The imperfect union: labor racketeering, corruption exposure, and its consequences

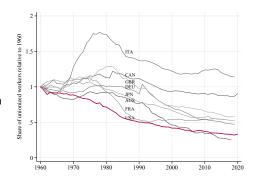
Miriam Venturini

University of Zurich

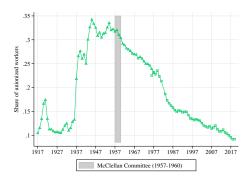
August 29, 2023

- Exposing corruption
 - → Institutions' reputation?

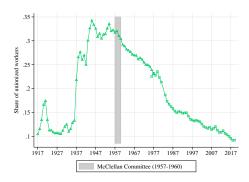
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 - → Institutions' reputation?
- Unions in the US:
 - -63% decline in unionization (1960-2010)
 - $\bullet\,$ already in the end of 1950s



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 - → Institutions' reputation?
- Unions in the US:
 - -63% decline in unionization (1960-2010)
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 - → What caused this decline?



- Exposing corruption
 - → Institutions' reputation?
- Unions in the US:
 - -63% decline in unionization (1960-2010)
 - already in the end of 1950s
 - → What caused this decline?



- US Senate Investigative Committee: McClellan Committee (1957-1960)
 - corruption in US unions
 - large-scale shock Gallup

Research question(s)

- Unions and politics:
 - mobilize workers/voters
 - campaign for workers' demands in public policy
- Did the McClellan investigation on corruption in US unions cause:
 - Negative reputation shock?
 - Decline in unionization?
 - Lower political mobilization?
 - Lower ability to influence public policy?

Literature

Road Map

- Labor racketeering
- McClellan Committee (1957-1960)
- Identifying variation
- Data
- Results DiD
 - News coverage
 - Unionization
 - Political mobilization
 - Policy-making
- Next steps

Labor Racketeering

- Thefts and embezzlement:
 - membership fees
 - pension and welfare funds
- Extortion of employers by threatening:
 - strikes
 - picketing
 - workplace sabotage
- Bribes from employers to:
 - ignore terms of collective bargaining agreement (sweetheart deal)
 - prevent strikes (labor peace)
 - enforce employer cartels

McClellan Committee (1957-1960)

Biggest national-level news shock about union corruption (news' graph





- Highly publicized
- Hearings on television
- US Senate Investigative Committee
- Landrum-Griffin Act (1959)



- Mainly investigated:
 - Teamsters
 - Bakery Workers Union
 - United Textile Workers
 - Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union
 - Transport Workers Union
 - International Longshoremen's Association

McClellan Committee (1957-1960) - Consequences

"A cancer that almost destroyed the American labor movement"

(D. Dubinsky)

1957 Commitee's Report:

- The public has been seriously shaken by the Committee's revelations.
- Labor's stock and its influence has dipped sharply in both national and state legislative halls.
- Union organizing campaigns were postponed and the unions began to show poorer results in elections held by the NLRB.
- Push for Right-to-Work Laws (e.g. Indiana, California)

Hypothesis

McClellan Committee caused:

- unions' reputation ↓
- unionization ↓
- turnout in elections ↓
- pro-labor policy-making ↓

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 - unions were initially stronger

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Hypothesis

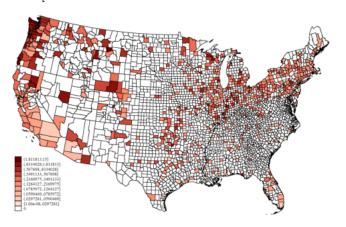
McClellan Committee caused:

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- unionization ↓
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- pro-labor policy-making ↓

- before-after McClellan Committee (1957-1960)
- higher bite where:
 - lacktriangle unions were initially stronger o bigger consequences
 - **o** corrupted unions are located → bigger or smaller consequences?

