Broken Democratic Values and Individual Propensities of Vote-Selling: A Conjoint Experiment in the United States

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Abstract

Many advanced democracies were first very clientelistic political systems. Eventually, vote-buyers could not afford this strategy any longer, not at least in a massive scale, thus making vote-buying a rare event. However, several questions remain unanswered. Most of them pertain to vote-sellers. Has the decline in vote-buying in the United States been paired with improvements in voters' democratic values? What would voters do, if offered the chance to sell their votes? Would they sell their votes (and what price), or would they consciously opt-out of vote-selling because they oppose vote-selling? Given that the emphasis so far has been on vote-buying, prior studies do not offer answers to these questions. I collected a novel dataset of U.S. voters representative at the national level, and performed a list experiment and a conjoint experiment. The results suggest that U.S. voters are very much willing to sell their votes, and that they systematically lie about it. I contend that overlooking the supply side gives the falsely optimistic impression that U.S. voters have healthier democratic values.

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I. Vote-Sellers and Vote-Buyers: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

Many advanced democracies were first very clientelistic political systems. For instance, Stokes et al. [2013, 200] explains that in the nineteenth-century United States "vote buying was commonplace." In Chicago, New York City, Newark, and other big cities, votes were exchanged for "cash, food, alcohol, health care, poverty relief, and myriad other benefits,"[1] even resembling the worst practices in the current developing world. The street price of the right to vote freely seemed to be very low. Bensel explains that "[voters] handed in a party ticket in return for a shot of whiskey, a pair of boots, or a small amount of money."[2] Vote buying, besides being cheap, was "the major urban political institution in the late nineteenth century"[3] in "one-half of the nation's twenty largest cities"[4] in the United States. Other students of American political development have analyzed vote-buying in more detail, confirming both its early development, and its generalized practice.[5] However, nowadays vote-buying seemed to have declined considerably. For instance, Stokes et al. [2013, 201] have shown that industrialization has driven up the median income of the electorate, making vote-buying more expensive for party machines.[6] In line with that, Figure 1 suggests—using survey data—that 93.6% of respondents have *never* received a clientelistic offer from a political party.[7]

We seem to know that vote-*buyers* cannot afford this strategy any longer, not at least in a massive scale, thus making vote-buying a rare event. However, several questions remain unanswered. And worryingly, most of them pertain to vote-*sellers*. *What would voters do, if offered the chance to sell their votes? Would they sell their votes (and at what price), or would they consistently opt-out of vote-selling?*[8] Given that the emphasis so far has been devoted to studying vote-*buying*, ignoring the micro-dynamics of vote-*selling*, prior studies do not offer satisfactory answers to these questions.[9]

Prior research usually focuses on whether *parties* have attempted to buy votes, overlooking whether voters have attempted to *sell* their votes. For instance, Figure 1 shows responses about whether *a candidate or someone from a political party* has offered something in exchange for people's votes, completely ignoring the *supply* side. The figure, in fact, represents the canon in how to research clientelism, begging the question about whether *survey respondents answering "never" are, in fact,*

[1] Stokes et al. [2013, 200].
[2] In Stokes et al. [2013, 227].
[3] Erie [1990, 2].
[4] Erie [1990, 2].
[5] See particularly Bensel [2004] and Campbell [2005].
[6] However, see Kitschelt and Wilkinson [2006, 320], who explain that "it is not economic development that accounts for the emergence and decline of varying linkage practices and not even the nature of formal democratic institutions," but higher levels of "[s]tate involvement in the public sector."
[7] A very small percentage (4.8%) reports to have received some kind of clientelistic offer from a political party.
[8] In a similar vein, Weitz-Shapiro [2012] explains that vote-buyers in Argentina would opt-out of clientelism in scenarios where the middle class, due to "moral or normative" reasons, would /fail to support clientelistic politicians.
[9] Hicken et al. [2014, 2015] constitute two very important exceptions.

against *vote-selling*. I contend that this *demand-side bias* gives an incomplete picture. Overlooking the supply side should give the falsely optimistic impression that U.S. voters systematically oppose vote-buying, "thus" engaging almost *never* in clientelism (as Figure 1 strongly suggests). Moreover, demand-side studies of clientelism have traditionally focused, except for a few exceptions,[10] what *parties* do by asking *voters* about what *parties* do. This *reverse demand-side bias* might cause other problems too. For instance, not only asking (directly) survey respondents about illegal behaviors constitutes an important source of social desirability bias,[11] actually suggesting that the number *never*(s) should be larger, double-biasing these results. Also, *indirect learning* (i.e., learning about what parties do by asking voters) is inevitable confounded with the respondent's frustrations and/or positive opinions about political parties, and politics in general.

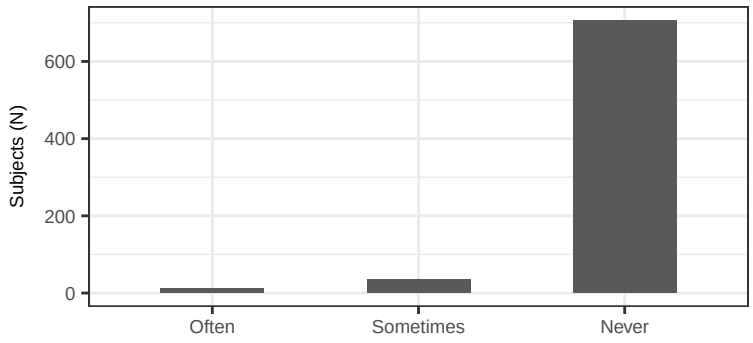

Figure 1: *Frequency of Clientelism*
Note*: Figure shows the frequency of survey respondents. N =755.The respective proportions are: 1.6, 4.8, 93.6.*
Source*: LAPOP, 2010 wave for the United States. Question is* `clien1`*:* In recent years and thinking about election campaigns, has a candidate or someone from a political party offered you something, like a favor, food, or any other benefit or object in return for your vote or support? Has this happened often, sometimes or never?

