Suffrage Extensions and Voting Patterns in Latin America: Is Mobilization a Source of Decay?

Marisa Kellam

ABSTRACT

This article examines whether changes in electoral participation contributed to electoral volatility in Latin America between 1945 and 2000. As a result of literacy voting requirements and authoritarian interludes that disenfranchised large portions of the population, new voters in Latin America probably had different political interests from the previous electorate and were not socialized to electoral politics. The article considers the hypothesis that the inclusion of new voters with different interests produces an immediate, short-term change in aggregate voting patterns, and a lack of socialization of new voters generates lingering instability in electoral behavior. Accounting for confounding factors, the analysis of legislative elections in 12 countries indicates that the expansion of the electorate temporarily disrupted voting patterns in Latin America but did not lead to long-run party system decay.

Do rapid increases in political participation disrupt voting patterns? Do party systems decay as a result? Huntington (1965, 386) argues that "rapid increases in mobilization and participation, the principal political aspects of modernization, undermine political institutions. Rapid modernization, in brief, produces not political development, but political decay." To test this argument, Przeworski (1975) examined whether changes in electoral participation associated with the introduction of universal male suffrage in Western Europe and Canada destabilized patterns in the partisan distribution of votes. He found that mobilization—and demobilization—increased electoral volatility, but that this destabilizing effect was of short duration.

Przeworski concluded from his analysis that the newly mobilized voters were already socialized to electoral politics and entered the electorate with fairly fixed partisan preferences. Consequently, electoral mobilization did not have a long-run decaying effect on the institutionalization of the party system. Przeworski's finding also ran contrary to learning models of partisanship; aggregate partisan loyalties were thought to stabilize only with time, as new voters developed attachments to parties through repeated voting experiences and passed their partisan loyalties on to their children (Converse 1969). Preworski's study of Western Europe instead reveals that

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mobilization waves produce short-term shifts in voting patterns that quickly stabilize. Adopting a punctuated equilibrium model of party system institutionalization, other scholars concluded that major party alternatives were frozen in the wake of suffrage extensions (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Bartolini and Mair 1990).

Echoing this previous debate, scholars have recently questioned whether partisanship and interparty competition stabilize over time, particularly in new democracies that emerged after 1978. Mainwaring and Zoco (2007) argue that electoral volatility persists in late-democratizing countries because parties were not involved in voter enfranchisement and have relied on television as a primary means of electoral mobilization; parties were thus less motivated to develop deep roots in society that would help to stabilize patterns of interparty competition. In line with Huntington's "mobilization leads to decay" hypothesis, this theory would expect low party system institutionalization in countries that incorporated many new voters during the third wave of democratization. Yet other studies find that partisanship builds and electoral volatility declines as democracy ages (Tavits 2005a; Lupu and Stokes 2010).

Building on behavioral theories that link the experience of voting to the strength of partisanship, Lupu and Stokes (2010, 92) argue that "the proportion of voters with partisan attachments should be a direct function of the number of years of democracy that the adult population has lived through" and therefore expect that "partisanship becomes more widespread as new democracies age and elections are held but that it will fall back when democracy is interrupted."

Yet these recent studies focusing on the year of democratization or the passage of time under democracy overlook variation in the size and composition of the electorate across time of the sort that Przeworski (1975) examined in Europe. In recent work, Przeworski (2009) shows that the historical growth of electoral participation worldwide has been due largely to suffrage extensions altering who has the right to vote, rather than to individual decisions whether or not to turn out at the polls. We should not expect the proportion of voters with partisan attachments to increase with the number of years under democracy when suffrage extensions and voter mobilization waves inject new groups of inexperienced voters into the electorate.

Latin America provides another testing ground for the theory that major changes in political participation produce "institutional decay" in voting patterns in political party systems. In several countries in Latin America, literacy qualifications to vote were lifted only recently. Because literacy restrictions affected the uneducated, poor, rural, and indigenous populations, it is likely that these newly enfranchised voters in Latin America had different political interests from those of the previous electorate, and unlikely that they were socialized to electoral politics. Combined with literacy restrictions, lengthy authoritarian interludes in many Latin American countries kept large portions of the population effectively disenfranchised until the current democratic period. This study considers whether suffrage extensions and the mobilization of new voters destabilized voting patterns in Latin America, thereby tying together old and new debates in the literature.

The (in)stability of voting patterns in Latin America draws the attention of scholars who link electoral volatility to the quality of democracy and see the degree

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of party system institutionalization as the defining characteristic that separates Latin American party systems from one another, and from Western European systems in general (Dix 1992; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Coppedge 1998; Mainwaring 1998, 1999). Mainwaring and others argue that a tendency toward personalism, weak mechanisms of accountability, and more uncertainty characterize Latin America's "inchoate" party systems. High levels of volatility in the region have been attributed in large part to factors exogenous to voters or political parties themselves, such as regime change, economic downturn, and political institutions (Remmer 1991; Coppedge 1998; Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Madrid 2005; Lupu and Stokes 2010). When scholars include the expansion of the electorate in their explanations of party system change or electoral volatility, they tend to bundle enfranchisement with redemocratization or other institutional changes and to ignore changes in electoral mobilization and demobilization that occur apart from changes in voter eligibility (Remmer 1985; Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Geddes 2003; Madrid 2005).

This research uses electoral data from 12 Latin American countries between 1945 and 2000 to examine whether changes in electoral participation were associated with short- and longer-term changes in the aggregate distribution of party vote shares, measured as electoral volatility. It shows that changing partisan preferences at the aggregate level occur when new voters enter (or exit) the system—whether these changes in participation result from suffrage extension, changes in registration rules, the mobilization of previously unmobilized voters, or abstention among previous voters. It also shows that illiterate suffrage extensions, in particular, increase electoral volatility. It concludes that increases in voter participation in competitive democratic elections disrupt voting patterns in the short term, but it does not find evidence that increases in participation lead to long-run decay in aggregate partisanship.

Is Electoral Mobilization a Source of Decay?

