Who Monitors?
Clientelism and Democratic Representation in Argentine Municipalities

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Abstract:
Why do some party candidates choose to monitor voter turnout while others do not? This article provides a novel approach to understanding clientelism through careful examination of candidate decisions to monitor voters, a political strategy with far-reaching consequences for political representation. I test for the individual and contextual traits that explain clientelistic monitoring, such as a candidate's social origin, her incumbency status, partisan affiliation, the size of the electoral district, and the type of region in which she competes. I use an original dataset that combines information about the political careers of 144 municipal candidates gathered during 20 months of fieldwork across Argentine municipalities. Drawing on participant observation, field and archival research, and over 100 in-depth interviews with candidates and party activists, I show that the social and partisan origins of the candidates and the size of the municipality are important determinants of the decision to monitor voters.

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Clientelism works as long as voters who receive goods from politicians support them at the polls. *Clientelism or clientelistic strategies* (terms that I use interchangeably) imply the distribution of excludable private goods to individual voters in exchange for their electoral support. In the United States, cigarettes, beer, medicine (in East St. Louis), coupons for free chicken dinners (in Oakland), and "street money" (in Chicago) are still delivered to induce voters to turn out at the polls (Nichter 2008: 19). European advanced democracies like Italy (Chubb 1981) still allocate public jobs based on personal recommendations. Candidates still buy votes in exchange for chickens (Schedler 2004, 84) and bags of rice (Cornelius 2004) in Mexico and mattresses, construction materials, and marihuana in Argentina (Szwarcberg 2009). Schaffer (2007: 1-2) reports the "dizzying array of material inducements" that candidates distribute in exchange for their votes such as soap, cement, whisky, coffins, cigarettes, bicycles, "and the list goes on." In Taiwan, 30 percent of the voters living in the third largest city reported accepting cash before an electoral campaign (Cheng et al. 2000), in Cambodia the number increases by 10 percent (Collins et al. 2000). In Brazil, 6 percent of eligible voters were offered cash in exchange for their vote (Speck and Abramo 2000), and in Argentina (Brusco et al. 2004) and Mexico (Cornelius 2004) the number almost doubled.[1]

Understanding the conditions that enable candidates to buy votes despite the secret ballot have led scholars to focus on the type of voters, core or swing, candidates target with clientelistic inducements (Dunning and Stokes 2008, Gans-Morse 2009), as well as on the electoral technologies, like the introduction of the Australian ballot, that make more difficult for parties to monitor voters (Stokes

[1] Schedler (2004: 2-4) provides a full list of countries and data about the reach of vote buying.

2005, Rosas and Hawkins 2007, Lehoucq 2007).[2] Yet, while the literature has helped us to understand a good deal about strategies of electoral mobilization and clientelism, studies that examine variation in candidates' decision to monitor voters are surprisingly absent.[3] By *monitoring* I describe the tactics candidates employ to obtain information about individual voter participation in rallies and elections.[4] In studying individual candidates' decisions to monitor voters, this article provides a window on the selection and use of clientelistic strategies.

Uncertainty about electoral results induces risk-adverse and career-seeking candidates to employ clientelistic strategies to turn out working and low-income voters who are likely to exchange their support for a welfare program or a bag of food. Candidates observe or make voters believe that they are being observed to prevent them to fail to turn out or support opposition candidates. Yet, in most contemporary democracies, the secrecy of the ballot prevents candidates to observe vote choice, but not turnout.

The introduction of asymmetries of information induces candidates to monitor voter turnout to reduce the risk of moral hazard. Clientelism is effective when voters believe that their failure to participate will imply losing benefits.

[2] In contrast to party-printed and supplied ballots, Australian ballots contain the names of every registered candidate and party in a single list and are government-supplied.

[3] The following is just a partial list of ethnographic and case studies that have documented monitoring strategies after the introduction of the secret ballot in the US (Dahl 1961, Banfield 1963, Kurtzman 1935), Italy (Chubb 1981), Argentina (Alvarez 1999, Brusco et al. 2004, Szwarcberg 2009), India (Chandra 2004), and Taiwan (Wang and Kurzman 2007).

[4] In this paper I focus on individual voter monitoring and not on related phenomena, such as group monitoring. I acknowledge that group monitoring is a less costly strategy that also contributes to mobilize voters. In Argentina, scholars have documented how different groups such as unions (Collier 1991; Levitsky 2003; Murillo 2001), evangelist groups (Semán 2004), and soccer hooligans (Alabarces 1996; Veiga 1998; Grabia 2009) mobilized voters to participate and support political candidates. Candidates use different strategies and negotiate differently the support of individual and group voters. In most cases, negotiations between candidates and group leaders are not open and known and thus, it is more difficult (although not impossible) to understand and measure. Instead, by focusing on individual voters, I am able to accurately examine the causal effects of clientelistic distribution. My on-going research investigates both, individual and group monitoring.

Monitoring is therefore a constitutive component of clientelistic exchanges (Kitschelt 2000: 9) because it is the practice that induces voters to act as if their actions were visible to candidates.

To study variation in candidates' decisions to monitor voters, I assume that voters demand particularistic goods and candidates select the strategy of mobilization that it is most likely to get them reelected subject to budget constraints. I use comparative evidence from several municipalities in Argentina, a country that shares the characteristic features of many new democracies: institutional weakness and political instability (Levitsky and Murillo 2005) with an institutionalized party system (Mainwaring and Scully 1995) that enables me to test whether and how often candidates affiliated to stable parties with roots in society and solid party organizations monitor voters.[5]

Since 1983, Argentina has held free and fair elections with alternation in the executive and considerable competition at the provincial and municipal levels. The two major parties, the Radical Civic Union (*Unión Cívica Radical*, UCR), and the Justicialist (Peronist) Party (*Partido Justicialista*, PJ), maintain territorial control over most municipalities by combining a common history that created "communities of fate" (Wellhofer 1979: 171) and "electorates of belonging" (Panebianco 1988: 267) with clientelistic inducements (Torre 2005, Auyero 2000, Levitsky 2003, Calvo and Murillo 2004, Szwarcberg 2009). By making comparisons across municipalities in two provinces, Buenos Aires and Córdoba, I am able to test the effects that multiple combinations of partisan

[5] Aside from methodological considerations, it is worth noting that some recent and seminal studies of clientelism (Calvo and Murillo 2004), vote buying (Stokes 2005), and turnout buying (Nichter 2008) are also based on empirical evidence from Argentina. In studying and measuring monitoring in the same country, my study makes a direct contribution to this body of work.

support at the national, provincial, and municipal level have on candidates' decisions to monitor voters.

