JOSÉ RAMÓN ENRÍQUEZ

jrenriquez@stanford.edu
Cell 617-842-9680
scholar.harvard.edu/enriquez

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY

| 79 John F. Kennedy St. | Placement Director: Marcella Alsan | marcella_alsan@hks.harvard.edu | 617-384-0016 |
| Cambridge MA 02138 | Administrative Director: Nicole Tateosian | nicole_tateosian@hks.harvard.edu | 617-495-119 |

Employment

Postdoctoral Fellow
Golub Capital Social Impact Lab (Stanford Graduate School of Business), 2023-Present
Digital Economy Lab (Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence), 2023-Present

Education

Harvard University
Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government, 2023
Committee: Melissa Dell, Jeffry Frieden, Rema Hanna, Horacio Larreguy, Pia Raffler

Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)
B.A. in Economics (with honors), 2017
B.A. in Political Science (with honors), 2017

Fields

Political Economy; Development Economics
Economics of Social Media, AI, and Digital Transformation

References

Professor Susan Athey
Stanford Graduate School of Business
athey@stanford.edu

Professor Erik Brynjolfsson
Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI
erikb@stanford.edu

Professor Rema Hanna
Harvard Kennedy School
rema_hanna@hks.harvard.edu

Professor Horacio Larreguy
Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)
horacio.larreguy@itam.mx

Professor Melissa Dell
Harvard University
melissadell@fas.harvard.edu

Professor Pia Raffler
Harvard University
praffler@gov.harvard.edu

Affiliations

Affiliated Researcher at the King Center on Global Development, Stanford University

Teaching

Using Big Data to solve Social Problems, Economics Dept., Harvard University, Teaching Fellow, 2020-21
Politics and Policies: What Can Data Tell Us? Harvard Kennedy School, Teaching Fellow, 2020-21
Development Policy Strategy, Harvard Kennedy School, Teaching Fellow, 2019

Publications

Mass political information on social media: Facebook ads, electorate saturation, and electoral accountability in Mexico
(with Horacio Larreguy, John Marshall, and Alberto Simpser)
Journal of the European Economic Association, 22(4), August 2024, p. 1678–1722.

Translational papers
Generative AI for Pro-Democracy Platforms
(with Alia Braley, Nuole Chen, Alex Pentland, Anka Reuel, and Lily L. Tsai)
An MIT Exploration of Generative AI, 2024

Job Market Paper   **Accountability under Polarization**
(with Horacio Larreguy, John Marshall, and Alberto Simpser)

Political polarization can negatively impact electoral accountability by influencing how citizens perceive and process incumbent performance information. We study how such information affects voting behavior in a polarized environment, and how this varies when additionally treating citizens with a debiasing nudge to incorporate counter-attitudinal information. We experimentally evaluate the electoral effects of a local CSO's Facebook ad campaign providing citizens with benchmarked information about COVID-19 cases and deaths in 500 Mexican municipalities in the run-up to the 2021 elections. On its own, the information had a backfiring effect, increasing (reducing) the vote share received by the local incumbent party with relatively high (low) levels of COVID-19 cases and deaths. These effects are driven by areas with high past vote share for the incumbent, higher shares of citizens with communal values, and behavior indicative of more-stressed citizens. The randomly assigned debiasing nudge, however, reversed the backfiring: voters electorally rewarded (punished) incumbents with relatively low (high) levels of COVID-19 cases and deaths. Our findings demonstrate how biases in information processing can undermine electoral accountability in polarized contexts, and document the potential for nudges to restore electoral accountability.

Working papers   **A Theory of Criminal Bribe and Punishment under Elections**
(with Martín Castillo-Quintana)
Under review

Criminal organizations exert political influence through bribery, voter mobilization, and pre- and post-electoral violence. We present a model in which organized crime groups strategically choose between inducements (e.g., vote buying), punishments (e.g., violence against voters and/or candidates), or a combination of both to obtain political favors, either before or after elections. The model elucidates the mechanisms through which these choices impact voter turnout and electoral competitiveness—two critical aspects of democratic processes. We derive direct, testable empirical implications and discuss their relevance to existing and prospective research, offering insights for transparency-enhancing policies.

