Witch Hunts? Electoral Cycles and Corruption Lawsuits in Argentina

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Abstract

Courts prosecuting corruption serve a critical horizontal accountability function, but they can also play a role in moments of vertical accountability when voters have the opportunity to sanction corrupt candidates. This article documents the strategic use of corruption lawsuits, demonstrating the presence of an electoral cycle in the filing of new corruption accusations against politicians. Using an original dataset of daily corruption complaints filed in federal courts against members of Argentina's main political coalitions between 2013 and 2021, we document an increase in corruption accusations against and by politicians in the periods immediately preceding an election. A second dataset of daily media coverage of corruption accusations in two leading newspapers suggests that corruption is indeed more salient prior to elections, offering politicians a temporal focal point to prepare and launch especially impactful lawsuits. Our findings shed new light on the use of courts as a tool for accountability as well as on debates about the so-called 'lawfare' in Latin America.

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A primary concern among those who study corruption prosecutions is the risk of seeing the rule of law morph into a "political weapon" (Maravall 2003) or "lawfare," that is, "the resort to legal instruments, to the violence inherent in the law, to commit acts of political coercion, even erasure" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006: 30). Indeed, many studies document how incumbents politicize investigations to sideline opponents.[1] Not all instances of the politicization of corruption, however, respond to the "lawfare" logic or carry such extreme implications for regime openness. In this paper we examine one instance that takes place prior to the involvement of law enforcement, is not necessarily aimed at political erasure, and can be deployed against both incumbents and oppositions. We look at the decision to file corruption accusations against politicians in court, and document that these accusations are timed strategically: politicians bring allegations to the attention of a prosecutor or judge during electoral campaigns.

Politicians can benefit from filing corruption lawsuits against their rivals, as it can harm their reputation, lower their approval rating, and possibly lead to a conviction. Electoral campaigns, in particular, are a good time to launch accusations against rivals, as voters have limited attention spans and prioritize new information (e.g., Healy and Lenz 2014; Huber, Hill and Lenz 2012). However, making such accusations also comes with risks. The authoritativeness and credibility of the judicial process depends on maintaining the "myth of legality" (Scheb and Lyons, 2000; Nicholson and Howard, 2003; Gibson and Caldeira, 2009; Zink et al., 2009; Bybee, 2010; Nicholson and Hansford, 2014). Opportunistic lawsuits, or

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[1] While recent studies emphasise the independence of law enforcement (Adebanwi and Odabare 2011, Manzi 2018, and Gonzalez-Ocantos and Baraybar 2019), others document incumbents manipulating investigations against rivals. Pei (2018) shows that prosecutions in China coincide with the arrival of new leaders and are aimed at cementing their authority. Shen-Bayh (2018) describes how African regimes use the courts to "propagate narratives of incumbent strength and challenger weakness" (ibid: 322). Popova and Post (2018) find that corruption prosecutions in Eastern Europe are more common where party systems are unstable and against junior coalition partners, a pattern suggestive of proceedings designed to undermine weak rivals. Finally, Helmke et al. (2019) show that Latin American presidents are more likely to end up in jail if their successors are anti-establishment outsiders.

investigations that are perceived as politically motivated, can quickly accumulate controversies, lose effectiveness and embolden allegedly corrupt actors. Politicians therefore need to weigh the potential costs and benefits of involving the courts in investigating other politicians.

We investigate whether the ebbs and flows of the electoral cycle in Argentina track changes in the frequency with which corruption accusations make it to the federal docket. We use an original dataset of all cases filed in federal courts based in Buenos Aires (the *Comodoro Py* Courthouse) between 2013 and 2021, a period covering eleven national elections and three administrations. Our data includes information on the timing of accusations, as well as on the identity of defendants and accusers and the crimes involved. We are thus able to detect cases against and by members of the main political coalitions that competed for office during this period.

Using this granular data, we examine daily variation in the filing of lawsuits against politicians before and after election day. Our local-linear estimates suggest that, on average, days with accusations *against* politicians are 26% more likely right before the election. We observe a similar difference using alternative estimators and for varying temporal windows. For instance, the number of days with a complaint against a politician is 24% greater in the week before the election compared to the week after. When we analyse accusations against opposition and incumbent politicians separately, we observe that the impact is more pronounced for accusations against the incumbent (20% compared to 15%; p-values of .064 compared to .195). We also find more days with accusations filed *by* politicians right before election day (18%). The estimates for accusations filed by members of the incumbent and opposition coalitions are similar (.08 compared to .09), but the precision of the estimates is higher for opposition politicians (p-value of .07 versus .112). We also find little differences in the frequency and timing of accusations filed against or by politicians when controlling for the

party in power – i.e., denunciation is not an activity dominated by right-wing incumbents. Finally, an analysis of a second original dataset of daily media coverage of corruption in two leading newspapers confirms that corruption is more salient prior to elections, offering politicians a suitable environment for their judicialization tactics.

The paper adds a new angle to the literature on corruption, which focuses on the macro-level determinants of corruption (Treisman 2000; Rothstein 2011; Rose-Ackerman and Palifka 2016; Fisman and Golden 2018); when and how politicians steal (Gingerich 2013; Cooper 2019; Figueroa 2021); and whether voters punish corrupt politicians (Ferraz and Finan 2008; Chang et al. 2010; Anduiza, Gallego and Muñoz 2013; Winters & Weitz-Shapiro, 2013; Chong et al. 2015; Weitz-Shapiro & Winters 2017; Pavão 2018; Boas et al. 2019; Dunning et al. 2019; Klašnja, Lupu and Tucker 2020).

First, the paper sheds light on the production of information about corruption by actors close to the action, a key step in the accountability chain (De Vries and Solaz 2017). Previous work by Balan (2011) studies when politicians leak corruption information to the press. We take this a step further, clarifying when politicians find it wise to act on those leaks by involving the courts. Our analysis calls attention to the strategic timing of corruption lawsuits, and to the merits and perils of activating horizontal accountability mechanisms over the electoral cycle.

Second, by looking at who targets whom with corruption lawsuits and when, this paper complicates narratives about "lawfare" in Latin America. The term is invoked by leftist leaders, including those investigated as part of the different national chapters of the *Lava Jato* inquiry, arguably the biggest shock to Latin American politics in recent times (Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2023). Members of the left use the notion of "lawfare" to accuse incumbents, and the "right" more generally, of resorting to authoritarian legality to thwart progressive agendas (de Sa e

Silva 2020; Mota-Prado and Rodriguez-Machado forthcoming).[2] While our finding about the timing of corruption lawsuits indeed suggests that politicians rely on the courts to score political points, we uncover patterns of politicization that differ from "lawfare." In particular, our analysis shows that the filing of corruption lawsuits is not an activity dominated by the right, and more importantly, that corruption lawsuits, including strategically timed ones, are not more likely to be initiated by incumbents than challengers. Furthermore, it is the incumbent coalition that receives more accusations, both overall and closer to the election. These patterns are in line with what one might expect from healthy checks and balances, although in the conclusion we discuss possible downsides.

Finally, the paper innovates empirically. We use an original dataset covering thousands of corruption allegations and exploit short-term variation to examine the role of electoral motivations. While our analysis only identifies a descriptive difference in the frequency of accusations before and after elections, we exploit high-frequency data, pre-determined election dates, and short temporal windows, making it unlikely that important correlates of allegations (such as actual levels of corruption or detection capacity) drive the results (cf. Figueroa 2021). This approach stands in contrast to those that draw conclusions either from qualitative assessments and case studies of the politicization of corruption or from the outcomes of investigations. Our study has the additional advantage of using official records that cover every judicial complaint filed against Argentina's elites rather than relying on subjective expert assessments or information from the media. We are thus able to separate the judicial tactics used by political actors from their efficacy or salience.

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[2] See, for example, "Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner files 'lawfare' writ with IACHR," *Buenos Aires Times* (May 5, 2020)

The Electoral Timing of Corruption Accusations

The way politicians activate horizontal accountability has implications for the quality of representative democracy. Decisions about whether and when to approach the courts with corruption accusations against public officials and political rivals are no exception. For politicians, these decisions raise important normative and strategic questions.

Many instances of corruption are justiciable because they match codified criminal behaviour. In those cases, politicians have an obligation to alert law enforcement. When politicians scrutinize the exercise of power in this way, they act in accordance with what their role prescribes and fulfil a critical accountability function. Behaving in a principled manner might also yield pragmatic dividends. After all, corruption accusations are a straightforward way of scoring political points against opponents. While the effects may be short-lived, the damage potential can be high. Indeed, scholars have shown that corruption accusations in Latin America dent presidential approval (Carlin and Hellwig 2019) and play a role in executive downfalls (Hochstetler 2006; Pérez-Liñán 2007). Similarly, lawsuits in Spain helped the right reach power in the 1990s after a long period in opposition (Maravall 2003).

Yet, accusing a rival of corruption is not without risks. First, crying wolf too many times can backfire, even when there are good reasons to repeatedly go to court. From a strategic standpoint, doing so may dampen the ammunition or upend a politician's reputation, turning her into a serial finger pointer of diminished credibility, especially because proving corruption is very hard (Della Porta 2001; Bertossa 2003; Martini 2015). Raising the salience of corruption can also be dangerous for politicians who aspire to be in power because the tide may turn against them relatively quickly. This is particularly likely in contexts where corruption is systemic. Argentina exemplifies these perils. Fernando De la Rúa ran for President in 1999 on an anti-corruption platform at a time when the incumbent administration had been the target of multiple corruption accusations. But less than a year into his administration, a scandal that

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other politicians might have survived destroyed De la Rua's political capital (Charoski 2002). Similarly, a few years later, a leading candidate in the 2005 race for a high-profile legislative seat in the City of Buenos Aires and a former deputy mayor, represented a party that had similarly made anti-corruption a flagship issue. When rivals accused him of omitting to declare over US$ 2 million from his financial records, the campaign took a massive electoral hit.[3] Finally, in contexts where corruption is systemic, it is hard to predict how an accusation that initially focuses on particular figures might evolve. Italian politicians subject to the wrath of *Mani Pulite,* or their Brazilian counterparts during *Lava Jato,* can attest to this. It is unsurprising that Presidents Berlusconi and Bolsonaro, who rode the coattails of both anti-corruption probes, sought to suppress the affairs shortly after taking office.

The decision to insert corruption into the public debate through litigation is therefore a complex one. The balance of risks suggests that politicians lodging lawsuits against political rivals need to administer them carefully to maximize their normative merits, horizontal accountability value, and potential for electoral gain. But deciding *when* to go to court is also far from straightforward.

Timing lawsuits right before elections has several advantages. Given that voters on average have limited attention spans and weigh new information more heavily than older information (e.g., Healy and Lenz 2014; Huber, Hill and Lenz 2012), it is during a campaign that an accusation can make the biggest impact. Voters' propensity to weigh new information more heavily may result from a combination of psychological biases (e.g., recency bias) and well-known news consumption cycles. Work on Mexico suggests that voters increase their attention to the news in the period preceding elections (Marshall 2021), and evidence from the USA shows that congressional candidates are negatively affected by corruption accusations

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[3] The fact that the allegations eventually proved baseless reinforces our point that politicizing corruption can be costly.

mainly in the short term (Pereira and Waterbury 2019). Ferraz and Finan (2008) further demonstrate that the public release of corruption audits close to election day reduces the re-election chances of Brazilian mayors.[4] Allegations may have a greater impact if they are not just declared by a candidate during an interview or debate but brought to the attention of the courts. Going to court signals seriousness of purpose and enhances credibility.

For parties that cultivate transparency as a flagship issue, accusing a rival can be beneficial because it increases the electoral salience of corruption. It may also harden the anti-corruption stances of core constituents, boosting turnout. For a party that is perennially accused of corruption, counteraccusations may similarly help retain sympathisers or undermine a rival's competitive advantage in this area, effectively muting corruption considerations. Crucially, electoral campaigns are leader-centric affairs (McAllister 2007) that pit one political figurehead against another, whereas day-to-day politics tends to be more diffuse, with a greater focus on party politics (e.g., infighting), the interplay between institutions, and abstract policy issues. As a result, during a campaign it is easier to launch effective corruption allegations, which are usually personalized attacks.

Maximising attention to instances of wrongdoing by filing lawsuits during campaigns may be more than just an electorally sound strategy; it could also enhance the accountability value of this tool. Timing accusations so that they surface at a time when voters are deciding whom to vote for, implies using the judiciary to activate vertical accountability. In weak rule of law contexts, where electoral verdicts are often more powerful than legal ones, this might be a more effective strategy against corrupt political opponents.