Number of union locals in 1940 per 10k people

$$Y_{it} = \sum_{t} \beta_{t} \left(\frac{\textit{Num locals}_{i1940}}{10 \textit{k people}_{i1940}} \times \mathbb{1}[\textit{year} = t] \right) + \alpha_{i} + \gamma_{t} + \varepsilon_{it}$$
 (1)

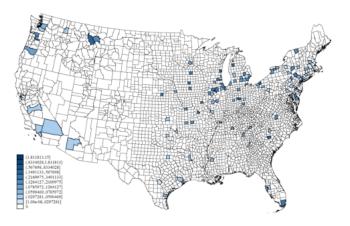


Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project (7 unions)

by union

Number of investigated union locals per 10k people

$$Y_{it} = \sum_{t} \beta_{t} \left(\frac{\textit{Num investigated locals}_{i}}{10 \textit{k people}_{i1950}} \times \mathbb{1}[\textit{year} = t] \right) + \alpha_{i} + \gamma_{t} + \varepsilon_{it}$$
 (2)



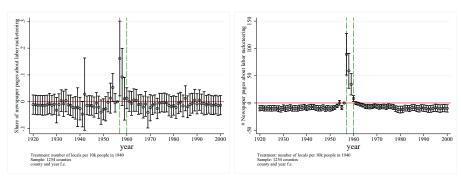
Data: McClellan Committee's reports

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- Investigations:
 - Investigated union locals from McClellan Committee's report
- Union density (county level):
 - Mapping American Social Movements Project (1930s to 1949)
 - Register of reporting labor organizations, U.S. Dep. of Labor (1960-90)
 - NLRB certification elections (NLRB election reports, starting 1962)
- News coverage and reputation:
 - Newspapers (newspaperarchive.com)
- Political and policy outcomes:
 - Turnout
 - Congress roll-call data
 - Speeches of elected legislative members

DiD(1) – News coverage

- Treatment: number of union locals per 10k people in 1940
- Outcome: share/number of newspaper pages on labor racketeering



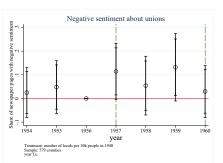
newspaperarchive.com

controls map table number

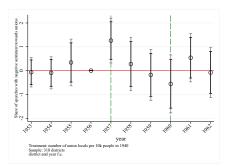
Sentiment towards unions

- **Treatment:** number of union locals per 10k people in 1940
- Outcome:

Share of **newspaper pages** with negative sentiment towards unions



Share of **congresspersons' speeches** with negative sentiment towards unions



Unionization (NLRB certification elections 1963)

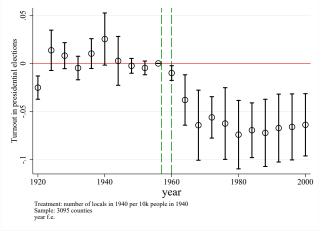
	Share of votes for union			Share of elections won		
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction	(4) News	(5) Unions 1940	(6) Interaction
Share union news on racketeering	-0.222* [0.115]		-0.006 [0.185]	-0.226 [0.234]		0.262 [0.352]
Num. locals / 10k pop. 1940		-0.039* [0.022]	0.130 [0.191]		-0.120*** [0.035]	0.471 [0.338] -2.466**
Share union news on racketeering ×			-1.127**			-2.466**
Num. locals / 10k pop. 1940			[0.560]			[0.934]
Mean Y	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.56	0.53	0.56
Counties (N)	83	202	83	83	202	83

Note: 7 unions

Number of elections

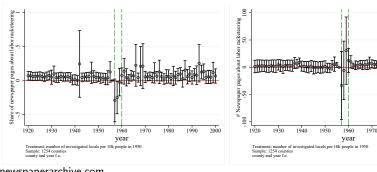
DiD (1) – Political mobilization

- Treatment: number of union locals per 10k people in 1940
- Outcome: turnout in presidential elections



DiD (2) – News coverage

- Treatment: number of investigated locals per 10k people in 1950
- **Outcome:** share/number newspaper pages about labor racketeering



newspaperarchive.com

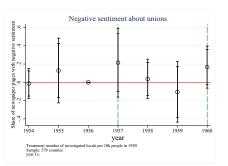
1980

2000

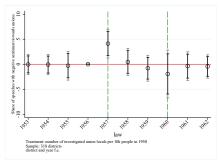
Sentiment towards unions

- Treatment: number of investigated locals per 10k people in 1950
- Outcome:

