Building a Following: Local Candidates' Political Careers and Clientelism in Argentine Municipalities

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ABSTRACT

Why do some candidates prefer to use clientelistic strategies to mobilize voters while others do not? Building on existing explanations that highlight the importance of voters' demand for particularistic goods and parties' capacities to supply goods and monitor voters, this article focuses on candidates' political careers. It argues that how candidates begin mobilizing voters to participate in rallies and elections becomes crucial in explaining their preferences to use clientelism. Candidates who receive a salary based on their ability to mobilize voters—paid party activists—are more likely to use clientelism than candidates who are not paid for their political work, unpaid party activists.

Clientelism works as long as voters who receive goods from politicians support them at the polls. In the United States, cigarettes, beer, medicine (in East St. Louis), coupons for free chicken dinners (in Oakland), and "street money" (in Chicago) are still delivered to induce voters to turn out at the polls (Nichter 2008, 19). European advanced democracies like Italy (Chubb 1981) still allocate public jobs based on personal recommendations. Candidates still buy votes in exchange for chickens (Schedler 2004, 84) and bags of rice in Mexico (Cornelius 2004), and mattresses, construction materials, and marijuana in Argentina (Szwarcberg 2009). Schaffer (2007, 1–2) reports the "dizzying array of material inducements" that candidates distribute in exchange for votes, such as soap, cement, whisky, coffins, cigarettes, bicycles, "and the list goes on."

In Taiwan, 30 percent of the voters living in the third-largest city reported accepting cash before an electoral campaign (Cheng et al. 2000); in Cambodia, the number increases by 10 percent (Collins et al. 2000). In Brazil, 6 percent of eligible voters were offered cash in exchange for their vote (Speck and Abramo 2001), and in Argentina (Brusco et al. 2004) and Mexico (Cornelius 2004), the number almost doubled.[1]

Understanding the conditions that enable candidates to buy votes despite the secret ballot has led scholars to focus on the type of voters, core or swing, candidates target with clientelistic inducements (Dunning and Stokes 2008; Gans-Morse et al. 2009), as well as on the electoral technologies, like the introduction of the Australian ballot, that make it more difficult for parties to monitor voters (Stokes 2005; Rosas and Hawkins 2007; Lehoucq 2007).[2]

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These reports notwithstanding, studies that examine variations in candidates' preferences to engage in clientelistic strategies are surprisingly absent. To mobilize voters, candidates can use clientelism or clientelistic strategies (terms used interchangeably in this article) by distributing particularistic goods to voters in exchange for their political participation and support. Existing explanations have focused on voters' demand for particularistic goods and parties' capacity to supply goods and monitor voters' responses. Yet candidates in Argentina and elsewhere can prefer not to distribute goods in exchange for electoral support, thus forgoing the use of clientelism.

In contrast to existing explanations that assume that parties having the capacity to use clientelism will turn to these strategies to mobilize low-income voters, this study argues that candidates affiliated with clientelistic parties can still prefer not to use these strategies. It argues that a candidate's capacity to turn to clientelistic strategies of mobilization is a necessary but insufficient condition to explain the use of clientelism. Thus, besides having access to material goods and a network of party activists, candidates have to prefer to use clientelism.

The argument advanced in this article sustains that how candidates begin building a following has important and enduring consequences in the strategies candidates employ in mobilizing voters. It draws on direct participation in over 40 rallies during the 2005 national election in Buenos Aires, 5 rallies and a primary election in Córdoba in 2006, more than 100 in-depth interviews with candidates and activists in Argentine municipalities, and interviews with key informants to describe the different career paths available and the preferences of 137 candidates. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, it shows that how candidates begin mobilizing voters to participate in rallies and elections becomes crucial in explaining their preferences to use clientelism.

The article begins by revisiting the contributions and shortcomings of existing explanations. It then presents the selection of cases and the data used to describe and analyze the political careers of party candidates. Next, it provides a theory about candidates' strategies to build a following; it examines first, candidates' capacities to use clientelistic strategies of mobilization, and second, their individual preferences to engage in these strategies. Empirical evidence is presented about candidates' political careers. The article concludes by analyzing the relationship between partisanship and clientelism and its effects on candidates' political careers.

Contributions and Shortcomings of Existing Explanations

Scholars of Argentine politics have consistently highlighted the loyalty of working-class and low-income voters to the Peronist Party (Mora y Araujo 1995; Ostiguy 1998; Levitsky 2003; Calvo and Murillo 2004; Brusco et al. 2004; Torre 2005). Torre sharply summarizes the Peronist Party's capacity to sustain a reserve of core voters by describing the organization's two pillars: "The first is a party identification grounded in a dense web of historically grounded ties of solidarity. Second, this party's identification is cemented by clientelistic political machines that give the Peronist Party a significant advantage in maintaining territorial control" (2005, 178).

