Today

- 6 main theories: 2 structural, 1 cultural, 1 institutional, etc.
- GDP pc vs. change in GDP pc
- Modernization, GDP, and outliers
- Uruguay case, 1972 election and the Double-Simultaneous Vote

The Theories

1. **Moderate social cleavages** (social structure argument)
   - Thinking here is that democracy can’t survive polarization
   - Alternative version of this argument is to avoid cumulative cleavages

2. **Level of development** (also a social structure argument)
   - Richer countries seem to be more democratic
   - “Modernization theory”

*NB: Important to distinguish between level of development and rate of growth*
- Rate of growth tends to favor incumbents, whether authoritarian or democrats
- Level of development tends to favor democracy systematically

3. **Political culture** (cultural argument)
   - Norms of political tolerance, peaceful competition for power, etc.
     - Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
     - Gaye Almond and Sid Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*
     - Problems with cultural theories?
     - Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*
   - Echoes De Tocqueville’s argument about democracy in America
   - Elite values

4. **Institutions** (institutional argument)
   - Presidentialism bad, parliamentarism good
   - Problems?
   - Other funny rules
   - The nature of the old regime

5. **Leaders**
   - We’ve talked about people and institutions that allow them to choose their leaders
   - What about leaders? Key argument: during political transition, they matter

6. **External influences**

The Evidence

Must look at both:
- Countries that became democratic
- Countries that didn’t become democratic
- Democracies that survived
• Democracies that broke down
• Look across countries, over time
• Look within countries

In general, what do we find?

1. Very few democracies that broke down had only one problem

2. Very strong support for modernization theory

3. Mixed support on social cleavages
   - No strong correlation on socioeconomic inequality
   - Cross-cutting cleavages seems to work pretty well
   - Interaction between cleavage and institutions may matter

4. Mixed support on institutions
   - It's clear that certain clusters of institutions don't work well
   - Winner-take-all system with permanent minorities (e.g. ethnically divided societies)
   - Excessive veto players
   - Electing a Vice President and a President on separate tickets.

5. Role of culture still uncertain

5. Leaders
   - Powerful evidence in some cases during transition
   - Or course, leaders can also fail
   - Question is whether they matter that much when system is already established
   - Scattered systematic evidence that cohort change can have a big effects on system
   - Socialization of elites may be crucial

Perfect country
OK – let’s design a country from scratch so that it’s destined to be democratic
• What traits would it have?
• Level of development? Why?
• Ethnic cleavages? What’s the logic?
• Socio-economic cleavages? What’s the logic?
• Culture?
• Leaders?
• Institutions?
• *English-speaking Sweden with Nelson Mandela as Prime Minister?*