

Why Civil Resistance Works

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Some Conventional Wisdoms?

- Insurgents use violence because
 - It is effective
 - It is a last resort
- Nonviolent resistance
 - Is ineffective against brutal regimes
 - Is ineffective for achieving “tough” demands
 - Only emerges in contexts where it is likely to succeed in the first place

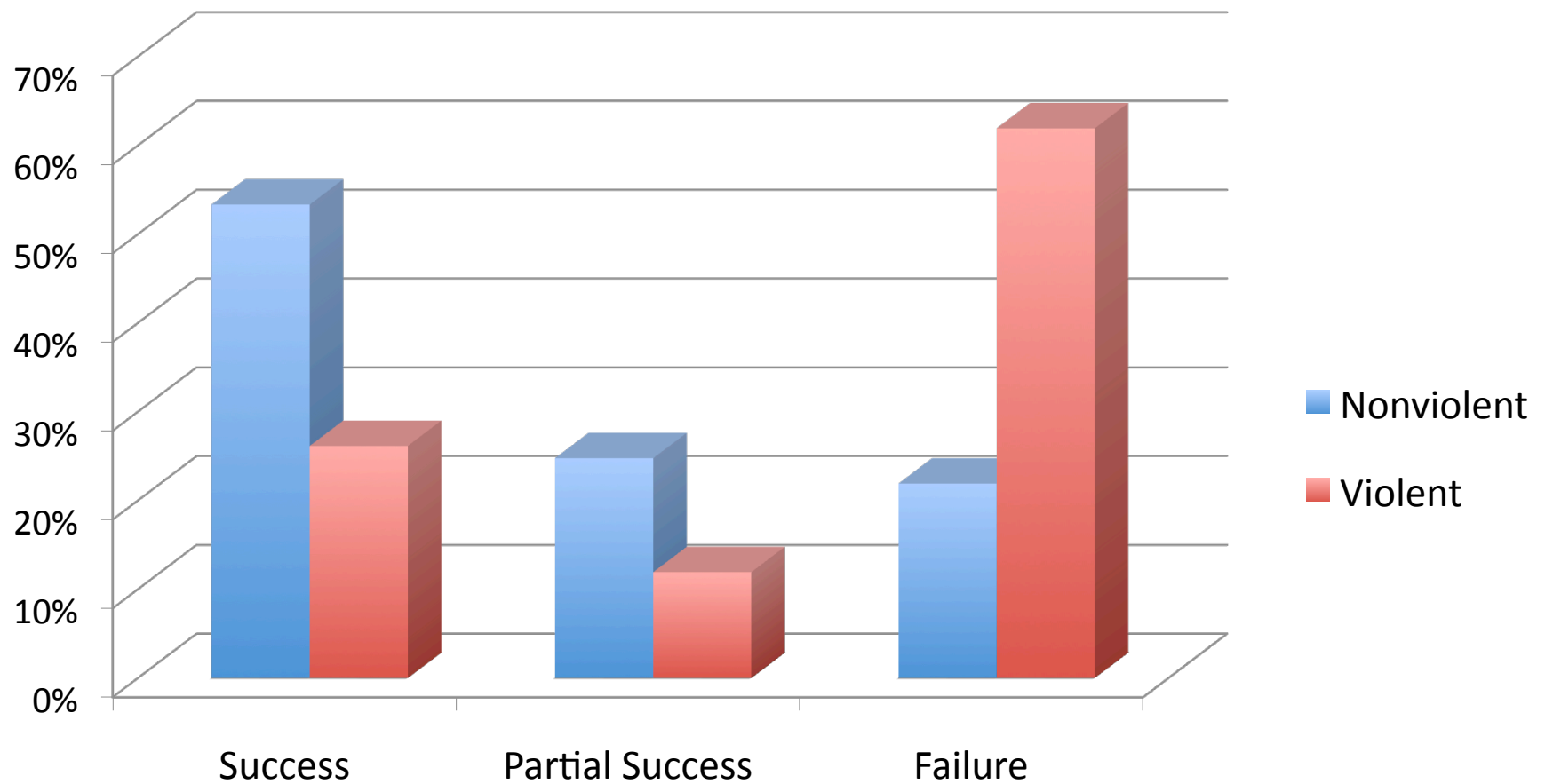
Project Scope

- The Project Does Not:
 - Explain the emergence of different campaigns
 - Examine cases outside of the three issue areas (i.e., civil rights, anti-war, etc.)
 - Argue that nonviolent campaigns are morally superior to violent campaigns
 - Establish a formula for campaign success
 - Focus on the human experience of conflict
- Goals of the Project:
