

Chapter 5

Mejor Solo Que Mal Acompañado: **Political Entrepreneurs in Colombia**

Erika Moreno
Maria Escobar-Lemmon

1. INTRODUCTION

The Colombian political system has long been characterized as a laboratory of personalized politics. Although the long-entrenched two party system has given way to a more plural setting as of late (see Leal Buitrago and Ladrón de Guevara 1990; Moreno 2005; Pinzón de Lewin, Patricia. 1987; Pizarro Leongómez n.d.), personal vote-seeking (Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Carey and Shugart 1994; Crisp and Ingall 2003) and, as we argue in this chapter, entrepreneurial behavior remains the norm. Specifically, we suggest that the development of candidate selection norms serves as both a valuable independent and dependent variable in understanding the behavior of members of congress in Colombia..

As Siavelis and Morgenstern (this volume) note, recruitment has escaped close scrutiny across Latin America in part because it is often conducted out of sight and, often, informally. What is more, the Latin American context is often made more complex by the presence of myriad actors and varying norms. The Colombian case, however, presents us with a good opportunity to examine how selection norms developed and how they affect the pool of successful political aspirants. Although a great deal of activity occurs informally in Colombia, the use of personal list-PR in the context of increasingly decentralized nominations process, provides us with a means to measure candidate selection to national legislative bodies. The presence of a two-party dominant system, for most of its history, also allows us to focus on the development of norms surrounding nominations in the two largest national parties.

We argue that electoral norms and the dismantling of the National Front agreement along with the emergence of third party challenges have enhanced self-selection and the emergence of entrepreneurs. The result has been an increasing reliance on one's individual traits to further one's career, which tends to reward those who have distinguished themselves as individuals at the expense of party loyalty. In the following

sections, we provide a full treatment of the development of candidate selection norms and their effects in enlisting specific candidate types who behave in a particular way once elected—thus treating recruitment as a dependent and independent variable, respectively.

2. CANDIDATE SELECTION IN THE COLOMBIAN CONTEXT

The selection of candidates is understood as the confluence of party, electoral, and legal variables (see Norris 1996, Siavelis and Morgenstern, this volume). The emergence of entrepreneurial agents, as suggested by Siavelis and Morgenstern (this volume) is, likewise, the product of party and legal system variables that both encourage and reward independence. The Colombian context is, in many ways, a textbook case for the emergence of entrepreneurs. Party variables, particularly candidate choice, and legal variables, specifically features of the list system, foster extraordinarily high levels of independence across members of the two dominant political parties. The widespread replication of those norms and adept manipulation of the electoral system has encouraged entrepreneurial behavior across nearly every party elected to office in Colombia.

In this section, we develop an understanding of the adoption of selection norms that cause candidates in Colombia to be entrepreneurs. Although we begin with a brief overview of the context of Colombian legislative elections, our primary focus is the adoption of internal party norms that allow for self-selection and the exploitation of the peculiarities of Colombia's PR list system. Thus, we envision selection as a dependent variable in this section as we examine the uneven use of *operación avispa* (list proliferation under Colombia's personal list PR format). Specifically, we suggest that the adoption of *operación avispa* was a concerted, albeit counterintuitive, strategy to outperform challengers that emerged at the end of the National Front period. The 'go it alone' logic behind the strategy, which encourages independence during the campaign and beyond, benefits the party with the most candidate lists by rewarding it with seats while exacerbating self-selection norms within the party and, ultimately, diminishing party loyalty. We examine this argument using data from the Colombian Chamber of Deputies, 1958-2002.

2.1. *The Contours of Colombian Legislative Elections*

Legislative elections in Colombia are conducted every four years in March, two months shy of the first round of presidential elections. Representatives to both chambers of congress are elected in proportional representation districts that mirror departmental boundaries. Although individuals are elected on closed lists allocated under Largest Remainders- Hare rules, Colombian law does not limit the number of lists that parties can submit. Effectively, this allows parties to submit multiple lists, which historically reflected the presence of factions within the two dominant political parties (Liberals and Conservatives). What is more, since votes are not pooled to the party, the result is what some have referred to as personal-list PR or, probably more accurately, effective SNTV (single non-transferable vote) (Cox and Shugart 1995).

How does this particular electoral arrangement work in Colombia? The seat allocation formula used in Colombia is a simple quota and largest remainders system that allocates seats to lists that meet the electoral quota first. The Largest Remainders Hare quota is calculated according to a simple formula,

$$v / (s+1),$$

where v is the total number of votes cast in a district and s is the number of seats to be allocated in the district (or district magnitude). So, in a district with a magnitude of 26 where 860,240 total votes¹ were cast, the quota would be 31,860. Each list that meets the quota receives seats during the first of a two stage allocation process. For instance, lists with twice as many votes as the quota (or 63,720 votes) would receive exactly two seats during the first allocation (see List B, Table 1). Similarly, lists that meet the quota only once with exactly 31,860 votes would receive one seat during the first allocation of seats (see List C, Table 1). In this example List A (Table 1) earns the most seats (22) during the first stage of the allocation process.

Infrequently are all the seats allocated during the first stage because list vote totals are rarely perfectly divisible into the established district quota. Some list totals fall far short of the quota while others tend to have some excess votes that were not used during the first allocation. Thus, votes leftover after list totals are divided into the quota are used in the second stage of the allocation, with seats going to lists with the largest remainders.

¹ This total reflects the total valid votes cast.

So, the list that had exactly twice as many votes as the quota received two seats during the first stage of the allocation and none during the second stage because it has no remainder votes. Meanwhile, lists that were shut out of the first allocation because their vote totals did not meet the quota can put their remaining vote totals in the remainder column. As is evident in the hypothetical example in Table 1, List D has the most ‘remainder’ votes and is the only list to receive a seat during this second stage, since there is only one left to allocate. It is also worth noting that the seat allocated through remainders was “cheaper” than the seat earned by any of the lists that won quota seats. After all, List D’s seat cost 30,000 votes compared to the 31,860 votes needed for a quota seat. While List D’s seat total is small in comparison to the number of seats earned by List A, each of the seats earned through quota allocation are still far more expensive than List D’s single remainder seat.

[Tables 1 and 2 here]

Simple quota and largest remainders allocation systems are not rare across the universe of PR systems, yet typically each list represents a single partisan effort. Colombia, however, is a radical departure from the norm since parties do not submit a single party list and votes are not pooled across the party. The implications of this peculiarity are nontrivial. For one, parties that submit multiple lists tend to win seats relatively cheaply through remainders allocation, especially in contrast to single party lists. Table 2 compares the effects of a party running multiple lists vs. a single list. The first two columns show, using actual data from the 1990 lower house election in Antioquia, how seats were allocated when parties submit multiple lists and votes are not pooled to the party level. Liberals, in this case, submitted fewer lists than Conservatives and won a total of 14 seats: 10 seats by meeting the quota and an additional 4 seats through remainders allocation. Conservatives, however, won a total of 12 seats: 5 seats by meeting the quota and 7 remainders seats. Other party lists, which in this case, represent several different parties and coalitions, won no seats in this election.