Calvo and Murillo (2004) show that political parties' access to resources (supply side) and voters' dependence on fiscal largesse (demand side) benefit the Peronist Party due to the geographic concentration of its voters and its linkages with less skilled constituencies. Building on Calvo and Murillo's work, this article shows how candidates vary not only in their capacity to use clientelism, but also in the incentives they face to prefer to use clientelistic strategies to mobilize voters. By studying candidates' political careers, this study shows that the existing opportunities for candidates at the time of mobilizing voters are crucial in explaining, first, candidates' capacity to use clientelism, and second, their preferences to use these strategies to turn out voters.

In his seminal study about parties and patronage in England, Germany, and Italy, Martin Shefter (1977) argues that whether or not a party enjoys access to patronage at the time it first undertakes to mobilize a popular base becomes character forming and, as a result, has enduring implications for future party strategies (414). This article builds on Shefter's seminal work by focusing on party candidates' decisions, assuming voters' demand for clientelistic goods and studying different combinations of candidates' access to goods and their individual preferences. It also incorporates Simona Piattoni's 2001 contributions to Shefter's work by studying candidates' decisionmaking as a strategy in which candidates "identify the sets of incentives that make political clientelism and patronage into viable and acceptable strategies … while also pointing to the real maneuvering room left to individual and collective choice" (Piattoni 2001, 2–3).

In studying the Peronist Party, Steven Levitsky (2003) shows how loosely structured party organizations are often better equipped to adapt and survive in times of crisis than are well-institutionalized party structures. He explains how the Peronist Party's combination of organizational strength and flexibility has enabled it to adapt to the opportunities and constraints posed by a changing socioeconomic environment. Yet while Levitsky focuses on the advantages of institutional flexibility, this study will show how flexibility also serves to enforce a system of incentives that encourage candidates to use clientelism to mobilize voters. The three factors that Levitsky recognizes as fundamental to explain party adaptation and survival also serve to strengthen incentives that reward candidates, based only on the number of voters they mobilize. These factors are weakly institutionalized linkages between different sectors of the party, the absence of stable career paths and secure tenure, and the absence of stable norms of accountability or routinized decision rules.

As organizations that seek to win elections, political parties are not likely to punish candidates capable of turning out large numbers of voters. Moreover, even if parties were interested in inducing candidates not to use clientelism, they would be unable to achieve their goal because the same flexibility that enables parties to adapt disables them from disciplining their members. It is interesting that flexibility is what explains why, under the same conditions, candidates make different decisions.

Beyond flexibility, the Peronist Party has "a tentacle-like organizational structure" (Stokes 2005, 322) that enables it to make inferences about voters' electoral preferences despite the secret ballot. The tentacle-like organization also allows the party to distribute goods and monitor voters' electoral participation. In their study of vote buying in Argentina, Brusco and her collaborators (2004, 70–71) show that voters who receive a handout from a Peronist candidate are more likely to vote for the Peronist Party. The ethnographic and qualitative works of Javier

Auyero (2000) and this author (Szwarcberg 2009) about Peronist Party candidates in Buenos Aires and Córdoba provide further support for these arguments.

METHODOLOGY

Combining quantitative and qualitative data gathered between June 2005 and December 2006 across Argentine municipalities, this study examines municipal elected candidates' preferences to use clientelism in seven selected municipalities: José C. Paz, San Miguel, and Bahía Blanca in the province of Buenos Aires; and the city of Córdoba, Río Cuarto, Villa María, and Colonia Caroya in the province of Córdoba. These municipalities show considerable variation in partisanship, incumbency, population, housing quality, income, and education to provide suggestive findings.

To gather data on local candidates' use of clientelism, a few cases were selected that provided the opportunity to carry out extensive fieldwork. The locus of the study is the municipal level, where political machines are anchored. The majority of mayors and council members do not have large constituencies, high levels of education, or name recognition beyond their districts, and therefore they are unlikely to get promoted to the provincial or national level.

Combining direct observations of candidates' actions before, during, and after the national election of October 2005 with in-depth and semistructured interviews, I gathered information about candidates' capacities and preferences to use clientelism. Interviews with candidates ranged from a couple of hours to several hours over weeks. I also interviewed private secretaries and close advisers, who provided knowledgeable and reliable information about the trajectory of candidates they had known and worked for over several years, even decades, and with whom I was not able to meet. I traveled to the selected municipalities to conduct the interviews while also conducting archival research in national, provincial, and local newspapers.

Table 1 presents the data used in this article. Column 1 describes the names of the municipalities, and column 2 the number of elected council members participating in the 2005 election in each municipality. Column 3 describes the number of in-depth interviews with council members, and column 4 the number of semistructured interviews with private secretaries and advisers of council members I could not interview. Column 5 describes the sources of archival research in each municipality.