Share of **newspaper pages** with negative sentiment towards unions



Share of **congresspersons' speeches** with negative sentiment towards unions



Unionization (NLRB certification elections 1963)

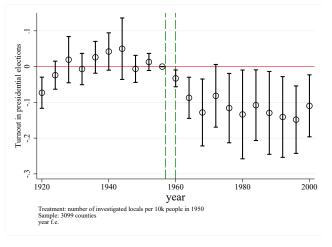
	Share of votes for union			Share of elections won		
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction	(4) News	(5) Unions 1940	(6) Interaction
Share union news on racketeering	-0.082* [0.047]		-0.078 [0.049]	-0.129* [0.077]		-0.115 [0.082]
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950		-0.067 [0.111]	0.008 [0.152]		-0.023 [0.189]	0.166 [0.174]
Share union news on racketeering \times Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950			-0.371 [0.418]			-1.226* [0.742]
Mean Y	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.56	0.55	0.56
Counties (N)	374	1137	374	374	1137	374

Note: all unions

Number of elections

DiD (2) - Political mobilization

- Treatment: number of investigated locals per 10k people in 1950
- Outcome: turnout in presidential elections



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Additional results and next steps

Additional results

- Congress roll-call, support for minimum wage minimum wage
 - Unions' presence: lower support for minimum wage in the short-term
 - Investigated locals: higher support for minimum wage

Preliminary: TV ownership and signal

- Higher newspaper coverage (# pages) newspapers
- Lower number of union locals p.c. union locals
- Lower turnout turnout

More about unions' outcomes:

- Digitize unions' representation election data (more years)
- Extend/improve sentiment analysis on newspaper content

Conclusion

This paper

- Studies the consequences of the McClellan Committee:
 a large-scale investigation of corruption in US labor unions
- Shows that
 - unions' mobilization capacity was affected by the investigation
 - this effect was at least partially mediated by a large reputation shock

What do we learn?

- Investigations about corruption in institutions may disrupt their ability to fulfill their function
- The McClellan Committee plausibly contributed to unions' decline in the US

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APPENDIX

Literature

Corruption revelation and institutions' reputation

- Guriev, Melnikov, Zhuravskaya (2021), Alsan and Wanamaker (2017), Lowes and Montero (2021), Aassve et al. (2018), Ares and Hernández (2017), Ferraz and Finan (2008), Chong et al. (2021)
- → Unions

Labor Racketeering

- Mastrobuoni, Matranga, Martinez (2022)
- → Reputation effect, wide-spread consequences

Unions and political participation

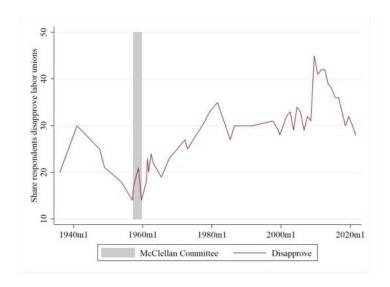
- Fouirnaies (2021), Freeman (2003), Gallego (2010), Radcliffe and Davis (2000), Leighley and Nagler (2007), Kerrissey and Schfoer (2013), Jake Rosenfeld (2010)
- → McClellan committee as shock to unions

Unions and economic outcomes

• Farber, Herbst, Kuziemko, Naidu (2021), Freeman (1976), Freeman and Medoff (1985), Doucouliagos, Freeman, Laroche (2017)



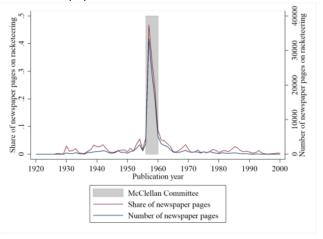
Gallup: Do you disapprove of labor unions?





