

The Violence of Law-and-order Politics: The Case of Law Enforcement Candidates in Brazil

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Abstract

Candidates in the developing world often run campaign platforms that promise to improve security, but what do these law-and-order candidates achieve after taking office? In Brazil, where violence is widespread, many law enforcement agents run for office in municipal councils under an unambiguous security platform. Through an electoral regression discontinuity design, this paper shows that the election of law enforcement candidates generates a surge in homicides among non-white men. *Mano-dura* tactics and weak state capacity cannot explain this violence, but local politics can. Spatial analyses using geocoded robberies and homicides show that neighborhoods that did not electorally support law-and-order candidates experience more violence and crime, while areas that supported become more secure. These results suggest that politicians that come from the police use their embeddedness in police departments to distort public policy to benefit their constituency, uncovering a perilous intersection between electoral politics and law enforcement.

This draft: 14th October 2020

*I thank Paulo Arvate, G3rman Feierherd, Sergio Firpo, Alison Post, Rodrigo Soares, Guadalupe Tuñ3n for comments on an earlier version, and seminar participants at the 2018 EPSA meeting, 2018 APSA meeting, EESP-FGV, FGV-RI, IAST-Sciences Po workshop, Insper, and Universidad San Andr3s for helpful feedback. Jorge Ikawa provided excellent research assistance. Any remaining errors are mine.

Violence is a phenomenon that democratic governance has all but failed to contain, and efforts to improve public security within poorly-functioning polities often backfire. Electorally motivated crackdowns on crime disturb the equilibrium between criminal gangs and the State (Calderón, Robles, Díaz-Cayeros and Magaloni, 2015; Lessing, 2017; Dell, 2015; Yashar, 2018), and provoke policies that undermine civil rights (Holland, 2013). Yet, despite these social costs, voters continue to elect law-and-order politicians.

This paper provides a novel perspective on the intersection between politics and public security by analyzing the election of law-and-order politicians. It focuses on Brazilian politicians who explicitly mobilize voters with promises of crime reduction and have a direct connection to the security apparatus: army personnel or police officers who use their professional experience to signal commitment and expertise in the provision of security. These candidates credibly mobilize voters through a programmatic platform, a rare feat in the developing world (Levitsky et al., 2016). Moreover, police candidates can use their enduring connections to law enforcement to divert public security resources in benefit of their constituency.

Crucial aspects of the relationship between politics and violence have received insufficient attention (Moncada, 2013; Post, 2018; Wenzelburger, 2015), and the connection between policing, politics, and quotidian violence remains scantily explored. Recent scholarship shows that victimization increases the support for law and order (Bateson, 2012; Visconti, 2019; García-Ponce, Young and Zeitzoff, 2018), and this fact complicates the empirical analysis of the reverse path, in which law and order may result in more victims. In addition, factors that provoke violence also disturb politics at the same time. To overcome these challenges, this paper deploys a regression discontinuity design comparing Brazilian municipalities that almost elected a law enforcement council candidate to municipalities that ended electing one. The 1.9 million official records of homicides committed between 2000 and 2016 serve as the violence outcome, information that includes some data about the victims. Budgetary, crime, and other political outcomes complement the causal analysis.

Estimates show that the election of these law enforcement candidates generates a considerable increase in murders. However, violence afflicts non-white men disproportionately, who are killed twice as often as before a law-and-order candidate is elected. Homicide rates among women of all races, and among white men are unaffected. Sui-

cides, which are not part of law-and-order agendas, remain constant, indicating that the increase in murders is not driven by chance. Balance tests confirm that treatment and control groups are similar, and the effects on homicides resist various different specifications and placebo tests. Crime, measured as car robberies by force, decreases, but the estimates are not precise. Finally, municipal spending on public security goes up. Municipalities are responsible for only a fraction of all security expenditures, but this effect on local budgets makes it clear that law enforcement candidates directly influence local security.

These results are surprising because councillors in Brazil have limited formal institutional levers to implement large scale policies.¹ It happens that the violence emerges not through the exercise of the powers public office give these candidates, nor through *mano-dura* or extralegal tactics: homicides committed by the police and killing of police officers remain constant. What the paper uncovers is that local law-and-order candidates use their enduring ties to local law enforcement to favor their constituents. In the process, these politicians leave unguarded the neighborhoods that do not support them electorally. Since those who vote for law and order are relatively wealthy, areas with the poorest individuals, who are the most vulnerable to violence (Moncada, 2016, 4), end up neglected. There is no comprehensive data on local policing in Brazil, but data on public security outcomes show an association between support and violence and crime. Based on geocoded information for more than 41 thousand homicides and 919 thousand car robberies from the state of São Paulo, results suggest that crime and violence increase where law enforcement candidates received the least support.

This paper contributes to the study of violence and political representation in several ways. Using natural experiments, it demonstrates the negative local effect of law-and-order politics.² Second, the paper uncovers new nuances of the politics of law and order, and proposes an overlooked explanation for increased violence in developing countries. Since the supporters of law-and-order politics and the groups vulnerable to violence are not necessarily the same, the democratic process can further aggravate the problem of violence, as law-and-order politicians will have incentives to distort

¹Prevention policies, as Moncada (2016) conceptualizes, are measures that tackle structural inequalities and influence norms and social cohesion. These are usually large-scale projects that local council members with limited discretion cannot feasibly put forth in a four-year term.

²Dell (2015) also uses regression discontinuities to causally assess the impact of state intervention in security. It is important to note, however, that that work analyzes a particular platform, that of president Calderón in Mexico. This paper analyzes independent and varied platforms in different districts and time periods.

public security to benefit their constituency. The quantitative analysis sheds light on inequalities in representation in urban areas that arise when local politicians have informal influence over public policy providers.

What Can Local Law-and-Order Politicians Do?

The scope for public policy on security in developing countries is narrow, especially at the local level. Policymakers who wish to reduce crime and violence need to make crime unattractive (Becker, 1968), and battle historical imbalances. Reducing income inequality (Fajnzylber, Lederman and Loayza, 2002), providing higher wages and education (Gould, Weinberg and Mustard, 2002; Lochner and Moretti, 2004), and creating job opportunities (Raphael and Winter-Ebmer, 2001) increase the opportunity costs of committing crimes, but even the most competent national politicians cannot easily control these factors. Subnational and local incumbents cannot feasibly change these variables, much less in a short tenure of office. Policymakers can influence public security by punishing transgressors more often, but judicial reform is often a lengthy legislative process, and not an option for politicians, who cannot write their own criminal code.³ Moreover, the judiciaries in the developing world are lax and do not follow due process for every citizen (Staats, Bowler and Hiskey, 2005; Brinks, 2007). In the end, the measure for tackling crime most readily available to every sphere of government is rearranging policing resources (Soares and Naritomi, 2010, 49).

Even if, on the margin, more or better policing improves security, relying on it to carry law and order forward can result in violent aggregate outcomes. Police forces in emerging democracies are often corrupt, unprepared, and brutal (Scheper-Hughes, 2006; Hinton and Newburn, 2008; Flom and Post, 2016). The police also often lack proper oversight, and many crimes and abuses perpetrated by police officers go unpunished (Brinks, 2007; Gonzalez, 2014; Cabral and Lazzarini, 2014). In addition, police forces often retain practices from their past role of enforcers and torturers of authoritarian regimes (Scheper-Hughes, 1993; Huggins, 1991; Willis, 2014, 2015; Flom, 2019). A *mano-dura* approach to security can magnify these practices where the police are a “source of oppression, human rights abuses and murder” (? , 4).

Incompetence and lack of state capacity can bring more violence. Crackdowns are

³Local politicians can sometimes implement laws that reduce exposure to substances that increase the propensity to commit crimes (Biderman, De Mello and Schneider, 2010).

notoriously unpredictable when the State confronts transnational drug trafficking organizations (Yashar, 2018). The Mexican case is exemplary in showing how increasing security efforts can make violence explode. After Felipe Calderón won the presidency and started a war on drug cartels and their kingpins, homicide rates soared (Dell, 2015; Phillips, 2015; Calderón et al., 2015).⁴ Although these are examples of national policies failing to tackle drug organizations, the same could happen on smaller scales when local governments decide to confront criminal markets.

An overlooked reason for an increase in violence is the incentive of law-and-order politicians to influence policing for political gain. In this case, violence is also a side effect of political action, but it is not electorally damaging to the politician. As in other public policy domains, when providing resources, politicians can give precedence to their supporters, even if favoritism leads to worse public security outcomes overall. This distortion in allocation may manifest more intensely in multi-member districts where politicians do not need to appeal to the median voter to gain a seat. As long as there are enough individuals who feel more secure after the election of law enforcement candidates, the electoral strategy of favoring only part of the population can sustain the law-and-order candidate.

Favoring a constituency when there are considerable constraints means that some areas will receive less attention and, consequently, suffer more violence. If one additional patrol eliminates all crime in its surroundings (Di Tella and Schargrotsky, 2004), placing it in the most violence-prone neighborhood will result in fewer violent events than if that patrol is placed in a safer area. The reverse should also apply. Since young, poor men are those most likely to commit crimes and suffer violent deaths (Reza, Mercy and Krug, 2001), less policing where these individuals are should result in more homicides, even if the shift in policing prevents deaths somewhere else. Hence, if in the process of favoring their potential supporters, law-and-order candidates redirect policing efforts away from areas with vulnerable individuals, we should expect overall homicides to increase.

However, not all law-and-order politicians will have means to favor their constituency. Formal rules and democratic procedures limit most officeholders from distorting policy. In the case of policing, it may be decided at the different sphere of government or require multiple layers of approval, limiting the scope of action for

⁴Lessing (2017) points out a different source of violence that security efforts can cause indirectly. When cartels are unable to coordinate their control of territories and bribe security forces following crime crackdowns, violence escalates.

individual politicians. Yet, some politicians may be able to influence policy through backdoor channels and embeddedness. Although most budgetary decisions and encompassing strategies may be decided at national and state levels, decisions on the location of police patrols and patrols, security cameras, outpost, and checkpoints, are often decided at the local level.

Local politics can meddle with local decisions (Bhavnani and Lee, 2018). In the case of law-and-order politicians and police delivery, this interference requires a direct connection between the public official and policing. We should expect that former police officers will have connections and will be able to influence policing in their favor, while other politicians, even other law-and-order politicians that are not originally from police forces, will not.

Law-and-order Politics in Brazilian Municipalities

This subsection describes local law-and-order politicians in Brazil. Brazil is an unfortunate but ideal place to study politics and security. Levels of violence in the country are comparable to those of areas u(Magaloni, Franco-Vivanco and Melo, 2020), and the issue was ranked high in voters' concerns during the 2018 elections.⁵ The case of Jair Bolsonaro, a former army captain elected president in 2018 under an explicit law-and-order platform,⁶ makes the appeal of this type of candidate evident.

Recent scholarship has brought new insights about the intersection of politics and violence in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Rio has received renewed attention after the implementation of so-called pacifying outposts in *favelas* (*Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora*), and the recent increase of paralegal militia presence in areas previously occupied by organized criminal gangs.⁷ São Paulo succeeded in reducing homicides but at the same time it saw the growth of the most organized prison gang in the country, which appears to have been able to monopolize the crime market in the whole state (Willis, 2015; Feltran, 2018; Lessing and Willis, 2019). The same criminal group has recently made incursions into other states, generating violence.

It is unclear, however, if the patterns found in metropolitan areas are present in

⁵<https://g1.globo.com/politica/eleicoes/2018/eleicao-em-numeros/noticia/2018/09/11/saude-e-violencia-sao-os-principais-problemas-para-os-eleitores-brasileiros-segundo-datafolha.ghtml>, accessed 04-08-2019

⁶www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2017/12/1943288-bolsonaro-e-recepcionado-em-manaus-por-boneco-de-12-metros.shtml

⁷Magaloni, Franco-Vivanco and Melo (2020); Lessing (2017) describe and offer explanations for these recent developments.

smaller municipalities. Aside from a few case studies, there are no comprehensive studies of violence, police organization, or politics in mid-size or small municipalities. There is no evidence that large organized criminal entities had spread to municipalities far from state capitals and into other states prior to a recent expansion in the late 2020s. Local drug markets are likely small to allow groups to capitalize and buy heavy armaments, and incipient organize to confront the State. It is unlikely that local criminal groups in these municipalities resemble those from state prisons or Rio's communities.

The Link between Police Organization and Local Politics

Since higher spheres of government decide the budget and organization of police departments, local politicians in Brazil do not have institutional levers to revamp public security on their own. Brazilian law enforcement are either organized at the national level (Federal Police, which investigates cross-state crime and financial crime), or at the state level. Each state has a regular police force, which are divided into an investigative plainclothes branch (*polícia civil*), and uniformed patrolling police (*polícia militar*, or PM), which holds the larger staff.⁸

The organization of the PM resembles a military hierarchy. State government authorities dictate state-wide strategies and coordinate resources, then police chiefs (“*coronéis*”) oversee regional police outposts (called “battalions”), and at the municipality level, local police chiefs decide how to police neighborhoods, given the amount of manpower the state authority has decided to allocate to a particular municipality. Municipal governments can complement public security by hiring private security guards, implementing surveillance systems, and other measures. Local governments can also create “Municipal Guards,” who have policing rights, but are locally managed and funded, and are not always allowed to carry guns (Arvate and Souza, 2016).

Local legislatures in Brazil vary in size according to the municipal population, but 90% have the minimum of nine councilors (Cepaluni and Mignozzetti, 2015).⁹ Most instruments for local policy rest with the mayor. Councilors can propose municipal laws and legislate over local taxes, but cannot individually propose budgetary amend-

⁸Despite its name, *polícia militar* is under civilian control. For a summary of the different attributes of Brazilian police branches, see Willis (2015, 13-15).

⁹Since there are too few municipalities with more than nine councilors that had close elections of law enforcement councilors, it is not possible to explore if the number of councilors affects public security.

ments. The councilors' staff lack professional expertise, and their legislative activity often centers on public honoring ceremonies (Silva, 2014). Clientelistic exchanges between councilors and voters are common during and after elections (Kerbaux, 2005; Lopez and Almeida, 2017; Cepaluni and Mignozzetti, 2015).