However, if all Liberal, Conservative, and other parties submitted a single list—and votes were pooled to the party—we see different outcomes (see final two columns in Table 2). For one, the party that submitted the most lists, in this case the Conservatives, earns a total of 11 seats when we assume a single party list; a loss of one seat by pooling

votes. Thus, the use of the multi-list strategy tends to provide an advantage for the party with the most lists. It is also worth noting that the seat that would have otherwise gone to the Conservative party under *operación avispa*, goes to the ‘other’ party list, which did not earn a seat in the earlier example. Thus, when votes are pooled to the party level, this particular electoral rule tends to work as originally intended; that is, it tends to reward political minorities with seats. However, when votes are not pooled and parties are permitted to submit multiple lists, some of those dominant party lists get treated as political minorities and earn seats relatively cheaply. Thus, what we see with the multi-list strategy is a widespread manipulation of a mechanism intended to provide benefits to other actors.

Figure 1 (below) provides a vivid demonstration of the number of the mean number of lists submitted to Lower House contests between 1958 and 2002. Although the period between 1958 and 1974 does not represent a period of absolute competitiveness,² it is important to note that even during that period we see fluctuations in the number of lists presented by each party. More importantly, beginning in 1974, we see the number of lists increase dramatically—with some of the most dramatic increases evident in the 1990’s and perpetrated by the Liberal party.

[Figures 1 and 2 here]

List proliferation is most pronounced when you examine the total number of lists submitted for lower house contests over time. Figure 1 provides a stark depiction of the dramatic proliferation of lists. The Liberal party alone progressed from a mere 28 lists in 1958, to well over 300 in 2002. In similar fashion, new and other parties—which were absent until 1974—most recently ran over 500 lists in the 2002 elections. As before, it is important to note that the increase in other lists is also accompanied by a dramatic increase in the number of new parties that emerge over time, exceeding 80 by 2002. Thus, the increasing number of lists does not reflect the presence of more seats, as the

² This was a period marked by a pacted agreement between Liberals and Conservatives, known as the National Front (1958-1974), which required parity and alternation in government offices, including the national congress. Thus, elections were not entirely decisive in determining who was elected to congress, but rather which representatives of each party were permitted to have a seat at the table that was already divided between Liberals and Conservatives only (see Hoskin 1971).

size of the lower house also decreased during the post-National Front period and the average district magnitude decreased slightly from about 7 prior to 1991 to about 5.³ Rather it reflects intense competition, especially within the Liberal party. It is also clear that the Liberals do a better job of winning seats through list proliferation, winning an average of 2 seats in each department after 1974, rising to nearly 4 seats per department in 1990. Meanwhile the Conservatives seem to gain fewer seats per department—dropping to less than 1 by 2002 (see Figure 2).

List proliferation is at the heart of *operación avispa* (or operation wasp); a term that evokes a swarm of lists competing for seats and overwhelming all others in its wake. Though this strategy may seem initially counterintuitive, its application has been very beneficial for dominant parties, particularly for the Liberal party which tends to submit the most lists in each district (Cox and Shugart 1995; Rodriguez-Raza 2002; Ungar Bleier 2003). As Cox and Shugart (1995, 452) note, the Liberal party in Colombia has grown increasingly savvy in its ability to avoid spreading out its votes—and diluting its seat share as a result— in lower house elections.

How did list proliferation (*operación avispa*) become such a prominent feature of the Colombian political system? We examine list proliferation as a function of forces that only begin to exert themselves as the National Front agreement ended.

2.2. *The Effect of Party Strategy on Self-Selection Norms*

Independent process variables, party and legal variables, help shape the kinds of candidates that emerge. Colombia's dominant political parties, the Liberal and Conservative Parties, both share long histories that are intertwined with the nation's conflicts—most notably during the period of *La Violencia* (1948-1954). Following years of internecine turmoil between two traditional parties during the *La Violencia* and a brief military interregnum, the Colombian political system began a tentative, pacted return to

³ The Chamber of Deputies continues to be elected from multi-member department level districts. District magnitude varies from 2 – 18 in the chamber although the overall number of deputies in the chamber fell from 199 to 161 after the adoption of the 1991 national constitution.

democracy in 1957.⁴ Today's Liberal and Conservative parties have evolved from those days, with intra-party conflict supplanting inter-party conflict in the modern period, but selection norms are the result of events that transpired during the National Front period and took on new significance in its aftermath (Latorre 1974; Pinzón de Lewin 1987).

The National Front ensured alternation and parity of representation for Liberals and Conservatives until 1974. While parity in legislative bodies reduces inter-party conflict because it ensures that both parties get half of the seats,⁵ it tended to increase intra-party competition since partisans are forced to compete against each other for a limited number of seats. As intra-party competition increased and fissures formed, often along family lines, an increasing number of unofficial party lists competed for seats in congress (Dix 1987; Osterling 1989; Hartlyn 1988). The most notable rupture occurred during the 1968 election, where unofficial lists were recorded as party dissidents (see Figure 3).

The possibility of submitting multiple lists was—at least initially—a means to avoid difficult choices at the nomination stage. Access to the party label, at least during the National Front, was largely determined by faction heads—often prominent national party figures with previous political experience. Rather than choose from among factions that represented some of the most prominent families in both parties, running official and unofficial lists allowed party leaders to lay responsibility at voters' doorsteps. It was a compromise position that, while it did not mollify critics of those in charge at the national level, allowed for a simple democratic solution (Dix 1980, 1987; Giraldo 2003; Martz 1999; Osterling 1989). The National Front period saw conflicts within the Liberal party between *Alvaristas* (followers of Alvaro Gomez Hurtado) and *Lopistas* (Lopez Michelson), often reproducing those conflicts at the legislative and subnational levels. Similarly, the Conservatives were split between the *Laureanistas* (followers of former president and ultra-conservative, Laureano Gomez) and *Ospinistas* (followers of Mariano Ospina Pérez). In both parties, new factions emerged over time, including the *Pastranistas* (followers of Misael Pastrana, and, eventually supporters of Andres

⁴ Agreement between Liberals, Conservatives, and the military resulted in the National Front, which lasted from 1954 to 1974.

⁵ The Constitutional Reform of 1968 removed the parity requirement for subnational offices, notably state assembly and municipal council elections.

Pastrana, scion of one of several political families in Colombia and former president), which continued the tradition of intra-party contestation. Indeed, some have noted that lists representing different wings of each party were also used as an unofficial primary for aspiring presidential candidates (see Martz 1999). During this period, it might be appropriate to classify the heads of these lists as entrepreneurs and refer to those lower down on the list as faction loyalists (to use the Siavelis & Morgenstern typology). However, this designation would not survive the National Front period. As the National Front ended the faction loyalists were replaced by entrepreneurs for reasons we explore more fully below. Yet, the fact remains that for most of the National Front period Liberals and Conservatives submitted an average of less than 100 lists total per year, or about 3 lists per department.⁶

As the country modernized and partisan attachments weakened due to the staid parameters of bipartisan rule, the work of turning out voters and electing candidates fell increasingly to local *gamonales* (or local bosses) (Dix 1987; Osterling 1989). As it became increasingly clear to aspirants that national party leaders were willing to allow the voting public a say in deciding factional disputes—by allowing effective primaries to take place during congressional contests—they turned increasingly to mobilizing voters through greater use of *gamonales* belonging to their faction. The result was a weakening of national party leaders and a rapid decentralization of the nominations process (Giraldo 2003; Hartlyn 1988). Given the absence of formalized rules regarding nominations, this process of decentralization gave way to the inevitable self-selection process that currently guides ballot access. As long as you could gain the support of a *gamonal*, you stood a good chance of winning a seat. Thus, candidate selection norms emerged from a weakening of internal party rules—which grew more permissive and decentralized over time for both major parties—that seriously compromises the loyalty of partisans to their party. The effect of this decentralized nomination process is evident in Figure 3.