I begin by describing the logistics of monitoring voters. I consider how candidates control and punish voters based on their participation to party rallies. I then describe the case-selection criteria and the data used to measure monitoring. Building on ethnographic data, I elaborate a set of hypotheses to measure the conditions under which candidates monitor voters. Next, I present the measures of the dependent and independent variables, discuss the quantitative results, and examine alternative explanations. I conclude by analyzing the implications of the empirical findings for the quality of political representation in new democracies.

The Microfoundations of Political Clientelism: Monitoring Voter Turnout

Monitoring is a cost-effective practice that enables candidates to gather information about voter turnout. In countries where voting is compulsory like Argentina, voter participation at rallies is voluntary and thus voter willingness to participate and candidate abilities to mobilize them explains turn out. Moreover, voters who choose to participate at rallies independently are easily distinguishable from mobilized voters because independent voters do not wear any identification such as candidate-made hats and t-shirts that signal them as candidate supporters. More importantly, rallies enable mayors to act preventively by avoiding the distribution of goods to candidates who are unlikely to turn out the expected number of votes on Election Day, given their performances in rallies (Szwarcberg 2009).

To monitor voter turnout at rallies, candidates simply have to see who is at the event. Candidates have rosters "made using Excel and organized alphabetically" with the names of beneficiaries of welfare programs, public employees, neighbors, community organizers, and party activists whose problems they have solved, are solving, or are thinking about solving in the future.[6] Everyone who had come to ask for help or who had been offered assistance without asking is on these rosters and is expected to attend the rally.[7]

To measure if a candidate monitors voters I rely on observations of a visible practice, taking attendance of voter participation at party rallies. The dependent variable in my analysis, consequently, takes the value of one if a candidate collects individual voter information about their attendance to rallies and cero otherwise. Candidates who invest in clientelistic strategies monitor voter participation by developing surveillance mechanisms. Candidates are not as interested in punishing voters as to induce turnout and deter support for the opposition. Over time, candidates who build a reputation for monitoring voters may reduce de cost of monitoring by disclosing that attendance may be taken while randomly monitoring voters in some rallies.

Monitoring is effective only if voters *believe* that candidates will use attendance rosters to distribute benefits. Candidates use the information collected in these lists to punish only a few voters who had failed to participate to set an example. I observed how selective punishment worked during the 2005 electoral campaign in Buenos Aires. Enrique, a Peronist candidate in José C. Paz

[6] Author interview with Mabel, Private Secretary of a councilor in the city of Córdoba.
[7] In Mexico, "PRI activists reportedly used lists of PROGRESA (welfare program) beneficiaries to mobilize participation in campaign rallies and to get out the vote on Election Day." (Cornelius 2004: 53).

had rented four buses to transport voters to attend a rally that was going to take place in a neighboring municipality. The day of the rally voter turnout was much lower than Enrique had expected, and voters were waiting outside his *Unidad Básica* to participate at the rally traveled comfortably seated in two buses.[8]

José, an unemployed voter who was receiving a welfare program thanks to Enrique, was one of the candidate's followers who failed to attend the rally. The rally was on a Sunday; the same day as José's grandson's birthday, and he chose to remain at the party his daughter had organized instead of attending one more rally. The following month, José found out that he had been removed (*dar de baja*) from the welfare program he was receiving.

> *When I went to talk to Enrique, he explained to me that I couldn't get the welfare program anymore because this was a program for only four months. I told him that I was receiving the program for almost a year, and if it was only for four months I should not have received it for the last couple of months. Also, I knew my neighbor was still getting it and it had been more than four months. He smiled and told me, "but Pedro [the neighbor] is a good fellow, he always comes when I ask him." I didn't know what to say, I felt so humiliated. I was there begging for 350 pesos [U$S 100 per month] and promising whatever. He just used me to set an example, and you know what the worst thing is? That it really worked. Since they took the program away from me, and people found out, no one else ever failed to attend a rally. And I mean no one.*[9]

In choosing to selectively punish José and other voters who failed to show up, Enrique strengthened his reputation. By demonstrating that a failure to attend rallies has consequences, Enrique's followers are more likely to turn out in the future.

[8] In his study of the Peronist party organization, Steven Levitsky (2003: 66) describes *Unidades Básicas* (Base Units) as "the neighborhood branches out of which activists operate." *Unidades Básicas* "tend to be run by either a small group activists or a single *puntero* (neighborhood broker) and her inner circle of friends and family."

[9] Author interview with José. José C. Paz, December 1, 2005.

Case Selection

To study candidate choices to monitor voters, I carried out fieldwork during 20 months leading to the national election of October 2005 in Argentina.[10] Elected in 2003 with only 22 percent of the valid votes and the crucial support of former President and Governor of Buenos Aires Eduardo Duhalde, President Néstor Kirchner needed to show that it was him and not Duhalde who controlled the party apparatus. To signal the change, President Kirchner chose his wife Cristina to run for the Senate seat of the Peronist party's stronghold, the province of Buenos Aires. The First Lady used the same Front for Victory (*Frente para la Victoria*) label her husband had used to get elected two years before. Chiche Duhalde, wife of Eduardo Duhalde, began a fierce dispute over who represented the "true Peronists" of the province by running for the same Seat with the PJ label as well as its symbols and hymn. Opposition parties called the election an "open primary," accusing Peronists of using a national election to solve their internal disputes.

Based on data availability and regional differences in levels of economic development, demographic characteristics, and electoral patterns, I selected seven municipalities in two Argentine provinces: Buenos Aires and Córdoba. Buenos Aires is the financial, productive, and political center of the country. Voters living in the 24 districts that border the capital city and are referred to as the Conurbano Bonaerense have the capacity to choose the country's President given the size of the province's electorate.[11] For instance, La Matanza is a

[10] In October 2005, Argentine voters elected 128 national deputies, 24 national senators, 400 provincial legislators, 55 mayors, and 3,738 councilors.