Yet, qualitative evidence shows that law enforcement councilors play an active role in security. They often lead local legislative security commissions or are appointed by mayors as the chief of public security. Also, they organize town hall meetings with the police and citizens, and propose commendations for local police chiefs, which signals effort to maintain a relationship with those still working in law enforcement.¹⁰

If councillors can exert any influence, that must come informally through an attachment to the police force. Political influence over police affairs is hard to identify and quantify. One survey finds that political interference is one of the most common complaints among officials in Minas Gerais military police (Ribeiro, Cruz and Battucci, 2005, 302), and in one interview a high-ranking police officer stated that with political connections fellow police personnel get promotions more easily.¹¹ At the local level, military personnel have limited embeddedness in society or in police forces. If these candidates wish to direct local public security, they will only be able to do so through regular channels (the military only take policing roles in special circumstances of security disarray). Hence, if law enforcement candidates use their respective law enforcement agencies for political purposes, the police-candidate is the most likely to be able to affect public policy through the organization channel they have to their old job.

The Law-and-order Constituency

To fully characterize law-and-order politicians in Brazil, it is important to assess who they represent while in office. The law-and-order constituency is relatively wealthier. There are no surveys at the local level in Brazil measuring support for law enforcement candidates, but in order to learn who supports these candidates, I calcu-

¹⁰Law enforcement council candidates in Brazil are different from the average council candidate, too. Campaign data indicate that law enforcement candidates run campaigns on programming rather than on the distribution of selective goods. They are less wealthy, receive fewer donations, and comparatively do not rely as much on political brokers during campaigns. In comparison to other candidates, law enforcement candidates are outsiders, having been members of political parties for considerably shorter periods. An extended comparison between law enforcement candidates' campaigns and political experience and those of other candidates appears in the Appendix.

¹¹Block (2019) documents that state governors use police resources to improve electoral odds.

late regression models at the polling station level with municipal fixed effects. The electoral authority reports the number of individuals at the polling station and their level of schooling at the time of registration. Schooling is strongly correlated with income in Brazil (Binelli and Menezes-Filho, 2019), making it a proxy for income. I classify voters into three groups: (i) those that are illiterate, barely literate, or who only finished middle school (54.0% of the total); (ii) those that attended high school (37%); and those that attended university or college (9.1%). At sixteen, the age at which individuals can register to vote, voters still in the education system would be attending high school. Further, I rank all polling stations in a municipality according to their support for law enforcement candidates, and create binary indicators for stations in the bottom and top quartiles.

Law enforcement candidates have a higher appeal among voters with better education, who are in higher income strata. Table 1 shows a positive relationship between education and support for law enforcement candidates. Polling stations with more post-secondary-educated voters supported law enforcement candidates, and stations with voters with lower educational attainment are unlikely to vote heavily for those candidates. Similarly, the probability of a station being at the top quartile of support for law enforcement candidates increases with university education.¹²

¹²Law and order is also attractive to wealthier citizens in other countries. In the United States, Lacey and Soskice (2015, 4) note that the demands for and eventual enactment of more punitive laws is often associated with the political engagement of better-off voters.

Table 1: Support for Law Enforcement Candidates and Education, Brazil 2012

	Top station	Bottom station	Support for LEC
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Proportion Post-Sec. Ed.	0.26*** (0.01)	-0.40*** (0.01)	0.30*** (0.03)
Proportion High School Ed.	0.21*** (0.01)	-0.23*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.02)
Munic. FE Observations	Y 256,950	Y 256,950	Y 256,950

Notes: Top station and Bottom station are indicators that are equal to one if the polling station is in the top or bottom quartile of support to law enforcement candidates in the municipality, respectively. Support for LEC is the proportion of votes that law enforcement candidates received out of all votes at a polling station. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

The Data

Data come from several sources and span the 2000–2016 period. The Electoral Court (TSE) provides detailed electoral data.¹³ It includes information about candidates, the electorate, and election results. I use ballot names to identify council candidates who are running a law-and-order platform in the election. These candidates make reference to the police or military forces by including titles such as captain, colonel, corporal, detective, lieutenant, private, or sheriff in their ballot names. Specifically, these law-and-order politicians are *law enforcement candidates*. The Brazilian political system is a low-information environment, and using ballot names to convey signals to voters is common (Boas, 2014). Since 2000, a total of 6,193 council candidates have used some sort of military or police ranking designation in their ballot names. Of these, 996 members have indicated they were from a branch of the military, and 3,126 from the police force. The remainder did not declare their occupations as being either police or military, listing themselves instead as retirees and public employees, or other jobs they might have had. Candidates also need to self-report their

¹³Electoral data is available at www.tse.jus.br, accessed 03-07-2018.

occupations, but not all law enforcement officers are law enforcement candidates. Almost ten thousand law enforcement officers did not run as law enforcement candidates.¹⁴ Of the 5570 municipalities in Brazil, 2,030 have had one law enforcement candidate at some point, and 571 had at least one elected.

The Ministry of Health collects mortality statistics through the Brazilian System of Death Registration (SIM/Datasus).¹⁵ In contrast to crime data and police reports, every death is documented, and the records include the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) classification. I include all deaths involving aggressions, which range from homicide to suicide.¹⁶ From 1996 to 2016 there have been 1.9 million deaths due to aggression. According to regulations, a coroner or an appointed physician must investigate deaths that involve aggressions. Cause of death comes from a medical examination of the body, and through interviews with family members, witnesses, and the police. This decision sometimes contain errors (Cerqueira, 2012).¹⁷ Death records also list the victim's race.¹⁸

The Ministry of Justice provides municipal crime data through the National System of Public Security Statistics and Criminal Justice (SINESPJC).¹⁹ The ministry aggregates all crime data from different state police authorities. The dataset contains crime statistics for four large groups of crimes: car thefts, car robberies, sexual assaults, and homicides. Data for all municipalities is available starting in 2012.

The unavailability of information regarding the number of police allocated to each municipality limits the analysis. However, the National Treasury provides data on

¹⁴See Appendix B for further details on the classification.

¹⁵ftp.datasus.gov.br/dissemin/publicos/SIM/CID10/, accessed 03-07-2018. Some Brazilian data sources prevent access from international IPs, but can be accessed through a Virtual Private Network that tunnels through a Brazilian server.

¹⁶I code homicides as cases with ICD-10 codes ranging between X85-99 and Y00-09; suicides as X60-84; and undetermined external causes, which is when the coroner cannot determine intent as Y10-34 codes.

¹⁷For example, the ICD-10 reserves a category for deaths from direct confrontation with law enforcement officers, and a comparison between annual reports from state police departments and SIM/Datasus shows that the number of deaths by confrontation in the latter is too low (Bueno, Cerqueira and de Lima, 2014). The medical examiners are a branch of the police force (*polícia científica*), making misreporting or deliberate misclassification potentially correlated with law enforcement officers in politics, an aspect that will be further developed in the empirical section.

¹⁸The Brazilian bureaucracy separates individuals according to skin color, not race. The classification includes five categories: white, black, brown (*pardo*), yellow, and indigenous. Nonwhite victims are those not classified as "white." Of these, 97% are either "black" or "brown". The coroner does not classify color herself, but asks a family member to choose it from among the categories.

¹⁹<http://dados.gov.br/dataset/sistema-nacional-de-estatisticas-de-seguranca-publica>, accessed on 06-10-2018.

municipal spending on public security.²⁰ All demographic information, which includes Gini coefficients, population, and population according to race, among others, comes from the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).²¹ Municipal racial composition comes from census data, and the proportions of white and non-white municipal residents used in the estimates (as well as any other covariate) are always pre-treatment measurements.

The spatial analysis uses data from the TSE and from São Paulo state police. In Brazil, polling stations are located in schools. Since citizens in Brazil are assigned to the polling station closest to their current residence, measuring support at the polling station level will determine the support of voters surrounding the polling station.²² In order to capture high and low support for candidates, I rank all polling stations in a municipality according to votes cast for law enforcement candidate as a proportion of the total votes in the station, and define the top quartile of stations as *supporters*. Likewise, the bottom quartile are the *non-supporters*.²³ The São Paulo police repository contains the addresses of murders and reported car thefts in the state since 2003.²⁴

The Election of Law Enforcement Candidates and Violence: The Regression Discontinuity Design

Regression discontinuity (RD) designs are appropriate for addressing endogeneity problems. Many factors drive public security outcomes, and without accounting for charisma, valence, the ability to fight crime, and other unobservable attributes of the

²⁰<https://siconfi.tesouro.gov.br>, accessed on 06-10-2018.

²¹<https://seriesestatisticas.ibge.gov.br/default.aspx>, accessed on 06-10-2018.

²²Voters are not required to update their addresses after moving. When they fail to update, they either must travel to their last registered polling station, or not vote. Voting is mandatory, but penalties are not severe. The use of polling station fixed effects eliminates any structural factor that might influence the decision to update the address. The Electoral Authority provided the addresses of all polling stations in 2012. Requested through the Freedom of Information Law (*Lei de Acesso à Informação*). Some polling stations are added or removed between electoral cycles, and the 2012 list is only accurate for that electoral year.

²³Tests with a different operationalization that uses a continuous variable of support (votes law enforcement divided by total votes) are reported in the Appendix.

²⁴I webscraped these reports from the São Paulo Security Secretariat website (<https://www.ssp.sp.gov.br/>, accessed 01-27-2019). Although recent reports contain the events' geographical coordinates, many have the exact location missing. I used Google's API services to input 357 thousand missing coordinates. Some addresses are missing street numbers, and their location is approximate. Still, some addresses could not be determined.

candidates, the analysis will be confounded. In addition, it is possible that competitive candidates only appear in places with high homicide rates, or where homicide rates follow a distinct pattern. Hence, simply comparing municipalities with winning and losing law enforcement candidates will not provide reliable evidence about how these candidates affect homicide rates when in office. RD designs can alleviate the problem of confounders and produce unbiased estimates under few assumptions, which are testable (Lee and Lemieux, 2010; Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik, 2014). The method exploits the fact that the treatment assignment, electing a law enforcement candidate, is discontinuous around a vote margin cutoff, but potential outcomes regarding violence are continuous, making the observed outcomes in one group comparable to the unobserved potential outcome of units in the other. One caveat in RD designs is the local nature of estimated effects. Effects should be interpreted as causal within the subgroup of municipalities that had a law enforcement candidate elected or not elected by a small margin.

Council candidates are elected through a PR system. In this setting, the “closeness” of an election result is measured according to the distance in terms of vote margins between candidates within the same list (Boas, Hidalgo and Richardson, 2014). The number of seats each list receives depends on all the votes their candidates win, and also how votes are distributed across different lists as well. It is doubtful that candidates can act strategically and influence the list ranking. Opinion polls are uncommon for council elections, and the number of new entrants are high, as it is the total number of candidates (each list can have up to twice as many candidates as the total number of available seats). Section B.1 implements a density test and shows no sign of sorting around the cutoff. The basic regression discontinuity model that captures the causal effect of law enforcement incumbency is:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta Y_{i,t+1} = \alpha + \beta_1 LEC_{i_t} + \beta_2 Margin_{i_t} + \beta_3 LEC_{i_t} * Margin_{i_t} + \phi_t + \mu_{i_t} \\ \forall i, t \text{ s.t. } |M_{i_t}| < \epsilon, \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

where LEC_{i_t} is a binary indicator equal to one if the law enforcement candidate won the election in t , and β_1 measures its causal effect. $Margin_{i_t}$ is the forcing variable, ϕ_t are the time fixed effects, and μ_{i_t} is an error term. $|M_{i_t}|$, the forcing variable, is constructed within each party or coalition list. ϵ is an arbitrarily small vote margin that defines the study group for each estimation. $Margin$ is the absolute distance (in terms of vote share) between a losing candidate and the last winning candidate of his

or her list, or the distance between a winning candidate and the most voted losing candidate on his or her list. Candidates from lists without a winning candidate do not figure in the estimations.

The dependent variable $\Delta Y_{i,k_{t+1}}$ measures of the difference between the outcome in the period after the election and the outcome in the period before the election in municipality i . For example, for homicides the dependent variable is the yearly homicide rate in the period after the elections, minus the rate in the period before the election.²⁵ With the exception of budget spending, the periods of analysis include all years in the study period except the election year.²⁶

Choosing the margin to build the study groups involves a trade-off between precision and bias. This paper often opts to present this trade-off using different windows of analysis, from small to larger bandwidths progressively, as suggested in Bueno and Tuñón (2015), and to calculate robust confidence intervals for each window. This process allows a transparent visualization of point estimates for each arbitrarily chosen comparison group, and shows how both confidence intervals and point estimates vary for every increment in the window of analysis.²⁷ Where the study group size is small due to the calculation of heterogeneous effects of subgroups, I use nonparametrical estimations following (Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik, 2014).

The average margin of victory is 0.7% of all valid votes, which means that close discontinuities involve very small margins.²⁸ Municipalities that had winning and losing law enforcement candidates are dropped. Balance tests in the Appendix confirm that there is no noticeable difference in the characteristics of municipalities and candidates between municipalities with winning or losing candidates. Some municipalities had one barely winning and one barely losing law enforcement candidates in

²⁵Given that homicide rates in a given period strongly correlate with their past values ($\rho = 0.80$), inserting homicide levels introduces prior knowledge about homicide trends at the municipality level.

²⁶Since elections occur in October, and the appointment only starts in January of the next year, an elected law enforcement candidate could already start influencing policing after her electoral victory, but before taking office. By removing the electoral year I conservatively estimate the effect of the election to only include periods where the law enforcement candidate is in office. The spending outcomes variable is measured differently because the previous year's budget decision carries to the next. Hence, the first year of a candidate's term also includes budgetary decisions from a previous year. For this reason, I only evaluate spending from the second to the fourth year of a municipal legislature. That said, measuring outcomes using different periods does not qualitatively change the results (not shown).

²⁷For presentation purposes, estimates at very close margins only show point estimates, as confidence intervals are large due to the small power of these tests. In these cases, the point estimate is never statistically significant.

²⁸In the case of ties, the eldest tied candidate wins the seat, unbalancing the study group. For this reason, estimates do not include the (few) candidates with an absolute margin of zero votes.

the same election, which simultaneously put them in both the control and treatment group. The main estimates do not include these cases. Finally, to estimate the effect of the election instead of the re-election of re-election of these candidates, I drop municipalities with a sitting law enforcement councillor. Municipal elections without a law enforcement candidate are not included in the analysis.²⁹

The Causal Effects of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidates

The election of law enforcement candidates results in more homicides. Figure 1 plots several different estimations for homicides and firearm homicides, from the smallest bandwidths on the left of each panel to increasingly larger bandwidths moving to the right. The effects are large: around 20 more homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. The magnitudes of the effects are in line with estimates from the Mexican drug war in Dell (2015). Section B.6 in the Appendix shows that the results are robust to different robustness checks: without outliers, with lagged outcomes, and non-parametric estimates.³⁰ Figure shows that firearms are the weapon of choice. Figure 2 shows the difference in homicide rates in municipalities most likely to have had “as if random” treatment assignment. Even at seven observations closest to the cutoff the treatment effect is significant.

