Comparative Politics Newsletter

The Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association

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Letter from the Editors: Training the Next Generation of Comparative Politics Scholars

by Matt Golder & Sona N. Golder

The Pennsylvania State University

Welcome to the Fall 2015 issue of the Comparative Politics Newsletter. Our current issue includes a symposium on training the next generation of comparative politics scholars, a special topic looking at the evolving situation in Ukraine, and an overview of recent developments with the data set, *Archigos: A Database on Political Leaders*.

I. Symposium

We are incredibly grateful to the individuals who contributed to our symposium on training the next generation of comparative politics scholars. This is an important topic and our contributors all have an excellent track record in training and placing graduate students, as well as in receiving awards for their teaching and men-

toring. We posed a variety of questions to our contributors: What skills do the current crop of graduate students need to be successful? What types of classes should they be taking? How should we mentor them inside and outside of the classroom? Is there an "ideal" type of comparative politics graduate student? In what ways does a successful graduate student on the job market today differ from a successful graduate student on the job market ten or twenty years ago? We asked our contributors to respond to questions like these and, more generally, to share their experiences and thoughts about training the next generation of comparative politics scholars.

One of our contributors, Jeff Staton, an Associate Professor and Winship Distinguished Research Professor in the Department of Political Science at Emory University, argues that an important way to improve graduate training in comparative politics involves reforming the *undergraduate* curriculum. As Jeff notes, there is often a sharp disconnect between what we teach our undergraduate students and what it is that we actually do as comparative political scientists. This leads to situations in which many students arrive in our graduate programs with little idea about exactly what it is that they are signing up for. In his contribution, Jeff discusses the recent reforms, guided by four underlying principles (breadth, depth, progression, and integration), that Emory's Political Science Department has made to its undergraduate curriculum. Jeff's focus on the beneficial consequences of reforming the undergraduate curriculum is a subject near and dear to our hearts, given our own attempt to shape how comparative politics is taught at the undergraduate level through our textbook, *Principles in Comparative Politics*.

Several of our contributors note that the role of fieldwork, or the type of fieldwork conducted, has changed over time. Kanchan Chandra, a Professor in the Department of Politics at New York University, notes that the increasing emphasis on causal inference in political science has, in many ways, led to a renewed emphasis on fieldwork in comparative politics. However, she argues that the current model of fieldwork — what she calls the 'two-to-four week model' — is deeply problematic both for the nature of the knowledge that we produce and the principles by which that knowledge is generated. Among other things, Kanchan suggests that scholars adopting this model of fieldwork often lack a relationship with the people and places being studied, something that produces, among other things, a lack of accountability.

Leonard Wantchekon, a Professor in the Department of Politics at Princeton University and Associate Faculty in Princeton's Department of Economics, makes a similar claim in his contribution. Leonard argues that modern fieldwork, especially that conducted in Africa, often "resembles a 'research mission' in which comparativists use some local academic resources, particularly 'native informants' to discover patterns of social behavior in a relatively short period of time …locals are generally not considered equal partners and are not always given enough credit for their contributions." He argues that there are practical and ethical reasons to restructure fieldwork so that researchers consider more fully their obligations to the country or community under study.[1] In addition to his comments on fieldwork, Leonard also discusses the African School of Economics (ASE), a school that he established in 2014 in his home country of Benin. As he notes, the curriculum for the school places an emphasis on students being conversant with ideas and methods from across the social sciences.

Gretchen Helmke and Bing Powell stress the tradeoffs that must be made in graduate education in comparative politics. Gretchen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Rochester, while Bing is the Marie C. Wilson and Joseph C. Wilson Professor of Political Science in the same department. Among other things, they highlight the importance of fieldwork, arguing that comparative politics has always been based in area studies. They go on to note that they are launching a new interactive website at the University of Rochester called *In the Field - Political Science* aimed at helping scholars going into the field.

In her contribution, Elisabeth Wood, a Professor of Political Science at Yale University and a member of the External Faculty of the Santa Fe Institute, discusses the origins and development of Yale's comprehensive doctoral field in qualitative and archival methods. This doctoral field comprises three core classes: Qualitative Field

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[1]The thoughts of Kanchan and Leonard on some aspects of modern fieldwork echo something that Scott Desposato said in his contribution to the last issue of the Comparative Politics Newsletter. Reporting on a conference that he organized on the ethics of field experiments, Scott noted with respect to gaining local permission that many "scholars from the developing world …were indignant that first-world researchers would fly in on tourist visas, conduct experiments without permission, and slip out of the country, essentially running 'under the radar' experiments."

Research, Historical and Archival Methods, and Philosophy of Science for the Study of Politics, and draws students from across the subfields of political science. As far as she is aware, Yale is the only school that offers a comprehensive field that certifies expertise in these methods.

Scott Gehlbach, a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, has a different take on current trends in comparative graduate student education. In his contribution, Scott takes aim at what he calls the "fallacy of multiple methods." While many of our contributors suggest that graduate students should employ multiple methods in their research, Scott argues that this is all too often a recipe for doing "many things poorly — theoretically ungrounded ethnographies, poorly identified regressions, inexpertly conceived experiments, mathematically incoherent models — rather than a few things well." While we as a subfield should welcome and reward research based on a broad range of methods, this does not imply that individual scholars or pieces of research should employ multiple methods. Scott suggests that the use of multiple methods should be a goal for the subfield, not for any particular scholar.

In her contribution, Barbara Geddes, a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Los Angeles, wonders whether contemporary graduate students in comparative politics have less substantive knowledge than they did in the past. Barbara argues that improved training in methods over the last couple of decades has greatly increased the rigor and persuasiveness of our research. However, she believes that "we have made no progress … in helping students acquire substantive knowledge and the intuitions and judgements that go along with such knowledge. We may even have regressed." She does not believe that more substantive classes is the answer and calls for a discussion on how we can "encourage students to acquire the background knowledge they need in order to have good academic judgement, regardless of the methods that they use."

Jim Adams, a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Davis, offers a broader perspective on graduate mentoring. Jim argues that a key strategy that we can adopt to help our graduate students succeed is to start meaningful research collaborations at an early stage in their graduate careers.

One of the benefits that comes from starting a research collaboration is the confidence boost that it can give a student. As Jim notes, "Ph.D. programs are breeding grounds for self-doubt, and graduate students often have little sense of how the faculty looks on them (they often assume the worst)." In line with the advice that Gretchen Helmke and Bing Powell give in their contribution, Jim also recommends that comparative students should acquaint themselves with how their topics are treated in the American politics literature.

II. Some Thoughts

The symposium raises a number of issues about training the next generation of comparative politics scholars. We'd like to take advantage of our role as editors to touch briefly on the role of fieldwork. Many of our contributors emphasize its importance. Gretchen Helmke, Bing Powell, and Elisabeth Wood, for example, all discuss the importance of going into the field, often multiple times over the course of one's graduate career. Kanchan Chandra and Leonard Wantchekon are critical of the 'two-to-four week' model of fieldwork and call for graduate students to spend more extensive periods of time in the field. Our own personal experience suggests that a variety of institutions consider fieldwork almost a necessary condition when it comes to hiring a comparative politics scholar.

We think that a number of important implications follow from viewing fieldwork in this way. The most important is that it maintains the academic hierarchy and privileges comparative politics students from elite and private universities. Spending repeated and extended periods of time in the field is costly and requires significant resources. As Bing Powell and Gretchen Helmke note, "substantial fieldwork will almost always lengthen the time needed to complete the Ph.D.". They go on to suggest that departments should "organize their sequential deadlines and funding structures to compensate for this iron fact." Many institutions, though, particularly public institutions, are incredibly limited in their ability to fund graduate students beyond five years. At our own institution, Penn State, we guarantee funding for five years, and can, under some circumstances, extend this to six years. It would be incredibly rare for us to be able to support a student in her seventh year. We suspect that we are not unusual in our financial limitations.

Students can, of course, apply for grants to support

their field research. In theory, the grant application process is a level playing field for students from all schools. All that should matter is the quality of one's proposed research project. We suspect, though, that this is not always the case in practice. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the prestige and reputation of the student's university and sponsoring faculty member play a role in the likelihood of successfully obtaining a grant. Even without this potential prestige and reputation effect, though, graduate students from private and elite institutions are at an advantage. This is because grant applications for fieldwork are often looked on more favorably if pilot studies have already been completed, something that is more likely if the student's department has internal pots of money to support this kind of thing. Previous graduate students (and their faculty advisors) who have obtained grants can act as a useful resource for learning about how to write, frame, and structure one's grant. If you are applying to, say, the Fulbright Program, it helps to have people at your university or in your department who have experience with students who have successfully obtained Fulbright grants. These types of factors that help create institutional memory are often overlooked, but they do benefit elite and private institutions that have had a long history of successfully gaining grants.

Most of us recognize that students from elite institutions have an edge when it comes to the job market, even controlling for the quality of their dissertation and research. We can argue about whether this edge is justified or not. Our sense, though, is that this edge is greater in comparative politics than in American politics or international politics because of the additional costs imposed on comparative students by the expectation that they will engage in long and repeated amounts of fieldwork. If we are correct, then it may be in the interests of comparative scholars at elite and private institutions (and the former students from those institutions teaching elsewhere) to continue emphasizing the necessity of fieldwork as an important, and almost necessary, component of graduate education in comparative politics.

Taking Scott Gehlbach's advice seriously, though, would mean that students should not have to conduct fieldwork as a prerequisite for becoming a "real" comparativist. Whether fieldwork is required should be determined by the kinds of questions that a student seeks to answer. Obviously there are certain research questions that cannot be answered without extensive fieldwork. And in many cases, fieldwork will improve the quality of a graduate student's research. However, we, personally, would argue that it is possible for comparativists to produce excellent work, both theoretical and empirical, without conducting fieldwork. Conversely, the fact that a student does fieldwork does not mean that the quality of the work is high, or that the student's project was automatically improved by the endeavor. Ultimately, we should be interested in the quality of the work. In addition, we should not necessarily assume that a student who has not done extensive fieldwork while in graduate school will never do so; field work can be easier to arrange when one has a research account and a larger network, not to mention sabbatical opportunities, and it might become more of a priority depending on how a scholar's research agenda develops over time. In our opinion, fieldwork in graduate school should not necessarily be treated as a litmus test on the job market.

III. Special Topic

In addition to our symposium, this issue of the Comparative Politics Newsletter also includes a special topic looking at recent developments in Ukraine. Our first contribution comes from Mark Beissinger, the Henry W. Putnam Professor of Politics in the Department of Politics at Princeton University. Mark's contribution focuses on Russia's war in Ukraine and Putin's propaganda state. In recent years, scholars of authoritarian regimes have focused their attention on how institutions such as parties, elections, and legislatures can act as mechanisms of conflict-resolution, patronage distribution, and political control. Mark argues that "the fabrication of a social base through control over key communications networks — once the subject of an older literature on totalitarian politics — needs to be integrated more centrally into theorizing about authoritarian rule and survival."

In her contribution, Maria Popova, an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at McGill University, discusses the continuity and change that has occurred in Ukraine's judiciary since Euromaidan. The lack of the rule of law was one of the primary grievances amongst Euromaidan protestors. Using original data from the Fall 2014 judicial elections, though, Maria shows that the creation of an independent and clean judiciary in Ukraine remains elusive. She goes on to discuss the implications of Ukraine's post-Maidan judicial evolution for the broader comparative judicial politics literature.

Oxana Shevel, an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Tufts University, provides our third contribution. She examines the claim that Ukraine is a deeply divided country by looking at how political attitudes vary across its different regions. Historically, the western and central regions of Ukraine have provided widespread electoral support for candidates promising closer ties with the West, whereas the southern and eastern regions have voted overwhelmingly for candidates promising closer ties to Russia. Oxana presents public opinion evidence showing that it is more accurate to describe the regional divide in Ukraine since Euromaidan as a reduced east versus the rest. She goes on to discuss how the changes in political attitudes might affect the Ukrainian party system and political competition.

Our final contribution on Ukraine comes from Erik Herron, the Eberly Family Professor of Political Science at West Virginia University. Erik examines Ukraine in the context of the growing literature on electoral integrity. Drawing on his own recent research in Ukraine on elections and accountability, Erik argues that scholars should pay greater attention to exactly how elections are administered. He suggests that since "election administration is also a major focus of international development practitioners, this area has great potential for international collaboration and broader impacts beyond the scholarly community."

IV. Data Set

Finally, this issue of the Comparative Politics Newsletter includes a contribution by Hein Goemans, an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Rochester, describing *Archigos: A Database on Political Leaders*. This data set contains information on the date and manner of entry and exit of over 3,000 leaders from 1875-2004 (soon to be updated through 2014) as well as their gender, birth- and death-date, previous times in office and their post-exit fate. *Archigos* is a collaborative project with Kristian Skrede Gleditsch (University of Essex, UK) and Giacomo Chiozza (Vanderbilt). In his contribution, Hein describes the motivation behind the Archigos project and highlights how in recent years numerous scholars have built upon it in their own research.

V. Conclusion

We hope that you enjoy our second issue of the Comparative Politics Newsletter. We were hoping to introduce a new section in this issue of the Newsletter called "Letters to the Editors" in which readers could, among other things, comment on the topics raised in the previous issue of the Newsletter. Unfortunately, things did not pan out quite as we planned. However, if you have short comments on the material that you find in this issue of the Newsletter, please contact us and we may be able to include them in the Spring 2016 issue. Please contact us as well if you have ideas for possible symposia or special topics, or would like to publicize a data set of broad appeal. You can contact us through the Contact page of the Newsletter's webpage at http://comparativenewsletter.com/contact or simply use our Penn State email addresses (sgolder@psu.edu, mgolder@psu.edu).

Matt and Sona

I. Symposium: Training the Next Generation of Comparative Politics Scholars.

Faculty-student Research Collaboration as a Training Tool

by James F. Adams
University of California, Davis

It has been my experience that the quality of the comparative politics graduate student plays a much larger role in determining their success than the quality of their advisor. Smart, industrious, mature, and focused graduate students will likely succeed regardless of their advisor, while no mentoring strategy can help students who lack these attributes. I have been fortunate to work with several outstanding graduate students over the past fifteen years, and my main contribution to their success was probably not to stand in their way. That being said, I believe that there are steps advisors can take to help talented graduate students succeed more quickly, and I outline two such strategies below. As a caveat, I note that

I typically work with students studying comparative political parties and elections in advanced industrial societies. As a result, I cannot vouch that these approaches work equally well for students studying other areas of comparative politics. Moreover, these mentoring strategies are, frankly, obvious, and many — probably most — scholars undoubtedly follow them already. I hope, though, that my suggestions may at least prove useful to younger faculty with more limited experience mentoring graduate students.

> Ph.D. programs are breeding grounds for self-doubt, and graduate students often have little sense of how the faculty looks on them (they often assume the worst).

First, I encourage comparative politics (CP) students interested in political parties and behavior to become familiar with the American politics (AP) literature addressing these topics. The literature on American political parties, public opinion, and mass-elite policy linkages is obviously relevant to comparative studies of these issues, yet the graduate student papers I read for academic conferences — and those I review for journals — often miss these connections.[1] CP graduate students thereby miss opportunities to expand their paper's audience by making interesting comparisons to U.S. politics. The American literature on many topics that preoccupy CP scholars — such as dynamic policy representation, the causes and consequences of party polarization, and the reciprocal effects of citizens' party support and their policy beliefs — offers promising road maps for addressing these issues in a CP framework. I have benefitted enormously from following the AP literature on these topics, and found that this has informed my own research agendas. Yet the research presentations I observe at academic conferences suggest that many CP graduate students are unaware of the relevant AP research, and these students at times "re-invent the wheel" to devise research approaches to questions that have already been insightfully addressed in the American politics literature. In many cases, the alternative approaches that the CP students devise are inferior to those already developed by AP scholars. For this reason, I encourage students studying comparative political parties and behavior to closely follow the American literature on these topics. At a minimum, knowing the American literature will allow CP students to make useful comparisons to

their own findings on non-U.S. cases. Quite often, in my experience, the U.S. literature offers excellent road maps for studying the relevant issues in comparative contexts.

