Flavours of Democracy I: Delegative Democracy in Latin America
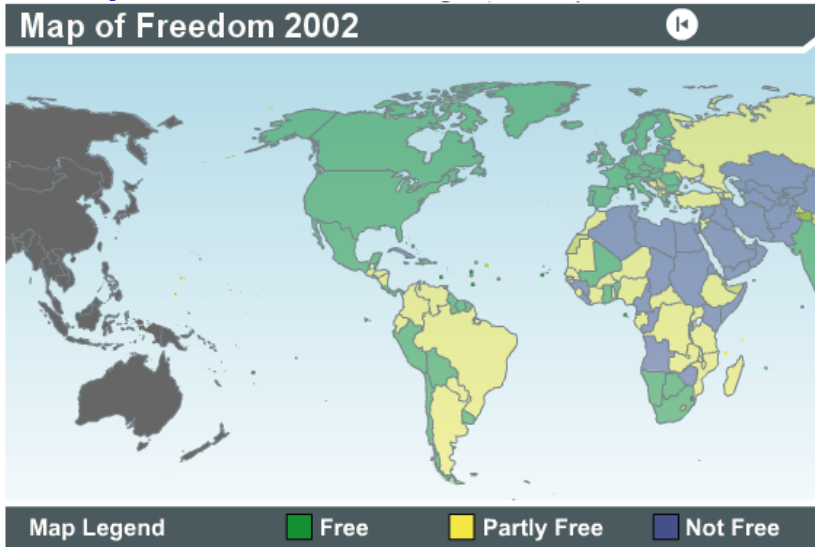
Measurement and Theory of Democratic Attitudes

Different types of democracy?

- ▶ So far, discussion largely dominated by American research
- ▶ Based on a program founded in the 1950s/60s
- ▶ Deficits spotted so far
    - ▶ Direct participation
    - ▶ New means of (electronic) communication
    - ▶ Focus on ultra-short scales/items (few general principles)
    - ▶ What do people mean by 'Democracy'?
- ▶ But: are there different (but equally democratic) concepts of 'Democracy'?
- ▶ (Applicable to countries outside the OECD world?)
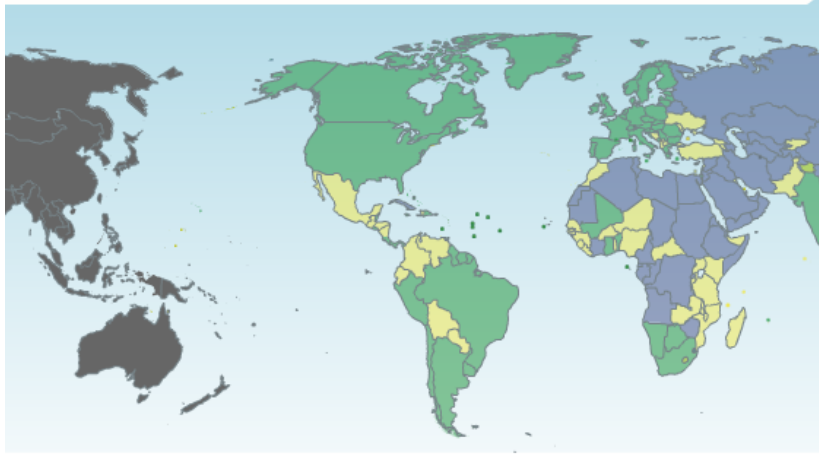
Democracy in Latin America

- ▶ For decades/centuries, highly problematic
- ▶ Colonial legacy
  - ▶ Pre-industrial societies
  - ▶ Vast economic, social, cultural gaps between ethnic groups
  - ▶ Very small middle classes
  - ▶ Land/factory owning strata not interested in democratisation/redistribution
  - ▶ 19th century interpretation of liberalism/liberal democracy
- ▶ US intervention(s) and interests
  - ▶ Cold war/allegedly 'communist' regimes
  - ▶ Economic interests (fruit, Panama, oil, raw materials)
  - ▶ 'War against drugs'
- ▶ International trade links often not conducive to democratisation
- ▶ But: situation massively improving over last 20 years

Democracy in Latin America: 2002 vs 2011

Democracy in Latin America: 2002 vs 2011

Delegative Democracy

- ▶ Coined by Guillermo O'Donnell (1994)
- ▶ Main idea:
    - ▶ New subtype in emerging/unstable democracies
    - ▶ Stuck in the middle:
        - ▶ 'No imminent threat of authoritarian regression'
        - ▶ But also 'no advances towards institutionalised representativeness'
    - ▶ A type of 'ultra-Presidentialism'
        - ▶ President elected → 'authorised to govern as he sees fit'
        - ▶ 'Embodiment of the nation'
        - ▶ Based on movement
    - ▶ Highly individualised, emotional campaigns
    - ▶ (Actually, not so new: populism, majoritarian rule)
    - ▶ Strong bureaucratic/technocratic undertones
- ▶ Congress, judiciary, interest groups, media free to complain
- ▶ But lack of effective horizontal accountability/control

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Delegative Democracy in Latin America
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Theory/hypotheses
Model and data
Findings

Delegative democratic attitudes

- ▶ O'Donnell:
    - ▶ DD a highly problematic borderline case
    - ▶ A *regime* type

- ▶ Walker:
    - ▶ Measure DD attitudes
    - ▶ At the individual level

- ▶ Some sort of 'third way' between liberal and authoritarian attitudes
    - ▶ Favours 'unrestrained presidential power'
    - ▶ Different evaluation of judiciary and legislature

- ▶ Prevalent in Latin America?

