrant Neighborhoods in an Industrial City

Newport was in most respects the polar opposite of Alexandria. It was an industrial town, given over to highly skilled iron and steel production, both industrial (the Swift Iron and Steel Rolling Mill, the Kenton Blast Furnace, the Gaylord Iron Pipe Company) and commercial (the Buecker Company) purposes. Nearly 800 men (and they were almost all men) worked in the steel and iron industries of the town. Newport was also an immigrant town with nearly half (48 percent) of its adult population of Irish (14 percent) or German (34 percent) birth.

Whereas Alexandria was a rentier economy where home ownership was rare for average white residents, the founders of Newport were determined to create an industrial labor force with deep ties to the city, perhaps calculating that homeowners were less likely to engage in destructive strike action. A key part of this industrial social vision was laid down by General James Taylor Jackson, who had surveyed for the federal government much of the original land the town came to occupy. Taylor's vision was of an industrial town of worker-owners and, unlike the commission merchants of Alexandria, he set out to create small plats of land (most only 30 by 90- feet) that could be purchased my those workers. In Alexandria, home ownership for African Americans, slave or free, was highly proscribed. But few white heads of household owned houses either: just 20 were owners or purchasers of a house. In Newport the rate of homeownership was 45 percent, more than twice as great as the Alexandria rate. The poorest quintile of Newport residents were three times more likely to own or be purchasing a home than the poorest quintile of Alexandria's white population. The result was

that Alexandria's white working population lived in rented accommodation, often in two and three story brick buildings, the market anticipated by the commission merchants who monopolized the city's vacant land, while Newport's working population were much more likely to be in the property market.

The result in Newport was a city much less concentrated than Alexandria and, in its dispersion, much more likely to exhibit neighborhoods with distinctive ethnic and religious connotations. One of our central analytic questions is the political effects of those neighborhoods. Earlier work has shown the political behavior of some Prussians, particularly those engaged in retail trade, changed dramatically depending on whether they resided in Democratic or Republican cores.

The election used to gauge these effects was, as in Alexandria, a critical election, in this case the March 2, 1874 municipal contest in which 13 local offices were to be filled, held in the midst of the city's first ever major labor unrest, as the Panic of 1873 deepened into a major economic depression. Wages were cut for the city's industrial workers and the large Swift Iron and Steel plant because the site of a violent labor conflict. Swift called in strike-breakers, and violent confrontations, marked by at least one fatal shooting, rolled through the steel mill district. There were demands that the Newport City government call in the Kentucky militia and even federal troops. The outcome of labor unrest in small industrial cities rested very significantly with the control and use of the local political power, a matter central to the 1874 election.

Figure 3 shows us the residence of a small sample of members of Immaculate Conception church, the largest Irish Catholic church in the city. What that figure, though based on a

sample, makes clear is that Irish Catholic households in Newport, were clustered around the church itself, a very different situation than in Alexandria where the distribution of the Catholic population bore little relationship to the location of the church, befitting St. Mary's role as a *city* church. Catholic laborers in Newport voted 100 percent Democratic whether residents of the core or not whereas all other occupational groups (from merchants and proprietors through clerks and semi-skilled workers) were quite sensitive to residence in the core. Thus 81 percent of men with this more high status occupations voted Democratic if they resided within the core but 58% Republican if they did not.

Contested Communities in the Post-Civil War South

Garrard County, Kentucky was one of the many areas in late nineteenth century America that exhibited the enthusiasm for the acquisition of commercially produced maps showing the land owners of the County in terms of the area's natural terrain and transportation infrastructure. This enthusiasm stemmed from the discovery of lithography which radically reduced the cost of producing highly detailed and colored maps. What had once been the result of hand engraving became a chemical process and new map map-making companies quickly emerged to produce maps of newly settled rural areas, particularly in the American mid-west and border states. Between 1850 and 1880 over 5000 country land-owner maps were produced, with many counties mapped more than once.

The map making companies that sprang up to capitalize on this enthusiasm produced for customers subscribing to their services large wall maps, often four feet by 3 feet, which included the individual's name accurately placed on the map in relation to the County's roads, rivers and streams, towns and villages and a wide range of local institutions, including

schoolhouse and churches, notable estates, and other features ranging from blacksmith shops to the local poor house. While farmers of course knew their neighbors, these maps placed the individual in a far grander vista and in his social and physical circumstances. The maps became a nineteenth century phenomenon, and an enormous commercial success. There was about this enthusiasm a degree of hucksterism, of isolated farmers separated from their scarce hard cash by city slickers selling them unnecessary, but highly flattering images and an opportunity to see themselves in a grand process of rural development and progress.

