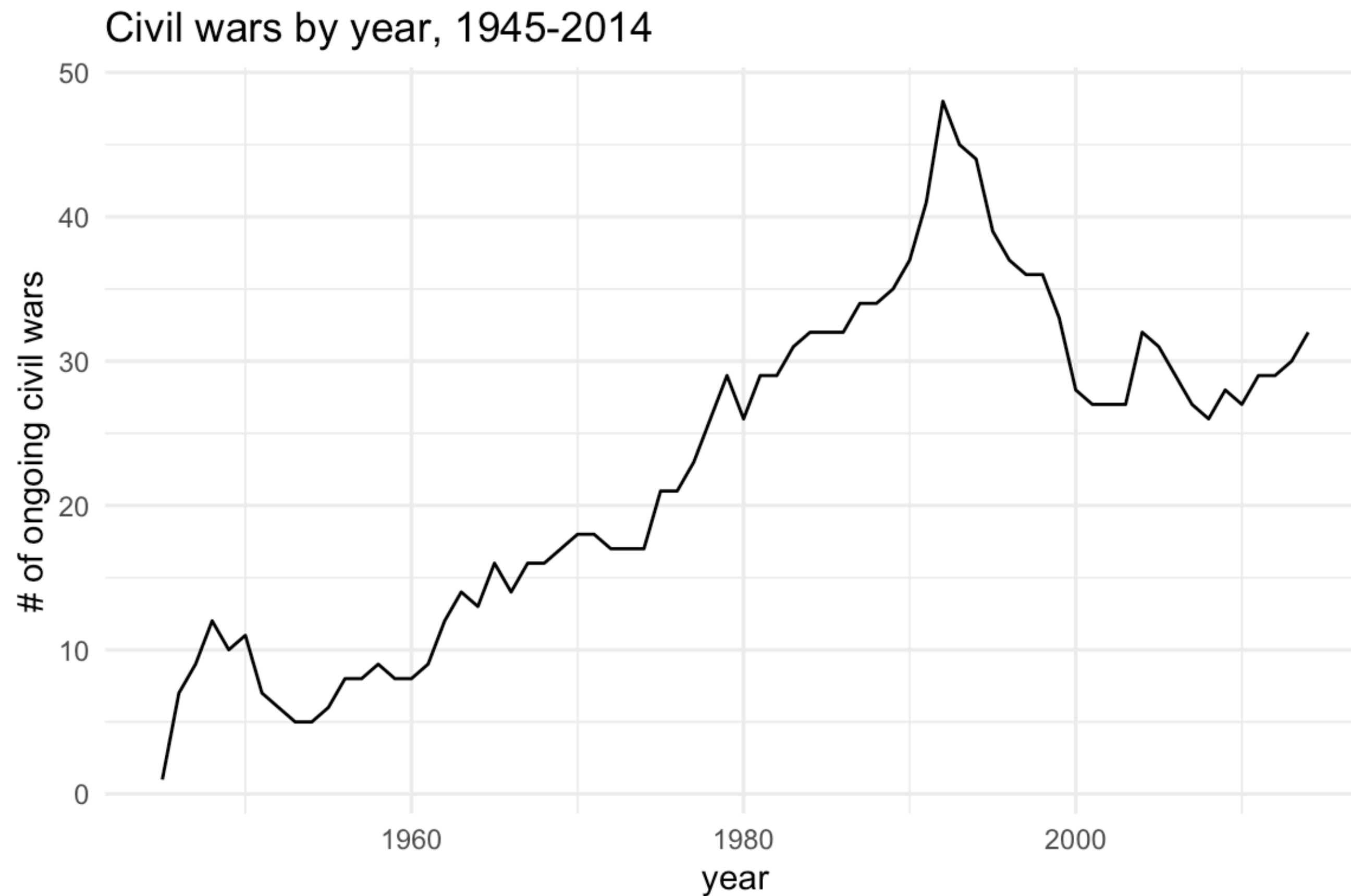




Section 5: Civil war

Sesame Street is opening up to Syrian refugees, NYT (1/31/2020)