Confounding, spillovers, and interactions influence estimates of social distancing policy effects
(with Horacio Larreguy and Alberto Simpser)
Under review

Understanding the effectiveness of social distancing policies aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases is a pressing need that a growing number of studies seek to address. Using fine-grained mobility and epidemiological data, we show that widely used methods to estimate the effects of policies are highly sensitive to accounting for the facts that policies are often enacted simultaneously, that they can complement, or substitute for, each other, and that they can spill over as persons move across geographies. Accounting for confounding and spillovers can change conclusions about the direction and magnitude of the effects of social distancing policies, while failing to consider interactions may hamper the design of optimal public policy packages.

Democracy under Assault: Electoral Reform and Political Violence

This paper investigates when criminal organizations use violence to influence politicians. Using an asymmetric information model, I show that criminal groups resort to violence when other channels of influence, specifically bribes, become unavailable. I test the model's predictions in the context of an electoral reform in Mexico that increased politicians' cost of accepting bribes. I measure bribes using confidential administrative reports of suspicious financial transactions in retail banking and measure violence using an original dataset of attacks on politicians. Using a difference-in-differences design, I find that in areas with drug trafficking organizations, the reform led to a 4-percentage point decrease (~650 fewer reports) in suspicious financial transactions and a 2-percentage point increase (~44 more attacks) in attacks on politicians. Consistent with the model, further evidence indicates that (1) criminal

organizations resort to violence when they fail to reach agreements with politicians, and (2) the effects of the reform are driven by municipalities where politicians have tighter campaign spending limits and possess less information about the criminal groups. These findings have implications for our understanding of local governance and call for attention to the design and implementation of transparency-enhancing electoral reforms.

Elite-driven Polarization on social media
(with Horacio Larreguy and Octavio Lujambio)

Social media has been identified as a relevant factor in the global rise in political polarization. Yet, the role of political elites in this process remains unclear. Using data on mobile coverage, Facebook connections, and electoral outcomes in Mexico from 2012 to 2021, we investigate the determinants of elite-driven polarization on social media. Our findings indicate that political actors who deepened a divisive discourse during this period gained electoral benefits from increased polarization. We distinguish between mechanisms of selective exposure (i.e., echo chambers) and diversification (i.e., contact), noting that electoral gains are concentrated where social media amplifies a single political voice. Conversely, exposure to an ideologically diverse network mitigates these effects. By clarifying the role of political elites and differentiating mechanisms of social media exposure, our study reconciles conflicting results in political polarization literature and offers insights into potential mitigation strategies.

Works in Progress	**Emotional Drivers of Misinformation** (with Susan Athey and Kristine Koutout) **Augmenting Human Survey Responses with Generative AI: An Application to Economic Research** (with Erik Brynjolfsson and David Nguyen) **Deliberating for Social Good: Generative AI in Policy Deliberation** **Policy Dreamer: Diverse Public Policy Generation via Elicitation and Simulation of Human Preferences** (with Arjun Karanam, Udari Madhushani Sehwag, Michael Elabd, Noah Goodman, and Sanmi Koyejo)
Awards	Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University, 2020-21
Seminars & Conferences	ASSA Annual Meeting, 2025* Pacific Conference for Development Economics (PacDev) at Stanford University, 2024 Conference on the Economics of Crime and Justice at the University of Chicago, 2023 EGAP's Seminar Series on Democracy, Conflict, and Polarization, 2023 Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), 2023 Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) at the University of California, Berkeley, 2022 The Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association and the Latin American Meeting of the Econometric Society (LACEA-LAMES) Annual Meeting, 2022 ITAM, Center for Economic Research, 2022 Northeastern Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC) at Yale University, 2022 Northeast Workshop in Empirical Political Science (NEWEPS) at Yale University, 2022 XIII Transatlantic Workshop on the Economics of Crime (TWEC) at Bocconi University, 2022 American Political Science Association (APSA), 2020, 2021, 2022
Service	Referee for: *Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Development Economics, The Journal of Politics, Stanford Impact Labs* Co-chair, Harvard University Mexican Association of Students, 2020-21 Co-chair, The Mexico Conference at Harvard University, 2020-21
Skills	Computing: R, Python, STATA Languages: English (fluent), Spanish (native), Mandarin (basic), French (basic)