

Violence and Democratic Political Capital in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Abstract

We examine how current and past political violence affect democratic political capital, a set of behaviors and attitudes that contribute to democratic consolidation. Political capital—political participation, holding democratic norms, and support for national institutions—links citizens to and orients them toward the political system. Our analysis explores how political violence affects the development of democratic political capital. Using data from a 2006 survey of 20 Latin American and Caribbean countries, we find that the relationship between violence and political capital is complex: past civil conflict and past and current political violence depress political participation, past civil conflict and past violence lessen democratic norms but increase support for national institutions.

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Violence and Democratic Political Capital in Latin America and the Caribbean

Most Latin America and the Caribbean countries have relatively young and developing democracies. Several have experienced widespread political violence or civil war in recent decades, and in many levels of crime and political turmoil have remained high despite democratization. Citizens' commitment to democratic norms, support for democratic national institutions, and participation in politics are often cited as desiderata for democratic consolidation (Boix and Posner 1998; Diamond 1994; Diamond 1999; Norris 1999a; Smith 2005). But does violence threaten the consolidation of the Western Hemisphere's newer democracies by undermining or discouraging democracy-reinforcing attitudes and behaviors?

We explore how political violence affects the development of democratic political capital, and, through this, potentially influences the consolidation of democracy in the region. Controlling for social capital, individual resources, individual experiences with the political system's performance, and economic change, we examine how past civil conflict and past and current violence influence citizens' support for democratic institutions, democratic values, and their political activism, factors that should influence the prospects for a further consolidation of rights, democracy, and peace.

Discussion

Political capital consists of citizen attitudes and behaviors that influence or constrain the political system, the state, incumbents in government, social groups, and citizens themselves. Political capital affects the political system by influencing citizens' compliance with the law, cooperation with governmental institutions, and participation politically within or outside of officially sanctioned channels (Booth and Richard 1998a; Booth and Richard 1998b; Norris 1999a). Boix and Posner (Boix and Posner 1998) have such political behaviors and attitudes in mind when they describe several phenomena that may affect government performance: voting, campaigning, and contacting officials, they argue, may hold elected representatives and bureaucrats accountable through elections and demand-making. System support (trust in institutions) may reduce the cost of enforcing public policy, maintaining order, and collecting taxes. Democratic norms of support for participation rights, tolerance, and support for civil liberties may promote civic virtue by setting limits on the behavior of government and encouraging attention to the collective good. Democratic political capital includes overall political participation, support for fundamental democratic norms, and support for extant democratic institutions. We

see political capital as critical to sustaining democracy in that it shapes governmental performance as well as the institutional rules of the game.

Without claiming that these exhaust the potential behaviors and attitudes that impinge upon the state and polity, we analyze three political capital variables that we believe affect the state and its performance – a combined political participation measure built from four behaviors (voting, partisan activism, campaign participation, and protest) and two sets of attitudes, support for democracy and support for national political institutions.

Conceptually, our model of political capital, illustrated in Figure 1, represents the four sets of effects we believe shape political capital.

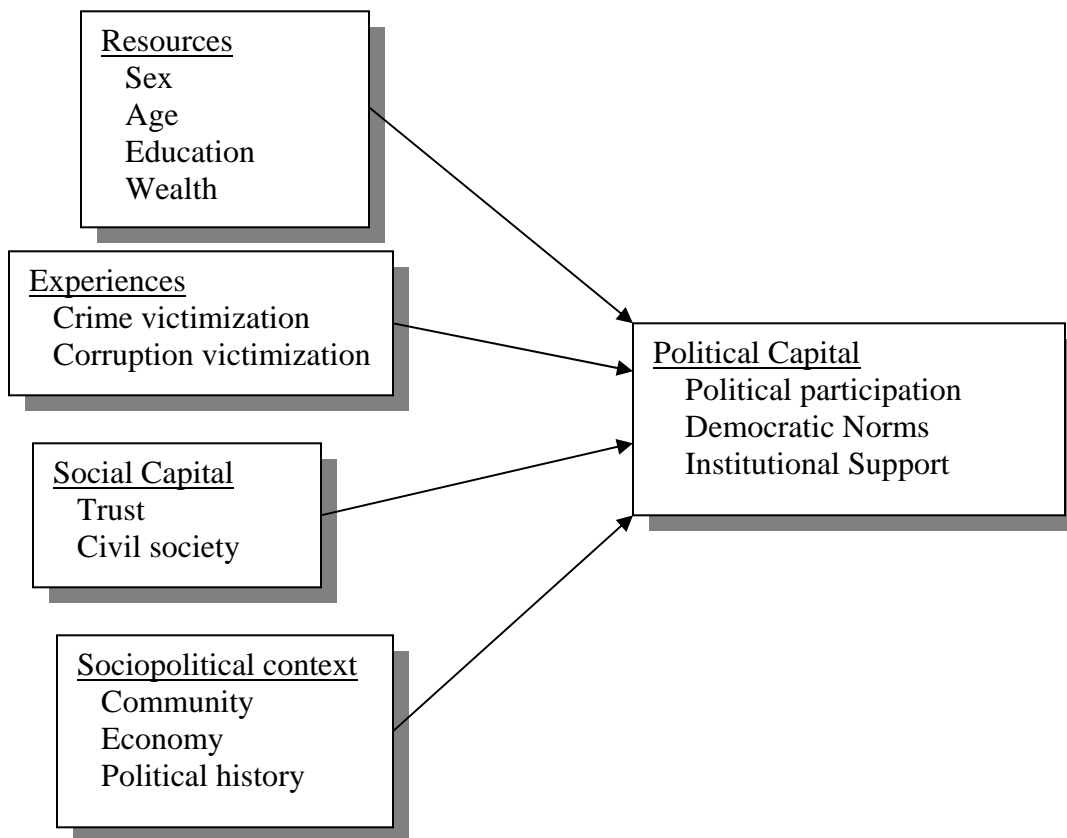


Figure 1. A model of democratic political capital

Drawing from this model and discussion, we specifically hypothesize that:

