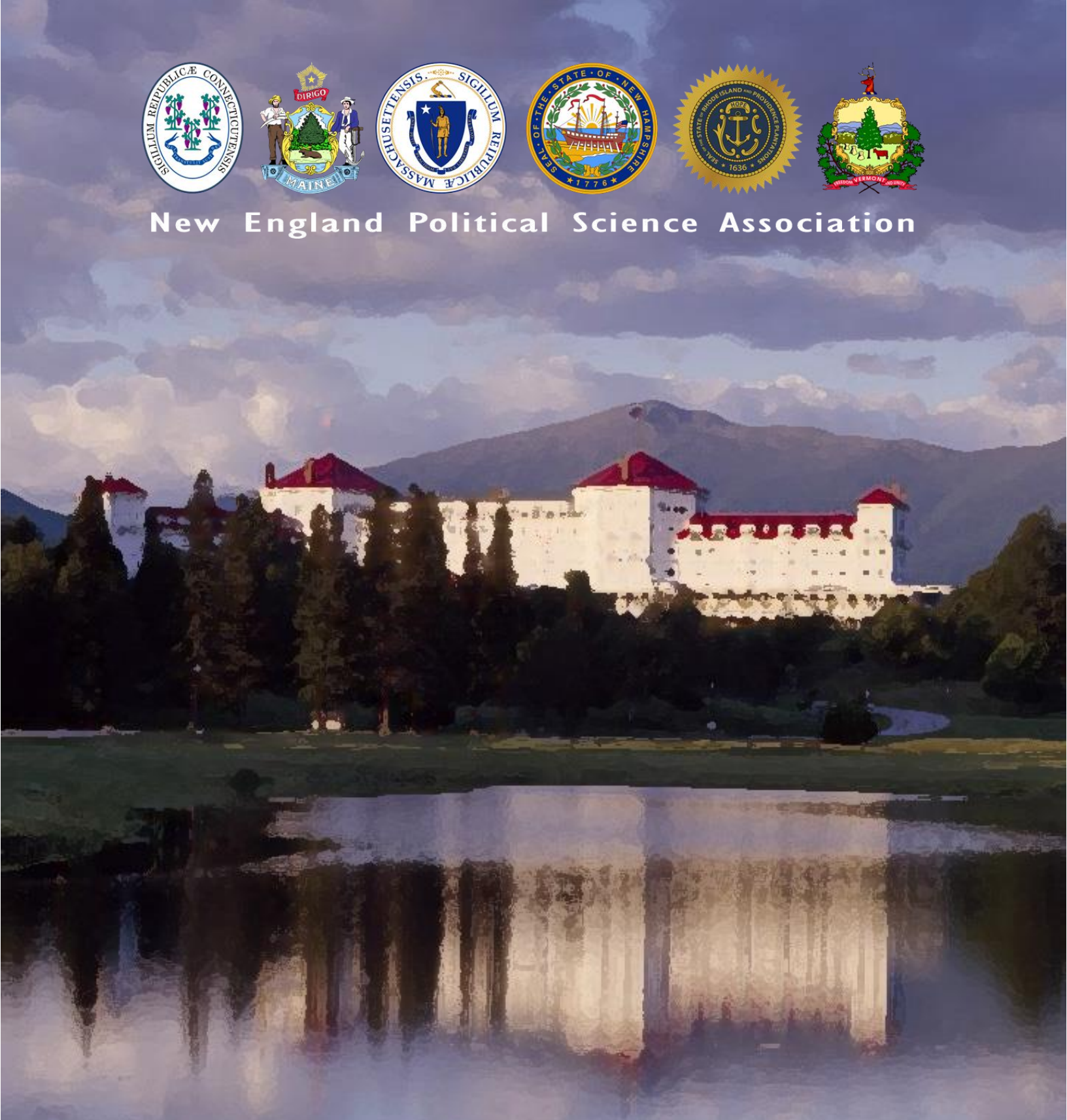
New England Political Science Association

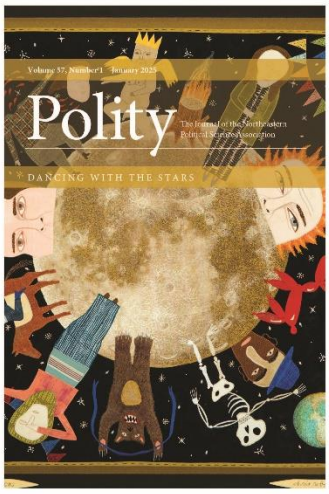


2025 Annual Meeting
Omni Mt. Washington Resort
Bretton Woods, New Hampshire
April 24-26, 2025

Social Science journals *from Chicago*

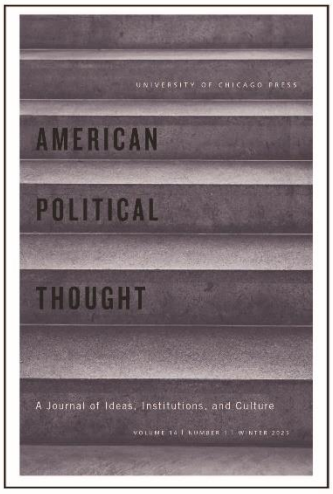
The Journal of Politics

Established in 1939 and published for the Southern Political Science Association, *The Journal of Politics* is a leading general-interest journal of political science and the oldest regional political science journal in the United States.



Polity

Among the leading general-interest journals in political science, *Polity* is guided by the premise that political knowledge advances through scholarly exchange across subfield boundaries and even beyond disciplinary borders.



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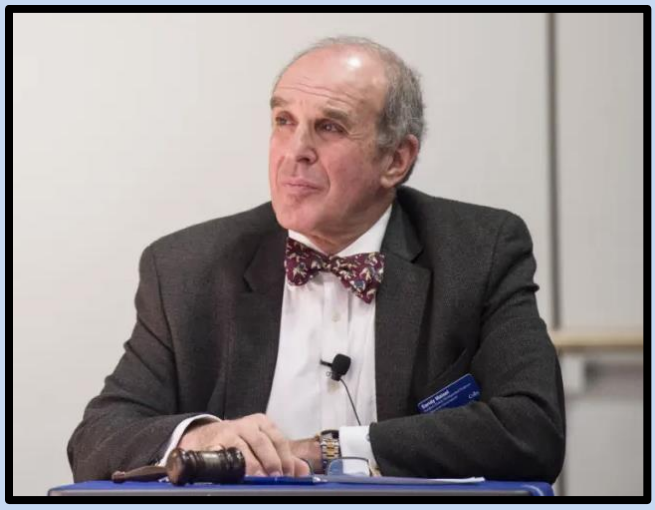
In Memoriam

L. SANDY MAISEL

PRESIDENT, NEW ENGLAND POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION, 1995



Sandy Maisel – legendary Colby College professor, Boston Red Sox and Buffalo Bills loyalist, committed duffer on the golf links of several continents, and lifelong presence in the students he inspired and shaped for a half-century – passed away at his home in Rome, Maine on December 9, 2024. He was 79.

Sandy was a Buffalo, New York, native but as much a Maine institution as the distinctive college where he taught. He was that rare figure, an earnest bow-tied teacher with a whiff of the long-ago academic past melded into a modern man of letters who understood, and interpreted for students and readers of his column, the mysteries of contemporary political life.

He was one part topflight scholar, one part political analyst, one part Mules sports enthusiast, one part self-appointed (and published) golf critic, one part mentor, and one (large) part family man.

Sandy joined Colby's faculty in 1971 after earning a bachelor's in government, *magna cum laude*, from Harvard University and a doctorate from Columbia University. He was nationally known for his scholarship on American political parties and elections, political campaigns, and Jews in American politics, writing or editing numerous books, compilations, journal articles, and book chapters. Visiting positions included professorships at Harvard and Stanford universities, fellowships at the University of London and the Brookings Institute, and two Fulbright scholarships in the Philippines and Brazil.

"In his 50 years on the faculty, Sandy became an icon and served for many of us as a model of what it means to be a Colby professor," said Joe Reisert, Sandy's longtime Colby colleague and 2019 NEPSA President. "A passionate and dedicated instructor, Sandy inspired generations of students to study political science"

In addition to his beloved wife, Patrice, he is survived and will be missed by his grown children, daughter Dana Maisel Anderson (Erik Anderson), son Joshua Louis Maisel (Eden Maisel); grandsons Conrad, Gustaf, Leopold, Weber, and Tyler; 20 nieces and nephews and their partners; many grandnieces and nephews, and a large number of cousins.

NEPSA gratefully acknowledges the authors of these stories – https://news.colby.edu/story/professor-l-sandy-maisel-dies-at-age-79/ and https://news.colby.edu/story/sandy-maisel-a-profound-sense-of-loss/ – which were adapted for this tribute.

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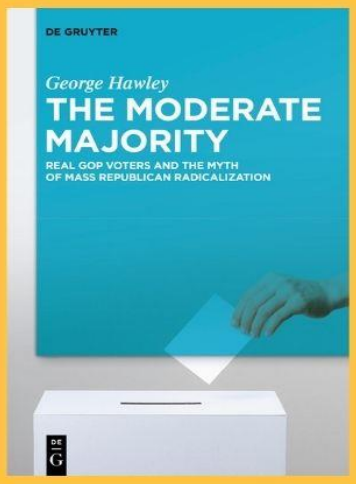

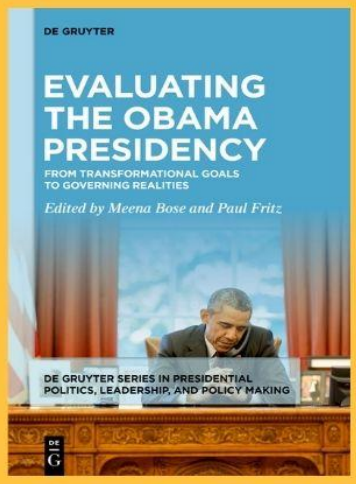

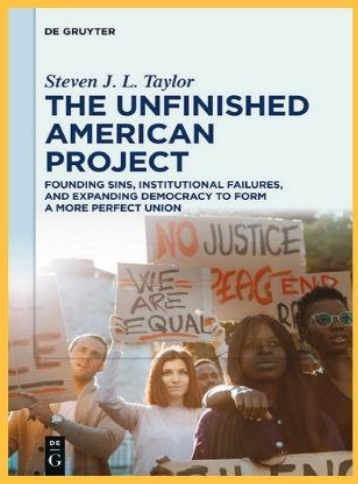

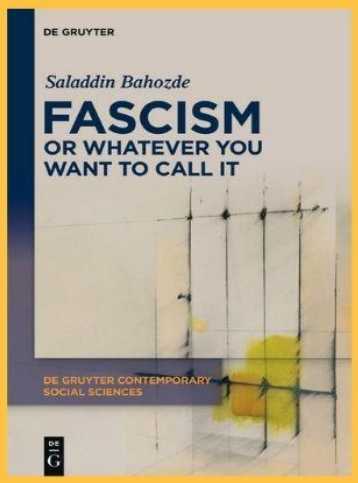

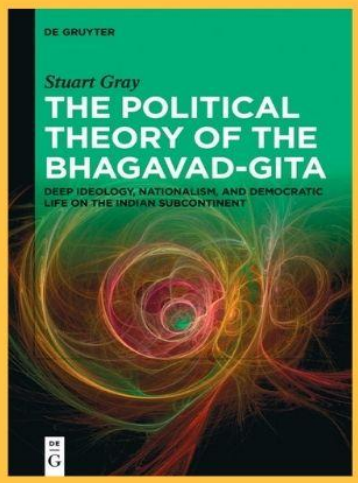

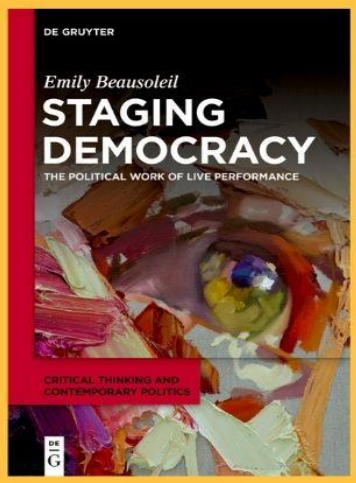

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New England Political Science Association (NEPSA) meeting.

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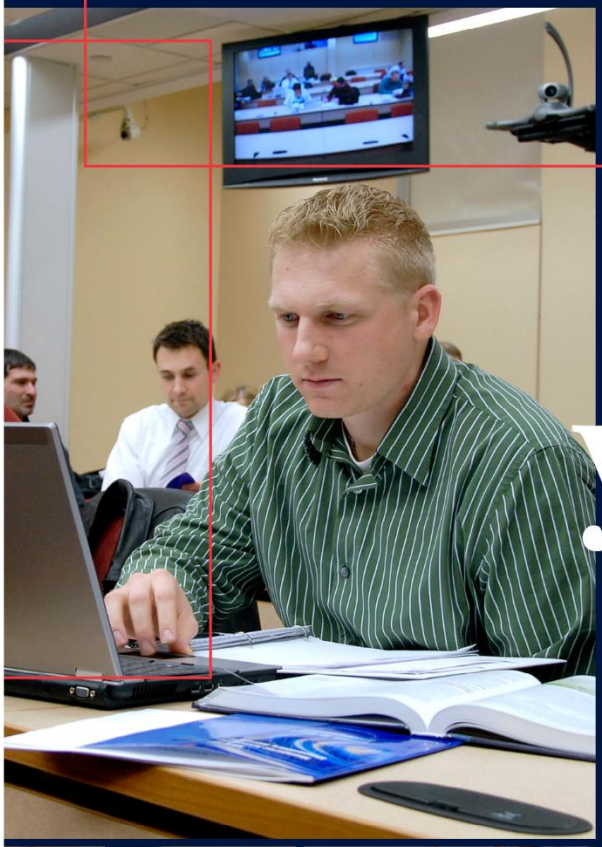

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Friday, April 25

"Understanding the Present Crisis"

an address by

THEDA SKOCPOL

Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology
Harvard University

Theda Skocpol is the Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard University. Over the last three decades, her research has primarily focused on health care reform, public policy, and civic engagement amidst the shifting inequalities in American democracy. Among the many books she has authored or co-authored are Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life; Health Care Reform and American Politics; and The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism. Her most recent book is Rust Belt Union Blues: Why Working-Class Voters Are Turning Away from the Democratic Party (with Lainey Newman). In 2009, Skocpol founded the Scholars Strategy Network, an organization with dozens of regional chapters across the U.S. that encourages nonpartisan public engagement by university-based scholars, building ties between academics and policymakers, civic groups, and journalists.

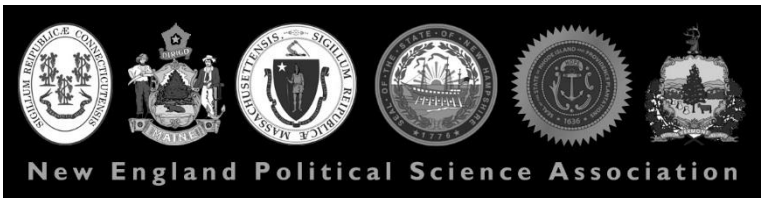
Saturday, April 26

a memorial tribute to

L. SANDY MAISEL

Goldfarb Family Distinguished Professor of Government
Colby College
President, New England Political Science Association, 1995

L. Sandy Maisel – legendary Colby College professor, founder of the Goldfarb Center for Public Affairs, and 1995 President of the New England Political Science Association – passed away on December 9, 2024, at the age of 79, at his home in Rome, Maine. A profound influence on generations of students in his over fifty-year career at Colby, Sandy was also the winner of NEPSA's John C. Donovan Prize for the Best Paper presented at the 2021 Annual Meeting, for "Excessive Spending in Maine: Political Advertising in the Collins-Gideon Senate Race." The Donovan Prize was presented to him during NEPSA's 2022 Annual Meeting, which was held right here at the Mt. Washington Resort in Bretton Woods.