Second, and to move on to the main point of this contribution, I actively pursue research collaborations with promising graduate students, and my general rule on the timing of these collaborations is "sooner rather than later." I offer this suggestion despite recognizing that the response of most faculty members will likely be "No, duh." I should stipulate that I have in mind meaningful collaborations that generate a co-authored research article on a topic interesting to the student and not just "collaborations" where the student is a glorified research assistant. While such faculty-student research collaborations are surely more common now than in the past, I believe that their benefits are still not fully appreciated. It is a truism that collaboration with faculty provides graduate students with valuable research training (and, hopefully, a publication that helps the student's job prospects), but such collaborations also help students in many less obvious ways. First, the message that the offer of research collaboration conveys — namely, that "I, the faculty member, think well of you" — is important. Ph.D. programs are breeding grounds for self-doubt, and graduate students often have little sense of how the faculty looks on them (they often assume the worst). This is true even for students who succeed in their course work. That a faculty member reaches out to them can provide a valuable confidence boost to students who at times feel invisible to faculty. Moreover, the research collaboration — which is likely to extend over a lengthy period of time as the student and faculty member research and write the paper, present it at academic conferences, prepare it for journal submission, and then revise and resubmit in response to a journal's (hoped for) R&R invitation — will help to keep the student 'connected' to the department and to the faculty member. This connection alleviates a major occupational hazard of graduate school, particularly for students who have completed their coursework: namely, that students can become isolated from the department and 'fall through the cracks' as they wrestle to gain traction on their dissertation.

The benefits of faculty-student research collaborations do not end there, though. In my experience, most graduate students greatly overestimate what is required for a piece of research to be publishable, and also what they are expected to accomplish in their disserta-

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[1]Papers on American politics often miss the reciprocal connection to Comparative politics as well, but that is another story.

tion project. I suspect this misperception arises because students view the assigned readings in their graduate courses, which are often the most influential studies by the most influential scholars, as examples of 'typical' research, and judge their own projects accordingly. If Downs (1957) is the standard for acceptable political science research, how many of us could survive in this profession? But whatever its origins, the perception of students that "the bar" for successful research is intimidatingly high can prompt them to needlessly second-guess their own research as not important enough, or polished enough, or methodologically rigorous enough, and whatever else enough. This can delay and even cripple students' professional development. In this regard, the simple experience of a faculty member informing the student that their joint paper is ready for journal submission can be a revelation. In my experience, students rarely view the paper as "ready" — it surely requires more theorizing, more robustness checks, and more polish. So, the faculty member's message to the student that "this is where I think the bar is for journal submission" is salutary, even if the outcome of the review process is ultimately negative. It is far less painful for students to experience rejection on a paper co-authored with faculty than on their own solo-authored research. Moreover, a rejection introduces the student to a simple fact of academic life (for most of us, anyhow), namely that publishing involves repeated rejections and disappointments!

Of course there can be drawbacks to faculty-student research collaborations that are tangential to the student's research interests or that delay the student's progress on her own research agenda. But my purpose is not to rehearse considerations that all faculty members already recognize. My own experience is that such collaborations almost always advance the student's progress more than they retard it, that they improve student morale while keeping them connected to the graduate program, and that these collaborations provide an invaluable reality check by giving students a true read on what the standards actually are for successful research. My sense is that these benefits of research collaboration are not as widely recognized as they should be.

References

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Redefining the Relationship with the Field: Why Graduate Students Should Avoid The Two to Four Week Model of Fieldwork

by Kanchan Chandra
New York University

The introduction of new standards and techniques for causal inference represents one of the most significant changes in methodological standards in comparative politics in recent years. It has also led to significant changes in graduate student training, as Ph.D. candidates in comparative politics now take courses not just in quantitative methods generally but also in techniques of causal inference specifically. This, to my mind, is an important and welcome development.

This emphasis on causal inference has produced a renewed emphasis on fieldwork. In the 1990s, when I went to graduate school, an emphasis on "generalizability" and cross-national comparative studies had begun to crowd out "area studies" and with it, field-based studies, which are by definition confined to particular areas. The new emphasis on causal inference has redirected attention to within-country studies, which permit a tighter set of controls, sometimes at the cost of generalizability. The generation of original data in within-country studies typically requires some sort of fieldwork.

> In some studies, fieldwork has been redefined to mean simply "data extraction," devoid of relationship or contextual knowledge.

At the same time, the nature of fieldwork, and the political scientist's relationship with the field, has been transformed by the emphasis on causal inference. Fieldwork in political science a generation ago was a diluted version of ethnography and archival work, influenced by anthropology and history respectively. Even in diluted form, it involved long periods in the field, some language training, and the development of a relationship of some sort between the political scientist and the places and people being studied. Such fieldwork was typically undertaken by graduate students, and, less frequently, by scholars further along in their careers.

Graduate "fieldwork" in the days of causal inference, though, has begun, in many cases, to take the form of one or more brief visits — what I call the "two to four week model" — to the place being studied. If graduate students are generating their own data, these brief visits are used to obtain preliminary information to guide the research design or train local collaborators to whom the actual data collection is delegated. If they are procuring data collected by others, often NGOs or government agencies, this time is used to build relationships with the NGOs or government offices that are the sources of the data.

I do not believe, or intend to suggest here, that research that pays attention to causal inference *requires* this model of fieldwork. There is no reason that empirical work that pays attention to causal inference cannot be based on a stronger relationship with the field. It can be and should be. But graduate students are overburdened, and in a world of scarce time and resources, they often prioritize the technical aspects of inference-based designs without also investing in the contextual knowledge that makes these designs meaningful.

The two to four week model of fieldwork does not require or create any significant relationship between the student and her subjects. Often, especially in lab experiments, U.S. based students do not themselves interact directly with their subjects, leaving that to their "local" research collaborators. In some studies, fieldwork has been redefined to mean simply "data extraction," devoid of relationship or contextual knowledge.

This model of fieldwork has some deeply problematic consequences, both for the nature of the knowledge we produce and the principles by which that knowledge is generated, that I will try to discuss here in general terms (although I cannot give specific examples for obvious reasons). The two to four week model of fieldwork has led to remarkable inaccuracies in comparative politics research. In reviewing contemporary article submissions and conference papers on India and South Asia, for example, areas which are part of my own expertise, I find that research with increasingly more sophisticated research designs has also begun to be accompanied by significant factual errors on the content or scope of government policy, on the chronology of political events, and sometimes even on the full form of acronyms. Although this is hardly a scientific sample, I do not recall seeing these errors with such frequency in

the manuscripts that I reviewed or discussed ten years ago. One reason such errors have begun to appear, I suspect, is that, as the nature of fieldwork has changed, we have become collectively less informed not only as a community of authors but also as a community of evaluators. Our standard process of peer review — even informal peer review in which we have colleagues look over our work — has become less adept at catching these substantive errors.

There is also an increasing tendency to take data generated by other sources — the NGOs, or government offices, or survey firms responsible for the collection of the primary data — at face value, without a description of the process by which the data are constructed, or an evaluation of the potential errors. The lack of a relationship with the people and places being studied means also a relative lack of accountability: the data are generated elsewhere, but the conclusions are published here in the U.S., with authors often providing little feedback to the subjects regarding the conclusions that are being made about them. Of course, field-based studies of an earlier era done by U.S.-based scholars were also more likely to be published in the U.S. by American publishers rather than in the country in which fieldwork was conducted. However, this previous generation of comparative politics scholars was held accountable, or held itself accountable, by the relationships that they had developed in the field. As these relationships become more tenuous, so does the degree of accountability.

Oddly enough, while this model of fieldwork is becoming increasingly common in dissertation research, it is not necessarily being rewarded when the same students go on the job market. As far as I can see, the comparative politics candidates who have the strongest appeal on the job market are usually those who are able to combine strong research design with deep contextual knowledge of an area. So, from a practical, incentive-based perspective, as well as from a knowledge-based and ethical perspective, developing a deep relationship with their "field" should be a priority for current Ph.D. candidates in comparative politics.

The key question is how to develop this deep relationship with the field while acquiring the necessary training in techniques of causal inference and creating a strong research design at the same time. There are certainly constraints on time and resources that make developing this combination of strengths difficult. But it is

not that difficult. There is one very simple pre-requisite: students have to believe that this is important and prioritize it, and for that their advisers have to believe it is important and prioritize it too. Beyond that, there are some practical solutions. One is to build in graduate school on the knowledge of, and relationship with, an area acquired during the undergraduate years, and to value such an area background in the admissions process. A second is to encourage students to go to the field early in their graduate careers and fund such early fieldwork so that they already have a relationship with the field by the time they develop their dissertation proposals. A third is to encourage collaborative work at the dissertation stage.

Training for Both Skills and Substance

by Barbara Geddes

University of California, Los Angeles

When I was in graduate school in the early 1980s, reading in comparative politics classes centered on explanatory arguments that no one now believes. Graduate students picked up substantive knowledge about the real world from the descriptive information that accompanied these arguments and from lengthy fieldwork. Since students could only do fieldwork in a tiny number of countries, their substantive knowledge of other places remained superficial and full of holes. As an example of a hole, when I began teaching Latin American politics at UCLA, I did not know that nearly all Latin American countries had proportional representation electoral systems — despite having taken classes and passed a qualifying exam in Latin American politics. Instead, I knew quite a bit about Brazil's political system and a lot of theories about the relationship between economics and politics that lost plausibility within a few years.

In important ways, graduate training has improved immeasurably since the 1980s. Training in statistical methods has become routine in comparative politics. Some graduate programs now teach experimental methods and causal inference. This kind of training will soon be standard everywhere because of its obvious advantages in establishing causality. The development of statistical skills and higher standards for evidence have reduced our opportunities to become famous for articulating attractive theoretical ideas contradicted by easily found facts, but have improved the quality, and thus staying power, of our knowledge claims. The spread of training in causal inference limits some of the excesses of inductive data mining and clarifies the ways that observational data can be used to support arguments. These big changes have greatly increased the rigor, and hence persuasiveness, of our research.

We have made no progress, however, in helping students acquire substantive knowledge and the intuitions and judgment that go along with such knowledge. We may even have regressed. Comparative coursework still centers on explanatory arguments, though we hope current ones will last a little longer. Graduate students still pick up substantive information from the descriptions and anecdotes that embed the arguments. Few students now do the kinds of lengthy fieldwork that most comparativists once did.

I think the most serious failing of good graduate programs now is that we allow students to get good grades and pass exams without learning very much about the real-world events and processes that their research claims to explain. We all need to think about ways to remedy this failing without reducing the effort we spend on skills training.

Students must have training in statistics, experimental methods, and research design, and some also need training in formal modeling, game theory, or the collection and use of qualitative evidence. They really need these skills, not only to do well on the job market but also to figure out how the world works. Since students do not usually arrive in graduate programs with the skills they will need, we have no choice about using a lot of their classroom time on methods training of various kinds. Acquiring these skills takes time and effort, which can come at the expense of other forms of intellectual investment.

But what is the point of high-powered research skills if the person wielding them lacks a basic substantive understanding of the processes being explained and the time and place in which they occur? They need substantive knowledge in order to develop promising hypotheses, design successful experiments, interpret their findings, and stay grounded in earthly causal processes rather than academics' fantasies about them. That means

that we need to find some way to create incentives for them to invest in acquiring substantive knowledge as well as skills.

Some colleagues believe that requiring students to take more substantive classes would solve the problem of statistically sophisticated but mindless student papers, but I have my doubts. Our substantive classes still focus on explanatory arguments, many of which now center on an economic model or an experiment. As sources of substantive knowledge, each of these kinds of studies has serious limitations.

Papers organized around formal models sometimes include statistical tests of an implication or two, and usually use a few anecdotes to establish plausibility. Students still try to pick up their substantive knowledge from this empirical accompaniment, just as in the 1980s, but the purportedly descriptive material surrounding models seems narrower and less factually reliable than the descriptive material used for similar purposes by previous generations of comparativists. As a superficial example of this decline, in my Reading Group on Dictators last quarter, every article containing an economic model of dictatorship also contained a misspelling of the name of one or more of the dictators discussed in the illustrative anecdotes. The spelling of names has no importance, but how much credibility should we give to the fact claims made about a dictator whose name the analyst does not know?

> I think the most serious failing of good graduate programs now is that we allow students to get good grades and pass exams without learning very much about the real-world events and processes that their research claims to explain.

Studies reporting experimental results resemble papers organized around models in one sense: the factual information included is ruthlessly pruned to exclude anything not germane to the subject under the experimental microscope. In my experience, the fact claims about context made in experimental studies are more reliably accurate and less cherry-picked on average than those made in articles that feature economic models. Nevertheless, they provide a narrow and biased source of substantive knowledge (and of course were never intended for this use).

This is not a criticism of theory or experiments. Theories that capture real world processes are what we all aim for. Experiments, when feasible, are the best strategy we have for testing causal arguments. To a person with a solid background of substantive knowledge, a theory is an interesting and possibly illuminating idea about how some real world process works. A well-designed experiment demonstrates that something really has the causal effect claimed. The model's necessary simplification, possible factual errors, and misspellings do not much matter. Its value lies in its creative simplification, which sometimes makes visible a relationship we had been unable to see with the naked eye. We professors do not intend for students to take economists' assumptions as descriptively accurate or to learn about real political processes from the anecdotes that accompany models or the snippets of information included in reports of experimental results. And yet, to judge from the papers turned in for my classes, many students do precisely this.

Comparative politics classes, mine included, often provide few other sources of substantive knowledge, and I am not sure how much we can change this. We need to organize our classes around theories, even though we know that the half-life of comparative politics theories is short, because students must situate their own research within the intellectual conversation of their time. We need to expose them to the most important experimental results. But somehow, in the process of training students, we also need to help them acquire more substantive knowledge.

What, if anything, can we do? Comparativists used to rely on fieldwork to supply real-world knowledge about at least one place during a particular period, and once upon a time, all comparativists spent a substantial amount of time in the field. We can still encourage fieldwork, but most contemporary graduate students cannot compensate for the lack of other background knowledge by spending a year or more in the field because they cannot secure sufficient funding. They make short trips focused on doing something very specific, e.g., a few weeks to do a survey or field experiment. The immensely greater availability of data has compensated for one of the main reasons for lengthy fieldwork in the past, but nothing compensates for the reality-check function fieldwork used to provide.

We might also be able to modify our substantive classes in small ways to help alleviate the problem. I

have tried adding more descriptive content to course requirements, though with mixed results. I have tried requiring students to read books and articles that provide detailed descriptions of real dictatorships, but in class discussions and papers I find that most students do not integrate the descriptive material with the theories. Giving students incentives to invest in gathering information about times and places that interest them seems to work better than adding requirements. I have found, for example, that requiring students to apply theories to one or more cases in assigned papers can stimulate deep digging into information sources. For quantitative papers, students can be required to include a case sketch showing the empirical process they claim to have shown in the data analysis. Such assignments encourage students to find the information needed to bring a theory into conversation with the real world or to embed data analysis in its substantive context. These are small changes that add incremental amounts to the store of background knowledge, and no doubt other faculty have found other ways of organizing their classes to provide these incentives. Over time even small changes should add up.