 - Assess the empirical validity of the conventional wisdom
 - Compare trends in the outcomes of nonviolent and violent campaigns
 - Explore the conditions under which campaigns succeed and fail
 - Make some claims about the strategic utility of different approaches to political contestation

Introducing NAVCO

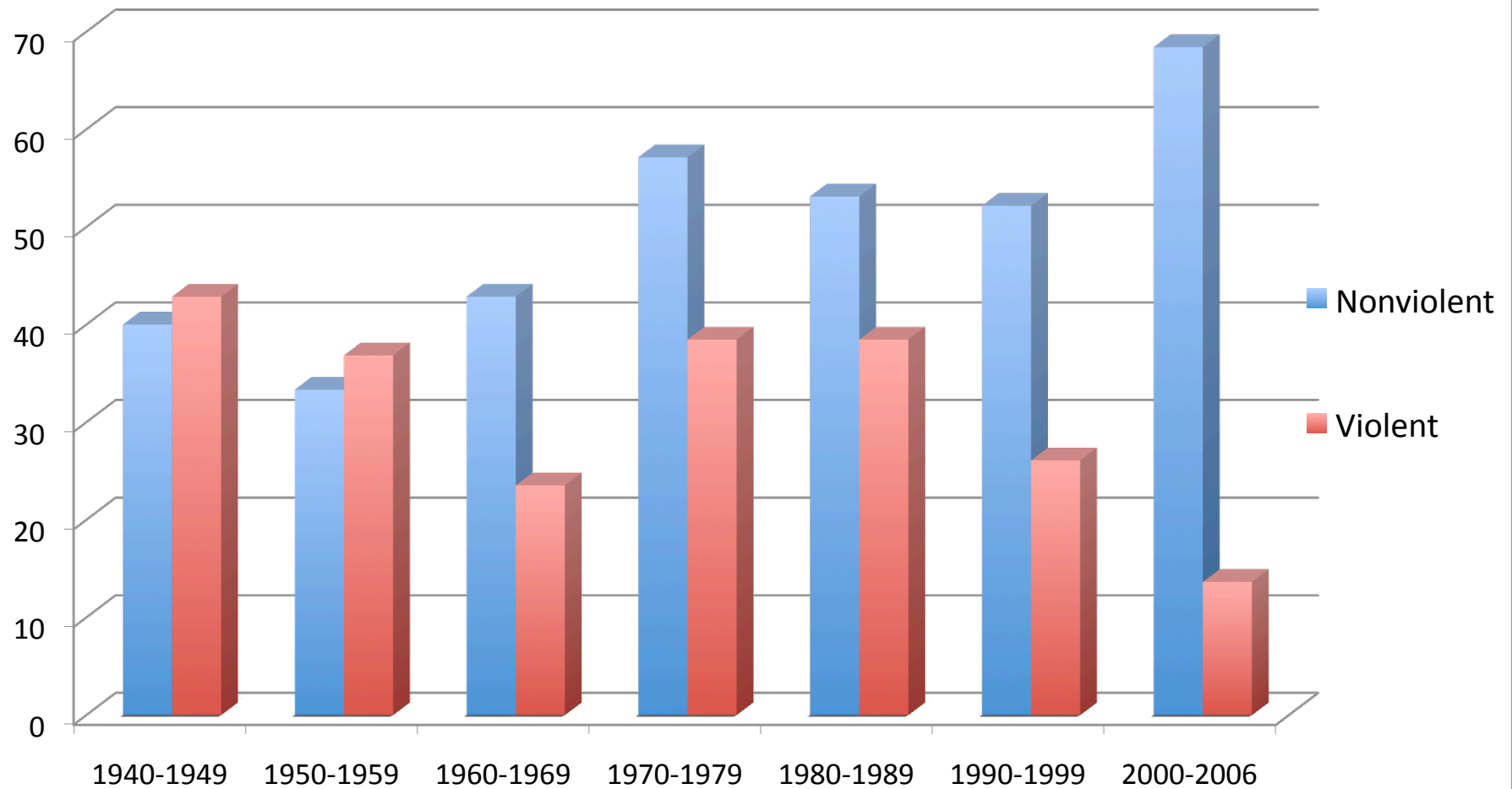
- Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes Dataset
 - 323 campaigns from 1900-2006
 - Ideal types: nonviolent and violent
 - Campaign goals: regime change, anti-occupation, secession
 - Unit of analysis: campaign end year
 - Examples of typical variables
 - Campaign peak membership
 - Security force defections
 - Violent government repression
 - Material support received from a foreign state
 - Regime type, regime capabilities, country population, etc.

