

DELIBERATIVE ELECTORAL STRATEGIES AND TRANSITION FROM CLIENTELISM: EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE FROM BENIN

Leonard Wantchekon

Princeton University

June 28, 2011

Abstract

This paper provides experimental evidence on the effect of town hall meetings on electoral support for programmatic candidates. The experiment takes place during the March 2011 elections in Benin and involves 150 randomly selected villages. The treatment group had town hall meetings where voters *deliberate* over their candidate's electoral platforms with *no cash distribution*. The control group had the standard campaign, i.e. *one-way communication* of the candidate's platform by himself or his local broker, followed (most of the time) by *cash distribution*. We find that the treatment has a positive effect on turnout. In addition, using village level election returns, we find no significant difference in electoral support for the experimental candidate between treatment and control villages. However, post-election individual surveys suggest a positive treatment effect on voters who attended town hall meetings.

INTRODUCTION

Broad public goods such as rural infrastructure, public education and universal health care play a crucial role in promoting economic development.¹ But, in many developing countries clientelist electoral incentives not only work against the provision of public goods but promote various forms of corruption. This may take the form of cash distribution during political campaigns to buy votes, or lucrative patronage jobs after the election to reward local brokers who helped deliver those votes. Because it profoundly shapes the conduct of elections and government policies, clientelism is at the heart of the study of governance in developing countries.

The political science literature has primarily focussed on uncovering the structural causes of clientelism, measuring its effects, and has not provided much insight on institutional reforms that would facilitate the emergence of programmatic politics. For this to be possible, it is quite obvious that one should primarily view clientelism as, above all, a political strategy. More precisely, it is the outcome of strategic interaction between patrons, brokers and voters. In this game, politicians offer public or private goods to voters (as electoral platforms, then as government policy when elected). In addition, they offer jobs or cash to brokers to secure electoral support from voters. Then, brokers mobilize voters by (at least in part) distributing public or private goods. Finally, voters turnout and vote. The strategic environment might vary greatly from one district or country to another; politicians, voters and brokers might be of any type (i.e. clean or corrupt, shortsighted or long-sighted), rationality might be bounded, enforcement of electoral rules might be weak, and commitment

¹See Keefer and Khemani [2003] for a discussion of the role of broad public goods in reducing poverty. See also St-Paul and Verdier [1993] for the effect of public education on growth and López-Casasnovas et al [2005], Sala-I-Martin [2002], Howitt [2005] for a survey of the literature on health and development.

to future actions might be limited. Whatever the context, analyzing this game can help predict the predominance of various clientelist practices such as pure patronage, or “prebendalism”. In so doing, it can help to guide empirical research.

One possible theoretical prediction coming out of this set-up is as follows: If an incumbent patron can commit to give out the job after the election (i.e. there is no challenger), then we have pure patronage. If she can’t (there is a challenger), then she has to pay the broker “enough” money upfront before electoral uncertainty is resolved. Furthermore, if we consider at least a two- period electoral cycle, the broker may require “prebends”, in order to secure early payoffs for future services.² That is, assuming the broker already has a patronage job, if the patron cannot commit to the security of this job, (e.g. because the political process is competitive), then she might let the broker “steal” state resources in ahead the next election, especially she needs his financial support to fund her campaign. This means that prebendalism might be more prevalent under competitive (democratic) political systems.

Therefore the fact that this form of clientelism is prevalent under some autocratic regimes such as Cameroon may be due to weak state capacity, not to regime type. As a result, democratization in Cameroon may lead to less prebendalism, unless it comes with effective anti-corruption measures. This result also suggests that decentralization might limit clientelism. Indeed, helping the broker get elected as mayor, governor or MP might eliminate the need to secure him a patronage job. The relationship between the broker and the patron would evolve from that of local agent working to get a patron elected in exchange for cash or a job, to that of mutual insurance between elected officials trying to improve their respective electoral fortunes.

