

# Michael Albertus

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## EMPLOYMENT

### University of Chicago

Associate Professor of Political Science, 2018-  
Director, Center for Latin American Studies, University of Chicago, 2018-19  
Assistant Professor of Political Science, 2012-2018

### Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University

Fellow, 2019-20

### Hoover Institution, Stanford University

W. Glenn Campbell and Rita Ricardo-Campbell National Fellow and William C. Bark  
National Fellow, 2015-16

### Stanford Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law (CDDRL)

Postdoctoral Fellow, 2011-12

## EDUCATION

### Stanford University

Ph.D. in Political Science, September 2011  
Fields: Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Methodology

Dissertation: "Political Regimes and Redistribution"

Committee: David Laitin (chair), Jonathan Rodden, James Fearon, Stephen Haber

Dissertation Fieldwork: Peru and Bolivia (June-August 2008); Venezuela and Colombia  
(Jan.-April 2009); Colombia and Ecuador (April-June 2011)

Language Skills: Spanish (highly proficient)

### University of Michigan

B.S. in Political Science, high honors, 2005  
B.S.E. in Electrical Engineering, *summa cum laude*, 2005  
B.S. in Mathematical Sciences, 2005

## BOOKS

*Property Without Rights: Origins and Consequences of the Property Rights Gap*. In press,  
Cambridge University Press.

*Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy*. 2018. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo.  
Cambridge University Press. Featured as part of a "Critical Dialogue" with Stephan  
Haggard and Robert Kaufman's *Dictators and Democrats in Perspectives on Politics*, December  
2018.

*Coercive Distribution*. 2018. Co-authored with Sofia Fenner and Dan Slater. Cambridge University Press, *Elements Series*.

*Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*. 2015. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics series. Winner of the 2016 Gregory Luebbert Award for Best Book in Comparative Politics published in 2014 or 2015, and of the 2017 LASA Bryce Wood Book Award for the best book on Latin America in the social sciences and humanities published in English between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

"Does Equalizing Assets Spur Development? Evidence from Large-Scale Land Reform in Peru." Co-authored with Bogdan Popescu. 2020. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 15(2): 255-295.

"Land Reform and Civil Conflict: Theory and Evidence from Peru." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(2): 256-274.

"Theory and Methods in the Study of Distributive Politics." 2019. *Political Science Research and Methods* 7(3): 629-639.

"The Fate of Former Authoritarian Elites under Democracy." 2019. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(3): 727-759.

"No Better Time Than Now: Future Uncertainty and Private Investment Under Dictatorship." 2019. Co-authored with Victor Gay. *Economics & Politics* 31(1): 71-96.

"The Effect of Commodity Price Shocks on Public Lands Distribution: Evidence from Colombia." 2019. *World Development* 113: 294-308.

"Land Inequality and Rural Unrest: Theory and Evidence from Brazil." Co-authored with Thomas Brambor and Ricardo Ceneviva. 2018. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(3): 557-96.

"Unlikely Democrats: Economic Elite Uncertainty Under Dictatorship and Support for Democratization." Co-authored with Victor Gay. 2017. *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3): 624-41.

"Landowners and Democracy: The Social Origins of Democracy Reconsidered." 2017. *World Politics* 69(2): 233-76. (Lead article). Winner of the 2018 best article award for APSA's Comparative Democratization section.

"Capital in the Twenty-First Century – In the Rest of the World." Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. 2016. *Annual Review of Political Science* 19: 49-66.

"Authoritarian Survival and Poverty Traps: Land Reform in Mexico." Co-authored with Beatriz Magaloni, Barry Weingast, and Alberto Diaz-Cayeros. 2016. *World Development* 77: 154-70.

"The Role of Subnational Politicians in Distributive Politics: Political Bias in Venezuela's Land Reform under Chávez." 2015. *Comparative Political Studies* 48(13): 1667-1710. (Lead article).

"Explaining Patterns of Redistribution Under Autocracy: The Case of Peru's Revolution from Above." 2015. *Latin American Research Review* 50(2): 107-34.

"Dealing with Dictators: Negotiated Democratization and the Fate of Outgoing Autocrats." 2014. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. *International Studies Quarterly* 58(3): 550-65.