I traced the political careers of the 137 elected candidates in the selected cases to establish whether a candidate engaged in clientelism. I also interviewed local candidates and voters in other municipalities in Buenos Aires: Malvinas Argentinas, Hurlingham, Avellaneda, Vicente López, Quilmes, Merlo, La Matanza, Morón Ayacucho, and Pergamino. I also conducted fieldwork across other municipalities in the province of Córdoba: Mina Clavero, Yacanto, Villa Carlos Paz, and San Francisco. In 2009 I made a follow-up fieldtrip to Buenos Aires and the province of San Luis. The information I collected in these districts supports the findings presented in this article, and therefore I am confident that the selected municipalities are representative of a larger universe of cases.

Table 1. Data Gathered by the Author, June 2005–December 2006

Municipality	Number of candidates participating in the 2005 election	Number of in-depth interviews	Number of semistructured interviews	Archival research (municipal level)
Córdoba Capital	31	20	11	*La Voz del Interior* *La Mañana de Córdoba*
Río Cuarto	19	15	4	*El Puntal*
Villa María	12	9	3	*La Voz del Interior* *La Mañana de Córdoba*
Colonia Caroya	7	5	2	*La Voz del Interior* *La Mañana de Córdoba*
José C. Paz	20	20	0	*La Hoja*
San Miguel	24	17	7	*La Hoja*
Bahía Blanca	24	15	9	*La Nueva Provincia*
Total	137	101	36	

CANDIDATES' POLITICAL CAREERS

The theory advanced in this study assumes that how candidates begin mobilizing voters at the outset of their political careers is key to understanding their preferences to use clientelism.[3] The argument is that candidates who begin their political careers from the bottom up by mobilizing voters to participate in rallies and elections in exchange for a welfare program or a job in the municipality are more likely to engage in clientelism than candidates who did not pay voters to participate in politics.

In tracing the careers of municipal candidates in Argentina, the research found three consistent and repetitive patterns. First, candidates begin their political careers either from the bottom up or the top down. Bottom-up candidates begin working as community organizers at civic associations (*sociedades de fomento*), school cooperatives, primary care community health clinics (*salitas*), soup kitchens, churches, and neighborhood political associations, *unidades básicas* (base units) in the case of the Peronist Party or *comites* (committees) in the case of the Radical Party.

In studying the organization of the Peronist Party, Levitsky (2003, 66) describes base units as "the neighborhood branches out of which activists operate. … They tend to be run by either a small group of activists or a single *puntero* (neighborhood candidate) and her inner circle of friends and family." *Comites* are, and work, exactly like *unidades básica*s, but receive a different name due to their partisan affiliation with the Radical Party instead of the Peronist Party.

It is through their daily work in these associations that organizers build a reputation among voters as effective problem solvers (Auyero 2000), and it is on the basis of their community work that candidates who "are constantly looking for people to work in the neighborhoods" recruit them (Marcelo 2005a). The politi-

cal career of Rodolfo "Pino" Remigio illustrates the career path of a community organizer who began as a shantytown leader and became a currently elected municipal councilor in José C. Paz.[4]

Pino began his career in the biggest and most dangerous slum in José C. Paz, El Ceibo. Emerging as a natural leader for his charismatic appeal and ability to organize soup kitchens *(ollas populares)* during the period of hyperinflation in 1989, Pino became involved in multiple community activities, chief among them organizing soup kitchens and soccer championships. As a result of these activities, Pino's name was constantly repeated in the corridors of City Hall. For instance, the soccer tournaments that took place every weekend mobilized entire families, displaying Pino's popularity and leadership in the slum.

> At first, I went to the municipality and waited for my number to be called so that they would give me a can of tomatoes, preserves, and pasta to cook at the soup kitchen. Then, what was the deal? That I got things … and I began to grow.… One day when I was at City Hall, Ortega [a councilor in José C. Paz] told me, "I believe that you do a great job. Why don't you work for me?" "What will you give me?" "A job in the municipality (*un nombramiento*)." (Pino 2005)

From that moment on, Pino was a paid party activist. Not only did he receive a salary to continue solving voters' problems, but he also had access to municipal resources and contacts. His paycheck, however, came with the condition of endorsing Ortega's candidacy and delivering votes. Over time, Pino built his own political machine and became a councilor himself, illustrating the successful path of a bottom-up candidate.

Paid party activists are informal party representatives who receive a salary, usually paid with public funds, in exchange for mobilizing voters in their neighborhoods for rallies and elections.