[11] The importance of the Conurbano for Argentine politics resides in the combination of levels of poverty and number of voters. Only 24 out of the 134 municipalities of Buenos Aires belong to

municipality with the same population as six Argentine provinces combined. José C. Paz, one of the municipalities examined here, has more than twice the number of voters (120,000) as the Argentine province of Formosa (50,000). Córdoba is the third largest electoral district after the province and the city of Buenos Aires.

In the last two decades, Argentina's historically dominant parties, the Radical and Peronist parties, experienced different electoral performances in the provinces of Córdoba and Buenos Aires. The predominance of the Peronist party among the working and low-income voters of Buenos Aires has been widely documented (Mora y Araujo 1995; Ostiguy 1998; Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2003). Córdoba, in contrast, has a bipartisan historical tradition in which both majority parties, the UCR and the PJ, competed at the local level.

In contrast to the contributions of Auyero (2000) and Levitsky (2003) that examine Argentine politics through the lenses of the politics of Buenos Aires, my work makes comparisons across municipalities in Buenos Aires and Córdoba. In incorporating Córdoba, I am able to compare candidate choices when competing for the support of working and low-income voters where both parties, the UCR and the PJ, share an analogous social history. The Radical party in the province of Córdoba has a historically grounded history, a sizeable following, and it had governed the province and the Capital City for sixteen consecutive years since

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the Conurbano. Still, 60 percent of the province's registered voters live in these 24 municipalities. The Conurbano comprises one quarter (8,684,437 inhabitants) of the country's total population in 1.2 percent of the territory with the highest percentage of unemployed and illegally employed workers. The proximity between those living in the Conurbano and those living in the city of Buenos Aires constitutes a source of continual tension between citizens and the provincial and local governments of Buenos Aires.

the return of democracy (Alonso 2000; Frávega 2006; Bischoff 1995; Capellupo 2003; Cabezas 1997).[12]

Table 1 provides demographic (population, number of low-income households, and number of social welfare beneficiaries) and electoral (number of municipal legislators, municipal electoral tradition, and municipal incumbent party in 2005) information for the seven selected municipalities in Buenos Aires and Córdoba. In Buenos Aires, I chose the municipalities of José C. Paz and San Miguel, the second most populous municipality of the Conurbano until 1994 when the governor decided to split it. Aside from sharing a common history, the mayors of these municipalities chose to support different factions of the Peronist party in this election. While Mario Ishii, mayor of José C. Paz, supported Cristina Kirchner's candidacy, Oscar Zilocchi, mayor of San Miguel supported the candidacy of Chiche Duhalde.[13] I also incorporated Bahía Blanca, a municipality with a population similar to those I studied in the Conurbano, but located in the southern area of Buenos Aires. While the three selected

[12] Whereas other parties had been successful in sitting representatives at the local legislature of Córdoba's Capital City, Radical and Peronist candidates have consistently held the majority of local seats as well as the executive office until 2003 when the *Partido Nuevo* ended the district's historical bipartisanship. In an election with the lowest voter turnout since the return of democracy, Luis Juez, the founder and leader of the *Partido Nuevo* became Córdoba's mayor. The majority of the candidates of this party entered politics for the first time in this election. Interestingly and in striking contrast with former councilors from both Radical and Peronist parties, the majority of the representatives of the *Partido Nuevo* were accomplished professionals by the time they took office, their main income was not provided by their political activity, and they had not participated in politics before. I examine this case in detail when I study electoral alternatives.

[13] The Kirchner administration's discourse of human rights directly challenged Zilocchi's party leader, Aldo Rico, who was involved with the military during the country's dirty war and had led a group of army mutineers, the *carapintada* movement, to rise up against a recently elected democratic government. Hence, it is unclear if Zilocchi's decision to support Duhalde responded to San Miguel's executive "loyalty" to the governor, or if his decision owed itself to the impossibility of supporting the President's faction. Ishii, however, had had a long-standing dispute with the former governor who twice had tried, once with success, to impede his election. Still, at the time Ishii decided to support Cristina Kirchner, it was not obvious who was going to win the election.

municipalities had candidates running for the two factions of the Peronist party, Bahía Blanca's mayor supported the party of the President.

In Córdoba, I studied the cases of the two biggest and most important municipalities, Capital City and Río Cuarto. I also examine the case of Villa María, a municipality that is third in importance, and Colonia Caroya, a small town near the capital city to test the effects of the municipality size in candidates decisions.

[Table 1 about here]

Whereas the results presented here are from several municipalities across two Argentine provinces, I also attended rallies and political meetings at city halls and local legislatures, and had informal conversations with politicians and voters in other municipalities of the Conurbano – Malvinas Argentinas, Hurlingham, Avellaneda, Vicente Lopez, Quilmes, Merlo, La Matanza, Morón – and outside of the Conurbano – Ayacucho, and Pergamino. I also conducted fieldwork across other municipalities in the province of Córdoba: Mina Clavero, Yacanto, Villa Carlos Paz, and San Francisco. The information I collected in these districts supports the findings presented in this paper and thus I am confident that the selected municipalities are representative of a larger universe of districts.

Data

This article uses an original dataset that contains information for the 144 local elected representatives, mayors and legislators in the selected municipalities. Less than 40 percent (38.19%) were female candidates, and only one municipality, Villa María, had a female mayor. Still, at the time of her appointment, Nora Bedano de Accastello was married to Eduardo Accastello,

who was a former councilor, a twice-elected mayor, and a prominent national deputy whose nomination for governor was under consideration. The size of the local legislatures, electoral competition, partisanship, and economic composition of the electorate varies across and within each of the seven selected municipalities. Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables discussed bellow.

Monitoring

Survey data is not useful to measure monitoring as candidates deny using practices that are illegal and undemocratic. To measure if a candidate monitors voters, I rely on semi-closed and in-depth interviews, and participant observations at political meetings, rallies, and on Election Day. I conducted over a hundred semi-structured interviews with candidates in each municipality to learn about their political trajectories and strategic choices. The length of these interviews ranged from a couple of hours to several hours over weeks. I interviewed 67 candidates and 36 private secretaries and close advisors who answered the questions for the candidate. I combine information from archives (see below), key informants, and activists to reconstruct the political trajectories and strategic choices of candidates I was not able to interview.

