

Political Economy (PhD level)

Instructors: Augustin Bergeron/ Jeff Weaver

Course Description:

This course is an upper year field course for economics PhD students. Students are expected to have taken PhD-level econometrics and microeconomics. This course is intended to: 1) familiarize students with the literature in political economy; 2) learn to critically engage the academic literature; 3) equip students with skills that they will need as academic researchers, such as presenting and writing referee reports; and 4) assist students in starting their own research.

The course will meet once per week on Mondays from 8:30-11:50am. The format of class will be the following, with some adjustment as the course progresses. Jeff will teach the first half of the course, and Augustin the second half, with some small deviations throughout.

8:30-9:30 or 10:30 am:

- The class will begin with **1 to 2 presentations** on the starred papers by a student (I will do this for the first week). The presentation should last for approximately 35-40 minutes, including interjections and questions by the class, followed by 10 minutes of discussion led by the presenter.

9:30 or 10:30 - 11:30am:

- Following that, we will discuss the remaining papers in turn. I will ask one student to begin the discussion with a pithy 2-4 minute summary of the content of the paper. We will then go through the paper, with me asking questions to guide the conversation. We will spend between 30 and 45 minutes on each of the other papers, depending on their number.
- At around 10:30am, we will take a short break.

11:30-11:50am

- We will give a short preview of the results for the next week and the empirical strategy that the papers are using. The goal is that this should make you prepared to engage more critically and deeply with the paper
- It will also give a brief introduction to the material for the upcoming week and the types of questions that you should keep in mind when reading those papers/thinking of critiques and extensions.

Textbook:

There is no assigned textbook for this class. Material will be based on (occasional) lecture notes and the economics articles listed for each class. However, the following resources may be useful for additional reading.

Olken, Ben and Rohini Pande (2013). [JPAL Governance Initiative Review Paper](#)

Finan, Fred, Olken, Ben and Rohini Pande (2015). The Personnel Economics of the State. NBER Working Paper

Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Besley, Tim and Torsten Persson (2011) Pillars of Prosperity, Princeton University Press.

Downs, Anthony (1957). An Economic Theory of Democracy. Boston, MA: Addison Wesley.

Grossman, Gene and Elhanan Helpman (2001) Special Interest Politics, MIT Press.

Persson, Torsten and Guido Tabellini (2000). Political Economics: Explaining Economic Policy. MIT Press.

Daron Acemoglu's (very detailed) [lecture notes](#)

Grading:

Assignment	Requirements	% of Final Grade
Presentations	<p>Each week, 1-2 papers will be presented by either me or a student. These presentations will rotate such that everyone presents the same number of times. Papers will be assigned to students during the first week of class, and each student will present at least 2 times.</p> <p>The presentations should discuss: (i) the research question, motivation, contribution and relationship to the background literature; (ii) the data; (iii) the empirical strategy; (iv) the main results; (v) conclusions and generalizability; (vi) strengths and weaknesses of the paper; and (vii) future directions for research on the topic.</p> <p>The presentations will be followed by questions from the rest of the class and discussion. The presentations will be graded by us.</p>	20%
Referee Reports (2)	<p>During the semester, students will select two papers from a list of recent job market papers in political economy and write a referee report on those papers. These reports should follow the format of a referee report and be as if you were actually refereeing the paper. Further details can be found below. You do not need to give a written response or presentation during the week that you write a referee report.</p>	10% each
Presentation of research proposal	<p>During the final week of the course/exam period, you will present a proposal for your own original research project. The goal of this assignment is to give you a start on thinking about your dissertation and coming up with a research proposal.</p> <p>In your presentation, you should: 1) describe the research question and why it is of interest (5 minutes); 2) summarize the related literature (5 minutes); 3) give a description of your proposed project (20-30 minutes). If empirical in nature, this should include an identification strategy and description of your data or planned data collection process. Presentations will be evaluated on both content and presentation style.</p> <p>You must meet with us about your proposed project at least once before spending much time on it. You should plan to meet with at least one of us for 20 minutes during office hours so that we can talk in more detail. We would recommend that you start thinking about the project early, and start a list of ideas for possible projects while going through the</p>	25%