2025 ANNUAL MEETING
OMNI MT. WASHINGTON RESORT RESORT
BRETTON WOODS, NEW HAMPSHIRE
APRIL 24-26, 2025

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THE 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

1-A (ADAMS): What It Takes for Policy Success

sponsored by the Public Policy section

Robert Dietterick, Brown University
Subnational Policy Action on Gun Control and the Crisis of Mass Shootings

Angie Jo, Massachussetts Institute of Technology
From Crisis to Capacity: Federal Interventions and the Evolution of State Welfare Institutions

Joseph Popcun, University at Albany, SUNY
What It Means to Fail: Ordinary Policy Failures through the Eyes of State Policymakers

Niamh Stull, Brown University
The Effect of Partisanship on State Education Agencies

PANEL CHAIR: Jason Barabas, Dartmouth College
DISCUSSANT: Jason Barabas, Dartmouth College
DISCUSSANT: Patricia Strach, University at Albany (SUNY)

1-B (JEFFERSON) Conflict and State Formation in the Global South

sponsored by the International Relations section

Benjamin Arah, Bowie State University
Intra-State Conflicts & Wars as Post-Independence Nation-Building Challenges in Africa (1960-2023)

David Rezvani, College of the Holy Cross
Termination Conditions of Partially Independent Territories

Ian Spears, University of Guelph
VIA ZOOM: *States, State Formation & Conflict in the Middle East*

PANEL CHAIR: Casey Stevens, Providence College
DISCUSSANT: Casey Stevens, Providence College

1-C (MADISON): Morality, Economics, Politics
sponsored by the Political Theory section

Serena Cho, Yale University
Plato on the kalon's indispensability to reason and politics

Luke Guimond, University of Ottawa
The Distinction between Individuality and Uniqueness: An Exploration of Ontological Claims in Emmanuel Mounier's Thought

Vincent Raynauld, Emerson College
Émilie Foster, Carleton University
Not Too Distant From Political Science: A Conceptual Look at Political Marketing

Siraj Sindhu, Brown University
Free Time and the Transformation of Work

Nicholas Tampio, Fordham University
The Occlusion of Origins: Leo Strauss, Machiavelli, and Political Zionism

PANEL CHAIR: Gabriel Greenstein, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Kenneth Andrew Andres Leonardo, Hamilton College

1-D (MONROE: Democracy backsliding and authoritarianism. What contemporary evidence tells us about trends in governance
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Jingyuan Cheng, Oxford University
"Who Calls the Shots": Interaction Mechanism between Work Teams and Village Cadres in Rural China

Matthew Ingram, University at Albany, SUNY
Detecting Clandestine Graves in Mexico: A Mixed-Methods Approach

Paul Manuel, Georgetown University
Daniela Melo, Boston University
Social Movements in Portugal Since the 25 April Revolution

Martin Mendoza-Botelho, Eastern Connecticut State University
Leadership and democratic legitimacy. Latin America's ongoing dilemma

PANEL CHAIR: Benjamin Cole, Southern New Hampshire University
DISCUSSANT: Benjamin Cole, Southern New Hampshire University

1-E (REAGAN) Conservatism, The Republican Party, and Conspiracy Culture
sponsored by the American Politics section

Evan Haglund, United States Coast Guard Academy
From Barracks to Badges: Military Academy Cadet Norms and Knowledge on Law Enforcement Authority

Mohsen Jalali, Midwestern State University
Supporting Conspiracy Theories: Does It Imply Belief?

Eric Miller, Brandeis University
Christian First, Conservative Second?: Examining the Relationship Between Religion and Candidate Favorability

Jesse Rhodes, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Adam Eichen, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Tatishe Nteta, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Economic, Ideological, and Group-Centric Factors and Support for Republicans in 2024 among Communities of Color

PANEL CHAIR: Angela Graves, SUNY Alfred State College of Technology
DISCUSSANT: Angela Graves, SUNY Alfred State College of Technology

1-F (WASHINGTON): Author Meets Critics: *Some White Folks: The Interracial Politics of Sympathy, Suffering, and Solidarity*, by Jennifer Chudy
sponsored by the Race, Gender, and Intersectionality section

Jose Gomez, University of Massachusetts - Boston
Deborah Schildkraut, Tufts University
Christine Slaughter, Boston College
Matthew Tokeshi, Williams College

PANEL CHAIR: Carrie LeVan, Colby College
DISCUSSANT: Jennifer Chudy, Wellesley College

1-G (AMMONOOSUC): The State of the Parties: The First 100 Days
sponsored by the American Politics section

Lawrence Becker, California State University - Northridge
Jerold Duquette, Central Connecticut State University
Amy Fried, University of Maine
Erin O'Brien, University of Massachusetts - Boston
Aaron Weinstein, Fairfield University

PANEL CHAIR: Douglas Harris, Loyola University - Maryland

1-H (DARTMOUTH): Ideology, Partisanship, and the Politics of Change
sponsored by the American Politics section

Costel Calin, Southern Connecticut State University
Antoaneta Vanc, Quinnipiac University
Media, War, and Bias: Analyzing Liberal and Conservative Narratives of the Israel-Hamas Conflict

Jennifer Lucas, Saint Anselm College
Benevolent and Hostile Sexism and Candidate Evaluations across Parties

Jesse Usher Barrett, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Aiden Parker, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Partisanship, Democratic Hypocrisy, and the State Supreme Court Appointment Process

PANEL CHAIR: Timothy Bristol, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Nicole Krassas, Eastern Connecticut State University

1-I (PRINCESS): Contemporary U.S.-Canadian Relations in Historical Perspective
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Mary Baxter, University of Western Ontario
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David Rovinsky, United States Department of State

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2-A (ADAMS): Ideology, Partisanship, and Elections

sponsored by the American Politics section

Nadya Hayasi, Georgetown University
Diana Owen, Georgetown University
The Politics of Belonging: Generational Differences in Immigrant Issue Priorities in the 2024 Elections

Lisa Holmes, University of Vermont
Party Differences in the Use of Courts in U.S. Presidential Campaigns

Nicholas Kapoor, Fairfield University
Mixing, Matching, and Winning? The Electoral Effects of Fusion Voting in Connecticut and New York State Legislative Elections 2012 - 2020

William Mayer, Northeastern University
News Media Owners in America: An Ideological Portrait

PANEL CHAIR: June Speakman, Roger Williams University
DISCUSSANT: Shyam Sriram, Canisius University

2-B (JEFFERSON): Why Policies Fail

sponsored by the Public Policy section

James Greer, United States Department of the Treasury
One (Important) Source of Urban Policy Failure

Marie Schenk, Lehigh University
Everyday Mask Mandates: Understanding the Digital Conversations about Public Health in 2020

Elizabeth Sharrow, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
The Politics of Exclusion: Lessons from Transgender Participation in College Sports

Kathleen Sullivan, Ohio University
Patricia Strach, University at Albany (SUNY)
From Sanitation to Sustainability: What Happens When Governments Address Old Issues in New Ways

Katie Zuber, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Patricia Strach, University at Albany (SUNY)
At the Intersection of Public Policy and Social Construction: How the Government's Response to Opioids Shapes Political Learning

PANEL CHAIR: Susan Moffitt, Brown University
DISCUSSANT: Susan Moffitt, Brown University
DISCUSSANT: Herschel Nachlis, Dartmouth College

2-C (MADISON): Pope Francis: Theology and Global Politics in the 21st Century Panel I

sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Christine Gustafson, Saint Anselm College
Mission from the Periphery: Pope Francis's Distinctive Perspective on Development and Democracy

Thomas Massaro, Fordham University
The First Jesuit Pope: The Contribution of his Jesuit Charism to his Political Views

James McHugh, University of Akron
Pope Francis, Modernism, and Liberal Democracy

Marc Rugani, Saint Anselm College
Pope Francis and Synodality as Political Process

PANEL CHAIR: Alynna Lyon, University of New Hampshire
DISCUSSANT: Michele Dillon, University of New Hampshire

2-D (MONROE) Topics in Undergraduate Research 1: Electoral Systems in America

sponsored by the Undergraduate Research Committee

Graham Backman, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Is There A Race Card in the Deck? Implicit and Explicit Racial Appeals in Modern Presidential Campaigns.

Carson Goh, Dartmouth College
Assessing the Effects of Independent Redistricting Commissions on Electoral Competition and Minority Representation

Samantha Olsen, Trinity College
A Good Sign: The effect of community signaling lawn signs on racial minority turnout

Kaitlyn Soper, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
The Anatomy of Redistricting Reform: How Composition, Rules, and Procedures Shape the Success of Independent Redistricting Commissions

PANEL CHAIR: Kevin McMahon, Trinity College
DISCUSSANT: Kevin McMahon, Trinity College

2-E (REAGAN): Present at the Destruction? The Global and Regional Implications of the Demise of the Liberal World Order

sponsored by the International Relations section

Patrick Bratton, United States Army War College
"The Empire is Dead! Long live the Liberal Empire! KM Panikkar, the end of the British Empire in Asia, and the Idea of a New Liberal Order in Asia"

Darrell Driver, American Public University System
A New 'Agonizing Reappraisal'? American Military Leadership in NATO and Its Potential End

Mark Duckenfield, United States Army War College
Present at the Destruction: The Erosion of International Institutions for Trade and Finance

PANEL CHAIR: Darrell Driver, American Public University System
DISCUSSANT: Mark Duckenfield, United States Army War College

2-F (WASHINGTON): The Political Writings of George Washington

sponsored by the Political Theory section

Paul Carrese, Arizona State University
Carson Holloway, University of Nebraska - Omaha
Bradford Wilson, Utah Valley University
Jean Yarbrough, Bowdoin College

PANEL CHAIR: James Stoner, Louisiana State University

2-G (AMMONOOSUC): Voting, Race, and the Future of Elections

sponsored by the American Politics section

Timothy Bristol, Southern Connecticut State University
Ranked Choice Voting In Connecticut

Rachael Cobb, Suffolk University
Orienting to Service: Young Poll Workers and the Future of Election Administration

Alec Ewald, University of Vermont
Why prisoners don't vote: evidence from a survey of incarcerated people in Vermont

Bilal Sekou, University of Hartford
Ensuring Every Citizen has the Opportunity to Vote: Adopting Early Voting in Connecticut

PANEL CHAIR: John Berg, Suffolk University
DISCUSSANT: Brian Arbour, John Jay College, CUNY

2-H (DARTMOUTH): SCOTUS 2024
sponsored by the Public Law section

Mark Graber, University of Maryland School of Law
Trump v. Anderson: the Rise and Fall of Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment

Susan Keller, Western State College of Law
FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine: Denying Standing for Anti-Abortion Doctor Groups While Expanding Conscience Protections

Carol Nackenoff, Swarthmore College
Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimando: the End of Chevron Deference

2-I (PRINCESS): Science and Society
sponsored by the Political Theory section

John Moriarty, Hillsdale College
Strauss on Xenophon's Socrates as a Response to Nietzsche and Heidegger

Austin Lamb, Boston College
The Conditional Imperative: Smith and Kant on Moral Duties

Paul Weisser, Baylor University
The Machine Stands Revealed: Heidegger on Technology and Metaphysics

PANEL CHAIR: Gabriel Greenstein, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Emily Agadzhanova, Georgia State University

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FEATURED PRESENTATION

THEDA SKOCPOL
Harvard University
"*Understanding the Present Crisis*"

3-A (ADAMS): Law, Media, and American Political Development

sponsored by the Politics and History section

Beau Breslin, Skidmore College
Founding Edits: How Revisions Reshaped America

Bruce Caswell, Rowan University
The Role of the Doctrine of Discovery in American Political Thought and Development

Justin Greenman, Yale University
"A No Man's Land Somewhere between the Legislative and Executive Branch: John C. Calhoun, John Nance Garner, and the Creation of the Modern Vice Presidency"

Girma Parris, Case Western Reserve University
Path Dependency, Drift, Conversion, Layering, and the Standard of Objectivity: The State of a Hallowed Media Tradition

PANEL CHAIR: Paul Herron, Providence College
DISCUSSANT: Paul Herron, Providence College

3-B (JEFFERSON): Judges and Judicial Approaches

sponsored by the Public Law section

Kimberly Bergendahl, University of Connecticut
Supreme Court Nominations and the Senate Judiciary Committee: What to Expect During a Second Trump Presidency

Michael Catalano, University of Scranton
Allison Bugenis, Binghamton University (SUNY)
Hayley Munir, Illinois State University
Safeguarding Presidential Policy through Appointments to the US Court of Appeals

Paul Foote, Murray State University
James Clinger, Murray State University
Government Censorship of Social Media: The Problem of Standing and the Strategy of Delay

Alex Hindman, College of the Holy Cross
Justice Hugo Black's Constitutional Evolution on Legislative Oversight

PANEL CHAIR: Courtney Broscious, Eastern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Courtney Broscious, Eastern Connecticut State University

3-C (MADISON): Pope Francis: Theology and Global Politics in the 21st Century Panel II
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Theresa Dabruzzi, Saint Anselm College
It's Not Easy Being Green: The Environmental Advocacy of Pope Francis

Miguel Glatzer, La Salle University
Debating Women's Role in the Church

Alynna Lyon, University of New Hampshire
"How many divisions has the pope?" Pope Francis and Global Diplomacy

Thomas Lacourse, Saint Anselm College
The Pope in Mongolia? How Pope Francis Changed Papal Travel

PANEL CHAIR: Paul Manuel, Georgetown University,
DISCUSSANT: Christine Gustafson, Saint Anselm College

3-D (MONROE) International Security Studies and Technology
sponsored by the Technology and Politics section

James Baker, Syracuse University College of Law
Promise and peril: the next ten years of national security AI and its regulation

Kate Perry, Georgia Southern University
Drones and child labor trafficking: using modern technology as a tool against exploitation

Alison Lawlor Russell, Merrimack College
Information control strategies of China and Russia

PANEL CHAIR: Tobias Gibson, Westminster College
DISCUSSANT: Darrell Driver, American Public University System

3-E (REAGAN): Perspectives on Ethnic and Gender identities on the formation of political ideas and public policy
sponsored by the Race, Gender, and Intersectionality section

Ashley Aguilera, Southern Connecticut State University
The Zoning Divide in Connecticut: How Exclusionary Zoning Laws Impact the Current Housing Crisis in the State

Elizabeth Aliu, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Beyond Freedom: A Qualitative content analysis research examining the intersectionality of freedom & independence

Mohammad Al-Mailam, Harvard University
Who Comes and Who Goes? Explaining Citizens' Migration Preferences in the Gulf

Marija Bingulac, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
Margareta Matache, Harvard University
Romani People in the United States: A Socio-Economic Statistical Profile

PANEL CHAIR: Nafisa Kiani, UEL Parliament
DISCUSSANT: Shyam Sriram, Canisius University

3-F (WASHINGTON): Soft Power, Media, and Diplomacy
sponsored by the International Relations section

Giuliano Espino, Framingham State University
Diplomacy in a New Era: Grappling with Taylor Swift's Power in International Relations

William Friedman, University of Chicago
The Utility of Economic Sanctions as the Preferred Instrument Under International Law: A Ukraine-Russia Sanctions Case Study

Claire Oto, University of Virginia
Nationalist Rhetoric, Foreign Policy Politicization, and Electoral Consequences

PANEL CHAIR: Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University
DISCUSSANT: Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University

3-G (AMMONOOSUC): Editors Meet Critics: *More Than Blue, More Than Yankee: Complexity and Change in New England Politics*, edited by Amy Fried and Erin O'Brien
sponsored by the American Politics section

Stephanie Chambers, Trinity College
Dan Shea, Colby College
Peter Ubertaccio, Stonehill College