I also participated in mobilizations, rallies, and activities organized by several candidates in their municipalities through which I met several voters and activists who contributed in building candidates' political histories. To increase the external validity of participant observation research and ethnographic data, I consulted the archives of *La Hoja*, a local independent newspaper of daily publication that focused on the municipalities of San Miguel and José C. Paz and

recorded daily information about rallies.[14] I reviewed *La Nueva Provincia* for Bahía Blanca, *El Puntal* for Río Cuarto, and *La Voz del Interior* and *La Mañana de Córdoba* for provincial information of Córdoba. I carried out additional archival research in national newspapers *Clarín, La Nación,* and *Página/12.*

Newspapers had special correspondents assigned to report and follow the daily activities of the main candidates, and I used these reports to track back information about rallies I was not able to attend and rechecked those in which I was present. In addition, printed media usually publishes information about the candidate's occupation, previous participation in politics, and other indicators such as age, education level, marital status, income, and even astrological sign. I found further support for my results in works of investigative journalism (Verbitsky 1991; Cerruti 1993; López Echagüe 2002; Vaca Narvaja 2001; O'Donnell 2005) that examined the political trajectories of different national figures who my interviewees mentioned were involved in this particular campaign.

There were multiple, usually weekly, political rallies in which candidates and voters participated months before the election. And, while I was present at several rallies, I was unable to observe every mobilization. Following my argument, I expect candidates to take attendance randomly and thus I consulted voters, journalists, and party operators about the presence or absence of party activists taking attendance at rallies. Note that in using respondent answers to a specific question: "Did the candidate or a party activist took attendance of voter participation at rallies?" I could gather systematic data to measure the same

[14] I was also present at several of the interviews to party candidates conducted by local journalists Alfredo Sayus and Fabián Domínguez.

observation across cases. Furthermore, I got consistent responses from operatives and informants that worked for competing parties and factions.

Monitoring is a dummy variable coded 1 for candidates who took attendance at rallies, and 0 for candidates who did not. The number of candidates who took attendance of voter participation at rallies was almost equal (48.61%) to the number of candidates who chose not to monitor voters (51.39%). This implies that almost half of elected local representatives in the seven selected municipalities used clientelistic strategies to mobilize voters in democracy.

Incumbency

Representatives of incumbent parties are likely to have more access to benefits than councilmen of the opposition and thus, they are more likely to use clientelism and monitor voters. In Buenos Aires, the mayors of Bahía Blanca and José C. Paz counted on the support of the President and the Governor, while the mayor of San Miguel, Oscar Zilocchi competed without access to national and provincial funds. Still, Zilocchi had municipal resources and a network of party activists that had been running the municipality since his party took power in 1997. In Córdoba, the mayors of Villa María and Colonia Caroya had the support of the President and the Governor. In contrast, the Radical mayor of Río Cuarto and the mayor of Córdoba Capital ran against both the national and provincial government.

Based on the strategic importance of this election for the President's electoral future, candidates running for his party received considerable support, and in the words of one candidate "felt the pressure" to turn out as many voters

as possible.[15] The openness and visibility in the distribution of goods for votes was such that clientelism became a matter of national debate, reflected on the covers of national newspapers.

National and provincial incumbent is coded 1 for candidates who run with the party of the President, and 0 for candidates who did not run for either the *Frente para la Victoria* in Buenos Aires, and *Unión por Córdoba* in Córdoba. Less than half of the sample, 41.67 percent of the candidates counted with both, national and provincial support. *Municipal incumbent* is coded 1 for candidates who ran for the mayor's party and 0 for candidates who ran for opposition parties. In contrast to national and provincial incumbency, more than half (52.78 percent) of the candidates had local support.

Social Origins of Candidates' Political Careers

To understand a candidate's decision to monitor voters, I examine the social origins of her political career. In studying how a candidate became engaged in politics, I focus on the opportunities and constraints she faced when beginning to turn out voters. Building on my ethnographic work, I argue that there are two distinct career paths for local politicians: one bottom-up and the other top-down. *Bottom-up candidates* begin their political careers as popular community organizers and party activists in their precincts. After going repeatedly to the municipality and knocking on the doors of councilors' offices in search of resources to solve their voters and community problems, politicians recruit activists to represent them in their precincts. The political career of Rodolfo "Pino" Remigio illustrates the successful trajectory of a community

[15] Author interview.

organizer who began as a shantytown leader and is currently a councilor in José C. Paz.[16]

The biggest and most dangerous slum in José C. Paz, El Ceibo, was Pino's home. Pino began his career during the period of hyperinflation in 1989 by organizing soup kitchens in the slum. Emerging as a natural leader (*líder villero)* for his charismatic appeal and organizational capacities in a time of need, Pino became involved in multiple community activities, chief among them the organization of soup kitchens and soccer championships.

> *I funded three soup kitchens and a social and athletic club that it is still here. How did I do it? I dropped a soccer ball and became a referee. Who then would set up a tournament? Pino. And then Pino is in the municipality. Pino is giving out goods. Pino is solving problems. You become a little bit the leader, the one who represents the slum.*[17]

As a result of these activities, Pino's name was constantly repeated in the corridors of City Hall. For instance, the soccer tournaments that took place every weekend mobilized entire families, displaying Pino's popularity and leadership in the slum.

> *At first, I went to the municipality and waited for my number to be called so that they would give me a can of tomatoes, preserves, and pasta to cook at the soup kitchen. Then, what was the deal? That I got things […] and I began to grow. […] One day when I was at city hall, Ortega [a councilor in José C. Paz] told me: I believe that you have a great job. Why don't you work for me? What will you give me? A job in the municipality* (un nombramiento).[18]

[16] I conducted over a dozen of in-depth interviews with Pino over two months, and interviewed different activists who had worked for him, and key informants who had followed his political career in the district. I draw on these narratives to describe Pino's political trayectory.
[17] Author's interview with Rodolfo "Pino" Remigio in José C. Paz, 5 October, 2005.
[18] Author's interview with Rodolfo "Pino" Remigio in José C. Paz, 5 October, 2005.

Since that moment, Pino became a *paid party activist* or *broker*. Not only did he receive a salary to continue solving voters' problems, but he had access to municipal resources and contacts. His paycheck, however, came with the condition of endorsing Ortega's candidacy and delivering votes. Over time, Pino built his own political organization and became councilor, illustrating the successful path of a bottom-up candidate.