	<p>semester. The best case is that you have a list of possible projects when we meet, and then we can work together to decide which is the strongest.</p> <p>Immediately before your presentation, you should send us a copy of your slides so that I can make notes on them. You will not need to turn in anything else written for this assignment (i.e. no written project proposal) – the presentation is the final product. We will give detailed feedback on the presentation and the research idea based on that.</p>	
Report on outside presentation	Consult the seminar schedules for economics seminars, the PIPE seminar and any other relevant departments (e.g., law school). Choose an empirical paper presentation in a seminar in which polished work is presented by an established scholar. Do not choose a seminar in which students or very junior faculty present works in progress. Write a one-page report on how the presentation style of the researcher contributed to or distracted from effective communication of his or her findings.	5%
Feedback on presentations of your fellow students	<p>One piece of required participation is that you must give feedback to the research proposals presented by your fellow students during the last few weeks of class. For this, you will fill out responses in a google form that I will send out, where this feedback will be given to them anonymously.</p> <p>You must give feedback on at least half of the presentations (and more is great). It is fine if this feedback is the same as a comment that you made during the presentations itself. I will send this feedback to the presenters afterwards along with my comments on their presentations. This feedback can be both on the content of the proposal or on the presentation – please keep the feedback constructive as best as you can.</p>	5%
Class participation	<p>You should actively participate in class discussions. At a minimum, you should talk at least twice per class (and hopefully more than that). This can be a comment, a question, a request for clarification on a particular part of a paper or empirical technique, or an idea that you had for how to extend the paper (or a related research idea). I will be keeping track of how often you speak during each class.</p> <p>I know that this can be challenging for some students. But this is an absolutely essential skill as a researcher and talking during class is a good way to get practice in what should hopefully be a lower stress setting. I recommend that when you are reading the articles, you write down some bullet points on things that you might want to say. If this is a particularly stressful prospect for you, then you might even jot down notes on how you will say the point that you would like to make. As you build your confidence, this will be less necessary, but it can be a good place to start.</p>	25%

Auditing the Course

Advanced year PhD students and others are welcome to audit the course. Our expectation is that auditors will have read the papers prior to class and be ready to discuss them. Depending on the

number of enrolled students, they may also be expected to do one presentation, but do not have to submit any of the other course assignments.

Course Outline:

In the syllabus, required papers are starred with an asterix (*). Students are expected to have read all starred papers prior to the start of each class. Those papers can be found in [this dropbox folder](#) for download.

If you have time, you may find it useful to read Persson and Tabellini (2000) chapters 1-5 to get some background on the theoretical side of political economy. This class will be focused on empirical research, so I will not cover this material. But knowing about the theoretical side helps to motivate empirical research.

Week 1 (August 22): Introduction to Political Economy/ Voter Turnout

Jeff will begin with an overview of the course. He will then give a presentation on the Gerber and Green (2000) paper to demonstrate what your presentations should look like. We will then discuss the remaining starred papers. **NB: You are expected to have read the starred papers even though this is the first week!**

*Gerber, Alan and Donald Green (2000). "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review*, 94, 3, 653-663.

Coate, Stephen, Michael Conlin, and Andrea Moro (2008). "The performance of pivotal-voter models in small-scale elections: Evidence from Texas liquor referenda", *Journal of Public Economics*, 92, 582-596.

Coate, Stephen and Michael Conlin (2004). "A Group Rule-Utilitarian Approach to Voter Turnout: Theory and Evidence." *American Economic Review*, 94, 5, 1476-1504.

DellaVigna, S., List, J. A., Malmendier, U., & Rao, G. (2016). Voting to tell others. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 84(1), 143-181.