H1. Higher levels of political terror will associate with lower levels of democratic political capital.

H2. Higher historical levels of political terror will associate with lower levels of democratic political capital.

H3. Having recently experienced or currently experiencing a civil war will associate with lower levels of democratic political capital.

The Latin American and Caribbean Cases and the Data Set

We employ survey data from 20 Latin American and Caribbean nations, listed in Appendix A. These data were collected in 2006 by the AmericasBarometer and constitute national probability samples of voting age citizens.¹ The countries in the study vary widely along various

¹This study draws on the continuing series of surveys collected by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) and AmericasBarometer at Vanderbilt University, affiliated with the Center for the Americas at Vanderbilt. The 2006 survey series used in this paper were funded with the generous support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The authors express our sincere thanks to LAPOP/AmericasBarometer and Mitchell Seligson, head of the organization and survey team.

The sample design involved multi-stage stratification by country, and then sub-stratification within each country by major geographic region in order to increase precision (minimum of five regions per country, representing the major geographic divisions and taking care not to exclude remote regions). For sampling precision, each country substratum was further subdivided into urban and rural sub-samples because the inclusion of the rural poor was essential for a comprehensive picture of national political. The sample design also anticipated that some selected households could be empty (“blanks”) or that selected respondents might refuse to cooperate and thus leave us too small sample. As a result, in each country an estimate of non-coverage was included and we over sampled to compensate. In the end, because the actual sample N by country deviated somewhat from target sample of 1,500, a post hoc weighting factor is employed to correct for this small variation. The next stage in the sample design involved determining the neighborhoods in which the interviews would take place, to serve as the primary sampling units (PSUs). Census maps from each country’s respective census bureaus were obtained and, using population data segments, national survey teams randomly selected the maps from within each, and then randomly selected the segments for interviews so that voting-aged adults in each country had an equal and known probability of being selected. Finally, housing units within a PSU were randomly selected using the census maps and locally updated information. Once the household was selected, a quota sampling methodology was employed at the level of the household, based on age and sex, again determined by the most recent census data for each

dimensions. Seventeen are Latin American nations; of these sixteen shared Spanish colonial heritage, while Brazil was a Portuguese colony. Afro-Caribbean countries with three different colonial experiences are also included -- Jamaica (British), Guyana (Dutch), and Haiti (French). In populations, their sizes range from Guyana on the small end (under 1.0 million) to Brazil with 190.0 million in 2007. All have developing economies. Per capita Gross Domestic Product in 2005 ranged from less than \$1,000 in Haiti (lowest at \$454), Nicaragua, and Bolivia to more than \$7,000 in Mexico and Chile. Net economic growth rates for the 15 years prior to the survey (1990 to 2005) vary widely as well. Haiti (-11 percent overall economic growth per capita) performed the worst, with Guatemala, El Salvador, Paraguay, Uruguay and Guyana at or near zero net economic growth per head. Ecuador (20 percent), Bolivia (20 percent), and Chile (17 percent) led in net economic growth (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2007)

Although all twenty nations had formally democratic governments at the time of our surveys, many were emerging or very young democracies still struggling with institutionalization (Freedom House 2007; Polity IV 2006; Schneider 2007; Smith 2005) and surprisingly high levels of political and social violence (Gibney, Cornett, and Wood 2008). (See Appendix B for political sketches of the countries.) For example, Haiti's just-reinstated democracy was the youngest at the time of our survey there, followed by those of Mexico and Peru. Costa Rican democracy was the oldest, having been established in 1949. To be expected considering the conditions and recent events there and its regional-lowest prior experience with democracy, Haiti in 2005 had the worst Freedom House (Freedom House 2007) combined score on rights and liberties, with a score of 1.² In 2006 Haiti was just emerging from a period of violence under the tutelage of a United Nations' stabilization and advisory mission. The next worst democracy performers in 2005 were Venezuela and Guatemala (scoring 6). Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Chile in 2005 had the highest democracy ratings possible (12), followed by Panama (11). Costa Rica, Panama, Chile and Uruguay in 2005 had the lowest levels of political terror (1 on a scale ranging up to 5). Brazil,

country. The survey was conducted in main national language of the countries surveyed (Spanish, Portuguese, and English) based upon locally field-tested translations of items to assure comparability. To accommodate the large language minorities in several countries, the survey team also developed local language translations of the questionnaire, various Mayan translations for Guatemala, Quechua and Aymara for Ecuador and Bolivia.

² We have combined the two Freedom House 7-point liberties and rights measures and reversed their polarity to provide a scale ranging from zero (the least) to 12 (the most) democracy.