Not all groups of citizens experience more murders. Considering that in Brazil the correlation between skin color and income is high (Bueno and Dunning, 2017), when analyzing heterogeneity according to skin color one is examining heterogeneity by social class, too. Figure 3 shows that the difference between the white and non-white male population is stark. Only the latter group are experiencing an increase in violence. These effects do not extend to any group of women, as Figure 23 in the Appendix shows.³¹

Estimates for crime are not precise, but crime rates appear to decrease after the election of law enforcement candidates. As shown in Figure 4, car robberies fall by 70 to 120 per 100,000 inhabitants after close elections. The range of the effect and confidence intervals for theft are larger, and the effect is not statistically significant.

²⁹Figure 4 in the Appendix shows that municipalities that had a law enforcement candidate are more violent and more populous than those that did not have any. There is no substantive difference in terms of income inequality. Of around 190 million Brazilians in 2012, 66% lived in municipalities that had a law enforcement candidate.

³⁰In the Appendix, estimations with different polynomial fits show that the local linear model is the most conservative model.

³¹Non-white individuals are 54% of the Brazilian population.

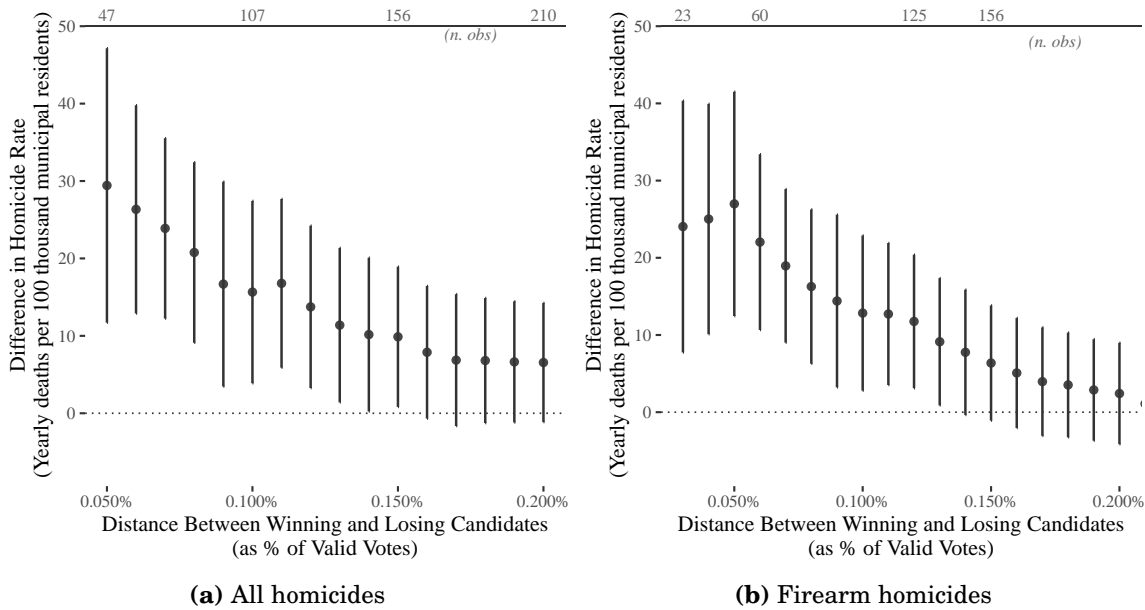


Figure 1: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Homicide Rates. Both plots estimate local linear models. Bars in (a) represent 95% robust confidence intervals. (b) illustrates the discontinuity.

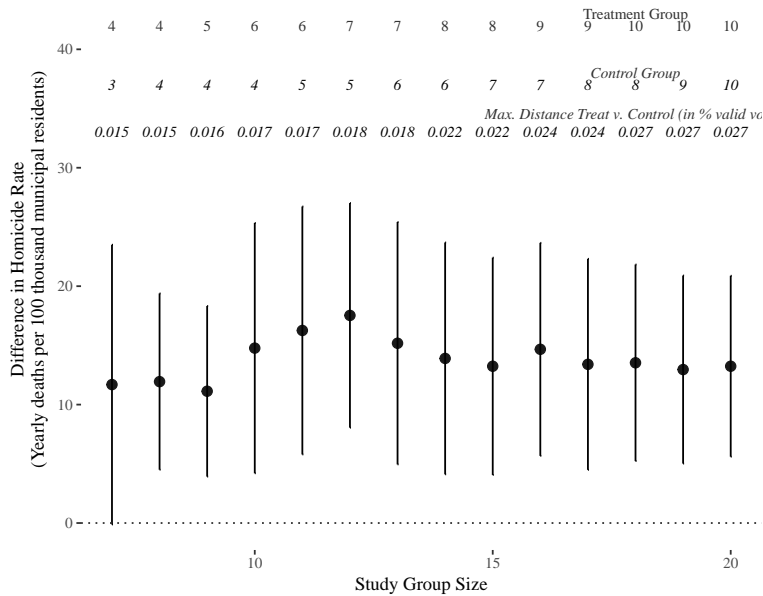


Figure 2: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Homicide Rates, Small Margins. Point estimates are difference of means. Bars are 95% robust confidence intervals. “Treatment Group” and “Control Group” count the total number of observations in each group.

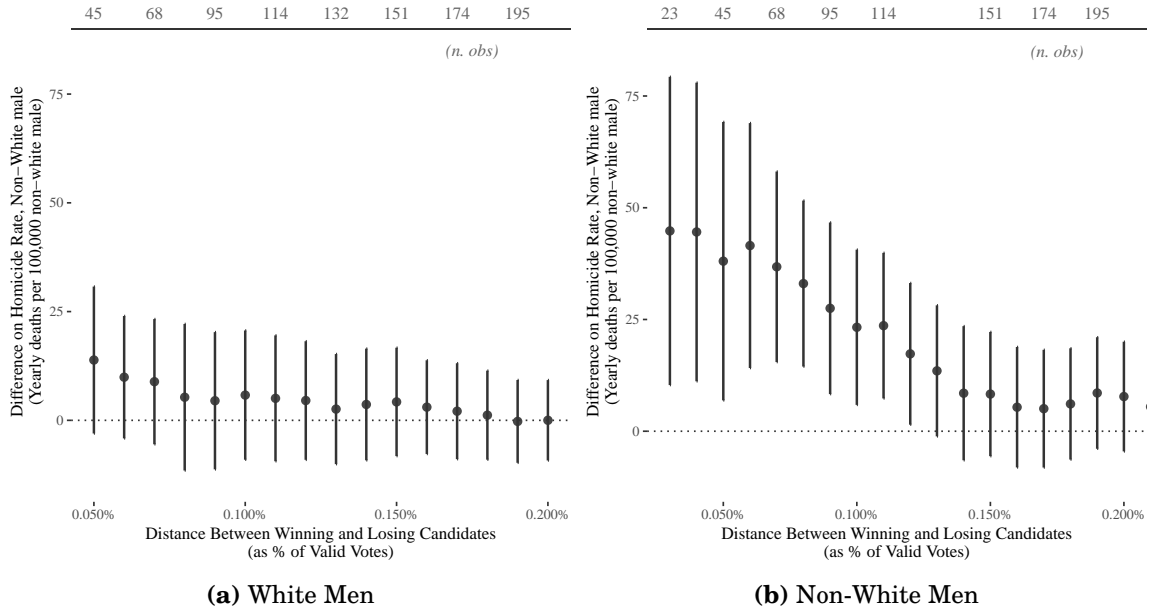


Figure 3: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Different Population Groups. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

Figure 17 in the Appendix shows there is no noticeable effect on sexual assaults.

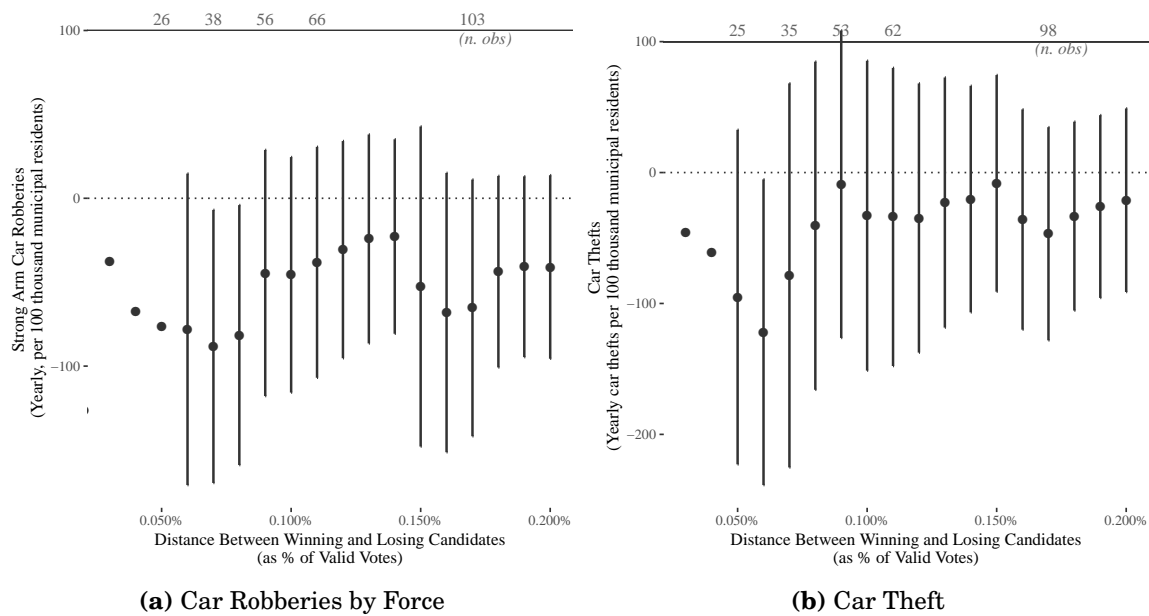


Figure 4: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Crime Statistics. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

Public policy and law enforcement candidates

This subsection shows that law enforcement candidates directly influence public policy. Spending on public security signals governmental effort in the pursuit of law-and-order policies (Wenzelburger, 2015), and Figure 5 shows that on average treated municipalities spend around R\$25 per capita more per year,³² representing a doubling of the R\$19.4 average.³³ Although the data do not allow a fine-grained examination of the policies behind security expenditures, the results make it clear that the election of law enforcement candidates influences public policy towards public security.³⁴ However, this value is only 10% of the total amount state governments spend on security per capita, thus unlikely to be noticeable in terms of resources on the ground. In sum, this result shows direct action in public security following the election of law enforcement candidates, but should not be interpreted as a surge in resources.

³²Around \$7 in May 2018.

³³As a placebo check, Figures 15 and 14 in Appendix B.3 use expenditures to which law enforcement candidates would not be expected to pay any particular attention (education and health).

³⁴A qualitative analysis of elected law enforcement candidates in 2012 provides a picture of how these funds were spent. I analyzed candidates with the 20 smallest margins of victory in 2012, and who had run in municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants (local media and municipal councils' websites may have information about legislative action, and larger municipalities are more likely to have one or both). For most (16 out of 20) incumbents it is possible to find at least one law-and-order policy they proposed. For example, PM Rosiney won a seat in the Council of Lorena, state of São Paulo, and implemented a program by which police officers could work overtime. Capitão Ideval, elected in Maringá, was appointed as Secretary of Traffic and Security, where he hired one hundred new officers for the municipal police (*Guarda Municipal*). (He later resigned after both his son and daughter were arrested in 2015 for involvement in crimes). Soldado Jadson, from Mossoró, Rio Grande do Norte, secured funds for more investment in police equipment, such as bulletproof vests and patrol cars. Cabo Ernesto, in Parintins, Amazonas, introduced a program where more than 400 teenagers would receive uniforms and patrol the streets.

