

# STATE POLITICS AND POLICY

## Fall 2014 Newsletter

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#### 1) **Message from the Section Chair**

California, here we come! I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in Sacramento this coming May for our 15<sup>th</sup> annual conference. Please take a moment to read through this issue of the newsletter—it's chock-full of valuable information about our upcoming conference, our annual meeting in D.C., and all the award winners from 2014.

Dan Smith, University of Florida

## **2) 2015 State Politics and Policy Conference Information**

The California State University at Sacramento is pleased to host the 2015 annual conference of APSA's State Politics and Policy Section. The conference will be held on the campus in California's capital city, on May 28-30, 2015. This year's theme is "Reform: Salvation or Cycle?" with particular attention to the question of whether reform moves us toward improved outcomes, or whether it reflects a churning cycle of change.

The conference will include a number of engaging panels and poster sessions, as well as a reception in the Rotunda of California's Capitol building, communal meals, speakers, and a few surprises. We have arranged a special conference rate at the historic Citizen Hotel, which has a state politics theme and is located just a few blocks from the Capitol. We have also arranged for a free shuttle between the Citizen and the campus.

Paper proposals will be accepted December 1, 2014 through January 23, 2015. For more information, go to:

[http://www.csus.edu/calst/spp\\_conference.html](http://www.csus.edu/calst/spp_conference.html).

## **3) APSA 2014 Section Business Meeting Recap**

The section business meeting began with a presentation from Leah Fargotsein about State Politics and Policy Quarterly. She noted that submissions have been strong, but Sage has also been working to build on that by reaching out to international comparative pieces and with a new social media campaign. As a result, she is cautiously optimistic about impact factor for next year. Leah was followed by Tom Carsey who started with thanks to Leah and Sage

who have been very supportive and to all who have played role in journal's success under his leadership. Tom noted he is pleased with the status of the journal: we have had a record setting pace for submissions of papers and international growth in submissions and subscriptions.

The new editors of SPPQ, Kristin Kanthak and Chris Bonneau, reported next. They began by thanking Tom for his service as editor and for making the transition as easy as possible. Eric Loepp, a PhD candidate at Pitt, is the editorial assistant, and he is already working hard, as 92 manuscripts had been submitted by the time of the meeting, which is up over the 85 new submissions last year.

Next, Margie Ferguson presented the treasurer's report which was accepted with no discussion. The minutes from the past business meeting were approved as well.

The new council members were then introduced and elected. Craig Burnett, UNC Wilmington, Julianna Pacheco, University of Iowa, and Nelson Dometrius, Texas Tech University, were unanimously approved. Brent Boyea, University of Texas, Arlington, Belinda Davis, Louisiana State University, and James Monogan, University of Georgia will continue on the Council through 2015. A special thanks was given to the outgoing members of the Council: Garrick Percival, San Jose State University, Janine Parry, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and Justin Phillips, Columbia University.

Jamie Monogan attended APSA Section Officers meeting and reported that APSA is trying a new formula for allocating panels. Previously, allocations were based on 90% attendance, and 10% on other factors. For this year, a pilot is in place and will be based on 45% membership, 45% attendance at

past conferences, and 10% on submissions. There will be 10% cap in place so no section's allocation could go up or down more than 10%. Seth McKee, Texas Tech University, will be the 2015 APSA State Politics Section Chair. Jenny Wolack, the 2014 APSA State Politics chair, reported there were 10 panels for the section this year.

Next, Steve Boilard announced details of the 2015 SPP Conference at California State University Sacramento. Details can be found above. Bob Lowry provided information on the 2016 SPP Conference which will be held at the University of Texas–Dallas in May, 2016. The theme will be “Federalism and States Rights in the 21st Century.”

The presentation of the annual awards came next. See below for information and abstracts on all of the winners. Finally, there was a discussion of whether there should be a conference registration fee for the SPP conference, as there are people who attend the meeting but do not join the section. No decision was made, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00.