Przeworski (1975) proposes to test Huntington's 1965 thesis that rapid mobilization brings about the decay of institutionalized patterns of behavior. He conceptualizes the instability, or decay, of patterns of voting behavior as electoral volatility. Huntington's deinstitutionalization argument suggests problems more serious than electoral volatility, involving political instability, corruption, violence, and the disintegration of institutions. Although volatility is not a direct measure of deinstitutionalization, it is an indication, or one symptom, of party system decay.

Electoral volatility captures net changes in party vote shares across a pair of elections (Pederson 1983; Przeworski 1975):

$$V_t = \frac{\sum \mid P_{i,t} - P_{i,t-1} \mid}{2}$$

where $P_{i,t}$ stands for the percentage of the vote obtained by party i at time t. This measure potentially conflates "demand-side" changes in voters' preferences with "supply-side" changes, such as party splits and mergers or the entrance and exit of parties

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(Tavits 2005b; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Lupu and Stokes 2010; Powell and Tucker 2010). Scholars use electoral volatility to measure change at the level of the party system, and thus emphasize that it is an indicator of the degree of institutionalization of voting patterns in the aggregate, from which we cannot directly infer individual-level behavior (Przeworski 1975; Roberts and Wibbels 1999).[1] Of course, party systems must allow for and exhibit some change as a reflection of the democratic exercise of competition among parties for voters' loyalties. Still, institutionalized party systems will manifest considerable predictability from election to election. Highly volatile systems, on the other hand, reflect—and create—much more uncertainty.

Two causal mechanisms link instability in aggregate patterns of partisan support across elections to the entrance or exit of new voters into the system. First, new voters may have interests that differ from those of previous voters. Consequently, their electoral participation produces a shift in the distribution of support across political parties (Przeworski 1975, 69). Demobilization of voters as groups would have a similar destabilizing effect. Second, it may take new voters some time before they establish stable partisan loyalties, whether or not they eventually end up voting differently from previously included voters because "they are not socialized to the norms of behavior that characterize a particular institution and as a consequence their behavior is much less stable" (Przeworski 1975, 69). Like those who move in, voters who move out of the electorate are less socialized to norms of political behavior. If so, we would expect high volatility to persist in the electoral periods following a major expansion or contraction of the electorate.

While the first mechanism implies an immediate short-term effect, the second implies lingering instability in aggregate electoral behavior. Because "each voting act reinforces the preference for voting in the same direction next time around," current electoral volatility depends also on the extent of change in previous elections (Converse 1969; Przeworski 1975, 53). This effect of earlier changes on current changes in voting patterns will dissipate over time as voters' partisan preferences become fixed.

A third possibility is that new voters do not vary systematically in identities or interests from previous voters and are equally socialized to electoral politics. In this case, new voters should vote in the same manner as established voters, and we would see no change in volatility.

Przeworski demonstrates that when voters entered or exited the system, volatility did increase considerably in the short term, relative to the typically low amount of volatility found in Western Europe. Yet the deinstitutionalizing consequences of mobilization waves were short-lived. The implication of these results "is that *newly mobilized voters are not any less socialized than are previous participants*. They enter with clear and already somewhat fixed preferences. Once having entered they adhere to these preferences" (Przeworski 1975, 58, emphasis in original). Newly enfranchised voters who do turn out to vote must already have been organized by political parties, since people who have just gained the right to vote generally turn out at a rate much lower than those who had the right in the past (Przeworski 1975, 58–59). Przeworski concludes that the hypothesis of political mobilization and institutional decay does not withstand the empirical realities of party systems in Western Europe.

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Previous research on Latin America, however, demonstrates that changes in political participation produce institutional decay in voting patterns and party systems. Early Latin American constitutions established formal restrictions on suffrage on the basis of property and literacy requirements. The elimination of property qualifications for voting led to the enfranchisement and participation of most of the (male) working class in the first half of the twentieth century in Latin America. Geddes (2003) examines party system change following the enfranchisement of the working class and concludes that post–working-class suffrage party systems in Latin America were more fluid than those of Western Europe. Remmer (1985) finds a strong relationship between growth in the electorate and party system discontinuity among pre- and postauthoritarian periods of democracy in Latin America between 1940 and 1983. In their studies of electoral volatility in Latin America in the current democratic period, Roberts and Wibbels (1999) and Madrid (2005) show evidence that the expansion of the electorate disrupts patterns of electoral competition. This result comes from the analysis of a 0–3 index that codes an increase in the electoral participation rate of more than 25 percent due to the enfranchisement of new voters, the adoption of a new constitution within the electoral cycle, or an irregular change in executive authority.

The context in which Latin American countries extended the franchise differed from the context of European enfranchisement in the early twentieth century. According to Mainwaring and Zoco (2007, 166), in late-democratizing countries, like many in Latin America, parties were not as involved in suffrage expansion, did not serve important social functions, and did not foster strong identities. Moreover, since parties in post-1978 democracies did not become entrenched in society before the emergence of television, "there is less incentive to invest in party building when television is a more useful vehicle for winning election" (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007, 167). Mainwaring and Zoco's "period" and "sequence" effects imply persistently high levels of electoral volatility following the more recent suffrage extensions in Latin America. When new voters are granted the franchise in an era of weak party organizations, they argue, mobilization leads to decay.[2]

In contrast to Przeworski's 1975 conclusion of prior political socialization in Western Europe, previous research on Latin America suggests that the exclusion of certain sectors of the population from electoral participation (i.e., the working class, women, illiterates) or entire generations from democratic contestation (i.e., during prolonged authoritarian rule) prevented political parties from sinking deep roots in society. Yet previous research has given insufficient attention to disparities in political representation and the differing levels of socialization to electoral politics that we would expect to follow from different means of prior political exclusion. This study explicitly considers the political exclusion of lower-class illiterate groups in Latin America. It explains how the enfranchisement of illiterate citizens—when they were mobilized to vote—probably affected subsequent institutionalization of party systems, as revealed in voting patterns.[3]

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Illiterate Suffrage Extensions and Electoral Volatility

In several Latin American countries, literacy tests that disenfranchised those who could not read and write lasted considerably longer than property qualifications for suffrage. Argentina, Colombia, and Uruguay instituted universal male suffrage early on, while Bolivia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela enfranchised all adult citizens in the middle of the twentieth century. Chile did not eliminate literacy restrictions on voting until 1970, and it was only with the recent phase of redemocratization in the 1980s that Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru extended voting privileges to their illiterate citizens.