Haiti, and Guatemala received scores of 4 on the political terror scale in 2005. In most countries formal democratization had sharply reduced state-driven repression of political participation at the time of our surveys, but the political terror scale revealed high levels of personal insecurity and crime continuing in many countries.

In summary, the twenty cases of Western Hemisphere countries provide a rich array of political, institutional, economic and social conditions. Our survey data allow us to examine national probability samples of citizens covering a rich array of demographics, attitudes, personal experiences, and political participation.

Variables

We have argued above and elsewhere (Booth and Richard 1998a; Booth and Richard 2007) that **political capital** provides the critical linkage between social capital and the political system by influencing compliance with the law, cooperation with governmental institutions, and participation politically within or outside of officially sanctioned channels. Voting, campaigning, contacting officials, and protest may hold elected representatives and bureaucrats accountable through elections and directly or indirectly convey citizens' demands. Democratic norms limit the behavior of government and encourage attention to the collective good. Support for political institutions may reduce the cost of operating the state by augmenting compliance with policy.

We measure political capital with three indices, one measuring overall **political participation**, and two indicative of attitudes that straightforwardly have meaning for and affect the polity. (Details on the construction and distribution characteristics of all variables in the analysis are in Appendix C.) The participation index incorporates four variables -- voting, partisan-campaign activism, contacting public officials, and protest -- constituting behaviors that shape the makeup or outputs of government, or transmit popular demands or discontent with the status quo.

A measure of **democratic norms** incorporates items indicating citizens' approval/disapproval of political participation rights for ordinary citizens and for government critics. Three measure of approval of basic participation rights (taking part in election campaigns, organizations, and demonstrations) and four measure approval of certain rights for political dissidents (voting, demonstrating peacefully, seeking public office, and giving a speech on television).

Finally, **support for national institutions** measures citizens' perception that the institutions of government are legitimate. It is composed of respondents' evaluations of eight specific national institutions including courts, the justice system, the supreme court, the national electoral agency, the armed forces, the legislature, the government and the political parties. The index also includes items on

general respect for institutions, a sense that basic rights are respected, and overall pride in the political system

We measure social capital with an index of level of **civil society activism** composed of level of involvement in four different types of organizations, combined to form a single index. A second measure of social capital is a single-item measure of **interpersonal trust**. (The social capital literature is now too expensive to cite, but draws heavily on the theories of Coleman (Coleman 1990), and Putnam (Putnam 1993; Putnam 2000)).

We use six contextual measures to explore the impact of the system-level environment on political capital. We assume that the absolute level of systemic economic activity in a country will affect citizens' attitudes and behaviors, and thus employ a static measure of **GDP per capita in 2005**, the year before our surveys. We further assume that economic dynamics also likely influence political capital, that whether an economy is stagnant or growing briskly over a fifteen year span prior to the surveys will affect attitudes independently of the absolute static level of economic output. To assess the impact of the rate and direction of economic growth of the previous decade we include in our model a measure of **GDP per capita change from 1990 to 2005**.

A central assumption of this paper is that various static and dynamic political factors affect individual political attitudes and behavior (Jackman and Miller 2004; Muller and Seligson 1994; Tarrow 1996). This school argues that such contextual effects may be more important in shaping social and political capital than the opposite causal path so often emphasized by social capital theorists, in which social capital is argued to shape system characteristics. Various studies have previously found that levels of political repression (state behavior specifically intended to discourage political engagement) and of political terror (a climate of unrest, turmoil, crime, and fear-inducing violence not necessarily aimed at citizen participation per se) depress citizen participation and democratic norms in Latin America, Asia, and post-soviet countries (Booth and Richard 1996; Booth and Richard 2006a; Booth and Richard 2006b; Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer 1998; Shin 1999). In order to pursue this question here, we include in our analysis a measure of the level of **political terror in 2005**, the year prior to our survey (Gibney, Cornett, and Wood 2008). Further, because we assume that protracted episodes of political violence can have a lingering effect on citizens, we also include a measure of the record of political terror over the longer run, specifically the average level of **political terror from 1980 to 2000**. Finally, we assume that a civil war constitutes a political event likely to shape citizens' political culture and behavior, both during the event and for decades post hoc. Depending on its outcome, a civil war might usher in either repression or a democratic regime, so the effect could be either to enhance or to diminish participation, democratic norms, or support for institutions. We include in our model a dummy

variable indicative of having experienced a **civil war since 1980**, including an ongoing one.

A fifth system-level context variable considers a nation's prior experience with democracy over the long run, which can affect current political behaviors and attitudes. We therefore include as a control variable a measure of the nation's **history of democracy** from 1900 to 1989 (Vanhanen 1997).

To address a common methodological problem arising with OLS regression analysis, especially using national-level contextual variables, we have examined these six national-level context variables for multicollinearity. We find that three do not to suffer from multicollinearity – GDP per capita 2005, GDP change 1990-2005, and history of democracy; the highest bivariate correlation between any two is .239. However, the other three main systemic variables of interest to the analysis are multicollinear; political terror 1980-2000 correlates with political terror 2005 at .612, and with the civil war dummy variable at .781. To avoid problems with interpretation of the results, we model the effects of these independent variables related to violence and civil conflict separately.

