

**Problems
CONFRONTING
Contemporary
DEMOCRACIES**

Essays in Honor of
Alfred Stepan

Edited by

Douglas Chalmers and Scott Mainwaring

University of Notre Dame Press
Notre Dame, Indiana

Contents

Preface and Acknowledgments ix

Introduction: Alfred Stepan and the Study of Democratic Regimes 1
Scott Mainwaring with Douglas Chalmers

Part I. The Armed Forces, Police, and Democracy

1 The Armed Forces and Society in Latin America:
Change and Continuity 25
J. Samuel Fitch

2 Reconciling the Brazilian Military with Democracy:
The Power of Alfred Stepan's Ideas 67
Fernando Henrique Cardoso

3 Managing Citizen Security in Latin America's
Changing States and Societies 82
Mark Ungar

Part II. The State and Democracy

4 The State of the Market: The Market Reform Debate and
Postcommunist Diversity 111
László Bruszt

Part III. Democratic Transitions and Democratic Regimes

- 5** Revisiting "Paths toward Redemocratization" 139
Robert M. Fishman
- 6** Electoral Victory, Political Defeat:
A Failed Democratic Transition in Iran 166
Mirjam Künkler
- 7** Executive Approval under Alternative Democratic
Regime Types 203
Ryan E. Carlin, Cecilia Martínez-Gallardo, and Jonathan Hartlyn
- 8** Cautionary and Unorthodox Thoughts about
Democracy Today 227
Juan J. Linz in collaboration with Thomas Jeffrey Miley

Part IV. Federalism and Democracy

- 9** Holding China Together: Democratic Solutions for
Resolving Ethnic Conflict 255
Ashley Esarey
- 10** Of Swords and Shields: Federalism and
Territorial Democratization in the United States 273
Edward L. Gibson
- 11** Oil and the Corporate Reintegration of Russia:
The Role of Federal Oil Companies in Russia's
Center-Periphery Relations 299
Shamil Midkhatovich Yenikeyeff

Part V. Religion, Tolerance, and Democracy

- 12** Religion, Politics, and the State in a Stepanesque Perspective:
Inseparable but Craftable 339
Brian H. Smith
- 13** Twin Tolerations or Siamese Twins?
Kemalist Laicism and Political Islam in Turkey 381
Murat Akan
- 14** Consociationalism versus Twin Tolerations:
Religion and State in Israel 424
Hanna Lerner

List of Contributors 450

Index 456

Executive Approval under Alternative Democratic Regime Types

*Ryan E. Carlin, Cecilia Martínez-Gallardo,
and Jonathan Hartlyn*

Among Alfred Stepan's many contributions to the study of politics is his work on political institutions and, in particular, his research (in collaboration with Juan J. Linz and Cindy Skach) examining the differences in the institutional frameworks of parliamentarism and presidentialism and their effects on democratic survival. In what has been a long and heated debate, Stepan and his coauthors argue that parliamentary systems provide a variety of incentives that strengthen the likelihood of democratic consolidation. The case for parliamentarism built on arguments advanced by Linz (1978, 1990) and developed by him and others (Linz and Valenzuela 1994 [esp. Linz 1994 and Lijphart 1994]; Mainwaring 1993). It also relied on empirical evidence that parliamentary regimes have a better record of survival than presidential regimes. The main advantage of parliamentarism identified in these writings is that it reduces the costs of constructing governing majorities, even in multiparty settings. The incentives for coalitional cooperation, in turn, lead to increased efficacy and to a lower likelihood that executives will seek to govern in a way that circumvents the constitution or that a government crisis will escalate into a crisis of the regime or end in a military

coup (Linz and Stepan 1996a; Linz and Stepan 1996b: esp. 141–42; Stepan and Skach 1993: esp. 22).

The scholarly debate regarding why presidential democracies have lower survival rates than parliamentary ones, however, is far from over. Although initial analyses appeared to substantiate the finding that lower survival rates were related to regime characteristics (in addition to work cited above, see Lijphart 1999; Przeworski et al. 2000), other scholars have disputed the specific mechanisms that underlie this relationship (e.g., Shugart and Carey 1992; Shugart and Mainwaring 1997; Cheibub 2007). Recent work has also shifted the focus from studying broad constitutional frameworks to examining government formation in presidential systems and how different types of governing coalitions affect policy success and regime survival within these systems (e.g., Altman 2000; Amorim Neto, Cox, and McCubbins 2003; Amorim Neto 2006; Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh 2004; Pérez-Liñán 2007; Martínez-Gallardo 2009). The advantages of different democratic regime types in terms of governance also remain a subject of continuing debate (e.g., Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno 2009; Hellwig and Samuels 2007).

In this chapter we provide an additional window into the discussion of differences across presidential and parliamentary regimes, focusing on the potential effect of regime differences on democratic accountability through *citizen evaluations* of executive performance. Here we understand accountability broadly as citizens' capacity to reward or sanction elected officials (cf. Manin et al. 1999; Samuels 2004; Johnson and Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Johnson and Ryu 2010). Building on the insights advanced by Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz, and others, we develop arguments regarding the mechanisms through which different institutional frameworks translate into systematic differences in executive approval dynamics. We then use a new data set of public opinion data to present some empirical tests of these arguments.