Timing corruption lawsuits during campaigns can be advantageous, but it may also carry costs. Corruption prosecutions tend to get caught up in a debate between what Della Porta and Vanucci (2007: 846) call "judicialists," who emphasise the salutary effects of investigating

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[4] But see also Dunning et al. (2020).

the powerful, and "guarantors of the political system," who caution against potential disruptions to democracy and the rule of law brought about by judicial involvement. This debate can resonate with voters. Voters value respect for procedures and fairness when evaluating judicial phenomena (Tyler 2001, 2004a, 2004b), and are responsive to whether the actors involved in the legal process behave in accordance with their role or turn the courts into a mere extension of politics (Ferejohn, 2002; Gonzalez-Ocantos, 2016). Performing and promoting the "myth of legality" (Scheb and Lyons, 2000) is therefore crucial for preserving judicial legitimacy and the effectiveness of legal institutions (Nicholson and Howard, 2003; Gibson and Caldeira, 2009; Zink et al., 2009; Bybee, 2010; Nicholson and Hansford, 2014). The electoral timing of lawsuits complicates this.

A recent study of the Lava Jato Operation by Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. (2023: 198-203; 215-225; 249-256) exemplifies some of these tradeoffs. Investigations inevitably accumulate controversies and lose support when they are perceived as politically motivated or to be deviating from due process guidelines. Advocates for anti-corruption probes therefore tend to find out that the intervention of judicial authorities can easily turn a valence issue into something highly contested (ibid: 172-174). Corruption probes create a tension between citizens' demand for accountability and their partisan preferences (especially when prosecutors are perceived to behave in a partisan way). They also generate rule of law dilemmas, for example, when decisions restrict the political rights of key figures or directly harm their electoral chances (e.g., pre-trial detention orders or strategically timed searches). As corruption probes lose legitimacy or become divisive, they help embolden rather than weaken allegedly corrupt actors.

Launching a corruption accusation against a rival while simultaneously seeking to attract votes can therefore deepen the political precarity of these lawsuits and damage their potential for political use. These credibility and legitimacy concerns are perhaps more relevant

for incumbents than for oppositions, suggesting that the kind of strategic timing we explore in the paper is more likely to be practiced by the latter. Incumbents who point the law against their rivals during a campaign have to deal with the opportunism charge and with the more serious charge that they intend to manipulate or pressure the courts at a critical time in the electoral cycle. This perception can undermine the credibility of the accusation and the incumbent's democratic credentials. By contrast, policing incumbent behaviour is one of the roles of oppositions in democratic systems, so these actors are less likely to encounter the same type of questioning. Relatedly, an incumbent fixated on wrongdoing by past administrations may seem less principled than an opposition politician who shines a light on recent incumbent behaviour, perhaps echoing media coverage of corruption.

While politicians may want to directly profit from an accusation by attaching their names to it, they can also diffuse authorship rights by enlisting political agents such as little-known associates, public interest lawyers, journalists, or NGOs to file complaints on their behalf. In Argentina, for instance, it is common for "independent" lawyers and low-profile activists to file the complaints. Politicians can also tip journalists with information about alleged crimes. The ensuing reporting often triggers new accusations.[5]

This implication of our argument stands in sharp contrast to the "lawfare" narrative that has emerged around the growing intensity of corruption prosecutions, especially in Latin America. The "lawfare" story makes one central claim: that incumbents abuse their influence over the courts for political gain, especially by targeting the opposition with the goal of removing them from the electoral arena (Smulovitz 2022). Proponents of the lawfare narrative would expect incumbents to initiate corruption lawsuits more frequently and for opposition politicians to be more often the target of these cases. Instead, we hypothesize that both the

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[5] Patricia Blanco, "Quiénes son los abogados que están detrás de las denuncias de corrupción en Comodoro Py," *A24.com* (March 20, 2018).

opposition and the incumbent politicians have incentives to approach the courts for legal action during election season, with the opposition having slightly stronger incentives. This practice may serve frivolous purposes, such as discrediting rivals regardless of facts, or it may be used to bring attention to possible criminal behaviour by members of the opposite party.

Case Selection

Corruption is a relevant axis of political competition in Argentina. It is usually activated by non-Peronist candidates against Peronist rivals. Peronists have been in office for much longer periods and have therefore been the subject of more investigations (Manzetti 2014; Volosin 2019; Figueroa 2021). Moreover, the historical sociological roots of non-Peronist parties make the defence of republican values key to their identity. Indeed, campaigning on anti-corruption platforms has helped these parties on at least two occasions (the 1999 and 2015 presidential races). Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro (2014) shows that middle-class voters, who tend to be anti-Peronist, punish candidates who use public office for private or electoral gain more severely than Peronists' poorer core constituents. While her focus is on clientelism, the logic also applies to grand corruption, giving non-Peronist candidates an incentive to politicize it. But precisely because of this, Peronists sometimes try to neutralize the issue or even the score with their own corruption allegations.

The evolution of the party system in the aftermath of the 2001 economic collapse reinforced the centrality of the corruption/anti-corruption cleavage (Gervasoni 2018). This was a function of two factors. First, as left-of-centre Presidents Kirchner (2003-2007) and Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2015) tightened their grip on Peronism and side-lined other internal factions, a few Peronists abandoned the government and mounted external challenges, citing corruption as a key differentiating characteristic. Second, the 2001 crisis severely weakened the *Unión Cívica Radical* (UCR), the oldest non-Peronist party, and led to the

balkanization of that side of the political spectrum (Torre 2006; Lupu 2015). Former Radicals formed their own parties (e.g., Elisa Carrió's *Coalición Cívica – CC*). Political newcomers, including future president Mauricio Macri, did so too (*Propuesta Republicana – PRO*). The fight against corruption became a key strategy deployed by new non-Peronist parties to position themselves in an overcrowded field, and by the UCR to mount a comeback. The politicization of corruption gained momentum as the Kirchners became embroiled in serious allegations (Manzetti 2014) and as non-Peronist parties overcame divisions to form competitive coalitions that challenged Peronist incumbents. One of those coalitions brought together the UCR, CC and PRO. With Macri as the nominee, it dislodged Kirchnerism from power in 2015 (Murillo, Rubio and Mangonnet 2016; Lupu, Oliveros and Schiumerini 2019), only to lose it again in 2019, when Fernández de Kirchner returned as vice-president in a Peronist government led by Alberto Fernández.

Two characteristics of Argentina's criminal justice system enhance the appeal of using corruption accusations to score political points or alert voters about wrongdoing by opponents. First, prosecutors are allowed to investigate *ex officio*, but they usually react to accusations brought to their attention by others. Importantly, standing rules are maximally lax, meaning that individuals do not need to show a legitimate interest in a case to be able to file an accusation. Accusers therefore face very low entry barriers.

Second, courts invariably fail to make progress with corruption investigations. A report by the National Judicial Council shows that impunity for corruption is rampant. In cases initiated between 1996 and 2016, only 2% of defendants reached the trial stage, and less than 1% were convicted. Among the 12 pre-trial federal courts based in the City of Buenos Aires (commonly known as *Comodoro Py*), which investigate corruption crimes involving federal officials, programs or money, the performance is especially dismal. The average duration of

investigations was 2 years and 9 months, with some cases taking more than 10 years.[6] All of this means that no one who files a case reasonably expects it to produce results on the criminal legal front, at least not in the short term. There is therefore every chance that actors will go to court mainly for the expressive value of formalizing accusations. This is especially true for members of the opposition because incumbents are known for being able to negotiate case outcomes with judges.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that some corruption accusations are electorally timed. In 2013, non-Peronist parties formed a coalition to compete for legislative seats in the City of Buenos Aires. The mid-terms were scheduled for October, but the parties agreed to determine the composition of their lists during the mandatory primary to be held on the second Sunday of August. A few days before a televised debate, one of the candidates filed two corruption cases against the incumbent Kirchner administration, the first for illicit enrichment against the Army Chief and the second for embezzlement against the head of the Social Security Agency. Elisa Carrió, an anti-corruption crusader, timed these accusations to burnish her credentials and distinguish herself from internal competitors. In fact, when referring to her coalition partners during the debate, she said: "They are all stupid. They will not give everything they have to fight corruption." The debate quickly descended into a bidding war in which the others emphasized that they could also be trusted on this issue. Some diligently went through the cases they had filed against Kirchnerism, implying that their accusations were more credible than Carrió's: "We didn't base our complaints on newspaper clippings, but on more than 300 pages of evidence."[7] An editorial published in a pro-government newspaper days later complained about the politicization of corruption by the opposition, longing for a bygone era when few corruption accusations were made against office holders. There were "accounts [of government

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[6] Available online: http://www.cipce.org.ar/sites/default/files/2019/04/articulos2787.pdf

[7] "Son estúpidos, no pondrán el cuerpo contra la corrupción," *Página 12* (July 30, 2013)

13

corruption], some more compelling that others […] but there were practically no cases filed in court […] Today's media show […] is more political than ethical and […] generates more confusion than clarity."[8]

More recently, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner expressed her belief that corruption accusations against her were strategically timed to maximise electoral damage. She cited a case from 2015, just before her term was about to expire, in which the opposition took to federal court allegations about currency manipulation. As the trial was concluding, the former President told the judges: "You contributed to Macri's victory […] Five days after it was clear that the [runoff of the 2015] election would be between Daniel Scioli [representing Kirchnerism] and Mauricio Macri, only then did [two opposition congressmen] file the complaint […] On 17 November 2015, [five days before the runoff, judicial officers] searched the premises of the Central Bank. What was the goal? To generate a run on the currency, a devaluation, a disaster."[9] Conspiracy theories aside, and regardless of whether the case had an impact on the election, the opposition indeed filed the complaint during the campaign.

Despite complaining about the timing of corruption lawsuits, Kirchnerists also resort to this tactic. For example, two weeks before the 2017 legislative elections during which the incumbent Macri administration sought to improve its minority status in Congress, a Kirchnerist legislator filed a case against the President and his Minister of Energy for influence peddling, arguing that Macri had asked the tax authority to shelve a complaint against the cabinet member. Interestingly, the congressman had gone public with the accusation three weeks earlier, but only decided to take it to court on the eve of the election.[10]

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[8] Luis Bruschtein, "Denuncismo," *Página 12* (August 3, 2013).
[9] Candela Ini, "Cristina, a los jueces: 'Ustedes contribuyeron a que Macri ganara'," *La Nación* (March 5, 2021)
[10] "Denunciaron a Macri y la AFIP por un millonario perdón a Aranguren," *Política Argentina* (October 6, 2017)

Two years later, Macri was fighting for re-election amidst a major economic crisis that included an unpopular rescue agreement with the IMF. Kirchnerism again went to court. Days before the August primaries, an activist with close ties to the Kirchners filed charges against the President, the Minister of Finance, and former IMF Chief Christine Lagarde. The brief accused them of being part of a criminal conspiracy to use the international loan for electoral purposes and asked the judge to put the agreement on hold. The unmistakeable goal was to shine additional light on one of the incumbent's key electoral liabilities. In fact, the accuser made sure to publicize the move in an online video.[11]

Data and main outcome variables

To investigate the electoral timing of corruption accusations, we assembled an original dataset with all the federal criminal accusations that entered the *Comodoro Py* docket between July 2013 and December 2021. Neither judges nor prosecutors intermediate the timeline of when cases appear in the dataset. A case appears in the docket when the accuser files the accusation, and information becomes publicly available immediately after. Data comes from the federal judiciary's official information system (*Lex 100*) and is available on the website of the Center for Judicial Information (*Centro de Información Judicial*). We retrieved all available information for a total of 38,828 cases. For each one, the dataset includes the filing date, the crimes under investigation, the court selected to instruct the case, and the names of defendants and plaintiffs.

To identify corruption allegations against or by prominent politicians and their networks within this universe of cases, we followed an approach that leverages the fact that most corruption accusations include a set of politicians as defendants. We first identified all

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[11] "Juan Grabois denunció penalmente a Mauricio Macri y Christine Lagarde por el acuerdo con el FMI," *Infobae* (July 25, 2019)

accusations targeting the leaders of the two political coalitions that dominated Argentine politics between 2013 and December 2021: Fernández de Kirchner and Macri. Those appearing as co-defendants in these cases subsequently formed the basis of our lists of individuals who are members of each political coalition.[12]

We are confident that our list of defendants for each network contains the most important politicians active during the period of interest, including prominent cabinet members and other high-profile executive branch officials; presidents' closest relatives/aides; leaders of Peronist and non-Peronist parties; and ranking members of Congress. The final networks contain 374 co-defendants for Macri and 435 for Kirchner.[13] Only a small number of co-defendants appear in our dataset as accusers: 11.7% for Macri's network and 12.8% for Kirchner's.