The D.G. Beers and J. Lanagan Lithography Company of Philadelphia produced in 1879 the map of Garrard (and Lincoln) County shown in Figure 4; the precise detailing of this map is evident in Figure 5.

Inevitably a map produced on a subscription basis was far more likely to include prominent men and a misleading proportion of prosperous residents. While the original map was imperfect in its comprehensiveness, it nevertheless does provide a very useful spatial framework which we further populated through the careful utilization of other sources, most particularly the manuscript US census schedules for Garrard County and the local tax lists. The sequential numbering of nineteenth century US census records represents the order in which households were visited and information recorded for the residents of that household. In the main, nineteenth century census takers moved down country roads and recording the details of all residents of each house on or accessible from the road. We carefully utilized these records to place additional known residents on the map.

Garrard tax records can also be turned to mapping purposes, exploiting the information recorded as to each tax-payer's "nearest neighbor." Of course there are flaws in a reliance on

census order for mapping. First we know that the nineteenth century census missed up to 30 percent of the population and secondly we know that the "missing" were most likely to be the least prominent residents. It is also evident that while census takers were instructed "to visit personally each dwelling house" to obtain the information required from each resident, they were quite elastic in interpreting the alternative instruction: if no one was at home, to obtain information from "the family or families, or person or persons, living nearest to such place of abode." Likewise tax information, while comprehensive in terms of listing all residents, including those with no taxable assets, was frequently incomplete as to the nearest neighbour designation.

Nevertheless, used carefully, census and tax information can add greatly to the "mapped" population of this precinct of Garrard County. The mapping protocol used to locate heads of household listed in the 1880 census depended upon identifying two landowners marked on the 1879 map as owning property on a given road and also identified in the census. We then allocated any heads of household listed consecutively in the census to the space between those two known residences. The use of "nearest neighbor" information from the 1875 tax list likewise depended on locating the individual named as the neighbor among the landowners appearing on the 1879 map. Using these techniques, we were able to greatly expand the number of residents on the map. Figure 6 shows the new residents added to the map and Figure 7 shows the black residents placed on the map. The over-all result for the Lancaster rural precinct is a composite map that locates on the 1879 Beers and Lanagan map 488 of the 538 residences identified in the 1880 census of the precinct. This is an approximate location rate of 91 percent of the residences in Lancaster, a substantial gain over the 64 percent of residences on the original Beers and Lanagan map.

These gains make it now possible to explore the consequences of spatial clumping and indication of community influences. Maps 8, 9, and 10 exhibit three different aspects of the influence of locality on political behaviour.

Map 8 presents the clearest illustration of that influence. By 1880, the black and white populations of Lancaster, once intermingled by slavery, had largely retreated to racial enclaves with the cores of households headed by blacks and whites occupying quite different areas of the town. The prime white area was resolutely centered on the town square; this core contained most of the town's mercantile elite though the wealthiest residents resided on the outskirts of town.

The two black cores – areas which had only recently been incorporated into the city -- hardly touched the white cores. Figure 8 shows us that not a single white person lived in the black core areas. Almost all black landowners were in the two black core areas or on the fringes of those cores. All the evidence suggests that Lancaster had become a very segregated small town in a very short space of time.

The two black areas of Lancaster reflected about the same degree of black autonomy as the free black area of antebellum Alexandria. The town's "colored school" was located in the black area northeast of the town center as was the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. The minister, the Reverend Silas Crawford, lived just a few doors from the church.

The black core in the southwestern quadrant was smaller in terms of population, was defined more by black commercial activity, and was less institutionalized. The Colored Baptist Church was nearby, but it had no permanent minister. Most (8 of 14) of the town's black

tradesmen and shop-keepers operated from shop-fronts there, including both of the town's black grocers. The only black businesses distant from the black cores were two barbers – Joseph Huffman who traded on the town's central square and Zale Campbell who was located nearby. The southwest black core was a distinctive black small business area.

These are the very features that contemporary political scientists, interested in the "social logic of politics," identify as the factors likely to stimulate, and protect, a political neighborhood. Ironically the process of segregating the black population, concentrating the black population, its institutions, and business, created the very basis for black political strength. This is exactly the pattern we would expect to see emerge in Alexandria's black core, where the sense of place and identity stretched back decades, rather than, as in Lancaster, just a few years. And the exercise of this power is what we can watch in the 1876 presidential election.

The Lancaster poll books for the presidential election of 1876 have been selected for analysis because they are among the few poll books for a presidential election known to have survived for post-Civil War America. Kentucky was solidly Democratic in the contest, voting 61 percent for Samuel Tilden and casting 12 electoral college votes for the winner of a highly controversial election that would decide the fate of the South and of the region's black voters. The eventual compromise would see Hayes elected and the end of Union military occupation in the South, effectively sealing the fate of the "First Enfranchisement."