Concomitant with the emergence of an increased number and diverse types of democracies in the world, there has been a dramatic increase in the frequency and sophistication of public opinion surveys. These surveys provide an invaluable means to gauge citizen approval of political leaders between elections and provide us with what has been

up to now a largely underexploited opportunity to test current theories on the factors that best explain executive approval in a fully cross-national setting. This new information allows us to examine the implications of different institutional configurations for the evolution of executive approval and provides a way to supplement the academic literature, which focuses on electoral accountability, by studying the evolution of citizen support for their leaders in nonelectoral periods.

In the first section below we explore how differences across presidential and parliamentary systems related to electoral, party-system, and institutional characteristics lead to important differences in patterns of executive approval. More specifically, because of these differences, we expect presidents to begin their terms in office with higher levels of public approval than prime ministers, to complete their terms in office with lower levels of support, and to experience overall greater fluctuations in levels of approval. We then present an original data set on executive approval that we have constructed and explain the methodology (initially developed by James Stimson [1991, 1999]) we employ to compile and compare surveys within and across countries and discuss some cross-national results regarding differences across presidential and parliamentary regimes and within presidential regimes. These findings generally provide support for our arguments. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of future directions this research can take, advancing work in the spirit of Alfred Stepan's inspiring research.

Executive Approval in Parliamentary and Presidential Systems

Trends in executive approval are not only widely reported in the media throughout the world but are also the theoretical focus of an extensive academic literature. One part of this literature has examined the factors that influence overall patterns in executive approval. Building from the classic work of Mueller (1970, 1973), the bulk of this literature centers on the dynamics of presidential approval in the United States (see Gronke and Newman 2003), though others have analyzed executive approval in the United Kingdom (e.g., Smith 2004; Clarke,

Ho, and Stewart 2000; Clarke and Stewart 1995) and in other European as well as Latin American contexts.

To date, analyses of factors that determine patterns of executive approval over time have focused on a number of political and economic variables. Mueller's seminal work (1973) and much subsequent work identified three main forces affecting approval: a "honeymoon" period with initially high approval rates that decline over time; negative economic factors, which tend to hurt presidential approval; and international crises that typically generate positive "rally round the flag" spikes in approval. These issues have continued to be the focus of research and elaboration within and across countries. One such extension examines approval at the individual level rather than at the aggregate level. These studies have enabled more refined and contextualized understandings of executive approval dynamics while at the same time largely corroborating the major findings at the aggregate level (Gronke and Newman 2003: 505–6). Another strand extends basic models built around these arguments to additional country cases. Such studies generally bear out Mueller's theoretical expectations even in countries with significantly different socioeconomic backgrounds and democratic histories, including Russia (Mishler and Willerton 2003), Peru (Arce 2003; Morgan Kelly 2003), Uruguay (Luna 2002), and countries in Central America (Cuzán and Bundrick 1997), while revealing additional factors that affect executive approval such as political violence and ideology.

In turn, other work has examined the implications of executive approval dynamics for other characteristics of the political system. Much of this literature has been focused on politics in the United States. Erickson, MacKuen, and Stimson (2002) examine its implication for macro-partisanship and for election outcomes. Canes-Wrone and Shotts (2004) argue that reelection-seeking presidents are more responsive to public opinion as the next election approaches and as the president's popularity moves from below average or above average to average, with important variations by policy issue. There has also been extensive research on the "diversionary war hypothesis," examining whether and under what electoral or economic circumstances national executives with low approval levels seek to boost them by initiating a conflict abroad; the em-

pirical results on this issue have been mixed (e.g., James and Oneal 1991; Gelpi 1997; Levy 1989; Morgan and Anderson 1999; Smith 1996). Also, Pérez-Liñán (2007) has examined the prominent role that sharp declines in approval rates have played in the impeachment of presidents in Latin America.

What has been theorized or explored much less is whether there are significant differences in executive approval patterns across different democratic regime types and different types of institutional configurations, and what implications these differences might have for democratic accountability and governability. Differences in electoral and party politics in presidential and parliamentary regimes should lead to different patterns of executive approval by shaping the strategic environment in which leaders make decisions, as well as the environment in which citizens evaluate these decisions.

We start from the definitions of presidential and parliamentary systems advanced in Stepan and Skach (1993). Presidential systems feature mutual independence between the executive and legislative branches: the legislative branch has a fixed electoral mandate that provides it with its own legitimacy, as does the president, though not necessarily the cabinet. Presidents serve fixed terms and remain in office unless they are impeached, resign, or are otherwise removed (as has in fact been the case recently in several Latin American cases; see Pérez-Liñán 2007); they can be reelected, though term limits are common. In contrast, in parliamentary systems, there is a mutual dependence between the two branches. The head of government (typically a prime minister) is supported by a majority in the legislature (or at least not opposed by a majority) and can fall if the government receives a vote of no confidence. The prime minister (typically together with the head of state) also has the capacity to dissolve the legislature and call for elections. Prime ministers remain in office until their terms are completed, they lose an early election, or they lose a vote of no confidence, with some limitations and variations across countries and time. Although there are a number of additional differences within these extremely broad categories, some of which we address below, these definitions capture the main dimensions on which these regimes vary that could affect executive approval patterns.¹

A first set of factors that affects whether voters identify (and identify with) the individual or party that wins the presidency and the extent to which this translates into higher initial rates of approval is related to the electoral system. The direct election of presidents, in particular, might affect the extent to which voters are willing to give presidents their support after the election. While presidents run as individual candidates in direct popular elections for the highest political office in the country, prime ministers are usually the leaders of their party and their selection typically takes place within the party itself. Presidential elections, which typically center more on the personality of the president than is the case for prime ministers, tend to create, in Linz's (1990: 53) words, "an aura, a self-image, and a set of popular expectations which are all quite different from those associated with a prime minister, no matter how popular he might be." The empirical question is whether this "aura," this greater identifiability, translates into higher initial rates of approval for presidents than for prime ministers. The electoral calendar might reinforce this effect; in particular, in some presidential systems the electoral calendar separates presidential elections from elections to other offices and so places additional emphasis on the individual candidates.