A potential concern with our method is that it might miss cases involving politicians who, while belonging to a coalition, were never accused alongside their leaders. In the appendix, we present our main results using an alternative list of politicians and public officials. To this end, we obtained the list of members of Congress that served during the period as well as the lists of public officials in the national and City of Buenos Aires governments. We obtained the latter from public payrolls and the sworn affidavits officials are required to submit each year detailing their income and assets.

Our co-defendant classification, however, has the advantage that it identifies network connections regardless of their role, including politicians, businessmen, relatives, and civil society activists, among others.[14] With this information, we reviewed all cases filed in federal courts to identify accusations in which at least one co-defendant of either president appeared as a defendant or accuser. We use approximate string distance matching (Jaro-Winkler distance

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[12] In the final classification, we use an original list of elected and government officials compiled by triangulating a variety of official sources (see below) to ensure that no network contains members from the opposing parties. We also exclude any remaining individuals that are present in both lists.

[13] See Appendix D for a complete list of defendants in our sample.

[14] Only 38.5% of co-defendants are elected politicians or public officials.

< .1) to ensure that our classification identifies name matches even in the presence of middle and second last names and small typos or spelling mistakes. The final sample includes 1,488 cases with political defendants. Table 1 presents the distribution of cases broken down by year and defendants' and accusers' political affiliation.

Table 1. Distribution of cases against Kirchnerist and Macrist networks

| Year	Incumbent	Cases against Kirchnerism	Cases filed by Kirchnerism	Cases against Macrism	Cases filed by Macrism	Total cases
2013	*Cristina*	61	10	14	21	2,053
2014	*Fernandez*	116	9	15	36	3,833
2015	*de Kirchner*	124	13	29	24	4,563
2016		114	17	100	38	5,136
2017	*Mauricio*	60	28	157	28	5,644
2018	*Macri*	45	13	208	38	5,566
2019		39	17	116	23	5,582
2020	*Alberto*	55	9	55	18	2,336
2021	*Fernandez*	117	10	63	20	4,115
Total		731 (1.9%)	126 (0.3%)	757 (1.9%)	246 (0.6%)	38,828

If the reader is not familiar with Argentine politics, these figures may come as a surprise because Kirchnerists are most often associated with corruption. By contrast, we reveal that both coalitions have been the targets of roughly the same number of corruption accusations. Temporal variation also suggests that complaints against a group increase when it is in power. For this reason, we further collapse our data into claims filed against incumbent and opposition politicians. Cases involving Fernández de Kirchner and her co-defendants during the period her party was in power (between July 2013 and 10 December 2015, and after 10 December 2019 until December 31, 2022) and those involving Macri and his co-defendants during his presidency (10 December 2015 to 10 December 2019) are *incumbent* cases. Cases involving the parties outside of these periods are classified as *opposition*.

In addition to being confident that the list of defendants includes relevant political figures, we are quite certain that the universe of complaints is corruption-specific.[15] Figure 1 presents the distribution of the crimes under investigation in cases against politicians from both networks.[16] For the incumbent (opposition), approximately 86% (77%) of the cases include standard corruption offenses, known in Argentina as "crimes against the public administration." These include abuse of power, bribery, conflict of interests, money-laundering, illicit enrichment, and fraud. Only in a few cases (6.7% for the incumbent and 10.8% for the opposition) we find no crimes specified in the complaint, mainly because the accuser simply asked the judge to investigate whether the defendant had committed any corruption crime at all.

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[15] This is important because courts handle other federal crimes in addition to corruption.
[16] We identify the crimes under investigation through the articles of the Criminal Code listed in the case files.

Figure 1. Crimes under investigation.
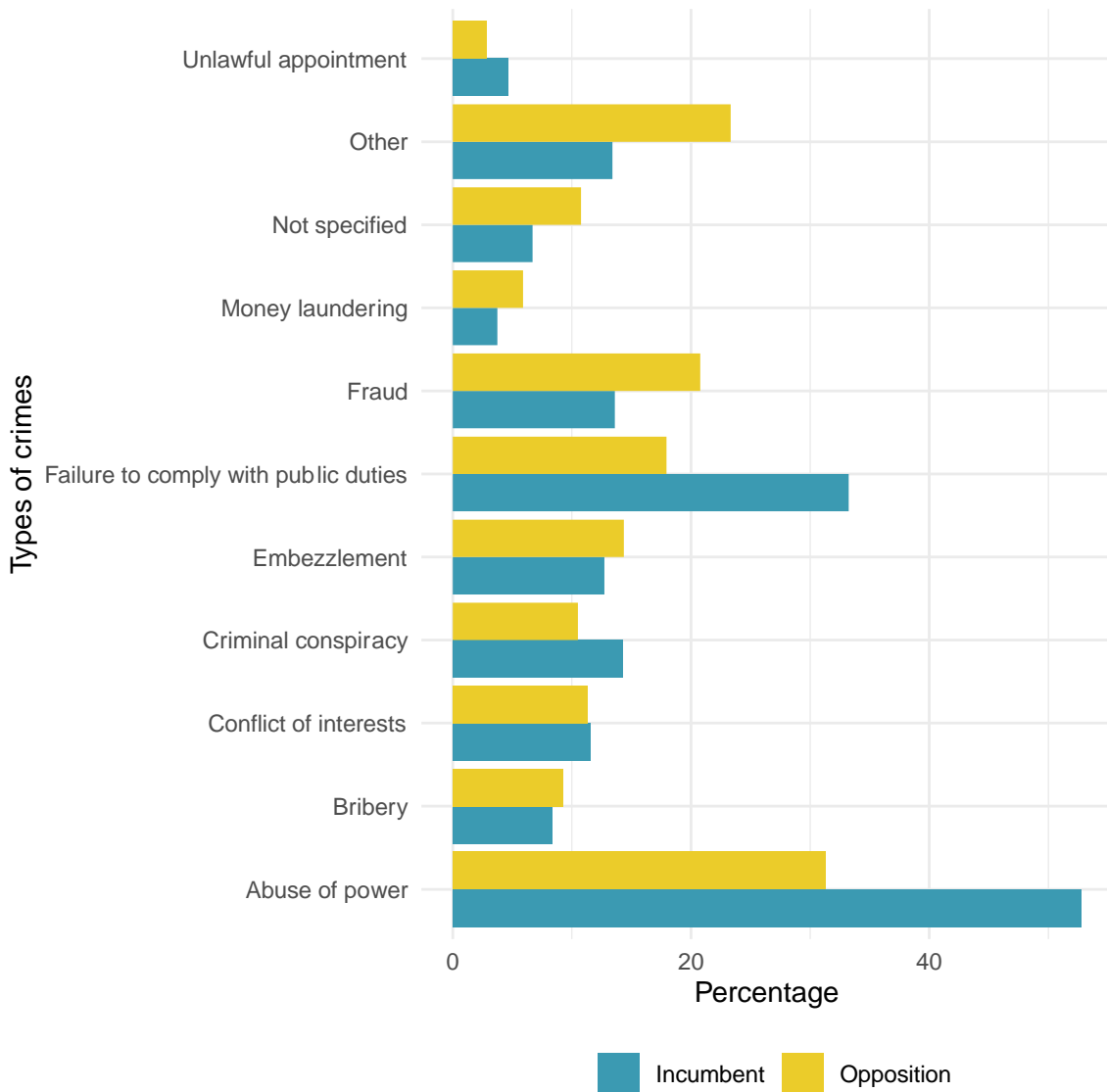
Note: cases may include none (Not specified) or multiple crimes under investigation. See Appendix B for the full table.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for our main dependent variables. Corruption complaints against politicians in our sample are pervasive. We document a complaint against a politician 43% of the time – roughly every other day. According to the "lawfare" narrative, we should observe more accusations against the leftist Kirchnerist coalition and more of these should materialize when it is in opposition. This is decidedly not what we find. Accusations are evenly distributed between coalitions, and they are almost twice as likely when parties are

in power. In total, we document 731 lawsuits against the incumbent and only 370 against the opposition. There are fewer days in which politicians appear as accusers (15% of all days in our sample). Indeed, the number of cases with a political accuser is much lower: only 328 cases, with a notable difference between Macrist (225) and Kirchnerist (119) accusers. As a result of the credibility concerns mentioned above, we suspect that many accusations are linked to politicians even if they are not filing them directly. The fact that Macrists and Kirchnerists receive a similar number of accusations but Macrists seem more adamant than Kirchnerists to put their names on lawsuits, is highly suggestive of this strategy. After all, it is the coalition led by Macri that emphasizes the issue of corruption; it therefore makes sense that they are more likely to claim credit for activating judicial probes.

Table 2. Summary statistics by network, incumbency, and status

	Role	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Total number of cases
CFK co-defendants		2217	0.254	0.436	0	1	731
MM co-defendants		2217	0.242	0.429	0	1	757
Political co-defendants	Defendants	2217	0.426	0.495	0	1	1,434
Incumbent co-defendants		2217	0.33	0.47	0	1	1,044
Opposition co-defendants		2217	0.167	0.373	0	1	444
CFK co-defendants		2217	0.054	0.225	0	1	126
MM co-defendants		2217	0.101	0.302	0	1	246
Political co-defendants	Accusers	2217	0.148	0.355	0	1	372
Incumbent co-defendants		2217	0.075	0.263	0	1	179
Opposition co-defendants		2217	0.08	0.272	0	1	193

Note: Summary statistics correspond to the number of days with at least one case, with the exception of Total, which corresponds to the sum in the number of cases.

Research Design

We define the campaign season as the window consisting of the days before primary and general elections (Figueroa 2021). In Argentina, both primary and general elections always take place on the second Sunday of August and are mandatory for voters and parties. For

presidential races there is the possibility of a runoff if no candidate secures more than 45% of the valid vote, or if the frontrunner secures more than 40% but the difference with the runner-up is less than 10%. Runoffs are scheduled for November.[17]

Given the nature of electoral competition in Argentina, the incentive to use corruption accusations against members of rival coalitions is similar across primary and general elections, which is why the analysis pools all elections that took place during this period. To be sure, in a context where primaries are competitive, like in the US, one might expect more friendly fire during primaries, and more enemy crossfire in general elections.[18] In Argentina, however, primaries are notoriously uncompetitive. A dataset of all district-level nominations for Chamber of Deputies elections between 2011 and 2017, shows that only 18.48% primaries included multiple lists whereas the rest were uncontested (Skigin 2022). This is because the law mandates that all parties, regardless of whether they have multiple contenders for specific elected offices, must go through the primary process in order to qualify for the general election. Since parties rarely feature internal competition during primaries, primary elections amount to an at scale opinion poll prior to the general election. As a result, for most politicians, the main goal is to garner more votes than their rivals in other parties to signal that victory in October is a *fait accompli*. The predominance of uncontested primaries suggests that it is highly unlikely that those accusing others of corruption will belong to the same party or coalition of the accused. In other words, the incentive to undermine the electoral prospects of a rival is as strong in the run up to primaries, as it is during the campaign ahead of the general election.

To explore whether corruption accusations increase in the run-up to the election, we compare the number of days with and without accusations shortly before to shortly after the elections (i.e., our unit of analysis is days). We take two approaches. First, we run a simple

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[17] Appendix C shows the dates for all elections that took place between 2013 and 2021.
[18] There are only 11 instances of friendly fire in our dataset.

regression model (i.e., akin to computing a difference-in-means) for varying temporal windows around the election:

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CampaignSeason_t + \varepsilon_t \quad (1)$$

Where Y_t is a dummy variable that takes the value 1 if at least one corruption complaint was filed on day t against or by politicians from the incumbent or opposition parties, $CampaignSeason_t$ is a dummy variable that indicates whether the complaints were filed before or after the election, and ε_t is the idiosyncratic error term. We expect $\hat{\beta}_1$, the coefficient of interest, to be positive, indicating that the number of days with corruption accusations increases before the election. We estimate Equation 1 using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and compute Huber-White robust standard errors (of the HC2 type).

We focus our temporal windows on one-day intervals within 5 and 37 days before and after the election. Because we analyse eleven elections in total and we only include business days in our sample, the number of observations in our regressions vary from 77 to 539. For instance, for a 5-day bandwidth, we have three business days before Sunday (election day) and four days after. We selected this 37-day range because 1) elections are held on Sundays, so the last day to file a complaint before the election that can make it to newspaper headlines is Thursday (three days before the election); and 2) the modal distance between elections in our sample is 77 days, thus a window of 37 days splits the pre- and post-election working days in half, leaving one day in between.