Once illiterates received the right to vote, electoral laws regulating registration procedures and the obligatory nature of voting still sometimes made distinctions based on literacy (Lapp 2004). For indigenous voters specifically, restrictive ballot access requirements and spatial registration rules that hampered the formation of indigenous parties may also have reduced electoral participation in some countries (Birnir 2004).

In addition, large portions of the population were effectively disenfranchised during authoritarian periods, which interrupted democratic electoral competition for a decade or more in many Latin American countries. Although most Central American countries formally granted universal suffrage at the beginning of the twentieth century, voting was not meaningful until the last decade or two. When Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru removed literacy restrictions on suffrage, more than 20 percent of their populations were illiterate. Long periods of authoritarian rule meant that many more citizens were first-time participants in politically competitive, democratic elections.

Table 1 provides dates of suffrage extensions to illiterates and illiterate portions of the adult populations in Latin America. Taking Peru as an example, we find a long history of highly exclusive oligarchic political participation. In 1931, suffrage was extended to literate males and about 5.3 percent of the total population voted (Nohlen 1993; Cotler 1995; Geddes 2003). By the 1963 presidential election, votes were cast by close to 40 percent of the adult population. The elimination of literacy requirements coincided with the return to democracy in 1980. By 1985, the absolute number of votes cast had more than tripled since 1963, and about 70 percent of the adult population voted for the president.

In Latin America, direct and indirect suffrage restrictions based on literacy probably excluded poor, isolated, and unorganized voters. Literacy requirements often affected indigenous populations (Van Cott 2000; Lapp 2004). Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatemala have large indigenous populations (66, 21, 40, and 50 percent, respectively), most of whom speak a language other than Spanish (Van Cott 2000; Burger 1990). The rural location of indigenous populations and their reliance on subsistence agriculture reduce access to schooling. These social groups differ from the citizens incorporated by suffrage extensions in Europe—namely, the urban working classes (Rokkan 1961; Lipset and Rokkan 1967)—and also by the elimination of property requirements in Latin America. The political demands of

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Table 1. Illiterate Suffrage Extensions in Central and South America

Country	Year of Formal Suffrage Extension to Illiterates	Percent Illiterate (Age 15+)	Percent Illiterate (Year)
Argentina	1912	35[a]	1914
Bolivia	1952	68[c]	1950
Brazil	1985	32[c]	1980
Chile	1970	11[c]	1970
Colombia	1936	44[c]	1938
Costa Rica	1913	21[c]	1950
Ecuador	1979, 1984	18[b]	1980
El Salvador	1883	27[b]	1990
Guatemala	1945	71[b]	1950
Honduras	1894	39[b]	1980
Mexico	1847, 1917	78[c]	1910
Nicaragua	1893	39[b]	1990
Panama	1904	11[b]	1990
Paraguay	1870	14[b]	1990
Peru	1979	17[c]	1981
Uruguay	1918	—	—
Venezuela	1946	59[a]	1941

Sources: Dates of suffrage extension from Lapp 2004; Przeworski 2008. Illiteracy figures from [a]Canton 1968; [b]IDB 1999; [c]Lapp 2004.

indigenous groups, for example, centered on community rights and local autonomy (Yashar 2005; Van Cott 2005).

If the newly enfranchised or newly mobilized in most Latin American contexts represented particular social groups that had distinct political interests from the previous electorate, their initial participation in elections ought to have shifted the aggregate distribution of votes across parties, provided that they had a choice among party platforms. This implies an immediate (short-term) increase in electoral volatility, in which change in participation in one election over the previous one produces a simultaneous increase in electoral volatility.

Hypothesis 1: Electoral periods in which the level of participation changed more will exhibit greater electoral volatility than those in which there was less change in the electorate, all else equal.

Given their isolation and low levels of education, these new voters were also probably less socialized to electoral politics. Indigenous voters in Latin America in particular have not been well represented by catch-all political parties; specifically indigenous parties have been rare, partly due to electoral laws and party formation rules that prohibit geographically concentrated parties (Madrid 2005; Birnir 2004; Birnir and Van Cott 2007). Without strong partisan attachments, indigenous voters

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may be perpetually frustrated by the major parties, and thus frequently switch their votes among them or switch their support to newly formed parties in each election.

Although Przeworski (1975) found that the newly enfranchised in Europe, for the most part, were not more likely than previous voters to change their partisan preferences, we cannot presume a similar level of socialization in the electoral process for newly enfranchised illiterate voters in Latin America. Consequently, we might expect their voting behavior to have been unstable for some time following their incorporation. This implies a long-run effect on electoral volatility, such that change in electoral participation between one election and the next increases electoral volatility across future electoral periods.

> *Hypothesis 2: Holding electoral participation in the current electoral period constant, electoral periods that follow larger changes in participation will exhibit higher levels of volatility than those that follow elections in which there was less change, all else equal.*

However, even if the new illiterate voters in Latin America were not socialized to competitive partisan politics, they might have been socialized to patronage politics. Like programmatic linkage mechanisms between voters and parties, clientelist linkage mechanisms "have the capacity to organize and institutionalize relations of democratic accountability and responsiveness" (Kitschelt 2000, 872). Where clientelist voter-party linkages prevail, we might expect voters to provide stable support for their patrons' parties.

Clientelism may have had a particularly stabilizing effect where ballots were not secret. Public voting took place in many countries in the early twentieth century. Once they established secret voting, some countries granted this right to literate voters only (Lapp 2004). The secrecy of voting is compromised in systems, such as Chile's until 1957, Brazil's until 1962, or Argentina's, that allow parties to provide completed ballots or party slip ballots to voters (Stokes 2005; Lapp 2004; Scully 1992; Hellinger 1978). Vote anonymity may also be weaker in smaller communities (Stokes 2005). A clientelist theory of partisanship implies that changes in electoral participation associated with illiterate suffrage extensions will produce a temporary increase in electoral volatility if clientelist relations with the illiterate population are unevenly distributed across parties. Therefore, a short-term increase in electoral volatility could be consistent with this theory (hypothesis 1), but not a long-run effect (hypothesis 2). Thus, the newly enfranchised in Latin America differ from those in Europe in ways that lead to competing expectations about their long-run impact on aggregate patterns of partisan support.