[Figure 3 here]

As the National Front drew to a close—a process known as the *desmonte*—and restrictions on participation by other actors were loosened, traditional parties faced

⁶ It is worth highlighting that this number does not come close to the peak of over 300 lists (Liberal)—about 9 lists per department; a threefold increase by 2002.

growing opposition. While both parties responded by submitting multiple lists, the Liberal party is the most prolific of the two. The legal variables associated with the electoral system do not necessarily encourage this behavior; however they do not prohibit it. In this case it is the combination of party and legal variables that allowed parties to take advantage of this loophole in the electoral rules which resulted in list proliferation among the traditional parties. We posit that Liberal list proliferation, which reflects lax control of ballot access, became an increasingly profitable endeavor since remainder seats could be earned ‘on the cheap’ since votes are not pooled to the party.

As challengers emerged, as a result of the *desmonte*, traditional party members become acutely aware of the implications for their futures. While some suggest that *operación avispa* is, at best, a reflection of the lack of party discipline (Hartlyn 1988, 161), others suggest it is the reflection of a coordinated strategy (Osterling 1989, 164; Ungar Bleier 2003). Alfonso López Michelson, former Liberal President and national figure, is credited as its intellectual author among those who see list proliferation as a conscious strategy (Ungar Bleier 1993). Rather than cede territory to upstart political parties some of which had lured defectors from the major parties—like the populist ANAPO (Alianza Nacional Popular or National Popular Alliance)—the Liberal party, in particular, left the gates open and fully encouraged aspirants (regardless of their affiliation to the party) to run on the party label by submitting their own lists. In contrast, the Conservatives seem far more tentative in their use of *avispa*, tending to present far fewer lists per district than their Liberal counterparts (Ungar Bleier 1993).

We examine the use of *operación avispa* by the Liberal Party in a relatively modest multivariate negative binomial regression model (see Table 3 below). Since we are primarily concerned with the effect of new party competition on list proliferation by Liberals, the results presented in the first two models are particularly relevant to this discussion.

[Table 3 here]

When we regress the number of other lists on the number of Liberal lists submitted since 1958, controlling for dramatic drops in the size of the lower chamber during 1968 and 1991, we find that there is indeed a relationship between the rise of challengers and Liberal party strategy. Specifically, an increase in the number of lists

presented by other actors—a reality made possible by the removal of restrictions on party registration and parity under the National Front (legal variables)—tends to spur an increase in the number of Liberal lists that are presented. More specifically, model 2 shows that the number of other party lists at $t-1$ is strongly predictive of an increase in the number of lists Liberals present at time t . The coefficient for other lists at $t-1$ is significant beyond the .001 level and the model has notable predictive capability (Pseudo R2 of .22).⁷

Simulations that leave control variables at their mode, suggest that as other parties increase the number of lists submitted in each district from 0 to 4, we would expect a .14 increase in the number of lists submitted by the Liberal party in each district.⁸ If we multiple that increase by the number of departmental districts in Colombia, we'd see a corresponding 4.48 increase in the number of Liberal lists presented across the country. An increase from 4 to 13 other party lists, a one standard deviation increase, would produce a .35 increase in the number of Liberal lists in each district—or 11.2 Liberal lists nationwide. Similarly, an increase from 0 to 131 other party lists (the maximum) would spur an increase of 14.88 Liberal lists per district (or 448 lists across the country!) Thus, the results suggest that the increased presence of third party challengers has a measurable and nontrivial impact on Liberal party strategy. In contrast, models 3 and 4, which explore the effect of other party lists on Conservative party strategy, suggest that the Conservatives did not respond the same way. Rather than encourage list proliferation to crush new actors, Conservatives seemed to issue fewer lists as a response to prior challenges. The literature seems to suggest greater discretion in issuing lists within the Conservative party as a primary rationale for this behavior (see Ungar Bleier 1993). While it is mere speculation at this point, Conservative hesitance to fully promote *avispa* in a manner similar to their Liberal counterparts may belie an interest in balancing seat gains with maintaining some degree of loyalty, especially early on.

While we refer to *operación avispa* (or list proliferation) as a Liberal party strategy, the 'go it alone' nature of the endeavor means that individuals do not necessarily

⁷ It is also worth noting that several lower chamber districts reached statistical significance, including the capital district (Bogotá, D.C.), Antioquia, Bolívar, Boyacá, Caldas, Casanare, Cesar, Cundinamarca, Nariño, Sucre, and Vaupes.

⁸ Expected results obtained by using CLARIFY (see Tomz, Wittenberg, and King)

see this as a means to benefit the party. While *avispa* may have evolved from a means to avoid tough choices to a concerted strategy to limit gains by new actors, its perpetrators have less loyalty to the party than their predecessors. When *avispa* was still in its infancy in the 1970's and early 1980's, many of the lists that appeared were still closely tied to one of a handful of prominent political families. Even dissidents within the parties were clearly identified with specific leaders, like Alfonso López Michelson who headed the long-defunct MRL (*Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal* or Liberal Revolutionary Movement) or Luis Carlos Galán who headed *Nuevo Liberalism* (New Liberalism). However, as the role of local vote brokers became more decisive in securing victory and as national leaders have drifted out of the political scene, it has become far less clear, to observers and participants alike, how lists and factions are related to the national directorate or even to other factions within the Liberal party. Rather, most scholars and politicians alike seem to see individual lists as *microempresas electorales* (or electoral micro-enterprises) a complete atomization of electoral efforts, even within the major parties. Indeed, the rapid acceleration of *operación avispa* when parties choose not to exert veto power over access to the party label makes it difficult to see how loyalty between partisans, leaders, and rank and file members could be established. To use the categories developed by Siavelis and Morgenstern it is this evolution that leads us to label congressmen in Colombia as entrepreneurs. While a case could undoubtedly be made that in the earlier period members of a list were faction loyalists, as national party control over who was on a list eroded and the go-it-alone nature increased as candidates knew that only the head of the list was likely to be elected Colombian congressional candidates became entrepreneurs.

It is also worth highlighting that *avispa* is a strategy that has spread to myriad electoral contests, including subnational elections. While this strategy is understandable in multi-seat contests, where—as we noted earlier—parties that submit more lists are likely to benefit most, list proliferation seems counterintuitive in single-seat contests. After all, if one party submits several candidates to compete in a single seat contest, like a gubernatorial post, then it is likely to split the vote and possibly lose the seat to a party that submits a single candidate or, at a minimum, does not divide up the vote in the same way. Nonetheless, gubernatorial contests have been marked by a remarkable number of

‘excess’ Liberal candidates competing in the general election. Consider Table 4, which provides a count of the number of candidates running for departmental governorships from 1991-2000.⁹

Although the Liberal party ran fewer lists in 2000 than in previous years, it is clear that they tend to run, on average, more than 1 candidate per contest—in some cases up to 4 or 5 Liberal candidates competed for a single seat. This stands in contrast to the number of Conservative and new party members competing for seats in a single gubernatorial contest. While the effectiveness of this strategy at the state level probably requires significant coordination and is beyond the scope of this paper, it is clear that selection norms cultivated at the national level have trickled down to the subnational level.¹⁰ Candidates at the national and subnational levels are forced to compete without being able to claim the mantle of the party—which might otherwise prove to be a useful voting cue for some in the electorate— while fending off challengers from other parties.