A factor working against the potential identifiability effect of direct (and concurrent) elections on initial levels of approval is the growing personalization of the office of prime minister in recent years and the presence of media-driven campaigns across all democratic regime types, which have partially offset the importance of incentives for the personalization of politics in presidential systems (cf. Campus and Pasquino 2006 on Italy; see McAllister 2007). Campaigns in parliamentary systems focus more and more on individual personalities (Italy's Silvio Berlusconi is a good example), so parties have tended to select leaders that might succeed in this type of contest. If this trend is sufficiently strong across all parliamentary systems, then we should expect to see a smaller (or negligible) difference between the initial popularity of presidents and prime ministers.

A second set of factors should have an impact on the executive's initial support by determining the likelihood that the executive will win the election with a larger proportion of votes that will translate

into larger approval rates. The first factor is the number of political parties competing in elections. In general, where fewer parties compete the likelihood that any one party will obtain a majority of the popular vote increases, strengthening the incumbent's claim to legitimacy and, potentially, the number of people willing to support him or her initially. If this is the case, we should expect that the impact of direct elections in presidential systems should be most marked when the number of parties is smaller and the likelihood of a president garnering a higher percentage of the vote is higher. Likewise, we should expect prime ministers in systems with fewer political parties to start their terms with higher approval rates than those in parliamentary systems with a larger number of parties. Of course, one of the main determinants of the number of parties is the electoral system, and so, *ceteris paribus*, we should observe higher initial approval rates in majoritarian systems, which tend to produce fewer parties than proportional electoral systems.²

At the same time, the effect of a higher number of parties can be mitigated in presidential systems where electoral rules mandate a second-round runoff presidential election when no candidate wins a majority, or a modified plurality, in the first round. Runoff elections, or *ballotage* systems, have become common in presidential multiparty systems seeking to avoid presidents with weak popular mandates. This rule forces a second vote in which the electorate must endorse one of only two presidential candidates and could have the effect of boosting the initial popularity of presidents to levels higher than prime ministers can expect to achieve as they begin their terms in office. In general, vote tallies in the last election before taking office (in *ballotage* systems, the second-round runoff election) might be expected to correlate positively with levels of presidential approval in the early months of the administration.

Across presidential systems, the presidential electoral system should also affect initial approval ratings. The clearest expectation is that, *ceteris paribus*, presidents elected in a single round of balloting should be more popular at the outset of their terms if they are elected with a majority of votes as opposed to a reduced threshold or a plurality. What is less clear is how the manufactured majority of the *ballotage* system

compares to mandates generated by plurality and reduced threshold systems. While reformers champion the theoretical potential of the ballotage to strengthen presidents' mandates in the context of multiparty competition, scholars cite unwelcome side effects. Runoffs could distort the preferences of the electorate more than plurality systems. Massive distortion, especially when combined with low voter turnout, could spoil an incoming president's popular legitimacy. Runoffs could also weaken the popularity of presidents who, like Peru's Alán García in 2006, won the runoff but were not the highest first-round vote-getters (Payne, Zovatto, and Mateo Díaz 2007: 319). Another potential risk to legitimacy and representation are first-round winners who do not take part in runoff elections, conceding the election because they believe their ultimate victory is unlikely or other calculations. In the Argentine presidential contest of 2003, for example, Néstor Kirchner, the second highest vote-getter, assumed office having garnered only 22 percent of the first-round votes after Carlos Menem, who won almost 24.5 percent in the first round, pulled out ahead of the second round. Systematic cross-national approval data will enable more careful examination of the contested notion that ballotage systems are superior to plurality and reduced threshold systems for producing strong mandates. For now, we proceed with the expectation that ballotage systems indeed generate higher initial levels of presidential approval than plurality or reduced threshold systems.

Another, related factor is that different coalitional dynamics across presidential and parliamentary systems can affect the evolution of executive approval. The clearest contrast is between presidents who achieve office through a majority victory (even one generated in a runoff election) and prime ministers who rise to power in a multiparty parliamentary system in which a coalition government must be agreed to by several parties after the election. It is easier for citizens to identify who the president is, and what his or her positions are on issues, when he or she is supported by only one party. And protracted coalition negotiations might further dampen the initial popularity of party leaders. However, although they occur more often in parliamentary systems, coalitions are far from rare in presidential systems (Cheibub 2007; Amorim Neto 2006; Martínez-Gallardo 2009). Thus we could potentially find

that governments in coalition presidential systems might also face lower initial levels of approval than single-party governments. An important difference remains, however: in presidential systems the leader of the governing coalition is always the president, and his or her direct election means that he or she remains highly identifiable.