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Empirical Analysis

In this section, I turn to the empirical examination of whether enfranchisement and changes in electoral participation contributed to electoral volatility in Latin America during the second half of the twentieth century, a period in which Latin American party systems incorporated a large number of new voters. Because this study focuses on both short and long-run effects of voter mobilization, the analysis includes the 12 Latin American countries for which a sufficient number of elections exists to accurately assess these effects. In this analysis, the starting date of 1945 is a consequence of the availability of data on the size of the national populations in Latin America by age group, and the ending date of 2000 falls 15 years after illiterate suffrage extension in Brazil, when literacy requirements were last lifted in the region. This time frame allows me to study how voting patterns changed as a result of changes in the size of the electorate, especially following illiterate suffrage extensions. I also analyze a longer time span in four countries with longer histories of competitive elections, using participation figures calculated with total, rather than adult, population figures. (See the appendix for a complete list of countries and elections included.)

Operationalization

The dependent variable is electoral volatility between elections that were secret, direct, competitive, and relatively free of fraud. Because the theoretical argument that I am testing concerns aggregate volatility attributed to voters—that is, shifts in the partisan distribution of the vote that arise from net shifts in voters' preferences and changes in the electorate—I separate out these demand-side changes from the supply-side changes involving political elites, as mentioned earlier.

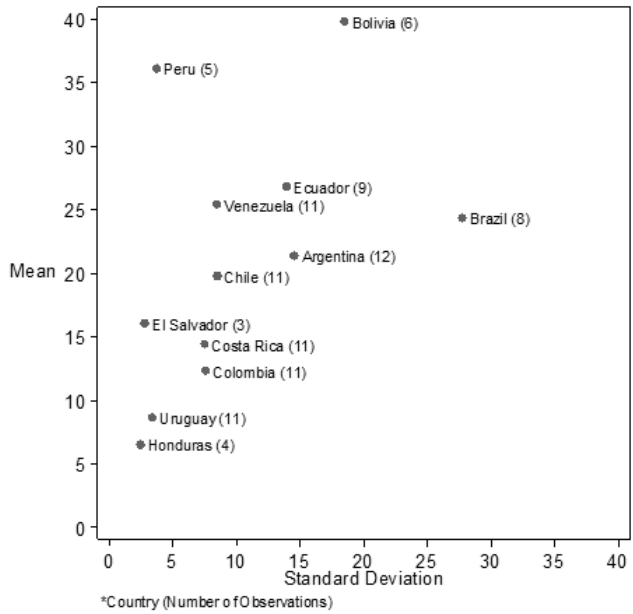
First, I exclude elections in which the left side of the political spectrum was legally proscribed. Second, my treatment of mergers and splits is different from that of most scholars, who, following Mainwaring (1999, 29), consider the smaller faction in a split to be a new party and the smaller party in a merger to have disappeared. Instead, I trace parties through their various splits, mergers, and name changes. The volatility levels that I report are thus lower than they would be if they were calculated following standard rules (Mainwaring 1999; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007).

Figure 1 shows that differences in volatility levels across countries are similar to differences within countries over time. Between 1945 and 2000, I calculate average volatility levels that range from 6 to 40, with average volatility being 20. (See the appendix for details on the volatility calculations.)

The principal explanatory variable of interest is the absolute value of change in electoral participation. I measure participation as the number of valid votes cast divided by the approximate voting-age population, expressed as a percentage.[4] The age at which people can begin to vote varies among countries and has changed in countries over time; it is usually either 18 or 21 years of age. To simplify, I have taken the adult population in every country to be the number of citizens aged 20 or

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Figure 1. Mean Volatility and Dispersion Around the Mean, 1945–2000



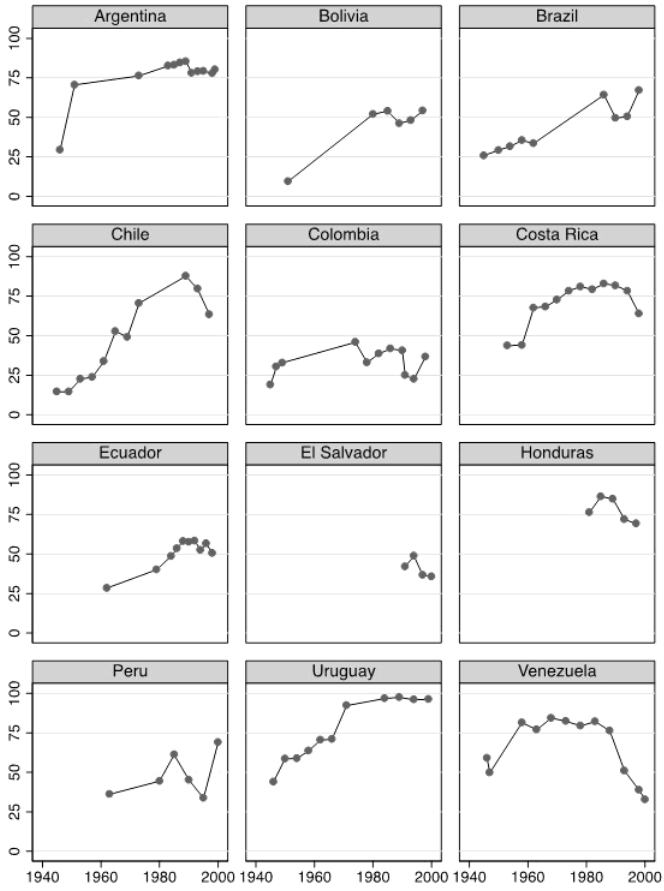
older (CELADE 1997a, b). This simplification leads to slightly overestimated participation figures, in most cases.