Civil War



Adapted from Fearon 2017

- Conflict among domestic armed groups fighting over political power
 - Goal: Center seeking or separatist
 - Method: Guerrilla or conventional warfare
 - Measurement: Threshold of 1,000 battle deaths

Verbalize: Civil War

- Civil war as a **credible commitment problem** to power-sharing
 - State cannot commit to reform without sharing power
 - Under power-sharing, rebels can't commit to not taking more/all power
- Rebels need to surpass threshold of violent capabilities to fight authority
 - Shock to capabilities of state or rebel group create first-strike advantage to seize power

Why Is Ethiopia at War With Itself?

More than a year after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed began a military campaign in the Tigray region, Ethiopians are bitterly divided and their country is wracked by famine and suffering.

Even before the war, Mr. Abiy appeared bent on breaking the power of the T.P.L.F., a political group of rebels turned rulers who had dominated Ethiopia for nearly three decades.

A former intelligence officer, Mr. Abiy had once been part of the T.P.L.F.-dominated government. But after he took office in 2018, he set about draining the group of its power and influence in Ethiopia, infuriating the Tigrayan leadership, which retreated to its stronghold of Tigray. Tensions grew.

In September 2020, the Tigrayans defied Mr. Abiy by going ahead with regional [parliamentary elections](#) that he had postponed across Ethiopia.

Two months later, T.P.L.F. forces attacked a federal military base in Tigray in what they called a pre-emptive strike against federal forces preparing to attack them from a neighboring region.

Hours later, Mr. Abiy ordered [a military offensive against the Tigrayan leadership](#). But his promises of a swift and bloodless victory quickly crumbled. The T.P.L.F. and its armed supporters fled to rural and mountainous areas, drawing Mr. Abiy into a quagmire.

1. What aspects of the civil war in Ethiopia resemble a commitment problem?
2. Are there any structural factors that favor insurgency and impede settlement?