Finally, rules of government formation and dissolution shape the strategic environment in ways that make it more likely that prime ministers will leave office before their popularity reaches very low levels. Fixed constitutional terms for presidents mean that they typically complete their terms regardless of their levels of approval, whereas prime ministers can be removed through early election or votes of no confidence if their support fails.³ These latter alternatives endow prime ministers, or their parties and coalitions, with strategic opportunities that presidents do not enjoy. Endogenous electoral timing, then, can provide an important advantage for incumbent parliamentary governments, or for some coalition partners that can induce parliamentary dissolution, and thus avert major plunges in popular support that presidents can experience. There is some evidence, however, that endogenous electoral timing can negatively affect approval levels. Based on data from the United Kingdom, Smith (2004) argues that calling early elections (especially when they are earlier than otherwise expected) signals to voters that the government anticipates a decline in its future performance. Given this information, the public will adjust their expectations and respond by lowering their approval of the prime minister. If this effect holds across countries and is strong enough, the difference in approval levels at the end of the term of prime ministers and presidents may not be significant.

In sum, various differences in the electoral and party systems of presidential and parliamentary systems should translate into different patterns of executive approval. Initial levels of approval should be higher where electoral incentives favor the development of a personal (and not party) reputation and, thus, contribute to the identifiability of the president. Majoritarian electoral systems, direct elections, and staggered elections all contribute to the personalization of the vote, even as competition between fewer political parties should also contribute to higher initial executive approval rates by vesting the executive with a stronger

mandate. The same should be true of single-party governments compared to coalition governments. Finally, we should expect to see presidents reach lower levels of approval by the end of their terms than prime ministers, who can avert this situation by calling elections early or fall to a vote of no confidence. Although many of these variables distinguish between presidential and parliamentary systems, some, like the proportionality of the electoral system, cut across regime types. Therefore, we can also expect to see certain systematic differences in patterns of approval within constitutional regimes.

Methods, Data, and Results

Systematic testing of the arguments advanced above requires extensive, comparable cross-national approval survey data. One of the greatest challenges to a more systematic understanding of executive approval is the lack of comparable survey data across a wide cross section of countries. One partial solution to the challenge of gaining an understanding of executive approval dynamics across countries has been to employ surveys taken every several years in a large number of countries, such as the World Values Survey or the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) survey. There is also work based on more frequent but geographically circumscribed surveys, such as the Eurobarometer, and more recent barometer surveys in other regions, such as the Afrobarometer, Latinobarometer, Americas Barometer, and Asia Barometer (Heath, Fisher, and Smith 2005 review and list the major survey-related websites; see also Diamond and Plattner 2007 and related articles). Yet the limitations in the scope and frequency of these surveys preclude more rigorous statistical examination of the dynamics of executive approval; their paucity does not allow careful tracking of citizens' views and their regional focus precludes wide cross-national comparisons. At the same time, generating a data set comprised of hundreds if not thousands of national surveys is practically impossible from a logistical and financial standpoint.

However, there is a more feasible and still very promising alternative. Surveys worldwide typically ask a version of the question, "Do you

approve or disapprove of the way that [name of executive] is handling his/her job as [title of executive position]?"⁴ In the United States, this question was first asked in 1938 and has been asked consistently since 1941. In the United Kingdom, a similar series since at least 1950 focuses on this question. The current "third wave" of democratization (with its limitations and partial reversals), coupled with a dramatic expansion in public opinion survey research worldwide, has further increased the countries and the time periods for which this question has been asked. These series provide a wealth of information that can be used to track executive approval over time in a large cross section of countries.

For this chapter, we have gathered as much publicly available data as possible on survey marginals in presidential and parliamentary regimes.⁵ Our initial data collection effort has yielded data for 137 executives—48 prime ministers and 89 presidents—in thirty presidential and parliamentary democracies.⁶ As expected, however, finding perfectly comparable data for more than a handful of country-years is impossible since these data vary from survey to survey with respect to question wording, length of series, missing data, time coverage, and sample frame. Thus, it is necessary to transform the disparate approval series into data that are comparable across administrations, countries, and time. Fortunately, a methodology has been developed to address this problem. The approach is well known in studies of macro-opinion in the United States (e.g., Erickson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002; Ellis, Ura, and Robinson 2006; Enns and Kellstedt 2008) and is based on estimating country-specific measurement models employing a dyad ratios algorithm (Stimson 1991). The algorithm is analogous to a time-series principal components analysis but is designed to deal with the irregular data we have—including different question wording and varied survey intervals. What this methodology does is confirm whether there is a single dimension within the data, which we call "executive approval," and then generate estimates of this dimension to employ in our analysis.⁷ This method, then, seeks to harness all available data to produce a single measure that best represents what we know about executive approval in a given country over a defined time period. To our knowledge this is the most ambitious application of this approach to the study of cross-national executive approval.

Table 7.1 Mean Executive Approval in Parliamentary and Presidential Systems

	PM	Pres.	Diff.	t	(d.f.) [^]
Initial Quarter	50.1	55.9	-5.8	-2.61**	(117)
Initial Quarter (Assumed Power Electorally)	50.8	56.9	-6.2	-2.62**	(100)
Second Quarter	49.5	53.2	-3.6	-1.51 [†]	(119)
Δ Initial–Second Quarter	1.1	3.2	-2.1	-1.92*	(111.8) [^]
Proportion: Second/Initial Quarter	0.98	0.94	0.04	1.73*	(107.6) [^]
Third Quarter	47.3	50.8	-3.5	-1.38 [†]	(118)
Δ Initial–Third Quarter	2.9	5.4	-2.5	-1.70*	(105.9) [^]
Proportion: Third/Initial Quarter	0.95	0.91	0.04	1.37 [†]	(102.8) [^]
Highest Quarter	53.1	61.2	-8.1	-3.44***	(87)
Lowest Quarter	35.8	31.2	4.6	1.82*	(91)
Range Highest–Lowest Quarter	16.9	28.5	-11.5	-4.99***	(79.2) [^]
Range Highest–Lowest Quarter (Popularly Elected)	16.9	28.7	-11.8	-4.92***	(70.0) [^]
Final Effective Quarter	40.6	38.5	2.1	0.89	(99)
Final Quarter	40.6	40.8	-0.2	-0.13	(92.3) [^]

Notes:

[^] Where the assumption of equal variance across groups is violated Satterthwaite's approximations of the degrees of freedom are calculated.

*** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$, [†] $p \leq .10$.

From the multiple time series for each of the thirty democracies in the sample, our measurement models consistently found that a single dimension, theorized to be executive approval, accounted for the largest amount of common variance, typically well above 85 percent. Most series correlate highly with the latent factor, very often over 0.90. Such evidence gives us confidence that despite the differences between the data series in any given case, the information can nevertheless be harnessed to provide a valid measure of the phenomenon of central interest: executive approval.

In the following paragraphs we use the data we have collected to date to provide some empirical tests of the primary implications of our hypotheses regarding variations in executive approval across and within

democratic regime types. The results compiled for all 137 executives from thirty countries are presented in table 7.1. First, we examine initial approval levels across regime types. As we argued in the previous section, there are several reasons for expecting presidents to begin their terms with higher levels of approval than do prime ministers. A comparison of mean levels of first-quarter approval across the executives in our sample indicates that presidents do, in fact, enjoy significantly higher initial levels of approval. Whereas presidents average 55.9 percent approval in the first quarter, prime ministers garner the support of half the citizenry (50.1 percent). If we exclude from the analysis those executives who gained power through nonelectoral pathways, the discrepancy in initial popularity grows to just over six percentage points. Thus, there is at least initial plausible evidence of a considerable difference in initial approval ratings across regime types.

We then examine the initial evolution of these approval levels. We find that the over-time trends of executive approval are distinct across executive types. The approval gap recedes somewhat in the second and third quarters, though a systematic difference of roughly three and a half points persists. From the first to the second quarter, prime ministers manage to retain a greater proportion of their initial approval ratings than presidents (98 percent compared to 94 percent). By the third quarter, prime ministers maintain 95 percent of their initial approval levels while presidents keep just 91 percent. So while presidential approval is, on average, higher than prime ministerial approval early on, it is comparatively less resilient.

Next, we examine whether the over-time patterns of executive approval vary across regime type in ways congruent with the expectations we spelled out earlier. If initial approval levels for presidents tend to be inflated due to the party and electoral factors examined in the previous section, we should expect not only higher initial approval levels (as we in fact find) but also both more fluctuation and sharper declines. As table 7.1 indicates, there is a substantial difference in the highest mean quarter approval level for presidents and for prime ministers, of just over 8 percent. The difference on the low end, 4.6 percent, while not quite as great, is nonetheless statistically significant ($p < .05$). In considering the range from the highest to the lowest quarter, a substantial difference

across regime types of 11.5 percent in the expected direction is evident. Hence these data clearly match our initial expectations.

Next we examine our expectation that fixed-term presidents typically leave office with lower levels of support than prime ministers, who are capable of manipulating the timing of their departure or may leave due to a vote of no confidence. For prime ministers, we focus on the approval ratings the quarter they leave office, whether by a loss of general elections or a loss of confidence. For presidents we settle on two time periods of comparable significance: the quarter the next president is inaugurated (Final Quarter in table 7.1) and the quarter elections are held, officially making the president a lame duck (Final Effective Quarter in table 7.1). These are very often but not always the same quarters. However, means tests reported in table 7.1 show very little difference in the outgoing popularity levels of prime ministers and presidents, though the differences that do exist are in the expected direction. These trends hold regardless of whether we examine Final Quarter or Final Effective Quarter, as defined here. Indeed, presidents even appear to get a small bump in the polls on their way out of office. In sum, we do not find support for the notion that presidents leave office less popular than prime ministers.

In the previous section, we discussed a series of expectations regarding the impact of the electoral system on initial executive approval levels within presidential systems. We take a two-pronged approach to this question. First, we correlate first-quarter presidential approval with the percentage of votes the presidents won in the most recent election. Where a runoff election took place we employ the result from it rather than the first-round election. The results show a positive but weak and insignificant relationship between vote tallies and initial approval levels ($r = .08$, $p = .540$).

Second, we distinguish presidents by the nature of their mandate (see table 7.2). Specifically, we compare initial approval levels across five categories: (1) presidents elected by a majority in a single round; (2) presidents elected by a runoff majority; (3) presidents elected by rules of a reduced threshold; (4) presidents elected by plurality; and (5) presidents who assumed power in some way other than winning an election. Since we are most interested in testing the causal mechanism

Table 7.2 Presidential Mandates and Initial Levels of Quarterly Approval

	Mean (s.d.)	Mean Diff. $I - J_n$ (s.e.)	n	Min.	Max.
Elected 1st Round Majority (I)	60.8 (12.1)		20	45.0	83.4
Elected Runoff Majority (J_1)	54.8 (11.7)	6.0 (3.7)	19	30.8	74.8
Elected Reduced 1st Round Threshold (J_2)	48.3 (13.0)	12.5* (5.4)	6	31.4	63.4
Elected Plurality (J_3)	58.0 (10.3)	2.8 (3.9)	16	40.6	80.3
Assumed Power Nonelectorally (J_4)	52.9 (11.3)	7.9* (4.0)	16	33.7	73.0
Total	56.1 (11.8)		77	30.8	83.4
ANOVA: $F = 1.99$, d.f. = 4, $p = .105$, $R^2 = .010$					

Notes:

Differences of means tests calculated with Least-Squared Difference (LSD) method.

