

# Conflict and Political Mobilization: The Demand for Suffrage and the Civil War

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Political mobilization has been key in the enfranchisement of disenfranchised groups, yet the conditions that incentivize or hinder political mobilization are little understood. This paper investigates the impact of conflict, the American Civil War, on mobilization for women's suffrage in the US. Leveraging variation in the fatality rate of men who enlisted in the Union Army from US counties, instrumented with exposure to the deadliest battles of the Civil War, I show that increased exposure to wartime sacrifice resulted in lower levels of petitioning for women's suffrage in the following years. I find evidence that these results may be driven by competition with other progressive movements of the time, more closely tied to the cause of the Civil War, and a backlash against women, who did not fight and sacrifice in the same way as men.