[Table 4 here]

Thus, in some ways, the realities facing candidates reflected an old proverb, *mejor solo que mal acompañado*. Not only does the saying reflect the relative lack of concern for the group, in this case the party, it also highlights the individualized nature of the effort. In the following section, we explore exactly *what kinds of candidates* do best in multi-list contests for legislative seats and the resultant implications for behavior.

3. LIST PROLIFERATION AND RECRUITMENT OF SPECIFIC CANDIDATES

What are the implications of running multiple lists (*operación avispa*) in Colombia? For one, it reinforces to members of the party that they are on their own. Since success is not tied to partisan efforts and intra-party competition is high, partisan affiliation loses its relevance. Thus, the nature of electoral competition, resulting from

⁹ Direct elections for this position do not begin until 1991. We capture the full range of candidacy information for governor elections in Colombia.

¹⁰ While we do not have a full time series of state assembly contests, we suspect that list proliferation is common there as well. For instance, contests in Antioquia in 1978 included 6 Liberal lists and 4 Conservative lists. State assembly contests for the same state in 1982 included 10 Liberal lists and 16 Conservative lists.

legal and party system variables, produces entrepreneurs—politicians with only a fleeting, instrumental sense of loyalty to anyone other than themselves. In this section, we consider how list proliferation – as an independent variable –benefits those with established personal reputations and leads to a legislature filled with experienced candidates. What is more, we might expect to see more winners among those who have experience in uni-personal posts, thus allowing them to bank on their credentials as experienced individuals, rather than members of the pack.

Members of the Colombian congress clearly see themselves as legislative free agents believing their fate is tied to their own actions and campaign strategies rather than the actions of their party. In surveys conducted in 1997 and 2000, by the Universidad de Salamanca, deputies were asked to identify the primary and secondary reasons they believe they were elected.¹¹ An overview of their responses is presented in Table 5. In 1997, the most common reason deputies believed they were elected was personal charm or charisma (33%) and the second most common reason was due to their campaign strategy (18%). In 2000, a plurality attributed their success to their campaign strategy (35%) while 25% believed it was due to prior political experience (an option not available on the 1997 survey). Deputies in both congresses clearly do not believe parties or partisan identification secured their election. For instance, only 15% in 1997 believed their election was due primarily (and 20% secondarily) to their adherence to the party’s platform. In 2000, a mere 10% attributed success primarily to either the party’s program or ideology and only 16% gave these two factors secondary importance. Deputies believe their actions are responsible for their electoral success encouraging future entrepreneurial behavior in campaigns. Thus, the ties that typically bind elected officials to their parties in many parts of the world do not appear to exert any influence on Colombian legislators.

[Table 5 about here]

The highly personalizing characteristics of the candidate selection process and the electoral system encourage a system in which personal vote seeking is rewarded. We

¹¹ The timing of these surveys allows us to compare the attitudes of the 1994-1998 Congress with those of the 1998-2002 congress. We thank Scott Morgenstern for facilitating our access to these surveys.

expect this to reward and favor candidates who have already established a personal reputation (i.e. name recognition) among voters. We expect that because of the highly competitive electoral environment created by the electoral system in Colombia, candidates who enjoy name recognition should possess certain advantages in getting elected and thus should be more likely to seek office. On the one hand, this should create an incumbency advantage. At the same time, however, we expect that challengers with prior experience as mayor or governor should also possess the name recognition to make competing in these elections attractive.¹²

Table 6 presents the percentage of candidates with all kinds of prior experience. As the candidate pool has swelled, the percentage of candidates with prior elected experience at the national level (in either the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate) has steadily decreased – falling from about 35% in 1986 to 14% in 2002. However, the number of candidates seeking re-election to the Chamber of Deputies increased three-fold between 1986 and 2002. Thus, while re-election seeking remains relatively constant (and low by comparative standards) candidates with little prior experience are also being drawn to these contests. The absence of control by the party over nominations, facilitated by the legal system, has removed any barriers that inexperienced candidates have to placing themselves on the ballot. Additionally, an increasing percentage of the candidate pool has prior experience at the subnational level as governor or mayor.¹³ While candidates with subnational experience are becoming increasingly common they are still less numerous than candidates with national experience, which is not surprising as national level positions do not impose term limits on incumbents wishing to continue their careers in politics.

[Table 6 about here]

This description of the candidate pool does not allow us to test whether prior experience is more valuable in helping a candidate secure election in highly competitive

¹² An examination of career paths in Colombia is well beyond the scope of this chapter. However, we do note that the electoral law would seem to favor progressive ambition as term limits (prohibiting immediate re-election) have been adopted for both mayoral and gubernatorial positions in Colombia, but not for either house of congress.

¹³ The absence of any candidates with subnational electoral experience in early elections is due to the fact that the first gubernatorial elections (for a three year term) were held in 1991 and the first mayoral elections (for a two year term) were held in 1988.

districts. To do this we consider the role of list proliferation (and entrepreneurship) in predicting the characteristics of elected candidates. Specifically, we posit that list proliferation increases the chances that candidate with prior name recognition will be elected. To test this, we examine elections for the Chamber of Deputies between 1986 and 2002 to consider which characteristics make a candidate more or less likely to be elected. We consider how party identification, prior elected experience (and thus name recognition) and the number of lists interact in order to affect elections. We collected data on all candidates who were heads of lists in elections for the Chamber of Deputies between 1986 and 2002. For each head of list we recorded the party endorsing the candidate, whether that had served in either of chamber of congress (regardless of whether they had been elected as head of list or not) and whether they had been governor or mayor. We also include the total number of lists being run by all parties in that department. The number of lists being run varies significantly across departments and across elections allowing us to model the changing competitive environment. Table 7 presents the results of models estimating the effect of these different factors upon whether a candidate is elected and the vote share the list received.

[Table 7 about here]

Table 7 presents two models; the first uses Ordinary Least Squares to estimates the percentage of the vote a list received and the second estimates the probability a candidate is elected using Logit.¹⁴ We find similar factors affect both the votes a list receives and the probability the list elects a candidate. The big difference between the two models relates to the effect of party.¹⁵ As would be expected, new political parties and movements (which comprise much of the ‘Other’ category) are both less likely to be elected and are expected to receive a lower percentage of the vote than Liberal Party lists. In the first model, which predicts a list’s vote share, lists from the Conservative Party are expected to fare worse than lists from the Liberal Party although this variable is only statistically significant at the more permissive .10 level. But, in the second model we observe that candidates from the Conservative Party are more likely to be elected than

¹⁴ Both models were estimated with standard errors adjusted for clustering by department and election to account for any possible correlation due to specific factors within that election.