In my department, and many others I'm sure, comparativist faculty often complain about students' lack of substantive knowledge. To judge by my own experience, this problem has existed for a very long time. Unlike other deficiencies in my graduate education, however, this one is not being remedied over time. Indeed, the great investments in various kinds of methods training that students now need may have further reduced their ability to spend time acquiring contextual and historical knowledge. I cannot offer a solution to this problem. Instead, I suggest that all of us who teach substantive classes should try to figure out ways to use discussion, assignments, and whatever else we can think of to encourage students to acquire the background knowledge they need in order to have good academic judgment, regardless of the methods that they use.

The Fallacy of Multiple Methods

by Scott Gehlbach
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Political scientists are trained to identify logical fallacies, yet as a subfield, comparativists have fallen victim to a pernicious failure of reasoning, one that I will call the fallacy of multiple methods. The fallacy goes like this: Comparative politics maximizes its understanding of the political world when multiple methods are employed; therefore, graduate students in comparative politics should produce work that employs multiple methods.

To understand why this is a fallacy, it is helpful to unpack the argument into its constituent parts. The premise of the statement, in my view, is on firm ground. Ethnographic and interpretive work offers deep insight into the motivations and understandings of particular political actors. Statistics gives us the tools to make statements of more or less confidence about populations of political actors or governing entities. Experimental research identifies causal relationships that are otherwise difficult or impossible to observe. Game theory provides a language for understanding the strategic interaction that is often central to politics. One could go on. The point is that the diversity of methods in comparative politics exists for a reason.

However, it does not follow that comparativists should employ multiple methods in their own work. This is a fallacy of division (the opposite of a fallacy of composition): concluding that because something is true for the whole, it must be true for its constituent parts. Comparative politics as a subfield can effectively employ multiple methods even if none of its practitioners do. All that is required — more on this below — is that (i) there be a diversity of comparativists in terms of methods employed, and (ii) comparativists be able to read and synthesize each others' work. In short, all that is necessary is a division of labor.

Some fallacies are harmless, but this is not true of the fallacy of multiple methods. This fallacy guides the advice that we provide to graduate students, the projects that we choose to fund, the awards that we provide for dissertations and published work, and the judgments of referees and editors at some of our top journals. And so graduate students attempt to do what is often impossible:

master multiple methods, not all of which are suited to a scholar's intellectual temperament, in a short period of time. The consequence, all too often, is research that does many things poorly — theoretically ungrounded ethnographies, poorly identified regressions, inexpertly conceived experiments, mathematically incoherent models — rather than a few things well.

This jack-of-all-trades tendency echoes the corporate practice of assembling diverse enterprises within a single conglomerate — a practice that had become hegemonic by the 1970s (Porter, 1987). As with comparative politics, the justification for this strategy rested in part on a logical error: the idea that firms could better diversify investor risk by participating in a variety of unrelated businesses. The fallacy, as eventually understood by the corporate world, is that investors are perfectly capable of diversifying risk on their own by holding diverse portfolios; there is no need for firms themselves to be organized as such (Alberts, 1966; Levy and Sarnat, 1970). Rather, firms should concentrate on their "core competencies." As explained by Prahalad and Hamel (1990) in their seminal work, this does not necessarily mean making just one thing. In their example, Honda was a major player in automobiles, lawn mowers, generators, and motorcycles. It does, however, imply that the various activities of the firm should follow its expertise in doing just a few things — in Honda's case, producing engines and power trains.

> Political scientists are trained to identify logical fallacies, yet as a subfield, comparativists have fallen victim to a pernicious failure of reasoning, one that I will call the fallacy of multiple methods.

Those of us in a position to guide graduate students should encourage them to develop their core competencies, that is, develop a portfolio of complementary skills (perhaps under the umbrella of some overarching method within a particular epistemological tradition) that will enable them to excel in a variety of research endeavors. We should discourage them from "triangulating" among methods in which they have only a semester's training. Finally, in our various professional capacities, we should reward scholarship that is convincing in a narrow domain — even when our own core competencies might have led us in a different direction

— over that which pursues multiple methods for its own sake.

At the same time, we should encourage graduate students to obtain basic training in a variety of methods. This is not paradoxical. Rather, it is only through exposure to diverse methods that the gains from trade of a division of labor can be realized. Comparativists must be able to read each others' work. They must be able to synthesize what has been done on a topic by practitioners of other methods. Finally, when collaborating with those who have different core competencies (a way for graduate students to signal that they are methodologically ecumenical without trying to do it all themselves), they must be able to monitor each others' contributions.

Empirical research demonstrates that firms became more valuable once conglomerates were broken up and companies reorganized around closely related activities (Bhagat, Shleifer and Vishny, 1990). Scholarship in comparative politics will similarly benefit when we appreciate that the use of multiple methods should be a goal for the subfield, not for any particular scholar.

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Balancing Trade-offs and Leveraging Experience[1]

by Gretchen Helmke and G. Bingham Powell, Jr

University of Rochester

The overarching goal of graduate school is to turn smart students into independent scholars, capable of producing original contributions that are relevant to a defined community or communities of scholars. Ph.D. education in comparative politics has traditionally comprised three stages: course work, fieldwork, and dissertation. As the history and breadth of the field grows and the available analytic tools multiply, the potential scope of each stage expands. Graduate programs face a particularly hard trade-off between requiring course sequences that adequately engage the student in the exciting problems of the field, providing the tools to contribute to it, and still leaving students enough time for creativity to flourish.

I. Course Sequences: Engaging the Student with the Discipline

Students choose graduate school in political science because they are excited by glimpses of the critical problems of human governance. They are drawn to comparative politics as they perceive these problems playing out in different contexts and see both similarities and differences between political processes across cultures and institutions. Different scholars and different departments have different visions of regularity and uniqueness. But if there is a communality, it might be captured in the self-characterization by Kalyvas (2006, 9-10) that "I draw from the very best of fine-grained analysis of particular cases to suggest that, while contexts may differ, mechanisms reoccur."

It is essential to expose students to a range of comparative politics scholarship. They need to see how previous generations of scholars have tried to understand things like democracy and dictatorship, revolution and evolutionary change, order and instability, the impact of economic and cultural context, parliamentary and presidential government, party competition and voting, contentious politics, and the political economy of public policies. This exposure can both mobilize their own fascinations with the issues or contexts that drew them to comparative politics and can help them to engage with the scholarly communities. To be successful they must be excited by their work, but they must also learn to communicate and engage. Science is a social enterprise. Students must gain a sense of the important debates and the shared expectations about what counts as a contribution.

Both a broad "field seminar" and more specialized research seminars are essential to enable this engagement. Students need familiarity with some of the "classics" and the big questions in order to communicate with the field. Yet, they also need exposure to cutting-edge work applying new methods and data to old questions and newer issues that are reshaping the field, such as electoral integrity and authoritarian elections, globalization contexts, sustainability, and population movements.

Moreover, students need to make the difficult transitions from students, to critics, to contributing scholars. They need to get in the habit of rethinking classical work and practicing alternative research designs, yet seeing what is positive and works, as well as what is unpersuasive and flawed. Writing seminar papers and, eventually, a larger paper to present to a broad departmental group can set the stage for useful fieldwork and an important and successful dissertation. The goal should be to provide as many relatively low stakes opportunities as possible for students to begin to make the leap from student to scholar.

II. Course Sequences: Providing the Methodological Tools

Technical training is essential. We are awash in a sea of new data, enabling the exploration of new problems and of old problems in new ways. Students require sophisticated technical training to exploit the cross-national surveys, the digitilization of archives, the internet and media flows, and Big Data. And our increasing sensitivity, especially in comparative politics, to the complex interaction between contexts and the micro-processes within them require more sophisticated statistical models and rigorous formalization to articulate the connections between theory and data.

At Rochester we teach in a department that is a pioneer in rigorous approaches to political science and that has always demanded deep technical training in its

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programs. The field's increasing concerns with causal inference, not just association, are welcome advances that naturally extend this tradition. But the quest for clever research design — whether in the form of natural experiments or field experiments — should always be deployed in the service of good theory and the search for causal mechanisms, which are themselves fundamentally problem-driven. Put differently, research design should go hand-in-hand with micro-level theory and the search for mechanisms, not substitute for them.

Experience with demanding and time-consuming technical sequences has also alerted us to the need for balance. Many students learn technical methods, formal or statistical, best while simultaneously applying them to interesting problems. Creative imagination can be suppressed without the freedom to apply it. The ideal graduate program induces its students to acquire a secure technical foundation and to link it to substantive applications. And students should acquire a sufficient appreciation of rigorous methodology in the broadest sense so that they can exploit qualitative evidence as deftly as quantitative data.

III. Field Research

Field research, examining political processes firsthand in one or more sites away from one's university setting and one's own cultural and political home, has always been an important part of comparative politics training. It continues to be so today. Comparative politics programs need to recognize that substantial fieldwork will almost always lengthen the time needed to complete the Ph.D. and, if possible, organize their sequential deadlines and funding structures to compensate for this iron fact.

In addition to allowing a graduate student to establish basic credibility as an expert in a field that has always been based in area studies, field research is essential for developing intuition about context. What seem to be the same institutions, even the same data, often look different upon close scrutiny. All comparative politics scholars have seen many times how a plausible research program or a clever theoretical angle morphs into something quite different as it is explored in the field. Equally exciting, we all know how the exotic trappings of a different environment can reveal familiar mechanisms when examined in the right theoretical light. Even a small number of field interviews can add great credibility as

part of a multi-faceted research project. Field research can also be the most exciting and rewarding part of the graduate education.

Although fieldwork is often conceived as a one-shot commitment of a substantial block of time, there is much to be said for going into the field early and often. Indeed, this can be another trade-off. Return trips after digesting the first round of experiences can be more productive. Yet, an extended stay can yield deeper insights and encourage creative reformulation of theory. It may often be essential to discover how to gain essential access to subjects and archives, and to develop collaborative relationships with local scholars that are both analytically invaluable and normatively desirable. In either case, grants, whether national or university, should also be structured to enable more fluid approaches to fieldwork.

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Going into the field for the first time can be overwhelming. At the University of Rochester we are launching a new interactive website, *In the Field - Political Science*, aimed at making this process more transparent and more efficient. Although, to some extent, each piece of field research is unique, scholars can benefit greatly from connecting to colleagues who are currently in the field as well as predecessors who have done research in their area. Not all parts of the wheel need to be reinvented each time. Following the template developed by the popular Chemistry lab website Not Voodoo, the idea is to crowd source information. This will help scholars at any stage get their bearings in a new country, and contribute to a public knowledge base about the resources, norms, and pitfalls of conducting research in a specific context, thus improving everything from productivity to emotional and physical well-being.

Similar to the website for the Poverty Action Lab at M.I.T., the homepage will provide a map of the world linking to information including a list of all Ph.D. scholars and professors from universities around the world

who are currently working or have recently been working in a given country, with their topic, keywords, and contact information. Additional links will include practical advice blogs, as well as tips and tricks related to all types of field research, including interviews, experiments, surveys, and so on. When up and running, this should help with everything from mundane questions about living and conducting field research in a new country to providing novel ways for scholars to network and collaborate. Ultimately, the goal is to expand the website into a global inter-disciplinary endeavor that encompasses all field research done in the social sciences.

IV. Dissertations

The dissertation is, of course, the cumulative event in a Ph.D. program, which brings together all of the issues of substantive courses, methodological training, and fieldwork. Choosing an interesting and tractable dissertation topic is one of the hardest problems that students face as they earn a Ph.D.. Students who have performed brilliantly in the classroom can be immobilized for months over choosing a dissertation topic.

We have no magic bullet for this specter, but we find that students who have been able to explore ideas in summer fieldwork and/or who have been able to produce and present extensive research papers are less likely to be intimidated by the dissertation. Departments can help by providing venues for students to present dissertation ideas at an early stage, such as subfield workshops, as well as by encouraging early fieldwork. Students should also be encouraged to try out various ideas, told that it's OK to fail at first; just to pick themselves up and try again. It is helpful to think of the dissertation as a contribution, not as a final solution to a problem of huge significance (which may be intractable).

Dissertation ideas come from many sources. Early in their graduate work, students should be encouraged to keep their eyes open, as they read widely in current events, other courses, and even other disciplines. American politics, itself inspired by Economics and Psychology, has long been a rich source of research ideas taken into a different context by comparative politics students. Increasingly, international relations is a source of theories, data sets, and issues that cross the comparative/IR barrier (civil war, terrorism/violence,

economic policy responsibility, mobilization, cross-national interest groups, European Parliament parties, and so forth.) Moreover, theories and regularities that are well-established in comparative politics by research in one part of the world or one type of political system may work quite differently in a different context. There are good theoretical reasons to expect Duverger's Law to work differently in a new African democracy than it does in an established European one — and it's very interesting when it does (Ferree, Powell and Scheiner, 2014).

Of course, as the dissertation idea develops, the faculty advisors who are mentoring can nudge the student to take account of those broad methodological principles of case selection learned earlier. Faculty should also make students aware early on of the principles and the constraints embodied in university Research Review Boards.

One final thought for advisors and students alike. Like good generals, experienced scholars are well aware that it is seldom the case that a battle plan survives the first contact with the adversary intact. Dissertation committees and Ph.D. students alike need to be aware of this and of the need to adapt flexibly to the situation on the ground. One implication is that it does not pay to be overly detailed and rigid in the dissertation design; rather, the dissertation design should allow for adaptation and even wholesale reconstruction. Fortunately, the internet now permits continuing interaction between a student in the field and his or her committee. Both student and faculty should take full advantage of this.

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Improving Graduate Education through the Undergraduate Curriculum

by Jeffrey K. Staton

Emory University

In my first year of graduate school, I had what I take to be a relatively common experience for a political scientist. The first few weeks of my program were a bit like learning a foreign language. I did not understand much of what was being said, but I figured that if I listened and tried to imitate my teachers I might eventually gain some fluency. Near the end of that first semester, after many of the words started to make a little sense, I fully accepted that the material and the approach being taught were not what I had expected to learn while completing my undergraduate major in political science.

I certainly recognized some things, like the ideas that a model was an abstraction of the world and that a model might structure both observation and the normative conclusions that you draw from data analysis. To say that I recognized these ideas does not imply that I understood the practical implications of being committed to them, much less did I recognize more than a few examples of core models in political science. By November, I was being asked to choose a whole slate of new courses, to identify research projects, and to build relationships with likely mentors. This process was guided by the mentors I had identified prior to starting graduate school, which as I have suggested, were selected via a pretty vague understanding of the discipline. This was not an ideal situation. Information about graduate programs certainly seems better today than it was when I was applying, but my experience still seems to be fairly common. New Ph.D. students, even those who were undergraduate majors in political science, are commonly surprised not just by the level of rigor of graduate school, but by the substance of the discipline itself. This state of affairs is problematic per se. It is also related in an important way to the questions that the editors of the Newsletter, Matt and Sona, posed about the future of graduate education.

What should a modern Ph.D. program in comparative politics look like? Faculty at Ph.D. granting institutions spend a considerable amount of time with this question. I suspect that there is a strong general agreement in the field about the goals of our programs. We all want to produce substantively oriented and theoretically informed scholars who publish methodologically rigorous work. We also want to produce engaged and effective teachers. Unfortunately, there is no consensus over the meaning of "methodologically rigorous," "theoretically informed," and "substantively oriented," and our disagreements about meaning account for much of our near constant debates about the precise components of graduate education and the order in which they should be covered. However we approach it, we do seem to agree that our programs require time, so that core lessons can be built upon sensibly. This means sequences or groups of courses and activities, which crowd out other opportunities. Naturally, when we are not tinkering with courses, we are offering students advice about how to evaluate the time allocation tradeoffs they confront. Should she take that new course on text analysis or that great course on transitions that hasn't been offered in years? Should he spend the summer learning new technical skills, reading histories of leadership, or taking a preliminary research trip to a likely field site?