In 2016 I collected a novel dataset representative at the national level, where a total of 1,479 U.S. voters participated in a list experiment between March 2nd and March 6th (see Figure 2). Leveraging this experimental design, I was able to identify the demographic factors that would make U.S. voters more likely to sell their votes, at what price, and whether they would systematically lie about whether they would sell their right to vote freely. The results are striking. They suggest that U.S. voters are very much willing to sell their votes (approximately 25% of the nationally representative sample), that they would sell it at an optimal price of $730, and that they would

[10] Notably, Zarazaga [2015] interviewed 120 brokers in Argentina. Szwarcberg [2013] employed a similar strategy. Oliveros [2016] interviewed 1,184 lower-and mid-level local public sector employees in three Argentinean municipalities about the provision of favors. See also Stokes et al. [2013].

[11] Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. [2012]. Unfortunately, their focus is on vote-*buying*, overlooking vote-*selling*. They ask whether "candidates or activists gave [voters] a gift or did a favor."

systematically lie about it (approximately 8% of the nationally representative sample). Given that these data are representative at the national level, these findings are striking, going against the standard optimistic panorama offered by analysts of the vote-*buying* approach (exemplified in Figure 1). Democrats, liberals, and lower-income individuals, are systematically more likely to sell than the rest. Education levels do not seem to have a systematic impact on vote-selling.

Ultimately, this paper is an attempt to bridge the gap between vote-*sellers* and vote-*buyers*, by looking at where supply and demand meet, not by criticizing the vote-*buying* literature *per se*. Particularly, by exploiting individual variations within a list experiment framework, the paper advances our knowledge about the micro-dynamics of vote-*selling* in an industrialized country. As the results indicate, and particularly given that the focus has been traditionally on vote-*buying*, these efforts are worth pursuing. It is worth noting that the author is not aware of any other study where voters of an advanced democracy are asked (via an experimental design) whether they would sell their votes.

Next section gives an account of vote-buying in the U.S. from a historical perspective. The section is also an effort to link the early historical evidence on vote-selling, with a more current experimental account. The following section explains the measurement and experimental strategies pursued in this paper. Finally, I offer some working hypotheses, and possible lines for future research.

II. Vote-Selling and Patronage in the U.S.: An Historical Account

> *"I took it because it was there to take. I know it isn't right, but this has been going on for so long that we no longer looked upon it as a crime."*
>
> American vote seller in 1910 (Reynolds [1980, 200]).

The exercise of the *sine qua non* democratic practice (i.e., voting) in the early U.S. was questionable, to say the least. While norms that existed to exclude women, African and Native Americans from politics were systematically enforced, norms that were imposed to restrict voting based on property qualifications, or made vote buying illegal, were not. While all states had made the bribery of voters illegal at very early stages,[12] these laws were purposely ignored. In particular, way before the Gilded Age (1877-1896), there were a number of norms that aimed to prohibit bribery, clientelism and patronage. For instance, as early as 1725, the New Jersey legislature had already outlawed a number of electoral malpractices.[13] However, these restrictions were systematically

[12] Bensel [2004, 59].
[13] Bensel [2004, 59].

bypassed. It was common that office-seekers (and their supporters) would buy "freeholds for landless men in return for their vote,"[14] a practice that was known as "fagot voting." Since it was a coercive bribe, after "the election, the land was simply returned to the original owner."[15]

Weak institutions, poor bureaucracies and bad-quality record-keeping, helped to foster electoral malpractices. Historians frequently report that judges at polling places had a hard time figuring out not only the age[16] of the potential voter—which was also a requisite for voting—but also whether the potential voter was a U.S. citizen, especially in cases that involved newly naturalized immigrants, who had strong foreign accents.[17] Consequently, often times it was at the judge's discretion whether to let prospective voters cast a ballot.[18]

Low literacy levels helped to sustain vote-selling in the U.S. as well. In places like Kentucky and Missouri, by law voters were required to verbally announce their choices in the polling places, instead of using tickets.[19] Since party workers were hired to monitor the surroundings of the voting window, this gave ample opportunities to punish (or reward) their clients accordingly. Eventually, the *viva voce* method was substituted with the ticket system. First of all, and given a series of factors that I explain later in this section, voters had a hard time "memoriz[ing] the names of the candidates for office."[20] Second of all, the *viva voce* method was impractical. It worked relatively "well" in small towns, but as population grew, polls had to be kept open for up to three consecutive days, so each citizen could vote.[21]

To sustain these levels of coercion and close monitoring, very strong party machines were required. While it is true that the street price of vote-buying was very cheap, votes were sold and purchased at massive frequencies.[22] Plus, higher levels of electoral competition drove-up the unit price of each vote.[23] Moreover, tickets had to be printed by each party (adding more to the total cost of