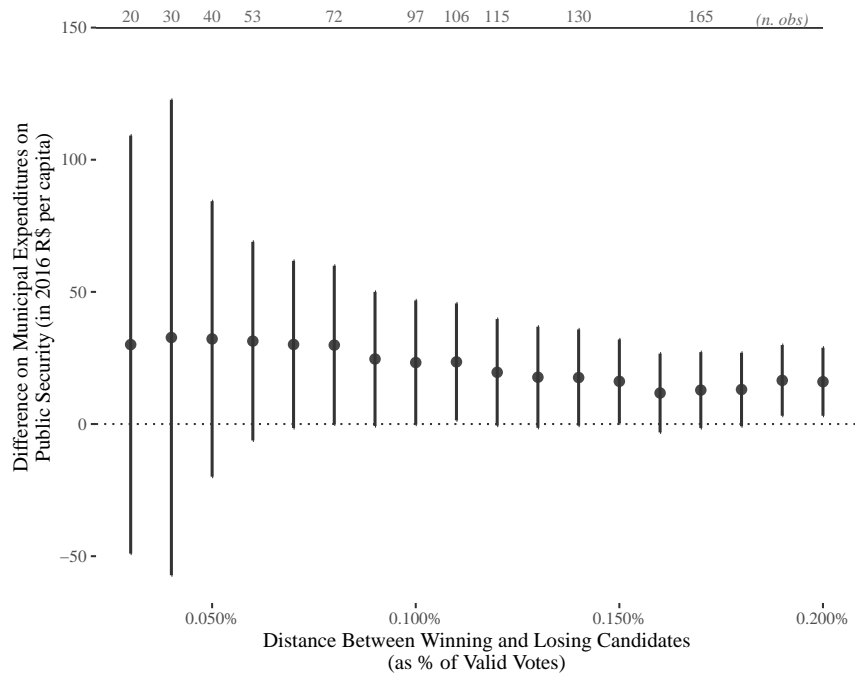
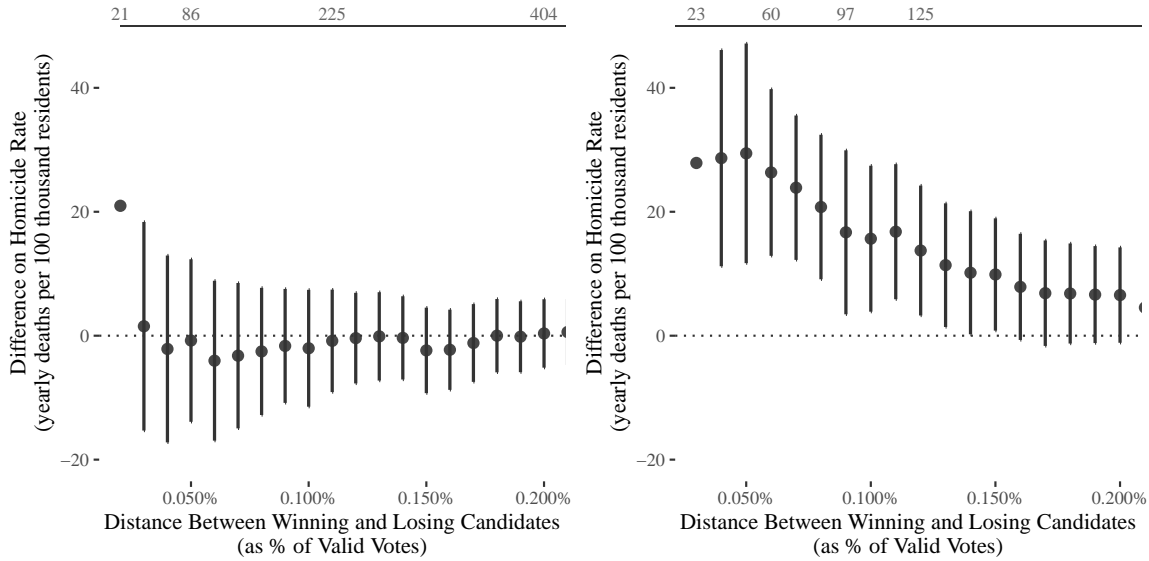


Figure 5: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Public Security Spending. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

Public Security and Electoral Favoritism

This section of the paper examines two potential processes by which law-and-order politics may lead to higher levels of violence. It shows that the increase in murders is not directly caused by police killings or *mano-dura* reactionary policies (Moncada, 2016), but due to the favoritism law enforcement incumbents exhibit towards groups that vote for them. A geographical analysis of murders and crime in the most populous state in Brazil reveals a consistent negative relationship between support and violence. Voters in areas that do not support law-and-order candidates – the least affluent neighborhoods – bear the costs of the election. These results suggest that law-and-order politicians favor their constituencies, displacing limited police resources toward these voters’ neighborhoods.

It is not their background as law enforcement agents that determines the results. There are many law enforcement officers who run for elections, but often these individuals do not remind voters of their occupations on the ballot. Although it is possible that during the campaign they still signal to voters some inclination towards law and order, when they decide not to state their occupation on the ballot, Figure 6 shows that



(a) No Law Enforcement Signal in Ballot Name (b) Law Enforcement Signal in Ballot Name

Figure 6: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Law Enforcement Signaling. *Only includes candidates who have reported a law enforcement occupation. Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

the effect is only evident in municipalities with winning law enforcement candidates.³⁵

Police Violence

The long history of Brazilian police using excessive force and performing extrajudicial killings on marginalized youth, together with a popular perception that a “good bandit is a dead bandit,”³⁶ make State security forces a main suspect for the excess in killings. The Brazilian police force is one of the most lethal police forces in the world (Bueno, Cerqueira and de Lima, 2014), and the criminal justice system investigates police killings in a much less thorough manner than homicides committed by civilians (Willis, 2015; Caldeira and Holston, 1999).³⁷ Brazilian police also have been noted

³⁵I use only police officers for both groups, as they are more likely to intervene against crime and violence even if they are not law enforcement candidates. It is possible that law enforcement candidates decide to drop the signaling from their ballot name after winning an election. When examining candidates that are not running for re-election results are substantially the same (see Appendix B.9).

³⁶Almost 60% of the Brazilian population agree with the saying “*bandido bom é bandido morto*” (Fórum da Segurança, 2016). A bandit in Brazil is often pictured as a young, non-white, poor man (Bueno, 2014).

³⁷However, the data on police killings is not completely reliable (Bueno, Cerqueira and de Lima, 2014). For instance, some states have not reported any police killings over the entire period of analysis,

for concentrating abuses in poorer areas (Caldeira, 2000; ?).

Local police could also be on the receiving end of violence if a law enforcement candidate imposes a crackdown. Brazilian police suffer from high lethality rates (Bueno, Cerqueira and de Lima, 2014), and they have recently been challenged by the rise of well-organized gangs of criminals, such as the *Primeiro Comando da Capital*. Originally from the state of São Paulo, the PCC has expanded operations throughout the country, dislodging rival gangs and making direct connections with Andean drug producers (Feltran, 2018). This expansion has been violent. In notable episodes the PCC has directly targeted police officers, and the police have responded to the challenge with killings (Willis, 2015). Although the expansion of the PCC is recent, other smaller crime factions could have staged offensives against the State in areas the PCC was not present.

However, there is no indication that the election of law enforcement candidates triggers police violence or violence against police. As Panel A in Figure 7 shows, there is no difference in the lethality of police forces between treated and non-treated municipalities.³⁸ Police mortality is also unaffected. Using the occupation codes on death certificates to identify murders of law enforcement officers, Panel (b) shows that there is no increase in the number of deaths in treated municipalities.³⁹ It is also unlikely that there is a cover-up effort to hide police killings from official statistics. As the literature on crime statistics in Brazil documents, it is probable that officials tamper with homicide data (Cerqueira, 2012). It would be worrisome for the design if law enforcement councilors would somehow deflate or inflate homicide statistics. In particular, they may force municipal authorities that write death certificates to rule some homicides as undetermined deaths. Figure 24 in the Appendix shows that there is no evidence of tampering, as there is no detectable effect in reporting of police killings or in the number of undetermined cases of homicides.

and it is possible that law enforcement incumbents pressure or protect the local police by forcing health officials to not report such deaths as police killings.

³⁸These results only include municipalities from states that have reported at least one death during the previous period. Including municipalities from all states yields null effects, too (available upon request).

³⁹The sequence of confidence intervals is not smooth because the data include an outlier case in the control group, Aragoiânia (aprox. 8,000 residents), where two police officers were killed in a double homicide.

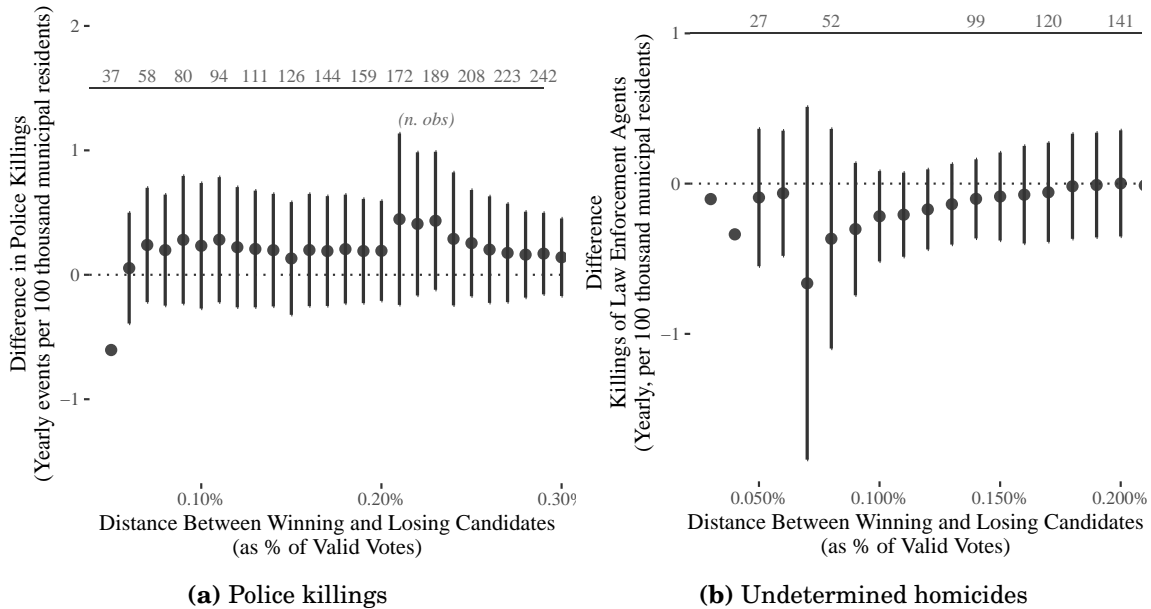


Figure 7: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Police killings. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals. Police killings online include municipalities in states that had reported police killings in the previous period.*

Law enforcement candidates and the police

Municipal councilors have limited formal tools to affect public security. However, law enforcement councilors have a past connection to their agencies. This professional network may be an asset to influence policing at the local level. If that is the case, electing a police officer should bring different outcomes than law-and-order candidates that do not have professional connections to the police.

Figure 8 shows the heterogeneous effect of law enforcement occupation and violence.⁴⁰ While law-and-order army candidates do not seem to affect public security, police candidates do, confirming that only the election of embedded candidates affect homicides. In the next section I will explore in more detail how these effects may be related to the geography of violence and crime within municipalities.

⁴⁰Smaller study groups for army candidates are small, making nonparametric models better suited to estimate causal effects.

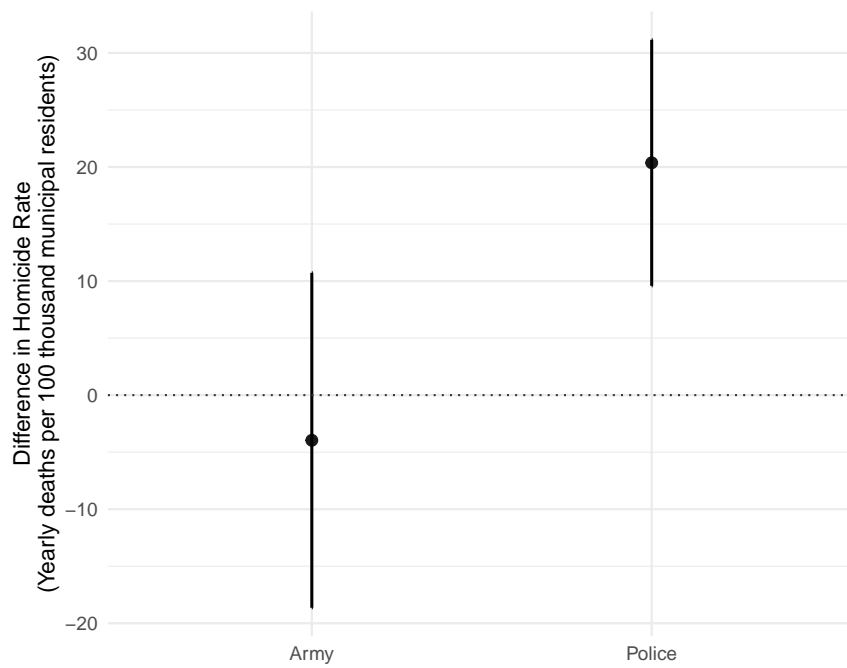


Figure 8: The Effect of Electing an Army or Police Law Enforcement Candidate on Violence. *Nonparametric regression discontinuity models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

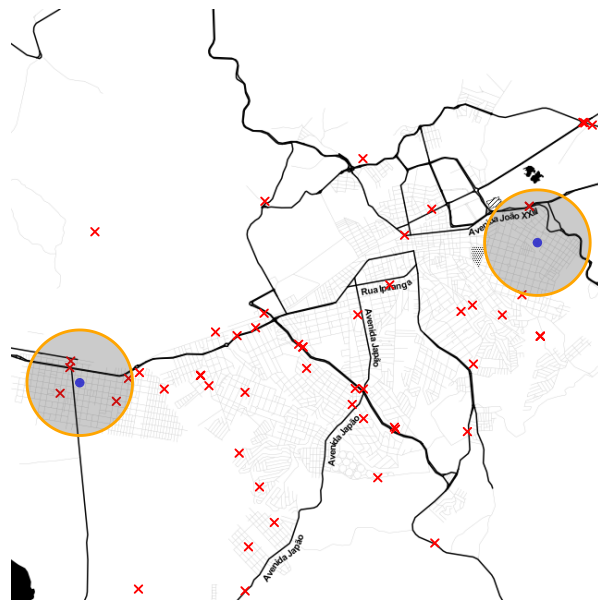
The geography of violence and the law-and-order constituency

The election of law enforcement candidates raises the level of violence, but does it distort public security according to the electoral support these candidates receive? Political interference could unbalance security within a municipality. Different areas of a city have different levels of crime, violence, and police protection (Caldeira, 2000). At the same time that some neighborhoods see improvements, others may start suffering from more violence. Having limited means to fight crime, and facing a constituency demanding increased security, elected law enforcement politicians will not necessarily apply security resources evenly in the municipality, nor craft an efficient strategy to reduce crime and violence. In their pursuit of re-election, law enforcement candidates may deploy resources to areas that are home to voters who support and respond to their law-and-order program. This would potentially reduce crime and violence in those areas, but since resources are limited at the local level, favoring supporters will leave other areas with fewer or no voters relatively less protected.

It is possible to measure the relationship between support for law enforcement candidates and (subsequent) crime and violence within municipalities. The state of São Paulo discloses the location of incidences of criminal activity. Geocoded criminal and violent events allows the neighborhood of security outcomes to be precisely located. Moreover, since voters usually vote in the polling station closest to their homes, election results can be used to measure support for law enforcement candidates in different neighborhoods. By locating criminal events, a violence score can be calculated for each polling station in the state.

The violence and crime scores count the number of events within a certain distance from the polling station. The violence score counts homicides. The crime score counts reported car robberies, a crime more likely to be reported than ordinary car thefts, as robberies involve direct interaction between victim and criminal, and victims need police reports to make an insurance claim. Figure 9 illustrates the variation in score in two arbitrarily selected polling stations in Mogi das Cruzes, a municipality 60 km from the state capital of São Paulo. The maps show the distribution of homicides in the city, and how violence plagues areas close to polling stations differently. Jundiapéba, a relatively poor neighborhood, has many more murders than Vila Oliveira, a wealthier district. Together, the two maps display the variation in homicides over two periods.