> *Author*: Do candidates come to ask you to work for them?
> *Marcelo*: Of course, there are many candidates interested in Barrufaldi [the name of Marcelo's neighborhood]. After all, it is in neighborhoods with mud streets where they get the vote. It is here where they fill the buses to go to rallies and to go to vote.
> *Author*: How many people, more or less, live here?
> *Marcelo*: I calculate that there are between seven thousand and eight thousand people, and as there were no strong leaders here, the right-hand man of the mayor called me and told me: "Look, from now on I want you to work politically for me. What do you want?" "What do you offer me?" "I will give you a salary, and the opportunity to solve voter problems. In the future, we will talk." Great, I responded. It was that simple. Since that moment I became a paid party activist and work for him in this neighborhood.
> *Author*: What does he give you?
> Marcelo: He just pays me to do politics. I receive a salary as the director of the primary care community health clinic, and I have all day to solve voter problems. (Marcelo 2005b)

Marcelo, a party activist in San Miguel, still had to show—"to prove," as he accurately put it—his ability to mobilize voters to get promoted to party candidate. Activists who succeed in mobilizing voters are invited to work for the polit-

ical campaign of a party candidate. Activists receive a salary and become paid party activists in exchange for mobilizing voters. Among paid party activists, those who turn out the higher number of voters for fewer resources are those who will succeed in getting nominated and eventually elected as local candidates.

Certainly, not every activist is interested in a political career, and therefore not all of them engage in mobilizing voters to participate in politics. Yet among activists who are interested in having a career in politics, the competition is brutal. There are always fewer candidacies than individuals seeking to get them, and activists face constant competition from those in their own and opposition parties to turn out voters. The dynamics of intraparty competition induce candidates to engage in clientelism because if they do not exchange goods for support, someone else from their party will, and will get the political promotion instead. "There is always someone competing with you, ready to cut your throat [*serruchándote el piso*], because he wants to be in your position" (Juan Carlos 2005).

The second repetitive pattern found in the study is a systematic and significant difference between paid and unpaid bottom-up candidates. Whereas paid party activists' income is tied to their capacity to turn out voters, unpaid party activists do not make a living out of politics. This difference is a key component in explaining candidates' preferences to use clientelism. Activists who work in neighborhoods where voters demand clientelistic goods and whose income depends on the ability to mobilize voters are more likely to exchange goods for political participation than activists who work in neighborhoods where voters do not demand goods for votes or whose income is independent from their efficacy in mobilizing voters.

Paid party activists observe that voters participate in rallies and elections when they receive something in exchange, and hence, they learn that clientelism works. Moreover, activists observe that in cases where they are successful in mobilizing voters, they are rewarded with candidacies.

As a result of this system of incentives, candidates who begin their careers from the bottom up by paying voters in exchange for participation are likely to continue using clientelism throughout their careers, because voters who receive something in exchange for participation are likely to expect the continuity of the flow of resources in order to continue participating. In this regard, even when candidates who use clientelism prefer to stop exchanging benefits for support, it is unlikely that they will be able to do it without losing the support of voters who follow them, given that they provide solutions to the voters' problems. As a result, in a political market that has a large supply of community organizers and party activists willing to mobilize voters in exchange for a paycheck, clientelistic candidates are likely to continue using the strategies that have made them successful.

The political careers of unpaid party activists also hinge on their ability to turn out voters, but given that politics does not constitute their main source of income, they have less pressure to use clientelism. In contrast to Pino, Néstor Solis, another party activist in José C. Paz, did not believe in using clientelism to mobilize voters. Solis, who became involved in politics at an early age and was forced to hide during the last military dictatorship, was not naive; he understood well "the mechanisms that candidates use to build a following." Yet he preferred to mobilize voters by using "ideas and convictions, not money" and never accepted buying voter turnout to increase the number of supporters (Solis 2005).

The third pattern is the prevalence of top-down candidates who are well known and well connected, such as celebrities, athletes, writers, journalists, union and social movement leaders, and members of families with a long tradition in politics whose last names invite immediate recognition. Candidates can also pay their way and get incorporated into party ballots. In almost all cases, these candidates do not have political experience or a constituency, but their popularity, charisma, name recognition, or money makes them attractive to political parties. Celebrities, for instance, are more popular and charismatic than local candidates, and parties expect their attractiveness to translate into party votes. The case of Héctor "Pichi" Campana, a famous basketball player who was able to get elected as councilor and vice governor of the Argentine province of Córdoba despite having neither political experience nor a territorial base of supporters, illustrates this point.

Political families are prone to producing candidates among their children. As in the United States, the catch phrase of an era was "most people grow up and go into politics. The Kennedys go into politics and then they grow up."[5] In José C. Paz, Paula "Poly" Denuchi, the youngest daughter of a well-known party operative of the Peronist Party in Buenos Aires, got elected without having any political experience, merely because of her last name. In talking about her political career, Poly told me that being a Denuchi was like having a "rubber stamp on my forehead" (*sellito en la frente*), and she recognized that it opened many doors for her—as well as closing others (Denuchi 2005).