Fujiwara, T., Meng, K., & Vogl, T. (2016). Habit formation in voting: Evidence from rainy elections. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 8(4), 160-88.

*Gerber, Alan, Donald Green, and Christopher Larimer (2008). "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment", *American Political Science Review*, 102(1), 33-48.

*Washington, Ebonya (2006). "How Black Candidates Affect Voter Turnout", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 121(3), 973-998.

Week 2 (August 29): Political Preferences

*Alesina, Alberto and Nicola Fuchs-Schündeln (2007). "Good Bye Lenin (or Not?): The Effect of Communism on People's Preferences." *American Economic Review*, 97, 4, 1507-1528.

Bursztyn, Leonardo and Davide Cantoni (2016). "A Tear in the Iron Curtain: The Impact of Western Television on Consumption Behavior." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 98(1): 25-41.

* Cantoni, Davide, Yuyu Chen, David Y. Yang, Noam Yuchtman, Y. Jane Zhang (2017). "Curriculum and Ideology." *Journal of Political Economy*, 125(2): 338-392.

*Edlund, Lena and Rohini Pande (2002). "Why Have Women Become Left-Wing? The Political Gender Gap and the Decline in Marriage," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 917-961.

Fujiwara, Thomas (2011). "A Regression Discontinuity Test of Strategic Voting and Duverger's Law", *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6, pp. 197-233.

Jensen, Robert and Emily Oster (2009). "The Power of TV: Cable Television and Women's Status in India." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124(3): 1057-1094.

Kuziemko, I., R. Buell, T. Reich, and M. Norton (2014). "Last-place Aversion: Evidence and Redistributive Implications," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129 (1): 105-149.

E Luttmer (2001). "Group Loyalty and the Taste for Redistribution." *Journal of Political Economy*, 109, 3, 500-528.

Manacorda, Marco, Edward Miguel, and Andrea Vigorito. (2011). "Government Transfers and Political Support", *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 3(3), 1-28.

*Mullainathan, Sendhil and Ebonya Washington (2009). "Sticking with Your Vote: Cognitive Dissonance and Political Attitudes", *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 1(1), 86-111.

Week 3 (September 5; No class due to Labor Day)

Week 4 (September 12): Political Representative Identity

*Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra and Esther Duflo (2004). "Women as Policymakers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India." *Econometrica*, 72, 5, 1409-1443.

Beaman, L., Chattopadhyay, R., Duflo, E., Pande, R., & Topalova, P. (2009). Powerful women: does exposure reduce bias?. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(4), 1497-1540.

*Ferreira, Fernando and Joseph Gyourko (2009). "Do Political Parties Matter? Evidence from Cities." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124, 1.

McGuirk, Eoin, Nathaniel Hilger, and Nicholas Miller. No kin in the game: Moral hazard and war in the US Congress. No. w23904. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2021.

*Washington, E. L. (2008). Female socialization: How daughters affect their legislator fathers. *American Economic Review*, 98(1):311-32.

Week 5 (September 19): Representative Agency and Accountability

*Dal Bó, Ernesto and Martín Rossi (2011). "Term Length and the Effort of Politicians," *Review of Economic Studies*, 78(4), 1237-1263.

Besley, Timothy and Anne Case (1995). "Does Political Accountability Affect Economic Policy Choices? Evidence From Gubernatorial Term Limits," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 110(3), 769-98.

Diermeier, Daniel, Michael Keane, and Antonio Merlo (2005). "A Political Economy Model of Congressional Careers." *American Economic Review*, 95:347-373.

*Ferraz, Claudio and Frederico Finan (2010). "Electoral accountability and corruption: Evidence from the audit of local governments," *American Economic Review*, 101, 1274-1311.

*Lee, David, Enrico Moretti and Matthew Butler (2004). "Do Voters Affect or Elect Policies? Evidence from the US House." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August, 807-859.