By The New York Times

Source: Walsh and Latif Dahir (1/12/22), NYT

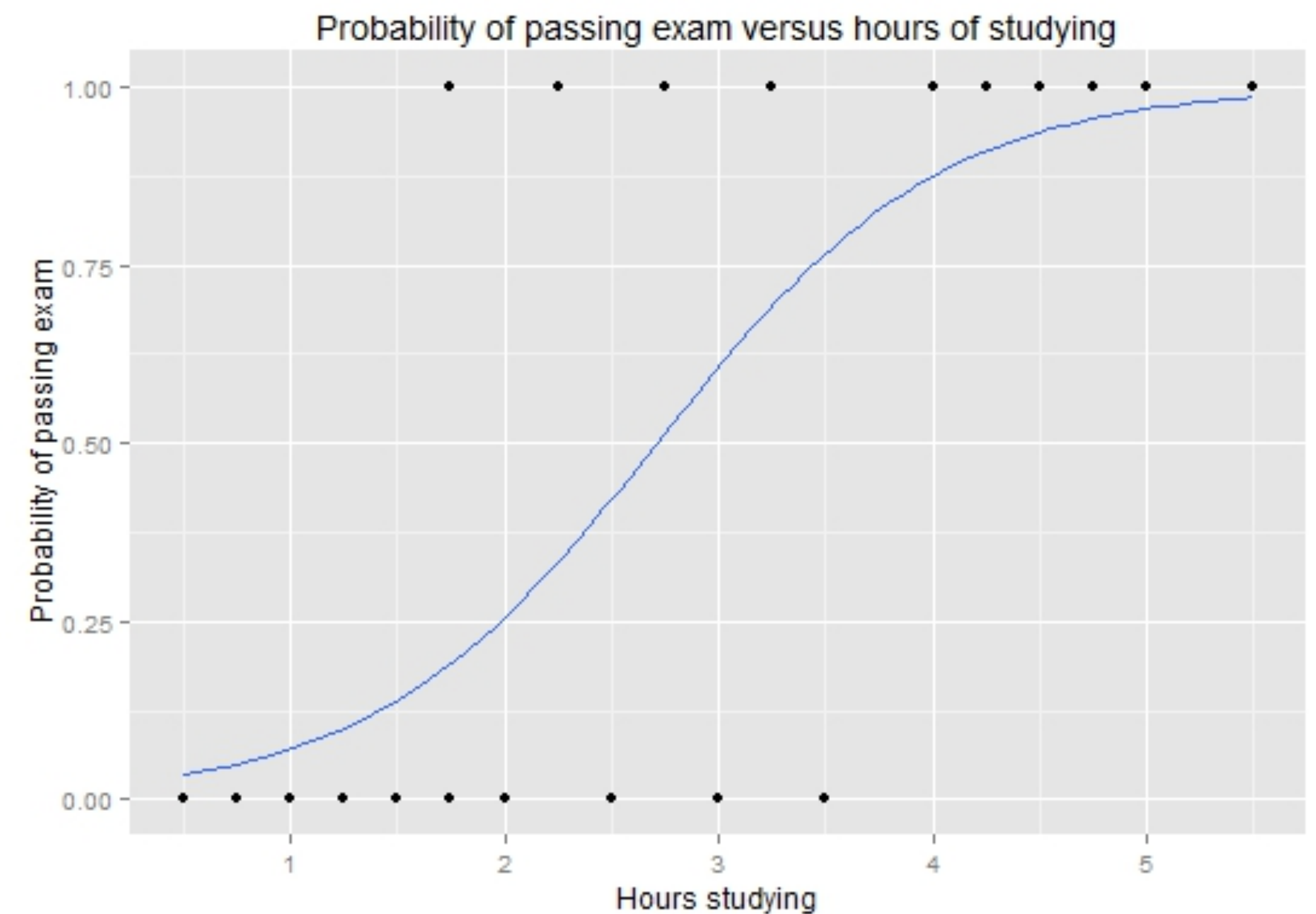
Mathematize: Civil War

Data = Systematic + Stochastic

If outcome variable is *dichotomous* (e.g., civil war started/did not start), typically use “logit” model