[14] Campbell [2005, 6].
[15] Campbell [2005, 6].
[16] Judges used as a rough proxy whether the prospective voter had the ability to grow a beard. In Bensel [2004, 20].
[17] Bensel [2004, 20].
[18] As judges were appointed by both parties, this was terribly important.
[19] Bensel [2004, 54].
[20] Bensel [2004, 54].
[21] This system was far from being ineffective for political elites. Generally, from the elite's perspective, it delivered efficient electoral outcomes, while minimizing levels of electoral uncertainty at very low costs. Consequently, as Bensel [2004, 56] puts it, "it was logistical necessity, not the integrity of voting, that motivated the change from voice voting to tickets."
[22] Reynolds [1980, 195] explains that by "the Gilded Age (1877-1896) parties had so integrated vote buying into their operations that the transactions were common everywhere. Estimates of the number of citizens receiving money regularly appeared in the press. The *Newark Evening News* reported in 1889 that roughly 8,000 of Essex county's and 45,000 voters were known to be purchasable. Jersey City, New Brunswick, Orange, Trenton, Long Branch and Atlantic City were all condemned at one time or another as major electoral marketplaces."
[23] Every time the election was highly contested, "vote sellers could sometimes be seen loitering about the polls in hopes of negotiating a better deal as the day wore on" (Reynolds [1980, 196]). Vote-buyers, anticipating this, would target extra resources to these districts. For instance, Reynolds [1980, 197-198] explains that Republicans in New Brunswick, NJ, for example, had to aim additional economic resources to buy more votes, as they knew that "Democrats would 'swamp' the area with money."

campaigns), and had to be handed in an individual-basis outside of the polls. To perform all these tasks, and succeed at them, political parties developed well-functioning oiled national machines able to deliver votes, buy votes, monitor voting behavior, and award (or punish) their voters accordingly. To contextualize, in the 1858 election in New York's Third Congressional District, one particular candidate employed 200 men on election day to distribute tickets. These men did all they could to secure the candidate's election. Some stayed at the poll, while others hunted up voters. Most of them (134) were paid five dollars each for the day. The remainder received more money. In total, it had been spent somewhere between six and eight hundred dollars employing men in the campaign.[24] Considering both the cost of maintaining the machine, and the cost of buying votes, *Where all this money come from?*

Machines were not only oiled with money. A solid incentive structure shaped every agent's behavior. On the one hand, many party workers were volunteers,[25] saving some of the costs needed to maintain the machine. Most of these volunteers, "enjoyed the patronage of elected party officials by holding government jobs, drawing public pensions, servicing government contracts, or enjoying special licensing privileges."[26] On the other hand, political appointees, "from janitor to secretary of state," and some corporations too, *donated* part of their salaries in a yearly basis.[27] Parties, then, amazed huge amounts of money. And while it is hard to calculate, it has been said that given all these donations, and large pools of volunteered work, party machines were able to spend half of their budgets buying votes.[28]

Machines were very successful at buying votes. With all these resources flooding the polls on election day, voting was truly a Dantesque spectacle. The currency used to buy votes on election day was either money (so voters could get a shot of whiskey at a nearby saloon), or directly whiskey.[29] Everything began the night before election day, and would continue on election day. On that day, as "men moved about the polling place, party agents would often offer them liquid refreshment, almost always whisky, as an enticement to vote their ticket."[30] Moreover, party machines would make sure that "liquor was both freely available and consumed to excess."[31] "As a result, the street or square outside the voting window frequently became a kind of alcoholic festival in which many men were clearly and spectacularly drunk [up to the point that] some could not remember whether or not they had voted."[32] American elections, even before the Gilded Age, were engineered according to

[24] See Bensel [2004, 65].
[25] Bensel [2004, 17].
[26] Bensel [2004, 17].
[27] In Reynolds [1980, 197].
[28] Reynolds [1980, 197].
[29] Bensel [2004, 57].
[30] Bensel [2004, 57].
[31] Bensel [2004, 20].
[32] Bensel [2004, 20].

these "principles." When running for the Virginia House, a young George Washington "spent nearly 40 pounds—a considerable sum for the day—for gallons of rum, wine, brandy, and beer, all used to win over the votes of his neighbors."[33] In summary, the environment outside the voting window was pitiful. Crowds were so drunk that not only voters were accustomed to fights outside the polls,[34] but also "were throughly inebriated by the time they turned in their ticket."[35]

While the *modus operandi* of clientelism has changed, and both the frequency of vote-buying and the importance of party machines have declined,[36] there are still some more contemporary accounts of clientelism in American elections. For instance, Campbell [2005, 243-244] explains how a Democratic leader in Logan County, West Virginia, accepted $ 35,000 in cash in exchange of supporting Senator Kennedy. As the Democratic leader explains it, "this money was for one purpose: 'We bought votes with it. Regardless of what you want to believe, that's the way real politics works'." Other examples are the famous primary election in March 1972 in Chicago, where 20 *Tribune* reporters managed to act as precinct officials. When "one voter was offered a ballot by a precinct official, the voters casually replied, 'I already have one'."[37] And in the 1980s, in the coal-rich Appalachian mountains, "[c]oal companies still exercised considerable leverage in election contests [where] liquor and cash were displayed in large quantities."[38]