Our second approach is to estimate a local-linear regression using the number of days away from the nearest election to compute triangular weights. Within a fixed bandwidth to/from election day, we fit two separate regressions for the days before and after the nearest election, respectively, and estimate the difference between the two intercepts. We report the bias-corrected confidence intervals and *p*-values developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014). This estimator assigns more weight in the regression to days closest to the

election, both before and after. Our analysis used a 37-day bandwidth, meaning that our local-linear regressions allow for a maximum of 37 days before and after the election on each side of the discontinuity.

We present the results grouping all elections together for all politicians, as well as for incumbent and opposition defendants separately. In the appendix we examine our results using alternative classification of political cases, estimators (e.g., n-degree polynomials) and bandwidths (e.g., the "optimal" bandwidth selection method developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik 2014).[19]

More corruption cases against and by politicians are filed in the run-up to elections

Our argument is about accusers' incentives to strategically time their accusations. We argue that those who accuse politicians in court—and especially politicians accusing other politicians—may have a strategic incentive to file accusations shortly before an election to maximize potential electoral payoffs. Yet testing this argument has challenges, mainly that accusers often delegate the legal work to "independent" lawyers and/or lesser-known activists, making it difficult to attribute direct connections to a political coalition. We thus test an observable implication: if those accusing politicians are more likely to do so shortly before an election, accusations against politicians should be higher at that time. As a result, we rely on the identity of the *defendants* for the main empirical examination of our theory.

Figure 2, panel (a), shows OLS estimates for whether any case was filed in *Comodoro Py* against a politician for a large number of temporal windows, collapsing both political

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[19] In the Appendix we present some additional results. We replicate the analysis excluding 54 cases that include co-defendants of both Macri and Kirchner; analyse the number of cases per day; re-run the analysis using the classification of cases that results from using lists of public officials to identify defendants/accusers; show results separately for primary and general elections; estimate local-linear estimates using fixed effects for the party in power and using a larger window of up to 100 days; and provide results using fixed effects for the party in power and run a estimates from a 5th-degree polynomial regression.

coalitions (left panel) and for incumbent (center panel) and opposition politicians (right panel) separately. Each point estimate in Figure 2 comes from a separate regression following Equation 1 where we compare the number of days with lawsuits involving a politician before and after election day using one-day intervals for each regression. For instance, the first figure on panel (a) looks at accusations against both incumbent and opposition politicians. For the 5-day window, we compare the number of days with accusations filed between Wednesday and Friday before election day with the number of days with accusations filed between Monday and Thursday after the election. The number of observations in that regression is 77 (7 days times 11 elections).

In all cases, the point estimates are positive and become smaller as we move away from election day. We find similar results when considering all politicians and when focusing on accusations against the incumbent.[20] For these groups, the difference in the number of days with a complaint between days before and after the election is positive (i.e., more accusation are filed before the election) and statistically significant for days closer to the election. These results are confirmed by our local-linear estimates, shown on Table 3, panel (a). On average, a complaint against a politician is 26% more likely right before the election (p-value <.05), and 20% more likely for incumbent party politicians (p-value <.1). For opposition politicians, the difference is smaller (15%) and not significant at conventional levels. However, the difference between the two estimates is not in itself statistically significant, a point we discuss further below (see Appendix A for full results).[21]

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[20] These results are similar both in magnitude and statistical significance when we examine cases involving only elected and public officials (see Appendix A).
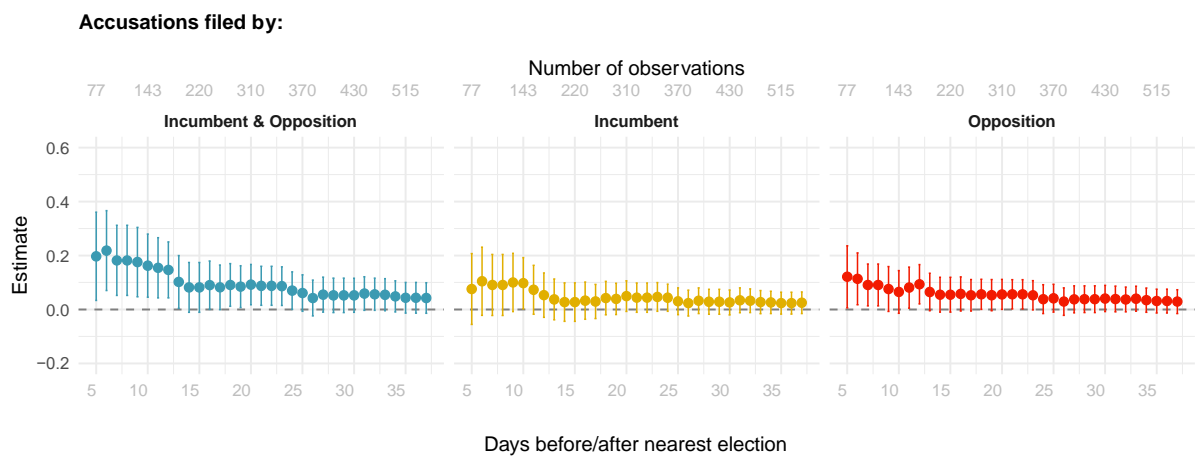
[21] We compute the standard error of the difference using the sum of the variances of each point estimate as an estimate of the variance of the difference (cf. Feierherd and Tuñón 2022).

Figure 2. Difference in the number of days with a corruption lawsuit before and after the nearest election

Panel (a)
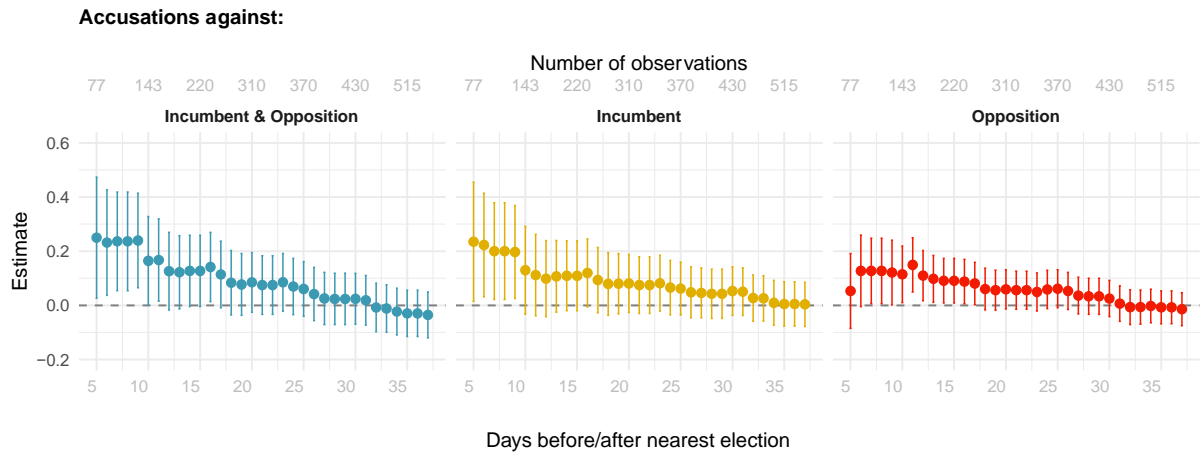
Panel (b)

Note: Outcome variables are dummy variables for whether there was at least one case filed on that day for each category. Point estimates come from separate regressions for varying windows as described in Equation 1. The top x axis indicates the number of observations for each regression. Bars represent robust 95% confidence intervals. Panel (a) examines cases in which politicians are the defendants; panel (b) examines cases in which politicians are the accusers.

The results are similar when we examine trends focusing on accusations filed by politicians. Figure 2, panel (b), reports difference in means for one-day intervals for these cases. We also find more days with corruption lawsuits as we move closer to Election Day. Table 3, panel (b), reports local-linear estimates. A complaint filed by a politician is 18% more likely right before the election (p-value <.05), and 8% (p-value >.1) to 9% (p-value <.1) more likely for incumbent and opposition party politicians.

Table 3. Local-linear estimates.

Panel (a): Accusations against politicians					
Cases against:	**Est.**	**95% RCI**	**p-value**	**N before | N after**	**Window**
Incumbent + Opposition politicians	0.26	[0.02:0.56]	0.032	266 | 257	37
Incumbent politicians	0.2	[-0.01:0.52]	0.064	266 | 257	37
Opposition politicians	0.15	[-0.06:0.3]	0.195	266 | 257	37
Panel (b): Accusations filed by politicians					
Cases filed by:	**Est.**	**95% RCI**	**p-value**	**N before | N after**	**Window**
Incumbent + Opposition politicians	0.18	[0.07:0.45]	0.007	266 | 257	37
Incumbent politicians	0.08	[-0.03:0.27]	0.112	266 | 257	37
Opposition politicians	0.09	[-0.01:0.25]	0.07	266 | 257	37

Note: Local-linear estimates with triangular wights for days with at least one case right before the nearest election. Confidence intervals and p-values are calculated using the "robust" procedure developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

These results are consistent with the idea that politicians privilege the possibility of maximising the benefits of horizontal accountability by filing lawsuits at a time when voters are paying more attention than usual to politics. The electoral impact of corruption allegations should be higher as we approach election day, so politicians disproportionately file cases in a relatively narrow temporal window.

While some of our results are suggestive of differences in the timing of accusations against and by incumbent and opposition networks, the magnitude of the estimates is very similar. It is true, however, that the differences are slightly larger and more precisely estimated

for lawsuits against the incumbent and by the opposition. This runs against the "lawfare" narrative (that suggests the opposite relationship) and instead is better explained by our argument emphasizing the credibility and legitimacy risks of strategically timed lawsuits. The nature of corruption means that accusations are more credible, and can potentially accrue greater political dividends, when raised against those who are in control of the state apparatus and are more likely to have misused public office for private or electoral gain in the recent past. Opposition members can usually be accused only of things they did under past administrations, but such accusations may fail to resonate with voters, appear extemporaneous or stink of opportunism, making lawsuits against opposition politicians less valuable from a purely electoral standpoint.

Several placebo tests increase confidence that the main results reflect politicians' electoral considerations. Figure 3 reports local-linear point estimates with 95% robust confidence intervals for a number of tests.[22] One threat to inference comes from the possibility that judicial activity increases before the election for reasons unrelated to politicians' judicial strategies. To examine this possibility, we first examine whether the electoral cycles we document are specific to corruption cases or apply more broadly. To this end, we replicate our main estimation examining differences before and after the election on non-corruption crimes. The crimes include drug and human trafficking and falsifying public documents or money. There are no significant differences in the number of cases that enter the *Comodoro Py* docket before and after the nearest election for these other offenses.

Second, the number of corruption accusations may drop after the election if, for instance, politicians take time off once the campaign is over. Indeed, we document that politicians file more complaints right before the election and accusations decrease in frequency thereafter. But politicians also file complaints for other offenses that do not involve corruption

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[22] See Appendix A1 for the full regression tables.

crimes or other politicians. If they are taking time off, we should also observe a drop in these accusations in the immediate aftermath of the election. However, we find that the overall number of cases filed by politicians in non-corruption cases does not change discontinuously after an election.

Third, we consider the possibility that the results are picking up a seasonal effect in the filing of corruption accusations rather than the strategic considerations of politicians. We test for this by looking at the number of cases filed before versus after the dates when elections would have taken place had non-election years been election years.[23] We find that there are no statistically significant differences in the number of cases before and after the dates of these placebo elections.

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[23] We define these placebo election dates by considering that the election takes place one year before each real election.