In light of our diverse understandings of what it means to train a productive scholar, there will be no consensus about how to evaluate these tradeoffs. However, what I believe we can do is make it easier for new graduate students to evaluate them. We can make the consequences of their tradeoffs clearer. Rather than attacking this problem at the graduate level, where we can no doubt clarify some things, I want to suggest that we focus on our undergraduates. Admittedly, this is a longer-term strategy, but it is a more robust one than the typical tinkering we do with our graduate programs. It will also compel us to question whether our undergraduate programs are effective for anyone, future graduate student or not.

We should teach political science at the undergraduate level in a way that places more emphasis on progression and integration than we typically do. This may require that we trade off some breadth, but I suspect that we will not have to give up much. We should think about undergraduate and graduate education as a singular progression rather than as two relatively distinct activities. This approach does not imply that we must envision identical goals for undergraduate and graduate students. We need not attempt to train professional po-

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[1] For example, we might include a goal of fostering good global citizenship. This can be done without detaching learning at the undergraduate level from the questions, theories, and empirical methods scholars use in their own work.

litical scientists at the undergraduate level.[1] It certainly does not require giving up a commitment to a reasonable degree of conceptual and methodological breadth. Doing this well requires a process, not just for making initial choices about the kind and timing of the information we want to convey, but also for the monitoring of our plans over time. Of course, this will require overcoming some fairly obvious challenges of collective decision-making, which may prove insurmountable in particular cases. A more progressive and integrated undergraduate program, though, will have a large number of benefits, including for the future graduate students that we send out to other departments as well as the graduate students in our own programs.

In response to an external review and some not so subtle prodding from a dean, Emory's Department of Political Science set about reforming its undergraduate curriculum in 2013. This process, which ultimately took two years, began with a general review of undergraduate programs around the country. Although our program had made particularly strong choices in favor of breadth and depth over integration and progression, it shared a lot in common with many of the programs we reviewed. I will develop my argument in the context of that process. Let me add a few caveats. First, I do not claim to speak for my colleagues. Although there was broad support for the reform among our faculty, there was not consensus, even among the coalition that voted for the reform. Second, I do not claim that we have solved all of the challenges that we confronted, at least from my perspective. It is a work in progress. Third, I will say nothing about what it means to be an effective classroom teacher.[2] My focus is on the curriculum. In what remains, I will first describe the principles of curriculum design that framed our reform. I summarize what we did and highlight the potential benefits of this reform for graduate education. I conclude by identifying several fundamental challenges that remain, which I believe may generalize to other contexts.

I. Reforming an Undergraduate Curriculum

The Emory process was guided by four curriculum design principles: breadth, depth, progression and in-

tegration.[3] Political science is a diverse field. So too is the subfield of comparative politics. Many key questions and ideas motivate our work and our curricula need to reflect that breadth. Yet, we also want students to be given opportunities to deepen their understanding of particular lessons, ideally through guided and ultimately individualized research. In order to ensure that lessons taught are internalized, curricula should be progressive, where core lessons build upon and are reinforced by subsequent lessons. Finally, the curriculum needs to be integrated — ideas taught in one class ought to be used in other classes.

Typical undergraduate curricula in the field surely reflect these principles in many ways. Nearly every department in the country has a variety of courses entitled "Introduction to [Subfield]," which often serve as prerequisites for upper level courses. Students are typically required to take all or nearly all of the main subfield introductions (Comparative Politics, American Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, Public Policy, etc.), ensuring a broad base of knowledge. Departments commonly offer a research methods course that presumably is used in future courses. Departments offer "writing-intensive" research opportunities. The recent undergraduate reform at Stanford, which I will return to in the final section, has resulted in an important variation. Stanford political science majors are introduced to the discipline via a single general course, after which they choose to focus in two of five thematic tracks (including a data science track), which in some ways reflect the traditional subfields, but in other ways reflect an effort to combine and re-imagine the substantive topics that best link courses and content to each other.[4]

A scan of existing undergraduate curricula suggests that each of the design principles is respected in a variety of ways. Programs offer considerable breadth and opportunities for deep learning experiences. What is hard to tell by scanning course plans, however, is whether the progression and integration we have in principle is real in practice. Does "Introduction to Comparative Politics" lead naturally to the questions that are asked in "Comparative Political Behavior" or "The Politics of [Region/Country]?" Are students frequently required to

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[2]I set aside some challenges that might follow adopting a curriculum that cannot be well delivered by the faculty. I assume that since we each largely choose our curricula, this is not a particularly salient problem in the academy.

[3]For a general discussion of these principles, see Meyers and Nulty (2009). For an explicit example of how they are used, the Education Scotland site proves particularly useful (`http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/`).

[4]The Stanford major is described at `https://politicalscience.stanford.edu/undergraduate-major/major`. A summary of the program, as well as its motivation, is described in Flaherty (2015).

apply methodological knowledge in substantive classes, and if so, how? When we say that our curricula are progressive and integrated, we have to mean more than that we have introductory courses that are followed by upper level courses, which require as prerequisites the introductory courses. New information actually has to build on core information and ideas actually need to be connected across classes. Not every idea needs to be built upon of course, but some explicit thought should be given to the links.

What we found. The Emory undergraduate reform committee found considerable evidence of our faculty creatively managing the potential tensions between breadth and depth. There was a great deal of which to be proud. Our department required undergraduates to take introductory courses in all of our subfields. Students were required to take at least one basic research methods course. We offered a variety of outstanding seminars with limited seating and intense contact with faculty. We provided opportunities to engage the Atlanta community in service-learning courses. We managed a series of high quality study abroad programs. Special writing-intensive courses provided opportunities to develop papers. Our year-long honors program, in which roughly twenty of our best students complete a thesis in close contact with a faculty advisor provided a unique research experience. Not that graduate placement must be a key metric of a program, but our students seeking Ph.D. programs were routinely placed in elite departments (this past year at the University of Chicago and the University of California, San Diego). We seemed to be touching all of the bases.

The opportunities for improvement that we identified became clear as we turned our attention to progression and integration. In order to satisfy distributional requirements, students commonly took introductory courses in their final year, including but certainly not limited to the introductory research methods course. Identical courses were taught quite differently by different instructors. Many students had trouble articulating a clear connection between lower level and upper level courses, as well as expressing confusion over the relevance of any research method for many of their courses. Hours spent learning statistics in R were certainly hard

to explain, but so too were lessons about clear conceptual development, causal mechanisms, and process. Even faculty reported being somewhat uncertain about exactly was was being taught in their colleagues' courses. Only the faculty coordinator for International Studies seemed to have the vaguest sense about what was being taught in foreign universities to our study abroad students.

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What we did. The Emory reform made a number of important changes, though it was not radical. A comparison between the old program and the new can be made at the department's website.[5] The primary goal of the reform was to increase progression and integration while maintaining the department's vision of a broad curriculum within which students would have ample opportunities to deepen knowledge. In each subfield, where students once took a single introductory course, they now take an introductory and an intermediate course. In comparative politics, this was created by transforming our typical single semester introductory course into a two course sequence, where both the complexity of topics and level of analysis is increased over time. For example, whereas the first course will introduce foundational work on regimes, the second course will consider how majoritarian and proportional electoral systems influence budgets or how elections are used in authoritarian states. Methods offerings are similarly progressive.[6] Where once we offered a single research course, which combined introductory statistics with broader lessons on research design, we now require a statistics course and a separate course on research design, which is broad with respect to approach and covers topics like ethics and data integrity, which can be glossed over in a single semester class. Students are strongly encouraged to fulfill all introductory requirements early, including the

[5] A comparison of the programs is available here: http://polisci.emory.edu/home/undergraduate/political_science_major/.

[6] The major is also linked to Emory's Institute for Quantitative Theory and Methods (QuanTM, http://quantitative.emory.edu/). Reflecting the option available to Stanford students, QuanTM majors can focus substantively in political science while pursuing a data science course of study.

methods courses. All instructors are strongly encouraged to use prerequisites.

Integration was advanced by requiring all members of subfields to develop templates for their introductory and intermediate courses together. Faculty assigned to these courses are encouraged to explicitly coordinate content under the general guidelines, perhaps providing additional integration by focusing on a theme for the year, e.g., human migration. Faculty are encouraged to "team-teach" courses when possible. Under the past guidelines, reflecting a push from the College, our curriculum featured a number of writing-intensive courses. We continue to feature these courses, but we now also require that students take "research-intensive" courses in their area of concentration. Further, programs run by members of the department are encouraged to provide a wider number of research opportunities. The Center for the Study of Law, Politics and Economics (CSLPE) now coordinates sixteen undergraduate research fellowships, matching students to faculty-led projects. Importantly, this year we have two undergraduates who have been matched to advanced graduate students, providing research support for dissertation projects.[7] The department continues to support roughly 20 undergraduate honors thesis projects, matching students to faculty advisors.

Having a more effective undergraduate curriculum has a number of implications for our graduate programs. Many of the benefits will naturally accrue to faculty at other schools, the schools at which our undergraduate students ultimately enroll. The following includes an non-exhaustive list of those benefits.

II. Implications for Graduate Education

- **More informed choice**: Assuming that a more effective curriculum improves familiarity with the discipline, the most obvious benefit is that students will be able to make better choices with respect to graduate programs, likely mentors, and program tradeoffs. They will ask better questions and they will be better able to evaluate faculty advice.

- **Better research partners**: Students will also be better prepared to begin contributing as faculty research partners much earlier on. As publication expectations in graduate school increase, it is essential that our graduate students are given research opportunities as early as possible. When a student spends semesters simply figuring out what political science actually is, it is difficult to ensure that they will be well matched to faculty research projects.

- **Lower attrition**: Attrition rates ought to be lower, especially the cases of attrition that derive from fundamental misperceptions about graduate school itself or a poor understanding of what might be a good match.

- **Better class interaction**: Seminar discussion should be better. Methods faculty would be able to cover more material more quickly and successfully teach at a higher level of abstraction. Critically, this should be true for any methodological approach.

Given faculty incentives to focus on their own graduate students, it is important to recognize that undergraduate reform has benefits for our own programs as well.

- **Learning through teaching**: In so far as graduate students are teaching assistants (instructors in many cases), a more effective undergraduate program will help reinforce the lessons they continue to learn in their own programs. Embedding these students in a progressive and integrated undergraduate program will serve the same purpose for them that it serves for our own undergraduates. This effect should be particularly strong if most programs in the country are still somewhat disconnected from their graduate programs.

- **Research assistance for graduate students**: Linking undergraduates to graduates students via research projects gives graduate students an opportunity to learn how to manage research associates, an important skill as they transition to assistant professorships. And if we pair undergraduate and graduate students on graduate student projects, we provide our graduate students with a level of research assistance that might not be financially feasible otherwise. In a context of high competition and uncertainty over grant dollars for graduate student research, finding creative ways to help promote graduate student productivity is essential.

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[7] A description of the CSLPE undergraduate fellow program can be found at http://polisci.emory.edu/home/cslpe/fellowships.html.

- **Larger pool of teaching assistants**: A more effective undergraduate program will increase the pool of undergraduate teaching assistants. In some contexts, it will create a pool where none existed before. This will free up opportunities for graduate students to serve as teaching assistants when it is desired or useful rather than required out of a scheduling necessity. Graduate students can be reassigned to teaching assistance or co-instructing where it makes the most sense. And of course they can be reassigned as research assistants.

III. Remaining Challenges

This section summarizes three remaining challenges that I see. I begin with a feature of many programs, which if reformed would greatly advance a progressive and integrated curriculum without giving up much breadth or depth.

Political Science 101. What does it mean to take four introductory courses in four subfields when there is no introduction to the field itself? Reflecting Stanford's experience, the curriculum reform committee first considered developing a single introductory course that would serve as the primary means through which students are introduced to the field of political science. Subfield introductions at an "intermediate" level would follow that course. This did not get very far and that is a real shame.

The failure to have a core course or set of courses in the discipline is a persistent problem. The common structure, where multiple subfield courses structure a student's introduction to the discipline, implies that the field is just the sum of distinct components found in the individual subfields. It also means that students spend four semesters being "introduced" to political science. For a variety of reasons and for a number of students, this introduction continues into the senior year. Students do not need four semesters to learn the basic lessons of political science. There are very good reasons for subfields to continue to structure much of the work that we do (Reiter, 2015), but among these good reasons is not that the subfields have nothing in common. That is simply wrong. The fields have core motivating problems in common. They rely on similar techniques of research design. They speak to similar normative concerns. Putting students through at least four separate semesters in pursuit of these basic lessons is a massive waste of time and resources. This is not to say that all foundational information about comparative politics could be placed in Political Science 101; however, excluded information could easily be covered in an intermediate subfield course, sensibly building upon or connecting to earlier lessons. This structure would lead naturally to upper level courses that continue to build on, and yet are linked to, upper level courses in other subfields. Breadth of study would be maintained while adding progression and integration.

The obvious practical problem would seem to be that faculties have to agree on a common set of "core topics" for the introductory course. That will be challenging in some cases, probably not so much because it is hard to find big ideas in common in principle, but because of a lack of trust and concerns about the implications of making content choices. In some groups, perhaps, it will be impossible. Still, I am generally optimistic, especially if we continue to allow for a major role for the subfields (or whatever salient groups there happen to be in a department). The goal is to find the topics and ideas that we share, so that future courses in our subfield can build on those ideas. As long as the subfields have many ideas in common, which I am certain that they do, this kind of process would not require considerable compromise. It might even be fun!

Managing Tensions Among Principles. The deepest challenges follow from tensions among the four principles of an effective curriculum. Our efforts to ensure that courses are integrated and progressive must be reconciled with a competing desire for breadth and depth. When faced with this problem, the Emory reform committee simply chose to leave an element of the curriculum alone. Although our introductory, intermediate, and methods courses are new, upper level courses were untouched. In a diverse field, people will naturally disagree about what to emphasize in those courses. Even if we can agree on what to highlight in the introductory or intermediate courses, higher level courses will ultimately reflect the particular interests of faculty; and, without a strategy for linking these courses, we cannot expect complete integration. Pushing hard for complete integration might actually risk undermining academic freedom too much. Political science may be too diverse for it ever to support the kind of integration that would maximize learning.

Managing tradeoffs across the four principles requires thinking about curriculum reform as an ongoing process. Some curricular changes that are not possible today may be possible in the future. It takes time to learn

about what is being taught and how you might link to each other's work. It takes time to put those lessons into practice in your own syllabi, and of course, not every course is taught every year, so the simple fact that faculty divide their time across many tasks other than teaching likely requires that curriculum change will take place over the long run. Being flexible and patient at the start is essential.

Incentives. The key practical challenge is this. Who is incentivized to work on this problem? Serving on a committee for a year is one thing. Helping to ensure that your courses are aligned with your colleagues' courses on an ongoing basis is another thing altogether. Faculty at Ph.D. granting institutions are constantly confronted by the idea that the major determinant of success in the discipline, perhaps the only determinant of success, is research productivity. Untenured faculty are acutely aware of this, as they should be.