A: 2009 – 2011 period



B: 2013 – 2015 period

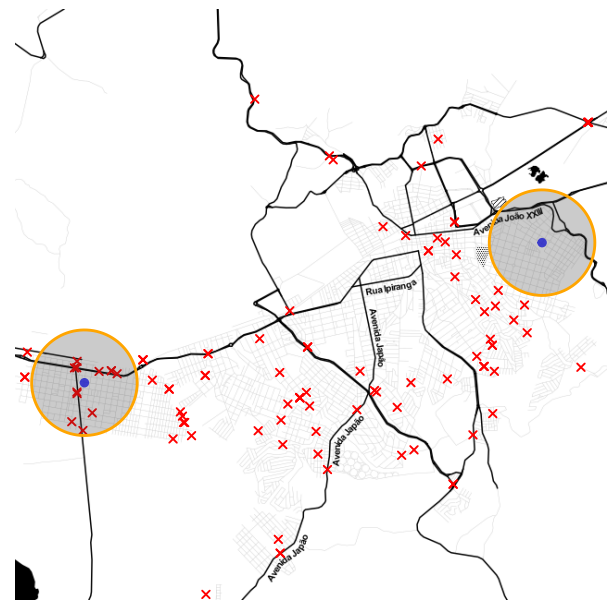


Figure 9: Homicides surrounding selected polling stations in the city of Mogi das Cruzes. *The eastern dot on each map represents Professor Camilo Faustino de Mello Public School in the Vila Oliveira neighborhood. The western dot is the Professor Paulo Ferrari Massaro Public School in the Jundiapéba neighborhood. Shaded areas are distances within one kilometer radius of polling stations. X's represent homicides.*

The full fitted model is

$$\Delta V_{p,m,2016} = V_{p,2016} - V_{p,2012} = \alpha + \beta_1 Lec_{p,2012} + \beta_2 BottomSt_{p,2012} + \beta_3 (Lec_{p,2012} \times BottomSt_{p,2012}) + \rho X_{p,2012} + \phi_m + \mu_{pt}, \quad (2)$$

where β_3 is the coefficient for the interaction between electing a law enforcement candidate and top polling station. This coefficient measures the quantity of interest, the association between the scores and support for law enforcement candidates in municipalities that elected a law enforcement candidate. The variable $Lec_{p,2012}$ is a binary indicator that is equal to one if the municipality elected a law enforcement candidate, and $BottomSt$ indicates whether the polling station is in the bottom quartile of support. (Alternatively, I estimate the model using an indicator for polling stations in the top quartile.) These indicators substantively represent supporting and non-supporting neighborhoods. The matrix X contains the polling station–level controls, and ϕ_m is the fixed effect for municipality m . Since estimates include municipal fixed effects, coefficients measure the relative variation of crime and homicides within the same municipality.

Table 2: Support for Law Enforcement Candidates, Crime, and Violence

	Variation, 2008–2012							
	Crime (1-4)				Violence (5-8)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
<i>BottomSt</i> × <i>Lec</i>	8.88*** (1.83)	36.81*** (6.28)			0.31*** (0.09)	0.80*** (0.20)		
<i>BottomSt</i>	-0.56 (1.37)	-3.22 (4.78)			-0.10** (0.05)	-0.19 (0.12)		
<i>TopSt</i> × <i>Lec</i>			-11.45*** (2.05)	-41.49*** (6.52)			-0.15 (0.10)	-0.80*** (0.21)
<i>TopSt</i>			1.91 (1.32)	6.01 (4.37)			0.05 (0.06)	0.24 (0.17)
<i>Lec</i>	1.37 (4.16)	0.99 (15.27)	11.47*** (4.36)	40.11** (16.35)	0.36*** (0.05)	0.50*** (0.11)	0.57*** (0.07)	1.24*** (0.17)
Constant	0.99 (0.96)	1.48 (3.23)	1.00 (0.68)	1.51 (3.04)	-0.35*** (0.07)	-0.65*** (0.11)	-0.39*** (0.08)	-0.75*** (0.12)
Radius	.5km	1km	.5km	1km	.5km	1km	.5km	1km
P.St. controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Munic. FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N. obs	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: The outcome *Robbery* is the variation in the car robberies score. *Violence* is the variation in homicides score. *Bottom St* and *Top St* are indicators that are equal to one if the polling station is in the bottom or top quartile of support for law enforcement candidates in the municipality, respectively. Controls include the proportion of high school-educated voters, proportion of post-secondary-educated voters, and total voters. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered at the municipality level. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

The tests show that neighborhoods that support law enforcement candidates have much less crime and violence than other sectors in the same municipality. With the exception of the coefficient for homicides in column (7), all models show a negative and significant relationship between the scores and the interaction. As expected, the larger the circumference, the larger the association. Placebo tests using past outcomes as dependent variables report no discernible effect, mitigating concerns that the results might be spurious or driven by confounders (Subsection C.1). In addition, an alternative specification using a continuous measure for support in the Appendix (total votes for law and order divided by the number of votes cast in the polling station) reveals the same negative and statistically significant association.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that law-and-order candidates in Brazil follow through on their programmatic commitments, at least for those that voted for them. After they are elected, local spending on public security increases, and property crime appears to go down. At the same time, however, non-white men are murdered at a higher rate. Suggestive evidence shows that it is political favoritism and not *mano-dura* police tactics that is responsible for these seemingly contradictory outcomes. Neighborhoods that did not support law enforcement candidates observe crime and violence increase to a much larger extent than areas that had supported these candidates. This pattern of politicians favoring those who vote for them is not uncommon in democracies, but favoritism in law and order provokes deaths.

These results showcase how politics can disturb the violence equilibrium in new ways. Most municipalities in which law enforcement candidates won are not directly involved in international trafficking. Moreover, the organized prison gangs expanded in the Brazilian territory only at the end of the period this paper analyzes. It is likely that local gangs are *Anarchic criminal orders* in which "only the police can bring a solution to the Hobbesian state of anarchy" (? , 2). In the case of law enforcement candidates, their meddling in policing is what brings violent anarchy. It is not a case of state weakness causing violence (O'Donnell, 1993; Caldeira, 2000; Yashar, 2018), but the "selective policy implementation" (Holland, 2017) resulting from electoral politics. Although the population of the group most vulnerable to violence – poor, non-white men – is large among voters, they are often marginalized in politics (Poertner, 2018,

107), and are unlikely to organize a political movement against the rise in violence they suffer.

The competitiveness of these elections in the regression discontinuity design could exacerbate the favoritism shown by law enforcement candidates. However, even if these patterns only appear when electoral competition runs high, the results warn us about the perils of mixing politics with policing. Law enforcement in the developing world can be brutal and undemocratic, but leaving vulnerable individuals without any protection is surely worse.

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A Appendix

A.1 Summary statistics

Table 3: Summary Statistics

	mean	sd	min	max
Margin	-0.013	0.014	-0.101	0.085
Votes	380.544	1362.082	0.000	89053.000
Elected	0.103	0.304	0.000	1.000
Female	0.034	0.180	0.000	1.000
Age	46.528	8.912	19.000	85.000
Leftwing Party	0.210	0.407	0.000	1.000
Donors	3.597	5.182	1.000	115.000
Donations	15.789	50.117	0.002	1168.821
Brokers	3.306	14.773	0.000	444.000
Wealth	315.333	4529.394	0.000	156272.000
Diff. Homicide Rate	2.120	12.716	-109.850	82.784
Homicide Rate	20.611	18.599	0.000	130.410
Past Homicide Rate	19.133	18.378	0.000	130.410
Homicide Rate, Nonwhite Pop	4.165	17.772	-160.707	122.624
Diff. Homicide Rate, Nonwhite	24.746	24.667	0.000	163.910
Police Killings	0.071	0.380	0.000	9.647
Suicide Rate	5.130	4.691	0.000	86.046
Undetermined Rate	4.290	6.916	0.000	149.028
Car Robbery Rate	47.116	80.531	0.000	795.373
Sexual Assault Rate	15.845	19.502	0.000	477.066
Theft Rate	82.074	100.008	0.000	867.186
Nonwhite Pop	0.496	0.224	0.004	0.968
Gini	0.555	0.064	0.336	0.880
Security Spending (p.c.)	43.740	103.005	0.000	1576.275

Note: Includes law enforcement candidates and municipalities where law enforcement candidates have run for municipal council. Rates are values for the period, divided by the population and the number of years of the period, times 100,000 a year. Hence, Homicide Rate, for example, is the total homicides for four years of the electoral cycle, divided by the average population and for the number of years (four), times 100,000.

Table 4: Comparing municipalities that had and did not have a law enforcement candidate (LEC), 2012

Variable	With LEC	Without LEC
Non-White Population	0.55	0.51
Population	87243.94	14881.25
Inequality (GINI)	0.52	0.50
(Past) Homicides per 100,000	22.12	12.63
(Past) Non-White Men Homicides per 100,000	46.37	23.92
(Past) Public Security Spending, in Reais pc	6.34	2.70
Car Robberies pc	40.86	20.94

Note: Yearly rates. All differences between the two groups are statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ levels. In the 2012 elections, there were 1442 municipalities with law enforcement candidates (out of 5560 municipalities).

B Law Enforcement Candidates' Campaigns

In order to better compare competitive law enforcement candidates with other candidates, I separate competitive candidates who won or lost elections by margins smaller than 0.25% of the valid votes. The analysis shows that law enforcement candidates do not rely as much on outside help during campaigns, receiving roughly half of the average amount of donations, and declaring on average six instead of eight campaign donors (Panels B and D in Figure 10). In addition, records show that law enforcement candidates are less wealthy. These campaign numbers indicate that competitive law enforcement candidates must run a different campaign from the ordinary candidate.

If that is the case, they will not need to rely as much on clientelism as the average candidate. It is not possible to accurately illustrate clientelistic transactions, but since clientelistic mobilization requires agents to enforce the contingent exchange of goods for votes (Stokes et al., 2013), using campaign records we can obtain a tentative picture of this team of brokers in council elections by identifying payments candidates make to individuals who perform some task related to the campaign. In this way, we have an approximation of the clientelistic network of each candidate. Not all payments to individuals in campaigns are made to brokers, and not all brokers receive compensation by legal means, but the descriptions of campaign expenditures show that some transactions are used to reward mobilization efforts. Assuming that all individuals who receive money during a councilor's campaign are brokers certainly returns a higher number of agents, since some individuals rent their cars for candidates' use, or do clerical tasks during the campaign. However, since other individuals that do not act as brokers are likely to be present in all campaigns, and the hypothesis is that law enforcement agents have fewer foot soldiers than other candidates, the measurement error will inflate the number of brokers mainly for those candidates that do not engage in clientelism. Still, as Figure 10, Panel C shows, the number of brokers used by law

enforcement candidates is less than half of that of the average candidate.

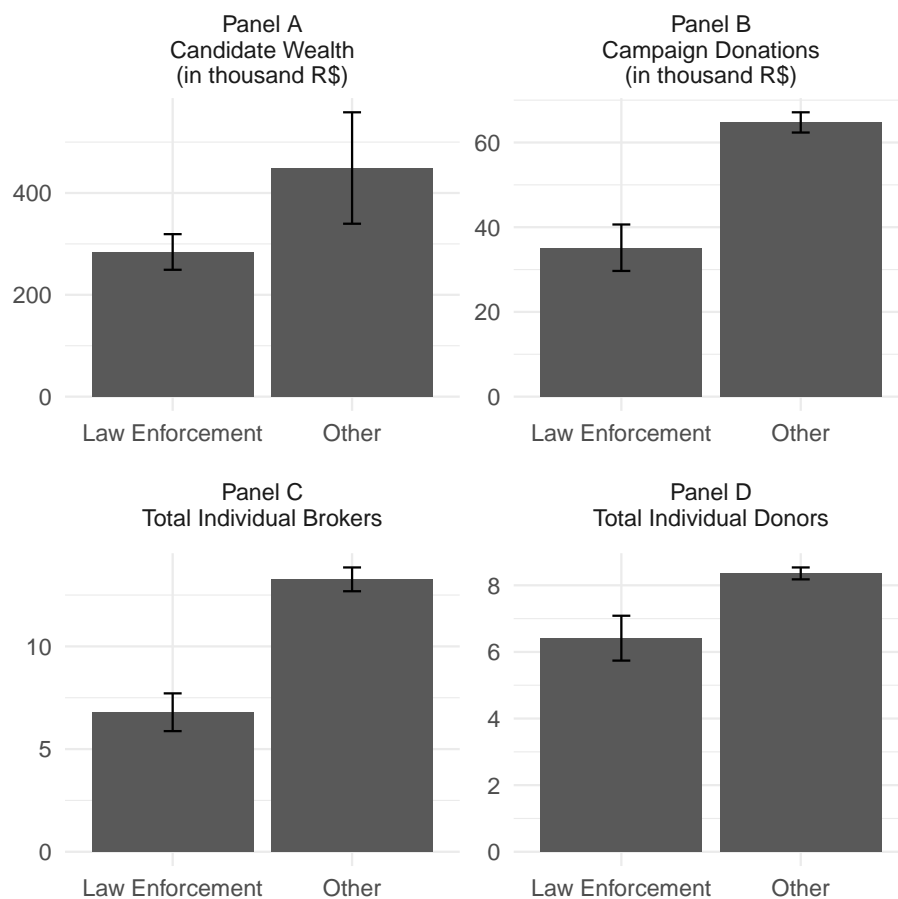


Figure 10: Campaign resources for competitive candidates. *Includes candidates who won or lost the election by a margin equal to or smaller than 0.25% in the 2012 and 2016 elections. Averages of 264 law enforcement candidates, and 6990 other candidates who competed in municipalities where there was a competitive law enforcement candidate. Bars are standard errors.*

Law-and-order candidates are relative outsiders, making them inexperienced in terms of politics and policymaking. This “outsideness” heightens the uncertainty about the scope and results of the policies law enforcement candidates enact. Although politicians are not particularly attached to political parties in Brazil, law enforcement candidates appear to be even more detached. Barr (2009) conceptualizes outsiders in politics as those politicians whose prominence comes not from established parties, but either from fringe political parties or from external organizations. Figure 11 compares the political experience of law enforcement candidates and regular politicians in two related dimensions. First, Panel A shows the average tenure of each group of candidates according to the number of years they have been member of the party in which

they run for an election. However, given the fluidity of party membership in Brazil, that measure does not capture the candidates' entry in party politics. The second dimension (Panel B) aims at capturing overall political experience; i.e., the total number of years in which candidates have been members of any political party. The comparison shows a considerable difference in political experience between groups, with law enforcement candidates having only 2.6 years of party membership before running in an election, and 7.5 years of party membership, revealing that law enforcement candidates are relatively outsiders in elections.

