

Interview with Turku University

Hector Bahamonde • Assistant Professor • O'Higgins University (Chile)

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The Order of the Day

In this presentation I will...

1. Briefly describe my **profile**.
2. Quickly mention three of my most important **publications**.
3. Explain my 3-year **research plan** at Turku.
4. Enumerate the three main reasons to **move to Turku**.

Short Bio

I am a political scientist (B.A. and PhD).

- Study the political economy of **inequality, democracy** and **clientelism**.
- Make heavy use of statistical and experimental methods (natural, lab and survey-based).
- Currently an assistant professor in Chile—but looking forward to relocate to Europe; family reasons. **Immediate availability**.

“Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity, and Income Inequality.”

- Global democratic theory, inequality and stateness.
- 126 industrial and developing countries, between 1970 and 2013 (N=4,000).
- Time-series and fixed-effects methods.
- European Journal of Political Economy (forthcoming).



“Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence From a List Experiment.”

- Democratic development and clientelism in the United States.
- I designed a survey experiment (list experiment) and implemented it in Qualtrics.
- *Original* data representative at the U.S. level.
- Acta Politica (forthcoming).

[Details](#)

“Aiming Right at You: Group versus Individual Clientelistic Targeting in Brazil.”

- Inequality and clientelism in Brazil.
- Observational data and matching methods for causal inference.
- Journal of Politics in Latin America (2018).

[Details](#)

My research plan seeks to study these issues by moving forward several pieces of research I have in the pipeline.

Research Plan: Two Pipelines

1. Clientelism and Democratic Theory: **lab and survey experiments.**

- “Recreating Market Conditions for Vote-Selling and Vote-Buying in the Lab: An Economic Experiment” ([work in progress](#)).
- “Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods” ([under review](#), [Political Analysis](#)).

2. Inequality and Covid: **natural experiments.**

- “Skyrocketed Inequality and (Un)lockdown Political Elites in Chile: Aerodrome Usage during Pandemic Times” ([in preparation](#)).
- “The Bus of Inequality: Public Transportation and COVID in Santiago” ([in preparation](#)).

Pipeline 1: survey and lab experiments

“Recreating Market Conditions for Vote-Selling and Vote-Buying in the Lab: An Economic Experiment.”

- **Economic experiment (“game”)**: subjects represent randomly-assigned roles (2 parties/1 voter).
- 1. **Behavioral economics framework**, play a game of **deliberation**: subjects make decisions and get payed according to the quality of their decisions.
- 2. **Democratic theory**: study conditions of **(i)lliberal democracy** that foster clientelism. Assign at random different:
 - **Endowments**: “parties” and “voters” (*emulates income inequality*).
 - **Ideology**: “parties” and “voters” (*emulates issue/spatial location*).
 - **Contestation levels**: “risk” of losing the election (*emulates party competition*).
- Data are being collected as we speak (N=200).

“Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods” (under review, Political Analysis).

1. Design:

- I designed a **conjoint experiment** in Qualtrics and implemented it in the U.S. (N=1,108).
- Conjoint experiments are **good to study the causal effect of multiple-attribute treatments**.

2. Democratic theory: Using Dahl's Polyarchy, I devised different “political candidates” who supported different “policies.”

- Tasked experimental subjects with choosing a candidate.
- Democratic values.

Candidate 1	Candidate 2
Media CAN confront the government	Media CANNOT confront the government
President CANNOT rule without Congress	President CAN rule without Congress
Citizens CANNOT vote in the next two elections	Citizens CANNOT vote in the next two elections
Citizens CAN run for office for the next two elections	Citizens CAN run for office for the next two elections
Citizens CAN associate with others and form groups	Citizens CANNOT associate with others and form groups
Which of these candidates represents the lesser of the two evils for you?	
Candidate 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Candidate 2 <input type="checkbox"/>

Attributes are assigned at random.

Pipeline 2: Inequality and Covid

“Skyrocketed Inequality and (Un)lockdown Political Elites in Chile: Aerodrome Usage during Pandemic Times.”