Pettersson-Lidbom, Per (2008). "Do Parties Matter for Economic Outcomes? A Regression-Discontinuity Approach", *Journal of the European Economic Association*. 6 (5), pp. 1037-1056.

Week 6 (September 26): Money in Politics

-I recommend skimming the first 8 pages of Ansolabehere, Stephen, John (2002). "Why is there So Little Money in Politics?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 17, 1, 105-130., though we will not discuss it in class

*Avis, Eric, Claudio Ferraz, Frederico Finan, and Carlos Varjao. "Money and politics: The effects of campaign spending limits on political entry and competition." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* (2018).

Bertrand, Marianne, Matilde Bombardini and Francesco Trebbi (2014). "Is it Whom You Know or What you Know? An Empirical Assessment of the Lobbying Process." *American Economic Review*, 104, 12, 3885-3920.

*Bertrand, Marianne, Matilde Bombardini, Raymond Fisman, and Francesco Trebbi. "Tax-exempt lobbying: Corporate philanthropy as a tool for political influence." *American Economic Review* 110, no. 7 (2020): 2065-2102.

Bertrand, Marianne, Matilde Bombardini, Raymond Fisman, Brad Hackinen, and Francesco Trebbi. "Hall of mirrors: Corporate philanthropy and strategic advocacy." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 136, no. 4 (2021): 2413-2465.

Blanes-Vidal, Jordi, Mirko Draca and Christian Fons-Roen (2012). "Revolving Door Lobbyists." *American Economic Review*, 102, 7, 3731-3748.

*Finan, Frederico and Laura Schecter (2012) "Vote-Buying and Reciprocity", *Econometrica*, 80(2): 863-881

Grossman, Gene M. and Elhanan Helpman. 1994. 'Protection for Sale.' American Economic Review. 84(4): 833-850.

Levitt, Steven (1994). "Using Repeat Challengers to Estimate the Effect of Campaign Spending on Election Outcomes in the U.S. House", Journal of Political Economy, 102(4), 777-798.

*Spenkuch, Jorg and David Toniatti (2018). "Political Advertising and Election Results". Quarterly Journal of Economics (133)4, 1981-2036

Vicente, Pedro (2013), "Is Vote Buying Effective? Evidence from a Field Experiment in West Africa?" Economic Journal.

Week 7 (October 3): Media

*Chen, Yuyu and Yang, David (2019). "The Impact of Media Censorship: 1984 or Brave New World?". American Economic Review, 109(6)

DellaVigna, Stefano and Ethan Kaplan (2007). "The Fox News Effect: Media Bias and Voting." Quarterly Journal of Economics 122(3): 1187-1234.

Durante, Ruben and Brian Knight (2012). "Partisan Control, Media Bias, and Viewer Responses: Evidence from Berlusconi's Italy." Journal of the European Economic Association 10(3): 451-481.

Durante, Ruben and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya (2018). "Attack When the World Is Not Watching? US News and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Journal of Political Economy 126(3): 1085-1133.

*Levy, Ro'ee. (2021). "Social Media, News Consumption, and Polarization: Evidence from a Field Experiment" . American Economic Review, 111(3)

*Gentzkow, M., Shapiro, J. M., & Sinkinson, M. (2011). The Effect of Newspaper Entry and Exit on Electoral Politics. American Economic Review, 101(7), 2980-3018.

Martin, Gregory J. and Ali Yurukoglu (2017). "Bias in Cable News: Persuasion and Polarization." American Economic Review 107(9): 2565-2599.

Paluck, Elizabeth and Don Green (2009). "Deference, Dissent and Dispute Resolution: An Experimental Intervention Using Mass Media to Change Norms and Behavior in Rwanda." American Political Science Review, 103, 4, 622-644.

*Snyder, James and David Stromberg (2010). "Press Coverage and Political Accountability." Journal of Political Economy 118(2).