#### **4) 2014 Best Paper Award: Gerald Gamm (University of Rochester) and Thad Kousser (University of California San Diego)**

“Contingent Partisanship: When Party Labels Matter—and When They Don’t—in the Distribution of Pork in American State Legislatures”

When dividing up pork (legislative appropriations targeted at a specific district), do lawmakers concentrate money on the political territory controlled by the majority party, or do they spread money evenly across all districts? In the 1960s and 1970s, scholars concluded that the theory of

minimum winning coalitions did not apply to Congress; they found instead that district spending was driven by a norm of universalism, with few advantages for members of the majority party. Recent studies of today's more polarized Congress question that consensus, revealing mounting evidence of partisan bias when it comes to pork spending. What forces underlie this shift?

This paper advances a theory of contingent partisanship. We argue that high levels of partisan polarization and tight party competition elevate the importance of majority party affiliation in pork provision. In order to test this theory, we move beyond Congress to the legislatures of six American states (California, Illinois, Montana, New York, Vermont, and Virginia) in the middle decades of the 20th century, an arena that provides variance on crucial independent variables (such as the existence or absence of two viable parties, partisan polarization, and seniority privileges) that are necessarily held constant in studies of Congress. In keeping with our predictions, we find that the majority takes a larger share of a state's pork in houses that are polarized along party lines and where two-party competition is fierce. By contrast, in one-party states or sessions in which the parties overlap on the ideological spectrum, there is no party bias, and other factors such as seniority and centrism explain who wins the most for their district.

**5) 2014 Best Paper Award (SPP Conference): James E. Monogan III (University of Georgia), David M. Konisky (Georgetown University), and Neal D. Woods (University of South Carolina)**

“Gone with the Wind: Federalism and the Strategic Placement of Air Polluters”

In federal systems, both state governments and firms have incentives to strategically locate polluting facilities where the environmental and health consequences will be borne as much as possible by residents of other jurisdictions. We analyze air polluter location in the United States using a spatial point pattern model, which treats the location in latitude and longitude of stationary pollution sources as the outcome variable itself. Our analyses indicate that major air polluters are significantly more likely to be located near a state's downwind border than a control group of other industrial facilities, results that are robust to a wide variety of model specifications and measurement strategies. This effect is particularly pronounced for facilities with toxic air emissions. The observed pattern of polluter location varies systematically across states and time in ways that suggest it is responsive to public policy at both the national and state levels.

**6) 2014 Best Article Award: Elizabeth Rigby (George Washington University) and Gerald Wright (Indiana University)**

“Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 57 (2013): 552–65.

Motivated by recent work suggesting that low-income citizens are virtually ignored in

the American policymaking process, this article asks whether a similar bias shapes the policy positions adopted by political parties much earlier in the policymaking process. While the normative hope is that parties serve as linkage institutions enhancing representation of those with fewer resources to organize, the resource-dependent campaign environment in which parties operate provides incentives to appeal to citizens with the greatest resources. Using newly developed measures of state party positions, we examine whether low-income preferences get incorporated in parties' campaign appeals at this early stage in the policymaking process—finding little evidence that they do. This differential responsiveness was most pronounced for Democratic parties in states with greater income inequality; it was least evident for Republicans' social policy platforms. We discuss the implications of these findings for representation in this era of growing economic inequality.

**7) 2014 Christopher Mooney Dissertation Award: Juliana M. Koch (Cornell University)**

“State of Inequality: Government Partisanship, Public Policies, and Income Disparity in the American States, 1970–2005.”

A steady stream of research describes rising income inequality in the U.S. since the 1970s. Beneath this familiar story, however, are a variety of state experiences. In this dissertation, I develop and test a new theory to explain why income inequality varies in the states over time. My partisan political-economy theory for state inequality builds on political explanations for national inequality; but it takes a step further to recognize and incorporate variation in state

governments, which do most of the governing and policymaking in our federal system.

I demonstrate that shifts in state government party composition, and related policy shifts, are a fundamental determinant of over time changes in state-level inequality between 1970 and 2005. First, controlling for economic and demographic factors, I find that increases in Democratic control of state government are significantly related to decreases, or diminished growth, of market inequality, while increases in Republican control coincide with increases in inequality. Second, I show *how* partisanship influences income disparity by identifying policy mechanisms that respond to changes in government partisanship and that also relate to changes in inequality: state public sector employment, minimum wages, and public welfare spending. My results for the former two policies suggest that the parties in state governments shape the distribution of income even before making adjustments with income taxes and transfers; however, those for the latter point to the relevance of state governments for changes in post-tax and transfer inequality as well.