On the one hand, we know that there are a number of long-term structural and institutional factors that have ended vote-buying as a feasible electoral strategy to win votes.[39] On the demand side, then, there does not seem enough incentives to buy votes anymore. However, what do we know about vote-*sellers*? In a highly controversial pair of articles,[40] Foa and Mounk [2016, 7] document a deep "crisis of democratic legitimacy [which] extends across a [...] wider set of indicators" in the United States (including a number of European countries). They find that only 10% of citizens born in the inter-war period, 14% of baby-boomers, and 26% of millennials, say that it is "unimportant" in a democracy for people to "choose their leaders in free elections."[41] Unfortunately, there have not been efforts dedicated to investigate these matters employing experimental designs. Following Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. [2014], who also use an hypothetical situation to study vote-buying norms in Latin America, I implement a list experiment designed to elicit truthful answers to vote-selling: *What would voters do if offered the chance to sell their votes? Would they sell their votes (and at*

[33] Campbell [2005, 5].
[34] Campbell [2005, 3]. In turn, Bensel [2004, 13] explains that "[a]lmost anything was permitted in this public space in terms of speech, electioneering, and, all too often, physical intimidation [...] election officials had no authority to maintain order outside."
[35] Bensel [2004, 57].
[36] Stokes et al. [2013, 230] explain that "party machines are a thing of the past."
[37] Campbell [2005, 262].
[38] Campbell [2005, 275].
[39] See for instance Stokes et al. [2013] and Kitschelt and Wilkinson [2006].
[40] See also Foa and Mounk [2017].
[41] Foa and Mounk [2016, 10].

what price), or would they consistently opt-out of vote-selling?

III. Vote-Selling in an Experimental Context: A List Experiment in an Industrialized Democracy

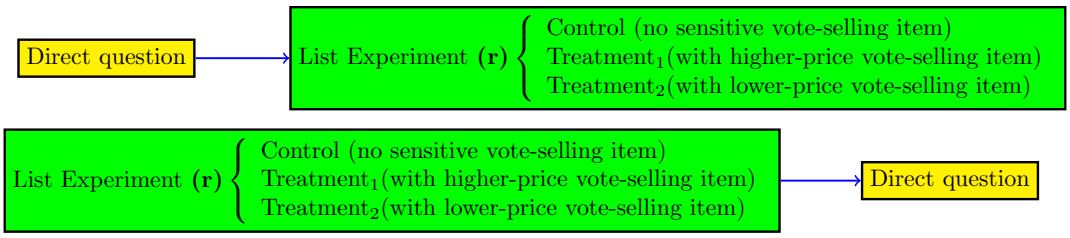

Figure 2: *Experimental Flow*

Experimental Design. There is an increasing literature dedicated to elicit truthful answers to sensitive questions via list experiments, including clientelism.[42] This has skyrocketed a number of methodological advances in the statistical study of these kinds of experiments. Most of these studies have been conducted in a number of developing countries.[43] Employing a similar strategy, this study exploits variance within an on-line survey experiment in the United States.[44] The data (N=1,479) were collected in 2016, and are representative at the national level. Figure 3 shows the geographical distribution of survey respondents broken by party identification. Before splitting the subject pool into their respective experimental conditions, all subjects were told to read a distractor paragraph. The idea was to frame the experiment as a study about crime in the U.S., not as a study about vote-selling. In the paragraph, four illegal activities were described, all of them formatted as pieces of news. Additionally, according to several pre-studies that were conducted, it was noticed that the concept of "vote-selling" was not common knowledge. Consequently, the secondary purpose of the distractor paragraph was to define the concept.

[42] See for example Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. [2012].
[43] See for example Corstange [2008b,a], Blair and Imai [2012].
[44] The data were collected by *SSI*.

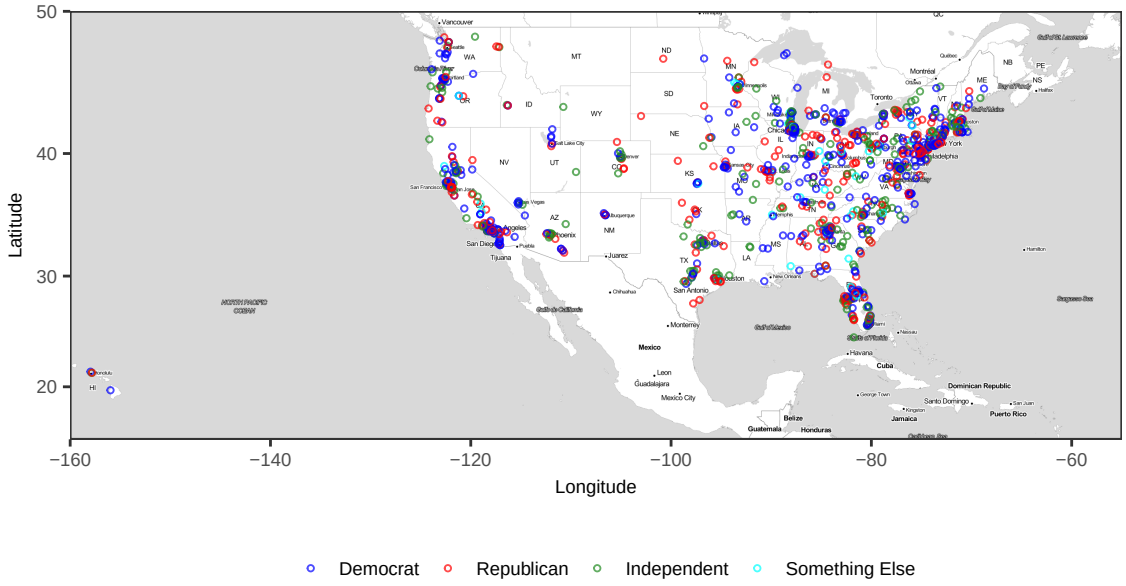

Figure 3: *Geographical Distribution of Survey Respondents broken by Party Identification*