¹⁵ In both the models the comparison category is whether the candidate was from the Liberal Party.

candidates from the Liberal Party all else being equal. This effect is illustrated in Table 8 which presents simulated probabilities and illustrates some of the power of *operación avispa*.¹⁶ Across all categories of experience, Conservative Party candidates have a noticeably higher probability of being elected than Liberal Party candidates when the number of lists is low. In particular, note that for both political neophytes and former congressmen there is no overlap in the confidence intervals for Liberal and Conservative candidates when the number of lists is low (at the minimum or the mean), but as the number of lists increases to the maximum there is significant overlap in the confidence intervals. Although *operación avispa* does not guarantee a greater percentage of winning lists, it ensures a greater total number of cheaply won seats. Thus, as the number of lists increases to the maximum there is increasing overlap in the confidence intervals because it is here that the overwhelming number of Liberal candidates cancels out any advantage the Conservatives may obtain from pooling their votes in a smaller number of lists.¹⁷

[Table 8 about here]

We expected candidates with prior experience to be more likely to win election because they already enjoy name recognition among voters. The different rows within Table 8 help to illustrate the effect of prior experience, especially in the presence of interaction terms. Because the electoral and party system variables encourage Colombian congressmen to be entrepreneurs, we expect to see a legislature filled with candidates whose name recognition helped them secure election. Prior name recognition becomes especially important as competition in a district increases. For instance, the chances a list headed by a Liberal Party candidate with no experience was elected declined from 28-35% when faced with only three lists to 2-4% percent when faced with 286 lists (the maximum observed). As competition becomes more intense, candidates without prior elected experience and the name recognition associated with it are less

¹⁶ This should not be seen as a direct test of the *operación avispa* strategy because we are not modeling the effect of party conditional upon the number of lists as would be required in either model to do that.

¹⁷ The results presented include the total number of lists in a district, however we obtain identical results in terms of sign and significance by including the number of Liberal Party lists. In fact, the correlation between number of Liberal lists and total lists is very high (.99) indicating that it is the Liberals who are driving overall list proliferation.

likely to be elected. This illustrates the power of *operación avispa* to overwhelm new entrants (both parties and individuals).

Increased competition also appears to hurt candidates with prior congressional experience, although the decline is much less steep in this case. The probability a list headed by a Conservative Party candidate who served one term in congress is elected declined from 54-65% to 19-40% as the number of lists in a district moved from the minimum to the maximum. On the one hand, this points to the power of a political system that rewards entrepreneurs to undermine the advantages of incumbency¹⁸ and encourages many congressmen to view elections as a possible one-shot deal. This may have the long-term effect of discouraging candidates from pursuing long careers in elected politics. Implications for behavior include increased incentives to focus on local pork-barrel projects instead of programmatic national bills, use (or abuse) of one's position to promote a future career in the private sector, and weakened loyalty to any partisan group, including local vote brokers (or *gamonales*) that proved so instrumental to electoral success in the immediate post-National Front period for both established parties.

The effect of prior national experience however is much stronger than subnational experience. In both models presented in Table 7, neither gubernatorial experience nor the interaction of gubernatorial experience with the number of lists affects the probability a candidate is elected. Since former governors were first eligible to run for congress in 1994 (as the term expired for the first group elected in 1991 in that year) only 15 have headed their own lists for the Chamber of Deputies. Of these 15 lists, seven won election – indicating no better than even odds for former governors. Not only are the simulated probabilities reported in Table 8 relatively constant across different levels of competition,

¹⁸ This does not mean there is no incumbency advantage as the error bars on probability are very high as the number of lists approaches the maximum. Moreover, the probability these candidates are elected is well above that for candidates with no experience suggesting that even at very high levels of competition there is an incumbency advantage. More likely what this suggests is that in districts, such as Bogotá, where the number of lists running is typically much higher than anywhere else in the country, it is difficult for any candidate to truly distinguish themselves. Former Senators who head lists that run for the Chamber also appear to have a good chance of being elected, at least when the number of lists is very small (between 32 and 49%). However, as the number of lists approaches the maximum value there is not a statistical difference in the probability of election for candidates with and without prior senate experience.

the confidence intervals are so wide that they are in fact indistinguishable. But, mayoral experience does predict whether a list is elected. In fact, former mayors are the only group whose probability of being elected *increase* as the number of lists grows.¹⁹

Thus, it appears that Colombian voters respond well to candidates with some political experience and visibility going into Chamber elections. Indeed, this indicator of name recognition conforms to our initial expectations and bears out our contentions regarding the personalization of politics. The end of the National Front certainly opened the door for increased competition and fostered an environment in which successful candidates must have some recognition. What is more, we see that individuals with prior elected experience in unipersonal positions, particularly mayoral posts, have an advantage in lower house elections. While a test of the precise qualities—including social, educational, economic, and professional backgrounds—of those mayors is not possible in the context of this study due to lack of available data, these findings make it clear that the benefits of name recognition conferred upon individuals who held a previous elected post are vitally important for success in national politics.

Party and legal system variables contributed to the creation of a ‘go it alone’ strategy or—more accurately—lend credence to the old Spanish refrain *major solo que mal acompañado*. Virtually every aspect of the selection and election process benefits those who can distinguish themselves as individuals and dispense with staid partisan labels. The emergence of entrepreneurs in Colombia, which is marked in the electoral arena, should also have clear behavioral implications for those who are elected to office. According to Siavelis and Morgenstern (this volume, 13), the entrepreneur should “...seek any way to cultivate the support of voters... engage in more populist rhetoric, and discuss few particulars of ideology or policy.”

Legislative behavior in term of bill sponsorship in office provides further support for our assertion that Colombian politicians engage in entrepreneurial behavior. For instance, Crisp, *et al* (2005) find that deputy’s bill initiation patterns respond to the incentives created by the electoral system. In countries where deputies confront personalizing incentives there is a greater propensity to initiate locally targeted bills.

¹⁹ These results should not be read as implying there is not progressive ambition or that in fact it is not rewarded as more detailed studies are needed to draw that conclusion.

This would lead us to expect that in Colombia deputies would prefer to focus on passing legislation that would bring pork to the voters in their district. A glance at the data for Colombia provides support for this expectation (see Table 9).

[Table 9 about here]

The available bill initiation data from 1986-1990 and 1994-1998 captures one congress before and after the 1991 constitutional reform. For both congresses, bills were categorized as being targeted at national constituencies, regional constituencies, sectoral constituencies, local or individual constituencies following Taylor-Robinson and Diaz (1999). Table 9 presents the number of bills by sponsor and category for both congressional sessions (Escobar-Lemmon, *et al* n.d.).

This bill initiation pattern is more in keeping with what we would expect from an entrepreneur than a constituent servant. Undeniably, Colombian congressmen are clearly the source of almost all locally or regionally targeted legislation initiated in Colombia. After all, of the bills initiated by the executive branch, only 2% of bills in 1986 and 2.5% in 1994 were locally or regionally targeted. This would suggest that the president and his cabinet are more focused on national issues.²⁰ However, the Colombian congressman is not a pure constituent servant. While recognizing the value of local and regionally targeted bills in courting voters, congressmen also attempt to legislate in a variety of national areas as well. Indeed we observe that in both congresses the total number of nationally focused bills exceeds the number of regional, local and individual bills combined, by over a 2:1 margin in the 1994-98 congress. Thus, the results of looking at bill initiation data would suggest that deputies are putting their bill initiation efforts where their mouths are and are paying attention to local issues that are most likely to produce rewards in the short and long term, but they are also giving attention to national issues. This suggests that deputies are active in a variety of areas where they believe they have a chance to make their mark. Because being an entrepreneur means that congressman can (and should) engage in the type of bill sponsorships that he or she