Incentives for grand corruption in clientelist networks might be limited if the patron can bypass the broker and directly take his message to voters. This would avoid the

²By “prebends” is meant to describe situation where a politician and a broker is given a public office in order for him/her to gain personal control over state resources (see, Van de Walle (2003).

upfront service fee together with the need to commit future government resources to the broker in exchange of his effort to take voters to the polls. This strategy was an essential component of candidate Obama's election campaign in the 2008 US presidential election (especially during the democratic primaries) and of the 200x Morales campaign in Bolivia. The strategy consist of replacing brokers with a network of young activists who engage local voters either through social media, town hall meetings or door-to-door campaigning in the context of an institutionalized "proximity" electoral campaign.

In this paper, we provide a randomized evaluation of a version of this strategy. The experiment took place during the March 2011 presidential election campaign in Benin, and involves 150 villages randomly selected from 30 of the country's 77 districts. Voters from 60 villages (the treatment group) attended town hall meetings and deliberated over candidates' policy platforms. Others from 90 villages (control group) attended rallies organized by candidates' local brokers. We find that town hall meetings have a positive effect on measures of turnout, the result being stronger for the opposition candidates. Using village level election returns, we find no significant difference between treatment and control villages in terms of electoral support for the candidate running the experiment. However, individual post-election surveys suggest a positive and significant treatment effect on those who did attend the meetings. Examining the causal mechanisms, we show that much of the impact of the meetings is through better knowledge of the candidate policy platforms, not a better knowledge of other voters' political preferences.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In next section engages the literature on deliberation. Section II presents the context in which the experiment took place, section III the experimental design, section IV the data, he main results. We then discuss issues related to external validity and the implications of the results for institutional design in section V. Section VI concludes.

Relation with the literature

There have been several studies in contemporary political science that investigate the effects of various forms of public deliberation on political behavior. Gutman and Thompson [1996] and Fishkin [1997] find that public deliberation promotes “enlightenment”, consensus, and civic engagement. One limitation of this literature is that it is mostly theoretical, and the evidence that it provides comes from deliberative polls and focus groups, rather than from the field. As a result, it is unclear how policy information provided in the context of public deliberation would affect voting behavior in real elections.

A key to our theoretical argument is that village discussions in a town hall setting make public goods promises more credible because benchmarks are clear and voters can coordinate to punish candidates in future elections. This argument relates to the literature on voter coordination, which describes situations where voters have heterogeneous expectations about future election outcomes.³ The paper also relates to models of information revelation in committee debates where individuals have private preferences.⁴ But in the voter coordination literature, coordination is shaped by expectations about future elections, not the information content of platforms and the outcome of public discussion of these platforms. In addition, the information revelation literature is mostly theoretical and is applied to decision-making in committees, not to voting in large elections.

The paper also contributes to the literature on access to information, political institutions, and local public goods. Olken [2008] provides experimental evidence from Indonesia that suggests that direct elections are better than representative-based meetings in generating popular satisfaction and support for local public goods. Reinikka and Svensson [2005] find that media access reduces local capture of public

³See. Melbane (2000) and Melbane and Seckon (2002), Cox (1997) among others.

⁴Austen Smith and Feddersen (2008)

funds and subsequently leads to higher school enrollment and test scores. However, these studies focus on local public goods and ignore political incentives at the national level.

The methodology, context, and results of the Benin experiment reported in Wantchekon [2003] are particularly relevant to the current study. That experiment aimed at testing the effectiveness of clientelist versus programmatic electoral campaigns on voting. The experiment consisted of randomized trials in 24 villages in which politicians used either a clientelist, programmatic, or neutral election campaign. The results suggested that the clientelist electoral campaign is most effective, and that the programmatic election campaign costs votes. However, women, more informed voters, and co-ethnics of the candidate running the programmatic platforms were more responsive to these platforms than men, less informed voters, and non co-ethnics (respectively). One question that arises from that study is whether clientelism is the only effective electoral campaign strategy. We address this question by providing evidence indicating that when deliberated at town hall meetings, programmatic platforms might at least as effective as clientelist platforms.

