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What drives voter choice? Does it boil down to group and partisan identities, alignment on key issues, judgments of incumbent performance, or crafty campaign messaging? Answers are not merely academic; they reveal what the electorate expects of its representatives. Contributors to *Campaigns and Voters in Developing Democracies*, edited by Noam Lupu, Virginia Oliveros, and Luis Schiumerini, tackle these enduring questions with a case study of the 2015 elections in Argentina. This is the latest in a series of recent book-length treatments of voting behavior in Latin America (Baker, Ames, and Rennó 2020; Carlin, Singer, and Zechmeister 2015; Domínguez et al. 2009, 2015; Torcal, Ruiz, and Maldonado 2018; Moreno and Telles 2013; Nadeau et al. 2015; Samuels and Zucco 2018). While dialoguing with these works, Lupu et al. seek to break new theoretical and methodological ground. The prevailing wisdom is that classic voting models – most of which were developed based on studies of the United States – travel fairly well to Latin America. Exactly how they can best be combined to understand Latin American voters is subject to debate. Lupu et al. (Chapter 1) impose some theoretical order on the competing models with a simple theoretical framework that is sensitive to electoral context. They posit that four large buckets of factors shape voting behavior across all contexts: group identities, issues, valence considerations, and campaign communications. Yet, crucially, how much these different buckets influence on electoral outcomes depends on the context.

Lupu, Oliveros, and Schiumerini's framework posits a hierarchy, or natural order. Where social and/or political cleavages – from religion to race to partisanship – are highly salient, they argue, voters will hew to these group identities. But sometimes voters lack politically salient identities, or sometimes campaigns fail to highlight potentially mobilizable identities. Lacking such cleavage-based cues, voters will depend more heavily on the match between candidates' issue stances and their own. Yet issue voting is not failsafe. Voters may lack clear issue positions or campaigns may fail to define clear platforms. Absent both cleavage-based and issue voting, the vote will turn on assessments of incumbent performance on valence issues and campaign messaging. In the context of Argentina's 2015 election, then, Lupu et al. suggest that various factors, including weak party attachments and politicians' reluctance to talk about issues, diminished the importance of the first two buckets of factors and raised weight of valence issues and campaigns communications. This theory sets the table for ten empirical chapters that shed light on its viability, though most chapters do not test it directly.

Empirically, the contributors rely chiefly on the Argentina Panel Election Study (APES). Though panel electoral surveys exist for Brazil and Mexico (Ames et al. 2010, 2016; Baker, Ames, and Rennó 2006; Lawson 2001, 2007), APES is both Argentina's first academic election survey and its first academic panel survey. Wave one was fielded face-to-face ahead of the August 9 primary (June 24 – July 27); re-interviews for the second wave occurred immediately after the November 22 presidential runoff and continued to December 30. As such, APES grants greater control over the causal sequencing of the attitudes and behaviors under scrutiny than a cross-sectional survey. Its lack of a third wave, however, hampers the quest for causal identification. Volume contributors deal with this by relying on wave 1 measurements to predict wave 2 vote choice, to "two-wave" tests (Schiumerini, Chapter 7), change-score models (Greene, Chapter 8), or careful within-subject and across-wave comparisons (Baker and Dorr, Chapter 5; Weitz-Shapiro and Winters, Chapter 9; Oliveros, Chapter 10).

Chapter Summaries

Before reflecting on this work's place in the field, let us briefly summarize the main conclusions of each empirical chapter. As we will see, many of the chapters partially confirm and partially call into question the argument in the introductory chapter that partisanship and issues played diminished roles in voters' decision calculi.

Murillo and Levitsky's chapter offers an insightful general analysis of recent Argentine politics and for this reason alone will be read, assigned and cited. The chapter's main argument, which some observers may find contentious, is that Macri's victory was not due to a "right turn" among voters but to simpler anti-incumbent

sentiment. With the UCR in shambles, there was no organized and competitive partisan opposition to the incumbent PJ. This made the presidential election something of a free-for-all, a dynamic that had not occurred since 2001. In short, the election was a case of a dominant party on the outs facing a fragmented opposition, which opened the door for a more-or-less independent politician like Macri to capitalize.