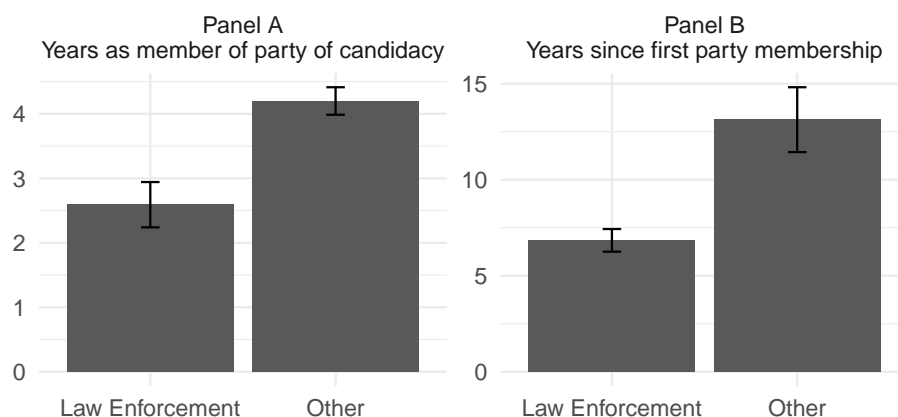


Figure 11: Length of party membership for competitive candidates. *Includes candidates who won or lost the election by a margin equal to or smaller than 0.25% in the 2016 elections. Averages for 98 law enforcement candidates, and 1150 other candidates who competed in municipalities where there was a competitive law enforcement candidate. Bars are standard errors.*

Classifying Law Enforcement Candidates and Candidates' Professional Backgrounds

I classify council candidates as law enforcement candidates if their ballot names have one of the following terms (including gender and spelling variations, and abbreviations): soldado, cabo, sargento, tenente, major, coronel, general, comandante, delegado, capitão, policial, civil, investigador, inspetor, sub-tenente, pm, xerife. Some police officers, mainly *delegados*, are commonly given a title of “*doutor*.” For this reason, I classify as law enforcement candidates those candidates who put *doutor* in their ballot name, and at the same time declare their occupation as police officer.

Candidates' occupation information comes from their self-reported answer to the electoral authority's questionnaire prior to every election. I classify a candidate's professional background as police officer if the occupa-

tion she listed is polícia civil, polícia militar, or delegado de polícia. Armed forces candidates are militar em geral, militar reformado, oficiais das forças armadas e forças auxiliares, membro das forças armadas.

B.1 Density test

The density test of the running variable is important to the regression discontinuity design because it informs us if there has been any potential manipulation around the cutoff. If this is the case, the potential outcomes framework would break apart, as treatment assignment would be compromised by unknown factors that could be associated with the selection of treatment and control. In our case, the running variable for the regression discontinuity design is the distance between the candidate and the last winner of the candidate's list, if that candidate lost the election, or the distance to the first loser of the list, when the candidate won the election. Manipulation would happen if close winning or close losing candidates would in fact cluster on one side or the other for some reason. As the test below shows, however, there is no indication of sorting around the zero margin threshold (0 at the x-axis).

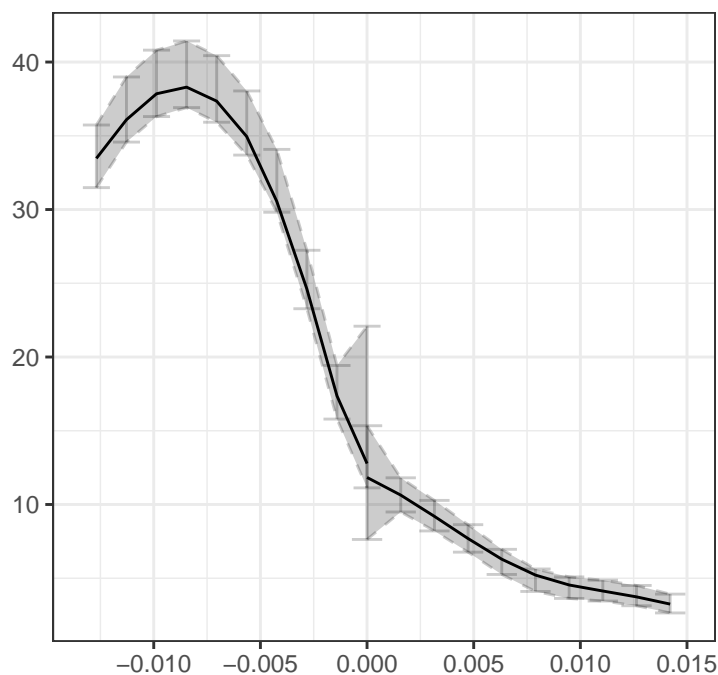


Figure 12: Density test. *Nonparametric density test around the RDD cutoff, following Cattaneo, Jansson and Ma (2017)*

B.2 Balance tests

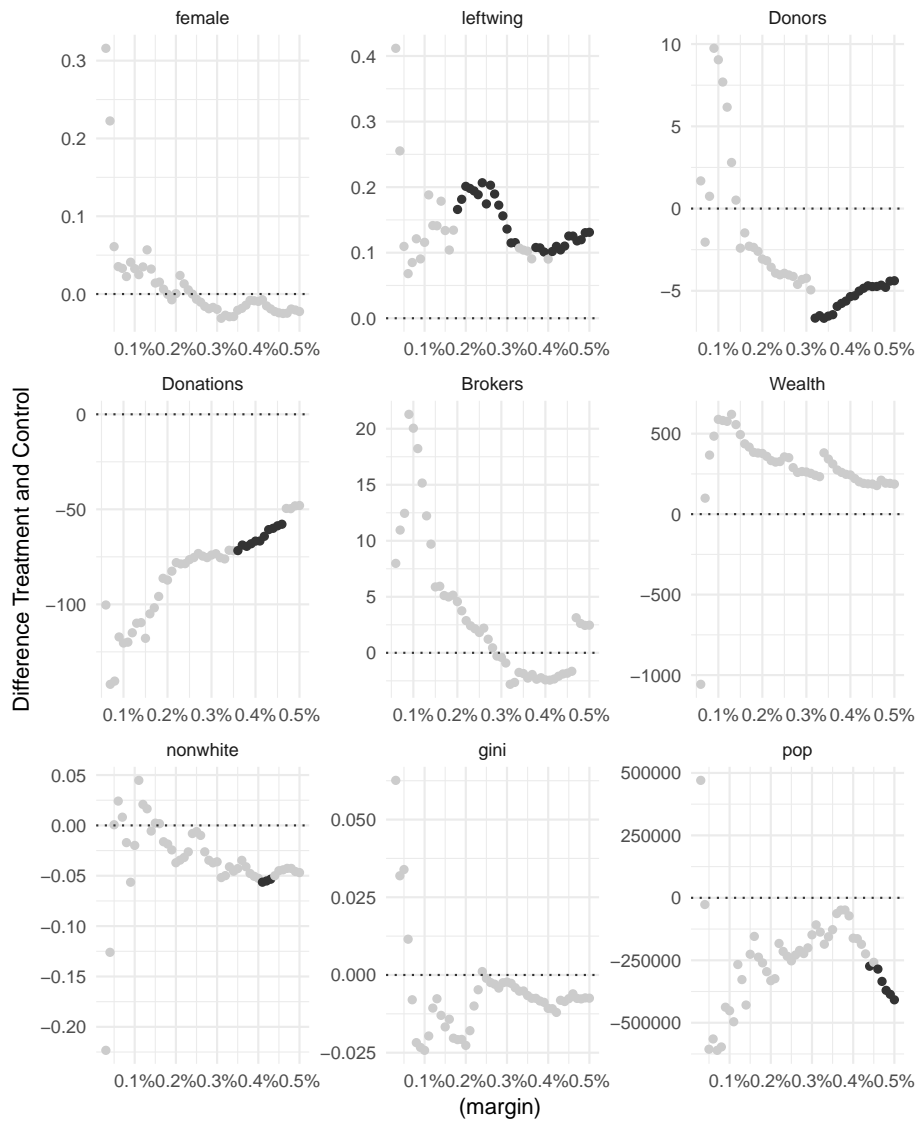


Figure 13: Balance tests. *Darker dots represent tests whose difference between treatment and control is significant at 10% level.*

B.3 Placebo Test for Public Security Spending

The idea behind the tests in Figures 14 and 15 is to check whether the election of a law enforcement candidate alters spending in areas outside the expertise of those candidates. Although the tests in the main text show that the election of law enforcement candidates generates more spending in public security and given that policymakers work under a constrained budget, it is unlikely that the increase in public security spending would result in noticeable less spending in specific areas. That is, since there are many areas in the municipal budget, it is also improbable that the increase in public security would generate a significant crowd-out in any health or education expenditure alone. Tests confirm that law enforcement candidates do not have any special expertise in public health or education, as there is no noticeable effect in spending in these areas.

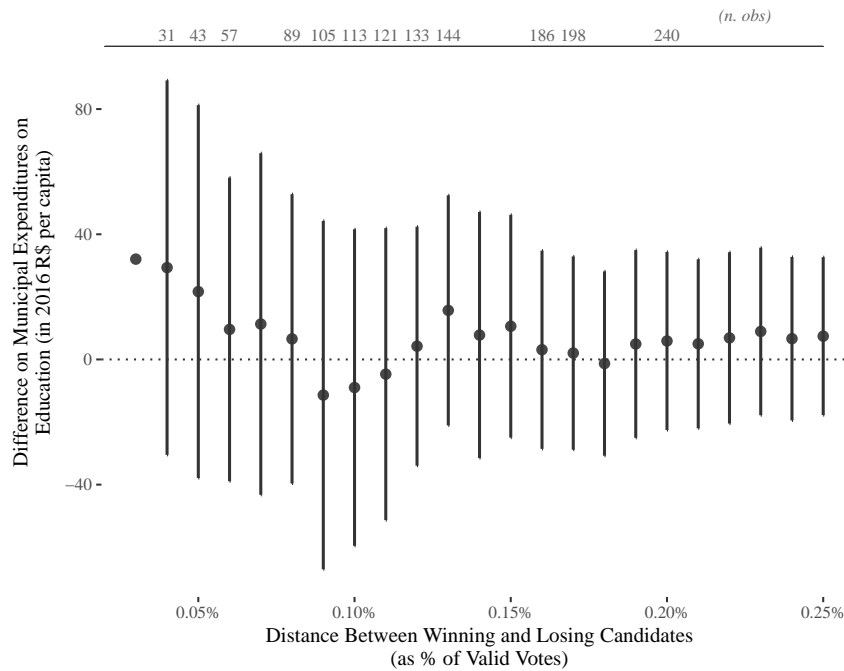


Figure 14: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Health Expenditures. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

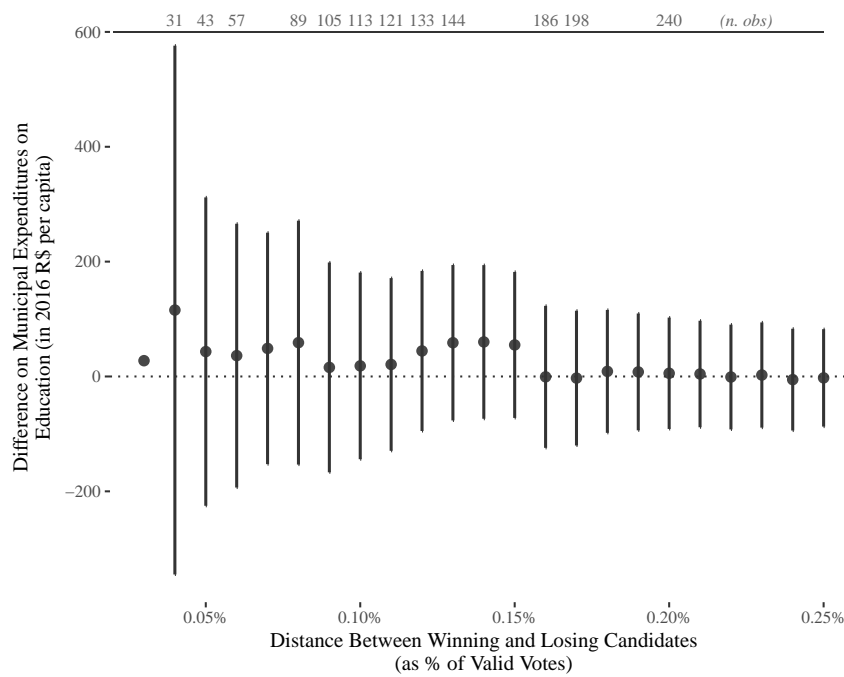


Figure 15: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Education Expenditures. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

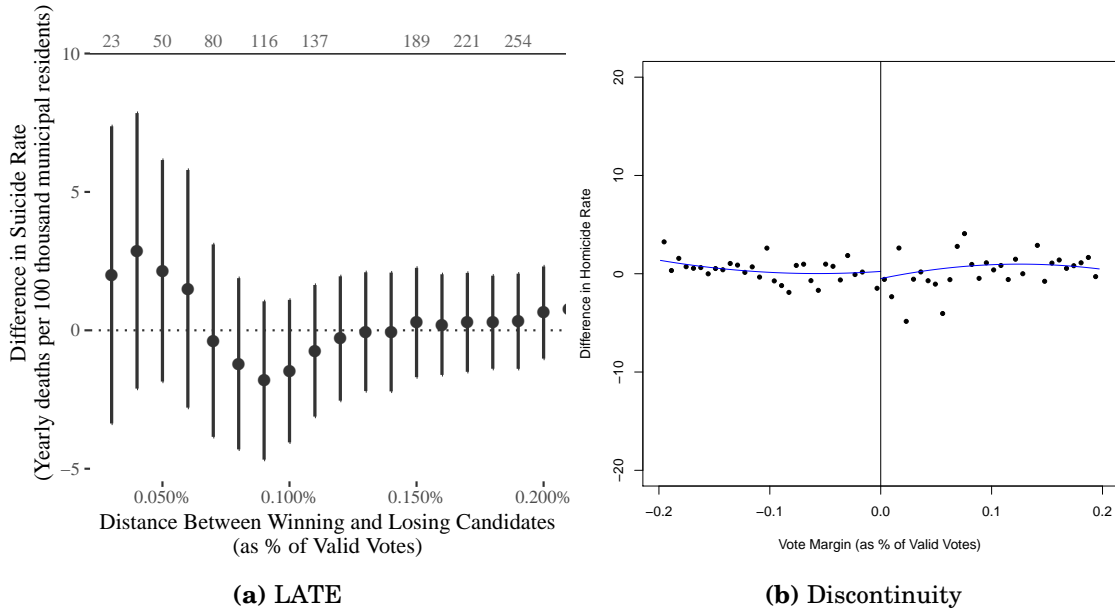


Figure 16: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Suicide Rates. Both plots estimate local linear models. Bars in (a) represent 95% robust confidence intervals. (b) illustrates the discontinuity.