We employ an ordinal measure for the **size** of the community of residence of each respondent. Because of their concentration of public agencies and generally better infrastructures, larger cities have more of certain resources for participation (information, communications media, accessibility of officials) than small towns or rural areas. In contrast, smaller communities provide proximity to neighbors and lower population size that may enhance interpersonal knowledge and networks and thus enhance political capital (Booth and Seligson forthcoming; Verba and Nie 1972).

Finally, we include four socio-demographic variables that reflect individual resources: **sex, age, education, and wealth**.³ These measure

³ Wealth is employed instead of income because the surveys revealed an unacceptably high rate of respondent refusal to answer the income question, raising a serious problem of missing data. Some 15.1 percent of cases in our sample would have dropped out had we used income as the economic status measure, with disproportionately high refusal rates in Haiti and Mexico. In its place we employ a measure of wealth of the household of residence based upon the possession of certain artifacts indicative of a range of economic levels ranging from indoor plumbing to the ownership of refrigerators, television sets, microwave ovens, motorcycles, automobiles, and computers. The bivariate correlation between the wealth measure and income is .511 indicating that wealth captures some part of income. We believe that wealth is also advantageous beyond its lack of missing data (none) because members of a household generally reflect the values of the class to which the pooled

the individual respondent's position within society that might shape political capital.

Analysis

We analyze these data using ordinary least squares multiple regression techniques. Tables 1 to 3 present our models which assess the impact of individual resources, experiences with corruption and crime, social capital, and sociopolitical context on three political capital variables. (Statistically significant relationships are indicated by shaded beta coefficients.)

We find strong support for all our hypotheses with respect to political participation (Table 1). (Note that t-coefficients presented in all the tables indicate statistical significance when greater than the absolute value of 2.0, as well as the relative strength of association among the variables according to the size of the absolute value of the coefficient.) As predicted, current political terror, a history of political terror, and recent civil war each reduce participation.

With respect to democratic norms, our hypotheses are only partially borne out (Table 2). While historic political terror and recent experience with a civil war depress citizens' democratic norms as expected (Table 2, models 3-6), although in some models not very powerfully, current political terror (model 1) relates positively to support for democratic values, although here the relationship becomes insignificant in model 2 with the Panama and Ecuador dummies included. We included these dummy variables when we saw that large improvements in GDP change seemed to markedly depress democratic norms (Table 2, models 1, 3 and 5) Upon investigating this relationship further, we determined that these two countries, Panama and Ecuador, had both very high historic economic growth rates and relatively low levels of democratic norms. We then reran the analysis including fixed effects dummies for these two countries (Table 2, models 2, 4 and 6). The findings demonstrate that these two outlier countries distorted the effect of both development level and the violence variables. The negative impact of rapid growth on democratic norms falls by almost half when we control for the Panama and Ecuador effects. The impact of political terror in 2005 falls to insignificance (comparing model 2 to model 1). The negative impact of a history of political terror and of a recent civil war on democratic norms is greatly strengthened with the added country controls. Recent civil wars and high historical political violence indeed have a corrosive effect on support for democratic liberties.

family income assigns one, whether the income is earned by the respondent, a spouse, or child.

Table 1. Effects of Political Violence and Civil Conflict on Overall Political Participation (t-scores)			
Sex (Male =1, Female = 2)	-20.350	-20.129	-20.143
Age	34.812	35.538	35.753
Total years of Education	27.753	28.895	28.780
Wealth	2.418	.559	.965
Victimized by corruption in last year	15.956	14.350	15.426
Victimized by crime in last year	10.140	10.445	10.257
Level of civil society activism	50.593	48.823	48.794
Interpersonal trust	8.463	7.924	7.349
Size of Community of Residence	-2.171	-1.310	-2.552
GDP per capita 2005	-5.713	-1.217	.735
GDP per capita change 1990-2005	-4.770	.411	-4.698
History of democracy 1900-1989	-12.114	-11.193	-14.459
Political Terror 2005	-19.675		
Political Terror Mean 1980-2000		-13.850	
Had a recent civil war			-19.933
<i>R-square</i>	.197	.191	.197
<i>F</i>	480.7	462.3	481.7
<i>Significance of the model</i>	.000	.000	.000
<i>Number of cases</i>	25,467		
Note: T-scores significant at $p \leq .05$ indicated in grey-shaded boxes.			

Table 2. Effects of Political Violence and Civil Conflict on Democratic Norms						
(t-scores)						
<i>Model Number</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
Sex (Male =1, Female = 2)	-7.653	-7.961	-7.871	-8.280	-7.795	-8.133
Age	.961	1.163	.520	1.047	.615	1.197
Total years of education	16.115	17.590	15.847	18.226	15.765	17.904
Wealth	2.690	-.415	2.338	-2.305	2.756	-1.383
Victimized by corruption in last year	1.227	1.753	1.227	1.406	1.605	2.131
Victimized by crime in last year	2.958	1.750	3.076	1.696	2.944	1.526
Level of civil society activism	-.570	-.316	.343	.230	.204	-.034
Interpersonal trust	11.319	10.168	11.187	9.483	11.163	9.431
Size of Community of residence	7.178	7.133	7.617	7.987	7.141	6.973
GDP per capita 2005	4.629	3.973	1.749	1.670	2.719	3.684
GDP per capita change 1990-2005	-14.391	-7.597	-18.431	-8.257	-17.910	-10.288
History of democracy 1900-1989	25.555	21.902	17.554	11.849	19.367	14.263
Political Terror 2005	6.550	1.769				
Panama dummy		-14.962		-19.864		-18.772
Ecuador dummy		-6.742		-9.463		-8.395
Political Terror Scale mean 1980-2000			-6.741	-12.933		
Had a recent civil war					-3.676	-9.297
<i>R-square</i>	.069	.079	.069	.084	.068	.082
<i>F</i>	148.5	146.3	148.8	159.2	146.1	153.4
<i>Significance of the model</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
<i>Number of cases</i>	25,907					

Note: T-scores significant at $p \leq .05$ indicated in grey-shaded boxes.