Big national-level news shock

• Discussed in newspapers



newspaperarchive.com









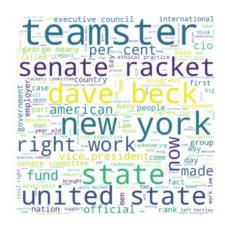


Word cloud

1956

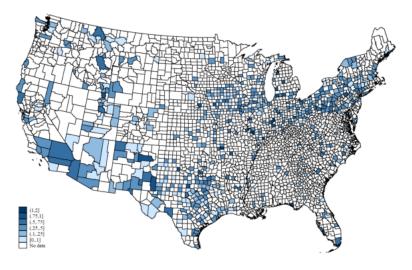
1957







Newspapers - Spatial variation McClellan 1957-1960



newspaperarchive.com



DiD tables

		cketeering paper pages	Turnout		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
$\frac{Num.\ locals}{10k\ people} imes ext{McClellan}$	0.0962** (0.0486)		-0.0547*** (0.0181)		
$\frac{\textit{Num. investigated locals}}{10\textit{k people}} \times McClellan$		-0.207** (0.0851)		-0.127* (0.0656)	
Observations	21290	21290	59898	59905	
Mean Y	0.041	0.041	0.57	0.57	
Number of Counties	1186	1186	3011	3012	

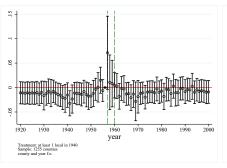
Clustered standard errors in parentheses (county-level) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

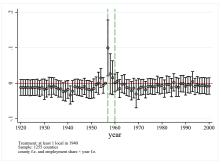
- (1)-(2) McClellan = 1 if year $\in \{1957, 1958, 1959, 1960\}$
- (3)-(4) McClellan = 1 if year \geq 1957

back (news 2)

DiD (1) – Newspapers

• Treatment: at least 1 union local in 1940

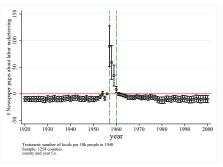


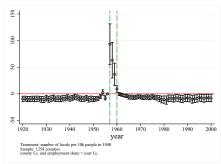




DiD(1) – Newspapers (number of pages)

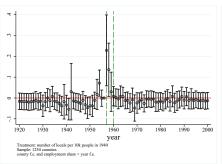
• Outcome: number of newspaper pages

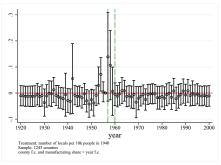






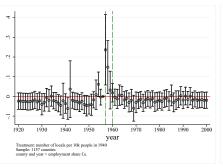
DiD(1) - Newspapers + controls

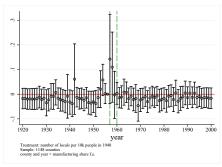






DiD (1) - Reputation + controls (no investigated)





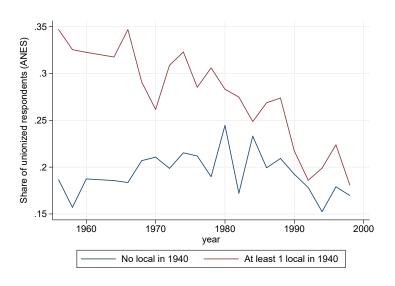


Registration campaign





Raw data – Unionization (suggestive)



Number of NLRB certification elections 1963

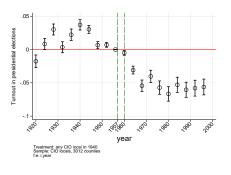
	Number of union elections			
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction	
Share union news on racketeering	-0.227 [0.143]		0.142 [0.118]	
Num. locals / 10k pop. 1940		0.257*** [0.092]	2.080*** [0.748]	
Share union news on racketeering ×			-4.221**	
Num. locals / 10k pop. 1940			[1.645]	
Mean Y	0.33	0.13	0.33	
Counties (N)	613	3098	613	