"Gaming Democracy: Elite Dominance During Transition and the Prospects for Redistribution." 2014. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. *British Journal of Political Science* 44(3): 575-603.

"Vote Buying with Multiple Distributive Goods." 2013. *Comparative Political Studies* 46(9): 1082-1111.

"Land Reform as a Counterinsurgency Policy: Evidence from Colombia." 2013. Co-authored with Oliver Kaplan. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57(2): 198-231.

"Dictators as Founding Fathers? The Role of Constitutions Under Autocracy." 2012. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. *Economics & Politics* 24(3): 279-306.

"If You're Against Them You're With Us: The Effect of Expropriation on Autocratic Survival." 2012. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. *Comparative Political Studies* 45: 973-1003.

"Coercive Capacity and the Prospects for Democratization." 2012. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. *Comparative Politics* 19(2): 151-69.

## **BOOK CHAPTERS**

"The Stickiness of 'Bad' Institutions: Constitutional Continuity and Change Under Democracy." 2020. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. In Daniel Brinks, Steven Levitsky, and M. Victoria Murillo, eds. *The Politics of Institutional Weakness in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3.

"The Political Economy of Autocratic Constitutions." 2014. Co-authored with Victor Menaldo. In Tom Ginsburg and Alberto Simpser, eds. *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5, pp. 53-82.

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

Review of Scott Mainwaring and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, *Democracies and Dictatorships in Latin America: Emergence, Survival, and Fall* (2014) in *Journal of Latin American Studies* 48(2016): 191-192.

Review of Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman, *Dictators and Democrats* (2016), as part of a "Critical Dialogue" with Victor Menaldo and I about our book *Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy* (2018). *Perspectives on Politics*, December 2018.

## **PAPERS IN PROGRESS**

"The Road to Rebellion: State-Building and Rural Uprisings in the Run-up to the French Revolution." With Victor Gay.

“Land Reform and Human Capital Development: Evidence from Peru.” With Ricardo Fort and Mauricio Espinoza.

“How Authoritarian Legacies of Social Order and Extraction Impact Democracy: Evidence from Portugal.” With Noah Schouela.

“Trajectories and Consequences of Authoritarian Elite Persistence Under Democracy.” With Mark Deming.

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

University of Chicago Center for International Social Science Research Fellow and grant for “Why Citizens Support Elected Leaders That Erode Democracy,” 2020-21.

University of Chicago Pearson Institute Research Fund grant for “Pacifying the Countryside in Spain,” 2020-21.

Spencer Foundation grant for project on land reform and educational attainment in Peru, 2019-2020.

University of Chicago Center for International Social Science Research Fellow and grant for “Land Reform and Long-Term Development,” 2019-20.

University of Chicago Pearson Institute Research Fund grant for “Rural Unrest and Land Reform in Portugal,” 2019-20.

University of Chicago David Hoeft Award for Newly Tenured Faculty, 2018-19.

University of Chicago Center for International Social Science Research Fellow and grant for “Land Reform and Long-Term Development,” 2018-19.

University of Chicago Pearson Institute Research Fund grant for “Land Tenure and Rural Rebellion in Pre-Revolutionary France,” 2018-19.

University of Chicago Undergraduate Research Initiative grant for “Land Reform and Civil Conflict: Theory and Evidence From Peru,” 2018-19.

University of Chicago Center for International Social Science Research Fellow and grant for “Land Reform and Civil Conflict,” 2017-18.

University of Chicago Pearson Institute Research Fund grant for “Land Reform and Civil Conflict: Theory and Evidence From Peru,” 2017-18.

W. Glenn Campbell and Rita Ricardo-Campbell National Fellow and William C. Bark National Fellow at Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 2015-16.

University of Chicago Social Sciences Division Research Grant for data collection on social origins of democracy and dictatorship, 2015.

Sabbatical fellowship at Carlos III-Juan March Institute of Social Sciences, 2015 (declined).

University of Chicago Social Sciences Division Research Grant for data collection on fate of former dictators, 2014.

University of Chicago Center in Beijing Grant for international conference in Beijing in summer 2015, "The Politics of Land Reform and Development," 2014.

University of Chicago Social Sciences Division Research Grant for data collection on land reform, 2013.