PANEL CHAIR: Carrie LeVan, Colby College
DISCUSSANT: Amy Fried, University of Maine
DISCUSSANT: Erin O'Brien, University of Massachusetts - Boston

3-H (DARTMOUTH): Topics in Undergraduate Research 2: Religion, Representation and Reform in American Politics
sponsored by the Undergraduate Research Committee

Elizabeth Duffin, Saint Anselm College
Is No News Good News for Democracy? An Analysis of Voter Representation within the News Deserts of the American South

Caroline Lewis, Fairfield University
Crisis & Activism: Youth Political Participation in the Late Nineteenth -- and Early Twenty-First Centuries

Bee Mayberry, Mount Holyoke College
Praise Jesus (And Trump): Language and Indoctrination Strategies Used by the Alt-Right and Christian Nationalists

Samuel Ponessa, Fairfield University
The Christian Question: Interpreting Rousseau's Civil Religion Through the Lens of Rome and a Civically Imperfect Christian Faith

PANEL CHAIR: Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, Southern Connecticut State University

3-I (PRINCESS): Trump II: The First 100 Days
sponsored by the American Politics section

Shep Melnick, Boston College
Adam Myers, Providence College
Jeff Tulis, University of Texas
Matthew Ulricksen, Community College of Rhode Island
Jesse Usher Barrett, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

PANEL CHAIR: James Morone, Brown University
PANEL CHAIR: June Speakman, Roger Williams University

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE SERVICE
Presidential Foyer

4-A (ADAMS): Geopolitics, Power, and Emerging Challenges

sponsored by the International Relations section

Jason Charrette, Plymouth State University
War-Gaming Humanitarianism: Using Table-Top Role Playing Games to Teach Humanitarian Intervention in the Climate Change Era

Sharyl Cross, St. Edward's University
Russia's Geopolitical Civilizational Narratives and Strategic Direction in the Contemporary Multipolar World Order

Farhan Khalid, Government Murray Graduate College
Seerat Saleem, Government Murray Graduate College
Indo-Pacific as the theatre of new great game: The Dynamics of United States- Canadian Policy Paradigms

Anna Ohanyan, Stonehill College
Supercontinent or a Sinkhole? The Promise and the Peril of Eurasian Continentalism for World Order

PANEL CHAIR: Benjamin Arah, Bowie State University
DISCUSSANT: Kevin Buterbaugh, Southern Connecticut State University

4-B (JEFFERSON): Challenges in Social, Environmental, and Criminal Justice

sponsored by the American Politics section

Jonathan Bradley, University of Vermont
Creation care: new framing of environmentalism for religious conservatives.

Courtney Broscious, Eastern Connecticut State University
Andrew Gooch, Rowan University
Katherine Javian, Rowan University
The Role of Deservingness in Criminal Justice Attitudes

Charles Crabtree, Dartmouth College
Mitchell Bosley, University of Toronto
John Holbein, University of Virginia
Semra Sevi, University of Toronto
Can AI Reduce Prejudice at Scale?

Molly Gahagen, Dartmouth College
Don't Say Climate Change?: The Influence of Local Accountability and Framing Effects on Climate Change Policymaking in Florida

Angela Graves, SUNY Alfred State College of Technology
Reimagining Civic Discourse in Higher Education: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Dialogue Across Difference

PANEL CHAIR: Deborah Guber, University of Vermont
DISCUSSANT: John Berg, Suffolk University

4-C (MADISON): State Capacity and American Institutional Arrangements: Some American Political Development Consequences
sponsored by the Politics and History section

Gwendoline Alphonso, Fairfield University
Daniel Sledge, University of Oklahoma
Saving Lives, Reopening the Economy: The Neoliberal Paradigm and US subnational decision-making during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ryan LaRochelle, University of Maine
The Great Society, State Power, and Conservative Backlash, 1964-Present

Eileen McDonagh, Northeastern University
"What's Wrong with American Democracy? The American Revolution, That's What"

Carol Nackenoff, Swarthmore College
How Organized Women Mobilized State Capacity to Rescue Chinese Women and Girls During a Strongly Anti-Immigrant Era

PANEL CHAIR: Kathleen Sullivan, Ohio University
DISCUSSANT: Patricia Strach, University at Albany (SUNY)
DISCUSSANT: Kathleen Sullivan, Ohio University

4-D (MONROE): A Study in Public Policy Agents of Change: Actors and Institutions
sponsored by the Public Policy section

Daniel Chand, Kent State University
Coercive Measures? Investigating the Relationship Between Immigration Enforcement Actions and ICE's IMAGE Program

Ahyoung Cho, St. Lawrence University
Collective action or free-riding: An analysis of city climate networks and adoption of climate action plans

Jeffrey Kraus, Wagner College
Health Care Policy in New York in a time of uncertainty

PANEL CHAIR: Marc Eisner, Wesleyan University
DISCUSSANT: Alexandre Couture Gagnon, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley

4-E (REAGAN) Shifting politics around the world. Elections, political parties and power
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Oleg Kodolov, University of Toronto
2024 British General Election: Key Issues, Campaign, Consequences

Patricia Olney, Southern Connecticut State University
Trump, AMLO and the 2024 Elections: Implications of the Tug of War between Strongmen and Rule of Law for U.S.-Mexico Relations

Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University
Alienated or Embraced? The Pedestrian in the City

Tim Stap, Florida State University
How Representative is Ireland's PR-STV System? Small Party Power in Ireland

PANEL CHAIR: Mark Duckenfield, United States Army War College
DISCUSSANT: Mark Duckenfield, United States Army War College

4-F (WASHINGTON): Is the Constitution Worth Saving? Considering the Alternative Claims of Erwin Chemerinsky and Yuval Levin
sponsored by the Public Law section

Mark Graber, University of Maryland School of Law
David Schaefer, College of the Holy Cross
James Stoner, Louisiana State University
Bradford Wilson, Utah Valley University

PANEL CHAIR: David Schaefer, College of the Holy Cross

4-G (AMMONOOSUC): Women and Politics

sponsored by the Political Theory section

Greg Collins, Yale University
Civil Society and Organized Womanhood in the Thought of Fannie Barrier Williams

Carol McNamara, Great Hearts Institute for Classical Education
Shakespeare's Grasp of the Feminine: Power and Purpose - The Political Skill of Shakespeare's Cleopatra

Helena Najm, CUNY Graduate Center
Mothering the Contemporary American Right

Wendy Wright, William Paterson University
Melissa Chalhoub, William Paterson University
Abolition's Arc: Tracing the development of abolitionist theory in Angela Davis's work

PANEL CHAIR: Nicholas Tampio, Fordham University
DISCUSSANT: Nicholas Tampio, Fordham University

4-H (DARTMOUTH): Statesmanship and Political Responsibility

sponsored by the International Relations section

Jordan Cash, Michigan State University
The Constitutional Logic of a Global Superpower

Clinton Condra, Independent Scholar
"The American System Abroad: Henry Clay's Diplomacy and Foreign Policy"

Joshua King, United States Military Academy
The Cost of Collapse: The Just War Tradition and Moral Responsibility in War

Nathan Orlando, Benedictine College
Imperium: Douglas MacArthur and the 20th Century

Tony Spanakos, Montclair State University
The Diversity and Relevance of Political Realism: Negro, d'Ors, and Galli

PANEL CHAIR: Joshua King, United States Military Academy
DISCUSSANT: David Clinton, Baylor University

4-I (PRINCESS): The Politics of Vermont and New Hampshire
sponsored by the American Politics section

Gabriel Greenstein, Southern Connecticut State University
A Better Brand for Bernie

Scott McLean, Quinnipiac University
Lisa Brandes, Southern Connecticut State University
Visit New England! Cultural Limits of Tourism Policies in Connecticut and New Hampshire

Sawyer Rogers, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Changing the Rules of Deliberation and Decision-Making: From Participatory to Plebiscitary Democracy

PANEL CHAIR: David Shakarishvili, Klaipeda University
DISCUSSANT: Garrison Nelson, University of Vermont

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE NEPSA COCKTAIL RECEPTION
5:30-6:30 PM
Conservatory

5-A (ADAMS): Gender and Representation in Politics and Society

sponsored by the International Relations section

Isil Akbulut Gok, Sacred Heart University
United Nations Civilian Peacekeeping and Human Rights Protection

Kevin Buterbaugh, Southern Connecticut State University
Costel Calin, Southern Connecticut State University
Ambassadorial Appointments under Democratic and Republican Administrations: Does partisanship affect where women ambassadors are placed by presidents.

Robert Bivens, Eastern Illinois University
Productive Shared Identity: Angola, Lusophony, and LGBTQIA Acceptance

Chantal Krcmar, Southern New Hampshire University
Breaking the Binary: Complexities of the Construction Industry in India

PANEL CHAIR: Emily Agadzhanova, Georgia State University
DISCUSSANT: Kate Perry, Georgia Southern University

5-B (JEFFERSON) Trends in contemporary Asian politics: China's old ways and democratic resilience in the neighborhood

sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Jingyuan Cheng, Oxford University
Structuring Provincial Identity: An Analysis of the Strength of Provincial Identity in China

Heon Lee, University of Delaware
Hwayong Shin, Dartmouth College
Kindle the Flame: Psychological Underpinnings of Democratic Resilience

Yaokun Shen, George Washington University
Rui Tang, University of Toronto
Up against the Wall: An Empirical Study on the Ideology and Propaganda of Contemporary China

PANEL CHAIR: Aynal Haque, Bucknell University
DISCUSSANT: Aynal Haque, Bucknell University

5-C (MADSON): Law & Public Policy
sponsored by the Public Law section

Ihsan Alkhatib, Murray State University
Gender in Immigration Court: Orientalism on Trial

Sarada Prasad Nayak, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Paul Collins, Jr., University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Case Backlogs and Bias in Timely Justice Delivery in the Indian Judiciary

Nicole Norval, Eastern Connecticut State University
Sameer Somal, Blue Ocean Global Technology LLC
Can AI Reduce Business Corruption - and Prevent Another FIFA … Another FTX?

PANEL CHAIR: Rick Peltz-Steele, University of Massachusetts Law School
DISCUSSANT: Rick Peltz-Steele, University of Massachusetts Law School

5-D (MONROE) Voting, Partisanship, and Identity Politics
sponsored by the American Politics section

Dante Scala, University of New Hampshire
Split-Ticket Voters in New Hampshire: Cohesive Bloc or Random Jumble?

Shyam Sriram, Canisius University
"Asian Immigration and Upcycled Religious Spaces in Western New York"

Haley Stiles, University of Virginia
Voting, Winning, and Democratic Satisfaction in Close US Elections

Jesse Usher Barrett, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Fear and Loathing in the Party: Punishment and Rewards for Deviant Partisan Behavior

PANEL CHAIR: Quinn Bornstein, Georgetown University
DISCUSSANT: Deborah Guber, University of Vermont

5-E (REAGAN): Economic Interdependence and Strategic Policy

sponsored by the International Relations section

Lauren Dagan Amos, Bar Ilan University
India in the Middle East: Modi's Strategic Realignment and Key Partnerships

Denis Kennedy, College of the Holy Cross
Olivia Paulsen, College of the Holy Cross
Caught between principles and politics: UNRWA and the humanitarian aid battlefield in the Gaza War

Kevin Muir, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
States, Firms, and the Weaponization of Interdependence: Corporate Ownership Strategies in a Geoeconomic World.

PANEL CHAIR: Randibel Ndip Tambe, University of Gothenburg
DISCUSSANT: Simon Vodrey, Carleton University

5-F (WASHINGTON): Public Policy Evolution: Dynamics of Opposition and Challenge

sponsored by the Public Policy section

Anthony Dell'Aera, Worcester State University
Going Against the Flow: Anti-Fluoridation Water Policy in the City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Marc Eisner, Wesleyan University
With Fingers Crossed: The Political and Institutional Constraints on Risk Management in the United States

Gregory Williams, Simmons University
The Donald Trump of X: Global Trumpism as Ideology and Policy

PANEL CHAIR: Vincent Raynauld, Emerson College
DISCUSSANT: Rachael Cobb, Suffolk University

5-G (AMMONOOSUC): The Clyde McKee / Garrison Nelson New England Politics Roundtable

sponsored by the American Politics section

CONNECTICUT	**Stefanie Chambers, Trinity College**
MAINE	**Jim Melcher, University of Maine – Farmington**
MASSACHUSETTS	**Jerold Duquette, Central Connecticut State University**
NEW HAMPSHIRE	**Christopher Galdieri, Saint Anselm College**
RHODE ISLAND	**Emily Lynch, University of Rhode Island**
VERMONT	**Paul Petterson, Central Connecticut State University**

PANEL CHAIR: Garrison Nelson, University of Vermont

5-H (DARTMOUTH): Individuality, Uniqueness, and Authenticity
sponsored by the Political Theory section

Robert Downes, University of Connecticut
Haudenosaunee vs. Habermas: Indigenous Democratic Traditions and the Boundaries of Deliberative Democratic Theory

Kenneth Andrew Andres Leonardo, Hamilton College
Re-Existence and the Possibility of a Universal Authenticity

Lucas Swaine, Dartmouth College
Freedom of Thought: First of the Liberties

PANEL CHAIR: Matthew Hodgetts, Case Western Reserve University
DISCUSSANT: Matthew Hodgetts, Case Western Reserve University

5-I (PRINCESS): Controversies in American Political Culture
sponsored by the American Politics section

Mary Craig, Furman University
The Red Scare and the Myth of Democratic Baseball

Sara Levenstein, Boston College
The Bureaucracy of School Accountability

Sam Little, Boston College
The Mischief of Harmony: Single-Issue Interest Groups and Party Assimilation

Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, Southern Connecticut State University
Andrew Marchant-Shapiro, Southern Connecticut State University
Building Community through Inclusion and Diversity

PANEL CHAIR: Shawn Driscoll, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
DISCUSSANT: Gregory Burnep, College of the Holy Cross

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE SERVICE
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6-A (ADAMS): Evolving Political Systems

sponsored by the Politics and History section

Yangmo Ku, Norwich University
Diplomacy Driven by Court Rulings? Explaining South Korea's Foreign Policy toward Japan, 2012-2024

Masako Okura, Columbus State University
Beyond Gender: Political and Historical Dimensions of Japan's Imperial Succession Crisis

Raza Raja, Syracuse University
The Co-optation of Islamist Movements: Impacts on Electoral Performance in Pakistan

Itai Sneh, John Jay College
Louisiana Purchase: Latin Influence on American Jurisprudence

PANEL CHAIR: Timothy Bristol, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Tony Spanakos, Montclair State University

6-B (JEFFERSON): Rowing in Stormy Seas: Public Policy Creation in an Age of Crisis

sponsored by the Public Policy section

Emily Armand, Simmons University
Capitalism As a Barrier to Equitable Healthcare

April Beatty, Simmons University
Bridging the Gap: Mitigating Business Resistance to Wage Reform

Teresa Crooks, Northeastern University
Healthy Soils: A Foundation for Sustainable Development and Human Security: A Critical Analysis and Proposed Framework for Global Soil Health

PANEL CHAIR: Gregory Williams, Simmons University
DISCUSSANT: Marija Bingulac, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

6-C (MADISON): Controversies in New England and American National Politics

sponsored by the American Politics section

Judson Abraham, University of Alabama
Sydney Regan , University of Alabama
Should the SEIU Disaffiliate from Policing Locals? Evidence from Rhode Island Collective Bargaining Agreements

Brian Arbour, John Jay College, CUNY
The Party Changes Its Mind: Democratic Presidential Endorsements in 2007 vs. 2008

Jason Barabas, Dartmouth College
Molly Gahagen, Dartmouth College
The Effects of Incentives, Reminders, and Messaging on Survey Participation in New Hampshire Pre-Election Polling