Given that top-down candidates get elected without the need to mobilize voters, they are less likely than bottom-up paid activists to use clientelism. Most of them already enjoy name recognition and popularity, or simply pay for their absence, and as a consequence, they are unlikely to turn to clientelistic strategies of mobilization.

The majority of municipal candidates studied, 125 (61.31 percent), began their political careers from the bottom up, while only 12 (8.76 percent) were recruited from the top down. This finding is important because it highlights that while top-down candidates receive much more intense press coverage than bottom-up candidates, the latter are the ones who constitute the bulk of municipal candidates. Moreover, although paid party activists are the most visible agents of political machines, they are, nevertheless, significantly fewer than unpaid activists, who constitute the majority of candidates.

Beyond Argentina, Barry Ames (1995) has found that individual congressional candidates' motivations are key in explaining the legislative distribution of pork in Brazil. Still, given that the focus is on congressional and not local candidates, the career paths the author describes—local, business, and bureaucratic—differ from those presented in this article. It is interesting that focusing on candidates' careers allows a whole set of existing theories and new hypotheses about the effects of past decisionmaking to be tested. In this regard, this work is the first step in a research project that seeks to trace candidates' political careers to observe and identify patterns and study their effects on parties' use of clientelism.

Whereas the empirical evidence used to test the argument advanced in this paper comes from Argentina, the article clearly demonstrates the importance of studying candidates' careers to understand their decisions to employ clientelism. In studying if the linkages between parties and activists are paid or unpaid, we will be better able to estimate a candidate's probability of turning to clientelism to mobi-

lize voters. There is no reason to circumvent the results to the Argentine case; it is reasonable to expect candidates' decisions and preferences of how to mobilize voters to have an effect on their political careers in Argentina and elsewhere.

Choosing Clientelism

A candidate's capacity to use clientelistic strategies of mobilization varies depending on the access to resources and on the existence of a network of party activists who contribute to distributing those goods to voters. Incumbent candidates are more likely to have access to material goods that enable them to solve voter problems than candidates affiliated with opposition parties. Incumbents, however, can reach for different levels—national, provincial, and municipal—leading to different combinations in the access to goods. Thus, a candidate who represents a party that counts on the support of the president (national incumbent), governor (provincial incumbent), and mayor (local incumbent) would have more resources than one who could count on only the support of the president.[6]

Incumbent candidates could, nevertheless, be unable to distribute goods in exchange for support. To be effective in using clientelism, candidates need not only access to resources but also a network of party activists to distribute those goods to voters who are likely to turn out and support the party. Building on this criterion, the second condition implies that only candidates affiliated with parties that possess an organization capable of distributing particularistic goods and monitoring voters' electoral support are able to employ clientelism.

In Argentina, only the Peronist (PJ) and Radical (UCR) Parties have had systematic access to public office and large networks of party activists capable of trading favors for votes effectively. Table 2 shows that only 24 candidates (17.52 percent) were unable to use clientelism; the remaining 113 candidates could turn to these strategies, and among those, 62.04 percent were affiliated with the Peronist Party, 7.30 percent with the Radical Party, and 13.14 percent with other parties. Whereas Peronist candidates could count on the support of the national, provincial, and local government in José C. Paz, Bahía Blanca, Villa María, and Colonia Caroya, non-Peronist candidates could count on the support of the municipal executive in Río Cuarto (UCR) and in the City of Córdoba (New Party).

After being fired by the governor from his post as a provincial anticorruption prosecutor, Luis Juez, a former Peronist candidate, created the New Party (*Partido Nuevo*, PN) to compete for office. The name of Juez's party summarized its leitmotif: Córdoba needed a change, something new, different from Peronism and Radicalism. Competing for votes in a context where the party leadership of the PJ and the UCR was heavily questioned, Juez ended Córdoba's historical bipartisanship, becoming mayor of the city in 2003.[7]

The majority of the 18 elected candidates affiliated with the New Party lacked networks of activists and were thus unable to use clientelism. Yet candidates who participated in politics with either the Peronist or Radical Party before joining Juez's party did possess a network of activists and the know-how to use clientelism, and some of them indeed continued exchanging favors for votes as in the past. Likewise, 10 Radical and 85 Peronist candidates had the possibility to engage in clientelistic strategies of mobilization.