* $p \leq .05$

involving the impact of presidential electoral mandates on initial approval ratings, as opposed to just the presidential electoral system by itself, group (1) includes presidents who managed to win a first-round majority regardless of whether the electoral rules dictated one or two rounds of voting.

We find positive to mixed evidence that presidential electoral systems, and the mandates they generate, influence initial levels of presidential approval. The most popular presidents in our sample are those elected with a majority in a single round of elections, enjoying, on average, first-quarter approval ratings of almost 61 percent. This is twelve and a half points higher than their counterparts elected in a single round with a reduced threshold. First-round majority presidents received nearly eight (7.8) points higher approval than presidents who came to power without having won a national election. There is less reliable evidence

that first-round majority presidents receive higher levels of starting approval than presidents elected by a plurality or a runoff majority. Based on this preliminary analysis, the debate about whether ballotage/runoff systems or plurality systems translate into stronger mandates is likely to continue: neither one consistently outperforms or underperforms the other. However, the middle-ground proposal, reduced threshold elections, may in fact be the least effective way to bolster presidential mandates. Reduced-threshold presidents begin, on average, with around 48 percent approval, compared to plurality (difference = 9.6 percent, $p = .086$) and runoff systems (difference = 6.5 percent, $p = .234$). One final note is that presidents who assume power without an electoral mandate average around 53 percent approval in their first quarter. While extraordinary circumstances bring these executives to office,⁸ the public appears to grant them, if briefly, a honeymoon period. Clearly, a larger sample size, and the addition of appropriate controls, would greatly boost our confidence in these effects.

Conclusion

The analysis of how institutions affect power dynamics and democracy has been a constant in much of Alfred Stepan's research. In addition, his research has frequently employed survey opinion data. Here, we merge these two interests. Building on the scholarship of Stepan, Linz, and others, we advance several arguments about why executive approval dynamics should differ across and within democratic regime types. We argue that political institutions, in particular the electoral and party systems, affect executive approval dynamics by shaping the strategic environment in which political actors make decisions and citizens evaluate them. Employing a methodology that permits the aggregation of survey data across different polling companies and sampling frames and slight variations in question wording and allows cross-country comparison, we provide initial tests of the main directional implications of our arguments, with highly encouraging results. As we continue to expand our executive approval data set, future iterations of this research project will test our arguments in a multivariate context, incorporating electoral,

institutional, and socioeconomic variables and seeking to clarify more precisely which of the various causal factors are most significant.

Our research makes important contributions to several strands of the literature on comparative politics. The first is the literature that seeks to explain the evolution of executive approval over time. To date, this literature has mostly focused on trends within individual administrations and has stressed the effect of factors such as a honeymoon period, economic performance, and international wars on approval rates. As developed in the pages above, we argue that party and electoral factors based on institutional differences have been ignored and advance several hypotheses that link these factors to patterns of executive approval across democratic regime types as well as within presidentialism. Indeed, we show institutional choices greatly influence how much popular support executives enjoy at the beginning of their terms. Our exploratory analyses reveal that compared to prime minister popularity, presidential popularity dissipates more quickly, reaches higher peaks and lower valleys, and tends to fluctuate over a wider range. Further, the data strategy we employ in this chapter will allow further empirical tests of these hypotheses in a wider cross section of democratic regimes.

Future work based on these data will also contribute to the literature on how different regime types, sometimes in combination with other institutional features, can have an impact on the way that citizens hold their executives accountable. Echoing Linz (1990, 1994), Stepan and Skach (1993) argue that one of the reasons why presidential democracies have been consistently shorter-lived than parliamentary ones is that incentives for accountability are weaker in these systems. That presidents cannot be removed except through a "too complicated and aridly legalistic" process of impeachment (Linz 1990: 53) makes accountability in presidentialism more difficult than in parliamentary systems, where the government can be defeated through a vote of no confidence. Others, in turn, have argued that accountability for economic policy is enhanced in institutional contexts where policy-making power is concentrated and there is "clarity of responsibility," which is typically found more in separation of powers systems than under parliamentarism. Evidence in favor of these arguments has focused on electoral accountability, that is, the ability of voters to make elected officials accountable by voting

for or against them (or their party) in periodic elections (e.g., Powell and Whitten 1993; Hellwig and Samuels 2007). However, there is some evidence that citizen evaluations of government performance have a direct effect on the government's decisions about policy design and implementation (see, e.g., Canes-Wrone and de Marchi 2008; Canes-Wrone and Shotts 2004; Canes-Wrone, Herron, and Shotts 2001). If this is indeed the case, our approach will shed light on the relationship of accountability throughout an executive's term (not only during elections) as well as on the question of how different political institutions condition this form of bottom-up accountability.

Appendix

Our data set covers the country-years presented in the table below.

