MATTEO FRANCESCO FERRONI

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, May 2024 (expected)
  Dissertation Title: *On the Role of People's Beliefs in Political Economy*
  Main advisor: Raymond Fisman
  Dissertation Committee: Raymond Fisman, Stefanie Stantcheva, and Martin Fiszbein

M.S., Economics and Social Sciences *(Summa Cum Laude)*, Bocconi University, Milan, Italy, 2016

B.S., Economics and Social Sciences, Bocconi University, Milan, Italy, 2014

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Political Economy, Experimental Economics, Social Economics, Applied Microeconomics

WORKING PAPERS

"Election Results and Democratic Discontent: Expectations, Extremism, and Democratic Values in Post-Election Brazil," October 2023. Job Market paper.

"Perceptions of Racial Gaps, Their Causes, and Ways to Reduce Them," (with Alberto Alesina and Stefanie Stantcheva), 2021, *NBER Working Paper 29245*, Reject and Resubmit at the Journal of Political Economy

"How Tolerant are Legislators and Citizens of Corruption? Descriptive and Experimental Evidence from Three Countries," (with Raymond Fisman and Miriam Golden), 2023

WORK IN PROGRESS

"Corruption, Salience, and Political Selection"

PRESENTATIONS

Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2023
Renmin University of China, Beijing, China, 2023
American Political Science Association, Los Angeles, CA, 2023 (presented remotely)

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Gitner Prize for Excellence in Teaching Undergraduates, Boston University, Spring 2022
Manuel Abdala Award for Fieldwork-Based Research, Boston University, Spring 2022
Susilo Institute for Ethics in the Global Economy Research Grant, Boston University, Summer 2020
Institute for Economic Development Data Grant, Boston University, Summer 2020
Institute for Economic Development Research Grant, Boston University, Summer 2019

WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for Prof. Alberto Alesina, Harvard University, Fall 2016 to Spring 2017
Research Assistant for Prof. Chiara Fumagalli, Bocconi University, Fall 2016 to Spring 2017
Research Assistant for Prof. Eliana La Ferrara, Bocconi University, Summer 2015

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

AEJ: Applied Economics, AEJ: Economic Policy, Economic Policy, Quarterly Journal of Economics, The Journal of Economic Inequality, The Review of Economics and Statistics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Political Economy, Department of Economics, Boston University, Spring 2021, 2022, 2024
Head Teaching Fellow, Introductory Microeconomics, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2022, 2023, Spring 2023
Teaching Fellow, Introductory Microeconomics, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2019, 2021
Teaching Fellow, Introductory Macroeconomics, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, 2020

LANGUAGES

Fluent in English, Italian, Portuguese, and French.
Intermediate in Spanish.

COMPUTER SKILLS: STATA, R, LaTeX

CITIZENSHIP/VISA STATUS: Italian, Brazilian/F1

REFERENCES

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MATTEO FRANCESCO FERRONI

Election Results and Democratic Discontent: Expectations, Extremism, and Democratic Values in Post-Election Brazil (Job Market Paper)

This paper studies how Brazilian voters' attitudes toward violence and democracy reacted to the results of the 2022 presidential election. Using new large-scale survey data collected in a two-month time span before and after the election, I investigate how respondents' electoral and socioeconomic expectations, polarization, emotions, and attitudes towards violence and democracy evolved over time. Supported by a stylized model, I find that highly polarized voters who assign a large probability to their candidate's victory experience a larger negative shock to their socioeconomic expectations in case they lose the election. This expectation shock will then lead to an increase in violent and anti-democratic sentiments. By recontacting 1,200 respondents right after the election's results, I confirm the predictions of the models and show how the role of this negative expectation shock is particularly strong among the most extreme supporters. In an additional survey experiment, I positively update respondents' expectations about the economy and find that this reduces their violent and anti-democratic sentiments, allowing me to causally identify the mechanism observed during the elections.

Perceptions of Racial Gaps, their Causes, and Ways to Reduce Them
(with Alberto Alesina and Stefanie Stantcheva)

Using new large-scale survey and experimental data, we investigate how respondents perceive racial inequities between Black and white Americans, what they believe causes them, and what interventions, if any, they think should be implemented to reduce them. We intentionally over-sample Black respondents, cover many US cities, and survey both adults and young people of ages 13 through 17. In the experimental parts, we consider the causal impact of information on racial inequities and explanations for these inequities on respondents' views. Although there is heterogeneity in how respondents perceive the magnitude of current racial gaps in economic conditions and opportunities, the biggest discrepancies are in how they explain them. There is a stark partisan gap among white respondents, particularly in the perceived causes of racial inequities and what should be done about them. White Democrats and Black respondents are much more likely to attribute racial inequities to adverse past and present circumstances and want to act on them with race-targeted and general redistribution policies. White Republicans are more likely to attribute racial gaps to individual actions. These views are already deeply entrenched in teenagers, based on their race and their parents' political affiliation. A policy decomposition shows that the perceived causes of racial inequities correlate most strongly with support for race-targeted or general redistribution policies, a finding confirmed by the experimental results.

How Tolerant are Legislators and Citizens of Corruption? Descriptive and Experimental Evidence from Three Countries
(with Raymond Fisman and Miriam Golden)

We report results of parallel surveys conducted in three countries of legislators and citizens to understand tolerance of corruption. We find voters and legislators in Colombia, Italy, and Pakistan share similar views within and across countries regarding the prevalence of corruption as well as its desirability, measured using hypothetical scenarios that involve trade-offs. Legislators exhibit considerable sensitivity to possible media and legal repercussions of taking a bribe whereas voters have little faith that a malfeasant legislator would be exposed, charged, or convicted. We also find that legislators who express ego or self-interested rather than social motivations for entering public office are more likely to express above-average tolerance of corruption. An experimental information treatment prompts legislators who initially thought that citizens' concerns about corruption were overestimated to adjust their beliefs downward.

October 2023