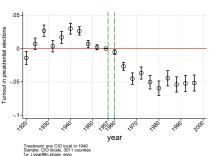
Note: 7 unions



DiD(1) – Turnout in presidential elections

• Treatment: at least 1 union local in 1940

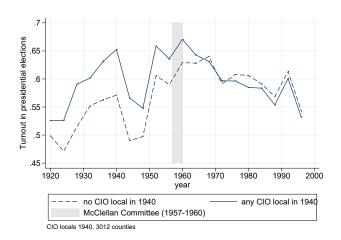






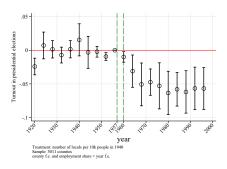
DiD – Turnout in presidential elections

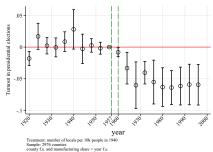
• Treatment: any CIO local in 1940



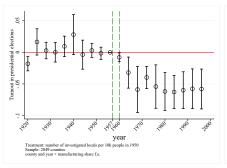


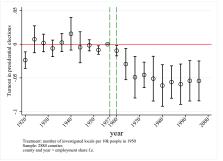
DiD(1) – Turnout in presidential elections + controls





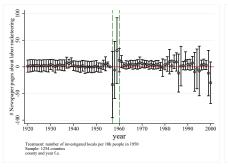
DiD(1) – Turnout + controls (no investigated)

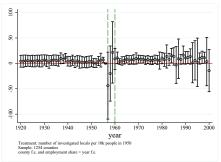






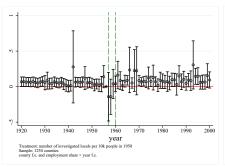
DiD (2) – Reputation (number of pages)

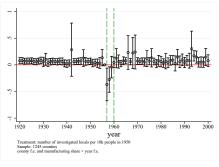






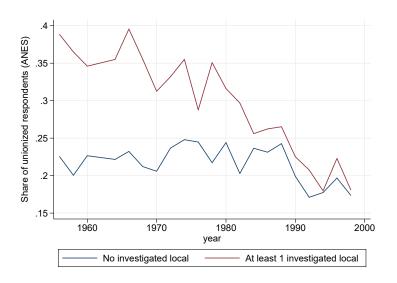
DiD(2) – Reputation + controls







Raw data – Unionization (suggestive)





Number of NLRB certification elections 1963

	Number of union elections				
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction		
Share union news on racketeering	-4.219*** [1.622]		-2.024 [1.302]		
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950		31.473* [18.939]	105.218*** [36.708]		
Share union news on racketeering ×			-167.018		
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950			[110.163]		
Mean Y	5.43	2.01	5.43		
Counties (N)	613	3101	613		

Note: all unions



Unionization (NLRB certification elections 1963)

	Share of votes for union			Share of elections won		
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction	(4) News	(5) Unions 1940	(6) Interaction
Share union news on racketeering	-0.222* [0.115]		-0.220* [0.122]	-0.226 [0.234]		-0.172 [0.251]
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950		0.164 [0.145]	0.037 [0.280]		0.377 [0.299]	0.425 [0.339]
Share union news on racketeering ×			1.563			0.174
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950			[2.062]			[4.156]
Mean Y	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.56	0.53	0.56
Counties (N)	83	201	83	83	201	83

Note: 7 unions

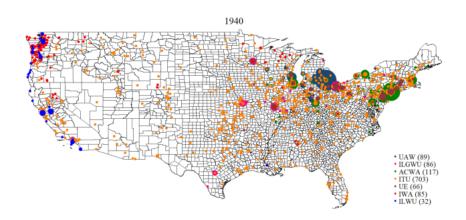


Number of NLRB certification elections 1963

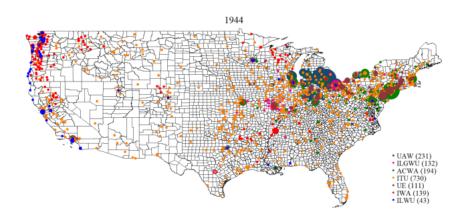
	Number of union elections			Union elections / 10k pop.		
	(1) News	(2) Unions 1940	(3) Interaction	(4) News	(5) Unions 1940	(6) Interaction
Share union news on racketeering	-0.227 [0.143]		0.028 [0.123]	0.007 [0.013]		0.009 [0.013]
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950		2.791 [1.825]	11.104*** [4.232]		0.039 [0.031]	0.080* [0.043]
Share union news on racketeering ×			-21.283*			-0.212*
Investigated locals / 10k pop. 1950			[11.512]			[0.120]
Mean Y	0.33	0.13	0.33	0.02	0.02	0.02
Counties (N)	613	3101	613	613	3101	613