II. CONTEXT

The experiment took place in Benin (formerly Dahomey), located between Togo and Nigeria, which was colonized by France in 1894, and gained independent in 1960. After 18 years under military rule, Benin achieved a successful democratic transition in 1990. Since then, democratic institutions have been strengthened with five presidential elections in which incumbents have lost twice.⁵ There has been high turnover in the National Assembly. In 2006, the country ranked 2nd in Africa and

⁵Presidents are elected by a plurality runoff system. That is, if no candidate achieves a majority during the first round, a second round is organized for the top two candidates on the list and the plurality winner is elected.

26th in the World in terms of freedom of the press by “Reporters without Borders”.

Despite progress towards democratic consolidation, economic performance has been very weak. According to the Benin Country Memorandum published by the World Bank in June 2008, the country has a lower per-capita growth rate, and weaker institutional performance (law enforcement, regulatory agencies and government effectiveness), than other African democracies. Corruption is widespread and the country is ranked quite low in terms of its governance index (37th in Africa).

Using evidence from the Database on Political Institutions, the World Bank Country Memorandum on Benin finds that while 60% of the top four parties in a typical democracy can be described as programmatic, in Benin none of them can be described as such. This is quite surprising for a country with a long leftist tradition that has experienced seventeen continuous years of democracy. In fact, all of the top four parties in Benin were founded by either Marxist or leftist ideologues (Amoussou Bruno of the Parti Social Democrate and Saka Lafia of the Union pour Democratie et la Solidarité), or by market reform ideologues (Nicephore Soglo of the Renaissance du Benin and to a lesser degree Adrien Houngbedji of the Parti pour le Renouveau Democratique).⁶

In addition, the first four years of democracy under a technocratic Soglo government and a programmatic “Renaissance du Benin Party” were characterized by a high growth rate (6.2% from 1990 to 1994) and good governance indicators.⁷ The move away from relatively programmatic to much more clientelist politics started with the 1996 campaign that led to the return to power (by the means of democratic elections) of the former dictator Mathieu Kerekou. He won by capitalizing on accusations that his opponent was undermining democratic pluralism, and by promising smaller

⁶If it had not boycotted the national conference, the Parti Communiste du Benin (PCB), a hardline communist party, would have been one of the top parties.

⁷See Wantchekon and Ngomo [2001].

parties better access to government. In short, programmatic politics dominated in the first post-transition election because there was a strong demand for market reforms, and because the top candidate in that election was an experienced technocrat and a credible and competent reformer. Clientelism dominated from 1996 to 2006 when Kerekou needed it to reward members of the broad coalition of small parties that brought him back to power in 1996. Thus programmatic and clientelist politics are, at least in part, strategic choices driven by electoral circumstances.

However, better governance under Soglo seemed to have come at the expense of democratic pluralism, and better democratic pluralism under Kerekou came at the expense of good governance.⁸ The goal of this experiment is to propose a set of conditions under which one might have good governance *and* democratic pluralism.

The 2011 presidential elections were the second since 1990 without the traditional “big men” Kerekou and Soglo. The top three candidates were Yayi Boni, a former President of the West African Development Bank, running as the incumbent candidate, Adrien Houngbedji, a former cabinet member in Kerekou’s Government and the candidate of the Party for Democratic Renewal (PRD), and Abdoulaye Bi Tchane, an economist and former Director of the Africa Department at the IMF.

III. THE EXPERIMENT

The experimental process started with a policy conference that took place on February 5, 2011. The goal was to promote policy debates involving candidates and academics and build trust between the experiment team and the candidates. The conference provided expert information to the candidates on five policy issues: Maths education, emergency health care, youth employment, rural infrastructure, and cor-

⁸To put it differently, economic indicators were much better under Soglo than they were under Kerekou, but “freedom indices” were higher under Kerekou than they were under Soglo.

ruption. There were about 70 participants and four panels.⁹ There were representatives of all three candidates, members of the National Assembly, Development Agencies, NGOs and a large number of academics including the Dean for research at the University of Abomey Calavi.