Country	Quarter/Year
Argentina	4/1983–1/2009
Austria	1/2005–1/2009
Australia	1/1971–1/2009
Bolivia	3/2002–1/2009
Brazil	1/1985–1/2009
Canada	3/1984–1/2009
Chile	1/1990–1/2009
Colombia	3/1990–1/2009
Costa Rica	2/1978–1/2009
Czech Republic	3/1998–1/2009
Dominican Republic	3/2000–1/2009
Ecuador	3/1979–1/2009
El Salvador	2/1999–1/2009
Germany	4/1949–1/2009
Greece	2/2004–1/2008
Guatemala	1/2004–1/2009
Honduras	1/2002–1/2009
Hungary	3/1998–1/2009
Italy	2/2001–1/2009

Mexico	4/1998–1/2009
Nicaragua	1/2002–1/2009
Panama	3/2004–1/2009
Paraguay	3/1998–1/2009
Perú	4/1990–1/2009
Philippines	2/1986–1/2009
Spain	3/1995–1/2009
United Kingdom	1/1964–1/2009
United States	2/1945–1/2009
Uruguay	3/1997–1/2009
Venezuela	1/1989–2/2008

Notes

1. For now, we leave aside consideration of semi-presidential systems, which provide significantly more power to the head of state than in parliamentary systems and which can possess different dynamics depending upon whether or not the president and the prime minister belong to the same governing party or coalition.

2. It is important to note that this last variable does not distinguish neatly between presidential and parliamentary systems: while in general we expect executives in presidential systems to have higher initial approval rates, we should expect executives in majoritarian parliamentary systems (like the UK) to do better than those with more proportional electoral systems (like Italy).

3. Though presidents can be removed through a process of impeachment, this implies a break in normal politics.

4. Another survey question sometimes used asks which party or candidate respondents would vote for if presidential or parliamentary elections were to be held the following day (e.g., Mattila 1996). Given different electoral calendars, temporal dynamics, and voter participation rates across parliamentary and presidential systems, we believe this would be a highly problematic indicator in an extensive cross-national analysis.

5. As a practical matter, we employed Hellwig and Samuels's (2008: 72) recent classification of presidential, semi-presidential, and parliamentary regimes. In terms of the case categorization and sampling frame, the only discrepancy that results from Stepan and Skach (1993) is that they categorize Ireland as parliamentary whereas we code it as semi-presidential and thus exclude it from the sample.

6. Our intention is to collect data from all countries considered electoral democracies by Freedom House in 2007 and have populations of over one million people. The total potential number of countries is eighty-one.

7. While more technical treatments of these methods exist (Stimson 1991, 1999), in this note we explain briefly the approach's key assumptions and basic logic. The first important assumption is that to the extent that any data series is a valid indicator of executive approval, the ratio of the values at any two times in the series is a relative indicator of executive approval. Employing all available ratios in a given series, the algorithm uses a recursive process to estimate values at regular time points (years, months, quarters) as specified by the researcher. Each series undergoes this step, resulting in N input ratio series. If the input ratio series indeed tap the same latent construct, executive approval, they should co-vary. The algorithm computes the communality (a validity estimate) of each of N input ratio series and, using the communality weights, it iteratively estimates the best single underlying series of latent approval. To sharpen the estimates, exponential smoothing on the raw series can remove random fluctuation due to sampling error.

8. The sixteen presidents in our data set that meet this classification are Argentina's Eduardo Duhalde (2002–3); Bolivia's Carlos Mesa (2003–5) and Eduardo Rodríguez (2005–6); Brazil's José Sarney (1985–90) and Itamar Franco (1992–95); Ecuador's Fabián Alarcón (1997–98), Gustavo Noboa (2000–2003), and L. Alfredo Palacio (2005–7); Paraguay's Luis González Macchi (1999–2003); Peru's Valentín Paniagua (2000–2001); the Philippines' Maria Corazón Aquino (1986–92) and Maria Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (2001–present); U.S. Harry Truman (1945–53), Lyndon Johnson (1963–69), and Gerald Ford (1974–77); and Venezuela's R. José Velásquez (1993–94).

References

- Amorim Neto, Octavio. 2006. "The Presidential Calculus: Executive Policy Making and Cabinet Formation in the Americas." *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 4: 415–40.
- Amorim Neto, Octavio, Gary W. Cox, and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2003. "Agenda Power in Brazil's Câmara dos Deputados, 1989 to 1998." *World Politics* 55, no. 4: 550–78.
- Arce, Moisés. 2003. "Political Violence and Presidential Approval in Peru." *Journal of Politics* 65, no. 2: 572–83.
- Campus, Donatella, and Gianfranco Pasquino. 2006. "Leadership in Italy: The Changing Role of Leaders in Elections and in Government." *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 14, no. 1: 25–40.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, and Scott de Marchi. 2008. "Presidential Approval and Legislative Success." *Journal of Politics* 64: 491–509.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, Michael C. Herron, and Kenneth W. Shotts. 2001. "Leadership and Pandering: A Theory of Executive Policymaking." *American Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 3: 532–50.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, and Kenneth W. Shotts. 2004. "The Conditional Nature of Presidential Responsiveness to Public Opinion." *American Journal of Political Science* 49: 690–706.
- Cheibub, José Antonio. 2007. *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Adam Przeworski, and Sebastián M. Saiegh. 2004. "Government Coalitions and Legislative Success under Presidentialism and Parliamentarism." *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 4: 565–87.
- Clarke, Harold D., Karl Ho, and Marianne C. Stewart. 2000. "Major's Lesser (not Minor) Effects: Prime Ministerial Approval and Governing Party Support in Britain since 1979." *Electoral Studies* 19, no. 2: 255–73.
- Clarke, Harold D., and Marianne C. Stewart. 1995. "Economic Evaluations, Prime Ministerial Approval and Governing Party Support: Rival Models Reconsidered." *British Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 2: 145–70.
- Cuzán, Alfred G., and Charles M. Bundrick. 1997. "Presidential Popularity in Central America: Parallels with the United States." *Political Research Quarterly* 50, no. 4: 833–49.
- Diamond, Larry, and Marc F. Plattner. 2007. "The Democracy Barometers (Part I)." *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 3: 65.
- Ellis, Christopher R., Joseph D. Ura, and Jenna Ashley-Robinson. 2006. "The Dynamic Consequences of Nonvoting in American National Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 59, no. 2: 227–33.
- Enns, Peter K., and Paul M. Kellstedt. 2008. "Policy Mood and Political Sophistication: Why Everybody Moves Mood." *British Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 3: 433–54.
- Erickson, Robert S., Michael B. MacKuen, and James A. Stimson. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gelpi, Christopher. 1997. "Democratic Diversions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 2: 255–82.
- Gerring, John, Strom C. Thacker, and Carola Moreno. 2009. "Are Parliamentary Systems Better?" *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 3: 327–59.
- Gronke, Paul, and Brian Newman. 2003. "FDR to Clinton, Mueller to? A Field Essay on Presidential Approval." *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 4: 501–12.
- Heath, Anthony, Stephen Fisher, and Shawna Smith. 2005. "The Globalization of Public Opinion Research." *Annual Review of Political Science* 8: 297–333.