²⁰ Sectoral issues are somewhat complicated in the case because some congressmen chose to seek a sectoral vote within their district focusing on employees from a particular enterprise and some enterprises are regionally concentrated. In essence then this category has bills that are both potentially national in terms of impact, but also bills that can be useful for personal vote seeking. We leave to others an analysis of the specific bills contained in this category.

expects to be most “profitable” we observe this mixed pattern of initiation where some find locally targeted bills most profitable and other instead focus on national bills.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Electoral laws in Colombia create an electoral system that results in congressmen being entrepreneurs. One of the clearest manifestations of the entrepreneurial behavior in Colombia is the increasing proliferation of lists. We trace the development of list proliferation (or *operación avispa*) to decisions and strategies adopted in the wake of the National Front. While adopted as something of a party (or at least factional) solution to the emergence of challenges from within and without it has morphed into a facilitator for electoral atomization. We find that list proliferation (our indicator of entrepreneurial behavior) has clear implications for those wishing to compete for office. *Avispa* advantages candidates who have prior elected experience and especially rewards those who previously served in high profile posts. The fact that as competition become more intense former mayors tend to do better points toward strong local loyalties which may be inherent in the system and to a mutual reinforcement of personalization of elections. What is more, we find that entrepreneurial norms shape the behavior of those elected to national congressional positions. Rather than court party leaders, deputies are prolific in the ways of courting voters through legislative initiation.

What does the value of individual name recognition in securing election mean for who deputies serve or to whom are they loyal? Siavelis and Morgenstern suggest in the introduction that entrepreneurs are loyal only to themselves and the outcomes we find – in terms of the predictive value of individual reputation - are largely consistent with deputies who value their individuality and do not want to be beholden to any party leadership. Colombian politicians do not wish to depend upon the rising tides of a party that can sweep them out of power as quickly as it brought them in. Entrepreneurship does not have to mean purely self interest, however. In the Universidad de Salamanca survey, 65% of congressmen said that they represented all Colombians, while 30% said they represented all those who voted in their department. Only 4% said they believed they represented everyone who voted for their party, and no respondents chose their political party as the group they primarily represented.

This personalistic link, which leads us to classify them as entrepreneurs, is firmly rooted in the country's electoral law and furthered by the party system. This personal link has resulted in entrepreneurs being dependent upon their own person credentials especially as elections become more competitive (i.e. the number of lists competing against them increases). In conclusion, what we find is a very personal belief about representation where deputies in Colombia believe that they as an individual represent their constituents (either the country as a whole or the people in their department) without the intermediation of political parties making it better to stand alone, than in bad company.

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Figure 1: Mean Number of Lists Presented Across Departments for the Colombian Lower House by Party, 1958-2002

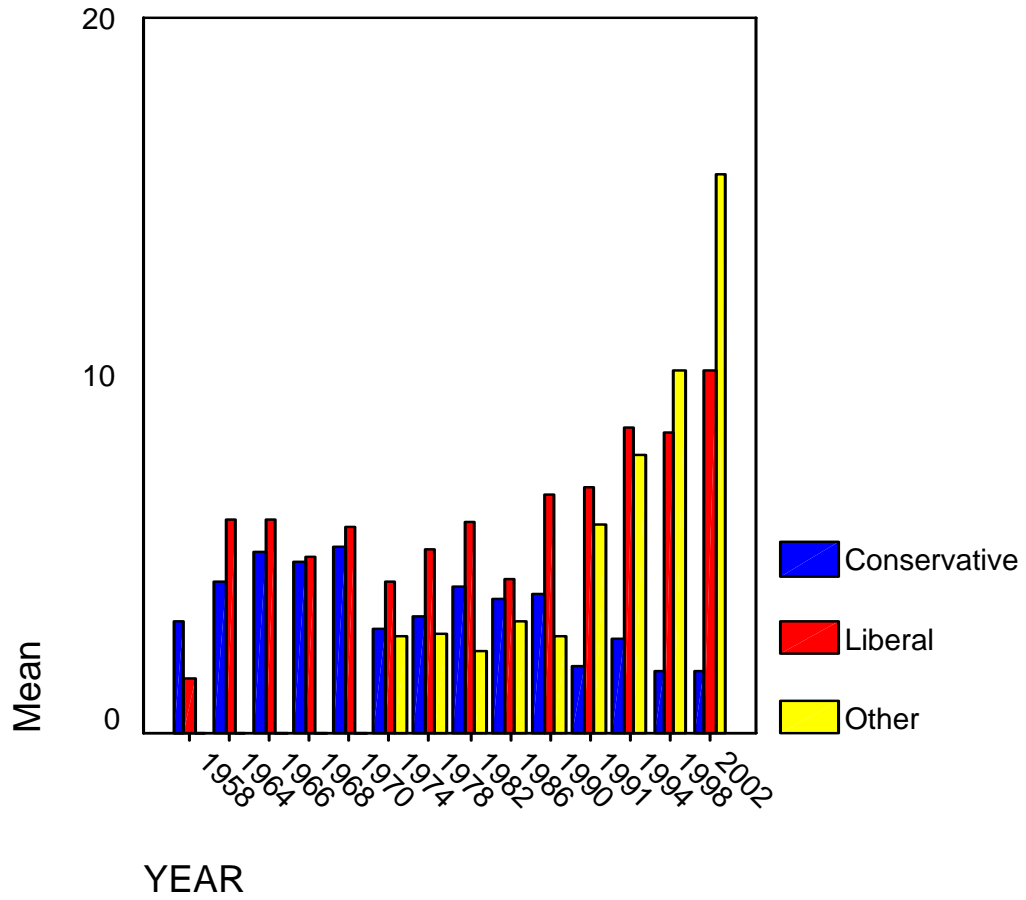


Figure 2: Mean Number of Winning Lists Presented Across Departments for the Colombian Lower House by Party, 1974-2002