B.4 Results for suicides and sexual assault

The Ministry of Justice data on crime also includes sexual assaults at the municipality level. Below is the test for that outcome, which does not show a significant effect. The point estimates are usually close to zero, which indicates that the lack of noticeable effect is not due to low statistical power.

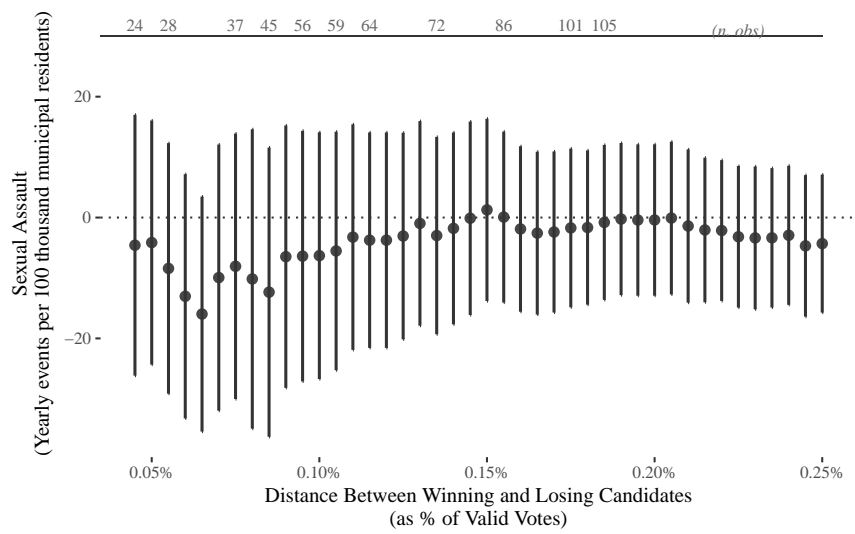


Figure 17: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Sexual Assault Rates. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

B.5 Placebo for Homicide Rate

The estimates in Figure 18 show the effect of electing a law enforcement candidate on the lagged dependent variable; i.e., the effect on the difference in homicide rates between the period before the election and the previous period. For close races, there is no indication that election of candidates explains past outcomes, supporting the validity of the design. Although for almost all regions, especially at very close elections, there is no indication that the election of law enforcement candidates is associated with past outcomes, there is at least one estimation that points to a positive effect. Yet, that effect disappears when outliers are removed. It is important to note that when dealing with the main results, the removal of outliers does not dissipate the effects, as shown in Figure 21.

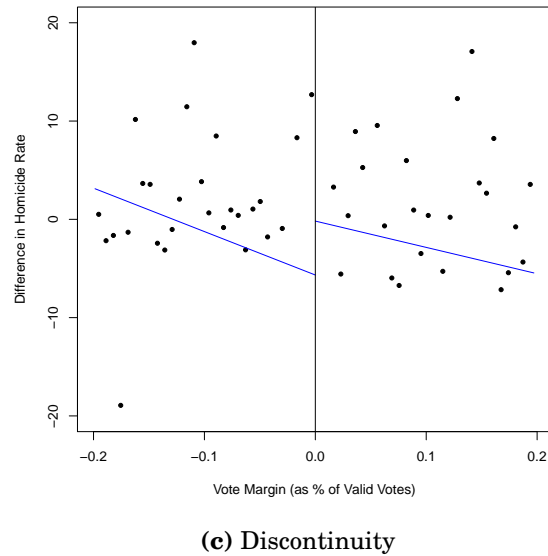
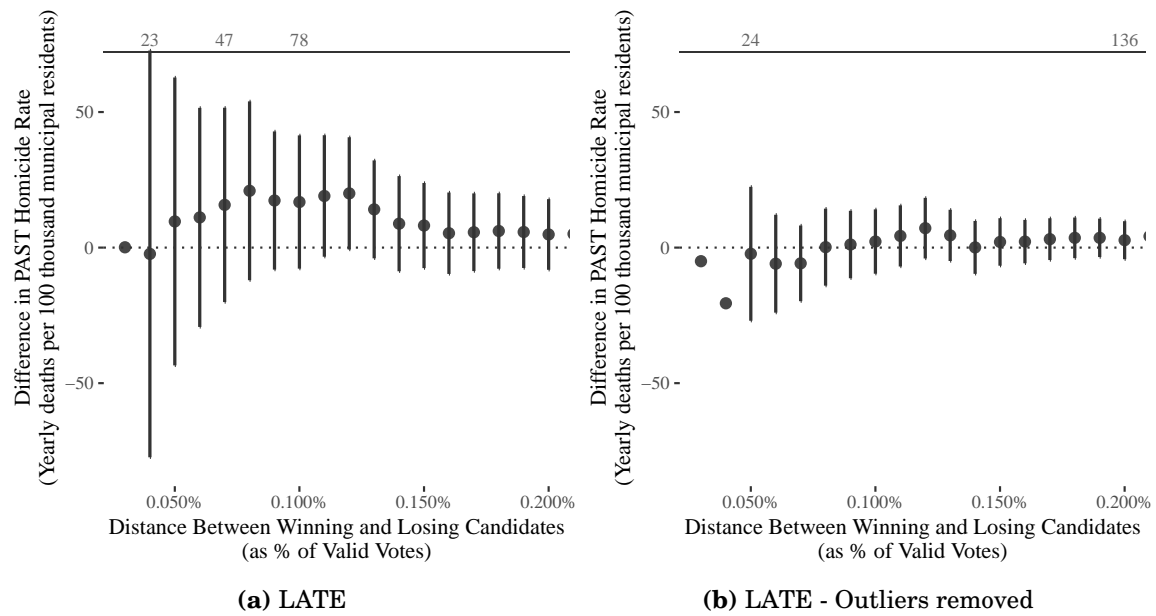


Figure 18: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on **Past** Homicide Rates. All plots estimate local linear models. Bars in (a) and (b) represent 95% robust confidence intervals. (c) illustrates the discontinuity.

B.6 Graphical Representation of the Discontinuity and Alternative Specifications

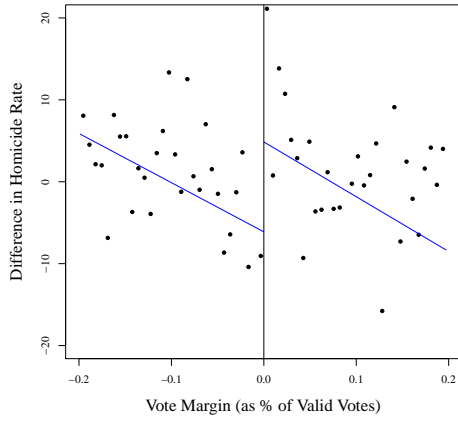
The figures below show alternate discontinuity plots using different polynomials. They all indicate that the linear models that are presented in the main text are the most conservative. Results are considerably larger in higher-degree polynomials.

Alternate Specifications

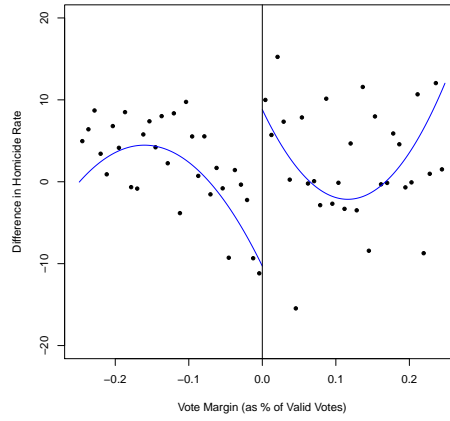
In this section, the main results are put into test through different checks. Figure 20 shows the estimations using nonparametric, bias-corrected models following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014).

Estimations in Figure 21 do not include observations whose outcome lies outside the range of two absolute standard deviation from the median outcome of all municipalities in the sample.

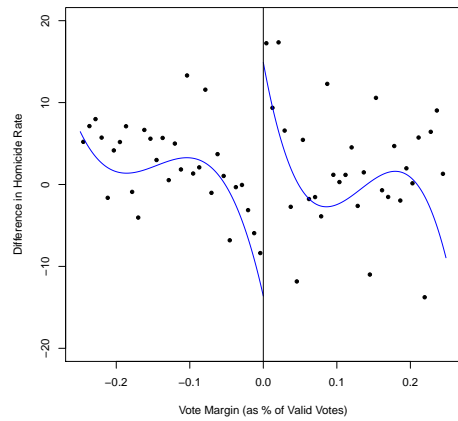
Estimations in Figure 22 have *homicides per capita* in the period after the election as dependent variable, and include the lagged dependent variable in the right-hand side of the equation.



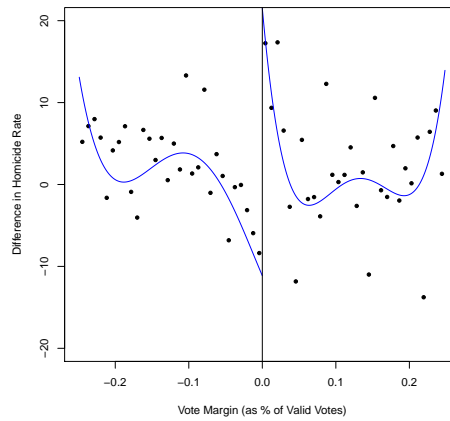
(a) Local linear



(b) Second degree polynomial



(c) Third degree polynomial



(d) Forth degree polynomial

Figure 19: Discontinuity Plots for Homicide Rates

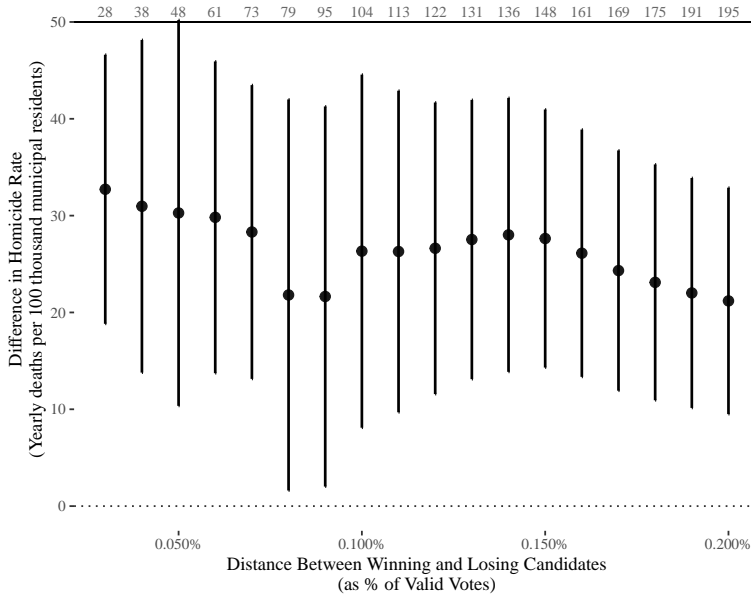


Figure 20: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate. *Local linear models with bias-corrected estimates and year dummies, using Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014), triangular kernel. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

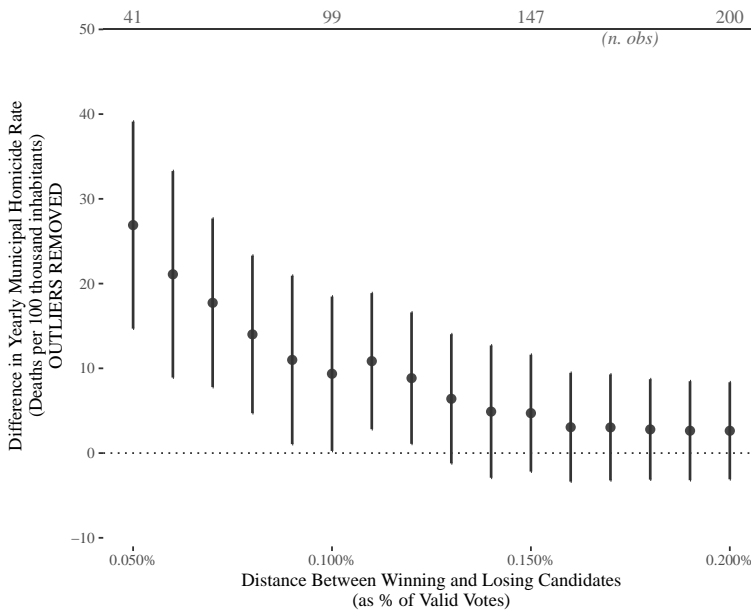


Figure 21: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Without Outliers. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

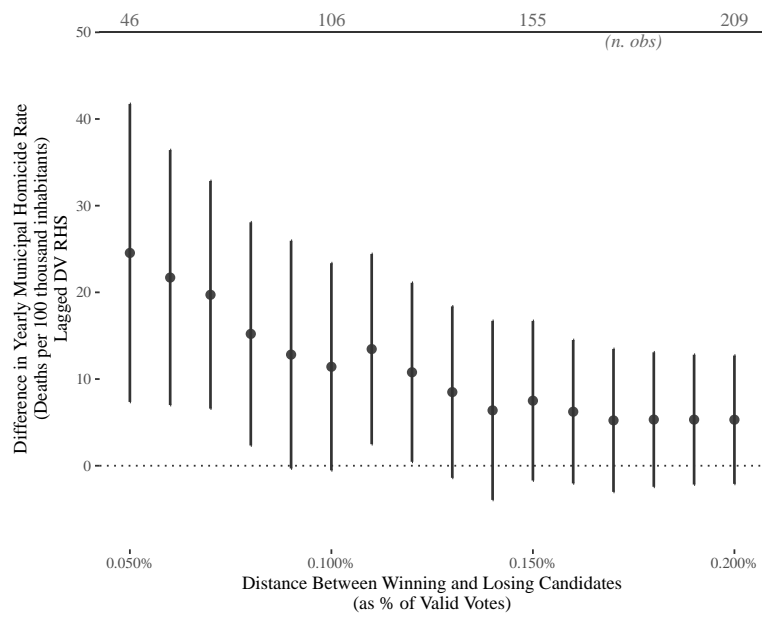


Figure 22: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Level of Homicide Rate as DV. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