These findings suggest that Peronist candidates were more capable of using clientelistic strategies than were Radical candidates, but they do not provide

Table 2. Incumbency and Partisanship

	Partisanship			Total
	Other Parties	Radical Party	Peronist Party	Number of candidates
Incumbency				
No incumbent support	8 (5.84%)	16 (11.68%)	—[a]	24 (17.52%)
Local incumbent support	18 (13.14%)	10 (7.30%)	69 (50.36%)	97 (70.80%)
Provincial incumbent support	—	—	66 (48.18%)	66 (48.18%)
National incumbent support	—	—	85 (62.04%)	85 (62.04%)
Combinations:				
National and local incumbent	—	—	19 (13.87%)	19 (13.87%)
Provincial and national incumbent	—	—	16 (11.68%)	16 (11.68%)
National, provincial, and local incumbent	—	—	50 (36.5%)	50 (36.50%)
Total	26 (18.98%)	26 (18.98%)	85 (62.04%)	137

[a] Indicates cases in which there were no observations.

information on candidate preferences. Were Peronist candidates more likely to prefer to use clientelism than Radical candidates under similar circumstances? To answer this question, I compared the strategies employed by Peronist and Radical candidates who had the same capacity to use clientelism when competing for the same voters.

How candidates mobilize voters varies on the basis of what they have to offer and what potential voters need. Candidates' capacities to build clientelistic linkages are determined by the combination of access to particularistic goods and their ability to distribute these goods to those voters who are likely to turn out and support the party. Clientelistic candidates engage in solving voter problems to obtain their electoral support, and will thus monitor their participation. Without monitoring voter turnout, candidates run the risk that voters will follow the political advice of opposition candidates and "take the goods with one hand and vote with the other" (Szwarcberg 2004, 4).

In countries where voting is compulsory, such as Argentina, and turnout numbers are considerably high by international standards (Cantón and Jorrat 2003; IDEA 2006), it is not possible to determine if voters turn out because they are mobilized, have strong partisan preferences, or a combination of both. Indeed, I argue elsewhere (Szwarcberg 2012) that party bosses compare informa-

tion from voter turnout at rallies and elections to judge a candidate's reliability and dole out rewards and punishments accordingly.

To monitor voter participation at rallies, candidates simply have to take attendance at party meetings. Mabel, the private secretary of a Peronist councilor in the city of Córdoba, explained that candidates use rosters "made in Excel and organized alphabetically" with the names of beneficiaries of welfare programs, public employees, and voters who had asked for favors. She said this while showing the rosters she makes and updates "at least once a week, and during elections almost daily" (Mabel 2006).

Monitoring voter turnout on election day is also easy and precise. Mayors assign candidates to monitor polling stations to secure and steal votes for the party; they evaluate the candidates on their performance of these tasks.[8] For example, on election day 2005 in José C. Paz, Domingo, a Peronist councilor, was appointed to monitor the election at a polling station located in his neighborhood. He had been "taking care" of this station for five years and thus knew "the face of almost everyone that comes to vote in this station" (Domingo 2005). Domingo had obtained a list with the full names and identity card numbers of the voters assigned to "his polling station" from the electoral authorities months before the election. He also had lists from activists working for him with the names of the voters they were going to mobilize. A candidate can be considered engaged in clientelistic strategies of mobilization if he, she, or a designated party activist takes attendance of voter participation at rallies.

Still, it is possible that a candidate monitors voter participation at rallies and not at elections, and vice versa. Building on Szwarcberg 2012, I expect clientelistic candidates to prefer monitoring voter participation at rallies rather than at elections because rally performance is easier to measure and reward than voter turnout at elections. The 2012 study of voter turnout in Argentina argues that clientelistic candidates tend to rely on clientelism to mobilize voters to participate in both rallies and elections and to monitor both political events accordingly.

The descriptive statistics in table 3 show that 40 percent of the candidates engaged in clientelism. Almost 68 percent of the elected candidates began their careers from the bottom up as unpaid party activists, 23 percent received a paycheck in exchange for mobilizing voters, and 9 percent were recruited from the top down to run for municipal office. Among top-down candidates, the majority were female candidates who, in most cases, were asked to participate to fulfill the enforced requirement that female candidates hold 30 percent of the ballot positions.

The findings described in table 3 suggest that candidates who began their political careers from the bottom up and received a salary in exchange for mobilizing voters were more likely to engage in clientelism than unpaid and top-down candidates. Observations about the relationship between candidates' political careers and partisanship also provide interesting findings. First, it is worth noting that among those who preferred to use clientelistic strategies, the majority were affiliated with the Peronist Party; moreover, Peronist candidates overall were more likely to use clientelism than candidates affiliated with the UCR and other parties, who in their majority did not engage in clientelistic strategies.