Together, the results of my research demonstrate that patterns in income inequality are not simply a function of broader economic shifts, or even policies set by the national government. Rather, the parties or party members we elect to state governments, and their policy decisions, help determine the extent of income disparity in the United States. These findings allow us to say with more empirical certainty that there are political explanations for changes in income inequality in the U.S. throughout the past forty years.

**8) 2014 Christopher Mooney Dissertation Award: Steven M. Rogers (Princeton University)**

“Accountability in a Federal System.”

Theories of political accountability suggest that officeholders should be electorally punished when they perform poorly or fail to represent their constituents. In my dissertation - *Accountability in a Federal System* - I provide analyses of state legislative challenger decision-making, party performance, and representatives’ roll-call activity and find little evidence of electoral accountability in state legislatures.

Over a third of state representatives do not face major party challengers in the general election, and when state legislators face competition, voters do not appear to reward or punish state legislators for state-level policy outcomes, their legislative records, or their general performance. Instead of serving as a referendum on state legislators’ own actions, state legislative elections are dominated by national politics. State legislators affiliated with the president’s party - especially during unpopular presidencies - are the most likely to be challenged, and compared to individuals’ assessments of the state legislature, changes in presidential approval have at least three times the impact on voters’ decision-making in state legislative elections.

Thus, while state legislatures wield considerable policy-making power, elections appear relatively ineffective in holding state legislators accountable for their own performance and lawmaking.

**9) 2014 Virginia Gray Best Book Award:  
Thad Kousser and Justin Phillips**

*The Power of American Governors: Winning on Budget and Losing on Policy.* New York: University of Cambridge Press, 2012.

Can governors govern? With limited authority over state lawmaking but ultimate responsibility for the performance of government, how effective are governors in moving their programs through the legislature? Under which institutional and strategic settings are chief executives most successful? This book argues that different dynamics drive bargaining over the budget and over policy bills, and develops a model for each type of negotiation. These models demonstrate how governors can use their informal and formal powers to influence the lawmaking process and point to the subtle and complex ways in which governors' legislative agendas are endogenous to their bargaining circumstances. A series of empirical analyses and rich case studies demonstrate that governors can be powerful actors in the lawmaking process, but that what they are bargaining over---the budget or policy bills---shapes not only the strategies they employ, but also their probability of success. This book not only uncovers the power of American governors, but contributes more broadly to our understanding of the determinants of executive power.

**10) 2014 Virginia Gray Best Book Award:  
Lynda Powell**

*The Influence of Campaign Contributions in State Legislatures: The Effects of Institutions and Politics.* Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012.

Do donors gain disproportionate influence in the legislative process? Perhaps surprisingly, we have struggled to answer this question. Based on legislative floor votes, many have concluded that money doesn't matter. Donor influence, however, is likely to occur earlier in the legislative process, when bills are written, marked up or killed quietly. Unfortunately, these actions seldom leave an observable data trail.

Powell uses a national survey which asked 3000 state legislators how much influence contributions have on the content and passage of legislation in their chamber to estimate the influence of money in each of the 99 legislative chambers. Chambers are found to vary greatly in influence. If these estimates are correct, their variation should be explicable by a theory of campaign finance.

In Powell's campaign finance model (which builds on investment models of campaign finance), legislators choose how much time to fundraise---the more time they devote to campaign fundraising (to increase their own odds of reelection) or to caucus fundraising (to advance their legislative career), the more they trade off the interests of constituents in favor of donors. She derives predictions about how institutional characteristics such as legislative compensation and term limits affect the time members fundraise (for self and caucus) and consequently determine chamber influence. (Legislators were asked how much time they spent on each type of fundraising.)

As the model predicts, a small set of factors explain both individual level fundraising time and chamber level influence. These results support the validity of the influence measure as well as the premise of the model---the

relationship between fundraising time and influence. The findings also identify the specific institutional features of legislatures that incentivize fundraising and foster influence. Finally, Powell turns to how campaign contributions create influence. She tests the access view of lobbying (contributions provide access to lobby advantaging donors) against the informational (legislators use information from lobbyists without being influenced) finding support only for the former.

