

# Juan Mateo Montenegro Zarama

## Curriculum Vitae

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## Education

- 2020 **Ph.D. in Economics**, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)*, Cambridge, USA.  
Dissertation: “Essays on the Political Economy of Development”
- 2013 **B.A. in Economics**, *Universidad de los Andes*, Bogota, Colombia, Summa Cum Laude.
- 2013 **B.A. in Philosophy**, *Universidad de los Andes*, Bogota, Colombia, Summa Cum Laude.

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## Academic Positions

- 2020 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, *CEMFI*, Madrid, Spain.
- 2015-2017 **RA for Professor Daron Acemoglu**, *MIT*, Cambridge, USA.
  - Empirical analysis and modeling for the paper “[Weak States: Causes and Consequences of the Sicilian Mafia](#)”.
- 2015 **RA for Professors Benjamin Olken and Melissa Dell**, *MIT and Harvard University*, Cambridge, USA.
  - Spatial analysis and econometrics for the paper “[The Development Effects of the Extractive Colonial Economy: The Dutch Cultivation System in Java](#)”.
- 2013-2014 **RA for Professor James Robinson**, *Harvard University and Universidad de los Andes*, Bogota, Colombia.
  - Fieldwork monitoring and interviews for the production of a database of violence in Colombia.
  - Review of historical documents and quantitative analysis for projects related to the development and political economy of Colombia.

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## Teaching Experience

- Fall 2018 **Introduction to Political Economy**, *MIT, Ph.D. level*, Cambridge, USA.  
Teaching assistant for Professors Daron Acemoglu and Benjamin Olken.
- Fall 2018, **The Challenges of World Poverty**, *MIT, Undergraduate level*, Cambridge, USA.  
2017 Teaching assistant for Professors Esther Duflo, David Atkin, Frank Schilbach and Nathan Lane.
- Fall 2017 **Labor Economics (14.661)**, *MIT, Ph.D. level*, Cambridge, USA.  
Teaching assistant for Professors Joshua Angrist and Daron Acemoglu.
- Spring 2017 **Data Analysis for Social Scientists**, *MIT, Masters and Undergraduate level*, Cambridge, USA.  
Teaching assistant for Professors Esther Duflo and David Atkin.
- Fall 2016 **Principles of Microeconomics**, *MIT, Undergraduate level*, Cambridge, USA.  
Teaching assistant for Professor Casey Rothschild.

Spring 2013 **Theory and Fiscal Policy**, *University of Los Andes, Undergraduate level*, Bogota, Colombia.

Teaching assistant for Professor Leopoldo Fergusson.

Spring 2012 **Game Theory**, *University of Los Andes, Undergraduate level*, Bogota, Colombia.

Teaching assistant for Professor Marcela Eslava.

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## Other Professional Activities

2018-2020 Referee for the *American Economic Review* and *Economía: Journal of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association*.

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## Awards

2019 *Governance Initiative Grant*, J-Pal, Cambridge, USA.

2019 *Jameel Graduate Fellowship*, MIT, Cambridge, USA.

2019, 2018 *George and Obie Shultz Fund Grant*, MIT, Cambridge, USA.

2014-2015 *Castle Krob Scholarship* for doctoral studies, MIT, Cambridge, USA.

2013 *Summa cum Laude* in Economics, Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia.

2013 *Summa cum Laude* in Philosophy, Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia.

2010-2013 *Ramon de Zubiría Scholarship* for undergraduate studies, Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia.

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## Research Papers

- **“Monitoring the Vote or Voting to Monitor? Evidence from Two Large Scale Field Experiments in Colombia”**, with Natalia Garbira.

Can crowdsourcing technologies aimed at augmenting civil oversight of elections increase electoral integrity? We report the results of two large-scale field experiments designed to assess the effectiveness of online crowdsourcing technologies in increasing the engagement of civil society in electoral monitoring around elections in Colombia. We leveraged Facebook advertisements to encourage citizen reporting of electoral irregularities through official websites, and also varied whether candidates were informed about the campaign in a subset of municipalities. In addition to the expected informational effects - whereby citizen reports increased, and politicians reduced their engagement in electoral irregularities - the results highlight powerful salience effects, which operated by making electoral irregularities more top-of-mind to citizens. Specifically, the advertisements generated a large shift in the vote share of candidates perceived to be less corrupt and away from those perceived to be more corrupt. We argue that these salience effects are driven by a shift in voter preferences towards candidates they perceived as ‘cleaner’. We formally test this hypothesis in a follow-up experiment around the 2019 mayoral elections in which we vary the salience of electoral irregularities in the advertisements sent through Facebook. As expected, we find that the advertisements featuring messages emphasizing the salience of electoral misdeeds generate a larger shift in the votes for ‘cleaner’ candidates than the ones only providing information about the reporting website.

- **“State Capacity and Spillovers Across Enforcement Activities: Evidence from Brazil”.**

This paper provides evidence about enforcement spillovers across enforcement activities. It shows that public audits, aimed at detecting and sanctioning corruption by public servants, increase tax compliance in Brazil. As a source of identification, it uses the geographic and time variation induced by a large-scale random audit program conducted by Brazilian federal government on municipal governments throughout the 2003-2015 period. I begin by showing that municipalities receiving an audit in the past experience an increase in federal, but not municipal tax collection. I show evidence that these effects operate through a state capacity signaling channel, whereby audits and the subsequent penal actions, act as signals both of the capacity and the willingness of the federal government to enforce the law in general, which induces citizens to increase tax compliance. Consistent with this interpretation I show that local information about the audits, such as the one conveyed through local media or to neighboring municipalities, is key in determining the magnitude of these spillover effects across types of enforcement.

- **“How Close Is Too Close When It Comes to Public Auditing? Evidence from Colombian Municipalities”.**

Are more decentralized public auditing institutions better at increasing government accountability and reducing corruption than centralized ones? To answer this question I exploit the exogenous variation in the level of decentralization of local auditing institutions created by Colombian law to implement a regression discontinuity design and study the empirical effects of decentralizing public auditing. Using data from third-party investigations on corruption, I find that more centralized auditors do a better job at curbing corruption than decentralized ones. This result is driven by types of corruption related to public procurement as well as ‘influence peddling’. Furthermore, I find that ‘effort’ of public auditing institutions do not change with respect to whether these institutions are decentralized or not, which validates the use of the third-party investigations about corruption as a measure that does not confound the efforts of auditing institutions. Finally, I show evidence suggesting that the rules governing the appointment of decentralized auditors is an important mechanism in explaining the results in this setting.

- **“The Costs of Representation: Effects of Local Council Size on Public Good Provision in Mexico”.**

What is the optimal number of representatives in democracies? In this project I shed some light on this question by exploiting a series of population-based rules that determine the size of local councils in Mexican states in order to causally estimate the effect of an increased body of representatives on public good provision. Regression discontinuity estimates show that, on average, there are small negative effects of increasing the number of representatives on the provision of public goods. However, I show that these results conceal a substantial heterogeneity: while municipalities that initially have a lower initial representation show strong negative effects of increasing representation, municipalities with higher initial representation are slightly positively affected by increasing their representation.

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## Software Skills

- R, Stata, Matlab, Python, ArcGIS, QGIS, Knitro,  $\text{\LaTeX}$

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## Languages

- Spanish (Native), English (Fluent), French (Fluent), German (Intermediate), Latin (Intermediate).

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## Citizenship

- Colombian

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## References

**Professor Esther Duflo**

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**Professor Daron Acemoglu**

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**Professor Benjamin Olken**

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