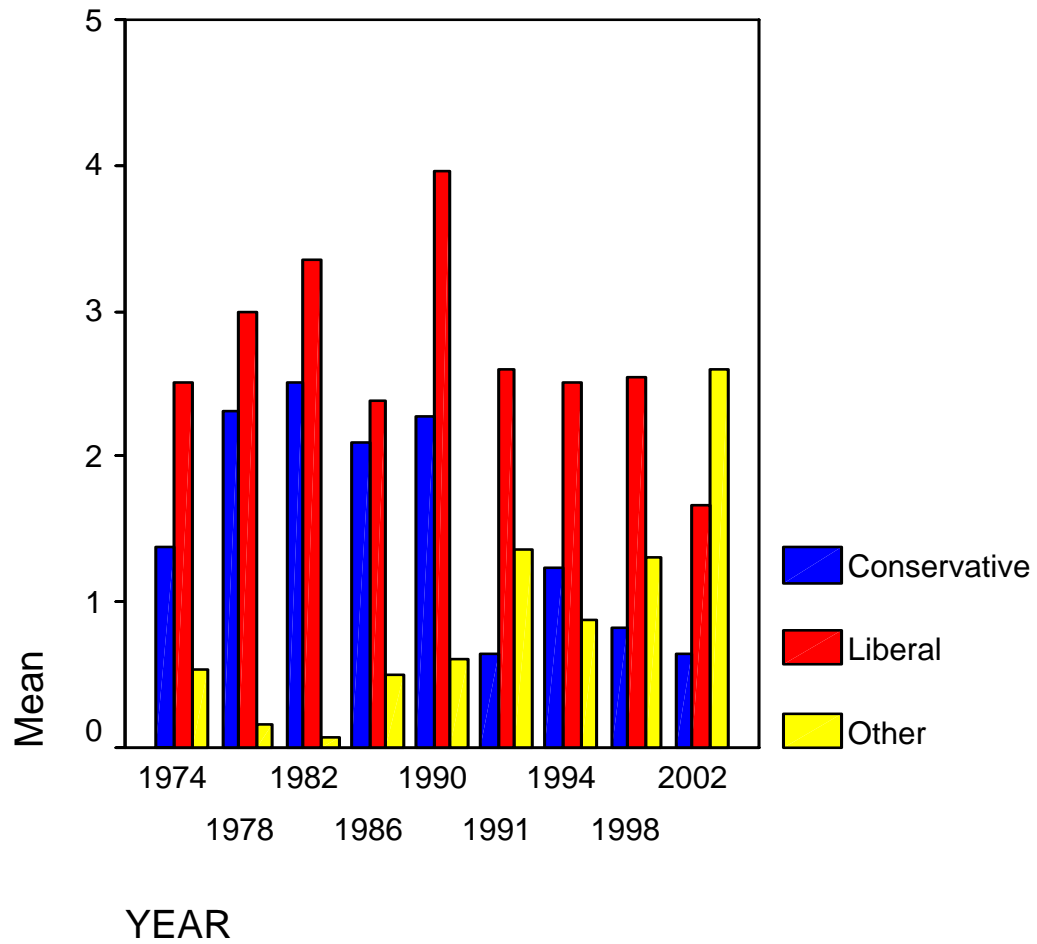


Figure 3: Mean Number of Lists, Across Parties and Dissidents, 1958-2002

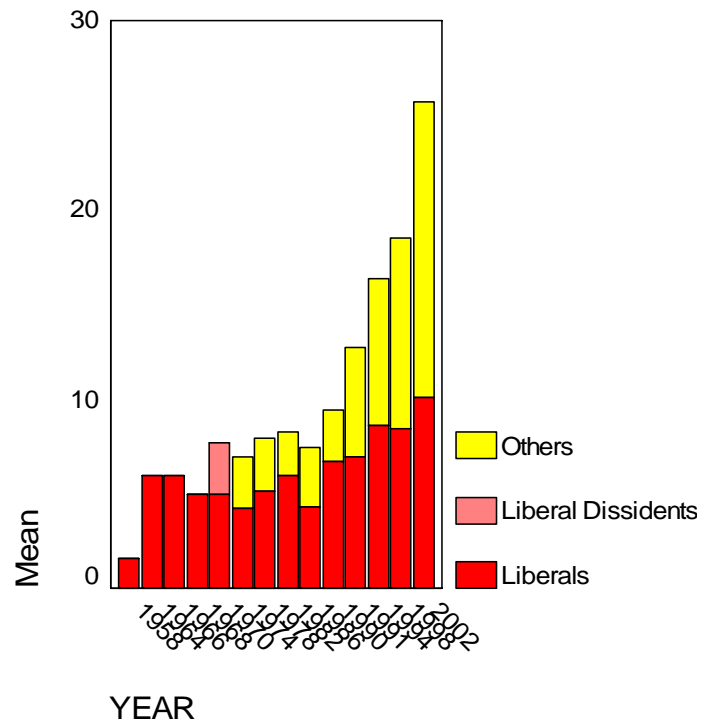
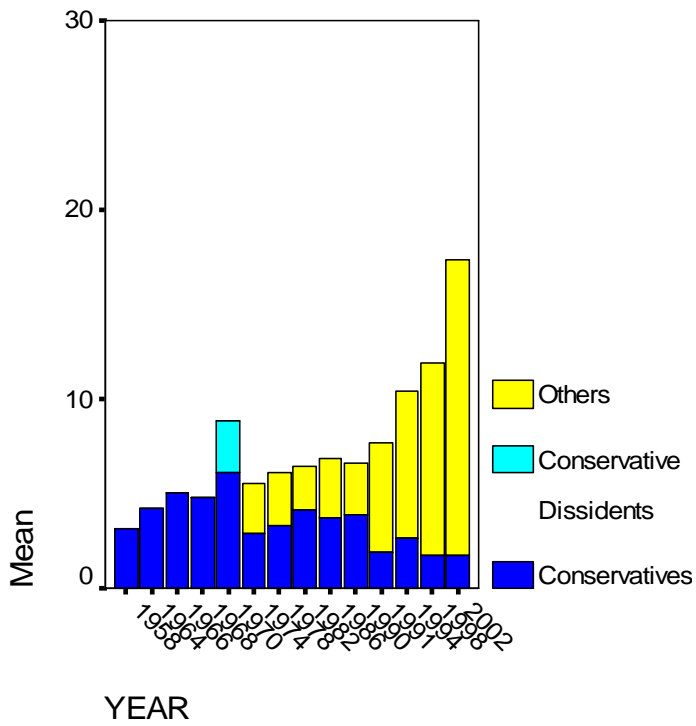


Table 1: Hypothetical Allocation of 26 Seats in Colombia's LR-Hare PR Elections¹

List	Votes	Quota Seats	Remainder	Remainder Seats
A	700,920	22	0	0
B	63,720	2	0	0
C	31,860	1	0	0
D	30,000	0	30,000	1
E	23,740	0	23,740	0
F	10,000	0	10,000	0
Total	860,240	25		1

¹We assume each list is a party list. Quota = 31860.

Table 2: Differences in allocation across single and multiple lists ¹

List	Votes	Each party presents multiple lists		Each party presents a single list	
		Quota Seats- Multiple Lists	Remainder Seats- Multiple Lists	Quota Seats- Single Party List	Remainder Seats- Single Party List
Liberal 1	199540	6	0	-	-
Liberal 2	75004	2	0	-	-
Liberal 3	47498	1	0	-	-
Liberal 4	33380	1	0	-	-
Liberal 5	27915	0	1	-	-
Liberal 6	25176	0	1	-	-
Liberal 7	23032	0	1	-	-
Liberal 8	21032	0	1	-	-
Liberal 9	6640	0	0	-	-
Liberal 10	5974	0	0	-	-
Liberal 11	1449	0	0	-	-
TOTAL	466640	10	4	14	0
Conservative 1	65796	2	1	-	-
Conservative 2	58999	1	1	-	-
Conservative 3	44789	1	0	-	-
Conservative 4	23441	0	1	-	-
Conservative 5	23068	0	1	-	-
Conservative 6	21321	0	1	-	-
Conservative 7	20836	0	1	-	-
Conservative 8	20413	0	1	-	-
Conservative 9	17753	0	0	-	-
Conservative 10	17599	0	0	-	-
Conservative 11	16435	1	0	-	-
Conservative 12	14873	0	0	-	-
Conservative 13	528	0	0	-	-
Conservative 14	188	0	0	-	-
TOTAL	346039	5	7	10	1
Other 1	5266	0	0	-	-
Other 2	601	0	0	-	-
Other 3	18679	0	0	-	-
Other 4	15694	0	0	-	-
Other 5	3586	0	0	-	-
Other 6	1031	0	0	-	-
Other 7	506	0	0	-	-
Other 8	230	0	0	-	-
TOTAL	45593	0	0	1	0
Total	858,272	15	11	25	1

¹Vote totals and seat total are taken from Antioquia's 1990 Lower House Elections. Quota is 31,860. District Magnitude is 26.