Week 8 (October 10): Bureaucrats I (Selection)

* Ashraf, Nava, Oriana Bandiera, Edward Davenport, and Scott S. Lee. "Losing pro-sociality in the quest for talent? Sorting, selection, and productivity in the delivery of public services." *American Economic Review* 110, no. 5 (2020): 1355-94.

* Colonnelli, Emanuele, Mounu Prem, and Edoardo Teso. (2020). "Patronage and Selection in Public Sector Organizations." *American Economic Review*, 110 (10): 3071-99.

* Dal Bó, E., Finan, F., & Rossi, M. A. (2013). Strengthening state capabilities: The role of financial incentives in the call to public service. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 128(3), 1169-1218.

Deserranno, Erika. "Financial incentives as signals: experimental evidence from the recruitment of village promoters in Uganda." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11, no. 1 (2019): 277-317.

Deserranno, Erika, and Gianmarco León Ciliotta. "Promotions and productivity: The role of meritocracy and pay progression in the public sector." (2021).

Hanna, Rema and Shing-Yi Wang (2017). "Dishonesty and Selection into Public Service." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 9(3): 262-290.

Murphy, Kevin M., Andrei Shleifer, and Robert W. Vishny. "The allocation of talent: Implications for growth." *The quarterly journal of economics* 106, no. 2 (1991): 503-530.

* Neggers, Yusuf. "Enfranchising your own? Experimental evidence on bureaucrat diversity and election bias in India." *American Economic Review* 108, no. 6 (2018): 1288-1321.

Weaver, Jeffrey (2021) "Jobs for Sale: Corruption and Misallocation in Hiring." *American Economic Review*, 111 (10): 3093-3122.

Week 9 (October 17): Bureaucrats II (Incentives and Allocation)

Aneja, Abhay, and Guo Xu. (2021) *The Costs of Employment Segregation: Evidence from the Federal Government under Woodrow Wilson*. Forthcoming at the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Banerjee, A. V., Chattopadhyay, R., Duflo, E., Keniston, D., & Singh, N. (2012). Can institutions be reformed from within? Evidence from a randomized experiment with the Rajasthan police.

Bergeron, Augustin, Pedro Bessone, John Kabeya Kabeya, Gabriel Tourek, and Jonathan Weigel. "Optimal Assignment of Bureaucrats: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Tax Collectors in the Democratic Republic of Congo." (2021).

* Bertrand, Marianne, Robin Burgess, Arunish Chawla, and Guo Xu. "The glittering prizes: Career incentives and bureaucrat performance." *The Review of Economic Studies* 87, no. 2 (2020): 626-655.

* Duflo, E., Hanna, R., & Ryan, S. P. (2012). Incentives work: Getting teachers to come to school. *The American Economic Review*, 1241-1278.

Iyer, Lakshmi and Anandi Mani (2012). "Traveling Agents: Political Change and Bureaucratic Turnover in India." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 94(3): 723-739.

*Khan, A., Khwaja, A., and Olken, B. (2016). "Tax Farming Redux: Experimental Evidence on Performance Pay for Tax Collectors." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. 131(1), 219-271.

Khan, Adnan Q., Asim Ijaz Khwaja, and Benjamin A. Olken. "Making moves matter: Experimental evidence on incentivizing bureaucrats through performance-based postings." *American Economic Review* 109, no. 1 (2019): 237-70.

Mas, Alexandre (2006). "Pay, Reference Points and Police Performance." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 121(3): 783-821.

Muralidharan, K., & Sundararaman, V. (2011). Teacher Performance Pay: Experimental Evidence from India. *Journal of Political Economy*, 119(1), 39-77.

Niehaus, Paul and Sandip Sukhtankar (2013). "Corruption Dynamics: The Golden Goose Effect." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 5(4): 230-269.

Olken, B, F. Finan & R Pande (2016) "The Personnel Economics of the State" *Handbook of Field Economics*

Rasul, Imran and Daniel Rogger. 2015. "Management of Bureaucrats and Public Service Delivery: Evidence from the Nigerian Civil Service." Working Paper

* Xu, Guo. "The costs of patronage: Evidence from the British empire." *American Economic Review* 108, no. 11 (2018): 3170-98.