Quinn Bornstein, Georgetown University
James Gimpel, University of Maryland
Bridging the Connecticut River Divide: Diffusion of Political Influence across State Boundaries

Brian Conley, Suffolk University
Trump and the 2024 Presidential Elections

PANEL CHAIR: Sawyer Rogers, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
DISCUSSANT: Jonathan Wharton, Southern Connecticut State University

6-D (MONROE): Topics in Undergraduate Research 3: Ideologies and Allegiances

sponsored by the Undergraduate Research Committee

Noah Charpentier, Providence College
Historical Analogies: A Looking Glass

Bel Corder, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Seeing in Black and White? Expressions of Racial Color-Blindness in African Americans

Emma Hoffman, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Artistic preferences and political views: A study of the American public

Catherine Raacke, Providence College
Genuine or Deception: Empirically Confirming Autocratic Legitimation Strategies that Use Gender Equality and Democracy

PANEL CHAIR: Scott McLean, Quinnipiac University
DISCUSSANT: Scott McLean, Quinnipiac University

6-E (REAGAN): Social Media, Information, and Democracy
sponsored by the Technology and Politics section

Alison Lawlor Russell, Merrimack College
Information control strategies of China and Russia

Catherine Abou-Khalil, Boston University
Jenifer Whitten-Woodring, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Ardeth Thawnghmung, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Tun Tun Lynn, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Can Pandora's Box be Closed? How Myanmar's Keyboard Fighters Circumvent the Military's Efforts to Minimize Access to Online Information

Lugyi No, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Tun Tun Lynn, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Ardeth Thawnghmung, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Crime and Corruption in Post-Coup Myanmar: Community Perceptions and Governance Challenges

Glory Okereke, Florida International University
Power and Authority: A Social and Technological Analysis of US and China Competition

PANEL CHAIR: Chloe Morgado, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
DISCUSSANT: Shawn Driscoll, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

6-F (WASHINGTON): Québec's public policy vis-à-vis the United States: Economic, political, cultural, and immigration outlooks
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Lawrence Brassard, Université du Québec à Montréal
Alexandre Couture Gagnon, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley
Gabrielle Gagnon, Université du Québec à Montréal
David Rovinsky, United States Department of State

PANEL CHAIR: David Rovinsky, United States Department of State

6-G (AMMONOOSUC): Controversies in Elections and Constitutional Rights
sponsored by the American Politics section

Jerome Foss, Saint Vincent College
The Fourteenth Amendment and the Idea of Rights

Vincent Raynauld, Emerson College
André Turcotte, Carleton University
Masculinity on the Ballot: Social Identity Appeals on the Right of the Political Spectrum and the 2024 US Presidential Elections

Matthew Reilly, Southern Connecticut State University
A Comparison of Historical Pre-Election Polling and Partisan Turnout in US General Elections

Aaron Weinstein, Fairfield University
The U.S. Electoral-Industrial Complex: A Theoretical Exploration

PANEL CHAIR: Nicole Krassas, Eastern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Michael Catalano, University of Scranton

6-H (DARTMOUTH): A Tribute to Ken Kersch
sponsored by the Public Law section

Gregory Burnep, College of the Holy Cross
Gerald Easter, Boston College
Mark Graber, University of Maryland School of Law
Paul Herron, Providence College
Carol Nackenoff, Swarthmore College

PANEL CHAIR: Shep Melnick, Boston College

6-I (PRINCESS): Issues in Contemporary Politics
sponsored by the Political Theory section

Samantha Godwin, Yale University
Consent as Address

Matthew Hodgetts, Case Western Reserve University
Hope, Fear, and (Realistic) Dreams of Climate Utopia

Peter Lindsay, Georgia State University
What rights can be denied to felons?

Faizan Rashid, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Democratic Backsliding and Post-Foundationalism: Lefort on Democracy as the empty place of power

PANEL CHAIR: Julie Rose, Dartmouth College
DISCUSSANT: Liza Williams, Tufts University

PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH AND THE NEPSA BUSINESS MEETING
Grand Ballroom

FEATURED PRESENTATION

A Memorial Tribute to L. Sandy Maisel
Colby College
President, New England Political Science Association, 1995

AWARDING OF THE BEST PAPER PRIZES FOR THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

JOHN C. DONOVAN PRIZE FOR BEST PAPER WRITTEN BY A FACULTY MEMBER
Douglas Edlin
Colorado College
"*The Undignified First Amendment*"

ROBERT C. WOOD PRIZE FOR BEST PAPER WRITTEN BY A GRADUATE STUDENT
Quinn Bornstein
Georgetown University
"*Flyover Voters: Rural American Political Satisfaction*"

WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS PRIZE FOR BEST PAPER WRITTEN BY AN UNDERGRADUATE
Carson Goh
Dartmouth College
"*Competition or Representation? How the Public Views Substantive and Descriptive Effects of Independent Redistricting Commissions*"

NEPSA BUSINESS MEETING

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO NEPSA CONSTITUTION

7-A (ADAMS): The Politics of Place: Geography's Political Influence
sponsored by the American Politics section

Sam Hayes, Trinity College
SoRelle Wyckoff Gaynor, College of the Holy Cross
New Lines, New Districts, New Representation: Institutional Decisions in Congressional Reapportionment

Tristan Hightower, Bryant University
Matthew Zinno, University of Maryland
Local Networks, National Influence: How Geographic Ties Affect Interest Group Success in Congress

Emily Lynch, University of Rhode Island
Julie Keller, University of Rhode Island
Matthew Ulricksen, Community College of Rhode Island
Beyond Red v. Blue: Place Identity and Place Resentment in the Rhode Island Electorate

Jack Santucci, Western New England University
The Structure of Mass Politics within and across American States

PANEL CHAIR: Nicholas Kapoor, Fairfield University
DISCUSSANT: Adam Olenn, Roger Williams University

7-B (JEFFERSON): Climate Change, Energy and Security Politics
sponsored by the International Relations section

Baris Alan, Tulane University
Who Attends the COPs? A Quantitative Study of Delegation Patterns in Climate Negotiations

Aynal Haque, Bucknell University
Energy, Environment, and Politics: Local Activism, National Priorities and International Influence on Bangladesh's Climate Mitigation Effort

Hyunsup Ko, Syracuse University
Decoding Provocations: US-ROK Alliance Cohesion and North Korea's Strategic Behavior

PANEL CHAIR: Kevin Buterbaugh, Southern Connecticut State University
DISCUSSANT: Kevin Buterbaugh, Southern Connecticut State University

7-C (MADISON): The contemporary perils of Canadian Politics: revisiting leadership and the rule of law
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Blake Cameron, Carleton University
Podcasting as Dialogic Public Relations: A Ventriloquial Analysis of Justin Trudeau's Appearance on Uncommons

Jamie Gillies, St. Thomas University
Canadian Populism in 2025: 'Common Sense' Marketing and Branding in Canadian Politics

David Plazek, Vermont State University
Realist or liberal? Lester Pearson's time as Prime Minister

David Rovinsky, United States Department of State
James McHugh, University of Akron
Prairie Populism and the Canadian Constitution

Simon Vodrey, Carleton University
Gun Control & the Nexus of Political Polarization, Wedge Politics, & Anger as a Motivating Factor in Canadian Politics

PANEL CHAIR: Oleg Kodolov, University of Toronto
DISCUSSANT: Oleg Kodolov, University of Toronto

7-D (MONROE): Topics in Undergraduate Research 4: International Processes
sponsored by the Undergraduate Research Committee

Rosabella Daraoui, Saint Anselm College
Gender Dynamics and Diplomacy: How Female Leaders Respond to Interstate Conflicts

Brennan King, United States Coast Guard Academy
Fishing For Answers: Identifying Best Practices to Combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing in the Gulf of Guinea

Christine Landry, Saint Anselm College
Does a new wind blow? Comparing the public perceptions of Cape Wind and Vineyard Wind in Massachusetts

Isabella Santos, Simmons University
Assessing the Effectiveness of U.S. - Imposed Sanctions on the Maduro Regime and How Marco Rubio Should Respond

PANEL CHAIR: Scott McLean, Quinnipiac University
DISCUSSANT: Jonathan Bradley, University of Vermont

7-E (REAGAN): Congress and Religion: The Intersection of Faith and Politics
sponsored by the American Politics section

Anne Marie Cammisa, Georgetown University
A History of Religious Lobbying in Congress

Thomas Carty, Springfield College
Catholicism, Abortion, and Realignment in the U.S. Senate: The Cases of Joe Biden and Ted Kennedy

David Dulio, Oakland University
Congress and Religion: A Lifetime of Tension and Coexistence

PANEL CHAIR: David Dulio, Oakland University
DISCUSSANT: Thomas Massaro, Fordham University

7-F … n/a

7-G (AMMONOOSUC): Constitutional Debates
sponsored by the Public Law section

Mark Graber, University of Maryland School of Law
"Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment from the Perspective of Section Two of the Fourteenth Amendment"

Michael Paris, College of Staten Island (CUNY)
"The Road After Brown and the Roads Not Taken: An Exploration of Legal Doctrines and the Politics of Reform."

Stephan Stohler, Syracuse University
Political Orders and Constitutional Change: The Evolution of the Clear and Present Danger Test

PANEL CHAIR: Douglas Edlin, Colorado College
DISCUSSANT: Lisa Holmes, University of Vermont

7-H (DARTMOUTH): Honor, Vainglory, and the Social Compact
sponsored by the Political Theory section

Kevin Akalski, Baylor University
"Honor, meddling in everything": Montesquieu and the Dialectic of Honor in The Spirit of the Laws

Ken Courtney, University of New England
Social Contract, or Social Media, Libers, or Tygers?

Peter McNamara, Arizona State University
Adam Smith on Resistance and Revolution

Barry Shain, Colgate University
Madison's Innovative and Almost Successful (Court) Constitutionalism: Backward Looking Monarchical and Forward Looking Liberal

PANEL CHAIR: Brigid Flaherty Staab, Assumption University
DISCUSSANT: Paul Weisser, Baylor University

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE SERVICE
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8-A (ADAMS): American Political Thought and Political History

sponsored by the American Politics section

Jacob Boros, Saint Vincent College
Replacing the Frontier: The Turner Thesis and Progressive Conservation

Jordan Cash, Michigan State University
The Founder's Congress: Separation of Powers in the First and Second Congresses

Brigid Flaherty Staab, Assumption University
'As time and experience…may render proper': Joseph Story and Constitutional Change

Jason Jividen, Saint Vincent College
Tocqueville and the Contemporary Critique of Liberalism

PANEL CHAIR: Jerome Foss, Saint Vincent College
DISCUSSANT: Benjamin Kleinerman, Baylor University

8-B (JEFFERSON): Global Migration and Diasporic Influence

sponsored by the International Relations section

Baris Alan, Tulane University
Migration Networks as International Networks

Renato Fakhoury, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Dylan Goldman, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Shirley Rodriguez, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Unity in Diversity? National Slogans and Ontological Security in Heterogeneous Societies

Daniela Melo, Boston University
Diasporic Mobilization and U.S. Foreign Policy: The Case of Portuguese Americans during the Portuguese Revolution of 1974-75

Jay Rumas, Tufts University
Funding Atrocities in Plain Sight: How Myanmar Exploits Migrant Workers For Cash

PANEL CHAIR: Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University
DISCUSSANT: Paul Manuel, Georgetown University

8-C (MADISON): Factors impacting racial and ethnic minority voter mobilization, political participation, and policy preferences
sponsored by the Race, Gender, and Intersectionality section

Sydney Carr-Glenn, College of the Holy Cross
Chaya Crowder, Loyola Marymount University
Christine Slaughter, Boston University
Social Media and Candidate Favorability: The Case of Kamala Harris' Tik Tok Usage During the 2024 Presidential Election

Nhat-Dang Do, Trinity College
Abigail Fisher Williamson, Trinity College
Voter Captains and Social Network Mobilization: A Civically-Engaged Study Among Racial Minorities in Hartford, CT

Jose Lopez, University of Massachusetts - Boston
Spanish-language Media and Candidate Emergence

Matthew Tokeshi, Williams College
Nathan Chan, Loyola Marymount University
Invisible: Asian Americans in the American Imagination and Why It Matters for Politics

PANEL CHAIR: Wendy Wright, William Paterson University
DISCUSSANT: Wendy Wright, William Paterson University

8-D (MONROE): U.S.-Canadian Environmental Relations
sponsored by the Comparative and Canadian Politics section

Mary Baxter, Western University
Border Gas: How early efforts to transport natural gas across the Canada-U.S. border influenced the fuel's development and use in the Great Lakes region and beyond

Jim Kenny, Royal Military College of Canada
A Tale of Two Dams: Debating Hydroelectricity on the International St. John River, 1950-70

Mark Kuhlberg, Laurentian University
"Our industry depends on Canadian pulpwood:" Reconsidering The American Paper Industry's Fight Against Canada's Pulpwood Embargo, 1920-30

Owen Temby, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley
Evelyn Roozee, McGill University
Institutional and ideational features of Canadian-U.S. fishery governance networks: connectivity, coherence, and collaboration

PANEL CHAIR: Alexandre Couture Gagnon, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley
DISCUSSANT: Alexandre Couture Gagnon, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley

8-E (REAGAN): Environmental Policy and Innovation
sponsored by the Public Policy section

Gloria Donkor, University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Fashion Companies & Take-Back Programs: A content Analysis of Social Media to Assess Efforts & Influence in Encouraging Textile Recycling

James Elekwachi, University of Massachusetts - Boston
Consumer Acceptance of Cultivated Meat and Seafood among GENZs

Adanna Kalejaye, University of Massachusetts - Boston
Leapfrogging Water Systems: Policy and Institutional Pathways to Climate Resilience and Adaptation in Coastal Cities.

PANEL CHAIR: Jennifer Jackman, Salem State University
DISCUSSANT: Jennifer Jackman, Salem State University

8-F (WASHINGTON): Who We Are, How We Vote, and How We Teach: Identity's Role in Shaping the 2024 Election and Classroom Discussion
sponsored by the Race, Gender, and Intersectionality section

Quinn Bornstein, Georgetown University
Angel Saavedra Cisneros, Bowdoin College
Nhat-Dang Do, Trinity College
Nicholas Kapoor, Fairfield University

PANEL CHAIR: Carrie LeVan, Colby College

8-G (AMMONOOSUC): Terrorism and Security Challenges
sponsored by the International Relations section

Emily Agadzhanova, Georgia State University
Ontological Insecurity and Terrorism: Does Ontological Insecurity Lead to Acts of Lone Wolf Terrorism?

Sara Agresti, Central Connecticut State University
Women of the Fatherland: How Women Advocate for Themselves and Their Families Within Putin's Russia

Tobias Gibson, Westminster College
Counterterrorism in Film

Casey Stevens, Providence College
The Global Protected Area Mosaic and World Order

PANEL CHAIR: MJ Peterson, University of Massachusetts - Amherst
DISCUSSANT: MJ Peterson, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

8-H (DARTMOUTH): Author Meets Critics: *The Presidents and the People: Five Leaders Who Threatened Democracy and the Citizens Who Fought to Defend It*, by Corey Brettschneider
sponsored by the American Politics section

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Kevin McMahon, Trinity College
James Morone, Brown University
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8-I (PRINCESS): Rhetoric and Political Life
sponsored by the Political Theory section

Stephon Boatwright, Saint Michael's College
If You Only Did Your Research: The Myth of the Deep State and the Emergence of Decentralized Demagoguery

Grace Fabrycky, Yale University
On the Political Thought of Du Bois and Douglass

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Should the SEIU Disaffiliate from Policing Locals? Evidence from Rhode Island Collective Bargaining Agreements

Some criminal justice reformers within the labor movement, hoping to isolate police unions, encourage large unions (such as the Service Employees International Union [SEIU]) to disaffiliate from their policing locals. Labor relations observers warn the SEIU against disaffiliating with police: policing locals that break with large, liberal unions may respond by reaffiliating with the Fraternal Order of Police, a conservative union known for supporting officers accused of abuse. This paper's authors want to know if former SEIU-affiliated locals partnering with the FOP would be a setback for police reform. Are FOP locals any more hardline in support of controversial policing practices than their SEIU-linked counterparts? This paper seeks to determine if the FOP's collective bargaining agreements are any more protective of abusive police officers than are the SEIU-affiliated International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO)'s union contracts. To do so, we read every active police union contract from the state of Rhode Island. Using the coding scheme for analyzing police union contracts developed by Stephen Rushin, we quantified the number of objectionable provisions in each contract. Rhode Island's FOP contracts, on average, have more controversial provisions by a statistically significant amount. However, the two policing locals that have recently switched affiliation from the IBPO to more conservative unions did not, upon switching, negotiate more hardline contracts. Our analysis has not yielded firm evidence that Rhode Island's FOP contracts are more problematic than the state's IBPO contracts.