Then, and as suggested in Figure 2, the order in which they saw the direct question and the list experiment was randomly assigned. Eventually, all subjects answered both the direct question *and* the list experiment. The direct question stated that there was going to be assigned, at random, the hypothetical possibility to do one of the illegal things mentioned in the distractor paragraph. However, and despite faking random assignment, *all* subjects were directly asked whether they would be interested in selling their votes. Direct answers then were used to estimate the proportion of "liars," a process which I describe below. Immediately after the direct question, subjects answered a pricing experiment, where they were asked for the right price for their votes. Following standard practice in marketing research, experimental subjects answered a pricing experiment, where they would slide two handles, one indicating which price was considered "too cheap," and another one indicating which price was considered "too high" for one's vote. Both sliders ranged from \$0 to \$1,000. As I explain below, the intersection of the "too cheap" and "too high" empirical distributions, was used to estimate the optimal price for a vote.

The list experiment contemplated one control (without any sensitive vote-selling item), and two possible treatments, each with different vote-selling prices. Since it is difficult to price a vote, based on a number of pretests, it was decided to consider either an arbitrarily low (\$100) or an arbitrarily

high ($500) price. Both prices were delivered via two different treatments. To be sure, subjects randomly assigned to the treatment condition, only answered *one* of these treatments. More than being hard pricing tests, these two treatments account for (possible) different elasticities that might have interacted with individual socio-economic backgrounds, mainly income.

Moving forward, subjects randomly assigned to the control condition,[45] answered the following question:

```
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're 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.
```

In turn, subjects assigned to the treatment condition answered *one* the following two treatments. The ones assigned to the *low* price condition, read and answered the following question:

```
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're 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.
```

However, the ones assigned to the *high* price vote-selling item, read exactly the same vignette, with the only difference that the third item read as follows: `(3) sell your vote to a candidate for $500`. Figure 4 shows the distinct frequencies of subjects declaring how many (if any) illegal things they would do. Notice that the figure shows the *number* of items, not which ones. For instance, the frequency of "3" does not mean the frequency of the third item, but the total number of individuals answering that they would do three of the illegal activities described in the vignette.

[45] This is an hypothetical situation. To isolate the risks and costs associated with engaging in any illegal activity, the next sentence was included: "assuming you would not go to jail."

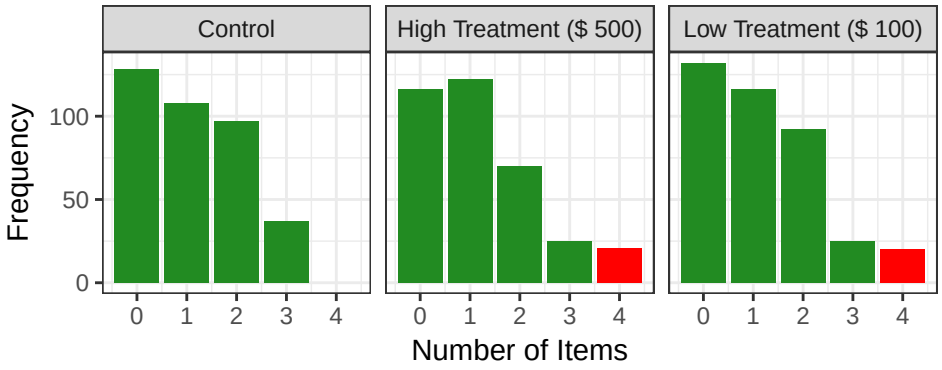

Figure 4: *Frequency of subjects declaring how many (if any) illegal things they would do.*
Note*: In red, it is indicated how many times subjects answered all items (n=4), that is, including the sensitive one.*

Would U.S. citizens sell their vote? Following the advice of Blair and Imai [2012] and Imai et al. [2014], the list data were analyzed using a statistical multivariate approach.[46] These analyses allow estimating the individual probability of vote-selling (Figure 9). Using this information it is possible to estimate the proportion of individuals selling their votes. In combination with the estimates of the direct question, it was also possible to estimate the number of "liars." Figure 5 suggests that, combining the estimates of the *low* and *high* treatments, approximately 25% of the nationally representative sample would be willing to sell their vote.[47] Since differences between these two experimental conditions are not statistically significant, it is reasonable to think that there are not concerns associated with the design of the treatments (e.g., their specific predetermined prices). When subjects were directly asked about selling their votes, due to social desirability bias, they systematically under-reported their true answers. Particularly, around 8% of the nationally representative sample lied about it.[48] These results are striking, and the author is not aware of any other experimental design where subjects in an industrialized democracy are asked whether they would sell their votes.

[46] Table 1 shows the regression table.
[47] This probability was obtained by computing the probability of the 'high' and 'low' conditions, and then dividing them by two.
[48] The *low* condition is barely non-significant. However, this does not alter the substantive results. Both experimental treatments suggest that subjects in fact lie about the possibility of selling their votes.