The experiment followed a randomized block design with treatments being assigned to 60 randomly selected subunits (villages), in 30 randomly chosen units (electoral districts) in the population, that are weak or strong strongholds of three experimental candidates i.e. the candidates participating in the experiment. The selection process was as follows:

First, we use a very simple proportionality rule to determine the number of districts to be selected by department (province). We use a random number generator to select two treatment districts in Alibori, the department with the smallest number of districts, and 4 from Zou, the department with the highest. Then we use the same procedure to select 5 villages in each district, and assign two to the treatment group and two to the control group. In collaboration with the campaign managers of the three candidates, districts were assigned to candidates.

Treatment: A team of one research assistant of the IREEP and one activist working for the candidate organize two meetings in each of their two assigned treatment villages. Every villager is informed of the date and the agenda, by a village crier. The agenda is education and health for the first meeting, and rural infrastructure and employment for the second. The research team introduces the topics in light of the proceedings of the February 5 conference. Villagers debate the policy proposals and make suggestions. The team summarizes the main points raised during the meetings

⁹The four experts were Professor Leonard Fourn who teaches Public Health at the University of Abomey Calavi, Dr. Hamissou Oumarou, an Education Expert from Niger, Dr Mouftaou Laleye, who taught Public administration at the University of IFE in Nigeria, and Mr Todjinou Jean Bosco, an architect and Urban Planning specialist.

in a written report to be transmitted to the candidate via his campaign manager. Each meeting lasts about 90 minutes. There is no cash distribution and no major political figure such the local mayor or MP in the audience.

Control: The local mayor, MP, or a political figure (the local broker) organizes two to three rallies sometimes in the presence of the candidate himself. The representative of the candidate makes a speech that outlines the policy agenda and the personal attributes of the candidate. There is no debate, but instead a festive atmosphere of celebration with drinks, music and sometimes cash and gadget distribution. Participants come from several villages and attendance varies from 800 villagers to 3000 or more if the candidate himself is present. The rallies would last about two hours.

Remark: By not getting the local broker directly involved in the town hall meetings and not distributing cash andgadgets to participants we were in fact working against a positive treatment. The presence of the mayor, the MP or a candidate himself would have boosted the audience, and gifts to the participants would certainly not have turned them against the candidate.

We collected two types of experimental data. The first originates from the electoral commission: as soon as the polls were closed the research teams went the relevant stations to record turnout and electoral support for the candidates involved in the experiment. These reports therefore generated village level measures of electoral outcomes. The second type of data originates from several rounds of pre- and post-election surveys. We collected pre-treatment demographic, political and economic information from a sample of would-be voters in both treatment and control groups. The variables include age, gender, ethnicity, education level, assets, as well as political preferences and knowledge. The second data set also covers key features of the town hall meetings such as attendance by gender and profession, the issues raised and final resolutions. The post-election survey data was collected after the election and covers the standard demographic and economic variables in addition to self-reported

turnout, voting behavior, meeting attendance, and civic education.

IV. THE DATA AND THE RESULTS

INTERNAL VALIDITY

We first verify the effectiveness of randomization in generating balanced covariates. More precisely, we test the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the means of pre-treatment variables in the treatment and control groups. We look at a wide range of covariates, including gender, ethnic ties, education level, and age.

Table 1 indicates that there is no significant difference between the means of these variables in the treatment and the control groups,

Insert Table 2 here

TURNOUT

Turnout is a fundamental variable of interest in the study of democracy and political participation, and has generated a great deal of interest in experimental political science. Gerber and Green [2000 and 2003] found that canvassing and face-to-face voter mobilization stimulates turnout in various types of elections. The conventional wisdom in comparative politics is that clientelism and vote-buying are the most reliable way to drive voters to the polls (Brusco, Nazareno and Stokes [2004], Nichter, (200x) Banegas (200x).