Table 3. Effects of Political Violence and Civil Conflict on Support for National Institutions (t-scores)						
<i>Model Number</i>	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sex (Male =1, Female = 2)	-.019	.230	.118	.213	.163	.278
Age	-.226	.656	.092	.618	.004	.545
Total years of education	-8.023	-6.634	-7.815	-6.677	-7.848	-6.831
Wealth	4.973	5.638	5.070	5.600	5.279	5.930
Victimized by corruption in last year	-15.718	-14.195	-15.796	-14.194	-16.223	-14.498
Victimized by crime in last year	-7.249	-7.480	-7.294	-7.471	-7.268	-7.493
Level of civil society activism	8.925	9.055	8.327	9.176	8.311	9.031
Interpersonal trust	21.596	21.084	21.636	21.068	22.147	21.550
Size of Community of residence	-8.642	-8.717	-8.858	-8.666	-8.511	-8.600
GDP per capita 2005	31.199	26.925	34.742	27.070	34.517	27.952
GDP per capita change 1990-2005	-23.795	.230	-22.917	-9.346	-18.454	-7.531
History of democracy 1900-1989	11.371	12.072	14.105	10.537	18.396	15.282
Political Terror 2005	-4.897	.535				
Ecuador dummy		-18.620		-18.974		-17.572
Political Terror Scale mean 1980-2000			3.281	-.451		
Had a recent civil war					11.278	8.113
<i>R-square</i>	.115	.127	.115	.127	.119	.129
<i>F</i>	257.5	267.0	256.3	267.082	266.5	272.5
<i>Significance of the model</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
<i>Number of cases</i>	25,655					

Note: T-scores significant at $p \leq .05$ indicated in grey-shaded boxes.

Finally, political terror in 2005 behaves as expected in depressing support for national institutions (Table 3, model 7). However, both higher historical political terror (Table 3, model 9) and recent civil war (Table 3 model 11) increase rather than reduce support for national institutions. This finding raises a question about the differential effects of current versus past political violence. One can easily understand why high levels of present insecurity might cause citizens to evaluate their political institutions negatively. Governments that cannot maintain order and provide personal security from crime earn poor marks. But why might having had high prior levels of violence contribute to later satisfaction with institutions?

We believe the observed effect relates to the nature of national institutions that emerge from a violent political crisis. This suspicion is confirmed by the large t-score for recent civil war (Table 3, model 11, $t = 11.278$) compared to that for the history of political terror (Table 3, model 9, $t = 3.281$), demonstrating that civil war is the most important of the three violence-related context variables for institutional support. Civil wars can contribute to democratization when such conflicts are resolved through victory or settlements. Rebel victories and negotiated settlements often allow formerly excluded power contenders to enter the political system under fairer participation rules (Rost and Booth 2008 forthcoming; Wantchekon 2004). Among our cases, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador had civil wars whose resolution included establishing a constitutional electoral democracy with greatly reduced political repression (Booth, Wade, and Walker 2006). We believe such changes resulting from the civil wars and the pacts ending them likely increased citizen support for their institutions. Although Mexico's Zapatista uprising of the mid 1990s did not capture power, in its wake the Mexican system nevertheless democratized. Fujimori's ouster from office in Peru and the decline of the Sendero insurgency brought reinvigorated electoral democracy. Colombia's electoral democracy has stabilized itself and survived despite an ongoing civil war. We speculate that even in these three cases, whose outcomes less definitively ended a war, the reaction of citizens to civil war's end and to democratic reforms is higher institutional support.

Among other notable contextual effects, our results show that stronger democratic histories contribute strongly to increased micro-level democratic norms and to support for national institutions (Tables 2 and 3). We read these findings to indicate that institutional democracy is to some degree self-consolidating because it builds loyalty to democratic rules of the game and democratic institutions. Yet, that said, a history of democracy is negatively associated with political participation (Table 1). Thus, we confront the apparent anomaly that the worse a nation's history of democracy has been, the more engaged in politics its citizens are in the present. Why might this occur? We suggest that citizens in younger democracies may be spurred to take part newly available political activities once denied to them by repression. The fact that voter turnout started out high in newly minted democracies such as Costa Rica and Venezuela in the 1950s and Honduras and Brazil in the 1980s and then eroded in subsequent elections shows that, while, in general, "founding elections" at the birth of democracy have only negligibly higher turnout rate than subsequent elections worldwide, in the Western Hemisphere such elections do tend to have somewhat higher turnout than subsequent elections (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2005).