Emily Agadzhanova, Georgia State University

Ontological Insecurity and Terrorism: Does Ontological Insecurity Lead to Acts of Lone Wolf Terrorism?

In this paper, I aim to see if there is a relationship between ontological insecurity and lone wolf terrorism. In this paper, I look at lone wolf terrorism because lone wolf terrorism is often overlooked by counter-terrorism measures despite their being an increase in lone-wolf terrorist attacks. Using the constructivist approach, ontological security can be defined as having a continuous sense of self and self-identity that is also affirmed and recognized by others. When an individual becomes ontologically insecure their perceived sense of self is threatened leading them to be insecure and feel unbalanced. For this paper, I will be using the Global Terrorism Databases' definition for terrorism which defines terrorism as acts of violence by non-state actors to attain political, economic, religious or social goals. I propose a qualitative case study using process tracing, content analysis and media coverage to analyze terrorists, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev who committed the Boston Marathon Bombing and Brenton Tarrant who committed the Christchurch Mosque shooting. I hypothesize that ontological insecurity will lead to lone wolf terrorist activity due to the terrorist grasping to acts of political and religious violence to return their sense of self that was disrupted and threatened. This research contributes to the literature by proposing how the disruption of self-identity at the individual level can cause those to commit acts of terrorism which goes against the norm that terrorists are solely motivated by political, social, religious and economic goals.

Sara Agresti, Central Connecticut State University

Women of the Fatherland: How Women Advocate for Themselves and Their Families Within Putin's Russia

After two decades in office, Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin has consolidated a considerable amount of power within his government. Due to the notoriety the president has gathered because of his position, a variety of opinions have developed based on the actions he has taken during his administration. While many of these opinions stem from scholarly sources, past studies gathering opinions on the president within Russia are subjected to falsehoods, or a reputational cascade. A reputational cascade is when private citizens express public opinions that differ from their own in an effort to be socially desirable. While citizens may unknowingly partake in a reputational cascade, citizens may also change their public views to avoid fear of retaliation. Within this politically charged media landscape, Russian women have been placed into a unique position to advocate for themselves and their families. Shifts within household norms, music activism, and fighting to bring their male loved ones home from ongoing conflict has led to a perceived increase in female-led protests against the Putin regime. Through an in-depth analysis of a variety of sources, this paper will examine the role of women in these situations, and determine whether the ongoing effects of their advocacy, regardless of intention, has influenced Putin's Russia.

Ashley Aguilera, Southern Connecticut State University

The Zoning Divide in Connecticut: How Exclusionary Zoning Laws Impact the Current Housing Crisis in the State

The legacy of racial exclusion in American towns is deeply embedded in historical policies and practices that deliberately segregated communities along racial lines. In Connecticut, and across the United States, these discriminatory practices—such as sundown towns, restrictive zoning laws, and redlining—have long shaped the racial and economic landscape. Scholars have documented how government policies intentionally created and maintained racially segregated neighborhoods, depriving African Americans of opportunities for homeownership and wealth accumulation. Despite the significant progress made since the Civil Rights Movement and the Fair Housing Act, the legacy of these discriminatory practices remains evident today in patterns of residential segregation and inequality. This ongoing racial exclusion, however, is not inevitable; recent legislative efforts in Connecticut, such as proposals for transit-oriented development and zoning reform, represent attempts to address the state's history of segregation and foster more inclusive communities. Yet, as these proposals face resistance, the challenge remains: how can Connecticut's policymakers confront the deep-rooted inequalities that continue to shape the state's housing landscape? There must be bold action taken by the Democratic Party in the state to redress exclusive zoning that has contributed to the residential segregation that African American residents suffer from today.

Kevin Akalski, Baylor University

"Honor, meddling in everything": Montesquieu and the Dialectic of Honor in The Spirit of the Laws

One of the most prominent debates in contemporary political theory scholarship concerns the importance of recognition (e.g., Honneth 1995; Taylor 1994). Frequently, scholars of recognition take their bearings from such canonical political thinkers as Rousseau and Hegel to show that, in the words of Charles Taylor, recognition "is a vital human need," and as such, misrecognition can be the cause of "real damage, real distortion" (Taylor 1994: 25-6). A thinker who has been neglected by the literature on recognition, however, is Montesquieu. In this paper, I interpret Montesquieu's reflections on honor in The Spirit of the Laws to construct a Montesquieuean theory of recognition. My paper has three parts. In the first section, I examine Montesquieu's thoughts on honor as they come to sight in his remarks on monarchy at the beginning of the text. And since Montesquieu appears to think that honor is especially at home in the French monarchy, I proceed, in the second part of my paper, to uncover how the desire for recognition manifests itself politically in Montesquieu's analysis of the development of Frankish law in Books 27-31. Overall, I draw on the work of Nathaniel Gilmore to argue in the first two sections of the paper that, unlike Rousseau and Hegel, Montesquieu does not understand honor to be an end in itself. Instead, honor is good because it provides on the political level an approximation to a form of recognition that is also the most natural pleasure that human beings can enjoy – the charming interactions between the sexes. The final part of my paper, then, provides speculation about how Montesquieu thinks that the advent of modern commercial societies will affect human beings' desire for honor and recognition.

Isil Akbulut Gok, Sacred Heart University

United Nations Civilian Peacekeeping and Human Rights Protection

This study explores civilian personnel's impact in performing the essential tasks of multidimensional peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Although several recent studies have supported the effectiveness of peace operations, the existing research on peacekeeping effectiveness focuses narrowly on the effect of uniformed personnel—potentially overlooking how civilian personnel can be as effective as uniformed personnel in carrying out the core tasks of PKOs. Therefore, this study addresses two main questions: What impact do unarmed civilian peacekeepers (UCPs) have on United Nations (UN) peacekeeping? How does the presence of UCPs affect human rights and protection of civilians in the countries where UN PKOs are deployed? This study suggests that increasing the number of UCPs in UN PKOs is critical to the effectiveness of peacekeeping in protecting human rights and civilians in the host countries. Expectations relating to the effectiveness of UCPs are tested on peace missions deployed in intrastate conflicts between 2016–2023, and the findings suggest that civilian peacekeepers are effective in promoting human rights and protecting civilians in countries experiencing intrastate conflicts. This study's findings offer useful guidance for policymakers and peacekeeping organizations, particularly the UN, in discerning effective applications and deployments of PKOs.

Baris Alan, Tulane University

Migration Networks as International Networks

This paper argues that cross-border population movements form a migration network that, like economic networks, can serve as a potent bargaining tool in international relations. The rapid globalization since the 1970s has led to increased interdependence among nations, resulting in new opportunities and risks across various domains, including politics, economics, and security. Traditionally, economic networks have been recognized for their hierarchical structures and the power asymmetries they create, with dominant states leveraging their central positions to exert influence. However, migration networks, often overlooked in this context, similarly exhibit hierarchical characteristics, with central nodes occupied by transit and sending states that play a crucial role in global migration flows. This paper examines how weaker states, particularly those positioned as transit countries, can exploit their roles within migration networks to coerce more powerful nations. By comparing migration networks to economic networks, this research highlights the unique attributes of migration flows—such as their unpredictability, volume, and the betweenness centrality of transit states—that enable these countries to wield significant influence over stronger states, particularly when those states have vulnerabilities related to migration interdependence. Through a detailed analysis of cases like Turkey's leverage over the European Union during the Syrian refugee crisis, this paper demonstrates how migration networks can be weaponized. The findings suggest that migration networks, much like economic networks, offer states the ability to monitor and control flows, exert choke-point power, and even use normative pressures as strategic tools in international diplomacy. As globalization continues to evolve, understanding the dynamics of migration networks and their potential for coercive use becomes increasingly critical for both weaker and stronger states alike.

Baris Alan, Tulane University

Who Attends the COPs? A Quantitative Study of Delegation Patterns in Climate Negotiations

The UN Climate Change Conference (COP) has attracted a growing number and diversity of participants from both governments and non-governmental organizations. Attendance has risen dramatically, from 859 participants representing 170 countries and 1,056 participants from observer organizations at the first COP in 1995, to 33,158 individuals from 195 countries and 50,756 individuals from 8,016 organizations at the most recent COP in 2024. Despite fluctuations, the overall trend of attendance has been upward and increasingly diversified. Various factors, including global developments such as wars and economic crises, domestic interest representation processes, and the host country's stance on climate issues, shape the outcomes of this key global climate decision-making process. The size and composition of delegations from governments and non-governmental organizations reflect a collective desire to influence COP outcomes. However, while there have been qualitative assessments and limited quantitative studies on the size of national delegations, there is no comprehensive quantitative analysis of the delegation dynamics of governments and non-governmental institutions at the COPs. For instance, what explains why some countries predominantly send representatives from their Ministries of Energy, while others prioritize academics? Similarly, which private sector industries send the largest delegations, and from which countries? This project seeks to answer these questions in two ways. First, it provides a descriptive analysis of COP attendees over time, offering country-level and sectoral profiles by employing Python-based data analysis. Second, it conducts a statistical analysis to identify the most significant determinants of delegation patterns among governmental and non-governmental institutions. Preliminary results suggest that developed nations send larger delegations due to greater economic resources, while the involvement of the fossil fuel industry in climate negotiations has grown significantly over the years.

Elizabeth Aliu, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Beyond Freedom: A Qualitative content analysis research examining the intersectionality of freedom & independence

This paper examines how feminist and gender studies conceptualize freedom and independence within socio-cultural and political frameworks. By analyzing 1,717 articles from five leading academic journals, the study employs relational content analysis and cognitive mapping to explore how language and social practices shape definitions of freedom and independence. A key distinction emerges between the two concepts. Freedom is frequently associated with collective action, rooted in social movements and structural systems that advocate for equity and justice. In contrast, independence is framed as individual agency and self-sufficiency within societal constraints. However, independence is also revealed as a relational construct influenced by intersecting identities, including race, gender, and class. This relational aspect highlights the complexity of freedom, where language and social practices can simultaneously reinforce and challenge established norms. The findings call attention to the need for feminist frameworks that integrate both individual and collective dimensions of freedom. Freedom is conceptualized as a dynamic and evolving construct, negotiated through interactions between individuals and collectives. By adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this research emphasizes the importance of understanding how independence and freedom are shaped across diverse social contexts. The study contributes to feminist theory by expanding the discourse on freedom and independence. It highlights the value of analyzing these constructs not as isolated phenomena but as interrelated and context-dependent. This nuanced perspective adds depth to theoretical debates and provides practical insights for advancing equity and justice in varied socio-political landscapes.

Ihsan Alkhatib, Murray State University

Gender in Immigration Court: Orientalism on Trial

There are five grounds for asylum. Gender is not one of them. Gender however comes up under the grounds of Particular Social Group. Two approaches to gender claims from the Arab world are presented and compared. I argue that one approach is grounded in Orientalism and perpetuates Islamophobia. The second approach is is grounded in a global view of gender and is more accurate representation of gender reality. Immigration lawyers are bound by Rules of Ethics. Advocacy grounded in the second approach is more consistent with the ethical obligations of lawyers.

Mohammad Al-Mailam, Harvard University

Who Comes and Who Goes? Explaining Citizens' Migration Preferences in the Gulf

The Arabian Peninsula is home to more than 31 million expatriates, accounting for about 15% of the global migrant population. While a rich, interdisciplinary literature has long investigated the origins and consequences of labor migration in the region, extant scholarship has relatively little to say about the determinants of natives' migrant preferences in the Gulf. This oversight is surprising in light of mounting campaigns demanding deportations of foreigners in these migrant-majority countries. I thus ask: "What explains citizens' attitudes towards migrants in the Gulf?" Understanding migration preferences in the Gulf contributes to the broader trans-regional literature on nativism. This is because prevailing accounts of anti-immigrant attitudes in European democracies presuppose the institutional context of migration preference formation. How do we understand opposition to migrants in authoritarian rentier contexts where there is little sectoral competition between natives and foreigners, limited welfare spending on non-nationals, and virtually no path to naturalization and citizenship? Put differently, how do we understand anti-immigrant sentiments when our prevailing explanations do not appear to hold? To answer these questions, I employ original surveys and conjoint experiments in Kuwait and the UAE, leveraging the fact that citizens are the primary decision-makers on migration policy in the Gulf with the power to offer or withdraw sponsorship to a given migrant. The analysis suggest that Gulf citizens' attitudes toward migration are best understood through the lens of status preservation, with citizens perceiving a loss in subjective social status more likely to oppose migration writ large, and less likely to prefer migration of culturally proximate groups in particular, compared to other citizens experiencing relative status security. This research thus contributes to extant scholarship by covering new empirical ground and by extending our theoretical toolkit to consider complex dynamics of status preservation that go beyond material self-interest, cultural threat, or sociotropic concern.

Gwendoline Alphonso, Fairfield University

Saving Lives, Reopening the Economy: The Neoliberal Paradigm and US subnational decision-making during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The paper examines US subnational policymaking during the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on variations in US state-level decisions to scale back social distancing and other public health measures in favor of reopening businesses and returning people to jobs, the paper asks why some states pursued a relaxation of these interventions despite not meeting CDC benchmarks for "reopening" while others did not. Analyzing over 5000 governors' messages across all states in the first wave of the pandemic (March to Sept 2021) and through two detailed case studies of New York and Texas, the paper identifies and assembles the ideational and institutional mechanisms of US subnational welfare policy regimes. Our explanation points to the durability of the neoliberal policy paradigm institutionalized in the 1990s that, we argue, impacted subnational policymaking in disparate ways. In the wake of the transformation of national welfare to state-led workfare in the late twentieth century, states differentially assembled policy regimes focused primarily on regulation or redistribution that disparately addressed, constructed, and shaped unequal safety net protections across racial, gender, and employment categories. By centralizing the significance of subnational policy regimes and exploring the relationship between policy paradigms and policymaking, the paper contributes to American political development and public policy literature that connects the rise and development of the neoliberal state to the production and embedment of social marginality, demonstrating its ongoing fortitude and durability despite the massive scale of the COVID disruption.

Benjamin Arah, Bowie State University

Intra-State Conflicts & Wars as Post-Independence Nation-Building Challenges in Africa (1960-2023)

Africa (as a continent of about 54 independent and sovereign states), as Mazrui would describe it, is between the birth of modern nationalism and the quest for nationhood or nation-building. In recent years (since 19580), most of the independent Africa states (namely Nigeria, Central African Republic, Chad, Rwanda, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Somalia, Libya, Sudan-South Sudan, Angola, etc.) have continued to experience devastating intra-state conflicts, military coups and subsequent violent wars in addition to the other post-colonial nation-building challenges. With some of these post-independent intrastate conflicts and wars, Africa has been ranked the second continent with an increasing number of ongoing violent armed conflicts in which over 40 million Africans have been displaced and/or killed. Since becoming politically independent from their unique European colonial domination, from 1951 until 1980; most of the African countries in this study were subjected to and consumed with intrastate conflicts (ethnic, religious, armed, etc.) that resulted in bloody civil wars. The list of these types of conflicts in Africa is staggering and depressing, and that is why this paper focuses on examining the nature, sources or causes, and consequences or implications of the selected post-independence intra-state conflicts and wars in Africa. It also attempts to address the question of why conflict resolution strategies, in Africa, most often fail or result in bloody violence in which Africans (women and children) die and properties destroyed.