Hewlett Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, 2011-12.

Bradley Graduate Research Predoctoral Fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR), 2010-11.

O'Be Shultz Dissertation Completion Grant, 2010-11.

Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation (SCICN) Grant for fieldwork in Colombia, 2010.

Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation Graduate Fellow, 2009-10.

Diversity Dissertation Research Opportunity Grant for research assistance on coding Bolivia and Peru land data from Stanford Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, 2009.

Ayacucho Foundation Grant for fieldwork in Venezuela (January-April 2009) from Stanford Center for Latin American Studies, 2008.

Diversity Dissertation Research Opportunity Grant for Venezuela and Colombia fieldwork (January-April 2009) from Stanford Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, 2008.

Stanford University Graduate Research Opportunity (GRO) Grant for fieldwork in Peru and Bolivia (June-August 2008), 2008.

John E. Sawyer Graduate Fellow at the Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality (SCSPI), 2007-8.

Melvin and Joan Lane Stanford Graduate Fellowship, 2006-10.

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS, INVITED TALKS, AND LECTURES**

"Trajectories and Consequences of Authoritarian Elite Persistence Under Democracy," presented at the University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, February 2020, and at the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at Stanford University, Stanford, CA, February 2020.

"Land Reform and Human Capital Development: Evidence from Peru," presented at the University of California at San Diego, San Diego, CA, January 2020.

"How Authoritarian Legacies of Social Order and Extraction Impact Democracy: Evidence from Portugal," presented at the University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, February 2020.

"Does Equalizing Assets Spur Development? Evidence from Large-Scale Land Reform in Peru," presented at the political science department at Stanford University, Stanford, CA,

November 2019, at the Center for Latin American Studies at Stanford University, Stanford, CA, May 2019, and at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, February 2019.

“Property Without Property Rights: Land Reform and the Political Origins of the Property Rights Gap,” presented at the University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, April 2020, at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, Stanford, CA, December 2019, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, September 2018, at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., September 2016, and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, February 2016.

“Redistributive Legacies: Land Reform and Rural Conflict Under Peru’s Shining Path,” presented at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, November 2018, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, October 2018, the American Political Science Conference, Boston, MA, September 2018, the Midwest Workshop in Empirical Political Science, Ann Arbor, MI, May 2018, at the University of Chicago Center for Latin American Studies, Chicago, IL, February 2018, the Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo, Lima, Peru, January 2018, and at the American Political Science Conference, San Francisco, CA, September 2017.

*Flawed By Design: Authoritarian Legacies Under Democracy*, presented at the University of Texas Law School, Austin, TX, October 2018, and Chapter 7 presented at MIT/Harvard State and Capitalism Seminar, Cambridge, MA, December 2016.

“Successful Agrarian Reforms,” presented in Bogotá, Colombia, as an invited lecture by the National Land Association to aid in designing an institutional structure for land reform as part of Colombia’s peace process, May 2017.

“The Fate of Former Authoritarian Elites Under Democracy,” presented at Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, December 2017, at the University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, November 2017, and at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, April 2016.

“Coercive Distribution,” presented at MPSA, Chicago, IL, April 2017, and at MIT/Harvard workshop, Cambridge, MA, December 2016.

“Land and Conflict,” roundtable participant at the American Political Science Conference, Philadelphia, PA, September 2016.

“The Effect of Commodity Price Shocks on Public Lands Distribution: Evidence from Colombia,” presented at MPSA, Chicago, IL, April 2017, and at Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, December 2016, and at Stanford University, Stanford, CA, May 2016.

“The Role of Subnational Politicians in Distributive Politics: Political Bias in Venezuela’s Land Reform under Chávez,” presented at Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO, November 2015, and at the University of California at San Diego, San Diego, CA, November 2015.

“The Social Origins of Democracy Reconsidered,” presented at Duke University, Durham, NC, April 2016, at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, December 2015, and at the American Political Science Conference, San Francisco, CA, September 2015.

“Land Inequality and Rural Unrest: Theory and Evidence from Brazil,” presented at the University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, April 2016, at the University of Washington, Seattle, WA, March 2015, at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, February

2015, at Yale University, New Haven, CT, December 2014, and at Columbia University, New York, NY, December 2014.