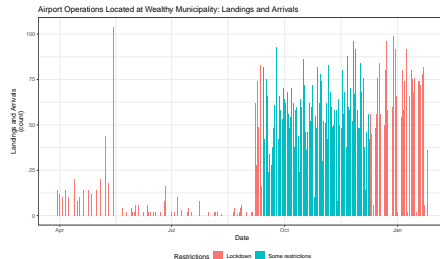
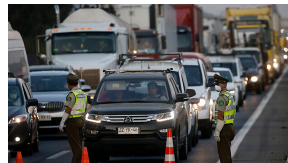
- *Santiago de Chile* is the capital city of one of the most unequal countries in the world.

1. Unequal Application of the Rule of Law:

- While the state was able to control ordinary citizens when traveling, it **systematically overlooked** controlling airspace.

2. Natural experiment:

- **Identification strategy:**
 - Confinement policies are endogenous and not-random.
 - Airport is used strictly by the elites.
- *How effective were the lockdown policies for the elite?*

[Details](#)

“The Bus of Inequality: Public Transportation and COVID in Santiago.”

- This paper explores a digitalized population dataset on daily public transportation.
- **Hypothesis:** the poor bore the cost of the Covid pandemic.
 1. **Welfare, Covid and Inequality:** “Working from home” is a regressive policy (blue collar workers had to ride the bus).
 2. **Natural Experiment:** lockdown policies are endogenous and not random. **What’s the effect of the same policy implemented in poor/wealthy municipalities?**



Last But Not Least

- Develop new research with faculty members, post-docs, under/graduate students.
- Attend conferences.
- Organize workshops.
- Give service to the Department/Centers.
- Teaching (graduate/undergraduate).
- Assuming administrative tasks if necessary.

In Sum

To conclude:

- **Substantively:** I work on political economy, inequality and democracy.
- **Methodologically:** Experience designing, implementing, and analyzing experiments (survey, lab, natural).
- **Geographically:** I've studied cases in the **developing** and **developed** world, as well as the **whole globe**.

Reasons to move to Turku

1. Research:

- The **INVEST center** works on socioeconomic differences: **my very topic of interest!**
- Has the **PCRClab** lab (**FIRIPO**): I'd be really interested in **implementing some experiments!**
- Has the **Participation in Long-Term Decision-Making** (PALO): doing interesting work implementing natural experiments related to direct democracy. **Would love to get involved!**

2. Multidisciplinary-oriented institution: **diversity is great!**

3. Finland has an outstanding educational system: **would be perfect for my 3YO and 4YO children!** (EU citizens).

Thank you!

More info:

www.HectorBahamonde.com

TOC

1. Research plan (additional slides)

- “Recreating Market Conditions for Vote-Selling and Vote-Buying in the Lab: An Economic Experiment.”
- “Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods.”
- “Income Taxation and State Capacity in Chile: Measuring Institutional Development Using Historical Earthquake Data.”

2. Published papers (additional slides)

- “Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity, and Income Inequality” (EJPE, forthcoming).
- “Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence From a List Experiment” (AP, forthcoming).
- “Aiming Right at You: Group versus Individual Clientelistic Targeting in Brazil” (JPLA, 2018).
- “Employment Effects of Covid-19 across Chilean Regions: An Application of the Translog Cost Function” (Regional Science Policy and Practice, 2020).

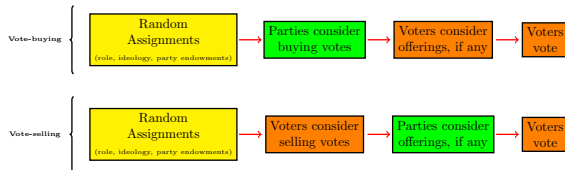
“Recreating Market Conditions for Vote-Selling and Vote-Buying in the Lab: An Economic Experiment.”

Tell a supply and demand story:

- Do parties target **own supporters** (Dixit/Londregan and Cox/McCubbins) or **moderate opposer** (Stokes)?
- Under what conditions do vote sellers sell to their own party of choosing?

Methodologically:

- Programmed in OTree.
- Formally:** bargaining game in an extensive form.



“Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods” (under review, Political Analysis).

