

## Supplementary Material: Selection Process for Replication

To select an article for replication, we first searched for articles containing the word “rural” published in the top three general interest political science journals (*American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *Journal of Politics*) in the past five years (August 2019 - August 2014). We restricted this search to articles on American politics. The country-specific focus of this paper enabled us to go into the level of detail necessary for a careful discussion of conceptualization and operationalization.<sup>1</sup> Our objective with the replication was to select a paper for which the concept of rurality was central to the main empirical analysis. The articles that fit the search criteria include:

1. Acharya, A., Blackwell, M., and Sen, M. 2016. “The Political Legacy of American Slavery,” *The Journal of Politics* 78(3), 621-641.

**Measurement Method:** County-level population density for 1860 from the U.S. Census.

**Suitability for Replication:** Rural appears only in the online appendix, thus it is not a good candidate for replication of rural research. Moreover, their data on rurality is archival; no better unit measures are available than what they have used.

2. Broockman, D.E. and Butler, D.M. 2017. “The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication,” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(1), 208-221.

**Measurement Method:** Rural is measured using the authors’ “own judgment” (Source: email exchange).

**Suitability for Replication:** Rurality is used as a descriptive statistic to show balance in the selection of districts into the experiment, which limits the project’s potential relevance as a replication study.

3. Caughey, D., Dougal, M. C., Schickler, E. “Policy and Performance in the New Deal Realignment: Evidence from Old Data and New Methods,” *The Journal of Politics*, *Forthcoming*.

**Measurement Method:** Survey respondents were coded as Urban/Rural/Farm. It is unclear whether this is self-identification or coding based on county, zip code, or some other unit of classification.

**Suitability for Replication:** This study is not a good candidate for replication because the survey data are from 1936 - 1952, which predates the availability of holistic geographic scales such as the Rural Urban Commuting Area Codes.

4. de Benedictis-Kessner, J. and Warshaw, C. 2019. “Politics in Forgotten Governments: The Partisan Composition of County Legislatures and County Fiscal Policies,” *The Journal of Politics*, *Forthcoming*.

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<sup>1</sup>We recommend scholars of other regions and subfields initiate this conversation pursuant to their specialties, such as McGrane et al.’s discussion of political geography in Canadian politics.

**Measurement Method:** In the appendix, they “divide our dataset into counties with more than 15% of the population is rural compared to counties where less than 15% of the population is rural” but rural is not defined. In the article, footnote 7 implies that the authors consider rural as counties with less than 150,000 people, which contrasts with their definition in the appendix.

**Suitability for Replication:** Data and code are publicly available. There are obvious and readily-available rural measurement alternatives. However, given that their most rural county is a micropolitan area, and that they include rurality only in an analyses in the appendix (likely to satisfy a reviewer), the article does not meet the criteria for a study on rural politics. Even if we did replicate their study, the small number of rural counties presents complications for the models converging. For example, the effective N of the regression discontinuity model for the UIC coding has 21 effective rural observations. For the RUCC coding, there are 0 effective rural observations.

5. Hersh, E. D., Nall, C. 2016. “The Primacy of Race in the Geography of Income-Based Voting: New Evidence from Public Voting Records,” *American Journal of Political Science* 60(2), 289-303.

**Measurement Method:** The appendix includes an analysis that measures rural as the rural population proportion in the district.

**Suitability for Replication:** We chose to not replicate this for the following reasons. First, rurality only appears in one of the empirical analyses (Figure A10) as a control variable. Empirical evidence for Hersh and Nall’s argument is evident across a number of figures and tables, thus any differences we may find for Figure A10 would not overturn upon their main finding.

6. Nall, C. 2015. “The Political Consequences of Spatial Policies: How Interstate Highways Facilitated Geographic Polarization,” *The Journal of Politics* 77(2), 394 - 406.

**Measurement Method:** The author controls for the geographic status (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural) of respondents using zip code level measures of population density and percent of residents living in a metropolitan area. Suburban counties are defined as those with geographic centroids 20 to 100 kilometers from the center of the 100 most populous cities in 1950.

**Suitability for Replication:** We chose to not replicate this project because the analyses use data from the Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Study (1965 - 1997), which predates the University of Washington zip code level RUCA codes.

7. Pope, J.C. and Treier, S. 2015. “Voting for a Founding: Testing the Effect of Economic Interests at the Federal Convention of 1787,” *The Journal of Politics* 77(2), 519-534.

**Measurement Method:** Rural is measured as percent of the state that is rural from the 1790 Census. The authors do not provide information on how rural was defined in Eighteenth Century Censuses.

**Suitability for Replication:** Data and code are publicly available. However, we have no improvements to offer on their historic measures of rural populations in 1790.

8. Thompson, D. I. 2018. “An Ill-Fitting Coat: Reforming US Political Boundaries for a Metropolitan Age,” *The Journal of Politics* 81(1), 246-259.

**Measurement Method:** No definition provided.

**Suitability for Replication:** There is no empirical analysis in this article.

After searching the top three of political science journals for potential replications, we found that very few of the relevant articles have replication code and data publicly available. So, we expanded our search to *Political Behavior*, a top American Politics subfield journal that requires

authors to post their data and code to the Harvard Dataverse prior to publication. We began our search in reverse chronological order so that we could replicate the most recent article involving rural populations. The Flavin and Franko article (detailed below) was published a few months before we began writing this manuscript. It is an ideal candidate for replication because it reflects the most recent standards on measuring rural populations in political science. Moreover, we felt we could make logical and coherent improvements to their measurement strategy.

Flavin, P., and Franko, W.W. (2019). Economic Segregation and Unequal Policy Responsiveness, *Political Behavior*, *Forthcoming*.

**Measurement Method:** They define rural ZCTAs as those that are not located within an urban area or urban cluster. The U.S. Census defines urban areas and clusters as “Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people; Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people.”

**Suitability for Replication:** Data and code are publicly available. There are obvious and readily-available rural measurement alternatives.