Figure 3. Placebo tests
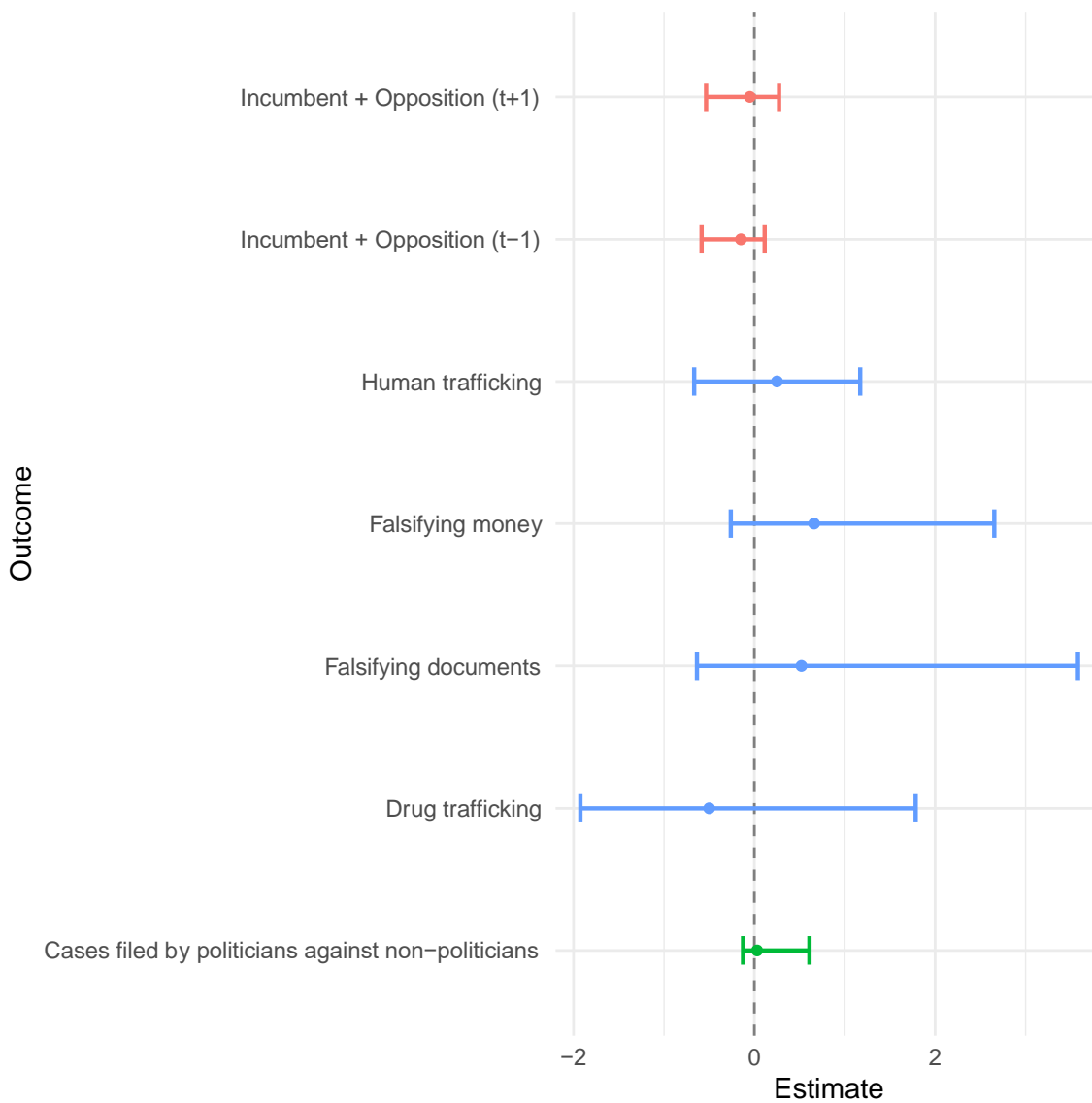
Note: estimates come from local-linear regressions. Bars represent "robust" 95% confidence intervals as developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

Media coverage of corruption also follows the electoral cycle

To complement the analysis of temporal patterns in case filings, we assess whether media reporting on corruption inquiries also follows the electoral cycle. The goal is to paint a picture of the environment in which the politicization of corruption lawsuits takes place, determining whether the campaign season is indeed a moment during which the issue salience of corruption, as well as journalists' demand for this type of news, is higher. If this is the case,

politicians can exploit and exacerbate the comparatively higher salience of corruption by going to court.

To this end, we built a second dataset with information from two of Argentina's leading newspapers, *Clarín* and *Página 12*. We selected these dailies because they have been among the most critical of the Fernández de Kirchner/Fernández and Macri administrations, respectively, and are therefore likely to pick up news about corruption by either group. We web-scraped the content of the front pages published up to 37 days before and after each election that took place between 2013 and 2021. To gauge the extent to which the dailies reported news about corruption inquiries, we identified whether the front pages included the keywords most frequently used in corruption news covering corruption investigations and coded two variables: a dummy indicating whether any of the keywords appeared on the front pages and a count of the number of keywords.[24] Using the same estimation techniques featured in the previous sections, we then analysed whether *Clarín* and *Página 12* were more likely to cover corruption news right before an election, when compared to the days and weeks after an election.

The results, reported in Figure 4 and Table 4, provide additional rationale for politicians' tendency to go to court during the campaign season: news about the judicialization of corruption is more frequent in the days before an election. Before the election, newspapers are 14 percentage points more likely to include news related to corruption on their front pages than after the contest is over, and they include, on average, roughly .9 more corruption-related keywords.

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[24] The keywords (in Spanish) were: corrupción, corrupto/a; denuncia, denunciante, denunciaron, denunció, denunciará, denunciarán, denunciaría, denunciarían; coima(s), coimeó, coimearon; sobreprecios, malversación, lavado, enriquecimiento ilícito; delito (federal); causa; fiscal, fiscalía; juez, juzgado; proceso, procesó, procesado(s), procesaron.

Figure 4. Corruption news coverage before and after elections (Clarín and Página 12)
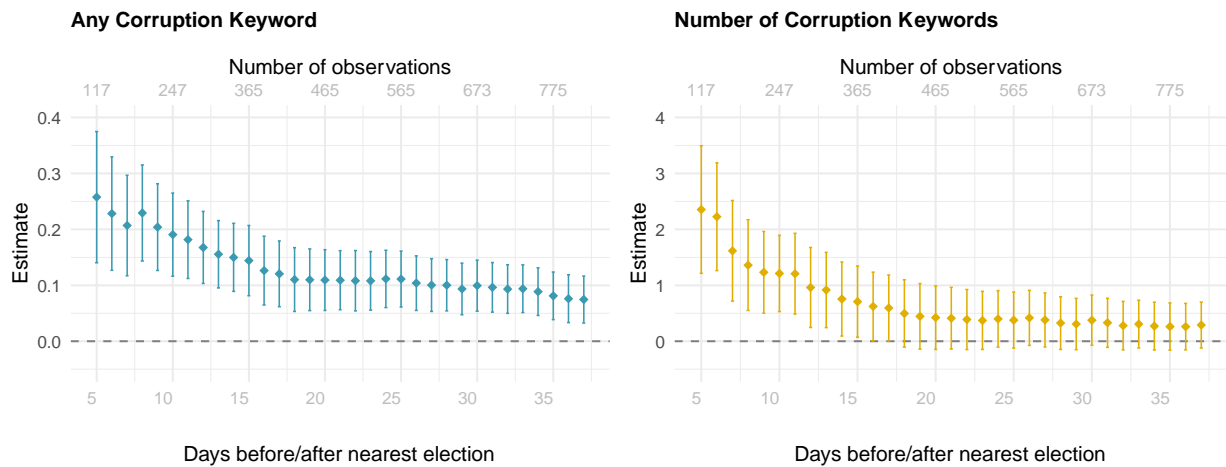
Note: Point estimates come from separate regressions for varying windows as described in Equation 1. Bars represent robust 95% confidence intervals.

Table 4. Local-linear estimates: corruption keywords

Outcome	Est.	95% RCI	p-value	N before	N after	Window
Any keyword	0.14	[0.01:0.33]	0.037	400	409	37
Number of keywords	0.91	[0.71:2.59]	0.001	400	409	37

Note: Local-linear estimates with triangular wights for days with at least one case right before the nearest election. Confidence intervals and p-values are calculated using the "robust" procedure developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

While this does not prove that politicians' judicial tactics find a direct echo in the press, it does suggest that the electoral cycle in corruption lawsuits is part of, and likely contributes to, an informational ecosystem in which corruption is comparatively salient. Just as with corruption claims, these differences become smaller and/or lose statistical significance as we move away from election day.

Our simple keyword search picks up news related to corruption inquiries in general. A close reading suggests that crimes committed by politicians (corruption or otherwise, including the use of intelligence officials to spy on others or participation in torture sessions during the

last military dictatorship) are amply covered in these frontpages. Often what is covered is the decision of the judge or the prosecutor to act in response to a politician's accusation against another. In Appendix E we provide several examples, but two from 2013 are particularly illustrative. Clarín dedicated half a page to an accusation by Elisa Carrio (from the opposition party Coalición Cívica) against Cesar Milani – Cristina Kirchner's Army Chief, for illicit enrichment. According to our dataset, Carrio filed the accusation on July 16 and the frontpage is from two weeks later (July 30), immediately after the prosecutor pressed charges. Interestingly, this happened 12 days away from the primary election. We also find headlines covering politicians going to court to bring "new dirt" on their political rivals. For example, eight days before the 2013 primary, Clarín dedicated space to an accusation filed by prominent opposition politicians against Cristina Kirchner for abusing her presidential prerogatives during the campaign.

Conclusion

Granular data from Argentina suggests politicians are more likely to file and be the target of criminal investigations in the days prior to an election. This pattern is consistent with politicians using these lawsuits to activate horizontal accountability. Understanding how and when corruption lawsuits become politicized has implications for debates about the rule of law. On the one hand, our findings could suggest that democratic competition produces favourable conditions for voters to access quality information about corruption when they need it the most to exercise their accountability functions. In other words, the results could point to possible synergies between horizontal and vertical accountability and undermine the "lawfare" narrative promoted by parts of the Latin American left.

Yet they could also lend themselves to a more pessimistic interpretation. First, the war of attrition can easily escalate, with accusations becoming an accepted part of campaign

strategy. Underlining this risk, our data shows that the two main political coalitions attack each other in similar measure. The abusive use of corruption accusations can undermine rather than strengthen the role of this information on accountability. On the one hand, the political source and timing of the allegations may ultimately do little to boost voters' propensity to exercise their vertical control function. For example, in the absence of high levels of sophistication that enable voters to separate the wheat from the chaff (Weitz-Shapiro and Winters 2017), accusations could merely reinforce pre-existing attitudes, turning corruption into a highly partisan (as opposed to a valence) issue. An opposite but similarly dangerous outcome is that after being bombarded with allegations from all sides, voters may simply become numb to the issue. As Pavão (2018) persuasively demonstrates, if everyone is allegedly corrupt, then voters cannot use corruption to decide whom to vote for. This may be why recent research finds that voters are responsive to information about corruption in hypothetical scenarios but not in real elections (Boas, Hidalgo and Melo 2019).

Second, following Maravall (2003), if instead of serving a neutral and permanent watch-dog function, rule of law institutions are selectively activated when political actors need to score points, democracy has the potential to distort accountability, and accountability has the potential to distort democracy. Compounding things further, if those who happen to be the target of lawsuits at any given point react by constructing a "lawfare" narrative, casting themselves as victims, the result may be a perilous form of cynicism about the role of courts as horizontal accountability bodies.

With these considerations in mind, future research could move forward in various directions. One possibility is to study the actors who accuse politicians in court in more detail. While our theoretical framework and empirics focus on the motivations of politicians, other actors, including citizens, corruption watchdogs, and journalists also approach the courts with accusations. Indeed, while we document an electoral cycle for lawsuits filed by politicians, the

universe of cases with political defendants is substantially larger. One limitation of our study is that we cannot distinguish which of these accusations filed by other actors are in fact orchestrated by politicians. We also cannot distinguish if some of these accusations should be considered "friendly fire." Because politicians often try to detach themselves from these accusations, it is hard to tell which ones are politically motivated.

Future research should also explore in more detail different aspects of political competition that could reinforce or ease electoral cycles in corruption accusations. For example, it is possible that higher levels of opposition fragmentation make these attacks against incumbents more frequent, because opposition politicians may find it attractive to stand out as anti-corruption watchdogs in a crowded field. And if dislodging incumbents through traditional programmatic politics proves hard, the attractiveness of activating corruption as an alternative axis of competition likely increases (Maravall 2003). Finally, the dynamics of coalitional presidentialism, typical of some Latin American countries (Chaisty, Cheeseman, and Power 2018), may temper the electoral use of corruption allegations. This outcome is especially likely to occur if incumbents rely on oversized coalitions and/or shifting coalitions to pass specific policies. In those instances, the line between incumbent and opposition becomes blurrier, and of course, side-payments are common, reducing the incentives for opposition actors to politicize corruption.

Finally, the vast literature on how voters process corruption information tends to draw pessimistic conclusions about the promise of electoral accountability (Dunning et al. 2019). In this regard, our findings suggest that it might be interesting to explore whether the strategic timing of corruption allegations underpins these accountability failures. It is entirely possible that the calculations that lead some actors to politicize corruption during campaigns do not correspond to the ways voters interpret those developments. Does the politicization of corruption during campaigns actually increase the informational value of accusations, or does

it diminish their credibility? Does it matter whether rivals own these allegations or diffuse authorship rights? And what is the most likely outcome: persuading swing voters or hardening core support?