Brian Arbour, John Jay College, CUNY

The Party Changes Its Mind: Democratic Presidential Endorsements in 2007 vs. 2008

The "party decides" thesis holds that party elites are effective in steering presidential nominations to their preferred candidate, cueing voters to follow the collective decision made by the elites. To measure the decisions of party elites, the authors of The Party Decides focus on endorsements by these party elites. The 2008 Democratic presidential nomination challenges this thesis. In 2007, Democratic elites gave a majority of their endorsements to Hillary Clinton. In 2008, a majority of endorsements went to Barack Obama. This paper examines why Democratic elites changed their minds about the relative merits of Clinton and Obama between the invisible primary (i.e. 2007) and voters weighed in in caucuses and primary elections (i.e. 2008). We find that endorsements in 2008 tended to come after primary or caucuses in an endorser's state were held and tended to support the winner of that state's primary, suggesting that party elites followed the cues of voters, rather than the other way around.

Emily Armand, Simmons University

Capitalism As a Barrier to Equitable Healthcare

The American state holds an immense amount of power when it comes to the ability to create, implement, and change public policy. These powers are both enabled and constrained by the economic system of capitalism. This study explores the ways in which capitalism impedes U.S. policymakers from improving equity within policy surrounding healthcare. It argues that due to the nature of capitalism centering upon the expansion and growth of capital, equitable policy regarding healthcare is constrained by the prioritization of economic growth and the accumulation of capital. On the flip side, the power to create policy that benefits corporations and the infinitely expanding growth of capital is enabled by capitalism. Although there are aspects of the healthcare system that are public, such as Medicare and Medicaid, three-quarters of the entire industry remains privatized. As a result, the United States spends the most amount of money per capita on healthcare in the world while continuing to yield unfavorable outcomes such as lower quality of care, higher costs, and reduced access.

Graham Backman, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Is There A Race Card in the Deck? Implicit and Explicit Racial Appeals in Modern Presidential Campaigns.

In The Race Card (2001) Tali Mendelberg argues that campaigns, given the prevalence and strength of the norm of racial equality, use implicit racial appeals as a method to mobilize white voters. Since then, many scholars have tested Mendelberg's theory concerning the impact of exposure to these messages with varied results (for review see Stephens-Dougan 2021). While these scholars have expanded our knowledge of the influence of racial appeals, few have examined whether the implicit or explicit messages that Mendelberg discovers are actually seen in modern presidential campaigns. To fill this gap, I leverage the Wesleyan Media Project's (WMP) database of Presidential ads and systematically hand-code the population of presidential television ads from 2012 to 2020 for their usage of implicit or explicit racial appeals. I find that while implicit racial messages can be found in every presidential campaign since 2012 they make up a smaller proportion of a campaign's total advertisement strategy. These implicit messages are also found with less frequency over time as campaigns diversified and specified their ads to appeal to specific constituencies instead of a one size fits all approach. The declining use of implicit racial appeals by these campaigns leads to questions regarding the modern utility and applicability of Mendelberg's theory of implicit-explicit racial appeals and whether these appeals still mobilize white voters in the ways that they did over thirty-five years ago.

James Baker, Syracuse University College of Law

Promise and peril: the next ten years of national security AI and its regulation

This paper offers an explication of the nature of the emerging subfield of security studies: national security and artificial intelligence. An explanation of the political, legal, and military lenses in relation to AI and how AI has evolved in terms of these areas and national security will occur. This chapter will help the security studies professional understand better how national security policy is being affected and altered due to AI.

Jason Barabas, Dartmouth College

The Effects of Incentives, Reminders, and Messaging on Survey Participation in New Hampshire Pre-Election Polling

We report the results of a large (n=100,000 invitations) two-wave random sample pre-election poll in the state of New Hampshire ahead of the November 2024 election that featured experimental variations on (1) incentives, (2) reminders to participate, and (3) the stated subject of the survey. Due to our registration-based sampling (RBS) techniques, we have a large set of pre-treatment covariates that permit us to (A) explore sampling biases, and (B) estimate heterogenous effects among important demographic subgroups (e.g., gender, age, race) and for individuals with highly variable turnout histories. Our preliminary results suggest that a large sweepstakes incentive (i.e., a chance to win one of twenty $250 gift cards) worked best when combined with reminder postcards or email messages encouraging survey participation in polls asking for input on "elections" or "events." Despite the strong statistical significance of our results, the substantive effects were small, increasing survey participation by just over one percentage point on an already low baseline level of survey response in the single digits and even after adjusting for treatment noncompliance (i.e., thousands of returned postcard mailers). In the end, though, while the effects on response rates were modest, the overall design may prove to be helpful when it comes to adjusting electoral predictions for the sample selection biases that we observed.

Mary Baxter, Western University

Border Gas: How early efforts to transport natural gas across the Canada-U.S. border influenced the fuel's development and use in the Great Lakes region and beyond

In Canadian energy histories, accounts of Western Canadian gas reserves routinely overshadow those of Ontario's early gas fields, where its use has been understood as a regional phenomenon with little impact on shaping long-term trends in energy policy and consumption. Drawing on documents in Canadian, Ontario and American national archives and newspaper accounts from the period to detail the industry's development across an international border, this paper will argue the opposite: The development of these first gas fields prompted the establishment of the regulatory and physical infrastructure for sharing natural gas across the border, including the 1907 Fluid and Electricity Act in Canada to regulate the export of Canadian natural gas, and an 1899 U.S. Supreme Court decision that classified natural gas as a crude bitumen exempt from import duties. The cross-border shipment of this gas presented an opportunity to hone the technology used to ship the fuel over waterbeds and long distances. It also helped to foster an understanding of the fuel's abundance of natural gas: individual wells and even fields might run dry, but other sources could be found. These two components would become essential for the development of natural gas trade between and within the two countries. Similarly, regulations introduced in Ontario to address exports and safeguard supply would inform Canadian conservation policy concerning natural gas production and distribution. Taking a close look at the development, transport and consumption of gas from these two early fields, I will also explore how the questions and issues that arose from sharing this resource across the border contributed to a much larger debate in both countries concerning ways to access and transport natural gas, and who should use it.

April Beatty, Simmons University

Bridging the Gap: Mitigating Business Resistance to Wage Reform

This study examines the systemic challenges posed by business resistance to wage reform policies, a critical obstacle to addressing income inequality in the United States. Employers frequently counter reforms such as raising the minimum wage, enforcing wage transparency, and expanding paid family leave with tactics including workforce reductions, increased automation, and the misclassification of employees. Drawing on case studies from state and local wage reform efforts, this paper analyzes targeted countermeasures to mitigate such resistance. Proposed strategies include providing tax incentives to incentivize compliance, enforcing penalties for labor law violations, and implementing reskilling initiatives to offset job displacement. By identifying these interventions, the study offers a nuanced framework for policymakers and advocates to navigate opposition and ensure the equitable implementation of wage reform policies.

Kimberly Bergendahl, University of Connecticut

Supreme Court Nominations and the Senate Judiciary Committee: What to Expect During a Second Trump Presidency

Following the results of the 2024 presidential election, speculation has arisen that President-elect Trump could have the opportunity to nominate at least two justices to the U.S. Supreme Court before the 2026 midterm elections. Although hypothetical, it is worthwhile to examine how the Senate Judiciary Committee might approach reviewing such nominations during the early years of Trump's second presidency. Building on previous works by this author and others, this current work argues that returning committee members are likely to maintain similar evaluation patterns, with members of the president's party demonstrating scrutiny comparable to that of the opposition party. Additional attention will be given to new committee members based on a review of their public statements regarding this particular assignment.

Marija Bingulac, Federal Reserve Bank Of Boston

Romani People in the United States: A Socio-Economic Statistical Profile

Romani people, a population chronicled in the US since the 1600s (Hancock 1987), belong to a global community that scattered and settled across the world after leaving India about a millennium ago. Varied political, social, and economic developments pushed waves of Roma immigration to the US, mostly from Europe, where most Romani people have lived, and some have been forced to flee due to repeated persecution and/or inequities. Today, the United States is home to at least one million Romani Americans, with some estimating the population to be between two and four million (Wilson, 2022). The largest population is clustered in metropolitan areas of Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Portland, San Francisco, and Seattle (Matache & Bhabha, 2021). Romani people have traditionally been overlooked in wide-ranging American academic, cultural, and institutional processes. Little is known about how this population group is doing in terms of socio-economic indicators. The scarce data and scholarship that do exist, suggests the presence of social and economic inequities linked to visible forms of interpersonal and institutional discrimination. There is an acute need for more data that examine the experiences and realities of this unknown population to inform policy, track progress, and advance social change. This paper answers that need. Utilizing American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year pooled estimates for 2013-2022, we explore socio-economic profile of Romani people in the United States and how it compares to that of three major groups. We analyze how Romani people self-identify racially ("white" or "non-white") and explore socio-economic differences among Romani Americans by their self-identified race and gender. Our paper reveals trends that are indicative of major racialized socio-economic realities. We discuss these in larger context of how "official" data might compare to lived realities of Romani people.

Robert Bivens, Eastern Illinois University

Productive Shared Identity: Angola, Lusophony, and LGBTQIA Acceptance

In 2019, Angola changed its penal code. One of the notable changes that occurred was the state eliminated its previous colonial law that outlawed "vices against nature." With this elimination, nonheteronormative relationships had become legal in the state. In addition, the state also included discrimination laws that protected nonheteronormative people from hate crimes and employment discrimination. Considering Angola's status as a semi-authoritarian state that did not seem to be close to making progress on LGBTQIA reform, it was puzzling to see such a significant reform that occurred so quickly. While previous explanations have been able to explain similar cases, none of them can adequately explain Angola's decision in 2019. I argue that shared identity, as a mechanism, functions as a productive means of power that is both indirect and inert. This Productive Shared Identity compels states that share this identity to adopt similar norms of appropriate behavior. Using process tracing methods and my analytical framework, I demonstrate how relationships between Lusophone state actors compelled Angolan policymakers to adopt legal LGBTQIA norms in 2019.

Stephon Boatwright, Saint Michael's College

If You Only Did Your Research: The Myth of the Deep State and the Emergence of Decentralized Demagoguery

Theodor Adorno's The Psychological Technique of Martin Luther Thomas' Radio Addresses (2000) examined the rhetorical methods populist demagogues use to manipulate audiences. His If You Only Knew Technique featured prominently as one of the five "strategies of terror" identified in his analysis. This method epistemologically isolates followers by delegitimizing established knowledge centers and offering exclusive, fragmentary insights into hidden truths and conspiracies in exchange for political loyalty. Modern technological advancements have both amplified this approach and introduced a new, intersubjective element: followers collaboratively construct and validate their own "privileged" knowledge. This research further develops Adorno's insights to explore the evolution of this phenomenon, introducing the concept of the "If You Did Your Research" technique. The paper analyzes discourse surrounding the existence of a covert "Deep State", and the January 6th insurrection using two datasets: Donald Trump's public and private communications across various platforms and platforms (n=200) and QAnon-related discourse, including Q's original communiqués ("Drops") and the communal interpretations generated by followers (n=700). The findings highlight a qualitative and quantitative shift in demagoguery, where decentralized, participatory social media platforms engender movements sustained by collective, conspiratorial knowledge creation rather than singular leadership. This study reinforces the enduring relevance of Adorno's analysis of Martin Luther Thaomas, while offering a critical perspective on the intersection of digital communication, conspiracy-driven populism, and intersubjective demagoguery in the 21st century.

Quinn Bornstein, Georgetown University

Bridging the Connecticut River Divide: Diffusion of Political Influence across State Boundaries

Does social and political influence diffuse across borders demarcated by geophysical barriers like rivers or mountains that may limit human interaction? The natural environment is abundant with obstacles and impediments to the kinds of personal social relations that make socialization and political influence possible. In this research we deploy GIS tools and spatial data analysis to study variation in the political similarity of communities on each side of a water boundary some of which are connected by bridges, while others are not. Our empirical focus is on the Connecticut River forming the eastern border of Vermont and the western border of New Hampshire. The river is sufficiently long and wide that it is not a trivial hindrance to the interaction of residents on each bank. Our leading hypothesis is that features of the built environment have led to more similarity in the political orientations of towns on opposite sides when they have been linked by a bridge traversing the river. When no bridge is present to enable cross-boundary interaction, the towns have remained politically more divergent, like their respective states.

Jacob Boros, Saint Vincent College

Replacing the Frontier: The Turner Thesis and Progressive Conservation

Scholars who study the Progressive Era from the perspective of American political thought often deemphasize the place of conservation within the Progressive project in favor of other theoretical or practical implications of the Era and its thought. This paper endeavors to highlight the theoretical consistency between the desire to conserve natural resources and the broader Progressive understanding of American politics. In my argument, I read Frederick Jackson Turner's famous "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" as a specifically Progressive document. Turner's emphasis on historical change and physical growth as what defines America in turn highlights the two benefits America historically received from the seemingly illimitable western frontier: natural resources, on one hand, and lessons about self-government and democracy, on the other. With the closing of the frontier, something, or someone, must provide these benefits. Progressivism posits that the nation and its government can provide both. While American political thought scholarship focuses heavily on the second category of benefits, highlighting "new freedoms," "new nationalisms," and "Hamiltonian means for Jeffersonian ends," the rise of the American conservation bureaucracy represents an effort to continue to reap the first category, the physical goods that nature provides to the country. In this way, conservation is integral to the Progressive project, and it is rooted in a deeply Turnerian way of understanding America.

Jonathan Bradley, University of Vermont

Creation care: new framing of environmentalism for religious conservatives.

Language framing is powerful when shaping political communications. The proper framing of policies and/or positions can message directly to target audiences. Environmental language framing has not proven successful with American religious conservatives. American religious conservatives, aligning with conservative politics, tend to eschew environmental protection. American religious conservatives tend to vote Republican 70% and are the base of the Republican Party. There have been efforts to try to introduce environmental framing into American conservative religious dialogue. Mostly, that effort has consisted of a debate between Biblical interpretations of Genesis 1:28. The interpretation of the verse can be read as having "Dominion over the Earth," or "Stewardship of the Earth," with "Stewardship" being the more environmentally friendly interpretation. There is little evidence that this framing has had any effect. Over the last few years, several Christian denominations have started to use "Creation care" as a new frame to incorporate environmental concerns, but to move it away from an interpretive debate about scripture. My paper will examine the rise and use of this term in conservative Christian denominations and churches, to see if the frame is being adopted by the elites of those organizations. This work will add to the often ignored intersection of religion, politics, and environmentalism in the US.

Patrick Bratton, United States Army War College

"The Empire is Dead! Long live the Liberal Empire! KM Panikkar, the end of the British Empire in Asia, and the Idea of a New Liberal Order in Asia"

Often called "India's Mahan," KM Panikkar was one of the most well-known Indian commentators on geopolitics in the 1940s and 1950s. Today's views of Panikkar are shaped by an American view from the Korean War that Panikkar was a tool of Maoist China. However, in the 1940s, Panikkar's thinking dovetailed with imperial reformers, like Lionel Curtis, who sought a close Indo-British partnership in post-WWII Asia. This paper does a textual analysis of Panikkar's writings (along with documents from Indian and British archives), on Indo-British leadership in a new Asian regional organization. Panikkar believed that a combination of representative government and unification of Asia into a regional organization would guarantee the security and stability of post-War Asia. Panikkar put forward a solution for both the domestic and international sphere in a series of lectures and articles that drew not only upon his well-known geopolitical views, but also upon the ideas of the Round Table Movement.