Still, not all candidates who began from the bottom-up are paid for their political job. Some community organizers receive funding through civic, religious, and social organizations that do not request their political participation. *Unpaid party activists* therefore enjoy greater independence in choosing whether to turn out voters. Yet, this does not imply that unpaid party activists will not distribute goods in exchange for voter participation to advance their political careers. The distinction between receiving and not receiving an income for their political work is what distinguishes *paid party activists* or *brokers* from *unpaid party activists*. It also explains why brokers are more likely to monitor voters than activists whose living conditions are not tied to their political performance.

I used life stories, in-depth interviews, and recorded interviews in printed media to gather information about the social origins of candidates. Brokers constitute a quarter of my sample and are coded 1 for candidates who began their paid political career from the bottom, and 0 for candidates who had not received a paycheck for their political work. Unpaid party activists are coded 1 for candidates who had began their political careers from the bottom up, but had not received a paid check for their political work, and 0 for candidates who had

received a pay check. There are 63 (43.75 percent) candidates who began their political careers as unpaid party activists.

Top-down candidates are well-known and/or well-connected individuals who are invited to run for elected office regardless of not having political experience. This tends to be the case of famous actors, athletes, writers, journalists, union and social movement leaders, and family members who have a long tradition in politics and their last names invite immediate recognition. I define these candidates as *outsiders* as they lack the political contacts and experience of bottom-up candidates. Outsiders are coded 1, and candidates whose political career began from the bottom up are coded 0. There are 45 (31.25 percent) candidates who began their political careers as outsiders.

My argument assumes that bottom-up candidates will be more likely to use clientelistic strategies and to monitor voters than top-down candidates because in order to become candidates activists have to prove their value to the party. The number of voters they can mobilize to participate in political rallies and vote in elections provides their value: the bigger the number, the higher their value. Experience teaches activists about the efficacy of clientelistic strategies and thus brokers who risk losing their jobs if they fail to mobilize voters are likely to turn to clientelism and monitor voters.

Partisanship

Scholars of Argentine politics have consistently highlighted the loyalty of working and low-income voters to the Peronist party (Torre 2005; Levitsky 2003; Calvo and Murillo 2004; Mora y Araujo 1995; 1995; Ostiguy 1998). Torre (2005: 178) sharply summarizes the Peronist party's capacity to sustain a reserve of core

voters by describing the organization's two pillars: "The first is a party identification grounded in a dense web of historically grounded ties of solidarity. Second, this party identification is cemented by clientelistic political machines that gave the PJ a significant advantage in maintaining territorial control." Building on this work, I hypothesize that the Peronist party will be more likely to engage in clientelistic strategies and monitor voters than the UCR and minority parties.

I used dummy variables to code candidate affiliations to different political parties. A description of the percentages of candidates affiliated to each political party can be found on Table 2. In the analysis, I focus on Peronist and Radical candidates, and control for candidates affiliated to minority parties.

Size of the municipality

In examining the relationship between the size of the municipality and clientelism, Brusco and her collaborators (2004) find that parties have an easier time targeting goods to low-income voters in smaller municipalities and that these goods are likely to have a positive effect in gaining voters' support. Their interpretation is "that parties' efforts to monitor voters are more effective in small communities, because social relations are multifaceted in these communities, and parties simply have an easier time keeping track of people" (79). Yet, precisely because candidates have an easier time tracking voters monitoring is not as important to ensuring voters' support.

In Colonia Caroya, the smallest municipality of my sample, Radical and Peronist candidates rarely took attendance at rallies because they could just remember who was present and who was not. "We don't need to take

attendance because here everyone knows everyone, or almost everyone because the *Colonia* is growing. It's not like in Córdoba Capital when you don't know who your neighbor is."[19] The fact that candidates could simply remember who was present at the rally suggests that monitoring in small municipalities is easier than in bigger cities where several party activists mediate between candidates and voters.

The number of local elected representatives varies based on the size of the population of each municipality. Table 1 reports this relationship by comparing the population size of each municipality (column 3) with the number of elected municipal legislators (column 4). As a result, I use the number of candidates elected to test how it affects their decision to monitor voters. Building on ethnographic and empirical data, I expect that the bigger the municipality, the more pressure candidates will feel to monitor voters. Accordingly, I expect the size of the municipality to have a positive relationship with a candidate's likelihood to use clientelistic strategies and monitor voters.

Controls

I introduced dummy variables to control for gender, although I do not expect female candidates to behave differently from male candidates, and to control for regional effects. Both provinces, Buenos Aires and Córdoba, are almost equally (Córdoba has two more candidates than Buenos Aires) represented in the sample.

[Table 2 about here]

[19] Author interview.

Results

Table 3 reports regression estimates of the likelihood that a candidate will monitor voters to the set of independent variables discussed earlier. Model 1, which I use for substantive interpretation, incorporates the social origins of party candidates, whether they had began their political careers from the top down or bottom up, partisanship, the magnitude of elected representatives in their municipality (ranging from 7 to 31), and gender. I run the same model (2, 4 and 6) with a dummy variable for Buenos Aires to control for regional effects. Models 2 and 3 offer robustness checks by examining the effects of incumbency (Model 2) and partisanship (Model 3) in candidate choices. When testing for the effects of incumbency in Model 2, I do not incorporate partisanship because both variables, partisanship and incumbency, are highly correlated. Model 3 tests the effects of candidates' partisanship without taking into account other independent variables (5) besides a regional control (6). The three models yield similar results.

[Table 3 about here]

The negative and significant coefficients on *unpaid party activist*, *outsiders*, and *minority party* show that these independent variables predict monitoring. Likewise, the positive and significant coefficient on *size* shows that candidates competing in bigger municipalities are more prone to monitor voters than candidates competing in smaller districts. Given the difficulties in interpreting regression coefficients form logistic regressions, I use predicted probabilities to explain these findings. With all other variables held constant at their mean, the probability that an unpaid party candidate will monitor voters was 0.19, while an outsider candidate resulted in a 0.09 probability. Likewise, for municipalities

that elect 7, 12, 19, 20, 24, and 31 local legislators, the probabilities that a candidate will monitor voters were 0.20, 0.29, 0.43, 0.46, 0.55, and 0.69, respectively, while holding other predictors constant at their mean. Candidates affiliated with minority parties had a 0.34 probability of monitoring.

To illustrate differences between models 1 and 3 without taking into account regional effects, consider the case of a male Peronist broker competing in an average-sized municipality. By taking into account only the candidate's partisanship without incorporating the social origins of his political career, the probability that he will monitor voters is 0.61 percent. In contrast, the probability that a Radical candidate competing in the same municipality will monitor voters is 0.88 percent. If we incorporate the information about a Peronist candidate's social origin, the likelihood that a former party broker will use monitoring raises to a striking 0.92 percent.