The patterns in our data reveal the growing centrality of federal courts as arenas of intense politicking, which is part and parcel of a broader trend in Latin America. The region has seen intense battles around historic waves of corruption prosecutions in recent years. The rhetoric of unyielding virtue of some political actors (the accusers) and the victimization cries of others (the accused), have proven extraordinarily disruptive for the normal course of democratic politics in countries like Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru. Argentina is no exception. Whether these corruption accusations constitute "lawfare," as many on the left claim, is of course in the eye of the beholder. But our data does provide some perspective on the extent to which this type of lawsuits has redrawn the boundaries of political competition.

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Online Appendix

Witch Hunts?

Electoral Cycles and Corruption Lawsuits in Argentina

Contents

A Robustness tests

A.1 Additional Results

Table A1 and the subsequent figures provides a number of additional results:

- First, panel (a) replicates the analysis excluding 54 cases with accusations against members of both networks

- Next, we replicate on panel (b) our main results using the number of cases filed per day against our sample of politicians.

- Fourth, panel (c) computes or main results controlling for the party in power.

- Panel (d) presents results using a 5-degree polynomial.

- Sixth, we replicate our results using a window of 100 days (panel e).

- We present results separately for primary and general elections (panels e and f).

- Finally, we also present our main results using an alternative list of politicians and public officials, that we assembled combining different public sources (see the main text for a full description). These results are presented on panels (h) and (i).

Table A1: Local-linear estimates

Outcome	Est.	95% CI	p-value	n control | n treat	Bandwidth
(a): Excluding accusations against members of both parties					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.24	[0:0.55]	0.047	266 | 257	37
Incumbent cases	0.18	[-0.04:0.5]	0.094	266 | 257	37
Opposition cases	0.09	[-0.1:0.23]	0.446	266 | 257	37
(b): Number of cases per day					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.43	[0:0.8]	0.052	266 | 257	37
Incumbent cases	0.94	[-0.26:2.84]	0.102	266 | 257	37
Opposition cases	0.56	[-0.12:1.07]	0.115	266 | 257	37
(c): Controlling for the party in power					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.26	[0.03:0.56]	0.03	266 | 257	37
Incumbent cases	0.2	[-0.01:0.52]	0.063	266 | 257	37
Opposition cases	0.15	[-0.06:0.29]	0.19	266 | 257	37
(d): Polynomial					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.43	[0.19:0.7]	0.001	716 | 702	187.1
Incumbent cases	0.33	[0.08:0.6]	0.011	676 | 666	175.6
Opposition cases	0.23	[0.06:0.43]	0.009	656 | 646	167.9
(e): Alternative bandwidth: 100 days					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.03	[0.05:0.38]	0.012	460 | 446	100
Incumbent cases	0.04	[0:0.33]	0.049	460 | 446	100
Opposition cases	0.04	[0.03:0.25]	0.012	460 | 446	100
(f): Distance to primary elections					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.26	[-0.13:0.69]	0.183	130 | 125	37
Incumbent cases	0.16	[-0.25:0.58]	0.445	130 | 125	37
Opposition cases	0.26	[0.05:0.6]	0.021	130 | 125	37
(g): Distance to general elections					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.26	[-0.06:0.76]	0.096	130 | 125	37
Incumbent cases	0.26	[-0.01:0.78]	0.054	130 | 125	37
Opposition cases	0.06	[-0.31:0.2]	0.656	130 | 125	37
(h): Cases against public officials					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.25	[0.01:0.56]	0.043	266 | 257	37
Incumbent cases	0.2	[-0.04:0.51]	0.088	266 | 257	37
Opposition cases	0.14	[-0.08:0.31]	0.266	266 | 257	37
(i): Cases by public officials					
Incumbent + Opposition	0.07	[-0.13:0.38]	0.328	266 | 257	37
Incumbent cases	0.1	[-0.08:0.35]	0.214	266 | 257	37
Opposition cases	-0.02	[-0.16:0.25]	0.663	266 | 257	37

Local-linear estimates with triangular weights. Confidence intervals and p-values are calculated using the robust procedure developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

Figure A1 replicates the results from Figure 3 using the number of cases filed against politicians using a Poisson model.

Figure A1: Difference in the number of cases filed before and after the nearest election.
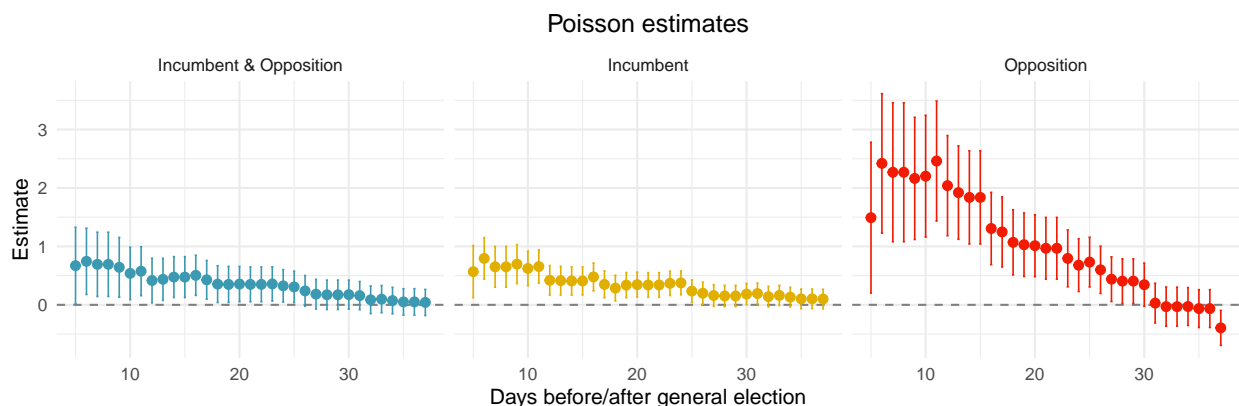
We also examine the statistical significance of the difference between the estimated effects of incumbent and opposition lawsuits. Table A.2 presents the results. We compute the standard error of the difference using the sum of the variances of each point estimate as an estimate of the variance of the difference.

Table A2: Difference between local-linear estimates

	Est.	95% CI	p-val	n_c | n_t	h
Accusation against:					
Incumbent	0.204	[-0.015:0.518]	0.064	266 | 257	37
Opposition	0.153	[-0.06:0.295]	0.195	266 | 257	37
difference	0.052	[-0.268:0.372]	0.751		
Accusation filed by:					
Incumbent	0.079	[-0.029:0.274]	0.112	266 | 257	37
Opposition	0.094	[-0.01:0.252]	0.07	266 | 257	37
difference	-0.014	[-0.214:0.186]	0.89		

Local-linear estimates with triangular weights. Confidence intervals and p-values are calculated using the robust procedure developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

A.2 Newspaper Cover Analysis by Newspaper

Figure A2 presents our newspaper keywords results by analyzing each of the dailies separately.

Figure A2: Corruption News Coverage before and after the election.
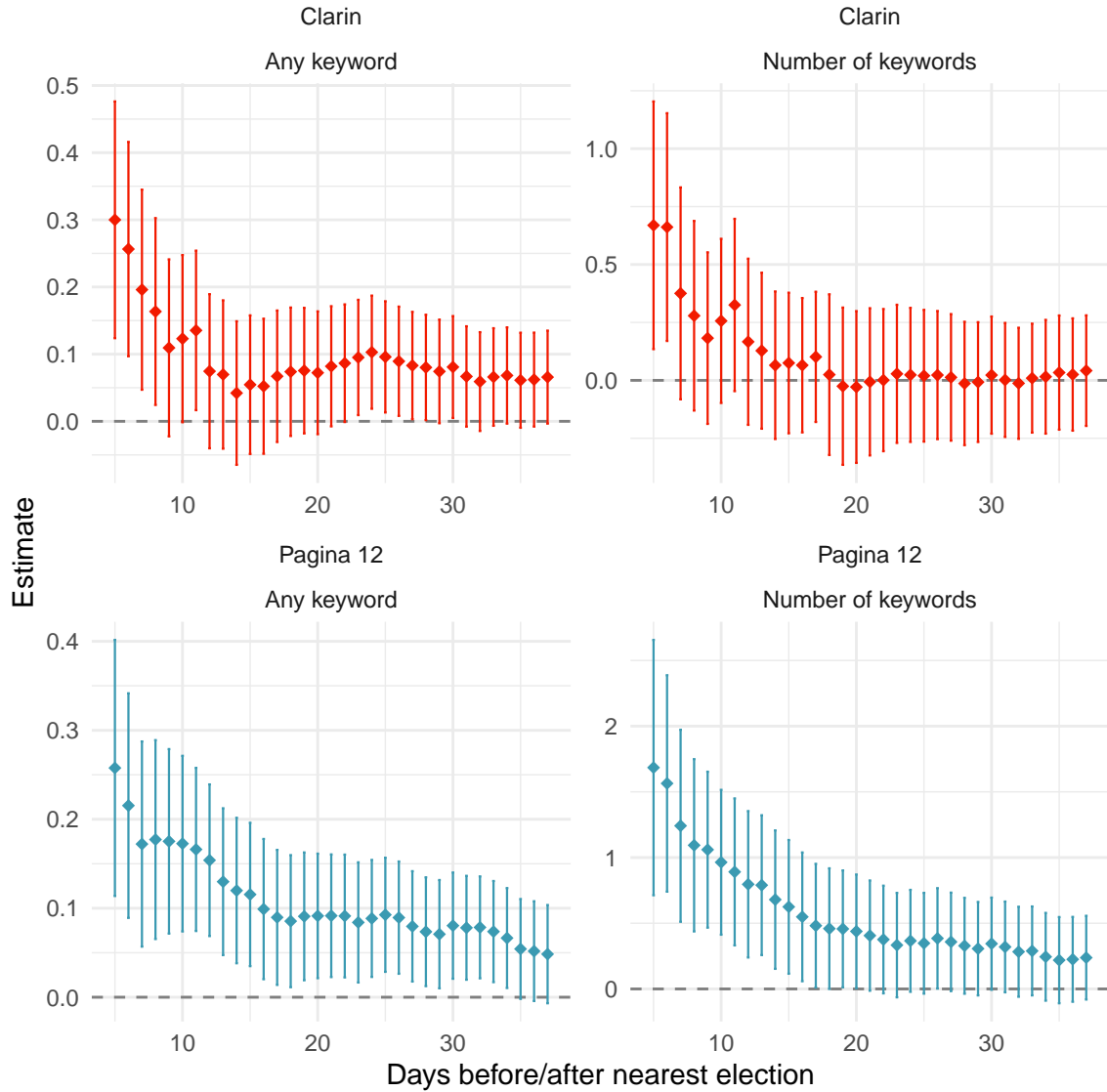
B   Full tables

Below we present the tables from which we assembled the figures presented in the main text.

B.1 Figure 1

Table A3: Crimes under investigation

Crime	Incumbent (sum)	Incumbent (%)	Opposition (sum)	Opposition (%)
Abuse of power	551	52.78	122	31.28
Failure to comply with public duties	347	33.24	70	17.95
Other	140	13.41	91	23.33
Fraud	142	13.60	81	20.77
Criminal conspiracy	149	14.27	41	10.51
Embezzlement	133	12.74	56	14.36
Conflict of interests	121	11.59	44	11.28
Bribery	87	8.33	36	9.23
Not specified	70	6.70	42	10.77
Money laundering	39	3.74	23	5.90
Unlawful appointment	49	4.69	11	2.82

Cases may include none (Not specified) or multiple crimes under investigation.