Beau Breslin, Skidmore College

Founding Edits: How Revisions Reshaped America

Founding Edits is a project focused on the redactions and revisions to America's most important founding-era texts. It explores the stories behind the edits and the implications those edits have had on American history. From the famous slavery clause in Jefferson's draft Declaration to the extraordinary revision to the Constitution's Preamble, these (and other) emendations are part of a broader American narrative that has not yet been told. Founding Edits is about the deliberate deletion of ideas that could have shaped American history differently. It contemplates the negative spaces of our Founding tale. The redactions all represent powerful ideas that served the authors' vision for a new polity. And yet all were rejected and the words disappeared from the documents. As we celebrate the semiquincentennial, it seems important to relive the stories of those redactions and to reexamine the crucial questions of America's birth through the lens of what could have been.

Timothy Bristol, Southern Connecticut State University

Ranked Choice Voting In Connecticut

My paper is a policy study on ranked choice voting, focusing on Maine and Connecticut. Connecticut politicians have become interested in Ranked choice voting in the last few years and a bill was drafted last year to adopt ranked choice voting in the state. Governor Ned Lamont has also created a working group that has made recommendations for how to implement ranked choice voting in CT. I also want to see how ranked choice voting has fared in Maine since it was passed into law in 2016. I would compare and contrast how Maine and Connecticut see the policy and determine if ranked choice voting is a good fit for Connecticut.

Courtney Broscious, Eastern Connecticut State University

The Role of Deservingness in Criminal Justice Attitudes

Crime and justice have grown in salience since the 2022 mid-term elections and were a focal point of the 2024 Presidential campaigns. Punitive attitudes about crime have increased dramatically since 2020, though progressive criminal justice reforms remain popular. This study examines the influence of perceived deservingness on public attitudes toward criminal justice outcomes and the disconnect between the public's general support for less punitive policies and their tendency to favor harsher punishments in individual cases. Using an online survey experiment this study examines the effects of the perceived deservingness of an offender, the race of offenders, and the type of crime committed on sentencing outcomes. The findings reveal that deservingness frames significantly reduce the punitiveness in respondent's evaluations of appropriate sentences, regardless of the offender's race or the respondent's political affiliation. However, these effects do not extend to policy preferences or candidate support.

Kevin Buterbaugh, Southern Connecticut State University

Ambassadorial Appointments under Democratic and Republican Administrations: Does partisanship affect where women ambassadors are placed by presidents.

This paper uses a data set created of all ambassadorial appointments for five presidents, GHW Bush, Clinton, GW Bush, Obama and Trump, to assess whether the party of the president affects where women are placed as ambassadors. We expect that Democratic presidents will differ from Republicans based on differences in how sex/gender roles are perceived. We use a variety of measures to examine and assess potential differences. These include the level of danger of a posting, as determined by the state department, the power of the country, the importance of the country to the U.S., the level of gender equity in the country, and the level of democracy. We expect that Republicans will be less likely to appoint a woman to an ambassadorship in a dangerous country, a more powerful country and a more important country. We also expect that republicans will be more likely to appointment women to an ambassadorship in countries with more gender equality and that are more democratic. The choice of who represents the United States, or any country for that matter, impacts it foreign policy and soft power. Ambassadors are the face of a country. As such, knowing why someone is placed in a posting is significant for explaining how a country is perceived and also how a country works to obtain its interests internationally.

Ze Cai, New York University

Know Your Opponent and Know Yourself: How Chinese Local Governments Adaptively Adjust to the Relative Performance Evaluation?

Relying on various reference standards to make relative performance evaluation (RPE) is indispensable for attaining precise information and making adjustment accordingly. This article examines how Chinese local governments adaptively adjust (AA) to the RPE. Utilizing a 5-year monthly panel dataset of "Safety Index" in Zhejiang Province, China, our empirical findings reveal various dynamics of RPE-AA: (1) performers with Positve/Negative (higher/lower than reference standards) RPE will "slack off"/"bounce back" in the future, in which (2) Negative RPE tend to trigger stronger response than Positive RPE, (3) Social RPE (based on peer comparison) proves more influential than Historical RPE (based on comparison to the past), (4) the combination of Historical-Social and Positive-Negative RPE generates more fuzzy and less informative signals, and (5) the effect of RPE tends to play a continuous role but shrink rapidly after more than a month. In addition, this study also contributes to qualitatively identifying various alternative explanations and mechanisms that remain relatively unnoticed by scholarship. Two major contextual alternative explanations are: (1) Positive RPE can also have incentivizing effects, so as negativizing effects of Negative RPE; (2) Social RPE is not always more important than Historical RPE, so as Negative RPE than Positive RPE. Various potential mechanisms include (1) sequential allocation shift under the multiple task-goal environment with limited administrative resources; (2) intertemporal incentive problem of "ratchet effect"; (3) natural "cooling down effect" from temporary overheating; (4) unstable effort-outcome connection and various forms of statistical adjustment or data manipulation; 5) natural fluctuation of indicator numbers caused by occasional accidents. Based on all above, the ultimate goal of this study is to theorize the RPE as an underlying, relatively imperceptible, but robust mechanism within the organizational routines, persistently generating a stable set of information, (dis)incentives, and pressures and triggering a variety of Chinese local governments' adaptive adjustment.

Costel Calin, Southern Connecticut State University

Media, War, and Bias: Analyzing Liberal and Conservative Narratives of the Israel-Hamas Conflict

The recent conflict between Israel and Hamas has reignited debates on media bias and the role of news outlets in shaping public perception. This paper examines the portrayal of the war in two leading U.S. newspapers: The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, representing liberal and conservative perspectives respectively. This examination includes analyzing both news articles and opinion pieces published during the first month of the conflict, to capture a holistic view of media representation. The paper also identifies recurring themes, tone, and the emphasis placed on different aspects of the war, such as humanitarian impact versus security concerns. The findings will be based on a qualitative thematic analysis that will enable the identification of any significant differences in language between liberal and conservative media outlets. Preliminary findings suggest notable differences in framing: liberal outlets often prioritize humanitarian crises and the plight of civilians, while conservative outlets focus on issues of national security and the legitimacy of Israel's military response. This dichotomy not only reflects ideological divides but also has broader implications for public opinion and policy advocacy in the U.S. By analyzing the media coverage of the conflict, the paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on media responsibility and the challenges of presenting balanced reporting in politically charged conflicts. It invites further discussion on how media framing impacts not only domestic audiences but also global perceptions of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Blake Cameron, Carleton University

Podcasting as Dialogic Public Relations: A Ventriloquial Analysis of Justin Trudeau's Appearance on Uncommons

Podcasts have emerged as a popular forum for political leadership candidates to present themselves to publics. While the affordances and limitations of the medium have been discussed (Tranová & Veneti, 2021; Modell, 2024), to date few have employed dialogue analysis to understand the performative aspects of candidacy as they appear directly negotiated in the terra firma of interaction. This paper aims to bridge this gap by simultaneously considering genre and interaction in political podcast interviews. Drawing upon a ventriloquial approach to communication—which emphasizes "actions through which someone or something makes someone or some-thing else say or do things"—I assess Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's 2024 appearance on the Uncommons podcast (Cooren, 2015, p. 476). The ventriloquial position (Cooren, 2012) reflects the metaphor of entities speaking through or on behalf of other actors, either explicitly (such as a principal of a firm) or non-explicitly (such as a manager discussing a document). I connect this frame with the ideas of dialogic public relations (Kent & Taylor, 2002; Grunig & Grunig, 2013) and analyze how various notions of political candidacy and political climate are talked-into-being through Trudeau's dialogue with host and fellow Liberal MP Nate Erskine-Smith. I focus on three themes of the wider political interviewing literature—public/private (MacDougall, 2011), strategic/non-strategic (Sompotan & Alvin, 2023), ally/opponent (Clayman, 2002)—and demonstrate how each are coloured by the presence of ventriloquism. I argue that this effect creates a meta discourse on political communication as a balance of various affiliations are openly displayed and discussed throughout the conversation. This, most notably, hinders the ability of the host to represent the public, a typical pretense of political interviews (Lauerbach, 2004; Hutchby, 2011). This paper contributes to wider research on media forms and political leaders by emphasizing the stresses of less formal interactions in building relations with publics.

Anne Marie Cammisa, Georgetown University

A History of Religious Lobbying in Congress

The American Congress is at the center of a pluralistic society whose democracy is designed to reconcile competing interests; urban, rural, workers, business owners, industry, agriculture and more. Religion is one of those competing interests and yet it holds a unique place in American society. Congress, as the most representative branch of government, is the place where various interests meet, compete and compromise. To some degree, religious groups are just another competitor among the many vying for congressional attention. And yet they also hold special place, representing an interest that is explicitly protected by the first amendment to the Constitution. Religious groups have been in important actors in Congress since the beginning, but there remains a tension between freedom to protect one's religious interests, and freedom from unwelcome restrictions coming from other religious groups.

Sydney Carr-Glenn, College of the Holy Cross

Social Media and Candidate Favorability: The Case of Kamala Harris' Tik Tok Usage During the 2024 Presidential Election

During Vice President Kamala Harris's bid for the 2024 presidential election, there was a substantial wave of social media messaging put forth to mobilize voters. Previous research indicates that many American voters tend to get their political news information through social media- therefore, political candidates often use social media as a critical campaign strategy to garner widespread attention (e.g., Bennett 2012; Steir et al 2018; McGregor 2018). However, few studies have yet to test whether exposure to political social media messaging- particularly that in video form, has the potential to influence voter attitudes and increase candidate favorability. Given Vice President Harris' momentous nomination as the first Black woman to represent a major party in a general U.S. presidential election, we intend to put forth important information surrounding the tactics of this historic campaign. Further, we ask the following: to what extent does exposure to social media videos influence candidate favorability towards Harris during the 2024 presidential election? To answer our proposed question, we implement an experiment exposing respondents to a series of HarrisWalz 2024 TikTok campaign videos to determine whether exposure to these videos impacts participant support and favorability towards Harris. Overall, our study sheds light on how social media messaging matters for public opinion and American political behavior, especially during presidential elections with polarizing political candidates. In a political environment that is growing increasingly digitized, our study also has important implications for understanding the factors that contribute toward the success of minority political candidates.

Thomas Carty, Springfield College

Catholicism, Abortion, and Realignment in the U.S. Senate: The Cases of Joe Biden and Ted Kennedy

In 1981, Republicans gained a majority in the U.S. Senate for the first time since 1955. At the time, some journalists speculated that Ronald Reagan's victory in the 1980 presidential election signaled a revolution that would sweep the GOP into leadership of both the legislative and executive branch for decades to come. No such realignment occurred in the Senate. In 1987, the Democrats regained the upper chamber, which remained closely divided in subsequent decades. Nonetheless, this period did herald an institutional change. After 1980, Catholic Democrats in the Senate overwhelmingly shifted from pro-life to pro-choice positions on abortion. This chapter examines two case studies of this realignment, specifically the changing positions on abortion of Democrat Senators Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy (D-MA) and Joseph R. Biden (D-DE). Both men identified as Catholic their entire lives. In the immediate aftermath of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision—when the Supreme Court asserted a woman's unrestricted constitutional right to terminate pregnancy in the first trimester—Kennedy and Biden initially demonstrated adherence to their church's anti-abortion teachings. During the 1970s, however, these two Catholic politicians wavered in their degree of adherence to the U.S. Catholic bishops' consistently pro-life position. After 1980, Kennedy and Biden made a clear break with their church. An examination of these two cases contributes to an emerging field of scholarship on religion, abortion, and U.S. politics. Most scholars have paid only limited attention to these topics, and political scientists have primarily focused on Protestant Evangelical Christians when examining religion and abortion as a salient feature of Senators' policy making.

Jordan Cash, Michigan State University

The Founder's Congress: Separation of Powers in the First and Second Congresses

This paper examines the constitutional logic of Congress, focusing on how the Constitution structures Congress to not only possess its own distinctive attributes necessary to the proper functioning of the national government, but also is positioned to limit the other branches of government, particularly the presidency. To demonstrate this, I focus on the First and Second Congresses, which operated before the development of the party system and during the presidency of the universally beloved George Washington. By assessing Congress's behavior during this period before parties became institutionalized and when the president had extraordinary popular support, I contend we have a clearer view of how the Constitution orients members of Congress to behave in a system of separation of powers and checks and balances unobstructed by other institutional and political factors.

Jordan Cash, Michigan State University

The Constitutional Logic of a Global Superpower

This paper examines how the United States's growth into a global superpower affected the logic of the American constitutional system. More specifically, it will assess how the expansion of America's foreign policy capabilities—and the basic choices made by policymakers on the direction of American foreign policy—have influenced the development and operation of the constitutional separation of powers. As I will show, the Constitution adequately enables the national government to properly engage in foreign relations and to have the capacity to develop in line with changing global circumstances, with the presidency being particularly situated to be the focal point of American foreign policy. Yet the demands created by being a global superpower and leader of the liberal international order has enabled the executive to centralize authority at the expense of the other branches of the American government. By examining key inflection points in the history of American foreign policy, I will evaluate the effect America's expanded role in the world has had on the constitutional logic which undergirds the political system of the United States.

Bruce Caswell, Rowan University

The Role of the Doctrine of Discovery in American Political Thought and Development

Richard Hakluyt's Discourse of Western Planting (1584), the Anglican version of the Doctrine of Discovery and Conquest originally promulgated by the Catholic Church, provides the rationale and plan for English colonization of American. Hakluyt's imprint can be found in the Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Virginia Colonies. Hakluft's Discourse also provides the justification for the treatment of indigenous populations and confiscation of their lands, as well as the treatment of African slaves and the racism shown African-Americans. The principles of the Doctrine of Discovery and Hakluyt's Discourse persist today in U.S. the culture and Constitutional law through Johnson & Graham's Lessee v. McIntosh (1823), a unanimous opinion authored by Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall which cited Doctrine of Discovery as "proven" international law. Johnson is cited as precedent in thirty subsequent Supreme Court cases, most recently by Ruth Bader Ginsburg in County of Oneida v. Oneida Indian Nation of N. Y. (1985).

Michael Catalano, University of Scranton

Safeguarding Presidential Policy through Appointments to the US Court of Appeals

If able, executive work to appoint judges who match the ideal point of the executive. However, a number of obstacles can make this appointment of preferred judges difficult for the executive. Important considerations include the priorities of the executive and the executive's allocation of resources to achieve her priorities. In particular, executives are concerned with retaining office (e.g., reelection) if permitted and securing their policy accomplishments (e.g., legacy). Resources allocated to reelection, for instance, means that those resources cannot be used to safeguard policy. We argue that executives have information-gathering resources that can be used for a wide range of reasons, including the screening potential jurists. When an executive has the ability to retain their office through reelection, the executive will devote these information-gathering resources to achieve that end. This means less resources are spent on safeguarding policy and legacy as the executive is trying to lengthen their time horizon in office to achieve more policy gains. We then argue that once an executive is no longer able to seek retention (e.g., through term limits), then the executive will turn those resources to safeguard their policy and legacy. Knowing that judges serve long after the executive leaves office, executives understand that appointing judges who closely match the executive's policy preferences better insulates the executive's policy gains from future action by other policymakers. Therefore, with retention no longer a priority, executives allocate more resources to safeguarding policy and legacy through the screening of potential jurists. We test our theory and accompanying game theoretic design using appointments to the United States Court of Appeals from President Eisenhower through President Obama. We find that term in office matters – Presidents appoint circuit court judges closer to the President's ideal point in their second term (when term limited) compared to their first term.