In an alternative specification, I examine positive and negative changes in electoral participation separately, as Przeworski did, to test whether demobilization is more destabilizing than mobilization in Latin America, as it appears to have been in Europe. Group demobilization, like suffrage extensions or group mobilization, probably leads to large shifts in the partisan distribution of the vote. However, the effects of mobilization and demobilization may differ over an extended period. When less-socialized voters continually participate in elections, we would expect volatility to remain high for some time; when they refrain from voting over an extended period of time, we would expect volatility to be much lower. As seen in figure 2, Latin American countries experienced large growth of the electorate over the course of the twentieth century, as well as some shrinkage in more recent elections. Returning to Peru as an example, turnout began to drop from the high levels seen at redemocratization and reached a low of 35 percent in the 1995 legislative elections, as armed insurrections occurred in certain regions of the country and President Alberto Fujimori consolidated power at the expense of the legislature. Figures 1 and 2 reveal consistently high levels of electoral volatility in Peru and considerable fluctuations in voter mobilization during the same period.

Apart from formal suffrage extensions, electoral participation in Latin America has fluctuated as a consequence of factors that influence voter mobilization in

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Figure 2. Participation in Secret, Direct, and Competitive Elections, 1945–2000



democracies throughout the world, including electoral institutions, parties' efforts and interest in getting voters to the polls, and individuals' interest in the particular elections, despite mandatory voting laws in some cases.[5] As noted, parties' efforts at voter mobilization target some groups more than others, and party registration rules may prevent the development of parties representing interests that tend to be geographically concentrated. When the rules change, new candidates appear on the scene, or parties step up their mobilization drives, the resulting increase in electoral participation may also disturb voting patterns, even though these mobilization waves are unrelated to any formal change in suffrage rules governing who has the right to vote.

To examine specifically the effects of suffrage extensions, this analysis includes dummy variables indicating the first competitive, democratic election following illiterate enfranchisement and the first competitive, democratic election following

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female enfranchisement. These dummy variables isolate elections that occurred following the formal enfranchisement of different kinds of new voters, while still controlling for the share of the adult population that actually participated in each election. I expect the effects on volatility of illiterate suffrage extension to be greater than the effects of increases in electoral participation due to the inclusion of women and young people—new voters from whom we would not expect large changes in voting patterns, since the distribution of their interests and socioeconomic standing is probably similar to that of their husbands or parents.

I also include several control variables, particularly those that may change over time within countries, to account for alternative explanations for electoral volatility in Latin America. Przeworski (1975) assumed that those already in the electorate do not change their preferences and that the electoral conditions remain the same from one election to the next. In Latin America, as Przeworski recognized for Europe, these two assumptions of continuity are almost certainly false. Nondemocratic interruptions in the process of political development in Latin America probably led greater numbers of "established" voters to change their preferences. A long time span between one voting act and another may reduce the voting reinforcement effect. Authoritarian episodes lengthen these intervals, and as the number of years increases, we should expect that the volatility of previous voters will also increase (Lupu and Stokes 2010; Remmer 1985).[6] By taking into account the number of years between competitive elections, I control for established voter volatility. I also include a dummy variable for the founding election after the return to democracy because authoritarian episodes may cause spikes in electoral volatility on the return to democracy (Lupu and Stokes 2010).

In addition, redemocratization after an authoritarian interlude often brings constitutional reforms and changes in electoral laws, designed to make systems more representative. Changes in ballot structure alter the options made available to voters and the conditions under which voters make their choices, and thus probably increase electoral volatility in the short run.[7] Previous research demonstrates that party systems stabilize only under stable institutional arrangements (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Mair 1997). The timing of elections may also produce a shift from a legislative election that was held concurrently with executive elections to one held nonconcurrently, or vice versa.[8] Extensive previous research shows that presidential elections affect the outcomes of concurrently held legislative elections (Shugart and Carey 1992; Amorim Neto and Cox 1997; Golder 2006; Hicken and Stoll 2011). Thus, changes in electoral timing might produce changes in legislative voting patterns, contributing to electoral volatility. To control for changes in the electoral conditions, I include dummy variables for elections that involved a change in electoral rules or a change in electoral timing.[9]

Along with authoritarian interruptions and institutional change, scholars attribute electoral volatility in Latin America to characteristics of the party system and social cleavage structures that weaken party-voter linkages (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Madrid 2005; Van Cott 2000; Mainwaring 1999; Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). In the context of severe, prolonged, and frequent economic

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crises in Latin America, scholars also offer economic voting explanations for electoral volatility (Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Remmer 1991). Therefore, the final empirical model tested here also includes control variables that measure the effective number of parties and the polarization of the party system, and the lagged annual change in gross domestic product.[10] Although it is only very slowly changing within countries over time, I also control for the percent of the population that is indigenous.[11]

Models and Results

The first part of the analysis consists of a "replication" of Przeworski's model with Latin American data. I regress electoral volatility at time t (V_t) on changes in electoral participation and the lagged dependent variable,

$$V_t = \alpha + \beta_1 |M_t| + \beta_2 V_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t,$$

where M_t (mobilization) stands for the change in electoral participation between time $t-1$ and time t. In this simple model, a positive estimate for β_1, the coefficient for the absolute value of mobilization, would be consistent with hypothesis 1, indicating a simultaneous increase in electoral volatility. A positive value for β_2 would indicate that volatility in the previous electoral period is related to current volatility, supporting the longer-run effect of hypothesis 2. Thus, positive and statistically significant estimates of both β_1 and β_2 would support the decay model: new voters produce an immediate shift in aggregate voting patterns and continue to switch their partisan preferences in subsequent elections. On the other hand, a positive estimate of β_1 in conjunction with an estimate of β_2 that is close to zero would support a punctuated equilibrium model: new voters shift the aggregate vote when they enter the system but vote in a fixed way from then on.