B.2 Figure 2

Table A4: Difference in days with cases before and after the nearest election (Incumbent and Opposition)

Bw	Outcome	N	Defendants			Accusers		
			Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)	Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)
5	Incumbent & Opposition	77	0.250	0.026	0.474	0.197	0.033	0.361
6	Incumbent & Opposition	99	0.232	0.037	0.427	0.218	0.070	0.366
7	Incumbent & Opposition	110	0.236	0.054	0.418	0.182	0.052	0.312
8	Incumbent & Opposition	110	0.236	0.054	0.418	0.182	0.052	0.312
9	Incumbent & Opposition	121	0.239	0.065	0.414	0.176	0.047	0.304
10	Incumbent & Opposition	143	0.165	0.001	0.328	0.162	0.045	0.279
11	Incumbent & Opposition	165	0.167	0.015	0.319	0.154	0.043	0.266
12	Incumbent & Opposition	187	0.126	-0.017	0.269	0.146	0.043	0.250
13	Incumbent & Opposition	209	0.122	-0.013	0.257	0.102	0.004	0.200
14	Incumbent & Opposition	220	0.127	-0.004	0.259	0.082	-0.010	0.174
15	Incumbent & Opposition	220	0.127	-0.004	0.259	0.082	-0.010	0.174
16	Incumbent & Opposition	230	0.142	0.014	0.270	0.090	0.001	0.180
17	Incumbent & Opposition	250	0.114	-0.009	0.237	0.082	-0.001	0.165
18	Incumbent & Opposition	270	0.084	-0.035	0.202	0.091	0.012	0.170
19	Incumbent & Opposition	290	0.077	-0.037	0.191	0.085	0.007	0.162
20	Incumbent & Opposition	310	0.085	-0.025	0.195	0.092	0.018	0.167
21	Incumbent & Opposition	320	0.075	-0.033	0.183	0.088	0.015	0.160
22	Incumbent & Opposition	320	0.075	-0.033	0.183	0.088	0.015	0.160
23	Incumbent & Opposition	330	0.085	-0.021	0.192	0.086	0.015	0.158
24	Incumbent & Opposition	350	0.070	-0.034	0.173	0.070	0.001	0.139
25	Incumbent & Opposition	370	0.061	-0.041	0.162	0.061	-0.007	0.129
26	Incumbent & Opposition	390	0.042	-0.057	0.140	0.042	-0.024	0.109
27	Incumbent & Opposition	410	0.025	-0.071	0.122	0.055	-0.010	0.120
28	Incumbent & Opposition	420	0.024	-0.071	0.119	0.052	-0.011	0.116
29	Incumbent & Opposition	420	0.024	-0.071	0.119	0.052	-0.011	0.116
30	Incumbent & Opposition	430	0.024	-0.070	0.118	0.052	-0.011	0.115
31	Incumbent & Opposition	450	0.019	-0.073	0.111	0.059	-0.003	0.121
32	Incumbent & Opposition	470	-0.008	-0.097	0.082	0.056	-0.003	0.116
33	Incumbent & Opposition	488	-0.012	-0.100	0.076	0.054	-0.005	0.114
34	Incumbent & Opposition	506	-0.023	-0.109	0.063	0.048	-0.009	0.106
35	Incumbent & Opposition	515	-0.029	-0.115	0.056	0.043	-0.014	0.100
36	Incumbent & Opposition	515	-0.029	-0.115	0.056	0.043	-0.014	0.100
37	Incumbent & Opposition	523	-0.035	-0.120	0.050	0.042	-0.014	0.099

Table A5: Difference in days with cases before and after the nearest election (Incumbent)

Bw	Outcome	N	Defendants			Accusers		
			Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)	Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)
5	Incumbent	77	0.235	0.015	0.455	0.076	-0.055	0.207
6	Incumbent	99	0.223	0.031	0.414	0.105	-0.022	0.231
7	Incumbent	110	0.200	0.022	0.378	0.091	-0.022	0.204
8	Incumbent	110	0.200	0.022	0.378	0.091	-0.022	0.204
9	Incumbent	121	0.197	0.025	0.369	0.100	-0.008	0.208
10	Incumbent	143	0.130	-0.032	0.292	0.097	0.002	0.192
11	Incumbent	165	0.112	-0.038	0.262	0.073	-0.017	0.164
12	Incumbent	187	0.098	-0.042	0.239	0.053	-0.029	0.135
13	Incumbent	209	0.107	-0.026	0.240	0.037	-0.038	0.113
14	Incumbent	220	0.109	-0.020	0.238	0.027	-0.044	0.098
15	Incumbent	220	0.109	-0.020	0.238	0.027	-0.044	0.098
16	Incumbent	230	0.120	-0.006	0.245	0.033	-0.036	0.101
17	Incumbent	250	0.094	-0.027	0.214	0.029	-0.034	0.093
18	Incumbent	270	0.079	-0.037	0.195	0.042	-0.020	0.104
19	Incumbent	290	0.080	-0.031	0.191	0.039	-0.019	0.097
20	Incumbent	310	0.081	-0.026	0.188	0.050	-0.007	0.106
21	Incumbent	320	0.075	-0.030	0.180	0.044	-0.011	0.098
22	Incumbent	320	0.075	-0.030	0.180	0.044	-0.011	0.098
23	Incumbent	330	0.082	-0.022	0.185	0.046	-0.007	0.100
24	Incumbent	350	0.066	-0.035	0.166	0.043	-0.007	0.094
25	Incumbent	370	0.062	-0.035	0.159	0.030	-0.019	0.080
26	Incumbent	390	0.048	-0.046	0.143	0.024	-0.024	0.072
27	Incumbent	410	0.046	-0.046	0.138	0.032	-0.015	0.080
28	Incumbent	420	0.043	-0.048	0.134	0.029	-0.018	0.075
29	Incumbent	420	0.043	-0.048	0.134	0.029	-0.018	0.075
30	Incumbent	430	0.053	-0.037	0.142	0.026	-0.020	0.072
31	Incumbent	450	0.051	-0.037	0.138	0.034	-0.012	0.080
32	Incumbent	470	0.027	-0.059	0.113	0.032	-0.011	0.076
33	Incumbent	488	0.026	-0.058	0.110	0.027	-0.016	0.070
34	Incumbent	506	0.009	-0.073	0.092	0.026	-0.015	0.068
35	Incumbent	515	0.005	-0.077	0.087	0.024	-0.017	0.064
36	Incumbent	515	0.005	-0.077	0.087	0.024	-0.017	0.064
37	Incumbent	523	0.004	-0.077	0.085	0.025	-0.015	0.065

Table A6: Difference in days with cases before and after the nearest election (Opposition)

Bw	Outcome	N	Defendants			Accusers		
			Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)	Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)
5	Opposition	77	0.053	-0.085	0.191	0.121	0.006	0.236
6	Opposition	99	0.127	-0.005	0.259	0.114	0.018	0.210
7	Opposition	110	0.127	0.007	0.248	0.091	0.013	0.168
8	Opposition	110	0.127	0.007	0.248	0.091	0.013	0.168
9	Opposition	121	0.121	0.002	0.241	0.076	-0.007	0.159
10	Opposition	143	0.115	0.010	0.219	0.065	-0.014	0.144
11	Opposition	165	0.149	0.049	0.249	0.081	0.005	0.157
12	Opposition	187	0.110	0.017	0.203	0.093	0.021	0.166
13	Opposition	209	0.098	0.011	0.185	0.065	-0.005	0.134
14	Opposition	220	0.091	0.009	0.173	0.055	-0.010	0.119
15	Opposition	220	0.091	0.009	0.173	0.055	-0.010	0.119
16	Opposition	230	0.088	0.006	0.170	0.058	-0.006	0.121
17	Opposition	250	0.081	0.003	0.159	0.053	-0.006	0.111
18	Opposition	270	0.060	-0.017	0.137	0.056	0.000	0.112
19	Opposition	290	0.056	-0.018	0.130	0.053	-0.005	0.111
20	Opposition	310	0.059	-0.013	0.131	0.056	0.000	0.111
21	Opposition	320	0.056	-0.014	0.127	0.056	0.002	0.111
22	Opposition	320	0.056	-0.014	0.127	0.056	0.002	0.111
23	Opposition	330	0.050	-0.021	0.120	0.053	-0.002	0.107
24	Opposition	350	0.059	-0.012	0.130	0.038	-0.015	0.092
25	Opposition	370	0.061	-0.009	0.132	0.042	-0.010	0.093
26	Opposition	390	0.053	-0.015	0.122	0.029	-0.022	0.080
27	Opposition	410	0.036	-0.032	0.104	0.038	-0.012	0.088
28	Opposition	420	0.033	-0.033	0.100	0.038	-0.011	0.087
29	Opposition	420	0.033	-0.033	0.100	0.038	-0.011	0.087
30	Opposition	430	0.025	-0.042	0.092	0.040	-0.008	0.089
31	Opposition	450	0.007	-0.059	0.072	0.039	-0.009	0.087
32	Opposition	470	-0.007	-0.071	0.058	0.037	-0.009	0.083
33	Opposition	488	-0.006	-0.069	0.057	0.040	-0.006	0.086
34	Opposition	506	-0.002	-0.064	0.060	0.034	-0.011	0.080
35	Opposition	515	-0.007	-0.068	0.054	0.031	-0.013	0.076
36	Opposition	515	-0.007	-0.068	0.054	0.031	-0.013	0.076
37	Opposition	523	-0.014	-0.075	0.047	0.029	-0.015	0.073

B.3 Figure 3

Table A7: Placebo tests

Outcome	Est.	95% CI	p-val	n control	n treat	Bandwidth
Incumbent + Opposition (t-1)	-0.15	[-0.58:0.11]	0.187	166	166	37
Incumbent + Opposition (t+1)	-0.05	[-0.53:0.27]	0.524	153	146	37
Cases filed by politicians against non-politicians	0.03	[-0.13:0.61]	0.197	266	257	37
Drug trafficking	-0.5	[-1.92:1.78]	0.941	266	257	37
Human trafficking	0.25	[-0.67:1.17]	0.591	266	257	37
Falsifying documents	0.52	[-0.64:3.58]	0.171	266	257	37
Falsifying money	0.66	[-0.26:2.65]	0.108	266	257	37

Estimates come from local-linear regressions. Bars represent robust 95% confidence intervals as developed by Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

B.4 Poisson model

Table A8: Difference in days with cases before and after the nearest election (Poisson estimates)

Bw	N	Incumbent + Opposition			Incumbent			Opposition		
		Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)	Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)	Est.	CI (Low)	CI (High)
5	77	0.671	0.568	1.492	0.014	0.123	0.201	1.327	1.013	2.782
6	99	0.744	0.795	2.420	0.177	0.441	1.228	1.312	1.148	3.613
7	110	0.693	0.651	2.269	0.142	0.302	1.080	1.244	1.000	3.457
8	110	0.693	0.651	2.269	0.142	0.302	1.080	1.244	1.000	3.457
9	121	0.642	0.697	2.163	0.131	0.363	1.118	1.153	1.031	3.209
10	143	0.539	0.622	2.202	0.089	0.328	1.161	0.988	0.917	3.243
11	165	0.575	0.655	2.461	0.157	0.371	1.434	0.994	0.939	3.487
12	187	0.416	0.420	2.040	0.035	0.167	1.183	0.798	0.672	2.896
13	209	0.436	0.413	1.921	0.076	0.168	1.122	0.796	0.658	2.719
14	220	0.475	0.408	1.838	0.125	0.168	1.041	0.824	0.648	2.636
15	220	0.475	0.408	1.838	0.125	0.168	1.041	0.824	0.648	2.636
16	230	0.505	0.478	1.306	0.161	0.239	0.688	0.848	0.716	1.925
17	250	0.428	0.350	1.248	0.098	0.121	0.648	0.759	0.579	1.847
18	270	0.354	0.286	1.070	0.040	0.066	0.513	0.669	0.506	1.626
19	290	0.350	0.338	1.029	0.041	0.122	0.486	0.658	0.553	1.572
20	310	0.356	0.345	1.012	0.054	0.132	0.482	0.657	0.559	1.542
21	320	0.350	0.340	0.968	0.052	0.130	0.439	0.647	0.551	1.496
22	320	0.350	0.340	0.968	0.052	0.130	0.439	0.647	0.551	1.496
23	330	0.358	0.368	0.795	0.065	0.159	0.308	0.651	0.576	1.281
24	350	0.325	0.376	0.679	0.047	0.172	0.228	0.602	0.579	1.130
25	370	0.307	0.235	0.731	0.037	0.043	0.306	0.576	0.426	1.157
26	390	0.239	0.199	0.599	-0.024	0.010	0.194	0.501	0.388	1.004
27	410	0.182	0.159	0.439	-0.071	-0.025	0.056	0.436	0.344	0.822
28	420	0.172	0.151	0.405	-0.079	-0.031	0.024	0.423	0.334	0.787
29	420	0.172	0.151	0.405	-0.079	-0.031	0.024	0.423	0.334	0.787
30	430	0.175	0.184	0.344	-0.074	0.002	-0.025	0.423	0.366	0.714
31	450	0.158	0.193	0.029	-0.083	0.015	-0.310	0.399	0.372	0.369
32	470	0.086	0.139	-0.030	-0.150	-0.037	-0.366	0.323	0.316	0.305
33	488	0.097	0.161	-0.031	-0.135	-0.012	-0.364	0.330	0.334	0.302
34	506	0.073	0.131	-0.029	-0.154	-0.037	-0.352	0.300	0.299	0.295
35	515	0.050	0.103	-0.064	-0.176	-0.065	-0.388	0.276	0.270	0.259
36	515	0.050	0.103	-0.064	-0.176	-0.065	-0.388	0.276	0.270	0.259
37	523	0.041	0.099	-0.394	-0.183	-0.067	-0.693	0.265	0.266	-0.095

C   Election dates

Table A9: Election dates

Date	Type
2013-08-11	primary
2013-10-27	general
2015-08-09	primary
2015-10-25	general
2015-11-22	run-off
2017-08-13	primary
2017-10-22	general
2019-08-11	primary
2019-10-27	general
2021-09-12	primary
2021-11-14	general

D   List of Defendants

In the following link we provide the full list of the defendants and their political affiliation:

Complete list of defendants.

