

Interview with Turku University

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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 plans** at Turku.
4. Enumerate the three main reasons to **move to Turku**.

Short Bio

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

- Whose primary subfield is the political economy of **inequality, political development** and **clientelism**.
- Who has a strong interest in statistical and experimental methods (natural, lab and survey-based).
- Who is 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.”

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Pipeline 1: Clientelism

1. 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](#)).

Pipeline 2: Inequality and COVID19

2. 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](#)).

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

- **Economic experiments** are “games”: subjects embody randomly-assigned roles (2 parties/1 voter).
- **Behavioral economics** framework, **deliberation games**: subjects make decisions and get paid according to the quality of their decisions.
- **Democratic theory**: study conditions of **(i)lliberal democracy** that foster clientelism:
 1. **Endowments**: different for “parties” and “voters” (**emulates income inequality**).
 2. **Ideology**: ideological distance between “parties” and “voters” (**emulates issue/spatial location**).
 3. **Contestation**: “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).

- I designed a **conjoint experiment** in Qualtrics.
- Conjoint experiments are **good to study the causal effect of multiple-attribute treatments**.
- **Democratic theory**: Using Dahl’s Polyarchy (1971), I devised different “political candidates” who supported different “policies.”
- Tasked experimental subjects with choosing a candidate.

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"/>
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Attributes are assigned at random. This is just one realization. Five of these tasks were administered for every subject.

[Details](#)

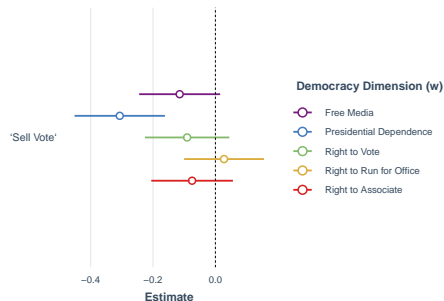
Pipeline: survey and lab experiments

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

- Innovative way of exploiting conjoint experimental data:

- Using **machine learning methods**, we exploit those data to **classify likely vote-sellers**.
- Building on Dahl (1971), **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 United States level (N=1,108).

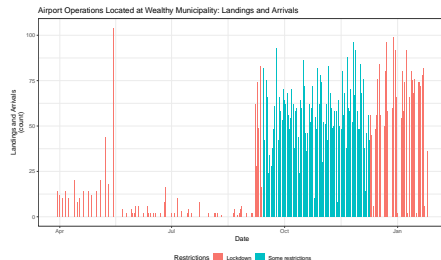
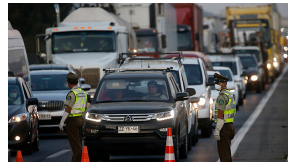
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“Skyrocketed Inequality and (Un)lockdown Political Elites in Chile: Aerodrome Usage during Pandemic Times.”

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

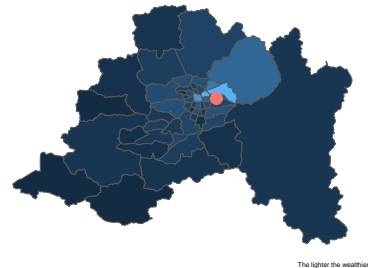
1. Unequal Application of the Rule of Law:

- While the state was able to control ordinary citizens when traveling, it “failed” to control airspace.
- Study how elites were able to travel to their vacations houses during lockdown via a small aerodrome located in one of the richest municipalities.



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

Santiago City: Aerodrome Located at Wealthy Hub



2. Natural experiment:

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

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

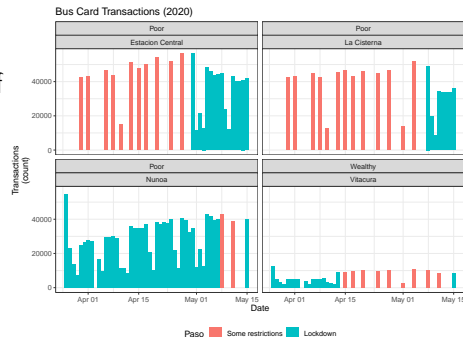
Welfare, Covid and Inequality:

- Chilean social safety net is very thin.
- While the wealthy were able to work from home (or flight to their vacation houses), the working class kept riding the bus to work presentially.