We first evaluate the effect of the treatment on measures of political participation. We use both the village level outcomes collected on election day and the post-election self-reported measure. For the individual level measure, we test for the treatment effect on turnout by estimating the following linear probably model.

$$Y_{ij} = z_{ij}a + T_{ij}\beta + z_{ij}T_i\gamma + u_{ij}$$

$$u_{ij} \stackrel{id}{\sim} N(0, \Omega_i)$$

where Y_{ij} is a categorical variable that takes the value of one if individual j in village i provides a positive response to the question "did you vote?", and zero otherwise; z_{ij} is a vector of individual characteristics for individual j in village i such as gender and education and T_{ij} is the categorical variable for treated individual j in village i . The key independent variable is T_{ij} , the treatment, which takes the value of one if the respondent was in the treatment group and zero if the respondent was in the control group.

For the village level measure, the estimate the linear model

$$Y_i = z_i a + T_i \beta + z_i T_i \gamma + u_i$$

$$u_i \stackrel{id}{\sim} N(0, \Omega_i)$$

In each specification we present the results with and without the treatment interacted with gender and education.

The results based on the village level data (see Table 2) suggest that town hall meetings can be at least as effective a voter mobilization strategy as vote-buying and clientelism. The overall effect of town hall meetings is positive and significant at 95%. When we disaggregate by candidates, the effect remains only for the opposition candidates. Thus turnout was significantly higher in the treatment villages than in control villages, despite the fact that villagers were less likely to receive cash and did not directly meet either the candidate or the local broker.

Insert Table 2

The treatment effect is more significant when we use the data from the post-election individual surveys. The self-reported measure of turnout is higher in treatment than in control villages, this time for both the incumbent and the opposition candidates (Table 3). Interestingly, education has no effect. However, female voters who attended meetings are more likely to turnout than those who did not. In addition, women who did not attend are less likely to vote than women in the control group. (Table 4)

Insert Table 3 and Table 4

VOTING

We now estimate the treatment effect on voting. As in the previous section, we will use the village level and individual level survey data. The individual survey provides information not only on who the individual voted for, but also her preference ordering over candidates. This enables us to measure the outcome for hypothetical sincere voting.

The village level data suggests that meetings have no effect on voting overall. The same holds for electoral support for each candidate individually (Table 5).

Insert Table 5

However, when we use the survey data we find a positive and significant treatment effect for those who did attend the meetings, especially in the opposition districts (Table 6). The treatment effect is stronger for preference ordering variable (Table 8) The conditional treatment effect for education is not significant. However, in contrast with turnout, the women who attended the meetings were not any more likely to support the experimental candidate than those who did not attend. (Table 7)

Insert Table 6, Table 7 and Table 8

CAUSAL MECHANISM

Why would town meetings generate electoral support programmatic platforms? This is because town hall meetings enable parties to make promises on public goods and transfers that are credible¹⁰. In addition, they enable voters to interact and learn about each other's preferences and beliefs. The meetings could also help project an image of the candidate as someone who "listen to voters". In section we test the relative weight of these mechanisms. For this purpose, we take advantage of a post election survey question: How do you think the meetings influence? (1) they help learn who other villagers will vote for (voter coordination)? (2) they help learn more about the candidate policy agenda (platform transparency) (3) show that candidate is willing to listen to voters (attentive candidate). Table 9 shows that "platform transparency" is most plausible mechanism. It is the only variable with significant effect on vote choice.

Insert Table 9

V. EXTERNAL VALIDITY

Randomized evaluation is strong on the quality of causal identification (internal validity), but weak on generalizability (external validity), i.e. whether the results are robust to changes in the background conditions of the experiment. We now explain the way in which the current experiment deals with these issues, in particular, representativeness of the target population and variation in the background conditions.