The challenge is not as bad as it might appear at first. What is minimally required is an efficient means for sharing information. A single location for the storage of syllabi, perhaps by subfield, is a good first start. Encouraging team-teaching, especially between junior and senior colleagues, is another simple strategy. Devoting a workshop, perhaps as infrequently as once a year, to presentations on teaching plans and innovations is another. Finally, the construction of more effective undergraduate programs means that teachers are less frequently involved in tasks that are significantly unrelated to each other. You will be more consistently embedded in your own research agenda when the courses you teach at the undergraduate level are better linked to the courses you teach at the graduate level.

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Training Graduate Students in Comparative Politics

by Leonard Wantchekon[1]

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Schools adopt a wide range of approaches for training graduate students in comparative politics. While NYU emphasizes quantitative methods and formal theory, others, such as Chicago, focus on more qualitative methods and the humanities. Most schools adopt a mix of these two approaches. Based on my own experience as a graduate student, an educator, and the founder of a higher education institution in Benin, I believe that a strong program is one that provides foundational training in both quantitative and qualitative methods, in microeconomics and game theory, and in history and anthropology.

As a Ph.D. student in economics at Northwestern University (1992-1995), I had to enroll in "Economic History," a requirement set up by Professor Joe Mokyr, where every student, regardless of his or her subfield (mathematical economics or development economics), had to write a publishable paper on some aspect of economic history. This resulted in some students who specialized in economic theory publishing in one of the top economic history journals.[2] At the African School of Economics (ASE), which I founded in 2014 in my home country of Benin, we have been inspired by the Northwestern approach in our Economics and Management graduate training. We currently have a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) and in Mathematics, Economics, and Statistics (MMES), where all students have to take at least one economic history course along with foundational classes in mathematics and statistics.

I believe certain qualities and skills distinguish the most promising graduate students. The "ideal" Ph.D. candidate in comparative politics should be able to navigate through all of the social science disciplines with ease. He or she should have a solid foundation in both qualitative and quantitative research methods,

with an ability to construct elegant and innovative research designs as well as conduct survey research. Lastly, I strongly believe (like many others) that graduate students in comparative politics should aim to possess in-depth country or region-specific knowledge and have on-the-ground experience.

In order to develop the aforementioned skills, political science graduate students need to take foundational courses in economics and history along with their core political science and research methods courses. The logic behind this approach is that, when paired with purely quantitative courses such as mathematics or statistics, enrolling in one or two rigorous history classes will enrich student perspectives, enabling them to gain inspiration from past events to understand future events.

> Currently, most field experience, at least in Africa, resembles "research missions" in which comparativists use some local academic resources, particularly "native informants" to discover patterns of social behavior in a relatively short time. Moreover, locals are generally not considered equal partners and are not always given enough credit for their contributions.

To be more specific, to spur student creativity, a core history course should cover three main elements. First, it must present historical events in a meaningful and concise way, covering events at critical historical junctures relevant to the region of focus. The goal of this element is to provide students with a key understanding of historical events. Second, it should expose students to research methods in economics and social history. Third, the course should incorporate readings from publications that have analyzed both macro- and micro-level dimensions of historical events and that have contributed substantially to the literature.

This profile of an "ideal" graduate student in comparative politics is too ambitious, however, to be achieved solely through classroom instruction or curriculum design. It is thus vital that at the recruitment stage of graduate training, schools place an emphasis on admitting a core group of students with a demonstrated interest in multidisciplinary research. Rather than selecting mostly students with narrow research interests,

political science departments should seek students who are also able to engage with those studying other disciplines.

Besides smarter recruiting, graduate-training programs should also emphasize horizontal learning among faculty and students. A strategy to foster such collaboration is to ensure academic events are interdisciplinary by including professors with diverse research backgrounds. For example the Politics Department at Princeton hosts a colloquium in which a professor specializing in political theory discusses a presentation given by a colleague from a different subfield such as international relations or American politics.

Additionally, to cultivate the "ideal" comparativist, graduate-level training must include a more extensive experiential learning component than what is currently required. While field experience is a common requirement across most programs, this experience should be channeled through exchange programs with partner universities in different countries. Field experiences in which a student is actively engaging with faculty and students from local universities will not only serve as a stepping stone for developing in-depth country knowledge, but also enable students to navigate through the local academic environment.

These types of rigorous, in-depth field experiences have numerous benefits. First, they allow a student to obtain data that he or she would not otherwise have access to through online sources or short-term experiences. As Kapiszewski and Read (2015) note, "by finding (and creating) data within its own context, researchers can benefit from serendipity, encounter emerging phenomena, grasp nuances, untangle causal processes, and confront gaps between concepts and reality." This process truly embodies the multi-method approach emphasized by political science training, as it requires students to rely on a number of methods, such as focus groups, observations, and field experiments among others. Beyond these advantages, extensive field experience allows students to better understand the motivations and incentives of local people. Overall, such experiences will enhance every step of the research cycle, from better understanding casual mechanisms to making more informed policy recommendations (Kapiszewski and Read, 2015).

Currently, most field experience, at least in Africa, resembles "research missions" in which comparativists

use some local academic resources, particularly "native informants" to discover patterns of social behavior in a relatively short time. Moreover, locals are generally not considered equal partners and are not always given enough credit for their contributions. Exchange programs must thus be structured in a way that overcomes the notion criticized by Mamdani (1998) that "natives can only be informants, and not intellectuals." Practical and ethical reasons call for a restructuring of the field experience that not only requires a researcher to consider his or her obligations to subjects, colleagues, and funders, but also his or her larger obligation to the country or community under study (Social Science Research Association, 2003).

In regards to this last obligation, students and faculty must structure their field experiences in a way that the society of the host country and groups within it also benefit from the research, which can be achieved (at least in part) through the active involvement of local academics. Such partnerships will allow researchers to gain access to an existing body of knowledge and resources that are not accessible through reports or articles, as well as access to local intermediaries to better disseminate their research findings. Furthermore, collaborative research stemming from partnerships can have an impact beyond the individuals involved. To be more specific, collaborative research increases local academics' publication records, thus raising the profile of their respective institutions. From a broader perspective, a more prominent profile pushes the institution to increase the quality of instruction by holding itself to higher standards.

Obviously, field experience and experiential learning is less of a problem for students from ASE because they live in Africa and are embedded in African social life and culture. The challenge, however, lies in helping them turn their experiences into academic projects. ASE has put in place a number of components for this goal to be realized, including academic partnerships, diverse foundational coursework, a work-study program, and field trips.

Regarding the first element, academic partnerships with universities abroad are critical for exposing students to new academic environments. Currently, ASE has partnerships with Princeton University, American University in Cairo, the Barcelona Graduate School of Economics, and Laval University, among others. As a result of these partnerships, more than 40 students from Germany, France, Argentina, and the United States have spent time on ASE's campus since 2013. At the same time, students and members of ASE's research teams have visited several African countries, Mexico and the United States. Through exposure to other environments, students are able to gain a deeper understanding of their own experiences.

Concerning coursework, we have put in place a curriculum that, as I mentioned earlier, equips students with the tools necessary to conduct innovative and multidisciplinary research as well as teach and communicate knowledge in an engaging manner. From the first semester, students enrolled in one of ASE's master degrees are required to take foundational courses not only in mathematics, statistics, and econometrics, but also in development economics and economic history.

Thirdly, ASE has implemented a Work-Study program that enables every student to work in exchange for a reduction of school fees. Adapted from American universities but unique to the African continent, the program provides students with opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge by acting as research assistants to ASE's faculty and researchers. Lastly, ASE has made it a priority to organize at least one field trip per year to major historical sites with the purpose of increasing student awareness of historical events.[3]

Social science research that is not rooted in extensive on-the-ground experience and multidisciplinary approaches can lead to misguided policy recommendations. A prime example of this is the World Bank and IMF-sponsored structural adjustment policies (SAP), which in seeking to redress the fiscal situation in developing countries generated a decrease in the quality of education in Africa. As Adeyinka, Babalola and Lungwangwa (1999) note, fiscal policies from SAP prescribed cuts as large as 8% in the share of education in the national budgets of Nigeria and Zambia, something that, among other things, resulted in a reduction in the gross enrolment ratio, female participation in education, completion rates, and performance in international examinations. These policies failed because they did not re-

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[3]This approach builds on my own experience. The inspiration for much of my own research stems from observations made in the field. For example, the idea for Wantchekon and Novta (2015) came from a casual observation I made regarding the relatively high proportion of students in my village with professional graduate degrees.

flect a basic understanding of education history in the continent, where investment in "elite" schools generated massive human capital externalities through rising aspirations.

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Qualitative and Archival Methods: A Doctoral Comprehensive Field at Yale

by Elisabeth Jean Wood

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Yale's department is one of the few — indeed, we are not aware of any other — that offers qualitative and archival methods as a comprehensive doctoral field. Many departments offer graduate courses in qualitative methods. However, it appears that we are unique in offering a comprehensive field that certifies expertise in these methods.

We define "qualitative methods" broadly, so that they include interviews, participant observation, ethnographic mapping, the recording of oral histories, focus groups, and historical source analysis, as well as some aspects of surveys (particularly less structured protocols) and experiments (e.g., debriefing after experiments, which often takes the form of qualitative interviews). We decided to include archival methods as well because these methods often draw on similar logics of inference and face the same challenges as other qualitative methods. Archival methods are often a central element of research on topics ranging from state building to patterns of violence to local governance, often in combination with other qualitative methods.

I. Origins of the Field

Faculty members who planned the field see the department's commitment to training in qualitative and archival research as a core component of the department's overarching commitment to methodological pluralism. We regard these methods as complementary to statistical and formal methods, all of which have varied strengths and weaknesses in confronting the challenges of descriptive and causal inference. Doctoral students from all substantive and methodological fields of political science, not just from comparative politics, take courses in this field and some go on to formally qualify in it as one of their three required comprehensive fields.

When we founded the field in 2009, we believed the time was right for such an initiative in light of developments in qualitative methodology. Over the past few decades, political methodologists have made key advances both in qualitative methodology itself and in the combining of qualitative methods with other methods. These advances drew on broader progress in the philosophy of social science, including the emphasis on causal inference, the challenge of identifying causes in complex processes, the analysis of causal mechanisms as well as causal effects, the increased attention to unit heterogeneity in social sciences as a challenge to both statistical and qualitative analysis, the specification of the logic of comparison across cases, the growing attention to diffusion processes across units too often treated as independent, and the importance of careful research design in general and multi-method research design in particular.

Just as statistical methodologists had become more skeptical about the extent to which the prerequisites for causal inference are met in the course of ordinary social science practice, qualitative methodologists have

also engaged in rigorous debate about the conditions for descriptive and causal inference using qualitative methods. The result has been significantly more sophisticated standards for the assertion of either kind of inference. These standards emphasize the need for a careful designation of the "case" and the universe of which it is an instance, an explicit justification of the particular cases considered, and the specification of observable implications of both the theory advocated and its rivals, which are then evaluated using the data gathered from the archives, ethnographic accounts, or other qualitative sources (often referred to as "process tracing").

II. The Structure of Field Requirements

The faculty teaching the sequence of courses that comprise the field sought to instill a more sophisticated grasp of these issues than would be possible with a single course. As in other comprehensive fields, doctoral students can qualify in the field either by passing a day-long written exam to assess critical mastery of a list of readings approved by the relevant faculty, or by taking three courses and writing a seminar paper in one of them.

Faculty strongly encourage students to pursue the latter option as we are convinced that learning these methods is best done not only through the discussion of key works and methods but also by carrying out a project requiring significant field or archival research over the course of the semester and discussing the challenges encountered with colleagues in workshop sessions of the course. Such learning by doing should not occur in the student's dissertation field site because the cost of mistakes might be substantial (to the student, the project, and under some circumstances to residents of the site). Participants carry out their course projects in a wide range of field sites and archives in the greater New Haven area, from New York City to Boston.

To qualify by coursework, students must take two of the three core courses, Qualitative Field Research, Historical and Archival Methods, and Philosophy of Science for the Study of Politics, as well as a third (either the third core course or one drawn from a list of a dozen courses from all fields of political science that include classic and recent works drawing on qualitative methods), and write a seminar paper in one of the three courses, which must be approved by the course instructor as a qualifying paper.

III. The Core Courses

One of the core courses is *Philosophy of Science of the Study of Politics*. When the field began, we did not include this course. As we struggled to teach the other core courses, though, we found that students needed a stronger grasp of the philosophy of science if they were to understand the logics of inference used by qualitative methods in combination with quantitative, experimental, and/or formal methods at the appropriate level of certification in a doctoral comprehensive field. Participants discuss topics such as causation; deduction, induction, and prediction; description, explanation, and interpretation; and the differences between the natural and social sciences. Discussion centers on the assessment of contending views about these topics with an eye to their implications for the central preoccupations in political science: the role of rational choice and other models of political behavior, observational versus experimental methods, the connections between empirical research and normative concerns; and the relations between science and democracy.

> Faculty members who planned the field see the department's commitment to training in qualitative and archival research as a core component of the department's overarching commitment to methodological pluralism.

Another core course is *Qualitative Field Research*. Over the course of the semester, students are taught methods appropriate for qualitative field research not only through a discussion of methods manuals and great books that draw on them but also through carrying out their own projects over the course of the semester. Each student in consultation with the instructor develops a project close to her own research interests, secures IRB approval, and designs a combination of qualitative methods to address her research question. Recent class projects include analyses of Uber's expansion into New Haven that addressed questions of fairness and access for poorer parts of the city, the motivations of union and Tea Party activists, and a project on Coptic Christians that explored their views toward the changing circumstances in Egypt. While there is vast flexibility in the choice of topic and significant flexibility in the balance between the qualitative methods employed, each student must

carry out different types of interviews, including an oral history, as well as participant observation; some also engage in participatory mapping or focus groups. In class, participants frequently report on their progress and brainstorm with colleagues about the challenges that they confront. The final paper is either an initial draft of a research paper drawing on their fieldwork, or, more frequently, a detailed self-critique of the project, their progress, and an assessment of what the project would require should they continue to pursue it.

The third core course is *Historical and Archival Methods*. Students in this course grapple with the challenges of constructing social science arguments based on primary historical sources. In seminar discussions, they analyze historical-comparative works that are based on both secondary and primary sources and in-depth historical studies that draw principally on primary sources. Discussion themes include deep controversies that draw on the same materials (the Browning-Goldhagen debate, for example), how historians and social scientists think about temporality and causality, and what kinds of questions can benefit from a historical approach. One emphasis is on how to use case studies in multi-method projects, how to combine original research with existing literature in larger comparative projects, and how to construct social science arguments through process tracing and counterfactual analysis. They also practice key skills and techniques, such as planning a historical research project, identifying archives and finding archival material, and historical source criticism. During the course participants write a methodological memo that lays out precisely how they would go about researching a particular historical paper based on primary sources, such as an archival project, a source criticism, a comparative-historical analysis, a case study, or an application of historical and archival methods in political philosophy (e.g., working with manuscript collections and personal papers, or a project on the history of ideas). Recent projects include papers on race and religion in U.S. electoral politics (focusing on Blaine amendments in the northern and southern US states); strategies of taxing wealth in the U.K. and U.S. in the late nineteenth century; nationalism, British colonial policy, and the formation of Iraq; calculated racial appeals in the presidential campaigns of Roosevelt and Nixon; and political opposition to dissolving East Germany.

IV. Conclusion

The qualitative and archival methods field is a thriving one at Yale, with more than a dozen faculty members participating in discussions about field requirements, course content, the advantage of qualifying via coursework versus exams, and so on. Last year, eighteen political science doctoral students took the philosophy of science course (from all fields of political science), seven took the archival methods course, and four took the field research course (as did an equal number of doctoral students from other disciplines — in other years as many as twenty four graduate students from a wide range of programs have taken it, of which half were doctoral students, including six from the various subfields of political science).