- Hellwig, Timothy, and David Samuels. 2007. "Electoral Accountability and the Variety of Democratic Regimes." *British Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 1: 65–90.
- James, Patrick, and John R. O Neal. 1991. "The Influence of Domestic and International Politics on the President's Use of Force." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35, no. 2: 307–22.
- Johnson, Gregg B., and Sooh-Rhee Ryu. 2010. "Repudiating or Rewarding Neoliberalism? How Broken Campaign Promises Condition Economic Voting in Latin America." *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 4: 1–24.
- Johnson, Gregg B., and Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer. 2009. "Economic Accountability in Central America." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1, no. 3: 33–56.
- Levy, Jack. 1989. "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique." In *Handbook of War Studies*, ed. Manus Midlarsky, 259–88. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1994. "Presidentialism and Majoritarian Democracy: Theoretical Observations." In *The Failure of Presidential Democracy: The Case of Latin America*, ed. Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela, 91–105. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Linz, Juan J. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1: 51–69.
- . 1994. "Democracy, Presidential or Parliamentary: Does It Make a Difference?" In *The Failure of Presidential Democracy: The Case of Latin America*, ed. Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela, 3–87. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan. 1996a. "Toward Consolidated Democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2: 14–33.
- . 1996b. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Linz, Juan J., and Arturo Valenzuela, eds. 1994. *The Failure of Presidential Democracy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Luna, Juan Pablo. 2002. "¿Pesimismo estructural o voto económico? Sobre la racionalidad agregada del electorado uruguayo" (Structural Pessimism or Economic Voting? On the Aggregate Rationality of the Uruguayan Electorate). *Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política* 13: 123–52.
- McAllister, I. 2007. "The Personalization of Politics." In *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, ed. R. J. Dalton and H. D. Klingemann, 571–88. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Mainwaring, Scott. 1993. "Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination." *Comparative Political Studies* 26, no. 2: 198–228.
- Martínez-Gallardo, Cecilia. 2009. "Coalition Duration in Presidential Systems." Paper prepared for presentation at the Latin American Studies Association meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 11, 2009.
- Mattila, Mikko. 1996. "Economic Changes and Government Popularity in Scandinavian Countries." *British Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 4: 583–95.
- Mishler, William, and John P. Willerton. 2003. "The Dynamics of Presidential Popularity in Post-Communist Russia: Culture Imperative versus Neo-Institutional Choice?" *Journal of Politics* 65, no. 1: 111–41.
- Morgan, T. Clifton, and Christopher Anderson. 1999. "Domestic Support and Diversionary External Conflict in Great Britain, 1950–1992." *Journal of Politics* 61, no. 3: 799–814.
- Morgan Kelly, Jana. 2003. "Counting on the Past or Investing in the Future: Economic and Political Accountability in Fujimori's Peru." *Journal of Politics* 65, no. 3: 864–80.
- Mueller, John. 1970. "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson." *American Political Science Review* 64, no. 1: 18–34.
- . 1973. *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Payne, Mark, Daniel Zovatto, and Mercedes Mateo Diaz, eds. 2007. *Democracies in Development: Politics and Reform in Latin America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal. 2007. *Presidential Impeachment and the New Political Instability in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Powell, G. Bingham, and Guy D. Whitten. 1993. "A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting: Taking Account of the Political Context." *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 1: 391–414.
- Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shugart, Matthew, and John Carey. 1992. *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shugart, Matthew Soberg, and Scott Mainwaring. 1997. "Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America: Rethinking the Debate." In *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*, ed. Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Soberg Shugart, 12–54. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, Alastair. 1996. "Diversionary Foreign Policy in Democratic Systems." *International Studies Quarterly* 40, no. 1: 133–53.

- . 2004. *Election Timing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stepan, Alfred, and Cindy Skach. 1993. "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism." *World Politics*, 46, no. 1: 1–22.
- Stimson, James A. 1991. *Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles, and Swings*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- . 1999. *Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles, and Swings*. 2nd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.