First, the districts involved in this experiment were drawn from all provinces, and as a result, from all major ethno-linguistic groups of the country (Atakora-Donga,

¹⁰This contrasts with Keefer and Vlacu (2008) who suggests that credibility comes with age of party politics.

Borgou-Alibori, Zou-Collines, Oueme-Plateau, Atlantic-Littoral and Oume-Plateau). In the 2001 experiment, neither Oueme Plateau nor Atakora-Donga were represented. Thus, the current population under treatment is more representative in terms of social and demographic conditions.

Second, while in the 2001 experiment all candidates were expected to win at least 60% of the vote locally, the current experiment includes three districts out of twelve where the experimental candidate, namely Soglo, was the underdog. We find that the average treatment effect was positive not only with the candidates favored to win, but also with the underdog.

Because the current project covers more regions than the previous experiment, there was more variation in terms of background conditions. There are districts with large Christian populations (e.g. Dangbo) and others with large Muslim populations (e.g. Kandi). There are urban districts (e.g. Kandi and Abomey Calavi) and rural districts (e.g. Ouesse and Kouande). There are districts with strong media coverage (e.g. Bembereke) and others with weak media coverage (e.g. Ouesse). Some experimental districts have stronger ties with neighboring countries such as Nigeria and Togo (e.g. Dangbo and Come) and others have virtually no ties with neighboring countries and are insulated (e.g. Ouesse and Bembereke).¹¹

Third, according to Ravallion [2008], threats to external validity also arise when policy experiments are designed and implemented by outsiders such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He wrote:

the very nature of the intervention may change when it is implemented by a government rather than an NGO. This may happen because of unavoidable differences in (inter alia) the quality of supervision, the incentives facing service providers, and administrative capacity. (p. 17)

¹¹The national scope of the experiment and the fact that it involves all major parties and candidates limits, but does not eliminate, concerns of partial equilibrium effects.

Like government in policy experiments, parties and candidates are the relevant actors in political experiments. Therefore, threats to external validity are limited in our experiment by the fact that it involved real candidates competing in real elections. The very fact that candidates agree to run such an experiment is an indication that the treatment is fairly realistic, and responds to electoral incentives. If, besides being realistic, the treatment is proven to be electorally effective, it will be more much more likely to be adopted by politicians in future elections.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

A field experiment was conducted in Benin to investigate the effect deliberative campaign on political behavior. We find that the campaign or the treatment has a positive effect on a self-reported measure voter information, turnout, and voting for the candidate running the experiment. We use the result to provide an empirical justification for the creation of “councils of experts” that would systematically evaluate policy initiatives, advise local and national governments, political parties and civil society organizations, and lead public discussions around election times, or other critical junctures of national policy-making. We argue that by engaging voters and political actors, councils of experts would not only help create an electoral constituency for good governance, but also improve transparency and accountability in governments.

The results lend some support to our earlier claim that clientelism may be driven by political conditions, namely the transparency of programmatic platforms and by town-meetings. The result might have been different if voters or clients were economically dependant on local patrons, as in agrarian societies with powerful landed elites such as in Latin American countries. In that case, the clientelist equilibrium may have been more robust and the effect of the information treatment less effective.

There are several directions for future research. In terms of experimental studies of

clientelism, we plan to improve the external validity of our findings by replicating the experiment in other African countries and in the context of other types of elections, such legislative or municipal elections.

REFERENCES

- Alesina Alberto, Reza Baqir and William Easterly. 1999. "Public Goods and Ethnic Divisions", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, CXIV, 1243-1284.
- Alesina, Alberto and Dani Rodrik. 1994. "Distributive Politics and Economic Growth", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 109, 465-490.
- Amuwo, Kunle. 2003. State and Politics of Democratic Consolidation in Benin. 1990-1999, in Julius Ibonvbere and John Mbaku, *Political Liberalization and Democratization in Africa: Lessons from Country Experiences*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003.
- Atchade F. Yves, and Leonard Wantchekon. 2008. Randomized Evaluation of Institutions: Theory with Applications to Voting and Deliberation Experiments. Working Paper, New York University
- Austen-Smith David and Timothy Feddersen. 2006. Deliberation, Preference Uncertainty and Voting Rules. *American Political Science Review*. Vol 100. No 2. p. 209-217
- Banegas, Richard. 1998. "Bouffer l'Argent, Politique du Ventre, Democratie et Clientelisme au Benin" in Jean-Louis Briquet et Frederic Sawicki (eds) *Clientelisme Politique dans les Societes Contemporaines*, Presses Universitaires de France.