Dahl's Polyarchy Dimension	Dahl's Requirements for a Democracy	Experimental Operationalization for Conjoint Design
Formulate preferences	Freedom of expression	Media can confront the government
	Alternative sources of information	Media can confront the government
	Right of political leaders to compete for support	President cannot rule without Congress
	Right to vote	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Freedom to form and join organizations	Citizens can associate with others and form groups
Signify preferences	Freedom of expression	Media can confront the government
	Alternative sources of information	Media can confront the Government
	Right of political leaders to compete for support	President cannot rule without Congress
	Right to vote	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Free and fair elections	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Eligibility for public office	Citizens can run for office for the next two elections
Preferences are weighted equally in conduct of government	Freedom to form and join organizations	Citizens can associate with others and form groups
	Freedom of expression	Media can confront the government
	Alternative sources of information	Media can confront the Government
	Right of political leaders to compete for support/votes	President cannot rule without Congress
	Right to vote	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Free and fair elections	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference	Citizens can vote in the next two elections
	Eligibility for public office	Citizens can run for office for the next two elections
	Freedom to form and join organizations	Citizens can associate with others and form groups

- **Democratic theory:** Dahl specifies a number of dimensions any “polyarchy” should **accomplish**.
- **Particularly relevant for democratic deliberation.**

“Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods” (under review, Political Analysis).

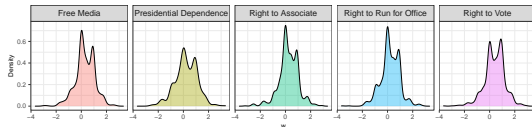
- Innovative way of exploiting conjoint experimental data:
 1. Using machine learning methods, we exploit those data to classify likely vote sellers.
 2. Building on Dahl, subjects who distrust “Free media” and “Presidential dependence” (on Congress) are more likely to sell their vote in the U.S.
- I already have this novel data (representative at the country level, N=1,108).

[Details](#)

“Analyzing Conjoint Datasets with Support Vector Machine Methods” (under review, Political Analysis).

Machine learning:

- We implemented an algorithm to classify attitudes toward every “policy.”
- These responses were organized in a “space” we called w .
- We had 5 different w 's—one per experimental condition.
- Then using simple OLS methods between the vote-selling question and every w .

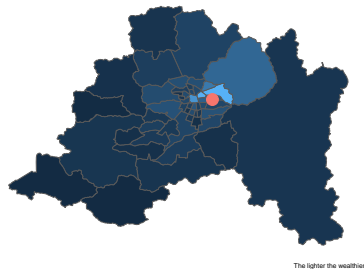


“Skyrocketed Inequality and (Un)lockdown Political Elites in Chile: Aerodrome Usage during Pandemic Times.”

Natural experiment:

- **Identification strategy:** The aerodrome is *strictly* used by the elite.
- **RDD:** confinement policies are endogenous and not-random. *How effective were the lockdown policies for the elite?*

Santiago City: Aerodrome Located at Wealthy Hub



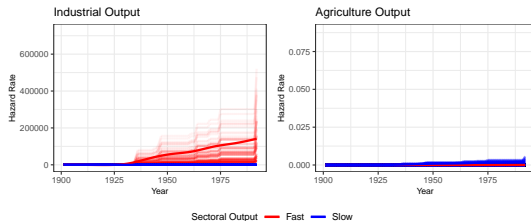
“Income Taxation and State Capacity in Chile: Measuring Institutional Development Using Historical Earthquake Data.”

Developed a theory of state formation based on class structure transformations:

- There was a clash between **landowners** and **industrialists** over the control for state institutions.
- **Fiscal sociology**: Using sectoral growth data from 1900's, I developed a state formation theory based on the implementation of the income tax.

Hazard Rate Model:

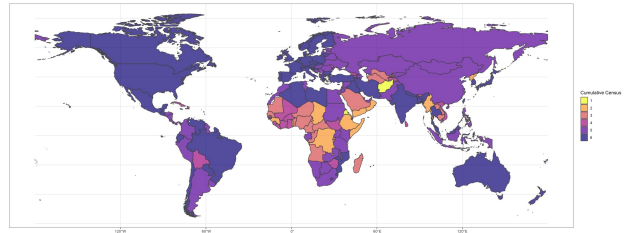
Income tax is implemented **earlier** when the industrial sector grew faster.



“Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity, and Income Inequality”(EJPE, forthcoming)

State Capacity and Democracy Increase Inequality:

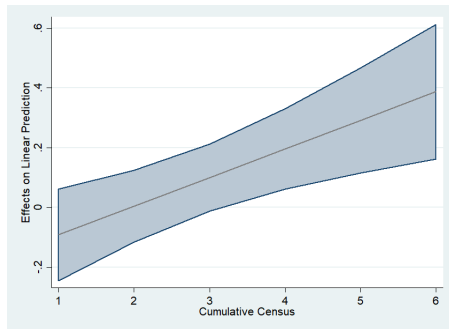
- We used a novel measurement of state capacity (cumulative census administration)
- **Data and methods:** 126 countries (1970-2013), and FE panel regressions.



“Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity, and Income Inequality”(EJPE, forthcoming)

State Capacity and Democracy Increase Inequality:

- We find that democracy combined with state capacity increases inequality overtime.
- Relationship operates through the effect of high-capacity states and democracy on FDIs.



Marginal Effect (interaction effect): Inequality Increases.

“Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence From a List Experiment” (AP, forthcoming)

Original Survey Experiment:

- **Data and methods:** List experiment well suited to study behaviors subject to social desirability bias (such as selling one's vote) .
- $N=1,479$.

Now, you will have to type HOW MANY, if any, of the following illegal activities you might engage in, assuming you would not go to jail.

- (1) steal an iPod from a large department store
- (2) speed on the highway because you are late for work/school
- (3) download your favorite music from the internet illegally

Type in HOW MANY (NOT WHICH), if any, of these things you would do.

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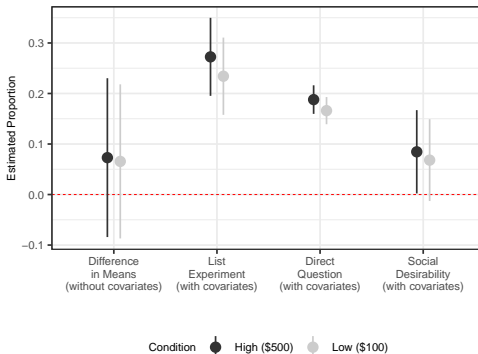
- (1) steal an iPod from a large department store
- (2) speed on the highway because you are late for work/school
- (3) sell your vote to a candidate for \$100
- (4) download your favorite music from the internet illegally

Type in HOW MANY (NOT WHICH), if any, of these things you would do.

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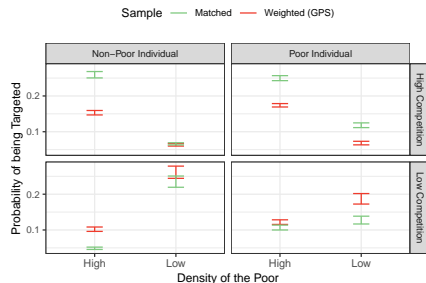
- 25% of Americans are still willing to sell their vote (expensive). **Data are representative at the country level!**



“Aiming Right at You: Group versus Individual Clientelistic Targeting in Brazil” (JPLA, 2018)

Matching methods for observational data, clientelism and inequality in Brazil:

- Challenges the idea that only the poor are always targeted for clientelism.
 - Wealthy individuals living in neighborhoods with lots of poor people are targeted too (Q1): **they are more noticeable (i.e., accountable)!**
 - Poor individuals living in neighborhoods with lots of poor people are targeted too only in context of high contestation (Q4).



“Employment Effects of Covid-19 across Chilean Regions: An Application of the Translog Cost Function” (Regional Science Policy and

Practice, 2020)

Regional effects of Covid Pandemic:

- Aggregated translog cost function (2013–2018) we provide forecasts of regional employment loses (between 700K–800K).
- Relative impacts were spatially heterogeneous.