II. Special Topic: Ukraine and Comparative Politics

Russia's War in Ukraine and Putin's Propaganda State

by Mark R. Beissinger
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There were no Russian soldiers in Crimea in March 2014, even though ten thousand professionally-trained soldiers without insignias on their uniforms, outfitted with Russian weapons and equipment, and speaking in an unaccented Russian not-of-a-local variety seized control over the peninsula. Nor have there ever been any Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine; rather, those Russian citizens fighting on the side of the rebels (some of whom have been captured by the Ukrainian army) happen to be volunteers on leave from the Russian army who crossed the Russian-Ukrainian border with their tanks and equipment during their vacations. And the shooting down of Malaysian passenger jet Flight MH17 was due not to a Buk surface-to-air missile fired from a village occupied by Russian-backed separatists (as concluded by a Dutch commission after an exhaustive investigation); rather, the plane was destroyed by an Israeli-made air-to-air missile smuggled into Ukraine via Georgia and fired by

a Ukrainian military aircraft — part of a widespread international conspiracy to tarnish Russia's reputation.

These and other instances of the "big lie" have been widely disseminated over Russian media, part of the information wars that the Putin regime has been waging in its conflict with Ukraine. The "big lie" is a propaganda technique, first coined in Nazi Germany, involving statements so outrageous that no one could possibly believe them to be false (Herf, 2006).[1] Many long-time observers of the Russian scene share a sense of déjà vu, as the tone of Russian media has increasingly come to resemble that of Soviet times.

More importantly, Russian propaganda during the Ukraine crisis has been extraordinarily effective in shaping public attitudes. According to polls conducted by the Levada Center (2014c), 95% of Russians believe that MH17 was shot down by the Ukrainian government or military, while only three percent believe it was shot down by the rebels or the Russian government. 79 percent believe that Russia annexed Crimea without the use of any military force, while only thirteen percent believe that force was used. And 60 percent believe that there are no Russian troops in Eastern Ukraine, that this is either a fabrication of Western governments, or that those helping the rebels are "volunteers" (Levada Center, 2014a). As Russian historian and liberal politician, Vladimir Ryzhkov (2015), has written:

> We are witnessing an unprecedented triumph of Kremlin propaganda … The overwhelming majority of Russians believe that the West attacked Russia in Ukraine and not that Russia seized part of Ukraine's territory and is now actively helping separatists in eastern Ukraine with regular army soldiers, volunteers, and heavy weapons. They believe not that the Ukrainian people ousted former President Viktor Yanukovych because of his unparalleled theft and lies, but that the United States and CIA agents overthrew him by using Maidan as a tool for replacing the pro-Russian regime in Kiev with an anti-Russian "junta." Most Russians believe that this country's economic problems are not the fault of the Russian authorities, …but stem from the machinations of

the West, which dreams only of how it can destroy Russia. Criticism of the authorities by the opposition and the activities of independent Russian nongovernmental organizations are increasingly portrayed as the subversive work of U.S. intelligence carried out using American money and serving American interests.

Lying is endemic to social life, and as Hannah Arendt (1972, 4) noted, "truthfulness has never been counted among the political virtues". But the scope of the Kremlin's efforts to manufacture public consent through information control places them on an entirely different footing than the banal lies of everyday politics. They are part of an integrated system of power — a propaganda state — that uses its control over the media to achieve its ends, squelch opponents, and fabricate a social base for itself.[2]

Regime control over the media has the power to transform the playing field of politics, even in the absence of favorable material conditions. Until recently, studies had shown that Russian presidential popularity largely tracked trends in the economy (Treisman, 2011), and only a few years ago Putin's power appeared to be threatened by widespread public opposition to the Kremlin's extensive corruption and use of electoral fraud. At that time, Putin's popularity dipped to its lowest level, and many thought his presidency was doomed. Yet at a time when the Russian economy has contracted by five percent, inflation has reached seventeen percent, and the rouble has lost 60 percent of its value, Putin's approval rating has never been higher, soaring to 89 percent largely on the basis of his assertions of Russian power abroad and media efforts to whip up nationalism and xenophobia at home. Igor Yakovenko, a Russian journalist, has noted, "If previous authoritarian regimes were three parts violence and one part propaganda, this one is virtually all propaganda and relatively little violence" (Pomerantsev, 2014).

If the propaganda state can reverse the adverse effects of widespread corruption and economic contraction on public beliefs, then we as comparativists should be paying greater attention to it as a powerful tool of authoritarian rule. In recent years the emphasis in the study of authoritarian regimes has shifted toward institutions, particularly, the role of parties, elections, and

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[1] On the role of the lie in communist propaganda, see Kolakowski (1984)

[2] On the notion of the propaganda state as applied to Soviet politics, see Kenez (1985).

legislatures as mechanisms of conflict-resolution, distribution, information-gathering, and political control. Other authoritarian scholars focus on systems of patronage or on how authoritarian regimes maintain control through repression. But the fabrication of a social base through control over key communication networks — once the subject of an older literature on totalitarian politics (Friedrich and Brzezinski, 1965; Arendt, 1973). — needs to be integrated more centrally into theorizing about authoritarian rule and survival.

The legacy of Soviet propaganda obviously casts a heavy shadow over Putin's propaganda machine, which draws on many of the same genres and traditions. But theories of totalitarianism are considerably less useful for understanding the Russian propaganda state than theories of social psychology. Putinism more closely resembles a "tinpot" dictatorship interested mainly in staying in office and personal enrichment than a totalitarian one interested in utopian transformations (Wintrobe, 1990). Moreover, the information landscape of contemporary Russia is vastly different than that of the Soviet state. Numerous independent newspapers continue to exist, and three-fifths of Russians regularly use the internet, where an enormous variety of opinions can be found, including foreign media. In short, unlike the Soviet state, the Russian state exercises no near-monopoly over communications.

It does, however, exercise a near-monopoly over the television news, and 90 percent of the Russian public receives its news primarily from television (Kichanova, 2014). A majority of these citizens (58 percent) report that they sometimes read information or listen to programs that have expressed a different point of view on the Ukrainian events than that presented on Russian TV. Nevertheless, surveys show that 70 percent of Russians believe that Russian television is generally presenting an objective picture of events in Ukraine, while thirteen percent believe that Russian television's coverage may not be objective but that this is irrelevant, since Russia should in any case be waging a propaganda war over the war in Ukraine (Volkov and Gocharov, 2014; Levada Center, 2014b). Moreover, 88 percent of those who do not trust Russian television still use it as their primary source of news and information (Rustamova, 2014).

What explains the extraordinary power of Russian television to shape public opinion even when Russian citizens have access to alternative information, and even

among those who know it is not fully truthful? With its visual imagery and ability to manipulate symbols and emotions, television is well-known to be adept at priming, at determining which bits and pieces of memory individuals use to evaluate a situation (Iyengar and Kinder, 2010). But more than just medium is at play. The Ukraine crisis has been a watershed in Russian identity politics, a catharsis in which pent-up frustrations and anxieties have come to the fore over the shabby way in which many Russians feel they have been treated over the last three decades by the West and by non-Russian nationalities of the former Soviet Union. Russian television has skilfully mobilized these emotions and in-group biases by constantly cuing a sense of out-group transgression and threat, thereby solidifying in-group identification and self-esteem, just as social identity theory would predict. It has created an alternative reality in which the survival of Russia is menaced by the U.S., Europe, and their Russian civil society collaborators, as well as by their neo-Nazi and extremist allies in Ukraine, Georgia, and the Baltic.

> If the propaganda state can reverse the adverse effects of widespread corruption and economic contraction on public beliefs, then we as comparativists should be paying greater attention to it as a powerful tool of authoritarian rule.

Relativism and psychological projection have also been powerful weapons of Russian propaganda. The West manipulated the rules of the game to ensure its interests in Kosovo, so why shouldn't Russians do the same with regard to Crimea? The rules of the international order themselves are simply surrogates for American power and aim at keeping Russia weak. On the basis of what they have heard over television, the overwhelming majority of Russians (88 percent) believe that the United States and Western Europe are engaged in an information war against Russia (Rustamova, 2014). So what is wrong with Russia doing the same for the sake of retaking Crimea or re-establishing Russian power abroad?

While Putin's propaganda state has persisted, it faces some significant challenges over the long haul. With the Russian economy suffering from cheap oil and Western sanctions over Ukraine, will the effects of the propaganda state eventually begin to wear off? Is control over television sufficient for maintaining the alternative real-

ity that the Kremlin has constructed, or will it eventually be driven to isolate citizens more thoroughly from divergent points of view? Can a "tinpot" dictatorship carry this off successfully, deflecting public attention from entrenched corruption and elite enrichment and eschewing a uniform ideology? Do Putin's astronomical ratings establish a baseline for expectations in the future, and should public support waver, will he be driven to new foreign adventures? Russia has lost tremendous credibility abroad and has backed itself into a corner by thoroughly embracing confrontation with the West. It has been down the road of the propaganda state before, with catastrophic consequences.

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Election Integrity in Ukraine: A Comparative Perspective

by Erik S. Herron

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A great challenge in comparative politics, discussed in this Newsletter over the years, is balancing the development of generalizable, theoretically-driven research with area-specific knowledge.[1] Scholarship that draws upon Ukraine's post-Soviet political experiences exemplifies this challenge. This essay addresses two issues: how the study of Ukraine's elections contributes to the burgeoning literature on election integrity, and how better understanding administrative processes enriches the study of electoral systems and their effects.

I. Election Integrity

Within the study of comparative elections, an emerging research subfield investigates election integrity (Norris, 2013). This work explores the quality of election processes. Among other things, it examines the distinction between fraud and malpractice (Birch, 2007, 2012; Vickery and Shein, 2012), it assesses the effects of election observation (Alvarez, Hall and Hyde, N.d.; Beaulieu and Hyde, 2009; Ichino and Schundeln, 2012; Kelley, 2012), it investigates the role of Election Management Bodies (Alvarez and Hall, 2008, 2012) and voting technology (Claassen et al., 2013), and it develops empirical approaches to evaluating election forensics (Mebane, 2008; Myagkov and Shakin, 2009; Beber and Scacco, 2012). This research agenda has defined what it means to have free and fair elections by distinguishing between intentional efforts to falsify results and errors

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[1]Perhaps the earliest discussion of this challenge in the Comparative Politics Newsletter is Laitin (1994).

introduced by inadequate training or professionalization. It has shown how the external oversight of administrators can undermine efforts to falsify elections. It has also developed a toolkit for evaluating election results that can uncover data anomalies plausibly attributable to fraud.

Ukraine has been a target in this research program, with data from its elections used to develop knowledge about election fraud detection (Myagkov and Shakin, 2005; Myagkov and Ordeshook, 2005), citizen mobilization in the aftermath of election fraud (Tucker, 2007; D'Anieri, 2010), citizen responses to election monitoring (Shulman and Bloom, 2012), and its electoral experience in the post-communist context (Herron, 2009; Birch, 2011). The Ukrainian case has also extended the overall research enterprise related to election integrity; its 2004 Orange Revolution inspired "color revolutions" worldwide, illustrating how fraud can mobilize protest activities and engender regime change.

The more recent 2013-2014 Euromaidan protests generated the *de facto* abdication of the president, Russian occupation of Crimea, conflict in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, and snap presidential and parliamentary elections, as well as new questions for researchers to pursue. The moving battle lines allow scholars to evaluate how occupation affects electoral behavior, how challenges to sovereignty affect the conduct of elections, and how conflict affects the capacity of the state to fulfill its critical functions. While access to political actors and institutions can be challenging for international scholars to obtain, and conflict has cordoned off areas of the country, the Ukrainian government provides a large amount of publicly accessible data that facilitates research on a wide range of questions.[2]

II. Election Administration

A common trope about election administration, attributed to actors as notorious as Boss Tweed and Joseph Stalin, is that voters matter little. What matters most is those who count the ballots. Relatively few compar-

ative studies have directly engaged with civil servants who oversee the casting, counting, and compilation processes that determine winners and losers. Circumstances in Ukraine, though, have facilitated a deep exploration of the ways that election administration staffing can affect outcomes. The extensive availability of unique public data on commission personnel, the willingness of government organizations to collaborate, and the presence of local researchers to serve as engaged partners has enhanced this research enterprise.

> A common trope about election administration, attributed to actors as notorious as Boss Tweed and Joseph Stalin, is that voters matter little. What matters most is those who count the ballots.

For the last few years, I have worked with scholars affiliated with a Ukraine-based NGO dedicated to conducting social science research on elections and accountability. CIFRA Group, especially its director Nazar Boyko, has been an essential partner in diversifying and deepening the theoretical and empirical components of the research, providing nuanced interpretations of local conditions, developing crucial professional connections with government agencies (notably the Central Electoral Commission), and disseminating results. Our partnership has focused on election administration. We have collected and analyzed administrative personnel and election results data, as well as conducted surveys of election officials.

Our research has focused on district-level and precinct-level commissioners, investigating how the attitudes and behaviors of these civil servants may exert partisan influence on election results.[3] The initial data collection focused on personnel information for all commissioners in the 2012 parliamentary elections. Data collection expanded to incorporate the 2014 election cycle, with support from several funding sources.[4] The 2014 presidential and parliamentary elections were conducted under extraordinary circumstances. In addi-

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[2]The Central Electoral Commission has posted online polling station level data for national elections since 2002. In addition, identifying information for all polling stations is published, thereby permitting geotagging.

[3]Ukraine has a three-tiered election administration, with a permanent Central Electoral Commission (CEC) at the top, 225 district electoral commissions subordinated to the CEC, and over 30,000 precinct electoral commissions subordinated to the district commissions. Unlike the CEC, the district and precinct commissions are temporary, but they perform vital tasks in the casting, counting, and vote compilation processes. The annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk has reduced the number of active districts. The Ukrainian government does not formally recognize the transfer of its sovereignty, though, officially retaining the full complement of districts.

[4]National Science Foundation (SES – 1462110), PACT/UNITER/USAID, and IFES.

tion to both elections occurring off the regular schedule, they took place as Ukrainian government forces battled "insurgents" for control over a substantial swath of territory bordering Russia.

During Ukraine's 2014 snap parliamentary elections, we conducted a survey of election commissioners across the country to better understand their perceptions of how well election administration was prepared; how they interacted with political parties, candidates, law enforcement, observers, and other external actors; how they assessed the quality of the process; and how the security situation affected their work. The initial findings suggest that expanding research to encompass election administration will enhance the existing research agenda on electoral systems and integrity. The research has shown that:

1. Control of election commissions, especially through the officers who manage commission agendas, exerts a small but non-trivial effect on election outcomes. The performance of several parties or candidates was, on average, a few percentage points higher in polling stations where they controlled officer positions. This outcome could be due to successful coordination in controlling commissions where parties knew they would have strong support, but it is more likely associated with influence over the process to benefit affiliated competitors (Boyko, Herron and Sverdan, 2014; Boyko and Herron, 2015).

2. Politicians have pressed the limits of institutional rules to enhance the likelihood of their success in elections, notably in efforts to pack election commissions with allies. Ukraine's allocation of commission seats by partisan affiliation and lotteries, combined with liberal party registration rules and an inchoate party system, permits major parties to control commission activities by supplementing their representatives with compliant minor party representatives (Boyko and Herron, 2015).

3. The Ukrainian state apparatus successfully contained the effects of conflict, at least in the 2014 snap elections. Despite the conflict in Ukraine's eastern regions and the occupation of Crimea, election administrators reported high levels of readiness and confidence. Concerns about preparedness and security were largely contained to the areas closest to the conflict zone, with limited evidence of contagion beyond the boundaries of these areas (Herron, Thunberg and Boyko, 2015).