Note: 7 unions

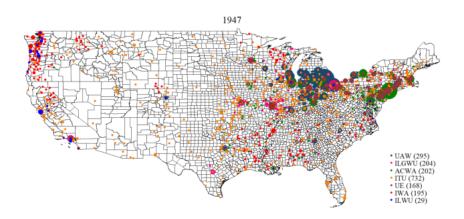




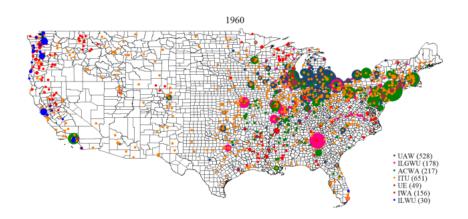
Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project



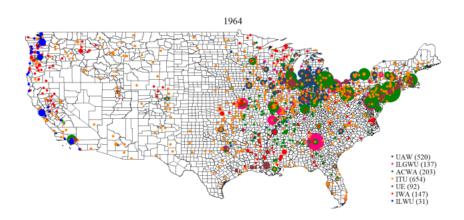
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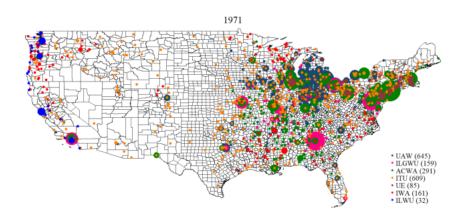
Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project



Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project

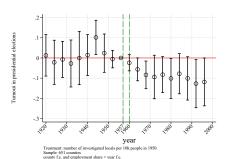


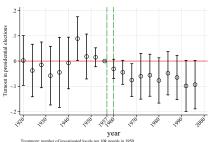
Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project



Data: Mapping American Social Movements Project

DiD (2) – Turnout in presidential elections + controls



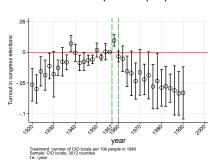


Treatment: number of investigated locals per 10k people in 1950 Sample: 651 counties county f.e. and manufacturing share × year f.e.

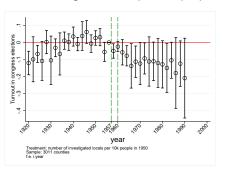
Turnout in congressional elections

- Outcome: Turnout in congressional elections
- Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



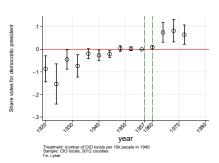
Num. investigated locals per 10k people



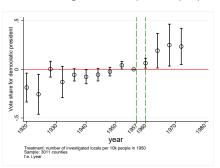
Vote share for democrat presidential candidate

- Outcome: Democrat president vote share
- Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



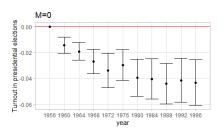
Num. investigated locals per 10k people



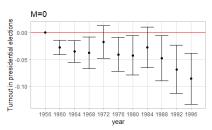
Honest DiD – Rambachan and Roth (2020)

- Outcome: Turnout in presidential elections
- Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



Num. investigated locals per 10k people



back (1)

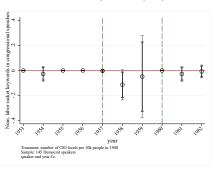


Congress speeches about racketeering – Democrats

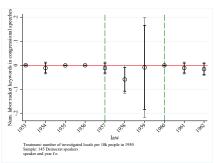
• Outcome: Num. of congress speeches mentioning labor racketeering (long-serving <u>Democrat</u> congressmen)

• Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



Num. investigated locals per 10k people



Congress speeches about racketeering – Republicans

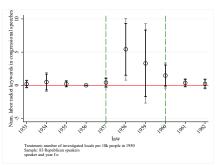
• Outcome: Num. of congress speeches mentioning labor racketeering (long-serving Republican congressmen)

• Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people

Treatment number of C10 locals per 10k people in 1940 species in 1940 species and 1940 spec