There is evidence from Nicaragua that, after the Sandinista revolution ended in 1990, citizen participation in organizations and other

political activities declined. These changes occurred because political mobilization for and against the revolution waned, and a miserable economy sapped citizens resources. Further, the Sandinista National Liberation Front divided, lost adherents, talented leaders, and the capacity to mobilize from within the state apparatus, while new administrations raised multiple obstacles to popular participation (Cuadra 2004; Kempwirth 2004; La Ramee and Polakoff 1997; Vanden 1997). Similar demobilization may have occurred in other post-civil war countries with poor prior histories of democracy. Thus we suspect that, because many of the 20 countries in the sample are new democracies with low levels of historical democracy, they may have experienced a participation bubble that may eventually lose some of its air.

When it comes to behavioral political capital, after other factors are controlled, lower rather than higher economic performance modestly increases citizen participation, either as GDP per capita in 2005 and for GDP growth 1990-2005 for political terror and civil war models (Table 1). We are not surprised to discover that citizens of the poorer countries tend to mobilize somewhat more than those in better off countries, especially considering that our index of participation includes protest. There are similar findings for other Latin American countries based on different data (Booth and Seligson 2006). No effect is seen for the history of political terror.

While GDP per capita in 2005 has a small positive relationship with stronger democratic norms for four of Table 2's six models (1, 2, 5, and 6), , greater national economic growth from 1990 to 2005 associates with weaker democratic norms. As noted above, this is partly an artifact of two outlier cases, Panama and Ecuador, which have both high growth and low democratic norms. When we correct for these national effects (Table 2, models 2, 4 and 6), the negative growth-democratic norms association decreases by almost half. but remains significant. These results at least partly belie Lipset's prediction in *Political Man* (Lipset 1961), with the modest association between GDP per capita and democratic beliefs but the reverse relationship for GDP growth and democratic norms.

On the other hand, higher levels of economic performance (GDP per capita) associate very strongly with institutional support in our 20 nations (Table 3). Indeed, high GDP per capita is the most powerful influence among our variables (all models). Here too, though, greater GDP growth is associated with lower support for national institutions.

Social capital, especially interpersonal trust, has strong positive associations with support for national institutions (Table 3, all models). Civil society activism associates more strongly with participation than any of our other variables. Interpersonal trust also is positively related to participation (Table 1), though less robustly. All six models show that interpersonal trust associates with stronger support of democratic norms (Table 2) but that civil society engagement, theorized to be critical to the

formation of democratic norms (Putnam 1993; Putnam 2000), has no significant effect.

Individuals' personal resources and social positions also influence political capital. In terms of behavior, Latin Americans who are male, older, and have higher levels of education participate more; all these factors have strong effects. These resources have a more complicated relationship to attitudes. Age does not influence support for either democratic norms or national institutions. Women support democratic norms somewhat less than men but sex has no bearing on support for institutions. Education contributes positively to holding democratic values but negatively to supporting national institutions. Others have reported similar results, using data on eight northern Latin American countries from 2004. While education strongly socializes for democratic values, the information-gathering and analytical skills acquired with increasing education apparently undermine the evaluation of institutions' performance (Booth and Seligson, 2008 forthcoming).

Finally, personal wealth has a trivial effect on participation and on democratic norms. This calls into question Lipset's (Lipset 1961) influential argument that greater personal wealth would increase political participation and democratic norms. Other research from developing areas has also called Lipset's prediction into question (Booth and Seligson 2006; Bratton 2006; Krishna 2006). It appears that the poor have a predisposition for and practice of democracy substantially similar to those who are better off, especially when one controls for the effects of education and national contextual effects including political violence.

Conclusions

We have shown that in 20 Latin American and Caribbean nations political violence has a complicated relationship with political capital. As citizens in these countries work together, free of the high levels of institutional repression that once plagued so many of them, they convey their demands to governments, popular democratic norms develop and consolidate, and public institutional support strengthens.

Even though, in most of the countries we study, political terror is no longer, or is much less, utilized by governments to repress citizens' political activity, persistent and lingering violence reduces participation. Getting control of sociopolitical violence is thus a critical objective for any regional democracy that wishes to keep its citizens actively engaged in governance. Democratization itself obviously did not provide the increased personal and public security that many had hoped for. One encouraging sign here, however, is that current political violence levels have little effect on either democratic norms or support for institutions. Thus the region's democracies enjoyed a reservoir of commitment to democracy that in 2006 resisted contemporary political violence.

But, if current violence has little evident effect on democratic commitment, what is the effect of persistent, long-term political terror? Does it run the risk of emptying that reservoir of democratic commitment and engagement? Our findings suggest that it does. Not only does high prior political violence strongly lower current political participation, but it has a lasting corrosive effect on citizens' democratic norms. We thus conclude it may take decades for a functioning democracy to mitigate the lingering negative effects of political violence on current political capital. A culture of democracy and participation likely grows gradually, so maintaining democracy and social peace stand out as critical keys to eventually undergirding democratic consolidation.

Finally, does it matter for political capital whether past political violence took the form of a civil war, as opposed to merely high levels of generalized political terror? We show that having had a recent civil war strongly depresses contemporary participation and democratic norms, as do high generalized levels of political violence. (This is not surprising because civil war inflates political terror scores.) Thus while civil wars may help found democracies, they do not appear to build citizens' democratic norms and participation.