"Democracy and Macroeconomic Policy," presented at the American Political Science Conference, San Francisco, CA, September 2015, and at the American Political Science Conference, Chicago, IL, September 2013.

"Authoritarian Survival and Poverty Traps: Land Reform in Mexico," presented at the conference "Land and Development" at the University of Chicago Center in Beijing, Beijing, China, June 2015.

"Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform," presented at the third annual Repal Conference, Boston, MA, June 2016, the Juan March Institute, Madrid, Spain, February 2015, at the University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, November 2014, at the conference "New Knowledge Frontiers in Political Economy," Institute of Political Science of the Pontificia Universidad Católica in Santiago, Chile, June 2014, at the conference "Causes and Consequences of Socio-Economic Inequality," Washington University in St. Louis, MO, May 2014, and at the University of Illinois Comparative Politics Workshop, Urbana-Champaign, IL, April 2013.

"Democratic Design 'Flaws': Upending Autocratic Legacies," presented at the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, April 2014.

"Democracy and the Threat of Redistribution in Latin America," presented at the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, January 2011, at Australia National University, January 2011, at the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, November 2010, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, November 2010, at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN, November 2010, at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Boston, MA, August 2008, and at the Stanford Center for Latin American Studies, Stanford, CA, January 2008.

"A Revolution for Whom?: Measuring Political Bias in the Venezuelan Land Reform Using *Maisanta*," presented at the University of Chicago Comparative Politics Workshop, Chicago, IL, April 2013, Stanford's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, December 2011, at the Symposium on "Venezuela from the Neutral Ground", Tulane University, January 2011, at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Washington, D.C., September 2010, at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2010, at the Stanford Comparative Politics Workshop, Stanford, CA, January 2010, and at the Stanford Center for Latin American Studies, Stanford, CA, December 2009.

"Dictators as Founding Fathers? The Role of Constitutions Under Autocracy" (with Victor Menaldo), to be presented at conference on "Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes," University of Chicago Law School, October 2011, and presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Seattle, WA, September 2011.

"Regime Transitions and Policy Uncertainty: The Effect of Autocratic Cabinet Volatility on Autocratic Regime Failure and Democratization," presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Seattle, WA, September 2011.

"Gaming Democracy: The Role of Elite Welfare in Democratic Transitions" (with Victor Menaldo), presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Washington, D.C., September 2010.

"Land Reform as a Counterinsurgency Policy: Evidence from Colombia," (with Oliver Kaplan), presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2010, and at the Stanford International Relations Workshop, Stanford, CA, February 2010.

"Sowing the Land and Harvesting Votes: The Political Logic of Land Reform in Venezuela," presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2009, and at the Berkeley-Stanford Comparative Politics Conference, Berkeley, CA, April 2009, and at the Stanford International Relations Workshop, Stanford, CA, October 2008.

"Political Regimes and Poverty Reduction, 1950-2002," presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2009.

"The Determinants of Redistribution Under Autocracy" (with Victor Menaldo), presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Boston, MA, August 2008, and at the Berkeley-Stanford Comparative Politics Conference, Stanford, CA, May 2008.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### University of Chicago

Introduction to Comparative Politics (Spring 2018), undergraduate course.

Democracy and the Politics of Wealth Redistribution (Fall 2012; Fall 2013; Fall 2014; Spring 2017; Spring 2018), undergraduate course.

The Politics of Wealth Redistribution (Fall 2012; Fall 2013; Fall 2014; Spring 2017; Spring 2018), graduate course.

Political Regimes and Transitions (Spring 2014; Spring 2015; Spring 2017), graduate course.

Latin American Civilizations III (Winter 2013; Winter 2017; Winter 2019, in Oaxaca, Mexico), undergraduate course.

Social Science Inquiry III (Spring 2014; Spring 2015), undergraduate course.

Redistribution in America and Abroad (2014-15), Greenberg Seminar (Law).

### Stanford University

Democracy and the Politics of Wealth Redistribution (Winter 2011), undergraduate course.

## ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Op-ed article, "The Coronavirus Will Cause New Crises in Latin America." *Foreign Policy* (4/6/2020).