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General expectation

- ▶ Four categories of citizens:
    1. Democrats
        1.1 Liberals
        1.2 People with DD attitudes
    2. Non-Democrats
        2.1 Authoritarians
        2.2 Ambivalents
- ▶ Only relevant in developing/consolidating democracies
- ▶ People with DD attitudes (PDD) more *likely* to support institutions
    - ▶ Because they are democrats (vs authoritarians)
    - ▶ Because they are less likely to scrutinise them (vs liberals)
- ▶ Evaluation of institutions affected by evaluation of the president

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Core hypotheses

1. PDD support institutions more than any other group
2. Support for president positively related to support for judiciary/legislature for *all* democrats
3. Controlling for presidential support, PDDs show more support for judiciary/legislature than liberals
4. Controlling for presidential support, PDDs show more support for judiciary/legislature than authoritarians
5. Controlling for presidential support, PDDs show more support for judiciary/legislature than ambivalents/nonrespondents
6. Link between support for president/judiciary/legislature weaker for persons with greater political knowledge

H3-5 are really just specifications of H1?

Countries and Data

- ► Countries:
    - ► 'Most Similar Systems' Design
        - ► Common history and structure
        - ► Unitary government, unicameral parliament
        - ► Presidents with strong executive and weak legislative powers
    - ► Costa Rica: largely peaceful and stable democracy since 1948
    - ► El Salvador: authoritarian/civil war; electoral democracy since early 1990s
    - ► Nicaragua: dictatorship, Sandinista revolution and American internvention; electoral democracy since early 1990s
- ► These countries are *not DDs* themselves

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Data

- ▶ Data: Latinobarometer
  - ▶ Growing number of 'Barometer' surveys in different regions of the planet
  - ▶ Asia, Africa, Latin America . . .
  - ▶ Not comparable across areas
  - ▶ Here: $\approx$ 1000 cases per country

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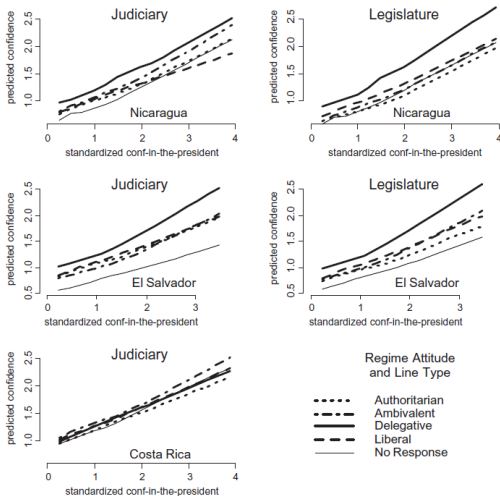Model and data
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Variables

- ▶ Confidence
  - ▶ In three institutions
  - ▶ Combined index of
    - ▶ Confidence in institutions
    - ▶ Institution indispensable for country
    - ▶ Trust in individual members/incumbent
  - ▶ Standardised on a per-country base

- ▶ Other independent vars
  - ▶ Regime preference, party identification
  - ▶ Gender, age, education, income
  - ▶ Political knowledge, newspaper readership

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Model

- ▶ 'Gamma model' to account for skewed distribution of errors
- ▶ Interpretation much like OLS, but: signs
- ▶ Two parallel models (legislative/judiciary confidence)
- ▶ Depending on regime preference, confidence in president, controls, interaction knowledge $\times$ confidence in president
- ▶ Separate estimation of two models per each of three countries

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Figure 1

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Distribution, H1, H2, H6

- ▶ Total number of PDDs very small
- ▶ PDDs have display highest confidence in legislative/judiciary, even controlling for presidential support (H1)
- ▶ (not in stable Costa Rica)
- ▶ Confidence in the president positively correlated with support for other institutions (H2)
- ▶ Effect is weaker amongst more knowledgeable/attentive citizens in Costa Rica and Nicaragua
- ▶ But not in El Salvador (careful: significance of interaction terms)

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H3-H5n

- ▶ PDDs show more support than liberals (H3)
- ▶ Basically, they are the most supportive of all (H4-H6)

Summary/class questions

- ► Summarise, in your own words, the main findings from this study
- ► Why are you unhappy with this research? What are the main problems?
- ► What could be done to improve on this study?