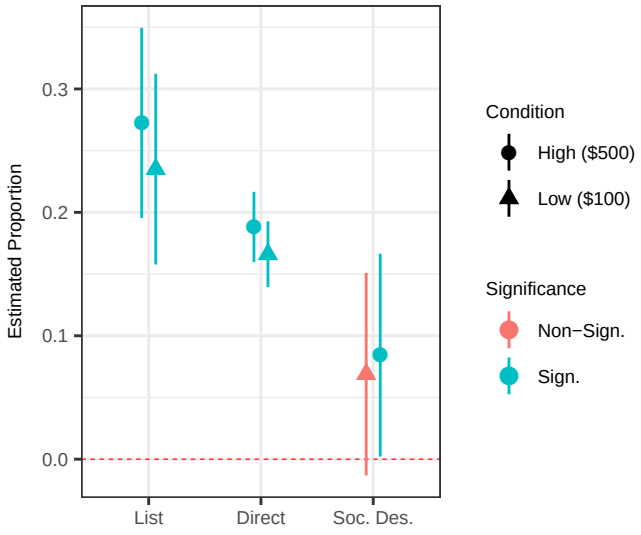

Figure 5: *Declared and Predicted Vote-Sellers.*
Note*: Figure shows the frequency of declared and predicted vote-sellers, and its difference ('liars').*

There seems to be two conflicting pictures. On the one hand, and leaving concerns of social desirability bias aside, we "know"—using non-experimental data—that most people have never been offered to sell their votes (as per Figure 1). On the other hand, the results presented in this study strongly suggest that they would: a very high proportion of the representative sample would be willing to give up its right to vote freely for money. That is, while buyers are not buying, there is a large proportion of latent vote-sellers. In light of what is described in Stokes et al. [2013], I advance an interpretation which goes in line with their findings.

From the demand side, vote-buying is no longer an efficient strategy for party machines. Buying votes has become an increasingly expensive strategy to win votes. Industrialization has driven up the median income of the electorate, forcing party machines to turn to other less prohibitively alternatives. However, from the supply side (i.e. voters), the vote is still for sale, only that for a very high price, which party machines cannot afford any longer. *What would be the tipping point for vote-sellers? Where do supply and demand meet?* A simple pricing experiment was conducted in this study. Subjects were directed to declare which price—within a $1-$1,000 range, and in $1 increments—was considered *too cheap*, and which price—idem—was considered *too expensive*. With these two pieces of information, it was possible to construct two supply curves, where the *too cheap* curve represents the lower bound, and the *too expensive* curve represents the upper bound. Substantively, the optimal selling price is located where both curves intersect. Following

this procedure, Figure 6 indicates that survey respondents would sell their vote for $730. Evidently, being the selling price so expensive, the demand side is not able to catch up with the supply side, making vote buying in the U.S. a rare event.[49]

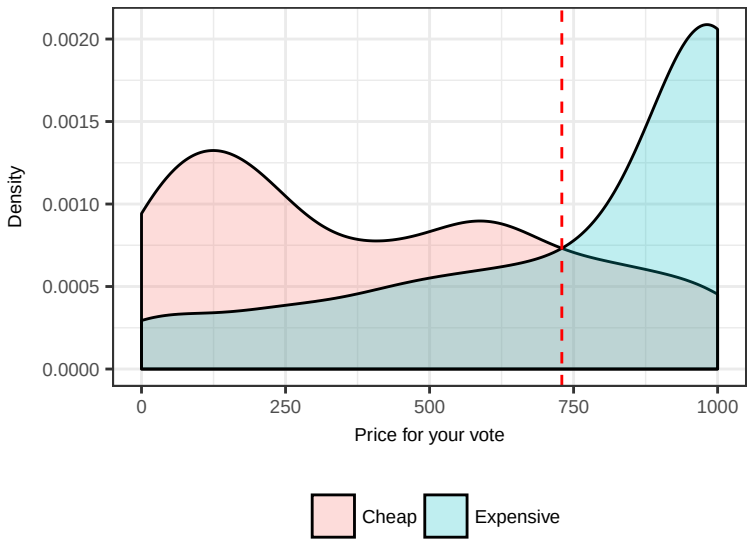

Figure 6: *Pricing Experiment: Ideal Selling Price*
Note*: Figure shows the empirical distributions of the 'too cheap' and 'to expensive' supply curves. The intersection of the two (the vertical dashed line) is used to get an estimate of the ideal selling price. The data suggest that the right price for one's vote is: $ 730.*

Who are the most-likely vote-sellers? The objective of this paper is to learn about the micro-dynamics of vote-sellers, including what socio-economic variables are more associated with vote-selling.

[49]Since there is no other way of knowing the *cheap* and *expensive* prices of a good than asking subjects directly, being very explicit about what good it is, these results should be taken with caution. The list experiment confirms that survey respondents systematically unreported the willingness to sell. Consequently, there is an unknown number of subjects that would have sold their votes, but due to the potential risk of being socially condemned, they preferred not to answer this question. Only 378 individuals answered the question. In any case, the results of the pricing experiment serve as a rough proxy of the right price for a vote.