Figure 1. Success Rates of Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns, 1900-2006



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Figure 2. Success Rates by Decade, 1940-2006



$p=.000$

The Puzzle

Why has nonviolent resistance been more effective than violent insurgency in the 20th century?

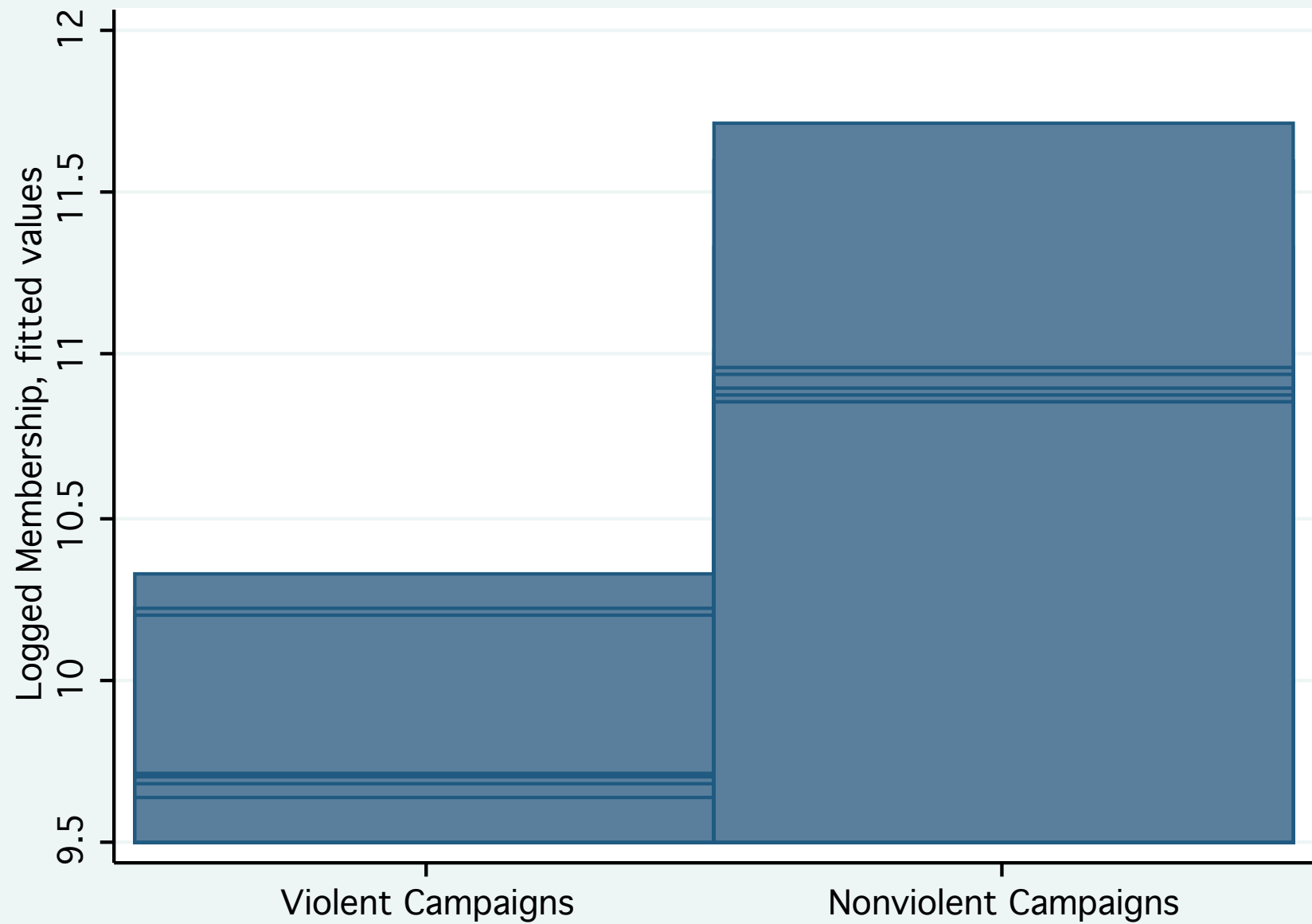
The Argument: The Primacy of Participation