But on election day in 1876 this was far from known. Garrard County again tipped Republican with 52 percent of its voters calling out their support for Hayes for President and

William O. Bradley for Congress, against the incumbent, Milton J. Durham. The little town of Lancaster was more enthusiastically Republican, splitting 56 percent to 44 percent.

The racial composition of the vote was critical, and in this respect Lancaster is emblematic of the situation in the entire post-Civil War South. In Lancaster as in so many other towns and counties, the aggregate result was split, but (Table 1) the blacks and whites were nearly unanimous in opposition to one another. The white Republican voters were critical and supplied the party's

Table 1:
Lancaster Vote in 1876 Presidential Election, by Race

	Hayes (Republican)	Tilden (Democrat)	Total
Black	33	1	34
White	7	32	39
Total	40	33	73

margin of victory in Lancaster. This was a rather exceptional group which included a lawyer, a rather wealthy federal revenue agent, a teacher, an express agent, and a harness maker; they created a very different profile from the black Republicans.

Using the tax list of 1875 for the residents in the entire Lancaster precinct (including the town) suggests that the turnout rate by race was almost identical – 50 percent for blacks (128 of 258 adult males) and 52 percent for whites (288 of 550 adult males). These rates were in all probability reflected in the town of Lancaster.

Those blacks in the town of Lancaster who voted were overwhelmingly heads of households (29 of 34 or 85 percent). On the other hand, only two of the twelve eligible blacks who lived in white households voted. Living in the black cores was, as predicted, also important: those

cores contained 63 percent of Lancaster's black population but 85 percent of black voters. Black heads of household were 32 percent more likely to vote if they were in the core than if they were not. Black landowners in the core were nearly three times as likely (50 percent to 17 percent) to vote as black landowners whose land was outside the core. Neighborhood mattered.

These black voters were not wealthy: 81 percent were laborers and only 32 percent were land-owners. The primary features of black voters were that they were disproportionately heads of households and residents in the black cores of Lancaster. The defining features of these cores were black tradesmen, black-owned business, black landowners, the black school and the two black churches. It was here that black politics was sustained.

Indeed, if there was a worrying portent in the 1876 profile of black voters and non-voters, it was that so few of the relatively well-off voted, especially, as we have seen with landowners, if they lived outside the core areas. This was even more characteristic of black small businessmen and tradesmen who by and large abstained from voting. There were four black carpenters in Lancaster; none vote. There were two black house-painters; neither voted. There were two black plasterers and neither voted. There were two black mail carriers and neither of them voted either.

Most black voters were heads of households, were laborers, and lived in one of the black cores. The key addition to this group was Silas Crawford, minister of the black Methodist Episcopal Church, perhaps providing an insight into the circumstances helping to sustain the unique leadership role of black religious figures.

Map 9 reminds us that not all concentrations of populations produced large political effects. This map shows the cores containing 60 percent of black residents in rural areas of the county, areas associated with the small villages of Lowell, Flatwoods, and Paint Lick. In the state election of August 1875, 62 percent of adult black men living within these cores voted – Republican to a man -- while black men living outside those cores participated at a somewhat lower rate of 56 percent. Both of these rates of participation were higher than the 50 percent of white men who voted.

The situation presented in Map 10 was dramatically different. We begin with a striking difference between the turnout in the local election of August 7, 1876 and that of the presidential election of November 6, 1876 in the town of Lancaster and the surrounding hinterland. The August election was to fill law enforcement positions, with voters calling out their preferences in turn for marshal, sheriff and constable. Participation increased in proportion to the localism of the office with 152 votes for marshal, 491 for sheriff and 612 for constable. By contrast the presidential election just three months later netted a turnout of only 440.

Fully 52 percent of the voters in the presidential election had not voted in the election for constable three months earlier and, perhaps more importantly, 65 percent of those who had voted in the constable election did not vote in the presidential election. Of the 1045 voters in the two elections, only 211 (20 percent) voted in both. These elections mobilized very different electorates.

Participants in these two contests lived in very different parts of the Lancaster rural precinct. The areas containing 60 percent of the Presidential voters were in the northern half of the county while the core of the voters for constable was concentrated in the southern half. The core of the district's black population, also located in the south, provided the core of the black vote for constable. That vote was nearly unanimous in both the constable election (97 percent for E. D. Bishop) and the November contest (96 percent for the Hayes, the Republican). But Bishop won the constable race (64 percent) whereas Tilden prevailed locally in the presidential race.