Second, in examining candidates' political careers and partisanship in table 4, one observes that the absolute number of Peronist and Radical paid party activists is significantly different: 28 and 9, respectively. But the finding is interesting because it suggests that how candidates begin participating in politics has an important

Table 3. Candidates' Political Careers, Partisanship, and Clientelism

	Did the candidate employ clientelism?		
	No	Yes	Total
Candidates' political careers			
Paid party candidates	7 (5.11%)	25 (18.25%)	32 (23.36%)
Unpaid party candidates	64 (46.72%)	29 (21.17%)	93 (67.88%)
Top-down candidates	10 (7.3%)	2 (1.46%)	12 (8.76%)
Candidates' partisan affiliation			
Other parties	22 (16.06%)	4 (2.92%)	26 (18.98%)
Radical Party (UCR)	20 (14.6%)	6 (4.38%)	26 (18.98%)
Peronist Party (PJ)	39 (28.47%)	46 (33.58%)	85 (62.04%)

N=137

effect on their preferences to use clientelism. Indeed, one could speculate that if the UCR had the same capacity as the PJ to recruit paid party candidates, we would not observe significant variation in their political careers and thus their preferences to use clientelism. Hence, it is not that Peronist candidates are more clientelistic than Radical candidates, but that Peronists can more easily pay activists to mobilize voters; and among Peronist activists, paid ones prefer to use clientelism.

Interesting, and contrary to the picture often painted of the Peronist Party as a giant patronage machine that uses the state to employ its activists, this finding suggests that the PJ has a higher number of unpaid followers than other parties. This could be because the PJ offers more possibilities for individuals interested in pursuing a political career, given that the party elects more representatives to provincial (Calvo and Murillo 2004) and municipal (Szwarcberg 2009) offices.

Third, besides differences in absolute numbers, all parties had a majority of representatives who began their careers as unpaid party activists, followed by paid party activists and celebrities. Fourth, there were no significant differences in candidates' preferences to use clientelism based on age differences (ranging from 24 to 65 years old) or gender (38 percent of candidates were female).

Comparing the political careers of a group of paid and unpaid activists with political ambition in José C. Paz between 1995 and 2009 revealed that only those who used a clientelistic political strategy succeeded in getting elected and re-elected. As candidates, former activists enjoyed more access to party goods and contacts and, as a result, party bosses expected them to sustain or, even better, enlarge the number of their following. To fulfill this goal, candidates who had been using clientelistic strategies to build a following were less likely to stop

Table 4. Candidates' Political Careers and Partisanship

	Other Parties	Radical Party (UCR)	Peronist Party (PJ)	Total
Paid party activist	4 (2.92%)	9 (6.57%)	28 (20.44%)	41 (29.93%)
Unpaid party activist	20 (14.6%)	13 (9.49%)	51 (37.23%)	84 (61.31%)
Top-down candidate	2 (1.46%)	4 (2.92%)	6 (4.38%)	12 (8.76%)
Total	26 (18.98%)	26 (18.98%)	85 (62.04%)	137 (100%)

using those strategies than had been proved useful in the past. All paid party activists continued using clientelism as elected candidates as they had in the past as activists. Candidates' testimonies suggest that changing from a clientelistic to a nonclientelistic strategy without certainty of the results was too risky. Most unpaid party activists, once elected, began using clientelism, while those who rejected engaging in these strategies failed to get re-elected.

More research is needed to assess the effects of candidates' preferences not to use clientelism, but these findings suggest a system that rewards candidates based only on the number of voters they mobilize, regardless of the strategies they employ. As a former paid party activist and currently elected councilor said,

> This is very simple. You are worth as much as the amount of people you can mobilize. You have a prize, a number. Your number is how many people you can carry to a rally and how many votes you can give in an election. I tell you, what you need to do is simple. How you do it, that is strategy. (Mario 2005)

As a result, it is likely that clientelistic candidates will continue using clientelism as long as they find it effective in mobilizing voters.

Conclusions

The theory developed in this article explains candidates' preferences to use clientelism based on how they decide to mobilize voters at the beginning of their political careers. Although it is always possible that candidates, like individuals, will change the strategies they employ over time, there are good reasons to expect paid party activists to use clientelism and unpaid party activists and top-down candidates not to use these strategies.

To my knowledge, all existing studies have focused on partisanship differences (Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2000; Calvo and Murillo 2004; Brusco et al. 2004; Stokes 2005) and political competition (Weitz-Shapiro 2012) to explain variation in political parties' use of clientelism. Political parties count on organizational resources, material and nonmaterial goods, and networks of party activists that enable candidates to distribute handouts in exchange for attendance and partici-

pation at rallies and elections. Yet we need to study candidates' capacities and preferences to use clientelism to understand and explain observable variation. Furthermore, in making policymakers aware of both the existence and the significant number of candidates who prefer not to use clientelism, this article will help to make a successful case for designing institutional incentives that will promote the political careers of idealist candidates.

Building on existing explanations that highlight the importance of voters' demand for particularistic goods and parties' capacity to supply goods and monitor voters, this article has focused on candidates' political careers. It has argued that how candidates choose to mobilize voters at the beginning of their political careers is a result of both their capacity to distribute particularistic goods in exchange for political support determined by their partisanship affiliation, and their individual preferences to engage in using clientelism to mobilize voters. Making the decision in a context where parties reward candidates based on the number of voters they mobilize, regardless of the strategies they employ, politically ambitious party activists who have the opportunity to use clientelism and work in low-income neighborhoods are encouraged to use clientelism.