- The superior mobilization capacity of nonviolent campaigns advantages them relative to violent campaigns.
- Mass, nonviolent action is more likely to divide the regime, whereas violent action is more likely to unite the regime.

Explaining Participation in Nonviolent Resistance

- Lower physical barriers
- Lower informational barriers
- Lower moral barriers
- Fewer commitment problems

Figure 1. The Effects of Campaign Type on Campaign Participation



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Figure 2. The Effects of Campaign Membership on the Probability of Success

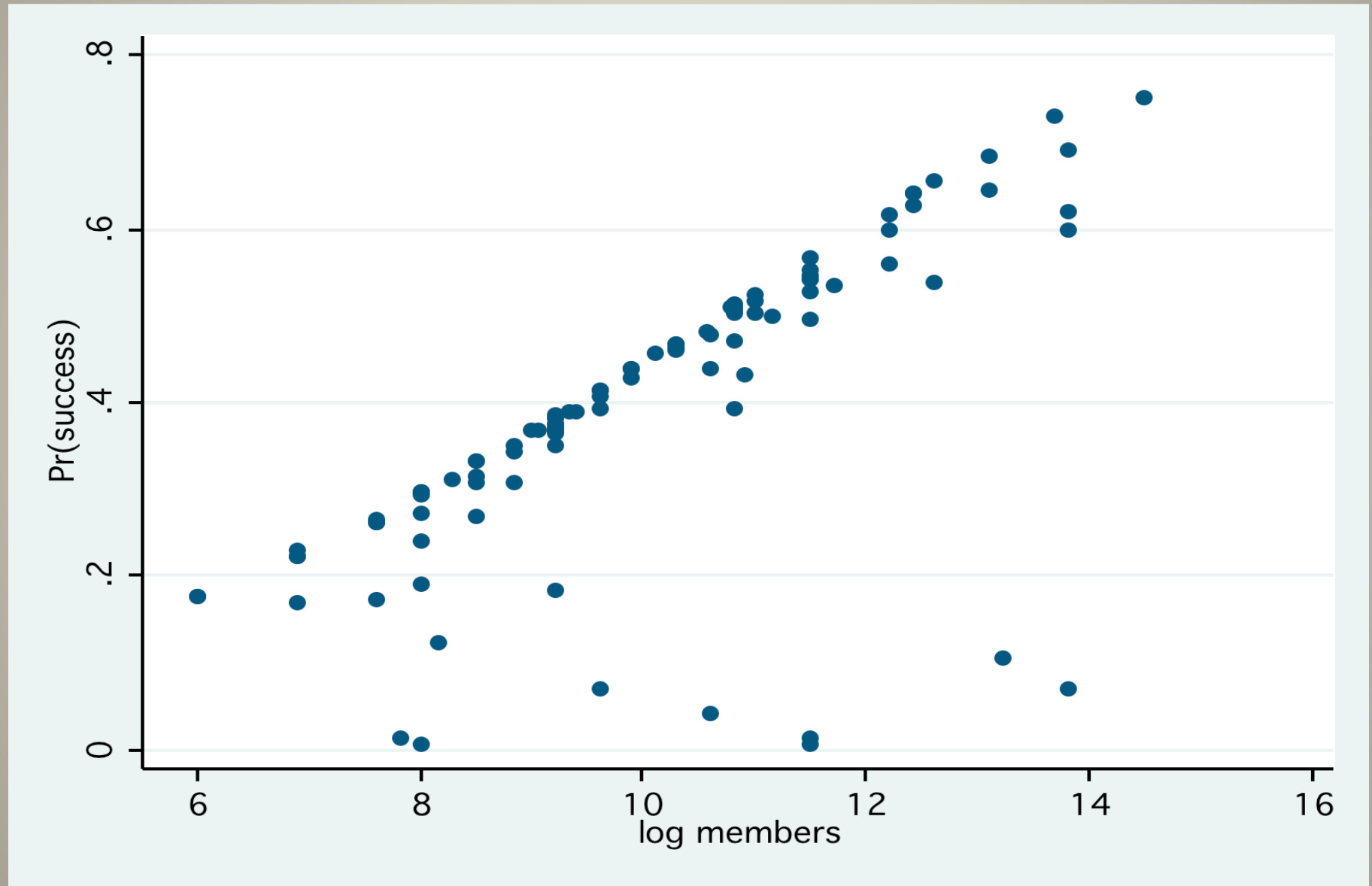
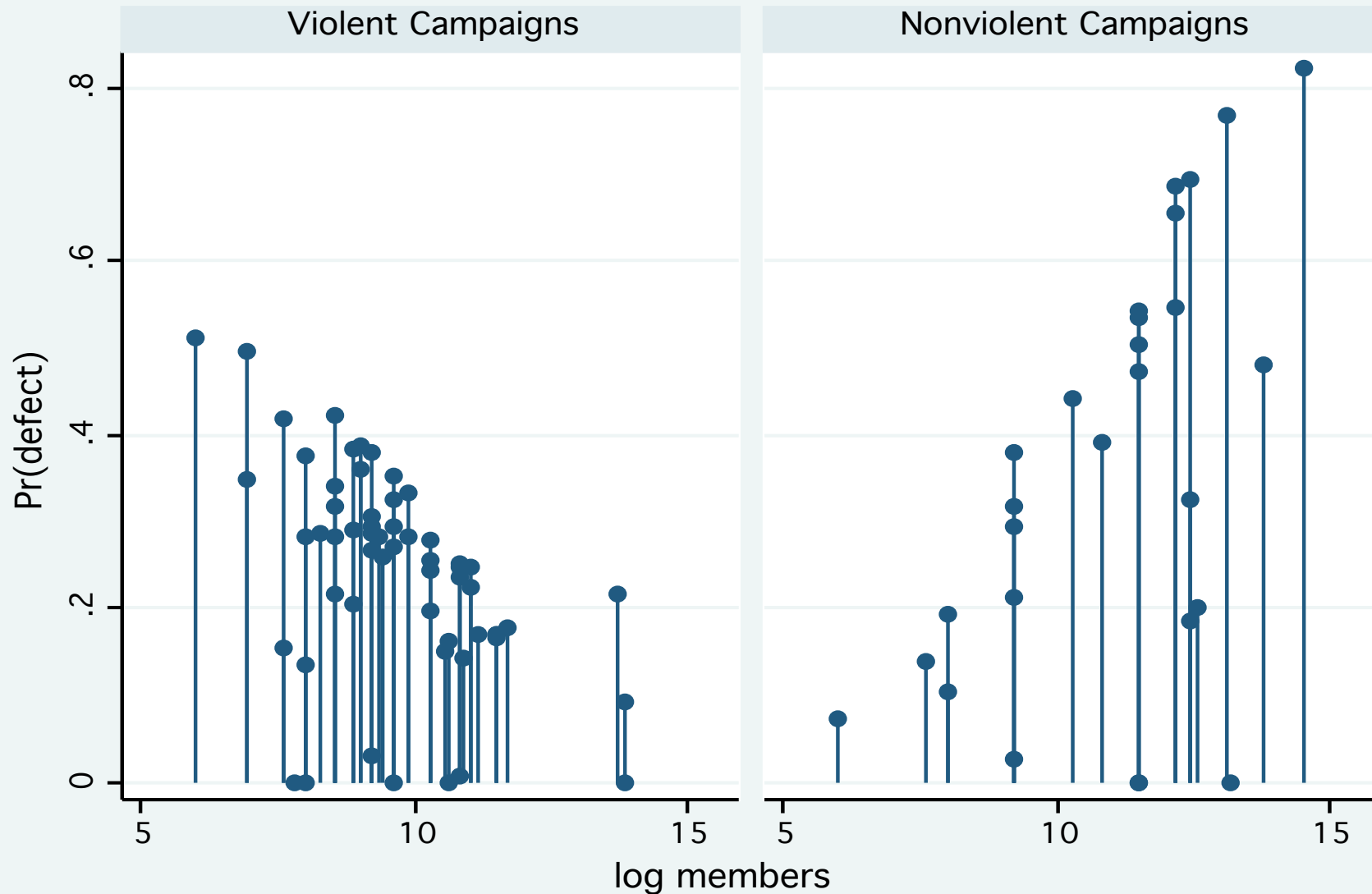