Election administration varies cross-nationally in its rules, integration with other institutions, staffing practices, and on-the-ground responsibilities. However, according to an ACE Project study, around one-third of Electoral Management Bodies used partisanship as a factor in determining membership. Moreover, elections are often conducted during periods of conflict or crisis. While some aspects of the research reported here may be specific to the Ukrainian case, the general experience is not unique. The increased study of comparative election administration may inform research agendas on electoral systems, representation, political parties, and election quality. Because election administration is also a major focus of international development practitioners, this area has great potential for international collaboration and broader impacts beyond the scholarly community.

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Ukraine's Judiciary after Euromaidan: Continuity and Change

by Maria Popova

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The lack of rule of law was one of Euromaidan's top grievances. A greater proportion of Maidan-goers cared about outcomes that required strong and independent courts than cared about the signing of the EU Association Agreement that initially triggered the protest. Over 80% demanded the release of arrested protesters by the courts; over 60% wanted to see a credible criminal investigation by the prosecution and the courts into police brutality; and an increasingly large proportion (47% in December 2013 and 62% in February 2014) came to Maidan to call for the prosecution of corrupt politicians. By contrast, the share of those supporting the EU Association Agreement dropped from 71% in early December 2013 to under 50% in February 2014 (Popova and Shevel, 2014; Popova, 2014*b*).

Add to this strong popular mandate for judicial reform the dramatic post-Maidan shifts in the political system. Former president Yanukovych and many of his allies literally exited Ukrainian politics. Ukraine's best organized party, the Party of Regions, collapsed, while other political elites reorganized into new alliances. Pre-term presidential and parliamentary elections significantly redrew Ukraine's electoral map and catapulted a brand new party (Samopomich) into the governing coalition. The country lost its territorial integrity as Crimea was lost to Russian annexation in March, and later in the spring, Russian meddling in Donbas, a region in Eastern Ukraine, triggered an insurgency and, eventually, civil war.

How have post-Maidan's tectonic political changes affected the Ukrainian judiciary, which has traditionally been politically dependent and corruption-plagued? Has popular demand for the rule of law put the Ukrainian courts on a trajectory towards greater transparency and political independence? Have the new political incumbents sought to reduce corruption and/or increase the institutional and decision-making independence of the judiciary? Is there a reform-minded constituency within the Ukrainian judiciary that pushes for radical change and the political emancipation of the courts? What are the implications of the post-Maidan development of the

Ukrainian courts for the comparative judicial politics literature?

Societal demand for better courts continues to be strong. In fact, reforming the judiciary has been a highly salient issue in Ukraine, even as the conflict in Donbas remains unsolved and economic problems pile up. A survey conducted by the Center of Policy and Legal Reform (2015) in December 2014 indicates that 91% of respondents think judicial reform "is needed"; in fact, 46% consider it to be "one of the most urgent tasks" for Ukraine today, and 81% would support "radical" or "serious" reforms.

Other evidence of civil society's focus on the courts comes from the Lustration Committee, an NGO that in March 2014 started collecting evidence of abuse of office and wrongdoing by state officials. The Lustration Committee solicited citizen complaints, which it then channeled to the state commission authorized to pursue lustration, i.e. the removal of state officials who had violated citizens' rights before or during Euromaidan. The Lustration Committee received close to 3,000 complaints between mid-March and October 2014. A simple count of the subject of the complaints shows that Ukrainians complained first and foremost about judges: almost half (47%) of all complaints were against judges. Judges were the subject of twice as many complaints as legislators, municipal officials, and state bureaucrats combined (Popova, 2014*a*).

Despite this strong demand for radical change in the judiciary, neither the new incumbents nor the judiciary itself have made substantial strides towards the establishment of politically independent and corruption-free courts. Instead of consistently implementing wide-ranging and principled judicial lustration, the new political incumbents have slowly purged the top echelons of the judiciary and replaced them with loyalists. They have eschewed calls by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission and civil society to adopt legislative changes that would create the institutional basis for an independent judiciary.

Since May 2014, pro-presidential forces have overcome pushback from entrenched judicial elites and have slowly gained control over judicial governance institutions — the High Qualification Commission for Judges (HQCJ), the High Council of Justice (HCJ), and the Council of Judges. For example, the new chair of the HQCJ is not a judge, but a commercial lawyer, active in the same association from whose ranks Poroshenko, the current Ukrainian president, had selected his administration's point man for the judiciary. In an introductory interview, the new appointee was upfront both about his close ties to the Presidential Administration and regular judges' resentment that an outsider had been appointed to lead one of the judiciary's most powerful institutions (Satchenko, 2015). The other judicial governance organ, the High Council of Justice (HCJ), was paralyzed throughout 2014 as Yanukovych-era elites fought to retain their positions. By the spring of 2015, however, the stalemate at the HCJ was broken. The majority of the newly-elected members of the council are widely seen as loyal to the Presidential Administration, either because they have long-standing ties to Poroshenko or because they have more recently pledged their allegiance to him.[1]

> In sum, 18 months post-Maidan, one of Maidan's main goals — the creation of an independent and clean judiciary — remains elusive.

Civil society groups, such as the Reanimation Package of Reforms (RPR), an umbrella organization of more than 100 NGOs, continue to focus on judicial reform and push for combining personnel turnover with legislative changes to grant greater institutional independence to the judiciary. The RPR proposals closely followed long-standing recommendations by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission. After the parliamentary elections, these NGOs gained veritable political power when some of their activists were elected to the Rada, the Ukrainian Parliament, on the Samopomich party list. Oksana Syroyid, a civil society expert on judicial reforms with fifteen years of experience in promoting judicial emancipation, became the deputy speaker of the Rada. The civil society groups cooperated with MPs and the Minister of Justice, and in December 2014 submitted a judicial reform bill. Just a few days later, the Presidential Administration submitted a competing judicial reform bill drafted by the Council on Judicial Reform, a body that is attached to the Presidential Administration. Deputy Rada speaker Syroyid publically complained that

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[1] In a Ukrainska Pravda journalist's words: "Адже більшість із них не можна віднести до політично незаангажованих правників із незаплямованою репутацією (Indeed, most of them cannot be counted as politically unbiased jurists with spotless reputations.)" (Shutko, 2015).

the Presidential Administration had humiliated her by keeping their work on the competing judicial reform bill secret from the Rada and then introducing it just as the Rada bill was heading to a vote (Ukr, 2015a). The ensuing negotiations between the MPs and the Presidential Administration produced a watered-down compromise bill, which was eventually adopted by the Rada in February 2015. Through the new law, the President retains many of his levers of influence over the judiciary, such as his formal participation in the appointment procedure for all judges. The law also introduces qualification categories for judges, which is a step back rather than forward for institutional independence. The assignment of qualification categories can easily become a tool for rewarding loyal judges and punishing disloyal ones.

The judiciary also seems to lack an internal constituency for radical reform. The court chair elections of April-May 2014 illustrate this deficiency. Court chairs are powerful actors in post-Soviet judiciaries. By controlling the distribution of cases, salary bonuses, and often apartments to fellow judges who need one, court chairs have significant leverage over their colleagues. They also play an important role in judicial careers by participating in hiring, discipline, and promotion. Court chairs had previously been appointed to five-year terms, either by the president or by one of the judicial self-government institutions. In the spring of 2014, one of the first (and most radical) judicial reform steps of the post-Maidan Rada majority was to give the judges on each court the power to elect their chair in a secret ballot. The 728 courts that Ukraine was left with after Crimea's annexation and the start of the insurgency in parts of Donbas held elections in April and May 2014.

In the fall of 2014, a team of research assistants in Ukraine helped me collect comprehensive data on these judicial elections. The data set that we compiled contains information on court characteristics, incumbent chair characteristics, and the outcome of the judicial election. The court variables include: (i) the level of the court — district, appellate, high; (ii) the type of court — general, administrative, economic; (iii) the region where the court is located; and (iv) the size of the court, measured by the number of judges serving on it. The chair variables include: (i) the time since the individual was first appointed as a judge on the court; (ii) the time since the individual was last appointed chair of the court; (iii) the chair's gender; (iv) and a dichotomous variable that captures whether the mandate that they served in

April 2014 was the first mandate as chair of this court or whether they have held previous mandates as well.

Preliminary analysis of the data shows that the judicial rank-and-file did not use the direct election to bring about major change in the courts. On the contrary, leadership continuity and retention were the norm across the judicial hierarchy and across the country's regions. Overall, over 80% of court chairs retained their positions. Figure 1 on the next page shows retention rates across types of courts, levels of courts, region, and chair characteristics. It may seem from this that administrative and economic courts, as well as higher courts, had lower chair re-election rates. However, regression analysis suggests that these differences are simply due to the larger size of those courts — the larger the court, the greater the number of potential competitors for the chair position. It is particularly interesting to see that re-election rates did not differ across Ukraine's regions. This finding suggests that judges in the west and center, where support for Maidan's causes was overwhelming, were just as reluctant to support radical change within the judiciary as the preservation of this lowest rung of the judicial leadership suggests that an internal clean-up of corrupt judges is unlikely to take place. It is hard to believe that re-elected old chairs who had overseen the mechanisms of judicial corruption would suddenly start uprooting entrenched practices. Indeed, according to information given to me by the Supreme Council of Justice, only 167 judges left the bench between April and November 2014. While this number is higher than in previous years, it hardly points to an internal clean-up of the 7,000-strong judiciary from endemic corruption.

In sum, 18 months post-Maidan, one of Maidan's main goals — the creation of an independent and clean judiciary — remains elusive. The Ukrainian judiciary remains both *de jure* and *de facto* dependent on incumbent politicians. Despite pressure from civil society and some judicial independence champions in the Rada, the Presidential Administration has managed to establish control over the courts and the new judicial leaders have flocked to it and pledged allegiance. It should hardly be surprising then that popular trust in the judiciary has plunged even below Yanukovych-era levels and that ordinary judges feel less independent from politicians than ever. A survey from Center of Policy and Legal Reform (2015) shows that only 9% of respondents trust the courts, compared to 40% trust in the President and the Army, and ≈30% trust in the Rada and the government.

Figure 1: Court Chair Re-election Rates in 2014
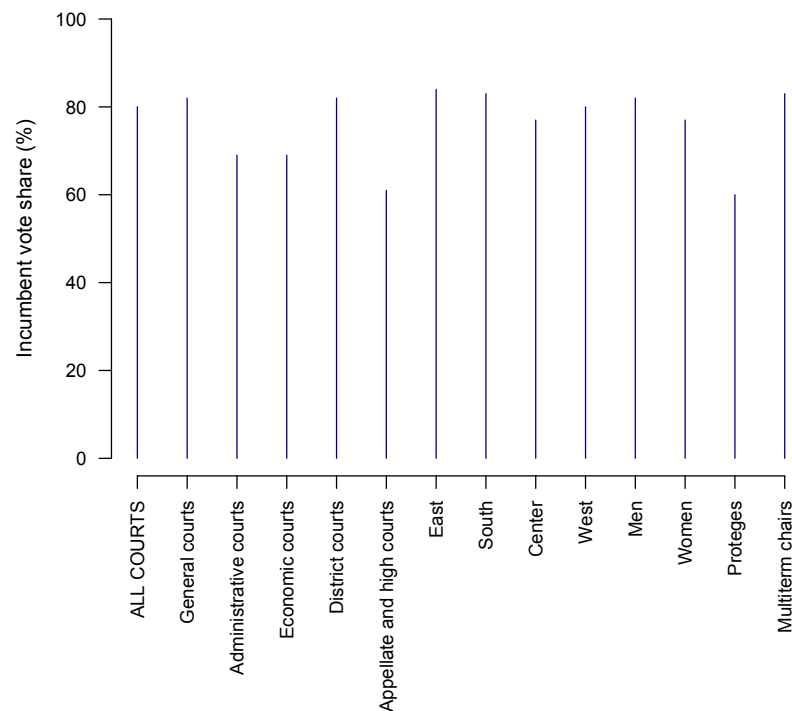
80% think judges are dependent on politicians and/or oligarchs. Another 2015 survey by the same organization shows that less than ten percent of judges believe that the Ukrainian judiciary is independent, and even more damningly for the current government, 46% of judges believe that political pressure on judges today is just as strong as under Yanukovych, while 29% of them believe that political pressure has increased under the current president, Poroshenko!

What are the implications of Ukraine's post-Maidan judicial development for the comparative judicial politics literature? First, the Ukrainian case has been problematic for theories that attribute the emergence of independent courts to electoral turnover (Ramseyer, 1994; Stephenson, 2003; Ginsburg, 2003) or political fragmentation (Bill Chavez, 2004; Magalhaes, 1999). Although Ukraine's post-Soviet politics have been characterized by both high electoral turnover — only one of Ukraine's four presidents has won re-election — and high fragmentation (Herron, 2002; Way, 2005; D'Anieri, 2007), judicial independence has been very low (Popova, 2010, 2012). That Yanukovych increased abuse of the courts' independence during Euromaidan further undermines the argument that politicians are likely to create independent courts in situations where they fear losing office (Popova, 2012). Instead, Yanukovych's behavior bolsters my theory that weak incumbents lean on the courts

more strongly than ever in a bid to preserve their power (Popova, 2012). Poroshenko is probably too early in his term to think about losing power, but he does face a fragmented parliament and a precarious government coalition. These divisions, though, have not turned him into a champion of independent courts.

A second, perhaps even more important, message is that a strong demand for the rule of law, once thought to be an important prerequisite for the political emancipation of post-Communist courts (Hendley, 1999), is woefully insufficient. Despite strong evidence that the Ukrainian electorate favors radical judicial reforms, politicians have not responded by providing them; instead, they have sought to harness the powers of the politically subservient and corrupt courts.

Finally, the inertia of the Ukrainian judiciary in the post-Maidan period bolsters theories that emphasize judges' professional orientation over the strategic incentives created by different levels of political competition. Different judiciaries have different dominant conceptions of their professional role. Some emphasize deference to both judicial and political elites, while others prioritize judicial self-government, assertiveness, and high autonomy for individual judges from their superiors. Deferent judiciaries are less likely to produce decisions

that challenge and override the interests of powerful political actors. Judiciaries with professional orientations that emphasize hierarchical control within the judiciary are also less likely to be politically independent (Widner, 1999; Scheppele, 2006; Hilbink, 2012; Kapiszewski, 2012). Over the past year and a half, the Ukrainian judiciary, long characterized by low internal dependence and deference to politicians, has proven to be impervious to civil society pressure for radical change and has instead sought to preserve the status quo.

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Attitudinal Geography in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: Divided, Re-divided, or Divided No More?

by Oxana Shevel

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The image of Ukraine as a deeply divided country has firm roots in both popular perceptions and academic studies. Huntington (1996) describes Ukraine as being divided along civilizational lines, while Laruelle (2015) highlights the Russia-promoted idea of southern and eastern Ukraine being "New Russia" or "Novorossia." The east-west divide has indeed been a real, important, and persistent reality in post-Soviet Ukraine, illustrated most obviously by the electoral maps of presidential races (Arel, 2006; Katchanovski, 2006). Election after election, western and central regions of the country on the one hand, and southern and eastern regions on the

other, have voted en masse for a candidate that promised either closer ties with the west or with Russia.