Ernesto Calvo's engaging Chapter 3 provides important background on the electoral context, key campaign events, and outcomes of 2015's various elections from an elite and institutional perspective. Several aspects of Argentine institutions and parties shaped the outcomes, he explains. At the legislative level, extreme malapportionment – when combined with Argentina's intense concentration of population in Buenos Aires city and province – heavily privileges rural regions that tend to support Peronism and other traditional parties. Meanwhile, presidential electoral politics, which centers on Buenos Aires, had long been dominated by factionalism and in-fighting within the Peronist Party. In 2009, the dominant Kirchnerist faction had attempted to punish its intra-party rivals by passing electoral reforms instituting nationwide primary elections with compulsory voting. Though this reform may have turned out to be unnecessary for shoring up Cristina Fernández's leadership within the party, it effectively turned the presidential contest into a three-round race and facilitated strategic voting.

Noam Lupu's interesting Chapter 4 asks whether and to what extent household wealth affected vote choice in 2015. The author argues that few of the “usual suspects” scholars have identified predicted voting in this case, such as income, evaluations of inequality, or partisanship. This chapter engages with the literature on inequality and voting behavior, and raised a number of important questions. Although APES is a panel survey, Lupu's chapter uses only cross-sectional data, which raises a number of methodological concerns. For example, the analysis does not rule out the possibility that the dependent variable is endogenous to several of the independent variables that might shape voting behavior. Second, wealth is never clearly operationalized. Unfortunately the published book does not include the methodological appendix that is promised in the text. More importantly, the chapter does not explain the theoretical connection between an index measure of household assets such as a TV or refrigerator and predicting voting behavior, as opposed to a measure of income (particularly since income predicts household assets for most households). Such questions merely point to the need for additional research on the question of the relationship between wealth and voting behavior.

Chapter 5 by Baker and Dorr explores the question – does party identification in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico work the “same” as elsewhere? The authors suggest that partisan attitudes are just not that important in Argentina, even though they also discover that party organizational characteristics predict the stability of partisan attachments. The authors, however, may underestimate the importance

of partisanship given the somewhat unique characteristics of this election – specifically that anti-incumbent sentiment against Argentina’s historically strongest political party was atypically high in 2015. A broader comparison over time might confirm – or undermine – the chapter’s argument and results.

Carlos Gervasoni and María Laura Tagina (Chapter 6) test the theory set forth in the introductory chapter with a model of support for Daniel Scioli, candidate for the Kirchnerist faction of Peronism, Frente para la Victoria (FpV). Approval of Cristina Fernández and sociotropic economic evaluations – two performance indicators – had large effects. Despite declining partisanship in Argentina, its effects were on par with identification with the FpV faction with the latter. As Lupu et al.’s theoretical framework would predict, partisanship appears to have subsumed issue positions. Yet strong performance voting alongside strong partisan effects echoes region-wide models of vote choice (Carlin, Singer and Zechmeister 2015, 366). Such inferences suggest a partial revision of the simple voting rules dictated in the book’s theoretical framework.

Luis Schiumerini’s (Chapter 7) investigation of Macri’s mandate concludes the Argentine electorate desires better performance within the same basic policy regime, not structural reform. Similar arguments arose in the wake of Latin America’s left turn (Baker and Greene 2011). Schiumerini shows that Argentines locate both the parties and themselves in the middle of the ideological spectrum. And, regardless of their 2015 vote choice, voters support a variety of statist policies implemented under Kirchnerism. So while, logically, retrospective voting cannot generate clear policy mandates for future officeholders, Schiumerini argues that in this case – where the electorate largely agrees on the parameters of the policy regime – voting based on performance assessments indicates lower reliance on valence issues, and higher reliance on positional issues, than previously acknowledged. While not directly opposed to Lupu et al.’s theoretical framework, this inference cautions against ruling out a role for issues in the face of evidence of valence voting.

While Schiumerini considers the relative roles of issues and valence considerations, Kenneth F. Greene’s chapter (8) is framed as an evaluation of partisan voting versus campaign effects – the other two sets of factors described in the introductory chapter. Greene persuasively argues that Mauricio Macri’s gradually improving performance across the three elections, and his eventual victory in the second round, were due to campaign effects. Considering only long-term dispositions and structural factors, Greene maintains, Daniel Scioli would have won the election. Thus, this election stands as one exemplar of the larger role of chance, agency, and campaign strategy in developing democracies more generally, according to Greene. But that’s not to say partisanship played no role. Comparing results from the APES to those from panel studies of recent elections in Mexico and the United States, Greene shows that volatility in vote choice over the campaign was higher in Argentina than in the United States – but lower than in Mexico. Thus, the

chapter illustrates the promise of comparing across the growing number of panel studies in Latin America.