The key determinants of the difference outcomes were the much greater black participation in the constable election and the split in the white vote in that election between Bishop (38 percent) and Daniel Miller (59 percent). The result was a candidate favored by blacks elected to the important local position of constable. But black voter turnout was much lower in the presidential, providing 31 percent of the total vote as against 40 percent of the vote for constable. Only 91 of the 165 blacks in Lancaster town and rural precinct who voted in the constable election also voted in the presidential election. Secondly, in the presidential battle, the white vote was much more united behind Tilden (77 percent). The result was that the district's vote went narrowly (53 percent) to the Democrat.

The black vote was a force in Garrard County that could be energized and mobilized with significant effect. The explanation for the relative decline in participation in the presidential election, especially in the black heartland, is not entirely clear, and may have been the result of intimidation. Equally it may have been that the black voters

simply cared a good deal more about controlling the local police power. This interpretation is supported by the historical pattern of higher participation in local elections and the events in Lancaster two years earlier that must have emphasized the importance of that very point.

The news from Lancaster, Kentucky, in the aftermath of the August 1874 local elections made the papers not just locally and in Kentucky, but nationally with coverage in the *Chicago Tribune, The Daily Phoenix* of Columbia, South Carolina, and the *National Republican* of Washington D. C. What began in the maneuvering among local political leaders for the position of clerk of the circuit court in the August 1874 election spilled over three weeks after the election into a confrontation between the principals who exchanged shots on the town's public square, and then descended into verbal assaults on prominent whites who did not vote the Democratic line and physical assaults on town blacks: "slapping, cursing, and otherwise mistreating negroes [sic] on the street." Democrats charged that William Sellers, the chairman of the Republican County Committee, "had the negro [sic] vote in the hollow of his hand" and would deploy them to support a Democrat for one local office in exchange for the delivery of Democratic votes for a family member running for another local office under the Republican banner.

Blacks responded to the assaults by arming and gathering at the Sellers' house just 100 yards from the Lancaster Courthouse. A group of Democrats, also armed and led by family members of the defeated candidate, occupied the Courthouse and confronted the armed blacks. Firing commenced, there were some wounds, probably minor. The

local doctor was fired upon when he attended the wounded and a detachment of US

Federal Troops, probably stationed at Camp Robinson or Camp Nelson, appeared to

escort a doctor to attend the wounded. A general melee followed:

> Thursday: Squire Yeaky was shot and wounded [in] both legs by a party of negroes station[ed]in a church, and [that] night Ed Kennedy's house was fired [into]and his little grandson wounded in the head. Friday telegrams and runners were sent to bring in help ...to put down the negro insurrection. The people of Lancaster, looking upon the affair as a personal one between Kennedy and Sellers, and being unable to suppress the riot, shut themselves up in their houses and refused to participate in the war. Friday night or Saturday morning, however, reinforcements began to arrive. Walter Saunders was given or assumed command, and the negroes, with two white men, Ward and Brickley, were driven to and besiege[d] in Sellers' house. Here the firing was kept up until late in the evening, when the house was fired by means of turpentine balls. This induced Gen. Landrum to send down the United States soldiers. A negro named Ray had been already killed, and Ward, of Sellers' party, was brought wounded out of the burning house and afterward died. When the soldiers arrived the negroes escaped from the house, but the soldiers became demoralized and started back up town on the run, firing in every direction. One of their shots struck and killed a barkeeper named Menifee Foley, standing on the opposite side of the public square, and many spectators in the riot narrowly escaped with their lives. The next morning (Sunday) about 200 State militia arrived from Louisville, but found the riot at an end. They remained several weeks, but never fired a shot. Sellers who [was] out beating up recruits, upon hearing [of] the fall of his fort, gave up the fight, and bade a final adieu to Garrard....Several negroes were tried and convicted, and pardoned by Governor Leslie. Judge Owsley, who received his Commission as Judge, and was sworn in on the Sunday morning the State troops arrived, appointed Eb Kennedy Circuit Clerk during the contest, which was finally decided in Faulkner's favor, and the famous riot ended. (*Chicago Tribune*, January 2, 1878. See also the *Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, South Carolina, August 25, 1874; *National Republican* (Washington, D.C.), August 24, 187.

Conclusion

These three case studies and the variety within them illustrate the utility of approaching past

politics through an appreciation of the networks and communities that held voters together. In

every case voters who lived within the most concentrated proportion of their population

behaved differently, to a small or large degree, than those who resided outside of those

concentrations. These effects were least in diffused rural areas and in cities where the

distribution of single family hosing militated against the development of distinctive ethnic or racial communities. These effects were greatest in villages and cities where ethnic and racial groups formed in distinct areas that did not overlap with other groups and in well institutionalized rural areas where past events served as powerful stimuli to political participation.