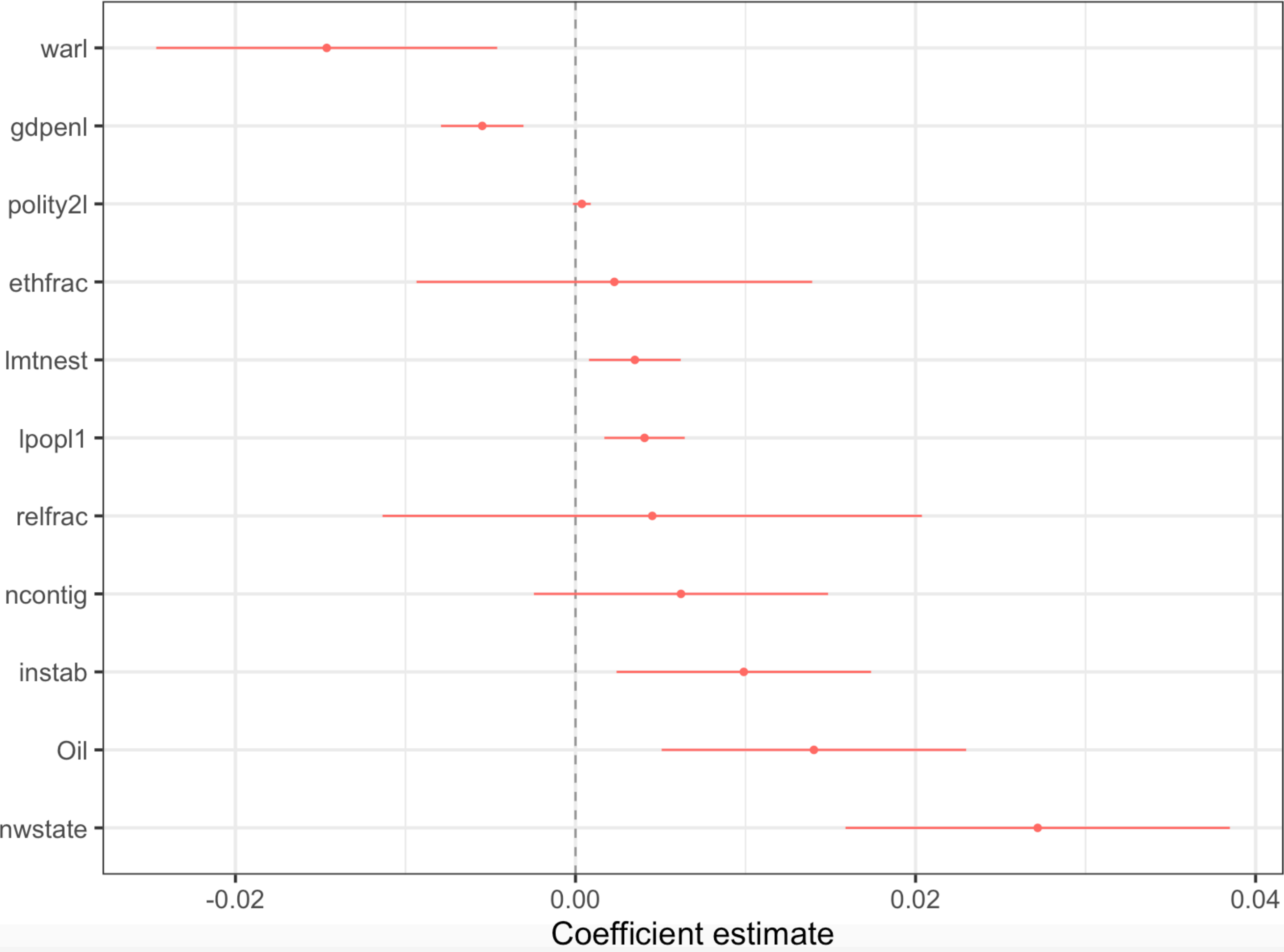
$$p(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x)}}$$

Interpretation: An increase in X by 1 unit multiplies the odds of civil war by e^{β_1} .