The findings presented here contribute to explain, "the fundamental elements (or the enigma) of contemporary Peronism, namely, the continuous support that it gets among the poor (despite its electoral setbacks)" (Auyero 2000: 209). By combining ethnographic work about the social origins of party candidates with statistical data, this study highlights the importance of studying political trajectories to understand candidates' strategic behavior. Differences in the origins of councilors' careers are likely to pose different constraints in the strategies candidates use to turn out voters. Councilors who began their careers as paid party activists are more likely to monitor voters than former unpaid activists simply because it is more likely that brokers' constituencies are sustained together through a flow of clientelistic inducements.

Figure 1 displays the percentages of candidates based on their social origins and partisanship affiliation. Slightly less than half of municipal candidates (43.76 percent) began their political careers from the bottom up, but only a quarter received a salary for mobilizing voters. The remaining third were invited by the party elite to participate in politics. Political parties are not equally represented in municipal legislatures, as they are not in provincial and national legislatures (Gibson 2001, 2004; Calvo 2001, 2004). The absence of paid party activists affiliated to the UCR is explained by the combination of the party's traditional constituency, middle and upper-income voters, as well as its poor performance in 2003 in a province that it used to be very favorable to the Radical machine. The fact that I did not find Radical paid activists does not imply that they do not exist, but rather reflects the significant loss of vote share the party experienced in the past 10 years.

[Figure 1 about here]

The Peronist party had candidates in comparable percentages from all social origins. The party's ability to comprise candidates from different classes and ideologies reflects Argentines' definition and understanding of the PJ as a "big tent." Analytically, this finding echoes Levistky's (2003) argument about the advantages of loosely structured party organizations to adapt and survive in changing socioeconomic environments. Yet while Levitsky focuses on the advantages of institutional flexibility over well-institutionalized party structures, my study examines the effects it has on enforcing a system of informal incentives that promote the use of clientelism and monitoring. Levitsky's argument implies that when major parties fail, party systems may fragment or decompose, and young democratic regimes may become vulnerable. By using comparative

evidence from Latin America, the author demonstrates that labor-based party adaptation and survival was critical to regime stability in the 1990s.

I find Levitsky's argument persuasive and accurate; however, while institutional flexibility may contribute to the survival of new democratic regimes, it also enables a greater use of clientelism and monitoring. Thus, institutional flexibility strengthens existing informal incentives that encourage candidates to use clientelism to mobilize voters. Indeed the three factors that Levitsky recognizes as fundamental to explain party adaptation and survival also strengthen the incentives that lead candidates to use clientelism to turn out voters: weakly institutionalized linkages between different sectors of the party, the absence of stable career paths and secure tenure, and the absence of stable norms of accountability or routinized decision rules.

In this context, political parties as organizations that seek to win elections are not likely to punish candidates capable of turning out a large number of voters. Moreover, even if parties were interested in inducing candidates not to use clientelism and monitor voters, they would be unable to achieve their goal because the same flexibility that enables parties to adapt to the context hinders their ability to discipline members.

Alternatives

This study shows that only the Peronist and Radical parties manage to win the majority of seats in local legislatures. Only 27 of the 144 elected candidates were affiliated to minority parties. And candidates elected in the landslide victory of the *Partido Nuevo* in Córdoba Capital constitute the bulk of this number. Indeed, the *Partido Nuevo* is the only not-majority party that

managed to win the government of Córdoba Capital in 2003 after the administration of Peronist mayor, Germán Kammerath. The Peronist government of Kammerath was such a debacle that even the Vice Governor publicly asked voters to pardon his party for having supported a mayor "who, together with his band of oligarchs, had humiliated voters."[20]

Peronist party leaders knew voters would not pardon the party's catastrophic administration in Córdoba Capital, and thus the governor did not even campaign for the party in the most important districts of the province.

With the PJ out of competition, the Radical party, whose past administrations had been prized and remembered by voters, could have benefited, regardless of the party's national defeats. Yet, the provincial and local party leadership was fractured. Eduardo Angeloz, who had governed the province between 1983 and 1995, had been charged with embezzlement; and although he was found not guilty in 1998, there was still too much suspicion and discontent to nominate him again. Ramón Mestre, his successor (1995-1999) and party rival died in 2003. And finally, Rubén Martí, who led the third faction of the UCR in Córdoba and was a former mayor of the city, was ill. Unable to nominate any leader of the party's representative factions, the UCR nominated Luis Molinari Romero, a qualified but uncharismatic candidate who was remembered for being Angeloz's right hand. In this regard, the party did not manage to fulfill the electorate's demand: a fresh face without ties to the past.

In this context, Luis Juez, a former Peronist member and provincial anticorruption prosecutor, emerged as the favorite candidate among opinion polls. After being fired by the governor, Juez, a media figure, decided to create a

[20] *La Voz del Interior*. October 17, 2005. Interview with Vice Governor Juan Schiaretti.

party to compete for office. The name of Juez's party, the *Partido Nuevo* (New Party), summarized his political campaign: Córdoba needed a change, something new, different from Peronism and Radicalism. In an election with the lowest voter turnout since the return of democracy, Luis Juez became mayor with the more hegemonic local legislature since 1983. The *Partido Nuevo* obtained twenty seats, and the remaining eleven were distributed among four parties making the creation of a strong, homogenous opposition unlikely.

After governing the Capital for sixteen years, and serving as the primary source of political opposition, the UCR only obtained two seats in the legislature, and the Peronist party eight out of the thirty-one seats. It is very likely that Juez would not have won if the Peronist administration was not a disaster and the Radical party's leadership was either alive or unquestioned.

A similar critical juncture (Collier and Collier 1991) enabled the electoral victory of the youngest mayor in the Conurbano of the province of Buenos Aires, Martín Sabatella. After being councilor and President of the commission that investigated the former mayor of Morón, Juan Carlos Rousellot, Sabatella was nominated by the ALIANZA (an electoral coalition of disenchanted Peronists and Radical candidates) to run for mayor of the municipality. In 1999, together with the national victory of this political alliance, Sabatella won the municipal election; and although the government of the ALIANZA ended up with the political crisis that forced President Fernando De la Rua to resign, Sabatella managed to get reelected.