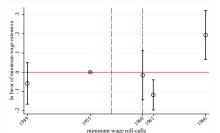
Num. investigated locals per 10k people



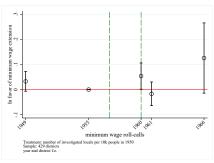
Labor-friendly policy-making

- Outcome: Support for minimum wage extension
- Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



Num. investigated locals per 10k people



poster policies co

congress

democratic vote share



Treatment: number of union locals per 10k people in 1940

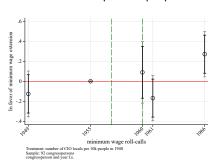
year and district f.e.

Labor-friendly policy-making (long-serving)

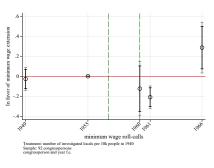
• Outcome: Support for minimum wage extension (long-serving congressmen)

• Treatment:

Num. locals per 10k people



Num. investigated locals per 10k people



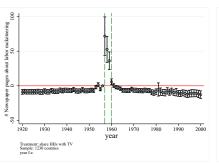
Unions' pro-labor policies



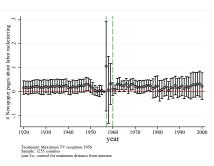
TV and newspapers

- Outcome: Number of newspaper pages on labor racketeering
- Treatment:

Share of HHs owning TV



Maximum tv signal

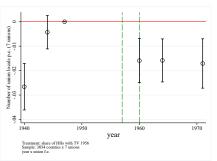




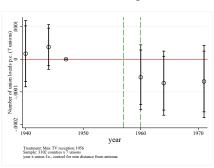
TV and union locals

- Outcome: Number of union locals per capita
- Treatment:

Share of HHs owning TV



Maximum tv signal

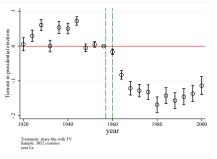




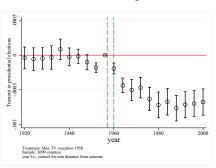
TV and turnout

- Outcome: Turnout in presidential elections
- Treatment:

Share of HHs owning TV

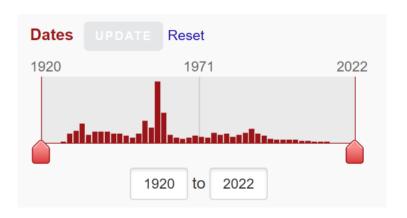


Maximum tv signal





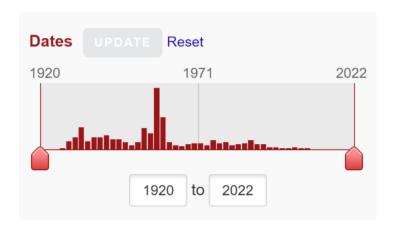
Newspapers - "union" and "racketeering"



- 153.546 records for Union Mafia from 1920 2022
- 150,571 records for Union Racketeering from 1920 2022
- 139,671 records for Labor Racketeering from 1920 2022

August 29, 2023

Newspapers - "labor" and "racketeering"

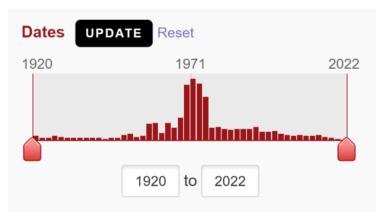


- 153.546 records for Union Mafia from 1920 2022
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- 139,671 records for Labor Racketeering from 1920 2022



Newspapers - "union" & "mafia"

newspaperarchive.com: ("union" & "mafia")



- 153,546 records for Union Mafia from 1920 2022
- 150,571 records for Union Racketeering from 1920 2022
- 139,671 records for Labor Racketeering from 1920 2022

back

August 29, 2023

DIAL 256-3111

WISCONSIN STATE SOURNAL THURSDAY, MARCH SO 1947

Effective Liaison in Upper Echelons

Seen by Crime Fighter

State Department Needs Shake-Up

WARRINGTON - The clast of the federal prosument's or | if depressed his 3 start general come and charged Webserlay that the Tecesters, Specifing to a group that he in-Bloom E. Principe, chief of the Januar Department's organ price of whom have administed

endicates the promposed's in their basiness, and

brated a record to contain we the hants of organ planation of the government to the specified of Illianus di Constiller must very contained Organical oband the harracterial Long work a form a counting leaders "who abuse

a menal consiers may this

Eurifernous, he said, "In the

upper echelate. Her have more

than an effective having be-

said the Teamters.