Non IR example to show shape of curve

Logit analysis of determinant factors of civil war onset



Data from Fearon and Laitin 2003

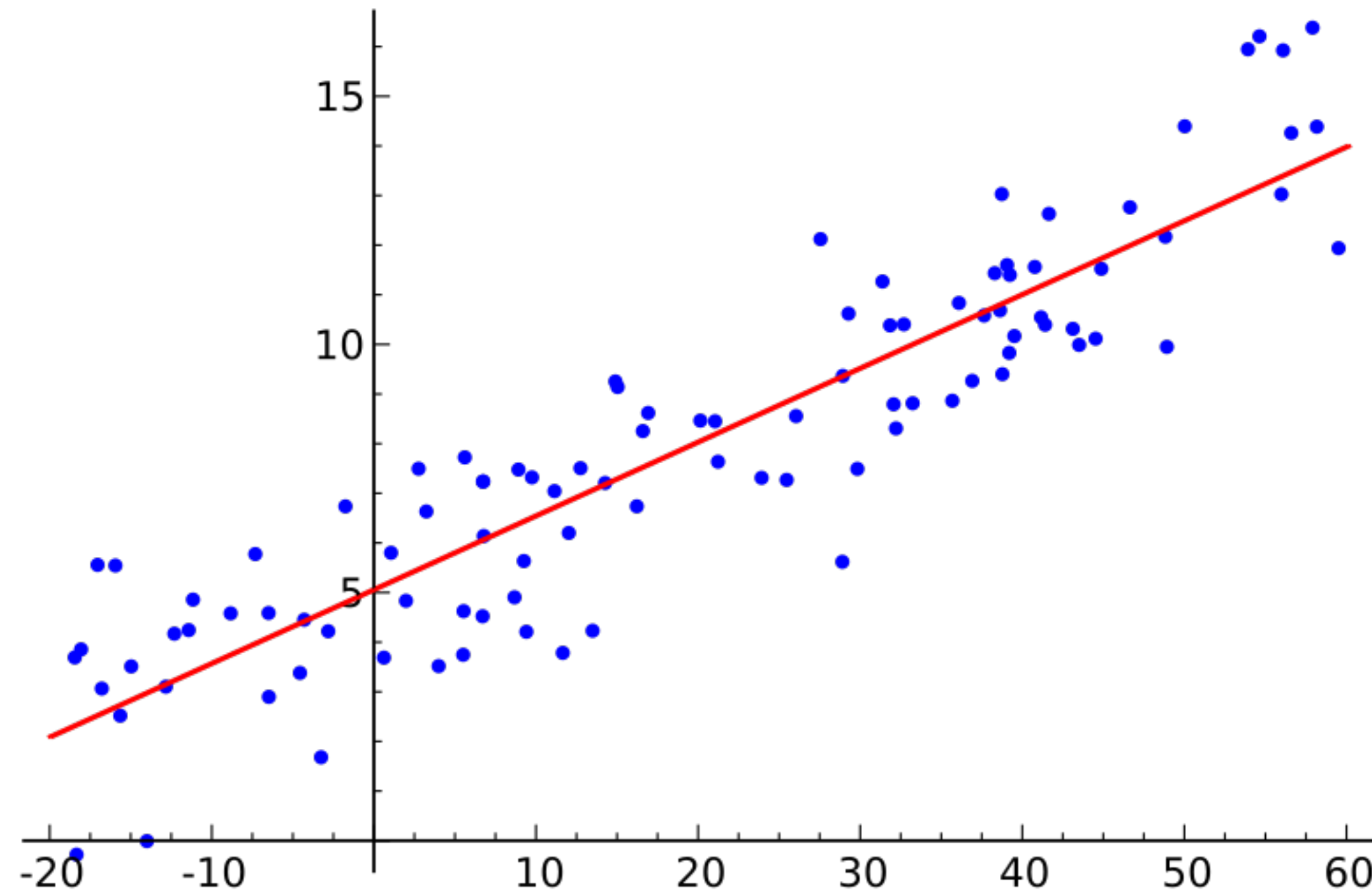
Mathematize: Civil War Duration

Data = Systematic + Stochastic

If outcome variable is *continuous*
(e.g., civil war duration in years),
typically use “OLS”

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + u_i$$

Interpretation: An increase in X by 1 unit
is associated with a β_1 change in Y.



β_1 is calculated by minimizing sum of squared residuals

Correlates of Civil War Duration

	Estimate
Coup/revolution	-6.43** (2.35)
Sons of soil	7.13** (2.37)
Anti-colonial	-1.90 (4.86)
Ethnic fractionalization	1.17 (3.33)
Intercept	9.33 (5.73)

Consider the following country profile:

- Coup: **NO**
- Sons of soil: **YES**
- Anti-Colonial: **NO**
- Ethnic fractionalization: **0.5**

What is the estimated civil war duration given this observation? (Assume values of controls not included in chart are 0.)

17.045 years =

$$-6.43 * 0 + 7.13 * 1 - 1.90 * 0 + 1.17 * 0.5 + 9.33$$

OLS model, data from Fearon 2004
(other controls in model, e.g., log pop,
log gdp, terrain, polity2, contiguity)

Midterm Overview

1. Variation

2. Theory

- PD/Stag hunt
- Bargaining model/rationalist explanations for war
- Democratic peace theory/audience costs/diversionary incentives

3. Hypothesis testing

- Regression analysis