- Banegas, Richard. 2003. *La Democratie a Pas de Cameleon: Transitions Imaginaires Politiques au Benin*. Karthala
- Bardhan Pranab 2002. Decentralization of Governance and Development. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Summer, 1990), pp. 3-7
- Bartels, Larry. 1996. "Uninformed Votes: Information Effects in Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 40:1 194-230.
- Boulaga, Eboussi. 1993. *Les Conferences en Afrique Noire*. Paris: Editions Karthala.
- Brusco Valeria, Marcelo Nazareno, and Susan Stokes. 2004. "Vote Buying in Argentina," *Latin American Research Review*, 39(2):66-88, June 2004
- Cox Gary W. 1997. Making Votes Count: *Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems* New York Cambridge University Press
- López-Casasnovas Guillem, Berta Rivera and Luis Currais (eds). 2005. *Health and Economic Growth: Findings and Policy Implications* MIT Press.
- Degboe Kuassi. 1995. *Elections et Realites Sociologiques du Benin*. Cotonou: Intermonde Editions.
- Delli Carpini Michael X. and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know about Politics and Why it Matters. What Americans Know about Politics and Why it Matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Duflo, Esther, Rachel Glennerster, and Michael Kremer. 2006. "Using Randomization in Development Economics Research: A Toolkit," Working Paper, MIT.
- Dixit Avinash and John Londegran. 1996. "The Determinants of Success of Special Interest in Redistributive Politics." *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 58, pp. 1132-1155.

- Easterly William. 2001. *The Elusive Quest for Growth: the Economists and Misadventures in the Tropics*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Easterly William and Ross Levine. 1997. Africa Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 112, 1203-1250.
- Fishkin James. 1997. *The Voice of the People: Public Opinion and Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press New Haven.
- Gerber Alan and Donald P. Green and David Nickerson. 2003. Getting out the Vote in Local Elections: Results from Six Canvassing Experiments. *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 65, No. 4, Pp. 1083–1096
- Gerber Alan and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Phone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94, No. 3, pp. 653-663
- Gilens, Martin. 2001. “Political Ignorance and Collective Policy Preferences.” *American Political Science Review* 95(2):379-396.
- Gisselquist, Rachel. 2006 “Benin’s 2006 Presidential Elections,” Working Paper. MIT.
- Gutman Amy and Dennis Frank Thompson. 1996. *Democracy and Disagreement: why moral conflict cannot be avoided in politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Keefer, Philip and Razvan Vlaicu. 2007. Democracy, Credibility, and Clientelism. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*. Forthcoming.
- Philip Keefer and Stuti Khemani. 2005. Democracy, Public Expenditures, and the Poor: Understanding Political Incentives for Providing Public Services. *World Bank Research Observer* Vol. 20: 1-27;