**11) 2014 Mac Jewell Enduring Contribution Book Award: Robert S. Erikson (Columbia University), Gerald C. Wright (Indiana University), and John P. McIver (University of Colorado)**

Robert Erikson, Gerald Wright, and John McIver were awarded the Mac Jewell Enduring Contribution Book award for their influential work *Statehouse Democracy* (1993). Not only is *Statehouse* a methodologically sophisticated, clearly argued, and persuasive book, it is largely recognized for reorienting the field of American state politics.

Indeed, it is nearly impossible to work on comparative state politics, representation in the states, policy-making, public opinion, or the role of institutions in facilitating responsiveness without acknowledging *Statehouse*.

This book, and the larger body of related research it generated, has been instrumental in measuring state political ideology, assessing party coalitions in the states, estimating policy outputs, and demonstrating a clear correlation between voter ideology and aggregate state policy. It also put the study of representation firmly in the center of state politics research. Further,

the insightful connections that the authors created among party systems, the public, and policy, remain some of the most important work on state political parties.

In short, *Statehouse* is an enduring classic that demonstrated the importance of “politics” in policymaking in the states, and made it nearly impossible to study state politics without a consideration of public opinion. It is undoubtedly a work of truly lasting significance.

**12) 2014 Career Achievement Award: Richard Winters (Dartmouth College)**

Dick Winters was the unanimous choice for the Career Achievement Award. In the words of Charles Barrilleaux, a member of the selection committee, “Dick has made enormous research, teaching, mentoring and service contributions to the state politics and policy field in over forty years of service, all of it at Dartmouth College.” Beginning with his initial article (with Brian Fry), “The Politics of Redistribution” (*APSR* 1970), Dick’s research is characterized by big research questions and theoretical sophistication and nuance, and it has helped to shape the “politics vs. economics” debate over the variation in public policies across the American states. Although he did not have doctoral students of his own during his four decades at Dartmouth, Dick has mentored numerous newly minted PhDs over the years, and we look forward to many more years of his active involvement in the section.

**13) California Elections Data Archive Award**

Sacramento State will be offering a new award to recognize exceptional research that makes use of the California Elections Data Archive (CEDA). The award will be offered by the university's Center for California Studies and the Institute for Social Research, who jointly maintain the Archive on behalf of the Secretary of State's office. Starting in 2015, an award of \$500 will be provided to the author(s) of an article published in in the prior calendar year that utilizes data from CEDA.

CEDA is the only statewide database that collects, tabulates and reports candidate and ballot measure results for all local elections. It includes all candidates, their ballot designations and vote totals as well as all ballot measures, their ballot summary information and vote totals. Ballot measures are also classified by type and topic. The database contains election results from counties, cities, and community college and school districts, dating back to 1994. Three standard CEDA reports are generated. These reports include:

- County Elections: Candidates, ballot designations, and vote totals for all elected county offices; vote totals and text for county ballot measures.

- City Elections: Candidates, ballot designations, and vote totals for all elected city offices; vote totals and text for all city ballot measures.
- Community College and School District Elections: Candidates, ballot designations, and vote totals for all elective community college and school district offices; vote totals and text for all district ballot measures.
- Ballot measures for all jurisdictions are coded according to type (e.g., charter amendment, bond measure, initiative, etc.) and to subject (e.g., taxes, education, public safety, governance, etc.).

Nominations of articles for the annual CEDA award may be sent to Dr. Steve Boilard, Executive Director, the Center for California Studies, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819. All research published in 2014 that uses CEDA data is eligible. Nominations must be received by March 1, 2015. The award will be presented at the 2015 annual conference of the State Politics and Policy Section of the American Political Science Association, which will be held at Sacramento State May 28-30, 2015.

For further information about the award, contact Steve Boilard at:

[steve.boilard@csus.edu](mailto:steve.boilard@csus.edu)

**14) Reminders and Important Dates**

December 15, 2015	Deadline for 2015 American Political Science Association Annual Meeting
January 15-17, 2015	2015 Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting
January 23, 2015	Deadline for 2015 State Politics and Policy Conference Proposals
April 2-4, 2015	2015 Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting
May 28-30, 2015	2015 State Politics and Policy Conference in Sacramento, CA



Any announcements or information for future newsletters should be sent to Shannon Jenkins at [sjenkins@umassd.edu](mailto:sjenkins@umassd.edu).

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All address corrections should be sent directly to APSA.

Shannon Jenkins, Newsletter Editor.