Instead of estimating separate longitudinal regressions for each country, the time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) analysis pools the coefficient estimates across countries. Given short periods of democratic contestation in some Latin American countries, this provides more precise estimates while allowing me to incorporate electoral data from most countries in the analysis and to control for confounding factors. TSCS analyses require special methodological treatment (Stimson 1985; Beck and Katz 1995, 1996; Beck 2001; Wilson and Butler 2007). Since each observation in a country is not independent, violations of OLS assumptions are likely. Although I assume that error variances are constant in each country, they may differ across countries. I therefore report a variant of panel-corrected standard errors (Beck and Katz 1995).[12]

Because volatility levels differ across countries for reasons not captured by the observed independent variables, I also model unit heterogeneity explicitly by using fixed effects (Beck 2001; Wilson and Butler 2007; Greene 1997, 615–23). These country dummies capture the "omitted variables" unique to each country, thereby reducing specification error. Election after election, many factors contribute to the low electoral volatility found in Honduras and the high electoral volatility found in Ecuador, for example. These factors are, in effect, held constant by the country

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Table 2. Electoral Participation and Volatility, 1945–2000

	1	2
Prior volatility	0.13	0.14
	(0.13)	(0.12)
Absolute value of change in electoral participation	0.80***	
	(0.12)	
Positive change in electoral participation		0.82***
		(0.13)
Absolute value of negative change in electoral participation		0.54*
		(0.22)
Intercept	1.78	3.19
	(2.03)	(2.03)
R-squared	0.59	0.60
LM test for autocorrelation	1.44	1.14
p-value	0.23	0.28

Notes: The dependent variable is electoral volatility. Number of observations = 90, number of countries = 12. Standard errors in parentheses. Country fixed effects included, with Honduras as the excluded category.
*p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

dummies, allowing us to examine the specific contribution that change in participation makes to electoral volatility across all the included cases.

Serial correlation is also a concern in TSCS data: models that examine the same case or cases over time often violate the assumption of uncorrelated errors. Lagrange multiplier tests indicate that the lagged dependent variable adequately addresses any correlation of the errors in this analysis. Once I include fixed effects, I find no evidence of autocorrelation even without the lagged dependent variable.[13] In any case, the lagged dependent variable is part of Przeworski's model for theoretical reasons, not simply to improve estimation and specification. I examined different dynamic specifications, including additional lags of the dependent variable, as well as a more general autoregressive distributed lag model. I found that the restrictions implied by Przeworski's model are valid in the Latin American data I analyze here.

I begin with the results, reported in table 2, from the application of Przeworski's models to data from competitive elections held between 1945 and 2000 in 12 Latin American countries. Model 1 shows that electoral volatility increases by 0.8 for every percentage point change in electoral participation. This suggests that the new voters (and those who abstain) in Latin America have voted quite differently from the previous voters who remain part of the electorate. In Peru, for example, electoral participation increased 17 percent between 1980 and 1985; the associated increase in volatility would be 13.6, according to model 1.

When positive and negative changes in electoral participation are examined separately (model 2), a positive effect on electoral volatility appears in both cases. While

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Table 3. Electoral Participation and Volatility, 1916–2000

	1	2
Prior volatility	0.22*	0.21*
	(0.11)	(0.10)
Absolute value of change in voting share of total population	1.04***	
	(0.21)	
Positive change in voting share of total population		1.08***
		(0.21
Absolute value of negative change in voting share of total population		0.57
		(0.51)
Intercept	11.63***	11.81***
	(2.59)	(2.56)
R-squared	0.57	0.58
LM test for autocorrelation	4.09	3.51
p-value	0.04	0.06

Note: The dependent variable is electoral volatility. Number of observations = 63, number of countries = 4. Standard errors in parentheses. Country fixed effects included, with Argentina as the excluded category.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

the results suggest that the entrance of new voters and increases in mobilization were more destabilizing for party systems, I cannot reject the null hypothesis that the coefficient estimates on positive and negative changes in participation are equal.[14] The drops in participation that occurred in about one-third of the Latin American electoral periods examined here led to moderate shifts in aggregate voting patterns.

In both models, the coefficient on prior volatility is not statistically different from zero. If we assume that previous voters do not change their preferences, we might consider this as evidence of strong voting reinforcement, such that few new voters changed their vote in the subsequent election. However, since I include country fixed effects, the estimated effects on volatility must be interpreted relative to country-specific mean levels. Even without waves of mobilization, a considerable amount of electoral volatility would have existed in Latin America. Thus, what the results actually show is that once new Latin American voters entered the electorate, they appeared to have just as stable (or unstable) partisan preferences as did the previous electorate.

In a separate analysis, reported in table 3, I examined a longer time frame in four countries with long histories of competitive elections. Since I do not have population data by age group prior to 1950, I used the voting share of the total population. Despite coefficients of greater magnitude, this analysis shows a somewhat smaller effect on volatility for the increases in electoral participation that occurred in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay over the course of the twentieth century.[15] In my dataset, the valid vote cast as a share of the total population is about half of what it is as a share of the adult population, on average. For instance, in Chile, about 1.3

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Table 4: Suffrage Extensions, Electoral Participation, and Volatility, 1945–2000

	3	4
Prior volatility	0.08	0.07
	(0.10)	(0.10)
Absolute value of change in electoral participation	0.53***	0.46**
	(0.15)	(0.16)
Illiterate enfranchisement (1/0)	12.36*	14.33*
	(6.20)	(6.35)
Female enfranchisement (1/0)	3.10	5.20
	(7.46)	(7.61)
Founding election (1/0)	–6.63	–5.74
	(5.57)	(5.77)
Number of years since last competitive election	0.91*	0.88*
	(0.42)	(0.43)
Change in electoral rules (1/0)	–3.62	–3.92
	(2.92)	(2.96)
Change in electoral timing (1/0)	–6.60	–6.87*
	(3.40)	(3.48)
Effective number of parties		0.73
		(0.79)
Polarization		–0.10
		(0.14)
Lagged change in GDP		–0.04
		(0.23)
Percent indigenous		2.00
		(1.83)
Intercept	2.46	1.72
	(2.50)	(5.64)
R-squared	0.70	0.71
LM test for autocorrelation	1.24	2.56
p-value	0.27	0.11

Note: The dependent variable is electoral volatility. Number of observations = 90, number of countries = 12. Standard errors in parentheses. Country fixed effects included, with Honduras as the excluded category.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

million more votes were cast in 1973 than in 1969. This translates to an 11 percent change in the voting share of the total population and a 21 percent change in the voting share of the adult population. The results of model 1 using total population data predict an increase in volatility of 1.04 × 11 = 11.4, while the results of model 1 reported above with adult population would predict an increase of 0.8 × 21 = 16.8.