Week 10 (October 24): Corruption

Avis, Eric, Claudio Ferraz, and Frederico Finan. "Do government audits reduce corruption? Estimating the impacts of exposing corrupt politicians." *Journal of Political Economy* 126, no. 5 (2018): 1912-1964.

Banerjee, Abhijit, Rema Hanna and Sendhil Mullainathan (2012). "Corruption." Chapter 27 in *Handbook of Organizational Economics*, edited by Robert Gibbons and John Roberts, Princeton University Press.

Bai, J., Jayachandran, S., Malesky, E. and Olken, B. (2014). "Does Economic Growth Reduce Corruption? Theory and Evidence from Vietnam." NBER Working Paper #19483

Bandiera, Oriana, Andrea Prat and Tommaso Valletti (2009). "Active and Passive Waste in Government Spending: Evidence from a Policy Experiment." *American Economic Review* 99(4): 1278-1308.

Bertrand, Marianne, Djankov, Simeon, Hanna, Rema and Mullainathan, Sendhil, (2007) "Obtaining a Driver's License in India: An Experimental Approach to Studying Corruption," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 122(4), 1639-1676

Burgess, Robin, Matthew Hansen, Benjamin Olken, Peter Potapov, and Stefanie Sieber, "The Political Economy of Deforestation in the Tropics," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(4): 1707-1754.

Di Tella, Rafael and Ernesto Schargrodsky (2003). "The Role of Wages and Auditing During a Crackdown on Corruption in the City of Buenos Aires," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 46: 269-292.

*Ferraz, Claudio, and Fred Finan. (2008). "Exposing Corruption politicians: The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 123(2), 703-745.

Fisman, Raymond and Yongxian Wang (2015). "The Mortality Cost of Political Connections." *Review of Economic Studies*, 2015, 82, 4, 1346-1382.

Muralidharan, K., Niehaus, P., & Sukhtankar, S. (2016). Building state capacity: Evidence from biometric smartcards in India. *American Economic Review*, 106(10), 2895-2929.

Niehaus, Paul, and Sandip Sukhtankar (2013). "Corruption dynamics: The golden goose effect." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 5.4: 230-69.

*Olken, Benjamin (2007). "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia," *Journal of Political Economy*, 115, 2, 200-249.

*Olken, Benjamin and Barron, Patrick (2009), "The Simple Economics of Extortion: Evidence from Trucking in Aceh", *Journal of Political Economy* 117(3), 417-452.

Sukhtankar, Sandip (2015). "The Impact of Corruption on Consumer Markets: Evidence from the Allocation of 2G Wireless Spectrum in India." *Journal of Law and Economics* 58 (1): 75-108.

Week 11 (October 31): Political Influences on Economic Outcomes/Clientelism

* Anderson, Siwan, Patrick Francois, and Ashok Kotwal (2015). "Clientelism in Indian Villages." *American Economic Review*, 105(6): 1780-1816.

*Fisman, Ray (2001). "Estimating the Value of Political Connections", *American Economic Review*, 91: 1095-1102.

Dube, Arin, Ethan Kaplan, and Suresh Naidu (2011). "Coups, Corporations, and Classified Information", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126(3), 1-35.

*Khwaja, Asim, and Atif Mian. (2005). "Do Lenders Favor Politically Connected Firms? Rent Provision in an Emerging Financial Market", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120(4).

Martinez-Bravo, M. 2014. "The Role of Local Officials in New Democracies: Evidence from Indonesia." *American Economic Review*, 104(4): 1244-87.

Shleifer, Andrei and Robert Vishny (1992). "Politicians and Firms", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 109: 995-1026.