“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 bore the cost of the COVID pandemic.
 1. **Inequality:** “Working from home” is a regressive policy (most workers had to ride the bus).
 2. **Natural Experiment:** lockdown policies are exogenous and not random. **What’s the effect of the same policy implemented in poor/wealthy municipalities?**



Reasons to move to Turku

1. Turku is one of the **leading research-oriented institutions** in Finland.
 - The **INVEST Research Flagship Center** works on socioeconomic differences, which is **my very topic of interest!**
 - Has the **PCRClab** lab (**FIRIPO**): really interesting to implement both **survey** and **lab** experiments!
 - Has the **Participation in Long-Term Decision-Making** (PALO): doing interesting work implementing natural experiments related to “direct democracy.” Interesting! **Would love to contribute!**
2. **Multidisciplinary-oriented** institution, as a whole: diversity is great!
3. Finland has an outstanding educational system: would be perfect for my 3YO and 4YO children! (both German nationals).

In Sum

To conclude,

- I work on political economy: inequality and democracy.
- Experience designing, implementing, and analyzing experiments (survey, lab, natural).
- I'd be very happy to move to Turku and work with you.

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).

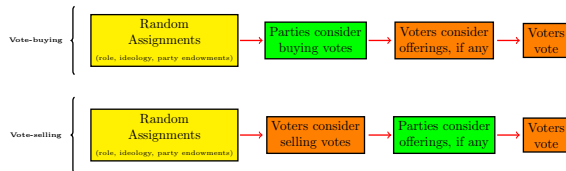
“Recreating Market Conditions for Vote-Selling and Vote-Buying in the Lab: An Economic Experiment.”

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).

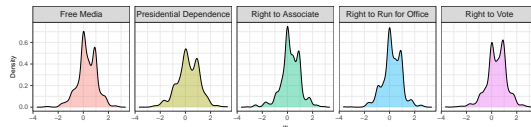
Dahl's Polyarchy Dimension	Dahl's Requirements for a Democracy	Experimental Operationalization for Conjoint Design
Formulate preferences	Freedom of expression	Media can confront the government
	Alternative sources of information	Media can confront the government
	Right of political leaders to compete 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 (1971) specifies a number of dimensions any “polyarchy” should accomplish (*free press, free competition, right to run for elections*, etc.)
- Particularly relevant for democratic deliberation.**

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

Machine learning:

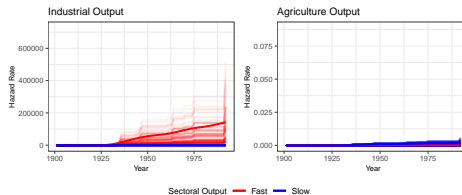
- We implemented an algorithm to classify attitudes toward every “policy.”
- These responses were organized in a “space” we called w .
- We had 5 different w 's—one per experimental condition.
- Then using simple OLS methods we run individual regressions between the vote-selling question and every w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



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

Class structure and state formation:

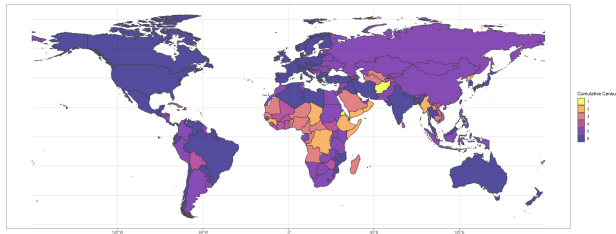
- There was a clash between **landowners** and **industrialists** over the control for state institutions.
- **Fiscal sociology**: Using sectoral growth data from 1900's, I developed a state formation theory based on the implementation of the income tax.



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

State Capacity and Democracy Increase Inequality:

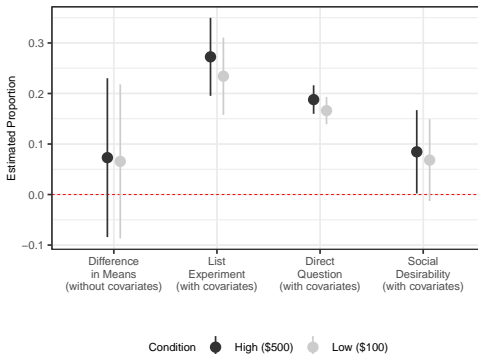
- Relationship operates through the effect of high-capacity states and democracy on FDIs.
- We used a novel measurement of state capacity (cumulative census administration)
- **Data and methods:** 126 countries (1970-2013), and FE panel regressions.



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

Original Survey Experiment:

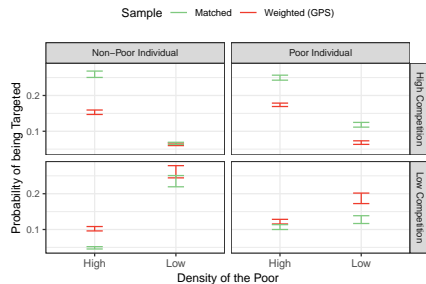
- 25% of Americans are still willing to sell their vote (expensive). **Data are representative at the country level!**
- **Data and methods:** List experiment (N=1,479) to study behaviors subject to social desirability bias (such as selling one's vote) .



“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.