Yet campaign volatility is not necessarily at odds with the notion that voters have long-standing candidate preferences and partisan ties, as Weitz-Shapiro and Winters show in their smart chapter. Calvo noted in Chapter 3 that the universal and compulsory nature of Argentina's new primary elections made them an effective early poll of voter intentions, and facilitated strategic voting. In Chapter 9, then, Weitz-Shapiro and Winters examine the incidence of strategic voting in the presidential elections. They find that between 6 and 10 percent of Argentine voters appear to have switched their votes strategically between the first and second round – about half of all voters who had preference rankings conducive to such switching. This is a remarkably high level of strategic voting, comparable to estimates derived from studies of stable, developed democracies such as the United States and Canada. Moreover, echoing a finding from Greene's chapter, Weitz-Shapiro and Winters discover that demographics were largely unassociated with switching; instead, strategic voting appears to have been almost entirely driven by the intensity of baseline candidate preferences.

In Chapter 10, Virginia Oliveros asks some questions ancillary to the book's theoretical thrust but on point with recent debates over the quality of democracy in the region. Are perceptions of clientelism and ballot integrity rooted in personal experience and interrelated? Perceived ballot secrecy is, she finds, informed by neighborhood perceptions of clientelism but not personal experience with it. This challenges the core assumption that vote-buying requires a belief that the ballot is not secret and, thus, clientelistic exchange is enforceable (Stokes 2005). Oliveros also finds voters of the losing candidate (Scioli) exhibit a marked decline in perceptions of ballot secrecy. Paired with recent evidence that electoral winners in Latin America tend to hold democratic processes, values, and norms in lower regard (Singer 2019), this winners-losers gap in ballot secrecy suggests elections may (at least temporarily) place the regime on thin ice with the electorate.

In the book's final chapter (11), Elizabeth J. Zechmeister investigates the consequences of the book's central finding: moderately high levels of electoral volatility and campaign persuasion in Argentina's 2015 election. She asks, is volatility potentially corrosive to democracy? Are "unmoored" voters – that is, ones who come in and out of the electorate or who switch vote intentions – less engaged or satisfied with democracy? Leveraging data from APES as well as the American National Election Studies (ANES) and the LAPOP AmericasBarometer, Zechmeister finds that across Latin America, unmoored voters report lower levels of internal and external political efficacy, but they are no more or less satisfied with democracy than their more stably rooted fellow citizens. Intriguingly, however, the negative correlation between vote switching and efficacy does not hold in the region's nine compulsory voting systems – including, importantly for this book, Argentina.

In fact, there is some indication that unmoored voters in Argentina might actually have higher levels of external efficacy. Thus, Zechmeister's chapter hints that in many developing country contexts, voter volatility may simply be a normalized feature of the electoral context.

Editor – Book Reviewer Q&A

RE Carlin: What will be Lupu et al.'s most enduring contributions to the study of voting behavior in Latin America (and beyond)?

AE Smith: Thinking of this book as a series of individual contributions, it is consistently well-written and engaging. The chapters, which include pieces from many of the top scholars of voting behavior in Latin America, each stand alone; they should be widely read and cited in scholarship on comparative electoral behavior in the developing world.

Thinking of this book as more than the sum of its parts, it offers a lot to help us structure the way we think about electoral behavior in the developing world. First, the editors effectively outline a simple, plausible, and flexible theoretical framework that synthesizes and begins to bring order to a wide range of approaches to voting behavior. The flexibility of their approach is its biggest selling point. One can readily imagine subsequent scholars of other countries and elections drawing on the same notion of hierarchically ordered baskets or buckets of factors that matter more or less in different contexts.