In 2002, the mayor funded the party *Nuevo Morón* (New Morón) that obtained a surprising approval, 58 percent of the votes, for a local party that did not present candidates for provincial and national offices. Martín Sabatella's

administration got international recognition when the mayor appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* in an article entitled: "Local battle: One tough mayor shows Argentina how to clean house."[21]

The cases of Luis Juez in Córdoba and Martín Sabatella in Buenos Aires demonstrate the challenges faced in building political alternatives. Both parties were unable to use clientelism to build a following given that they did not have a network of party activists and resources. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that even having goods and activists these parties would have engaged in these strategies given the social origins of their candidates: mostly professional individuals who were going to work in politics for the first time, the party electorate, middle-class and professional voters, and the party's program of getting rid of old clientelistic tactics.

Still, once elected these two parties have to prove that they are able to administer the municipality in a more transparent and effective way than their predecessors did to sustain and increase their vote share among the local population. This poses a significant burden in new parties without any governmental experience. In case of an unsatisfactory administration, these parties will disappear completely.

Critical junctures provide political alternatives with an opportunity to win seats, even the local executive office, while making these parties' administrations crucial for the party's political future, even survival. The absence of a common history, core supporters, and even leadership; after all these parties are created

[21] The article's full title is: "Local battle: One tough mayor shows Argentina how to clean house; while corruption still hobbles Latin American states, a few cities get results; On web: Mr. Sabatella's rent." Matt Moffett. *Wall Street Journal* (Eastern edition). New York, N.Y.: Jul 1, 2003. p. A1.

by one individual, Luis Juez is the *Partido Nuevo* and vice versa, implies that an unsatisfactory administration will lead to the party's disappearance. In contrast to Radical and Peronist candidates, whose parties can survive disastrous administrations, voters affiliated to these new parties do not have anywhere to go, but defect, if their parties' administrations turn out to be a disappointment. Still, this also implies that if these parties' administrations are successful they will pave the way for a different, neither Radical nor Peronist, and not clientelistic way of doing politics.

Conclusions

Monitoring voters in democracy has significant implications for the quality of local democracies. The study shows that candidates who are effective in mobilizing voters from working and low-income precincts are likely to receive a salary for their political work. Paid party activists have an incentive to sustain and even increase the size of their followings to become local elected representatives. To make sure that voters will support them, paid party activist are very likely to monitor voters. In contrast, candidates who have no political experience and no need to mobilize voters to get elected because they are either local celebrities or have a last name with a well-known and respected political legacy are not likely to monitor voters.

Activists recruited from the bottom up feel encouraged to monitor voters to advance in their political careers. By observing the success in getting promoted and eventually elected of former activists who had visibly used, and in most cases continue using monitoring strategies, party activists are perversely encouraged to monitor voters. In practice, this implies that voters who live in

working and low-income precincts are likely to be represented by councilors who monitor them.

It is not difficult to envision that voters who are being monitored have a different experience with democratic representation than voters who can choose freely which candidates to support and which, if any, rallies to attend. When working and low-income voters participate in elections and rallies because they are afraid of future retaliation and not because they believe in candidate programs, we run the risk of misinterpreting their true preferences (Kuran 1997).

Political representation "requires independent action in the interests of the governed, in a manner at least potentially responsive to them, yet not normally in conflict with their wishes" (Pitkin 1967: 222). By monitoring voters, candidates silence the voices of the most vulnerable voters in their constituency and deprive them of representation. Monitoring reflects "the introduction of social and economic inequalities into the realm of politics" (Stokes 2007: 81) depriving low-income voters the right to equally express their preferences regarding public policies. The exclusion of low-income voters from the decision-making processes violates "the normative legitimacy of a democratic decision" (Young 2000: 5) by depriving voters of the opportunity to influence the outcomes. Overall, monitoring leads to distort postelectoral representation and governance (Karlan 1457).

Changes in voters' economic and cognitive conditions would undoubtedly pave the way for the demise of clientelism and thus the use of monitoring practices. Yet, changes in the mechanisms that enable candidates to monitor voters would also contribute to achieving this goal. While it is difficult to predict how much voting patterns would change if voters had the opportunity to

express their true preferences at the polls, understanding the mechanisms that parties use to monitor voters is an important step in developing effective technologies of voting that disable politicians' monitoring of voters.

Table 1: Selected Municipalities in Argentina

Province	Municipality	Population	Elected candidates	Low-income households	Social welfare beneficiaries (*Plan Jefes*)	Electoral tradition	Incumbent party in 2005
Buenos Aires	José C. Paz	230,208	22	56,004	15,612	Monopoly	PJ
	San Miguel	253,086	24	65,689	10,238	Monopoly	PJ
	Bahía Blanca	284,776	24	88,260	5619	Bipartisan	PJ
Córdoba	Córdoba Capital	1,272,334	31	369,793	50,389	Bipartisan	PN
	Río Cuarto	144,021	19	42,044	5,142	Bipartisan	UCR
	Villa María	72,162	12	1,114	298	Bipartisan	PJ
	Colonia Caroya	13,806	7	4,018	211	Bipartisan	PJ

Note: *Population* numbers are based on the 2000 national census (INDEC). The number of *elected candidates* is legally stipulated and varies based on the population of each municipality. By combining educational, occupational, and construction characteristics, the INDEC measures the number of *low-income households*. A household that fulfills three of the following five characteristics is classified as low-income: (1) a density per room exceeds three inhabitants, (2) precarious physical conditions, (3) absence of indoor plumbing, (4) children aged between six and twelve years old that do not attend school, and (5) more than four members per one employed member, and also the head of the household has not finished primary school. Data about the number of *social welfare beneficiaries* of the most widespread welfare program, *Plan Jefes,* was collected by the author in each municipality and comprises data for the year 2004. Municipal *electoral tradition* is defined by the number of parties that had held the municipal highest office since the return of democracy. Monopoly is for cases where only one party (in these cases the PJ) had been elected, and bipartisanship is for cases where two parties (UCR and PJ) had been elected. Municipal *incumbent party* describes the party in charge of the local executive in each municipality.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	**Description**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Monitoring	The candidate or party activist took attendance of voter participation at rallies.	70	48.61
National and provincial incumbent	The candidate was affiliated to the *Frente para la Victoria.* (Party of the President and the Governor in 2005)	60	41.67
Municipal incumbent	The candidate was affiliated to the party of the mayor.	76	52.78
Paid party activist or broker	The candidate *received* a salary or a benefit such as a temporary job or welfare program for his or her political job before becoming a party candidate.	36	25
Unpaid party activist	The candidate *did not receive* a salary or a benefit such as a temporary job or welfare program for his or her political job before becoming a party candidate.	63	43.75
Outsider	A party leader offered the candidate to participate on a party ticket.	45	31.25
Frente para la Victoria	The candidate represented the FPV.	31	21.53
Partido Justicialista	The candidate represented the PJ.	58	40.28
Peronist candidate	The candidate represented the Peronist Party (FPV+PJ).	89	61.81
Unión Cívica Radical	The candidate represented the UCR.	28	19.44
Partido Nuevo	The candidate represented the PN.	21	14.58
Minority parties*	The candidate represented any other party that is neither the PJ nor the UCR.	27	18.75
Gender	Female	55	38.19
	Male	89	61.81
Buenos Aires	The candidate ran in a municipality in Buenos Aires.	71	49.31
Córdoba	The candidate ran in a municipality in Córdoba.	73	50.69
Size	The number of candidates elected in a municipality.	8	5.56
		13	9.03
		20	13.89
		21	14.58
		50	34.72
		32	22.22