With this longer time series in a smaller set of countries, I estimate a statistically significant coefficient on the lagged dependent variable. This implies some lingering

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instability following an expansion of the electorate. The long-term effect on volatility of a 1 percent change in electoral participation (measured as valid votes cast as a share of total population) is $\frac{1.04}{1 - .22} = 1.33$. For a 10 percent increase in electoral participation, volatility would immediately increase 10.4 points. In the next electoral period, volatility would rise an additional 2.3 points, even if participation had not continued to change. The net effect on volatility across all future electoral periods would be 13.3 points. While there is some perpetuating decay as a consequence of mobilization waves, the long-term effects are minimal compared to the immediate impact.

The second part of the analysis examines the specific effects of illiterate suffrage extensions and changes in electoral participation in a more fully specified model of electoral volatility. In model 3, I modify Przeworski's original model to include contextual and institutional effects that were suggested but not tested by Przeworski. In model 4, I include additional controls for factors shown to be important in previous work on electoral volatility in Latin America. Table 4 presents these results. In both specifications, the coefficient for the absolute value of the change in participation variable remains positive and significant. From a value of 0.8 in the original model, the coefficient estimate drops to about 0.5 in these more complete specifications.[16] The coefficient estimate in model 3 implies that for the average change in participation of about 8 percent, volatility typically increased by about four points. Four points represents just over one-quarter of the standard deviation in volatility. In addition to this effect of increases or decreases in participation in general, model 3 shows that volatility was typically 12 points higher in the first competitive election that followed an illiterate suffrage extension. The average change in participation in these elections following illiterate suffrage extensions was about 25 percent. Thus, model 3 predicts a large immediate increase in electoral volatility based on the combined effects: $12.36 + (0.53 \times 25) = 25.61$.

My findings support hypothesis 1 but not hypothesis 2. Increases in mobilization (or demobilization) have only an immediate effect on electoral volatility. The large shift in voting patterns that is associated with illiterate suffrage extensions further supports hypothesis 1. Yet frequent and large fluctuations characterize the trajectories of electoral participation in most Latin American countries during the second half of the twentieth century. So while the effects are short-lived, these results indicate that voting patterns were frequently disrupted as a consequence.

Even if electoral participation had not changed, however, the results indicate that we would still have found a considerable amount of electoral volatility in Latin America. For each additional year between one competitive election and the next, volatility typically rose by about 0.9. To consider a 10- or 20-year absence is not unrealistic, and such long absences of competitive electoral politics seem to have disrupted voting patterns in several countries.

The effect of institutional change is in the opposite direction from the theoretical expectations stated above. At least with this blunt measure of institutional change, it appears that voting patterns in Latin America have become more stable, not less, as a result of changes to the institutions governing the electoral choices of voters. This

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may not be all that surprising if we consider that incumbent politicians strategically alter electoral rules to maintain their electoral advantage. As for the relative timing of presidential and legislative elections, a shift from concurrent to nonconcurrent elections, or vice versa, was associated with a drop in volatility, all else equal.

Although they are not reported in the table, the country-specific dummy variables indicate the extent to which the distribution of party vote shares would change even if all else was held constant—as compared to the low levels of electoral volatility found in Honduras. In models 3 and 4, the country-specific intercepts are largest in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. Although these countries had large increases in voting, they never really had institutionalized party systems to begin with. The literature on electoral volatility in Latin America suggests several reasons why electoral volatility is higher in some countries and much lower in others, as cited earlier. Although I do not find strong support for the covariates that I have included in model 4, the country fixed effects swamp the effects of rarely changing variables measuring party system characteristics and the size of the indigenous population.[17]

Conclusions

Prior political exclusion helps to explain the weak institutionalization observed in Latin American party systems. In the process of political development, sharp increases in electoral participation associated with the removal of suffrage restrictions tended to disrupt patterns of voting behavior.

Because citizenship had been restricted to certain sectors of the population in many Latin American countries, new voters in many of these cases were uneducated, politically isolated, or members of culturally distinct groups who probably had different political interests and lower levels of political socialization compared to previous participants. Hence, I expected to find an immediate shift in aggregate voting patterns when they first exercised their right to vote, and lingering instability until they learned, from repeated experiences, to vote in a fixed way. The analysis in this study indicates that the initial incorporation of new voters produces electoral volatility, but it does not find evidence for long-term party system decay as a result of mobilization (and demobilization). Przeworski determined that the newly incorporated in Europe were already socialized to electoral politics. I speculate that patronage networks incorporated many new voters in Latin America, which helped to organize and stabilize their partisan attachments.

More consistent with the punctuated equilibrium model than the decay model, this analysis suggests that the effect of voter mobilization on the distribution of votes within the party system was moderate—temporarily destabilizing, perhaps, but not destructive. Increased electoral participation over the course of the twentieth century produced a considerable amount of electoral volatility. Yet after an abrupt change in voting patterns, the extent of change across subsequent elections tended to return to normal levels—although "normal" electoral volatility in most Latin American countries during this period does not mean fixed voting patterns. Inexperienced Latin American voters simply were no more likely to change their partisan preferences in

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subsequent elections than were experienced voters. The analysis also shows that the long absences of competitive elections that occurred in most countries in Latin America increased electoral volatility apart from any expansion of the electorate.

With continuous democracy, inclusive citizenship, and high levels of participation, it is possible that voting patterns in Latin American countries will stabilize and lead to more institutionalized party systems in the region. But even if change in voter mobilization between elections does not in itself lead to lingering decay, as long as electorates continue to grow or shrink, voting patterns will continue to change.

Appendix: Electoral Volatility Calculations

The data analysis is based on valid votes reported for lower-chamber legislative elections (three exceptions are indicated in table 5) in Central and South America between 1945 and 2000. As listed in table 5, competitive, direct, and secret elections held during these years are included in the analysis; elections in which leftist or other political parties were legally proscribed are excluded. Note that Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay are excluded due to insufficient electoral periods meeting the inclusion criteria.

I calculate electoral volatility using vote shares from legislative elections for the lower chamber, with the exception of four cases for which these data were not available: I use seat shares for Peru in 1963, presidential results for Bolivia in 1947 and 1951, and Constitutional Assembly results for Venezuela in 1946. The data come primarily from Nohlen (1993), national electoral tribunals, and electronic databases. I calculated volatility following six rules, adapted from Mainwaring (1999, 29) but altered fundamentally.