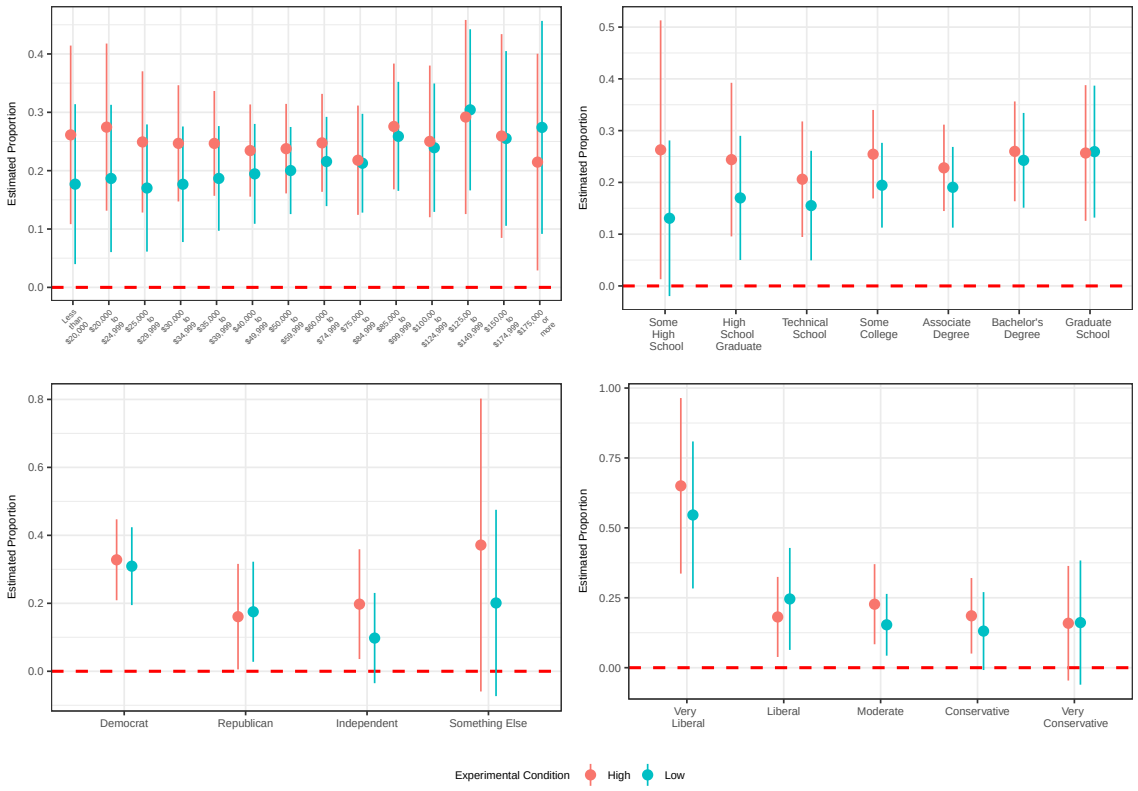

Figure 7: *Predicting Vote-Selling*

IV. Discussion

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Word count: 3,757

V. Appendix

I. Experimental Manipulations and Vignettes

Distractor Paragraph The next paragraph was used to distract subjects from the main purpose of the study, and also to define what vote-selling was.

> Washington, D.C.- A department store downtown had a robbery incident last week, reporting several missing iPods from their inventory. Authorities also inform that a group of local residents are trying to ``sell'' their votes to political candidates ahead of a local election for city council. Residents approached some of the candidates running for office and offered to vote for that candidate in return for monetary compensation. In a different subject matter, the local police station released a report on driving habits and behaviors in the Capitol district last week. Finally, cyber-crime has become an increasingly serious issue in the area in the past few year.

Direct Question All subjects read the next paragraph, and then answered the direct question:

> Now you will be entered into a random lottery for the opportunity to do ONE of the illegal things you just read before. This means that you might be randomly offered to hypothetically do ANY of the activities mentioned before.

> After a random assignment, you have been selected for the opportunity to hypothetically sell your vote. This means that you will have the hypothetical opportunity to accept money from a candidate for your vote. Would you be willing to accept the offer, assuming you would not go to jail? By selecting ``Yes,'' you could earn up to $1,000.

Pricing Experiment Immediately after answering the direct question, they were asked for the right price of their votes.

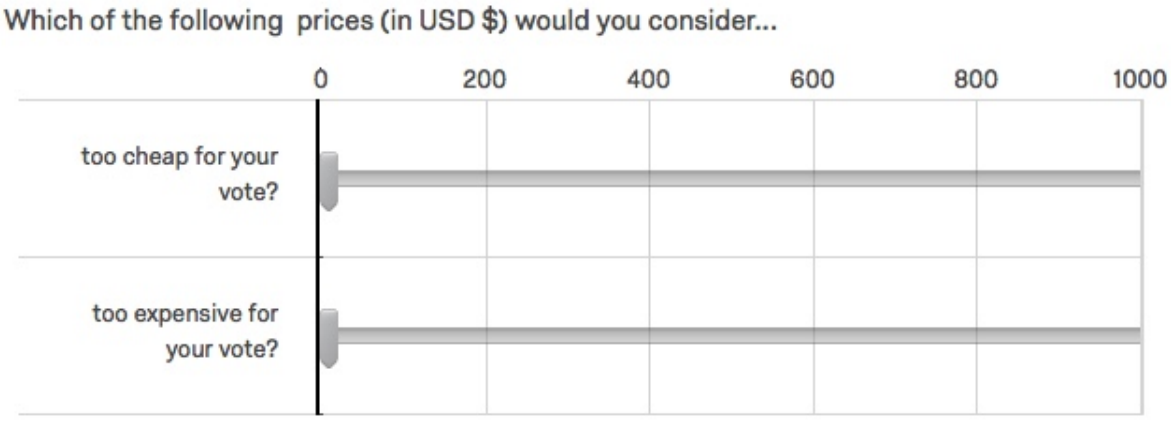

Figure 8: *Pricing Experiment*

Table 1: *Statistical Analysis of the List Experiment: Estimated coefficients from regression model where the outcome variables are whether or not subjects would sell their vote to a candidate for $100 o $500.*