Week 12 (November 7): Institutions and Institutional Persistence

*Acemoglu, D, S. Johnson and J Robinson (2001). "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *The American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369-1401.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. A. (2002). Reversal of Fortune: Geography and Institutions in the Making of the Modern World Income Distribution. *The Quarterly journal of economics*, 117(4), 1231-1294.

Banerjee, Abhijit and Iyer, Lakshmi (2005) "History, Institutions and Economic Performance: The Legacy of Colonial Land Tenure Systems in India." *American Economic Review*, 95, 1190-1213.

Bleakley, Hoyt and Lin, Jeffrey "Portage and Path Dependence". *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2012, volume 127, pp. 587-644.

*Dell, M. (2010). The persistent effects of Peru's mining mita. *Econometrica*, 78(6), 1863-1903

Nunn, N. (2008). The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 139-176.

Engerman, S. L., & Sokoloff, K. L. (2002). "Factor endowments, inequality, and paths of development among new world economics" (No. w9259). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Week 13 (November 14): Democracy and Democratization

If you have not done any referee reports yet, you need to do one this week.

*Olken, B. A. (2010). Direct democracy and local public goods: Evidence from a field experiment in Indonesia. *American Political Science Review*, 104(02), 243-267.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James Robinson, and Pierre Yared. (2008). "Income and Democracy", *American Economic Review*, 98(3), 808-842.

Acemoglu, D. (2006). *Economic origins of dictatorship and democracy*. Cambridge University Press (pgs. 99-203)

*Burgess, Robin, Remi Jedwab, Edward Miguel, Ameet Morjaria and Gerard Pedró i Miguel (2013). "The Value of Democracy: Evidence from Road Building in Kenya." *American Economic Review*, 105, 6, 1817-51.

Dal Bó, Pedro, Andrew Foster and Louis Putterman (2010). "Institutions and Behavior: Experimental Evidence on the Effects of Democracy." *American Economic Review*, 100, 2205-2229.

*Martinez-Bravo, M., i Miquel, G. P., Qian, N., & Yao, Y. (2021). "The Rise and Fall of Local Elections in China: Theory and Empirical Evidence on the Autocrat's Trade-off". forthcoming American Economic Review

Pande, R. (2011). Can informed voters enforce better governance? Experiments in low-income democracies. *Annu. Rev. Econ.*, 3(1), 215-237.

Week 14 (November 21): Conflict

Abadie, Alberto and Javier Garbeazabal (2003), "The Economic Costs of Conflict: A Case Study of the Basque Country," *American Economic Review* 93.

*Berman, Eli, Jacob Shapiro, and Joseph Felter (2011) "Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *Journal of Political Economy*, 119(4): 766-819.

Blattman, Christopher and Miguel, Edward (2010). "Civil War" *The Journal of Economic Literature*. 48(1): 3-57.

Blattman, Christopher and Jeannie Annan (2016). "Can Employment Reduce Lawlessness and Rebellion? A Field Experiment with High-Risk Men in a Fragile State." *American Political Science Review* 110(1): 1-17.

Cicccone, A. (2011). Economic shocks and civil conflict: A comment. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 3(4), 215-227.

Collier, Paul and Anke Hoffler (1998), "On economic causes of civil war," *Oxford Economic Papers*, 50: 563-573.

*Dell, M. (2015). Trafficking networks and the Mexican drug war. *The American Economic Review*, 105(6), 1738-1779.

Dell, Melissa and Pablo Querubin (2018). "Nation Building Through Foreign Intervention: Evidence from Discontinuities in Military Strategies." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 133(2): 701-764.

Dube, O., & Vargas, J. F. (2013). Commodity price shocks and civil conflict: Evidence from Colombia. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 80(4), 1384-1421.

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin (2003), "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, 97(1):75-90.

Fearon, James D. (1995). "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

*Miguel, E., Satyanath, S., & Sergenti, E. (2004). Economic shocks and civil conflict: An instrumental variables approach. *Journal of political Economy*, 112(4), 725-753.