1. In the case of merging parties and formal alliances, I compared their combined share in the previous election in which they participated separately with their vote share as one party or as an alliance in the current election.
2. The reverse applies to splits in a party. I compared the combined vote share of the various factions in the current election to the vote share of the old party in the previous election. In the second election following the split, I considered each "faction" that persisted to be an individual party and calculated its vote share by the standard formula.
3. When changes of name did not arise from mergers or splits, I considered the newly named party to be the same as the party with the old name.
4. In the case of two-tier districting, I included parties' vote shares only from elections held under proportional representation in multimember districts.
5. In all cases, party vote shares are based on the total valid votes cast. This excludes blank and null ballots from the analysis.
6. When I used different data sources for two consecutive elections, the combined vote share of small parties and "others" in the preceding election was compared to the combined vote share of small parties and "others" in the following election. This was done to avoid overestimating volatility simply as a result of different sources' classification rules for the "others" category.

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Table 5. Competitive, Direct, and Secret Elections Included in the Analysis

Country	Elections
Argentina	1930, 1946, **1951**
Bolivia	1947 (presidential), 1951 (presidential), **1980, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997**
Brazil	1945, 1950, **1954, 1958, 1962, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998**
Chile	1941, 1945, **1949, 1953, 1957, 1961, 1965, 1969, 1973, 1989, 1993, 1997**
Colombia	1943, 1945, **1947, 1949, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1998**
Costa Rica	1953, 1958, **1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998**
Ecuador	1962, 1979, **1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998**
El Salvador	1991, 1994, **1997, 2000**
Honduras	1981, 1985, **1989, 1993, 1997**
Peru	1963 (seats), 1980, **1985, 1990, 1995, 2000**
Uruguay	1942, 1946**, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1971, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1973, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 1999**
Venezuela	1946 (constitutional assembly), 1947, **1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2000**
The following elections are included in the analysis reported in table 3:	
Argentina	1916, 1918, **1920, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1930, 1946, 1951–1999 as above**
Chile	1925, 1932, **1937, 1941, 1945, 1949–1997 as above**
Colombia	1931, 1933, **1939, 1941, 1943, 1945, 1947–1998 as above**
Uruguay	1919, 1922, **1925, 1928, 1931, 1934, 1938, 1942, 1946, 1950–1999 as above**

Note: Election years in bold are observations in the analysis, while the previous two elections are necessary for calculating the initial prior volatility and change in electoral participation figures.

Notes

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1. See Mair 1997 for an alternative perspective on the conceptualization of party system change and electoral volatility.

2. What Mainwaring and Zoco (2007) show empirically is that electoral volatility is higher in younger democracies, in contrast to the advanced democracies that were established much earlier, as captured by a variable measuring the age of democracy in each country as of 2005.

3. See Lapp 2004 for a convincing explanation for the timing of illiterate suffrage extensions in Latin America, and Przeworski (2008, 2009) for a discussion of the history of suffrage extensions worldwide.

4. While a high share of blank and null votes may be reflective of an uninstitutionalized party system, I do not include these votes because they do not contribute to electoral volatility as it is measured here.

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5. Mandatory voting is common in Latin America, but meaningful sanctions for failing to vote are less common. Among the countries and years included in this analysis, compulsory voting without sanctions or weakly enforced sanctions existed in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, and Venezuela (IDEA 2008; Jackman 2001). In Uruguay, mandatory voting sanctions have been strictly enforced since 1970, and voter turnout is higher than 95 percent. None of the other countries that have obligatory voting have turnout rates as high as Uruguay's.

6. If military rulers create new, official parties and suppress all other parties, then political elites and their supporters will be forced to switch their allegiances in order to continue to participate in the political system; parties created by dictators tend to fragment following democratization, producing unstable party systems in the longer term (Geddes and Frantz 2007).

7. Between 1945 and 2000, changes to the ballot structure (e.g., PR to mixed system, fused to unfused ballots) occurred at least once in 8 of the 12 countries studied here.

8. Shifts between concurrent and nonconcurrent elections were common in Argentina and Ecuador as a result of midterm legislative elections, but they also occurred in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela.

9. In coding these changes, I relied heavily on the reports of Payne et al. 2002 and Jones 1995, 1997.

10. ENP has a mean of 4.44 and ranges from 2 to 12. Polarization is calculated following Coppedge (1998), with a mean of 39 and a range of 4 to 84. Economic growth, calculated with data from Angus Maddison (2003), has a mean of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 4.17.

11. Data on the indigenous population share come from Raúl Madrid. I used the oldest indigenous population figures to fill in missing values in the dataset backward in time. The range is 0 to 61 percent.

12. In Stata, I employ the "hetonly" option. Note that with this specification, I am not obtaining what are referred to in the literature as PCSEs. These standard errors are in the same spirit as PCSEs, but are from the asymptotic covariance estimates of OLS without allowing for contemporaneous correlation. I have no theoretical reason to suspect the presence of contemporaneous correlation in the data, especially given the unbalanced nature of the panels that results from the different nations' electoral calendars.

13. Although a dynamic panel model, which includes fixed effects and the lagged dependent variable, can be biased and inconsistent, this bias may be minimal (Wilson and Butler 2007). When I exclude the lagged dependent variable, the other parameter estimates remain essentially the same.

14. A Wald test for this restriction produces a statistic of 1.75, with an associated probability value of .19.

15. I exclude the noncompetitive elections held during Colombia's National Front from this analysis.

16. To assess the robustness of this result, I dropped each country from the analysis and reestimated model 3. The result is positive and significant ($p < .055$) in every case. The three most influential observations are Argentina 1951, Chile 1973, and Brazil 1986. Dropping these cases reduces the magnitude of the coefficient, but it remains positive and significant.

17. When I drop the country dummies, the coefficient on indigenous population is of similar magnitude to that reported by Madrid (2005) and significant. The coefficient on party system polarization is negative and significant, while the coefficient on ENP is positive but significant only at the .09 level. The effects of change in participation and of illiterate enfranchisement discussed here are robust to the exclusion of fixed effects.

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