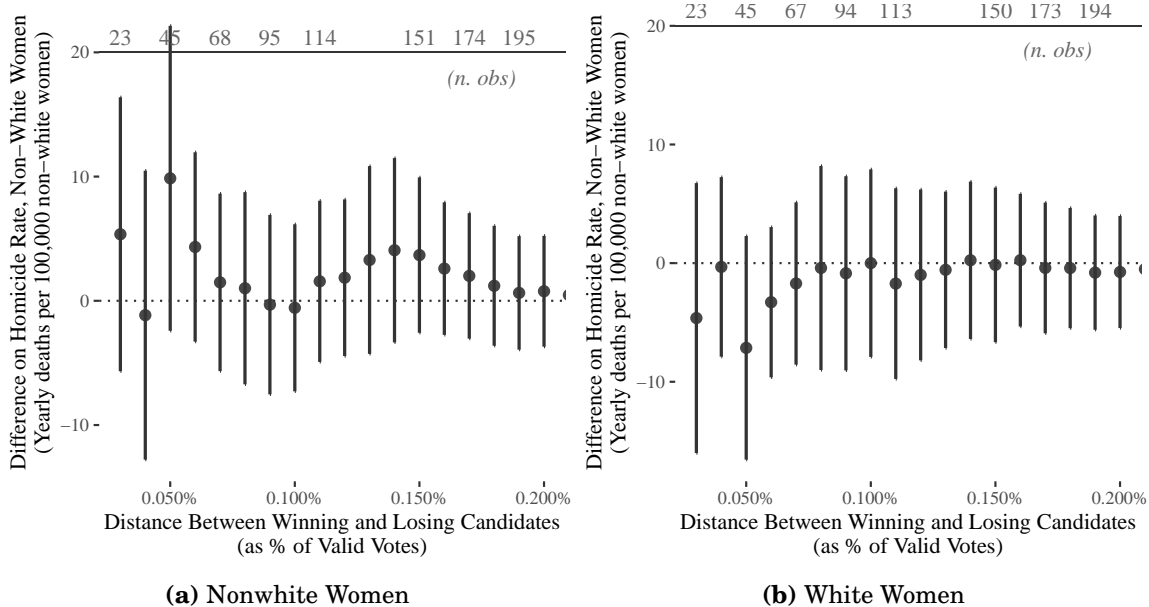


Figure 23: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Homicide Rates, Women. *Both plots estimate local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

B.7 Homicides Among Women

Figure 23 in this subsection shows that there is no effect for homicides among women, irrespective of race.

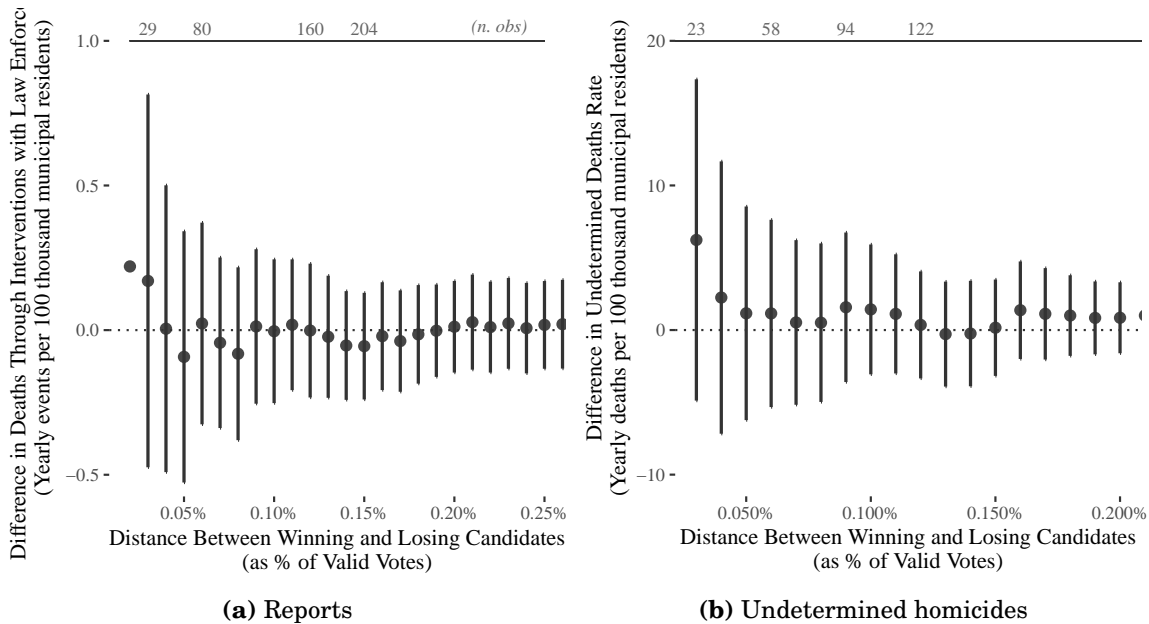


Figure 24: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate on Police Killing Reporting and Undetermined Homicides. *Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

B.8 Undetermined cases of violent death and reporting of police killings

It is possible that law enforcement incumbents influence the how authorities report homicides. First, it is possible that law enforcement incumbents affect how coroners rule on police killings, or “*autos de resistência*”. In Figure 24, Panel (a) I test and rule out that hypothesis using a binary outcome that indicates whether the municipality reported any homicide by the police after the election. Second, it is possible that politicians manipulate local statistics to deflate cases of homicides. Cerqueira (2012) finds suggestive evidence of that happening in the state of Rio de Janeiro. However, that has not been the case for law enforcement incumbents. Panel (b) shows that there is no detectable increase or decrease in the number of undetermined homicides.

B.9 Non-incumbents and signaling

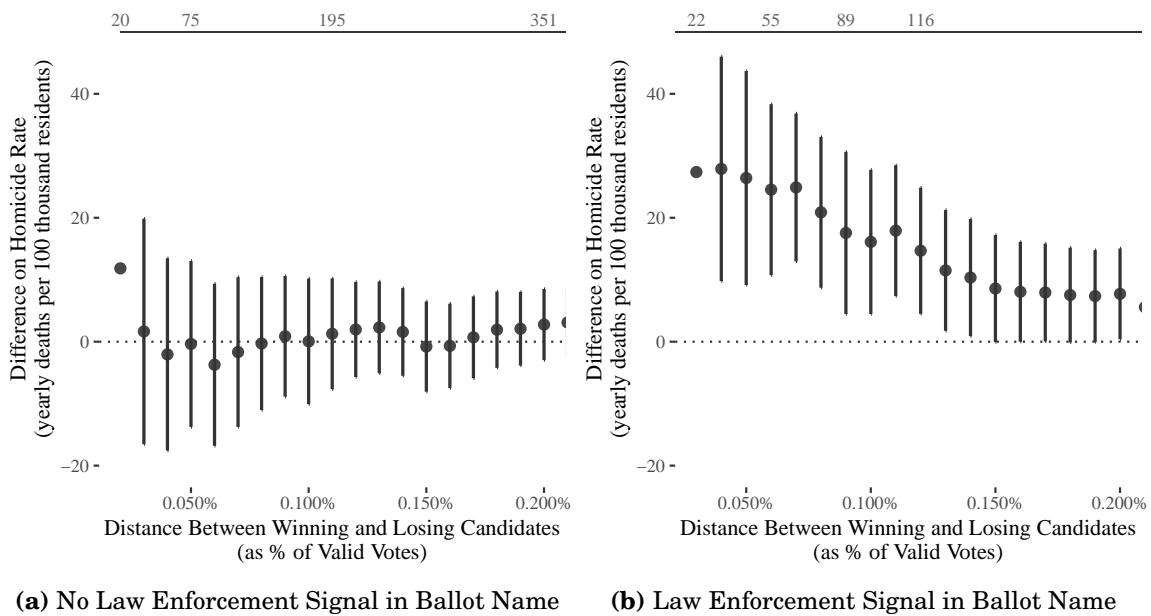


Figure 25: The Effect of Electing a Law Enforcement Candidate, Law Enforcement Signaling. *Only includes candidates who have reported a law enforcement occupation. Local linear models. Bars represent 95% robust confidence intervals.*

C Geography of crime and violence

Table 5: The effect of the election of police and army law-and-order candidates on difference of homicides per 100,000 residents.

Group	LATE	Stn. Error (Robust)	Observations	Bandwidth
Police	20.368	5.501	137	0.3%
Army	-3.958	7.491	54	0.3%

Local linear, nonparametric regression discontinuities (rdrobust), with triangular kernels. Study group trimmed to include only close elections with 1% margins or less.

	mean	sd	min	max
Variation Homicides	-0.25	3.76	-20.00	25.00
Variation Crime	70.60	238.92	-15250.00	1674.00
Prop. Post-Sec.	0.13	0.12	0.00	0.75
Prop. High School	0.53	0.12	0.00	1.00
Total Votes Station	243.48	92.00	1.00	436.00
Prop. Votes LE	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.56

Table 6: Summary Statistics, Public Security At Polling Station Level

C.1 Past Outcomes

This section present a placebo test for the spatial analysis. The results here show that there is no relationship between the election of law enforcement candidates in the future with past crime or violence outcomes. Table 7 shows the estimations using the stations on the bottom quartile of LEC support, and Table 8 the results for the stations at the top quartile.

Table 7: Support for Law Enforcement Candidates, Past Crime, and Past Violence - Bottom Stations

	Variation, 2004–2008					
	Robbery (1-3)			Violence (4-6)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interaction	1.63 (1.43)	3.41 (3.01)	56.96 (47.48)	0.05 (0.10)	-0.20 (0.26)	-0.16 (0.62)
Bottom Station	0.12 (1.19)	-0.98 (3.14)	-52.64 (50.82)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.23 (0.22)	-0.51 (0.58)
L.E. Elected	6.14*** (2.22)	21.28** (8.97)	55.54** (27.45)	0.32** (0.13)	2.10*** (0.36)	6.29*** (1.18)
Constant	-0.24 (1.01)	-0.78 (4.02)	-4.60 (15.50)	-0.62*** (0.09)	-2.42*** (0.16)	-7.48*** (0.36)
Radius	.5km	1km	2km	.5km	1km	2km
P. St. controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N. obs	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: The outcome *Robbery* is the variation in the car robberies score. *Violence* is the variation in homicides score. Bottom St is an indicator that is equal to one if the polling station is in the top quartile of support for law enforcement candidates in the municipality. Controls include the proportion of high school-educated voters, proportion of post-secondary-educated voters, and total voters. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered at the municipality level. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 8: Support for Law Enforcement Candidates, Past Crime, and Past Violence - Top Stations

	Variation, 2004–2008					
	Robbery (1-3)			Violence (4-6)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interaction	-1.78 (1.43)	-0.80 (2.84)	-48.99 (58.99)	-0.10 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.24)	-0.50 (0.78)
Top Station	0.75 (1.10)	1.54 (2.48)	70.20 (64.25)	0.07 (0.08)	-0.08 (0.19)	-0.21 (0.59)
L.E. Elected	7.89*** (2.15)	23.14*** (7.06)	82.22*** (23.15)	0.38*** (0.07)	1.95*** (0.23)	6.24*** (0.71)
Constant	-0.23 (0.71)	-1.45 (2.35)	-47.87 (43.75)	-0.65*** (0.08)	-2.55*** (0.10)	-7.72*** (0.24)
Radius	.5km	1km	2km	.5km	1km	2km
P.St. controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N. obs	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564	6564

Notes: The outcome *Robbery* is the variation in the car robberies score. *Violence* is the variation in homicides score. Top St is an indicator that is equal to one if the polling station is in the top quartile of support for law enforcement candidates in the municipality. Controls include the proportion of high school-educated voters, proportion of post-secondary-educated voters, and total voters. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered at the municipality level. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

C.2 Alternative specification with continuous measure of support

Table 9: Support for Law Enforcement Candidates, Crime, and Violence

	Variation, 2008–2012			
	Crime (1-6)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Support.Lec</i> × <i>Lec</i>	−194.51*** (42.50)	−732.42*** (147.90)	−5.32* (2.88)	−20.15*** (5.91)
<i>Support.Lec</i>	30.19 (39.32)	135.27 (141.99)	1.44 (2.12)	6.54 (4.92)
<i>Lec</i>	16.22*** (3.68)	57.41*** (13.67)	0.74*** (0.14)	1.73*** (0.26)
Constant	1.27** (0.64)	2.11 (2.66)	−0.39*** (0.08)	−0.72*** (0.12)
Radius	.5km	1km	.5km	1km
P.St. controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
Munic. FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
N. obs	6564	6564	6564	6564

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

C.3 Haversine Distance for All Events in the State

The estimations in this subsection use a penalty score as dependent variable. For polling station p at time t , the score is $V_{p,t} = \sum_{i=1}^h 1/d_{i,v}$, where $d_{i,m}$ is the Haversine distance between event m and p , and $H = \{1 \dots h\}$ are the events in São Paulo during the period starting at t . Thus, the larger the score, the more violent the area.

The results show that the interaction term of Support and having a law enforcement candidate elected is associated with a decrease in the penalty score for crime. In other words, as the level of support for an elected law enforcement candidate increases in a neighborhood, the less crime it experiences.

Table 10: Support for law enforcement candidates, violence and crime scores

	Penalty, 2008–2012	
	Crime	Violence
	(1)	(2)
Interaction	–278.25*** (102.25)	15.28 (17.63)
Support	–54.25 (68.79)	–18.29 (17.75)
L.E. Elected	–793.32*** (132.80)	23.40*** (3.95)
Constant	1,719.37*** (98.26)	–17.67** (6.90)
P. St. controls	Y	Y
N. obs	6003	6450
Munic. FE	Y	Y
<i>Note:</i>	* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01	