Op-ed article, "Pinochet Still Looms Large in Chilean Politics." *Foreign Policy* (11/5/2019).

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations white paper, "Agrarian Structure in Latin America" as part of *Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe*. Santiago de Chile, Document No 17. FAO. 2019.

Op-ed article, "Guaidó's Make or Break Moment." *Foreign Policy* (4/30/2019).

Op-ed article, "There is Still a Way Out of Venezuela's Stalemate." *Foreign Policy* (2/26/2019).

Op-ed article, "Venezuela's Best Path to Democracy? Pay Off the Military." *New York Times* (1/30/2019).

APSA Comparative Democratization Section Award Committee for Best Article, 2019.



Op-ed article, "Chávez's Real Legacy is Disaster." *Foreign Policy* (12/6/2019).

Op-ed article, "The Military Is Back in Brazil." *Foreign Policy* (10/29/2018).

Op-ed article, "The Military Returns to Brazilian Politics." *Foreign Policy* (10/8/2018).

Op-ed article, "There's a Better Way to Take White Farmers' Land." *Foreign Policy* (8/27/2018).

Gregory Luebbert Award Committee for Best Book in Comparative Politics, 2018.

Op-ed article, "Latin America's New Authoritarianism." *Slate* (5/21/2018).

Op-ed article, "Why Are So Many Democracies Breaking Down?" *New York Times* (5/8/2018).

Op-ed article, "Crony capitalism and protectionism are the despot's way." *Seattle Times* (4/20/2018).

Op-ed article, "How flawed constitutions undermine democracy." *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (2/26/2018).

Op-ed article, "Even with a new Colombian peace deal, what happens in the countryside?" *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (11/13/2016).

Op-ed article, "Here are the 3 (big!) challenges facing Peru's next president." *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (4/12/2016).

Best Paper Award Committee for APSA's Comparative Democratization Section, 2014-2015.

Op-ed article, "The Key to Peace in Colombia is in its Countryside." *Forbes* (10/29/2015).

Op-ed article, "Piketty thinks South Africa needs to redistribute land. Democracies can't do that. Dictators can." *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (10/20/2015).

Op-ed article, "Land and Conflict in Brazil." *International Relations and Security Network* (9/2/2014).

Op-ed article, "Capitalism Need Not Churn Inexorably Toward Higher Inequality." *London School of Economics*, "Politics and Policy Blog" (7/28/2014).

Op-ed article, "Land Reform and Rural Conflict in the Developing World." *International Relations and Security Network* (Week of 6/2/2014).

Op-ed article, "How Democracies are Gamed for Power and Profit: An Addendum to Picketty's 'Capital'." *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (5/27/2014).

Op-ed article, "A Glimmer of Hope for Democracy in Egypt." *Seattle Times* (1/31/2014).

Op-ed article, "Why Egypt's New Constitution May Not Turn Out As Badly As You Think." *Washington Post*, "The Monkey Cage" (1/16/2014).

Op-ed article, "South Africa, Unequal by Design." *Foreign Policy* (1/3/2014).

Op-ed article, "The Odds are Good for Egypt." *Foreign Policy* (7/18/2013).

Op-ed article, "Land for Peace in Colombia." *Foreign Affairs* (4/16/2013).

Op-ed article, "Aftermath of Revolution." *New York Times, Global/IHT* (2/14/2013).

Op-ed article, "Chávez Rides Again." *Foreign Policy* (10/10/2012).

Op-ed article, "Colombia's Rebels and Land Reform." *New York Times, Global/IHT* (10/9/2012).

Op-ed article, "Burma Can Bring It: Burma faces an uphill climb in its transition to democracy. But the odds may be better than you think." *Foreign Policy* (5/14/2012).

Op-ed article, "Needles Into Ploughshares: Want to fight Latin America's drug problem? Try land reform." *Foreign Policy* (4/12/2012).

Op-ed article, "For Enduring Democracies, Revolutions are the Best Bet." *USA Today* (3/2/2011).

Visiting Scholar at the *Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración*. Caracas, Venezuela, February-March 2009.

Peer reviewer for the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *World Politics*, *Comparative Politics*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Political Science Research and Methods*, *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *World Development*, and the *Economic Journal*.