

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48933-1 — The Politics of Institutional Weakness in Latin America
Edited by Daniel M. Brinks, Steven Levitsky, María Victoria Murillo
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The Politics of Institutional Weakness in Latin America

Analysts and policymakers often decry the failure of institutions to accomplish their stated purpose. Bringing together leading scholars of Latin American politics, this volume helps us understand why. The volume offers a conceptual and theoretical framework for studying weak institutions. It introduces different dimensions of institutional weakness and explores the origins and consequences of that weakness. Drawing on recent research on constitutional and electoral reform, executive–legislative relations, property rights, environmental and labor regulation, indigenous rights, squatters and street vendors, and anti–domestic violence laws in Latin America, the volume’s chapters show us that politicians often design institutions that they cannot or do not want to enforce or comply with. Challenging existing theories of institutional design, the volume helps us understand the logic that drives the creation of weak institutions, as well as the conditions under which they may be transformed into institutions that matter.

Daniel M. Brinks is Professor of Government and of Law and Chair of the Government Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Dan’s research focuses on the role of the law and courts in supporting democracy and human rights. His most recent book (with Abby Blass) is *The DNA of Constitutional Justice in Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), winner of the Corwin Award for Best Book on Law and Courts awarded by the Law and Courts Section of the American Political Science Association.

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