We find intriguing, however, that having had a civil war contributes to more rather than less support for national institutions. We conjecture that this post-civil war faith in institutions results from the resolution of the countries' conflicts. Wars ended, the new regimes mostly repressed their peoples less than their predecessor regimes, and formerly excluded groups gained entry to the political arena. Institutional support likely grew as civil life became more peaceful and formally democratic. Indeed, it makes sense on its face that few would decry institutions that were a self-evident improvement over prior autocratic regimes. Thus even though the region's post-civil war democracies may leave much to be desired in objective terms (Robinson 2003; Smith 2005), they enjoy more support from their citizens than do countries who escaped civil war.

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Appendix A. Countries in the Survey and Sample Sizes

Country	Unweighted sample	Weighted Sample
México	1560	1500
Guatemala	1498	1500
El Salvador	1729	1500
Honduras	1585	1500
Nicaragua	1762	1500
Costa Rica	1500	1500
Panamá	1536	1500
Colombia	1491	1500
Ecuador	2925	1500
Bolivia	3008	1500
Perú	1500	1500
Paraguay	1165	1500
Chile	1517	1500
Uruguay	1200	1500
Brazil	1214	1500
Venezuela	1510	1500
Dominican Republic	1516	1500
Haití	1625	1500
Jamaica	1595	1500
Guyana	1555	1500
Total	34201	30000

Note: The unweighted sample is the actual number of interviews collected per country. The weighted sample of 1,500 per country is used to offset the unequal sample sizes for comparative and pooled analysis purposes so that each country will contribute equally to the results.

Appendix B. Political Overview of Democracy and Civil Conflict of Countries in the Study

	Democracy			Recent Civil Conflict			
Country	FH 2005 ^a	Hist. of Democ. 1900-'89 ^b	Transition to Democracy Approximate Date and Comments ^c	Pol. Terr. Score 2005 ^d	Mean PTS 1980-2000 ^d	Rec. Civil Con-flict	Comments on Insurgency and Political Violence ^c
México	10.0	2.17	2000; PRI had dominated since 1929; PRI loses Congress '97, executive in '00	3.0	3.10	1	Chiapas uprising by Zapatistas of mid 1990s not formally ended but in quiescence for several years
Guatemala	6.0	2.47	1996; Peace accord legalizes left parties and reduces military role in politics	4.0	3.95	1	Peace accord ends civil war between URNG leftist insurgents and government/military that waxed and waned from 1960s to 1996.
El Salvador	9.0	2.45	1992; Peace accord legalizes left parties and reduces military role in politics	3.0	3.52	1	Peace accord ends civil war between FMLN leftist insurgents and government/military that lasted from 1979 to 1992.
Honduras	8.0	2.72	1982; Military-led liberalization restores civilian party competition; military role in politics further curtailed in 1990s	3.0	2.76	0	Several minor leftist insurgent groups during 1970s and early 1980s that abated with civilian rule.

Nicaragua	8.0	2.96	1990; Sandinista revolutionary government voted out, opposition coalition assumes power; military and police depoliticized	3.0	3.57	1	Following onset of FSLN-led revolution in 1979 US-backed rebels (<i>the contras</i>) fought revolutionary regime. Election and pacts in 1990 end contra war.
Costa Rica	12.0	8.99	1949; Civil war victory by insurgents in 1948 leads to stable democracy from 1949 on.	1.0	1.00	0	Political unrest involving domestic and foreign radicals occurred in 1980s, but no significant rebels.
Panamá	11.0	4.26	1989; U.S. invasion ousts military strongman Noriega, installs democratic regime.	1.0	2.24	0	Civic opposition parties mobilized against military regime; military largely dismantled after invasion and not reconstituted.
Colombia	8.0	4.29	1976; Competitive electoral democracy restored after National Front ('58-'75) 2-party power sharing ended and despite ongoing high political & narcoviolence	4.0	4.19	1	Leftist insurgency intensifies in early 1980s led by FARC and others; UAC rightist paramilitary; UAC and some left insurgencies demobilized and legalized, FARC, ELN continue war.
Ecuador	8.0	3.19	1979; Military ended its rule beginning a period of electoral competition; military coup in 2000 ousted president but electoral competition & civilian rule restored.	3.0	2.48	0	No insurgents, but indigenist movement has mobilized poor into political force demanding inclusion and contributing to instability of recent governments.

Bolivia	8.0	2.20	1982; Military ended rule and ushered in era of competitive elections and civilian governments. Leftist Evo Morales elected in 2005.	3.0	2.38	0	No insurgents. Indigenist movement has mobilized behind cocalero union head and now president Morales; resource-rich eastern region province threatening secession.
Perú	9.0	3.17	2001; Fujimori's executive coup of 1982 and dictatorship end when he was ousted in 2000; in 2002 Peru resumed competitive elections.	2.0	3.76	1	Tupamaro and later Shining Path leftist rebels wage civil war; SP defeated by late 1990s; military backed Fujimori but did not resist restoration of democracy.
Paraguay	8.0	2.02	1993; The military violently ousted dictator Stroessner in 1989; electoral system marred by violence, an attempted coup and irregularities, but opposition has won free elections.	3.0	2.76	0	No insurgents. Demonstrations and protests common, some violent.
Chile	12.0	4.61	1990; Pinochet-led military dictatorship voted out in plebiscite; major party coalition governs since. Competitive elections with recent socialist victory.	1.0	2.86	0	No insurgency. Military has withdrawn from national electoral politics but fears linger of potential for renewed military rule as military's subordination to civilian authority not clear.
Uruguay	12.0	11.32	1987; Military regime liberalized in mid 1980s; competitive elections since.	1.0	1.95	0	No insurgency; military in quiescent period.