Candidates who build a clientelistic linkage with voters at the beginning of their political careers by exchanging particularistic goods for political support are less likely to change their linkages once in office. This is because to get promoted, candidates have to show their ability to turn out voters, and preferring not to distribute goods could be too risky. If voters fail to participate or choose to participate with another activist or candidate, former clientelistic candidates are likely to lose political support and thereby lose their political careers.

It is only by studying local party candidates' political careers that we are able to understand the linkage between partisanship and clientelism at the individual and candidate level. In doing so, we are able to understand the mechanisms that explain the persistence and strong relationship between one party, the Peronists, and clientelism in Argentina.

This study finds that in contrast to other parties, the Peronist Party is the most successful in recruiting paid party activists who prefer to use clientelism to turn out voters. In this regard, it is not that all Peronist candidates are clientelistic, nor that other parties do not have clientelistic candidates among their rank and file. It is simply that the Peronist Party is more effective in turning paid party activists into party candidates.

Candidates who began mobilizing voters by using clientelistic strategies arguably find it harder to stop using these strategies once elected than candidates who have not utilized these strategies to mobilize voters.

In comparing the strategies chosen by candidates affiliated with the same party, competing for the same voters, and with the same capacity to use clientelism, variables such as age, gender, education, and income, as well as capacity to use clientelism, could be held constant, so as to focus on variation on candidates' preferences.

Further research is needed to explain why candidates capable of using clientelistic strategies prefer not to turn to these strategies. Still, in the Argentine case, I suspect that candidates' political activity and involvement in the resistance or exile during the dictatorship have an important effect in their future decisions about how to "do" politics. Most of those interviewed who had been persecuted during the dictatorship had a hard time "adapting" to the use of clientelistic strategies.

NOTES

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1. Schedler (2004, 2-4) provides a full list of countries and data about the reach of vote buying.

2. In contrast to party-printed and -supplied ballots, Australian ballots contain the names of every registered candidate and party in a single list and are government-supplied.

3. To distribute particularistic goods in exchange for support is one among many strategies that activists employ to mobilize voters. Díaz-Cayeros and his collaborators (2008) describe how parties employ a portfolio of mobilization strategies. This study focuses on the causes that lead candidates to employ clientelism.

4. I conducted over a dozen in-depth interviews with Pino over two months and interviewed different activists who had worked for him and key informants who had followed his political career in the district. I draw on these narratives to describe Pino's political trajectory.

5. The quotation belongs to James Sterling Young, the director of a Kennedy oral history project at the University of Virginia. Quoted in Broder 2009.

6. It is arguable that local support is as important as national and provincial support, given that municipalities can count on multiple resources to advertise political rallies, promote party candidates, and distribute goods to voters. Still, this study focuses on candidates' potential to use clientelism and not on the quantity of resources available to engage in these strategies.

7. The Peronist government of Germán Kammerath was such a debacle that party leaders knew that voters would not pardon the party's catastrophic administration of the City of Córdoba, and therefore Governor José Manuel De la Sota did not even campaign for the party in the most important district of the province. With the PJ out of competition, the UCR, whose past administrations had been prized and remembered by voters, could have benefited, regardless of the party's national defeats. Yet the provincial and local party leadership was fractured. Eduardo Angeloz, who had governed the province between 1983 and 1995, had been charged with embezzlement; and although he was found not guilty in 1998, there was still too much suspicion and discontent to nominate him again. Ramón Mestre, his successor (1995–99) and party rival, died in 2003. And Rubén Martí, who led the third faction of the UCR in Córdoba and was a former mayor of the city, was ill. Unable to nominate any leader of the party's representative factions, the UCR nominated Luis Molinari Romero, a qualified but uncharismatic candidate who was remembered for being Angeloz's right hand. In this regard, the party did not manage to fulfill the electorate's demand, a fresh face without ties to the past.

8. For instance, after recognizing her defeat in running for president in 2007, Elisa Carrió, the candidate of Support for an Egalitarian Republic (*Afirmación para una República Igualitaria,* ARI), mentioned that the absence of party monitors in some key districts led her numbers to fall.

INTERVIEWS

All author interviews were conducted in Spanish and translated by the author. In some cases, only first names are given to ensure interviewees' anonymity.

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Juan Carlos. 2005. Peronist Municipal Councilor. José C. Paz, September.
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Marcelo. 2005a. Party activist. San Miguel, September.
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Mario. 2005. Former paid activist, current municipal councilor. José C. Paz, November.
Remigio, Rodolfo "Pino." 2005. Municipal Councilor. José C. Paz, October.
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