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One day in 1989, I heard that the municipal-level votes received by candidates for Brazilian congressional seats had been recorded on a computer tape. Though the tape included only the votes of winning candidates and covered just two elections in a handful of states, I thought the data might help me understand the workings of Brazil’s unusual electoral system. One step led to another. The number of elections grew from two to five, coverage expanded to nearly the whole nation, and the behavior of the elected congressional candidates in subsequent legislatures became an integral part of the research program. The project ultimately took over a decade; fortunately, I already had tenure. Not surprisingly I accumulated a great many debts for the support, both personal and institutional, I received over this long period. I am too disorganized to remember them all, but here is a start.

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