	Sensitive Items				**Control Items**			
	Low Treatment		*High Treatment*		*Low Condition*		*High Condition*	
Variables	*Est.*	*SE*	*Est.*	*SE*	*Est.*	*SE*	*Est.*	*SE*
Intercept	−0.06	1.03	0.82	1.2	−0.73	0.22	−0.76	0.24
$\text{Ideology}_{\text{Liberal}}$	−1.36	0.8	−2.11	0.9	0.41	0.19	0.36	0.2
$\text{Ideology}_{\text{Moderate}}$	−1.79	0.76	−1.74	0.88	0.1	0.18	0.3	0.19
$\text{Ideology}_{\text{Conservative}}$	−2.1	0.89	−1.86	0.87	0.23	0.2	0.34	0.21
$\text{Ideology}_{\text{VeryConservative}}$	−1.88	1.12	−2	1.03	0.01	0.25	0.09	0.25
$\text{Party Id}_{\text{Republican}}$	−0.18	0.75	−0.6	0.73	−0.53	0.15	−0.55	0.15
$\text{Party Id}_{\text{Independent}}$	−1.2	0.89	−0.55	0.65	−0.37	0.13	−0.35	0.13
$\text{Party Id}_{\text{SomethingElse}}$	−0.23	1.02	0.32	1.1	−0.4	0.25	−0.24	0.27
Income	0.06	0.08	0.02	0.08	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02
Education	0.02	0.16	−0.03	0.17	0.01	0.03	0	0.03

II. Statistical Analysis of the List Experiment: Regression Table

III. Statistical Analysis of the List Experiment: Individual Probabilities of Vote-Selling

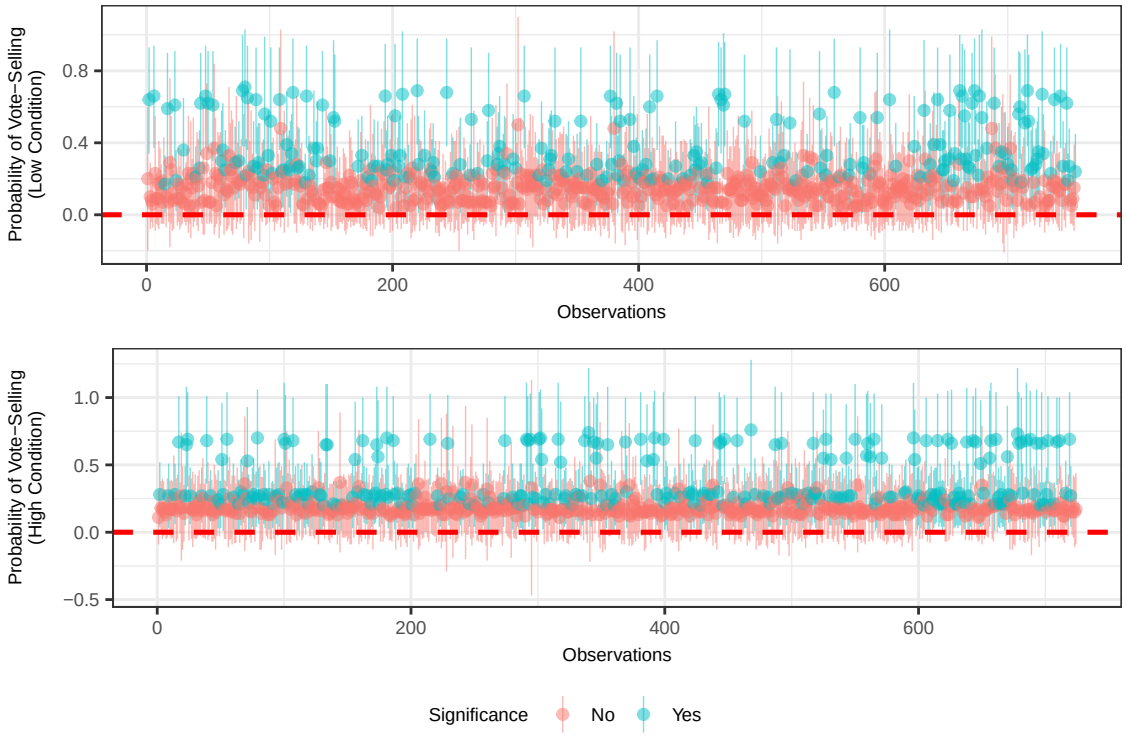

Figure 9: *Individual Estimated Probabilities of Vote-Selling*
Note: *Figure shows the individual probability of vote-selling, under the 'low' and 'high' conditions, i.e. when they were asked in the list experiment whether they would sell their vote for $100 or $ 500. Then, these individual prediction were paired with the conjoint data.*

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