Nunn, N., & Qian, N. (2014). US food aid and civil conflict. *The American Economic Review*, 104(6), 1630-1666. [note reply of Barrett and Christian (2017)]

Reynal-Querol, M., & Montalvo, J. G. (2005). Ethnic polarization, potential conflict and civil war. *American Economic Review*, 95(3), 796-816.

Week 15: November 28th

Topic TBD

Exam Time: Student Presentations on Research Projects

During these weeks, we will have 4-5 students per class present their research proposals

Referee Reports:

Writing referee reports is an important task on which graduate students frequently do not receive much training. This is an important way in which you can contribute to the profession and improve the research of others. It is also good practice in reading a paper carefully and deconstructing its argument.

Whenever doing a referee report, you should prepare two documents. The first is the referee report, which should be 2-3 pages double-spaced. The report has three main parts:

- One paragraph summary of the main argument of the article
- 2-4 major comments on the paper, where you discuss important positives or drawbacks of the paper. These should each be around a paragraph in length.
- Finally, you should conclude the report with minor comments. These can be 1-3 sentences, and refer to more minor points about the paper.

When writing the reports, always consider your audience – you are writing these to the author and editor. The editor will likely not have read the paper in as much detail as you, so make sure that your report is clear enough that they will not need to have read the paper to understand it. A good referee report not only clearly states the shortcomings of the work, but also lays out constructive, detailed and realistic suggestions for improvement. Do not include your recommendation for publication in the report. This [document](#) outlines what your report should include. Please read it carefully before writing your report.

The second document is a recommendation letter to the editor. This can be anywhere between 1-3 paragraphs depending on how much you need to make your point. You should list your recommendation for the paper (reject, revise and resubmit, acceptance) and the key reason for this recommendation.

One of the best ways to learn about how to write a successful job market is to read that of successful past candidates. I have thus selected a number of the best political economy job market papers over the past year for you to select from for the referee reports. Please use the version of the papers in this [dropbox folder](#), NOT any updated drafts. It is more useful to practice referee reports on less polished papers rather than the final published draft.

- **Augustin Bergeron (Harvard)**. “The State Capacity Ceiling on Tax Rates: Evidence from Randomized Tax Abatements in the DRC”
- **Milena Djourelova (UPF)**. “Media Persuasion through Slanted Language: Evidence from the Coverage of Immigration”
- **Teresa Esteban-Casanelles (Columbia)**. “The Effects of Exposure to Electoral Advertising: Evidence from Spain”
- **Martin Mattsson (Yale)**. “Service Delivery, Corruption and Information Flows in Bureaucracies: Evidence from the Bangladesh Civil Service”
- **Mateo Montenegro (MIT)**. “All Eyes on Them: A Field Experiment on Citizen Oversight and Election Integrity”
- **Jonah Rexer (UPenn)**. “The local advantage: Corruption, organized crime, and indigenization in the Nigerian oil sector”
- **MR Sharan (Harvard)**. “Something to complain about: How minority representatives overcome ethnic differences”

- **Silvia Vannutelli (BU)**. “From Lapdogs to Watchdogs: Random Auditor Assignment and Municipal Fiscal Performance in Italy”

Please read the below resources prior to writing your referee reports. They provide useful guidance on how to write a successful report – the document linked above gives my opinion, but I have much less experience writing referee reports than any of these authors! I will also send you a sample report from last year’s class so you have a model for how to write these.

- Berk et al, “Preparing a Referee Report: Guidelines and Perspectives”:
<https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=222>
- Bellemare, “Contributing to Public Goods: My 20 Rules for Refereeing”:
<http://marcfbellemare.com/wordpress/5542>
- Chris Blattman 2013 Syllabus (see the last four pages):
<https://chrisblattman.com/files/2009/07/POLS-G8412-Syllabus-Spring-2013-Jan-2013-final.docx>
- https://thepoliticalmethodologist.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/tpm_v23_n1.pdf