E   Sample of front covers

E.1   Clarín

Mundial de Rugby

Hernández

Vuelve la magia Puma

Recuperado de un desgarro, juega mañana de apertura ante Namibia. Ayer, Argentina pasó a cuartos gracias al triunfo de Nueva Zelanda sobre Tonga. **P.108**

Mundos Intimos

Memorias y conflictos de mi embarazo adolescente

La escritora Mariana Komiseroff cuenta lo que significó ser madre de Elías a los quince años.
SOCIEDAD P.82

Revista Ñ

Leonardo Padura define Cuba

"Es algo así como un purgatorio", dijo el premiado escritor antes de llegar a la argentina
COMPRA OPCIONAL

Clarín

Sábado 10.10.2015
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA · PRECIO: $ 21,00

Un toque de atención para la solución argentina de los problemas argentinos

---

El jefe de Gabinete y candidato K declarará después de las elecciones

Citaron a indagatoria a Aníbal Fernández por sospecha de corrupción

Lo hizo el juez Bonadio. Es por presuntas irregularidades en licitaciones del polémico plan Qunita, de $ 1.100 millones, para ayudar a madres de bajos recursos. También citaron al ministro de Salud, Daniel Gollán y a Juan Manzur, gobernador electo de Tucumán. **P.4**

En el bolsillo • Marcelo Canton
Otra pesada herencia en el área de la energía nuclear

Cristina En la cadena 44 del año, volvió a hacer campaña para Máximo y Alicia Kirchner

Recta final Scioli busca votos en el GBA, y Macri dice que Massa lo va a apoyar

Precios para enero

La quincena en la Costa saldrá hasta 20 mil pesos

Es un relevamiento sobre el alquiler de un departamento para cuatro personas en Mar del Plata, Pinamar o Villa Gesell. **P.72**

Además...

Nobel de la Paz para la Primavera Arabe en Túnez

Un premio para los civiles que salvaron la transición democrática tras la caída de una dictadura de 25 años. **EL MUNDO P.62**

Treinta agresores
Brutal ataque a tres basquetbolistas

Roberts (foto), Mac Hopson y Washam, de Libertad de Sunchales, fueron golpeados en un boliche de Rafaela. **DEPORTES P.106**

En menos de 3 minutos
Asaltan un banco y se llevan la bolsa equivocada

Fue en Hurlingham. La saca robada sólo tenía papeles. **POLICIALES P.94**

Estrellas de la Web

Locura youtuber en Buenos Aires

Hoy, los nuevos ídolos de los chicos darán su show gratis en Tigre. Ayer, muchos padres hicieron la previa con sus hijos frente al hotel donde se alojan en el Centro porteño. **P.80**

DAVID FERNANDEZ

DE BAHIA BLANCA. ROBERTO ACOMPAÑÓ A SU HIJA PRISCILA PARA VER AL ESPAÑOL RUBIUS.

Clarín

Candidatos en Clarín

Tres proyectos diferentes

Margarita Stolbizer, Adolfo Rodríguez Saá y Nicolás Del Caño definieron sus propuestas para la elección presidencial. P.14

Tema del día Documento difundido en el tramo final de la campaña

Denuncian espionaje contra jueces, políticos y periodistas

Involucra a la ex SIDE y al Ejército, según la presentación que hicieron las diputadas Bullrich y Alonso del PRO. Es un listado que incluye desde los integrantes de la Corte hasta Marcelo Tinelli. También a Macri, Massa, el espía Stiuso y su familia, Jorge Lanata y Adrián Suar. P.3

Análisis ● **Daniel Santoro**
Denuncias que terminan bloqueadas

REUTERS

Imparable ola de refugiados sirios sobre Europa

De a miles, con frío y hambre, atravesaban ayer Eslovenia en su intento de llegar a Austria y Alemania. Las autoridades eslovenas advirtieron que están dispuestas a usar el Ejército para controlar la situación. P.24

DETENIDO. SE MASTURBO EN EL SUBTE.

Abuso sexual

Se registran diez casos de exhibiciones obscenas al mes en Capital

Son las denuncias que llegan a las fiscalías. La mayoría ocurre en el transporte público. El tema cobró fuerza ayer por un escándalo en el subte. P.40

Además...

Otra vez, topos en un country: roban tres casas en Maschwitz

Cavaron un pozo y sorprendieron a las familias durmiendo. Los ataron y golpearon. Robaron más de US$ 50 mil.
POLICIALES P.44

"Si se me pelan los cables, habrá más palomitas"

Se lo dijo a Clarín Juan Imhoff, el Puma del vuelo triunfal contra Irlanda. Y cree posible ganarle a Australia.
DEPORTES P.58

¿La primera mamografía a los 45 años?

Lo recomienda la Asociación Americana contra el Cáncer. Acá, los médicos aconsejan hacerla a partir de los 40.
SOCIEDAD P.32

Duelo de asesinos y de rating en la TV del miércoles

Julio Chávez interpreta en "Signos" a un médico psicópata. Y Alejandro Awada a Puccio en "Historia de un clan".
ESPECTACULOS P.48

Ollas&Sartenes
Hoy, tartas caseras
GRATIS CON CLARIN

TARTAS CASERAS

16

E.2 Página 12

SE DUPLICÓ LA REPRODUCCIÓN DE YAGUARETÉS... ¡QUÉ HORROR... AHORA VAN A INVADIR NORDELTA

Entrevista a Victoria Tolosa Paz. Su optimismo ante las PASO. Las deudas del Gobierno y el "club de la mentira", como define a Juntos por el Cambio P/6/7

"Macri desprecia la democracia"
Por **Sebastián Cazón**

Desde el lunes, Cynthia García se hace cargo de la renovada primera mañana de AM 750 con agenda popular, latinoamericana y perspectiva de género P/32/33

Información y debate con ideas claras

CARAS y CARETAS

SANTA CILDA

Compra opcional $245

Página|12

Suples Radar y Cash

AM|750
OBJETIVOS
PERO NO IMPARCIALES

En la cuenta regresiva hacia las PASO, el Gobierno apuesta sus principales fichas en la elección bonaerense. El acto de cierre será el jueves en el Estadio Único de La Plata, con todos sus dirigentes. Juntos por el Cambio mantendrá sus campañas separadas y no consiguió acordar un bunker común para el domingo. Tienen la esperanza de que Macri no aparezca demasiado P/2/3

ÚLTIMOS PASOS ANTES DE LAS PASO

Daniel PAZ
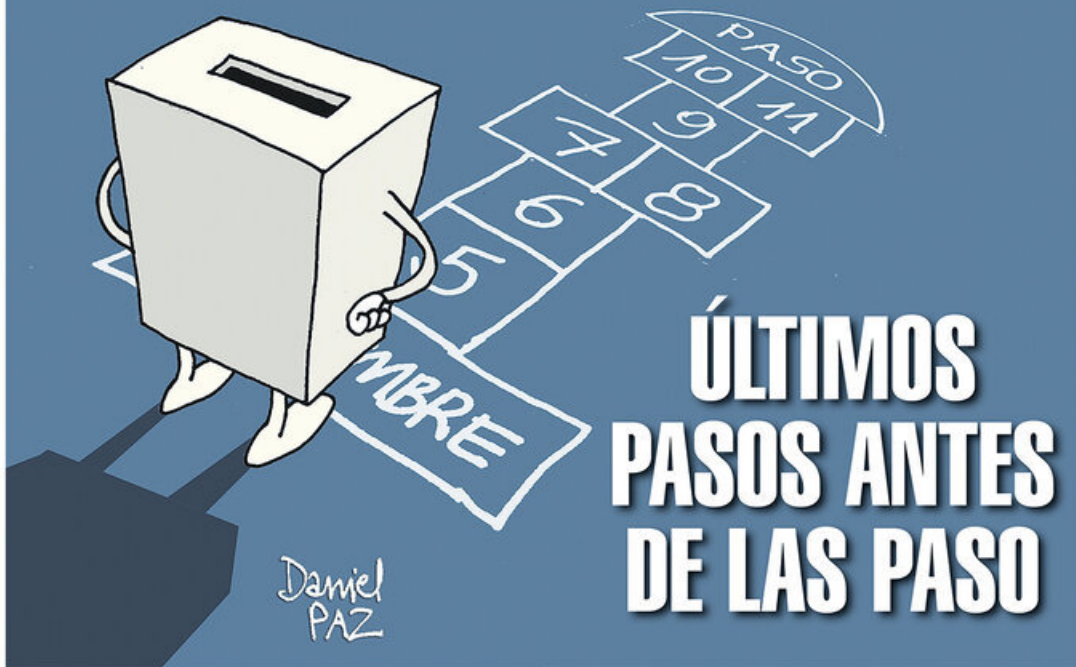
COLIFATA

La Colifata, la radio de los internos y exinternos del Hospital Borda fundada en 1991 por Alfredo Olivera, organiza desde 1995 lo que se conoce como "comicios simbólicos". "Lo que ocurría era que, en todas las presidenciales, el resultado era exactamente igual", destacó Olivera y recordó que Stella Cross, una integrante que ya falleció, supo decir: "Se vota igual adentro que afuera, lo cual indica que o los de afuera están un poco locos o nosotros, que estamos internados, estaríamos en condiciones de votar".

4
Los leones quieren reinar en la selva,
por **Mario Wainfeld**

26
La tumba de los imperios,
por **Eduardo Febbro**

LA OA amplió la denuncia contra Macri por la operatoria del "fideicomiso ciego" P/18/19

Una plataforma de lavado y evasión
por **Irina Hauser**

12
Qué pasará con el dólar y la economía,
por **Alfredo Zaiat**

40
La política y la inteligencia,
por **José Pablo Feinmann**

Hoy se cumplen veinte años del atentado contra las Torres Gemelas en Nueva York. Casi tres mil muertes en el corazón del poder financiero que redefinieron la geopolítica del siglo XXI

Un terror que provocó más terror P/24/25

La titular del PRO, Patricia Bullrich, sembró sospechas sobre el destino de 9 millones de vacunas. Sin ningún dato, dijo que "se habrían prestado" a Venezuela, Cuba o Bolivia P/7

La denuncia que faltaba
Por **Raúl Kollmann**

Página|12

AM|750
OBJETIVOS **PERO NO IMPARCIALES**

El poder económico logró el respaldo de un importante sector del Poder Judicial para oponerse a la participación de las mujeres en la conducción de las empresas. De manera irregular, la Cámara Comercial intenta impedir que la Inspección General de Justicia avance con la aplicación de la diversidad de género en las sociedades comerciales, asociaciones civiles y fundaciones P/2/3

SALA DE DIRECTORIO

LA JUSTICIA PATRIARCAL

Por Irina Hauser

| Gabriel Min

CANCIÓN

"Se dice de mí... Se dice que soy hueca, que el puesto no me merezco, que mi culo es lo que ofrezco y nada tengo pa' decir. Y tal vez si me escucharan, tanto no me criticaran, mi propuesta está muy clara, te la voy a repetir" comienza cantando frente al Congreso Cinthia Fernández, precandidata a diputada nacional por la provincia de Buenos Aires del frente Unite. En el spot que distribuyó en redes, Fernández, en colaless y portaligas, parafraseó el tango "Se dice de mí" que supo inmortalizar Tita Merello. Los herederos de Francisco Canaro e Ivo Pelay, autores del tema, presentaron una demanda contra la precandidata ante la Sociedad Argentina de Autores y Compositores de Música (Sadaic) por "uso indebido de la canción".

6
Interna y encuesta, por **Luis Bruschtein**

40
La vida en paz, por **Sandra Russo**

14
El éxodo fue con Macri, por **David Cufré**

Por primera vez desde el comienzo de la pandemia, en el Hospital Posadas no se detectaron casos positivos en las muestras analizadas P/20

La protección de las vacunas