Table 3: The Impact of New Actors on List Strategy in Lower House Contests, 1958-2002

	Dependent Variable = Number of Liberal Party Lists		Dependent Variable = Number of Conservative Party Lists	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Lists by Other parties	.017 (.00)**	-	-.008 (.004)*	-
Lists by Other parties $t-1$	-	.011 (.005)*	-	-.037(.009)**
1968 indicator variable	-.10 (.11)	-.23(.11)*	.21 (.12)*	.13 (.12)
1991 indicator variable	.08 (.08)	-.07 (.09)	-.59 (.14)**	-.62 (.15)**
Constant	1.15 (.21)**	1.09 (.216)**	-.05 (.39)	.27 (.39)
N	410	374	410	373
Pseudo R2	.21	.22	.15	.16

Note: Models shown employ negative binomial regression. Alpha levels exceed the .000 level for all four models shown.

Table 4: Number of Candidates Presented across Colombia's Gubernatorial Contests

Party	1991	1994	1997	2000
Liberal	67	64	71	56
Conservative	14	18	11	11
Other	62	11	35	69
Total	143	93	117	136
Districts	28	32	32	32

Table 5: Deputy's belief about why they were elected

	1997 Survey		2000 Survey	
	<i>1st</i> <i>preference</i>	<i>2nd</i> <i>preference</i>	<i>1st</i> <i>preference</i>	<i>2nd</i> <i>preference</i>
<i>Individual Attributes</i>				
Because of my prior experience in other political or public positions			22 25%	18 20.93%
For personal charm	20 32.79%	11 18.33%	14 15.91%	20 23.26%
Because of the modern and dynamic style of the campaign I ran	11 18.03%	10 16.67%	31 35.23%	17 19.77%
<i>Party Attributes</i>				
By assuming and sharing the program of the party	9 14.75%	12 20%		
Because of the party's program			6 6.82%	8 9.3%
Because of the ideology of the party.			3 3.41%	6 6.98%
Because none of the other parties convinced the voters	5 8.20%	8 13.33%		
Due to the family tradition of the voter, that bonds to the party	1 1.64%	3 5%	2 2.27%	3 3.49%
By the efforts of the leader of the party (coat tails).	6 9.84%	9 5%		
Because of the leader of the party			6 6.82%	8 9.3%
For another reason	8 13.11%	4 6.67%		

Questions asked: For which of the following reasons do you believe that fundamentally you were elected? Deputies were allowed to pick a primary and secondary reason from the list.

Table 6: Prior experience of candidate's heading lists for the Chamber of Deputies

	<i>Percentage of candidates who served in the chamber before</i>	<i>Percentage of candidates who served in the senate before</i>	<i>Percentage with Gubernatorial Experience</i>	<i>Percentage with Mayoral Experience</i>
1986	34.6%	8.5%	0.0%	0.0%
1990	43.2%	8.9%	0.0%	0.5%
1991	26.4%	7.8%	0.0%	2.5%
1994	23.0%	4.3%	0.0%	3.5%
1998	17.1%	4.3%	0.4%	4.3%
2002	13.9%	3.3%	1.3%	4.7%

Table 7: The effect of list proliferation upon Political Behavior

	<i>Dependent Variable = Percentage of Vote Received by the List</i>	<i>Dependent Variable = Did the List elect anyone?</i>
Conservative Party List	-.677 [^] (.381)	.454** (.109)
Other Party List	-2.071** (.412)	-.759** (.139)
Number of prior terms in the Chamber served by head of list	2.548** (.230)	.684** (.081)
Number of prior terms in the Senate served by head of list	1.209** (.459)	.367* (.184)
Prior Service as Governor by head of list	8.855 (6.328)	-.022 (1.884)
Prior Service as Mayor by head of list	5.111** (1.848)	-.410 (.342)
Total Number of Lists in the district	-.027** (.007)	-.009** (.0008)
Number of lists * Prior Chamber Experience of head of list	-.016* (.006)	.006** (.001)
Number of lists * Prior Senate Experience of head of list	-.011 (.008)	.009 (.006)
Number of lists * Gubernatorial Experience of head of list	-.356 (.319)	.031 (.106)
Number of lists * Mayoral Experience of head of list	-.111 [^] (.067)	.028** (.008)
Constant	6.763** (.539)	-.748** (.105)
N	3356	33565
F or Wald chi-square	52.43	405.3
Prob F/Prob Chi2	0	0
R-square/Pseudo R-square	0.223	0.196
Model estimated via:	OLS	Logit

[^] p > .10

* P > .05

** P > .01

Table 8: Probability a Candidate is elected to the Chamber of Deputies

	<i>Liberal Party Candidate</i>	<i>Conservative Party Candidate</i>	<i>“Other” Candidate</i>
<i>No Prior Experience</i>			
Minimum Lists	.32 (.28-.35)	.420 (.37-.47)	.18 (.16-.20)
Average Lists	.21 (.19-.24)	.300 (.26-.34)	.11 (.10-.13)
Maximum Lists	.03 (.02-.04)	.05 (.03-.07)	.02 (.01-.02)
<i>Former Congressman</i>			
Minimum Lists	.48 (.44-.52)	.59 (.54-.65)	.30 (.26-.34)
Average Lists	.44 (.40-.48)	.55 (.50-.61)	.27 (.23-.31)
Maximum Lists	.29 (.19-.40)	.39 (.26-.52)	.16 (.09-.24)
<i>Former Governor</i>			
Minimum Lists	.69 (.19-.98)	.75 (.26-.99)	.56 (.09-.96)
Average Lists	.68 (.004-.99)	.71 (.01-.99)	.62 (.002-.99)
Maximum Lists	.59 (0-1)	.60 (0-1)	.58 (0-1)
<i>Former Mayor</i>			
Minimum Lists	.62 (0-1)	.62 (0-1)	.61 (0-1)
Average Lists	.63 (0-1)	.64 (0-1)	.62 (0-1)
Maximum Lists	.68 (0-1)	.69 (0-1)	.67 (0-1)

Note: 90% confidence intervals in parenthesis. Probabilities and confidence intervals simulated based on OLS model in Table 8 using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King).

Table 9: Bill Initiation Patterns

	National	Regional	Sectoral	Local	Individual	Total
<i>1986 – 1990</i>						
Executive Sponsors Only	106	0	44	3	4	157
Congressional Sponsors only	481	188	235	146	40	1020
Executive and Legislative Cosponsors	9	2	10	22	3	46
All other sponsors and co-sponsorships	14	2	6	4	1	27
Total	610	122	295	175	48	1250
<i>1994 - 1998</i>						
Executive Sponsors Only	171	5	53	1	3	233
Congressional Sponsors only	450	45	176	183	43	897
Executive and Legislative Cosponsors	2	0	3	1	0	6
All other sponsors and co-sponsorships	7	0	0	0	1	8
Total	630	50	232	185	47	1144

Note: Each bill is counted only once regardless of the number of cosponsors of the bill.

The category congressional sponsors only includes: bills sponsored or cosponsored by members of either chamber (Chamber of Deputies or Senate) as well as bills co-authored by both Senators and Deputies.

The “other” category includes bills originating in the judiciary as well as those introduced by government watchdog agencies, plus bills cosponsored by either of the above and the executive or congress.