Figure 3. The Effects of Campaign Membership on the Probability of Security Force Defections, by Campaign Type

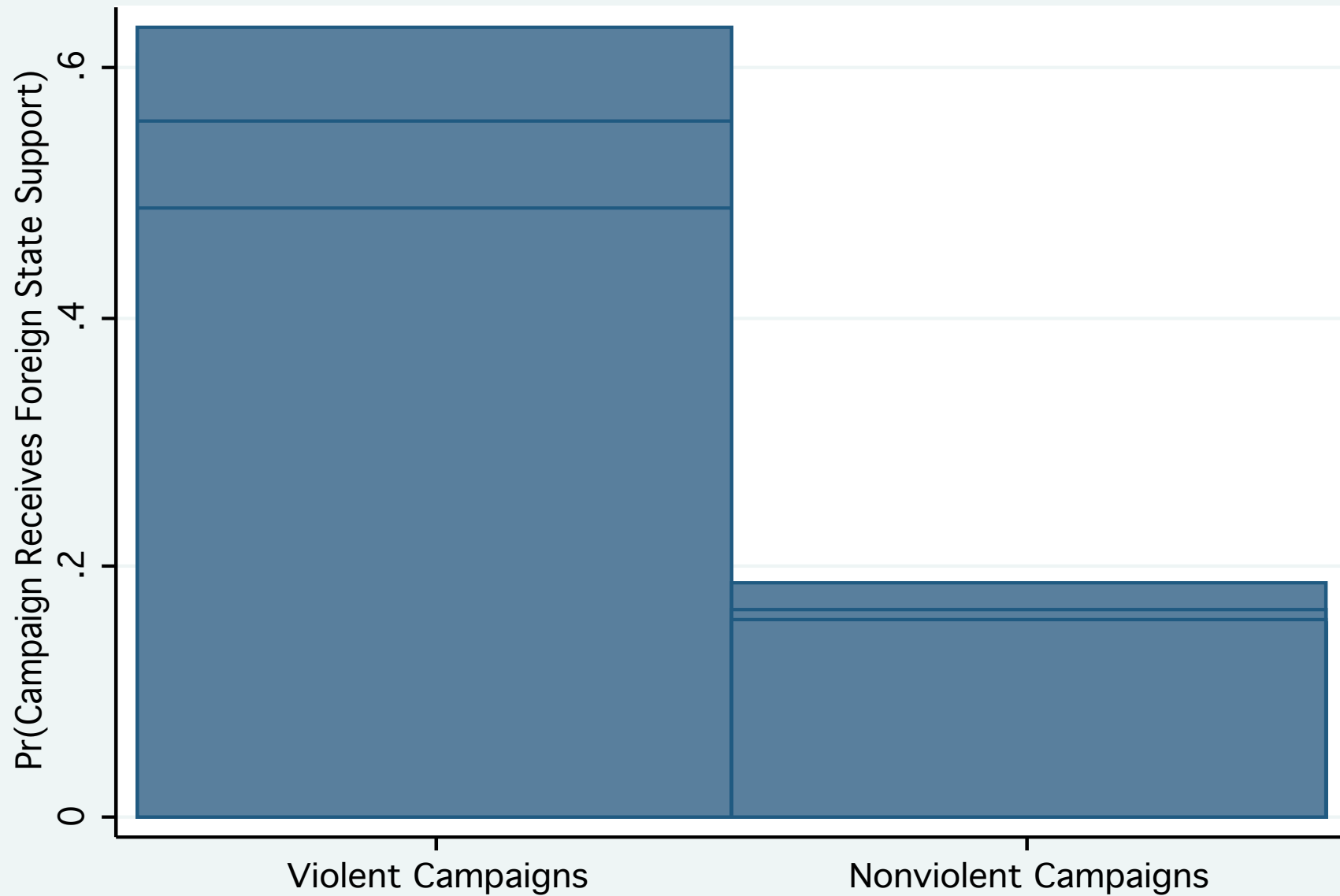


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The Effects of Repression

- Though repression is quite common against nonviolent and violent campaigns, its effects vary
 - Violent campaigns facing government repression are less than 20% likely to succeed
 - Nonviolent campaigns facing repression are over 46% likely to succeed
 - Backfire often results from government repression
 - The state cannot repress all of the people all of the time.

Figure 4. The Effects of Campaign Type on the Probability of Receiving External State Support



The Consequences of Insurgency

- Violent campaigns create “structural violence” long after the insurgency ends
- Nonviolent campaigns are more likely to improve governance and stability
 - Democracy
 - Civil peace

Post-Conflict Regime Type

	Violent Campaigns	Nonviolent Campaigns
Probability of Being a Democracy Five Years after the Conflict Has Ended	4%	41%

P=.000

Post-Conflict Regime Type, Extant Democracies Only

	Violent Campaigns	Nonviolent Campaigns
Probability of Being a Democracy Five Years after the Conflict Has Ended	15%	84%

P=.000

Post-Conflict Civil War Onset

	Violent Campaigns	Nonviolent Campaigns
Probability of Experiencing a Civil War within Ten Years of the End of the Conflict	43%	28%

P=.07

Study Limitations

- Considers only ideal types
 - Nonviolent and violent campaigns
 - Two broad categories of goals
- Over-aggregated unit of analysis
 - Campaign as the unit of analysis, rather than different tactical choices (or non-events)
 - Fails to capture the iterative nature of the conflict (inter-group and campaign vs. state interactions) over time.
- Statistics show only correlation, not causation.

Study Extensions

- Collecting panel data from 1900-2008.
- Collecting daily events data from 1989-2009.
 - Textual Analysis by Augmented Replacement Instructions (TABARI)
- Including many other variables, especially intra-organizational variables.

Questions

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