At the same time, many scholars have cautioned against the oversimplified image of Ukraine as divided into two monolithic opposing camps — Russian-speaking pro-Russian east and Ukrainian-speaking pro-western west — by drawing attention to the more ambiguous, fractured, and multilayered local, regional, and borderline identities that exist within each of the two camps (Hrytsak, 2004; Richardson, 2004; Zakharchenko, 2013; Zhurzhenko, 2002). An important and often overlooked feature of Ukraine's political and electoral geography has been a sizeable center of the country that distinguishes itself from both the east and the west by its ambivalent attitudes. On virtually any hot-button contentious issue, from foreign policy orientation to domestic language politics, a tri-fold rather than a two-fold division has existed in Ukraine, with the extreme west and east of the country holding for the most part opposite opinions and the numerically large and strategically important center of the country remaining more ambivalent.

Identities and preferences are not set in stone but are subject to change, in particular under the influence of external shocks. During the past two years Ukraine has experienced multiple deep shocks. The mass street protests against President Yanukovych, the bloody culmination of the protests and the overthrow of Yanukovych and his flight to Russia, the subsequent loss of territory when Russia annexed Crimea, and the eruption of a bloody confrontation between the central authorities and the Russian-backed separatists in the eastern Donbas region are the types of events capable of shifting opinions and identities. How exactly have the identities and preferences in Ukraine changed since Euromaidan, and what are the possible implications of these changes for the country's political future?

I. A National Shift Away from the "Russian world" but Not in Every Region

Opinion polls conducted since the fall of Yanukovych in 2014 show substantial changes in public opinion, including in the Russian-speaking south and east of Ukraine. Attitudinal changes are most noticeable and most significant with regard to foreign policy orientations and participation in political and economic alliances such as the European Union, the Russia-led

Customs Union, and NATO. Ironically, the strengthening of pro-Ukrainian attitudes that sociologists have characterized as the "active formation of the Ukrainian political nation" (Bekeshkina, 2015) was spurred by Russia's actions aimed at keeping Ukraine in Russia's orbit.

On NATO in particular there has been a sea change in the opinions of Ukrainians. Between 2002 and 2009, less than 25% of Ukrainians supported NATO membership (Razumkov Center, 2009). According to a July 2015 poll conducted by the Rating Group on behalf of the International Republican Institute (IRI), 41% of Ukrainians in a hypothetical referendum on NATO membership would have voted in favor, 30% against, and fifteen percent would have been undecided (Institutional Republican Institute, 2015). Historically, roughly equal numbers of Ukrainians have preferred membership in either the European Union or the Russia-led Customs Union. Now, though, support has firmly shifted towards membership in the European Union. According to the July 2015 IRI poll, 55% of respondents favored Ukraine's membership in the European Union whereas just fourteen percent favored membership in the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. In September 2013, before the Euromaidan protests started, these figures were 42% and 37%.

Since the annexation of Crimea, there has been an increase in the extent to which Ukrainians feel proud of their citizenship and a sharp decrease in the extent to which they hold positive attitudes towards Russia. According to a June-July 2015 poll conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, pride in Ukrainian citizenship increased from 38% in 2004 to 67% in 2015 (Ukr, 2015b). Polling by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) found that from September 2013 to February 2015 positive attitudes towards Russia dropped from 88% to 34% nationwide (Ukr, 2015a). Polling by the Razumkov Center (2015) found support for independence in 2015 — 72.2% in a hypothetical referendum — to be the highest recorded since 2001 when the agency began polling on this question.

While regional differences have not disappeared in the recent polling data, the "east/west" divide has shifted further east, with not just the center but also much of the south falling into the "western" camp. This attitudinal "catching up with western Ukraine" (Zhurzhenko, 2014) is evident in attitudes towards NATO, the EU, and

the Customs Union, as well as in the results of the October 2014 legislative elections. In the 2012 legislative elections, pro-Russian parties collectively won more votes than pro-Western parties in all but one electoral district in the south and the east. In 2014, in contrast, pro-Western parties won more votes in almost every electoral district in southern Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson oblast, and in eastern Dnipropetrovsk oblast.[1] This was also true in some electoral districts in Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv oblasts.[2] With regard to NATO, according to the Institutional Republican Institute (2015), supporters of joining NATO now outnumber opponents not only in the west (63% to 24%) and the center (43% to 26%), but also in the south (40% to 33%). The same goes for the support for the EU over the Customs Union. The support for the EU prevails by an even larger margin in the west (84% to 4%), center (58% to 8%), and south (48% to 18%). In sum, the regional divide in Ukraine may now be more accurately described not as east versus west, but as a reduced east versus the rest.

> Ironically, the strengthening of pro-Ukrainian attitudes that sociologists have characterized as the "active formation of the Ukrainian political nation" (Bekeshkina, 2015) was spurred by Russia's actions aimed at keeping Ukraine in Russia's orbit.

Still, in the three easternmost regions — Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk — majorities continue to prefer closer ties with Russia and support pro-Russian parties. How to integrate these regions into the nationwide Ukrainian political project and prevent the alienation of voters is one of the challenges that Ukrainian political elites must face moving forward.

II. New Opportunities for Building a Stronger Democracy?

New electoral and attitudinal geography offers opportunities, but also challenges, for Ukraine's future. Optimistically, the new attitudinal environment can foster the development of more stable and democratic party politics in Ukraine. Changes in public attitudes and a new electoral geography virtually ensure that pro-western parties will hold a legislative majority in the national parliament. Crimea, now annexed by Russia, and

the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, now partly controlled by pro-Russian insurgents, are the areas of Ukraine that have the most solidly pro-Russian electorate. These areas are excluded from voting. Over 4.5 million people (some 1.8 million in Crimea, 1.6 million in Donetsk, and 1.2 million in Luhansk) who would have likely voted overwhelmingly for the pro-Russian parties were unable to participate in the 2014 legislative elections, resulting in a parliament where for the first time in Ukraine's history pro-western parties formed a constitutional majority and the Communist Party failed to secure any seats (Shevel, 2015).

With pro-Russian parties relying on a much reduced voter base due to territorial conflicts and changed public opinion, self-declared pro-western parties may finally begin to build a reputation not on their pro-western position or their pro-Ukrainian cultural stand, but on their capacity to implement socioeconomic reforms and reduce corruption. New attitudinal realities could also spur the formation of a new left in Ukraine that would resemble social-democratic parties in other European democracies. While the transformation of the former ruling communist parties into social-democratic parties took place in many east-central European states after the fall of communism (Grzymala-Busse, 2002), no such transformation took place in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Communist Party (KPU) remained committed to Soviet orthodoxy, including the "unity" of the three Slavic nations. As a result, it was a party that essentially questioned the normalcy of an independent Ukrainian state. No unambiguously pro-Ukrainian left party existed, and the center-left party spectrum in Ukraine failed to develop, even though many voters favor a leftist socioeconomic agenda. With the KPU out of the parliament and unlikely to return, there is now a possibility for a pro-Ukrainian left party to form.

These optimistic scenarios are not the only possibility for Ukraine's future, though. If the conflict in the east drags on unresolved or escalates, and the economy fails to improve, the outcome may be less sanguine. Instead of party competition developing around important substantive issues, Ukraine may fall victim to populists and radicals. Judging by the results of the October 2014 legislative elections, neither radical nationalist nor populist messages swayed many voters. The two

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[1] An "oblast" is a sub-national administrative unit, like a province.

[2] District-level voting results in the 2012 and 2014 parliamentary elections are available at the website of the Ukrainian Central Electoral Commission at http://www.cvk.gov.ua/

far right parties, Svoboda and the Right Sector, both failed to clear the five percent threshold, while the Radical Party of Oleh Liashko came fifth with 7.4% of the vote. Populists and radicals, though, may gain ground if societal expectations for reforms and accountable government are dashed yet again. It remains to be seen if the Ukrainian political class will be able to use the window of opportunity offered by the Euromaidan victory and, inadvertently, by Russia's aggression, to build a functioning democracy within the territory under the government's control.

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III. Data Set

Archigos: A Database on Political Leaders

by Hein Goemans

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The *Archigos* data set grew out of a collaborative effort between Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Giacomo Chiozza, and myself as the result of a shared conviction that leader-specific data would be useful for a whole host of questions and research projects. While the data collection initially had a very specific purpose in mind — how the manner and consequences of losing office affects leaders' incentives to initiate or avoid international conflict — we were very conscious about its potential for a much broader range of questions and research agendas. Leader data, we thought, could be useful as explanatory variables as well as variation to be explained in its own right. Just as the Polity regime data powered the wave of research on the so-called Democratic Peace and a host of other important topics in many fields, so too we hoped would leader data open up new research avenues and research agendas across fields. We are therefore delighted to see our data used by scholars to examine questions about war and peace, arms races, genocides and politicides, monetary institutions, elections, economic development and growth, democratization, corruption, political stability, coups, civil war, and child health in developing countries, to name just some of the topics examined in published papers.

> Just as the Polity regime data powered the wave of research on the so-called Democratic Peace and a host of other important topics in many fields, so too we hoped would leader data open up new research avenues and research agendas across fields.

But the scholarly community has not just used the *Archigos* data in its initial form for their research; many have significantly added to the data. The original *Archigos* release recorded information on each leader's name, birth and death date, gender, date and manner of entry into power and exit, number of spells in power and their post-tenure fate. In the forthcoming release of *Archigos 4.0*, we extend the temporal domain through 2014 (from 2004) and add new information about any leader's family (blood or marriage) relation to previous and subsequent leaders, a variable that can, for example, be used to track the causes and consequences of political dynasties. Kasara, Fearon and Laitin (2007) was one of the first studies to build on the original *Archigos* data by collecting information on the ethnicity of leaders. Horowitz, Stam and Ellis (2015) and Ellis, Horowitz and Stam (2015) collected two dozen leader background variables, including military service variables, rebel experience variables, education variables, upbringing variables, family variables (including marriage and children), and prior occupation variables. Mattes, Leeds and Matsumura (n.d.), have developed the Change in Source of Leader Support (CHISOLS) data set, which includes information distinguishing which leaders share similar sources of societal support as their predecessors, and which receive support from a different set of interests. Combined with *Archigos*, these data allow users to examine the extent to which policy change results from leader change or a change in underlying domestic interests. The CHISOLS data set also codes which leaders served in an interim or caretaker role, and which leaders in parliamentary democracies experienced changes in junior coalition partners during their rule. Besley and Reynal-Querol (2011) added information on leaders' educational attainment for a core sample of 1,654 leaders in 197 countries between 1848 and 2004. Yu and Jong-A-Pin (2013) extended the original data and added new variables to the *Archigos* data by collecting information on the socio-economic status of the leader's family, as well as the educational (including education abroad) and professional background of leaders. These are only the most prominent examples of additional data collection efforts; I have surely but regretfully left out others.

The *Archigos* data has, thus, provided a firm foundation for a broad range of research projects and research agendas, and the focus on leaders and their characteristics seems to only be gaining steam in political science, economics and other related disciplines. The Lijphart/Przeworski/Verba Data Set Award won by *Archigos* last year, and the continued, indeed accelerating, interest in this and related data give us confidence that scholars will continue to consider variation among leaders as sources of questions as well as answers. A new version, *Archigos 4.0*, is in the beta stage; we very much look forward to making it widely available in the near future. You can find the current version of the data at `http://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/hgoemans/data.htm`.

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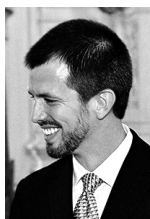Kanchan Chandra is a Professor in the Department of Politics at New York University. She has been a Carnegie Fellow, a Guggenheim Foundation Fellow, a Russell Sage Foundation Fellow, a Fellow at the Princeton Program on Democracy and Development, and a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. She conducts research on comparative ethnic politics, democratic theory, political parties and elections, and violence. She has published articles in journals such as the *Annual Review of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and *Electoral Studies*. In addition, she has published two books. The first, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Headcounts in India*, was published by Cambridge University Press. The second, *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*, was published by Oxford University Press. Her research has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the United States Institute of Peace. More information can be found on her website.

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Oxana Shevel is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Tufts University. She is also a member of the EUDO Citizenship expert group as a country expert on Ukraine, a member of the Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS Eurasia) scholarly network, and an Associate at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies and the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University. She received her Ph.D. in 2003 from Harvard University. Her research focuses on the post-Communist region surrounding Russia and on issues such as nation- and state-building, the politics of citizenship and migration, the politics of memory, and the influence of international institutions on democratization. Her research has been published in *Comparative Politics*, *Political Science Quarterly*, and *Post-Soviet Affairs*, among others. In addition, she has published an award-winning book, *Migration, Refugee Policy, and State Building in Postcommunist Europe*, with Cambridge University Press. More information can be found on her website and on her Google scholar profile.

Hein Goemans

Hein Goemans is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Rochester. Before coming to Rochester, he was an Assistant Professor at Duke University, a Visiting Professor at Stanford University, and a National Security Fellow at Harvard University. He received his Ph.D. in 1995 from the University of Chicago. His current research interests include attachment and claims to territory, and their impact on international relations. His research has been published in many of the discipline's leading journals, including the *American Journal of Political Science*, the *American Political Science Review*, and the *Journal of Politics*. He has also published two books. The first, *War and Punishment*, was published by Princeton University Press. The second, *Leaders and International Conflict*, was published by Cambridge University Press. More information can be found on his website.

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Announcements

2015 Section Award Winners

- Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz won the 2015 Lijphart/Przeworski/Verba Data Set Award for The Autocratic Regimes Data Set.
  - Award Committee: Giacomo Chiozza (chair), Hein Goemans, and Alison Post.
- Dominika Koter won the 2015 Gregory Luebbert Best Article Award for "King makers: Local leaders and ethnic politics in West Africa" (*World Politics* 65 (2) April 2013, 187-232).
  - Award Committee: Mala Htun (chair), Scott Gehlbach, and Daniel Ziblatt.
- Tariq Thachil won the 2015 Gregory Luebbert Best Book Award for *Elite Parties, Poor Voters: How Social Services Win Votes in India*. The book was published by Cambridge University Press in 2014.
  - Award Committee: Daniel Kelemen (chair), Leonardo Arriola, Pablo Beramendi, and Fotini Christia.
- Rafaela Dancygier, Karl-Oskar Lindgren, Sven Oskarsson, and Kåre Vernby won the 2015 Sage Best Paper Award for "Why are immigrants underrepresented in politics? Evidence from Sweden". The paper was presented at the 2014 APSA Annual Meeting.
  - Award Committee: Alberto Simpser (chair), Jeffrey Conroy-Krutz, and Jennifer Fitzgerald.

Visit our website for more information about the 2015 Comparative Politics Section award winners.

About the Section

The Organized Section in Comparative Politics is the largest organized section in the American Political Science Association (APSA) with over 1,300 members. The purpose of the Section is to promote the comparative, especially cross-national, study of politics and to integrate the work of comparativists, area studies specialists, and those interested in American politics. The Section organizes panels for APSA's annual meetings; awards annual prizes for best paper, best article, best book, and best data set; and oversees and helps finance the publication of the Newsletter. For more information, please visit the Section's website.

About the Newsletter

The goal of the Comparative Politics Newsletter is to engender a sense of community among comparative politics scholars around the world. To this end, the Newsletter publishes symposia on various substantive and methodological issues, highlights new data sets of broad appeal, prints short comments from readers in response to materials in the previous issue, and generally informs the community about field-specific developments. Recent symposia have looked at the varieties of authoritarianism, the global economic crisis, field experiments, and sensitive data. It is published twice a year, once during the Spring and once during the Fall. The Newsletter is currently edited by Matt Golder and Sona N. Golder at The Pennsylvania State University.

How to Subscribe

Subscription to the APSA-CP Newsletter is a benefit to members of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association. To join the section, check the appropriate box when joining APSA or renewing your Association membership. You may join the APSA online at http://www.apsanet.org/content. asp?contentid=4.