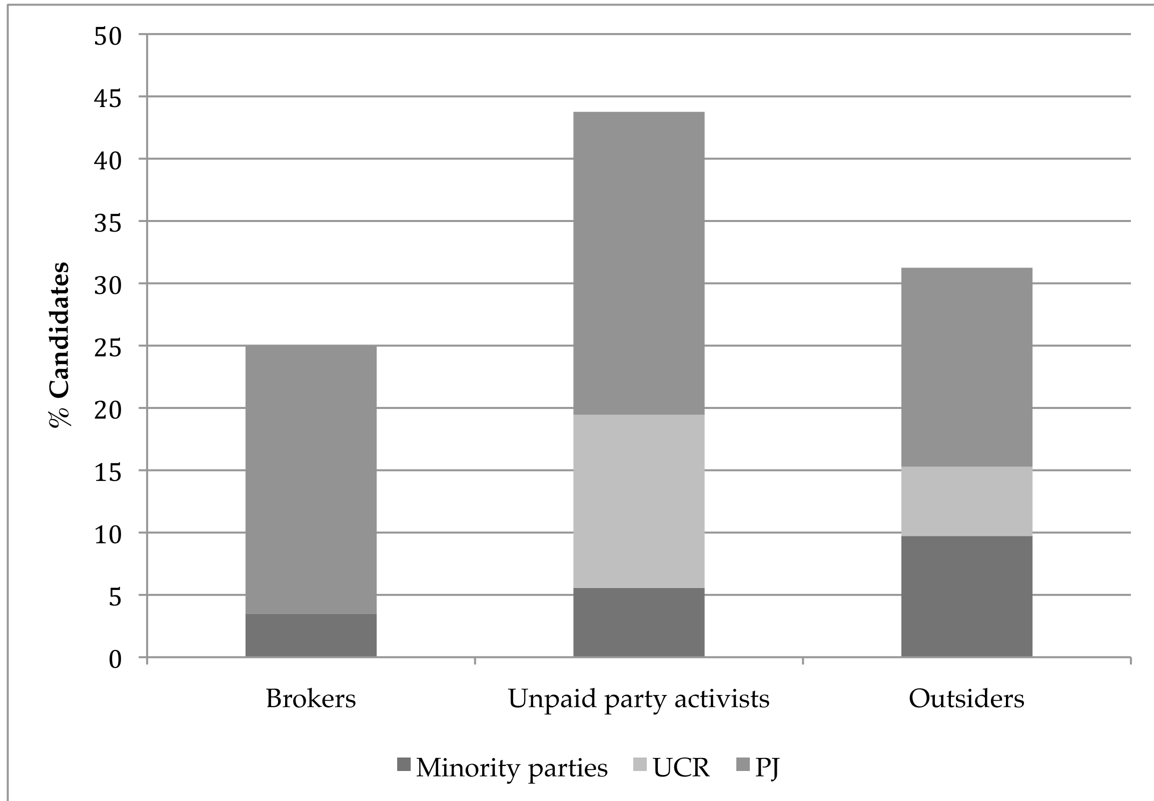
Note: The total number of elected candidates was 144.
* Minority parties comprise candidates from the New Party, (*Partido Nuevo,* PN), the Federalist Unit (*Partido Unidad Federalista*, PAUFE), and the Socialist party (*Partido Socialista*, PS)

Table 3: Explaining a Candidate's Decision to Monitor Voters

	Model 1		*Model 2*		*Model 3*	
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Unpaid party activist (Bottom-up)	-2.60 *** (.657)	-2.89 *** (.68)	-2.76 *** (.64)	-2.88 *** (.66)		
Outsider (Top-down)	-3.40 *** (.701)	-3.62 *** (.72)	-3.41 *** (.68)	-3.51 *** (.70)		
Unión Cívica Radical	-.464 (.519)	-.570 (.527)			-1.17 ** (.473)	-1.16 *** (.487)
Minority parties	-.872 * (.584)	-1.53 ** (.741)			-.918 * (.504)	-.869 (616)
Size	.090 *** (.037)	.116 *** (.042)	.07 *** (.03)	.08 *** (.03)	.031 (.030)	.029 (.032)
Gender	-.063 (.412)	-.097 (.419)	-.05 (.41)	-.05 (.41)	-.334 (.356)	-.331 (.357)
National and provincial incumbent			.50 (.44)	.50 (.44)		
Local incumbent			-.59 (.44)	-.67 (.45)		
Buenos Aires		-.779 * (.504)		-.31 (.41)		.058 (.425)
Constant	.525 (.837)	.691 (.870)		.91 (1)	-.234 (.678)	-.24 (.68)
Prog >chi2 Prob > F	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0409	0.0754
Pseudo R2 R-squared	0.2255	0.2380	0.2245	0.2273	0.0500	0.0501
Number of observations	144	144	144	144	144	144

Note: Dependent variable is monitoring coded 1 for candidates that took attendance at rallies, and 0 for candidates that did not take attendance at rallies. Entries are logit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.
***p< .01, **p<.05; *p < .10 for one-tailed tests.

Figure 1: Candidates' Social Origins and Partisanship



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