Brazil	10.0	2.50	1985; Corporatist military regime liberalized and allowed competitive elections;	4.0	3.19	0	No insurgency; rural violence widespread, and police/gang clashes in urban slums.
Venezuela	6.0	8.01	1958; Coup ousted military dictatorship; long period of 2-party dominance. Election of leftist & populist ex-coup leader Hugo Chávez in 1999 begins reversal of most restraints on executive.	3.0	2.71	0	No insurgency; unrest in early 1990s laid basis for Chávez's rise to power; now in minority center and rightist opposition to Chávez's government mobilizes heavily in protest, and government countermobilizes.
Dominican Republic	10.0	4.08	1980; One party dominance of polity in 1970s followed by gradual emergence of electoral competition, especially following 1994 multiparty pact.	3.0	2.14	0	No insurgency; violence and intimidation in political arena are common with links between parties and criminal gangs.
Haiti	1.0	.31	Following decades of dictatorship, in 1991 and 1996-2001 there were brief, flawed electoral democratic interludes; in 2004 Pres. Aristide ousted; new national elections in 2006.	4.0	3.19	1	Violent civil conflict in wake of breakdown of Aristide government in 2004; police unable to contain violence, some associated with ex-military; UN stabilization mission helped in 2006 vote.
Jamaica	9.0	15.41	1962; Parliamentary rule since independence from Britain.	3.0	2.19	0	Interparty competition is intense and sometimes violent.

Guyana	8.0	13.21	1992; After independence in 1966 one-party rule prevailed; 1 st free elections in 1992, but subsequent elections marred by fraud.	2.0	2.24	0	Ethnically based parties contest elections, sometimes with violent clashes. Inter-ethnic and inter-party violence has declined since 2001.
<p>^aFreedom House Score for 2005, combined political rights and civil liberties scales, reversed polarity, range 0 (least democratic) to 12 (most democratic); from Freedom House(Freedom House 2007).</p> <p>^bVanhanen (Vanhanen 1997).</p> <p>^cSources: Polity IV (Polity IV 2006);Central Intelligence Agency (Central Intelligence Agency 2008).</p> <p>^dGibney, Cornett, and Wood (Gibney, Cornett, and Wood 2008)</p>							

Appendix C. Variables in the Analysis			
Variable	Description	Mean	Std. Dev.
Political participation	Index constructed from mean responses to voting in the last presidential election, participating in a campaign or election, trying to persuade another how to vote, contacting various public officials, and protesting; range 0-100.	28.86	17.98
Democratic norms	Index constructed from level of agreement with seven democratic norms related to participation by dissidents (to vote, demonstrate peacefully, seek public office, and give a speech on television) and for ordinary citizens (to take part in election campaigns, organizations, and demonstrations); range 0-100.	62.70	22.48
Support for political institutions	Index constructed from level of support for eight specific national institutions including courts, the justice system, the supreme court, national electoral agency, the armed forces, the legislature, the government and the political parties, as well as general respect for institutions, a sense that basic rights are respected, and overall pride in the political system; range 0-100.	63.63	22.10
Sex	Male = 1, Female = 2	1.51	.50
Age	Range 16-97	38.96	15.73
Total years of education	Range 0-24	9.11	4.52
Wealth	Index based upon household of residence's possession of certain artifacts, including television set, refrigerator, telephone, cellular phone, vehicle, washing machine, microwave oven, motorcycle, running water, indoor plumbing, and computer, range = 0-13	3.81	2.04
Victimized by	Index constructed from	.35	.80

corruption in last year			
Victimized by crime in last year	Have you been a victim of a violent crime in the last year? Yes=1, no=0.	.17	.38
Level of civil society activism	Index based on involvement in 4 civil society organizations (church-related, school-related, community improvement, business and professional), range 0-100.	24.75	19.49
Interpersonal trust	Speaking of the people around here, would you say the people of your community are very trustworthy (1), somewhat trustworthy (.67), not very trustworthy (.33), or not at all trustworthy (0)?	.58	.31
Size of Community of Residence	Capital city (5), large city 4(), medium city (3), small city (2), small town or rural area (1).	2.86	1.61
GDP per capita 2005	Range \$454 to \$7,239 (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2007)	3229.86	1964.50
GDP per capita change 1990-2005	Percent change in GDP per capita from 1990 to 2005; range -11% to 20% (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2007)	6.50	7.54
History of democracy 1900-1989	Mean Vanhanen Index of Democracy from 1900 to 1989; range .31 – 21.35; (Vanhanen 1997)	5.56	4.81
Political Terror 2005	Political Terror Scale score for 2005; scale range 1-5 (Gibney, Cornett, and Wood 2008)	2.70	1.01
Political Terror mean 1980-2000	Average Political Terror Scale score from 1980 to 2000; scale range 1-5 (Gibney, Cornett, and Wood 2008)	2.80	.75
Had a recent civil war	Dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).	.35	.48