Second, a core theme emerges from reading across the empirical chapters: voter volatility, switching, or unmooring is a key and likely inherent feature of elections in Latin America. Comparing Argentina to Mexico (e.g., Greene, this volume), Brazil (e.g., Ames et al., 2012), or Latin America as a whole (e.g., Zechmeister, this volume) indicates that high levels of volatility are likely to be the rule, rather than the exception in Latin America. Volatility is produced by a combination of electoral institutions, unstable party systems, and campaigns. Moreover, Zechmeister's contribution suggests that volatility may not necessarily signal any particular problem or dysfunction of Latin American democracy – it may simply be a feature of how democracy works in the region. As Greene suggests (p.163), though Latin Americanists have long sought long-term structural frameworks that can explain political outcomes in the region, democracy itself limits such approaches. Contingency and uncertainty may even be normatively appropriate: “the definition of ‘liberal democracy’ almost always highlights uncertainty in electoral contestation.... Without uncertainty, it should be possible to forecast election outcomes well ahead of time” (163, this volume).

RE Carlin: To what extent does the model of scholarly collaboration in the Argentine Panel Electoral Study (APES) represent a new path forward?

AE Smith: One of the key contributions of this project is outlined in the book's preface: its model of scholarly collaboration to fund a nationally representative panel study. Panel studies have huge benefits for understanding political behavior, especially in contexts of voter volatility such as this one. But there have been only a few nationally representative election panel studies in Latin America: for Mexico's 2000, 2006, and 2012 elections (Lawson, et al. 2001, 2007, 2013) and Brazil's 2010 and 2014 national elections (Ames et al. 2013, 2016) – and now Argentina 2015. The reason there are so few is the cost. As all of us who have tried to fund panel studies know, they're expensive and logistically very complicated. Funding a single wave of a nationally representative survey is expensive, and panel studies multiply those costs, plus they imply additional logistical considerations in keeping track of and re-contacting the same respondents over the course of months (or even years!). The APES team bet that by pooling resources, even across relatively junior collaborators, they would be able to manage those costs. This bet largely paid off – though the effort was not able to raise the funds needed to fund a third wave that would have aided in causal identification.

Would such an approach work for future panel studies in Argentina or elsewhere? It's still not clear. As funding for large political science studies dwindles at the US National Science Foundation as well as other national scientific agencies such as Brazil's CNPQ, though, we need to explore it.

RE Carlin: What, if any, are the book's largest weaknesses? What issues raised by (or ignored in) this study will be the most theoretically fruitful for scholars to explore?

AE Smith: The work is an engaging read, and it will absolutely serve as a must-have reference for students of Argentine politics. However, its success is uneven as a work of comparative politics. The introduction usefully lays out the simple, flexible theoretical framework we have already discussed, but in my opinion it veers a bit off-course by attempting to make the case that Argentina is in some sense prototypical or representative of elections across developing democracies, and Latin America in particular. I would argue that there is no single representative case, and that any attempt to identify one distracts from the more fruitful path of describing variation in systematic ways. Moreover, Argentina differs from other developing democracies in important ways – for instance, the reduced role of identity-based cleavages such as race, ethnicity, religion, caste, and perhaps even partisanship.

By contrast, many of the individual chapters begin to show a different way forward. On the one hand, some chapters (e.g., Calvo) delightfully describe quirky,

rich detail that may initially seem to defy both any claims of prototypicality and systematic categorization of differences between Argentina and other cases. On the other hand, many chapters explicitly compare the Argentine case with other democracies (e.g., Baker and Dorr; Greene; Weitz-Shapiro and Winters; and Zechmeister). What we learn from the latter studies is not that Argentina stands in as a model developing democracy, but that it sometimes differs from other developing democracies in interesting and perhaps explicable ways.

The next step, then, is to develop our explanations further. While the theoretical framework describing four buckets of factors that affect electoral behavior is useful, we should now be trying with greater rigor to identify the forces that affect the relative importance of different buckets of factors. In addition, several contributions in this volume raise the question of whether the posited sequential ordering of and trade-offs among the different buckets work as theorized. In this regard, it is useful to think about the model of Carlin, Singer, and Zechmeister's seminal *The Latin American Voter* (2015). That volume began with a series of contextual variables hypothesized to help explain variance across countries in the relative importance of different individual-level variables. This approach yielded fruitful insights – for instance, that religious identity and religiosity are more strongly related to vote choice on a left-right scale in more programmatic and less clientelistic party systems (Boas and Smith 2015). Of course, such an approach doesn't fully work in a volume devoted to a single country. Moreover, it is entirely plausible that Carlin et al. missed important contextual factors shaping voters' decision-making. But as we begin to gather more panel studies in Latin America and the developing world, scholars should begin thinking systematically about how to explain varying levels of volatility – not to mention variance in patterns of change of other variables – across countries and elections.

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