Ike Attacks Labor Rackets. Suggests Laws

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)-President Eisenhower Thursday branded labor racksteering "an abomination which must be eliminated." He called for power and trust."

To help wipe out "corruption on the part of a few in the labor field, he urged Congress pass laws to protect all union funds, including an estimated 25 billion dollars so far contriborganization health and welfare programs. AFTER a 90-minute confer-

ence here with Secretary of Mitchell, the President asked for swift enactment of legislation to require:

Registration, reports to the government and public dis-



ROBERT LeFEVRE

Shipping at Union, Mafia Mercy

oot. Atlantic and gulf ports of the United States are descinated by the Longshoreman's Union and by the . For the first time the American public was told by means of the news media that the ports are riddled with corruntion, graft, payoffs and extortion. The Marion Brando movie "On the Waterfront" of the 1950's, which revealed the whole sordid craracter of dock payoffs, hiring hall rackets, and so on, has at last surfaced in non-fiction, Included is the discovery that many of the top executives of leading steamship lines are involved

that I been about all that

Labor Racketeering

the docks, dock workers, and so on. And in the midst of the news was the fascinating fact that top ranked business leaders were right in the middle of the swindle.

One of the reporters covering the story asked this question? How could a top business executive knowingly sit down in a board room with known criminals and agree to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in shakedown extortion and for work never performed? The answer given was that it was the cheapest way out. The union and the have shipping so even

pletely at their mercy that it

a few good men in the electronic media who call the shots the way they are. But the bulk of the media in this ecuntry is so biased in favor of unions that the public has been shortchanged on the facts for years.

Naturally, when a businessman goes public, he anticipotes that the public's sense of fair play and decency will surface in his favor. But thanks to the news hias from coast to coast, if the disorder and destruction was Maria made, you could count

on the press either turning a cold ahoulder, or frankly, you could expect the businessmen to be ridiculed; sneered

Measure news about corrupted unions

 More keywords (e.g. cosa nostra & union, racket & union, mob & union, organized crime & union)

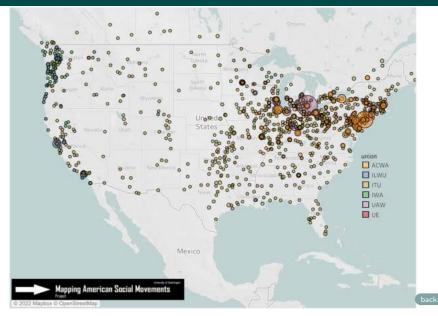
$$CorruptUnionNews_{jt} = \frac{\sum n_{jt} \times \mathbb{1}[Union \ and \ Racket]}{\sum n_{jt} \times \mathbb{1}[Union]}$$
(3)

$$CorruptUnionNews_{ct} = \frac{1}{J_{ct}} \sum_{j=1}^{J_{ct}} \frac{Circulation_{jct}}{Circulation_{ct}} \times CorruptUnionNews_{jt} \quad (4)$$

• newspaper j, county c, time t



Mapping Americal Social Movements



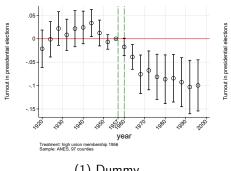
DiD - high vs low union membership (1956) ANES

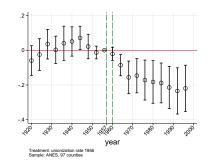


Treatment = 1 if unionization rate in $1956 \ge median$



DiD – high vs low union membership (1956) ANES





(1) Dummy

- (2) Continuous treatment
- Treatment = 1 if unionization rate in $1956 \ge median$
- Treatment = unionization rate in 1956