- Kitschelt Herbert and Steven Wilkinson (eds). 2007. *Patrons or Policies? Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, New York: Cambridge University Press
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1996. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hellbrunn, John R. 1993. "Social Origins of National Conferences in Benin and Togo". *Journal of Modern African Studies* v 31: 277-99.
- Howitt, Peter. 2005. Health, Human Capital and Economic Growth: A Shumpeterian Perspective. *In Health and Economic Growth: Findings and Policy Implications*, edited by Guillem Lopez-Casasnovas, Berta Rivera and Luis Currais. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005, 19-40.
- Lemarchand, René. 1972. "Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building," *American Political Science Review* 66
- Lindbeck, Assar and Jurgen Weibull. 1987. Balanced-Budget Redistribution as the Outcome of Political Competition," *Public Choice*, Vol. 52, pp. 273-297.
- Lizzeri, Alessandro and Nicola Persico. 2004. Why Did the Elites Extend the Suffrage? Democracy and the Scope of Government, With an Application to Britain's "Age of Reform". *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. Vol. 119, No. 2, pp. 707-765.
- Lizzeri, Alessandro and Nicola Persico. 2001. The Provision of Public Goods under Alternative Electoral Incentives. *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 91, No.1 pp. 225-239.

- Lupia, Arthur. 2002. "Deliberation Disconnected: What it Takes to Improve Civic Competence." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 65: 133-150.
- Lupia, Arthur. 2008. Beyond Facts and Norms: Contributions of Social Science to Deliberative Legitimacy. Working Paper. University of Michigan.
- Luskin, R.C. Fishkin, J. and Jowell, R, 2002. "Considered opinions: Deliberative polling in Britain." *British Journal of Political Science* 32: 455-487.
- Mebane, Walter R., Jr. 2000. "Coordination, Moderation, and Institutional Balancing in American Presidential and House Elections." *American Political Science Review* 94 (March):
- Mebane, Walter R., Jr., and Jasjeet S. Sekhon. 2002. "Coordination and Policy Moderation at Midterm" *American Political Science Review* 96 (March): 141–157.
- Nwajiaku, Kathryn. 1994. "The National Conferences in Benin and Togo Revisited." *Journal of Modern African Studies* v 32: 429-47.
- Nichter, Simeon. 2008. Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot. *American Political Science Review* (2008), 102:19-31
- Nielsen, François. 1985. "Toward a Theory of Ethnic Solidarity in Modern Societies", *American Sociological Review*, 50, 133-149.
- Olken, Benjamin. 2008. "Political Institutions and Local Public Goods: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia. Harvard University Working Paper.
- Torsten Persson and Guido Tabellini. 2000. *Political Economics: Explaining Economic Policy* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

- Ravallion, Martin. 2008. "Evaluation in the Practice of Development," Policy Research Working Paper 4547, World Bank.
- Reinnika, Ritva and Jakob Svensson. 2005. Fighting Corruption to Improve Schooling: Evidence from a Newspaper Campaign in Uganda. *The Journal of the European Economic Association*. Vol. 3, No. 2-3, Pages 259-267.
- Rodrik. Dani. 2008. The New Development Economics. We Shall Experiment. Shall We Learn? Working Paper, Kennedy School of Government.
- Rooney, Andy. 2004. Let us Have a Smart Board:
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/11/60minutes/rooney/main616858.shtml>
- Saint Paul Gilles and Thierry Verdier. 1993. - "Education, Democracy and Growth" *Journal of Development Economics*, 42, 399-407.
- Sala- I- Martin Xavier. 2002. "Poor People are Unhealthy People...and Viceversa", Proceedings of the International Meeting of Health Economics, Paris 2002.
- Van de Walle, Nicolas. 2003. "Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems", *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 41, no. 2, (June 2003), pp. 297-321.
- Van de Walle, Nicolas. 2007 "Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss? The Evolution of Political Clientelism in Africa." In Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, eds., *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, pp. 112-149. Cambridge University Press.
- Wantchekon, Leonard. 2003. Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin. *World Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 399-422.

- Wantchekon, Leonard and Paul Ngomo. 2001. Democratic Consolidation in Benin Lessons from the 1996 Presidential Election. Nordic Africa Institute Publications, Issue No 2.
- Wantchekon, Leonard and Christel Vermeersch. 2007. "Information, Social Networks and the Demand for Public Goods: Experimental Evidence from Benin". NYU Working paper.
- World Bank. 2008. Benin Country Memorandum. Draft. June 2008.

Table 1A: Summary Statistics