Daniel Chand, Kent State University

Coercive Measures? Investigating the Relationship Between Immigration Enforcement Actions and ICE's IMAGE Program

There has been surprisingly little research or reporting on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) IMAGE program. The program uses a public-private partnership (PPP) model to enlist private businesses in screening the immigration status of employees and reporting individuals suspected of being undocumented. Through repeated Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, this study learned that ICE signed more than 700 distinct IMAGE agreements between 2006 and 2018. The sheer number of these agreements raises an intriguing question: Why would any business participate in a program that risks its own employees being arrested? This study employs negative binomial panel models to examine whether ICE enforcement actions — specifically workplace raids — predict the signing of IMAGE agreements. The findings suggest IMAGE may be explained by policy diffusion through coercion (Berry and Berry 2007), raising ethical concerns beyond those of traditional PPPs. With a second Trump Administration's likely intensified efforts for more deportations, the urgency to understand ICE's enforcement programs is increasingly important.

Noah Charpentier, Providence College

Historical Analogies: A Looking Glass

The research question I attempted to answer was do the historical analogies used by leaders during the Vietnam War coincide with the motivations and reasons for student mass mobilization to the Vietnam War? While answering this question, I explained what motivated student protests against Vietnam while simultaneously trying to compare them to how US policymakers are motivated by historical analogies. I use Yuen Foong Khong's book, "Analogies at War" to accomplish this. I detailed out the argument of Khong, how leaders were influenced throughout the war effort by previous conflicts. I use Khong's examples of how US leaders looked to the Korean War, the French experience in Vietnam, and the buildup of Nazi Germany. The paper then explains the other end of the spectrum, the war protesters, particularly student protesters. The main area where I looked was first-hand accounts. Primarily, the Providence College archives. It was here I found school documents detailing the campus anti-war walk-out. I tried my best to find and fill in the gaps of what the students at the time were thinking and why exactly they were protesting. I was able to find flyers students made, school newspaper stories by students, and pictures of students themselves protesting. Other first-hand accounts I used included Tom Hayden's book, "Hell No: The Forgotten Power of the Vietnam Peace Movement". The comparison I was able to draw was that both leaders and protesters use historical analogies to explain their motivations and actions. Both groups rework and structure the past to determine their course of action in the future. Historical analogies used by students from all areas of the country and used by US leaders work to demonstrate that no matter where on the spectrum we fall on a political issue, our sources of reasoning and rationalizing are largely the same.

Jason Charrette, Plymouth State University

War-Gaming Humanitarianism: Using Table-Top Role Playing Games to Teach Humanitarian Intervention in the Climate Change Era

This paper examines the implementation and effectiveness of an Active Learning pedagogy with rules and style derived from role playing games (Dungeons and Dragons) in an international relations class. It will discuss the author's use of "The Ministry of the Americas" – a role-playing simulation custom-designed by the author for use in Plymouth State University's Humanitarianism course (PODI 1056). This semester-long simulation requires students to design, staff, and guide an NGO through various ethical, diplomatic, and climate-change crises. The paper will discuss how the simulation was designed, including the pedagogical challenges of running a semester-long simulation. It will conclude with survey evidence of learning effectiveness and student engagement.

Jingyuan Cheng, Oxford University

"Who Calls the Shots": Interaction Mechanism between Work Teams and Village Cadres in Rural China

This research focuses on the interaction mechanism between work teams and village cadres during the national campaign of targeted poverty alleviation. Based on the fieldwork in 13 villages, which are all located in B county of Hubei province, this research finds two interaction mechanisms. In the first mechanism, the work team leader owns a large amount of economic resource, and thus has the final say in the village issues. In this case, work team members tend to lack local knowledge. In the second mechanism, the work team leader is incapable of providing enough economic resources. Therefore, the work team tends to discuss and cooperate with village cadres during resource allocation. What's more, this research suggests that villagers hold higher trust in work team members and village cadres in the second mechanism.

Jingyuan Cheng, Oxford University

Structuring Provincial Identity: An Analysis of the Strength of Provincial Identity in China

This paper intends to answer two overarching questions about provincial-level regional identity in China. First, does the strength of provincial identity vary among provinces in China? Second, can economic development and marketization explain the variation in the strength of provincial identity? I select four measures to represent a province's strength of regional identity: dating preference (the proportion of dating preference for people from the same province), regional associations (the number of one province's associations in all the other provinces), NPC bills (the proportion of bills in National People's Congress on provincial affairs by provincial delegations), and TV rating (the proportion of top five TV programs with local themes), according to which 29 provinces in China are ranked by the strength of provincial identity. This research reveals that while China's coastal provinces embrace the strongest regional identity, the southwestern, northern, and northwestern provinces hold the weakest regional identity. Furthermore, this research suggests that the level of economic development and the degree of marketization hardly explain the variation in the strength of provincial identity in China.

Serena Cho, Yale University

Plato on the kalon's indispensability to reason and politics

This paper considers the place of the kalon (beautiful) and aischron (ugly) in Plato's political thought. Based on a reading of the Gorgias and the Republic, it argues that a proper sense of the kalon—that is, the ability to intuitively and immediately judge appearances well—not only complements rational argumentation but also enables effective usage of reason in politics. Additionally, it argues that this importance of the kalon grounds Plato's critique of democracy in both dialogues. Because citizens in democracies do not learn how to properly judge appearances, they fail to engage productively in political deliberation and exercise good political judgment. This paper challenges a prevalent view not only present in recent scholarship but also in Plato's broader reception: that Plato elevated reason above non-rational considerations—such as beauty—and insisted upon its primacy as the only appropriate mode of legitimation. The Gorgias, however, demonstrates how judgments of appearance can aid deliberation when reason alone fails to persuade. The indispensability of the kalon is further explored in the Republic, which establishes that philosophy itself is enabled by enduring esteem for an aesthetically justified value system. Attending to the kalon in this way also shows that Plato's critique of democracy is more subtle than it has been characterized in secondary literature. Lastly, this paper seeks to produce insights that are relevant to scholarship in political epistemology and deliberative theory. Too often, rational argumentation and aesthetic appreciation are treated as distinct—if not conflicting—modes of cognition. This paper indicates how aesthetically evaluating appearances may be internal to—and complementary with—using reason and demonstrate how they might work together to produce good political deliberation and judgment.

Ahyoung Cho, St. Lawrence University

Collective action or free-riding: An analysis of city climate networks and adoption of climate action plans

In the United States, with slow progress on comprehensive federal climate policy, cities and local governments have played important roles in addressing climate change. City climate networks have emerged as a significant platform for advancing climate action, with motivations for joining ranging from information sharing to political signaling. However, while these networks enable collective action, the problem of free-riding is inevitable. Due to a lack of resources, some cities may join networks but fail to adopt and implement concrete actions. This study aims to examine whether membership in climate networks translate into measurable outputs and outcomes by analyzing the development and adoption of climate action plans among member cities.

Rachael Cobb, Suffolk University

Orienting to Service: Young Poll Workers and the Future of Election Administration

This is the preliminary work of a broader project that will examine the impact of serving as a poll worker on youth development and their participation in future elections. The project seeks to explore how early exposure to the electoral process can shape civic attitudes, skills, and long-term engagement in democratic activities among young people.

Greg Collins, Yale University

Civil Society and Organized Womanhood in the Thought of Fannie Barrier Williams

This paper—a chapter in my book manuscript on the Tocquevillian idea of civil society in early Black political thought—examines Fannie Barrier Williams' thoughts on the women's club movement among African-American women in Chicago. Whereas Williams was involved in many civil society institutions, the broader purpose of this chapter is to consider her as a theorist of civil society, including but not limited to Black civil society. In some ways surpassing the depth of Alexis de Tocqueville's insights into voluntary associations, Williams' political and social thought distills a number of guiding themes that informed her conception of the art of association. First, the penchant for social organization stemmed from a distinctive racial passion of the Black race that combined the spirit of association with the pragmatic demands of a racially segregated society. Second, Black women faced racial and sex discrimination but nevertheless possessed agency for the social and intellectual improvement of Black women, and of Blacks overall. Third, the dedicated efforts of Black women in particular were integral to a flourishing Black civil society. Fourth, successful Black civil society institutions served as ornaments of Black progress in early industrial America. Finally, Black women and white women possessed the collaborative power to join hands under the banner of organized womanhood to broaden their influence over the strained moral and social fabric of American society at the turn of the twentieth century. In the end, Williams played a pivotal role in fostering a new form of race consciousness in this era that, while welcoming support from sympathetic white communities, also prized the power of self-sufficiency in promoting racial uplift, inspired in no insignificant part by the industry and resilience of Black women.

Clinton Condra, Independent Scholar

"The American System Abroad: Henry Clay's Diplomacy and Foreign Policy"

Henry Clay stands among those historical figures whose renown falls short of their influence. His best-known efforts served to assuage sectional jealousies and earned him the title of "Great Compromiser." He employed his considerable rhetorical and statesmanly talents in promoting his vision for America's future–the "American System," as he called it–which required strengthening the bonds of Union through tariffs that protected targeted domestic industries, transportation initiatives funded by the national government, and a coordinated national banking system. He was in this regard the heir of the Federalists and the precursor to the Republicans. Clay spent most of his career in the legislature, yet he aspired to be elected President and stood or ran unsuccessfully for that office several times. His time in the executive branch of government was limited to a four-year tenure as Secretary of State for John Quincy Adams, which was marred by persistent "Corrupt Bargain" charges from Jackson and his supporters. But Clay's service in this office deserves a closer look. The Monroe Doctrine had been proclaimed less than two years before, and the republics of Latin America were still newly independent and remained fragile. How did Clay intend for the United States to uphold this Doctrine and exert leadership in the New World? How did Clay navigate the points of competition between the sovereign countries of the New World, and what opportunities for greater cooperation among them did he see and pursue? How did Clay's diplomatic efforts complement his better known domestic commitments to an "American System?" The proposed paper will investigate these questions.

Brian Conley, Suffolk University

Trump and the 2024 Presidential Elections

Since his arrival on the national political stage in 2016, Donald Trump has defied easy comprehension. How has a political figure who openly rejects so many established conventions in U.S. politics remained politically viable? From the name-calling and personal attacks to his efforts to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power, his impeachments and his felony convictions, Trump has repeatedly transgressed norms once considered firmly entrenched in the nation's politics. Paradoxically, rather than harm him, these actions have often strengthened his appeal among Republican voters and leaders. Scholars have struggled to make sense of this incongruence. What they have often failed to appreciate are the strategic dimensions of the Trump phenomenon. Specifically, they have missed the importance Trump and his campaigns have placed on properly positioning him with selected voter segments, and the political, and ethical fungibility it has afforded him. The object of this paper is to examine Trump's political resilience, demonstrated most recently by his victory in the 2024 Presidential election. It will do so by highlighting the strategic flexibility Trump has gained –notably over other Republicans– by carefully grounding his campaign communication strategy in political frames unique to specific voter groups targeted by his campaigns.

Bel Corder, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Seeing in Black and White? Expressions of Racial Color-Blindness in African Americans

After the Civil Rights Movement, scholars believe that overt forms of racism fell out of favor with the public and a new racial ideology has dominated American society: Racial Color-Blindness (Mendelberg, 2001; Bonilla-Silva, 2022). In its basic form, Racial Color-Blindness finds seemingly non-racial ways to explain our society which downplay the effects of systemic racism and internalized racial prejudice. Racial Color-Blindness, like any other racial ideology, informs one's attitudes, beliefs, and support for policies, and its obfuscation of our racial reality can account for why individual political attitudes differ on policies on issues like immigration and Affirmative Action. While scholars believe that Racial Color-Blindness has become widespread, the vast majority of studies focus on the presentation of this ideology in Whites. Left unexplored is whether this popular ideology has been embraced by People of Color, and if so, who among these communities are most likely to subscribe? In this study, we seek to fill the gap in the literature by analyzing the use of Racial Color-Blindness among African Americans. Using data from the first wave of the American Multiracial Panel Survey (AMPS), a nationally representative panel survey tracking the opinions of large diverse samples of American adults and People of Color in particular, we analyze over 4000 open-ended responses for the utilization of Racial Color-Blindness. First, we perform qualitative methods to decipher the popular frames to see if their frames vary from the established literature. Then we employ quantitative analyses to learn how the usage of Racial Color-Blindness among Blacks varies from usage among other racial groups and if other measures can predict which African Americans are most likely to use Racial Color-Blindness. By focusing on African Americans, we hope to decipher both how they use Racial Color-Blindness, and how their Color-Blindness differs from established Black political ideologies.

Ken Courtney, University of New England

Social Contract, or Social Media, Libers, or Tygers?

Locke famously characterized those who refused to abide by the Contract as tygers—predators, not operating under the same rational constraints as the rest of us, that were noxious to the stable order of society and just targets for destruction. Philip Petit has more recently advocated for the preservation of libers—free men—who are not subject to domination by power. The coherence of the former (an 'outlaw' category), and the prospects for the latter (a non-dominated member of society) are quite suddenly under grave threat. With reference to classical and contemporary social contract theory, a smattering of ancient history, and current social psychology, I will explore the question of how analytically distinct these categories can be kept both in terms of how one becomes party to the contract, and what parties to the contract relinquish relative to what they supposedly gain. In practical terms I will argue that, while the aspirations of contractualists like Rousseau to harmonize social contract membership with the preservation of individual freedom remain alluring and theoretically possible, contemporary circumstances militate against this outcome. First, as Rousseau himself forewarned, in highly disparate circumstances the social contract almost certainly turns out to be a bad bargain for most—and thus one to which no rational actor could willingly consent. If this is correct, opportunities to remain libers narrow, and at the limit can perhaps only be approached by truly being an outsider, a 'barbarian,' or indeed a tyger. Second, the problem is compounded by a technological revolution which dramatically undermines the legitimacy of institutions. Social media amplifies the sensational and reactive, deemphasizing expertise and (faith in) the authority upon which it rests and which is necessary to the maintenance of a social contract. These dangers go beyond localized 'temptations of populism,' and threaten Gramsci's interregnum.

Charles Crabtree, Dartmouth College

Can AI Reduce Prejudice at Scale?

This study investigates the potential of artificial intelligence to facilitate conversations that mitigate prejudice, particularly towards transgender individuals. Previous research indicates that personalized, face-to-face interactions with outgroup members can significantly influence public attitudes. However, the scalability of this approach is hindered by the logistical and financial challenges associated with training human conversation facilitators. To overcome these limitations, we propose a novel method utilizing a GPT-powered chatbot to conduct personalized conversations tailored to the moral concerns of participants, as assessed by the Moral Foundations Questionnaire. We conduct an online survey experiment with a sample of approximately 2,500 respondents, designed to reflect a nationally representative demographic in the United States. Participants are randomly assigned to one of two groups: one engages in a morality-driven conversation with the chatbot about transgender rights, while the other serves as a control group with no conversation. Following the intervention, all respondents provide their levels of support for transgender rights using a validated set of questions. This research contributes methodologically by providing insights into the feasibility of scaling personal conversations through generative AI. Substantively, it advances the understanding of outgroup attitudes and specifically addresses the dynamics of prejudice against transgender individuals.

Mary Craig, Furman University

The Red Scare and the Myth of Democratic Baseball

In 1951, retired baseball player Lew Fonseca created a short film titled "The Democracy of Baseball," in celebration of the National League's 75th anniversary. Beyond celebrating this anniversary, the film was part of a larger project to use baseball as a means of protecting capitalist interests from the domestic communist threat. As America's National Pastime, baseball was deemed to possess the greatest and most fundamental American values—equality, justice, perseverance—opening the door for a great many athletes to pursue the American Dream. This paper explores the theoretical foundations of American democracy with respect to baseball, arguing that the use of baseball as a cultural and political weapon against communism ultimately undermined the very values the sport was supposed to instill in Americans.

Teresa Crooks, Northeastern University

Healthy Soils: A Foundation for Sustainable Development and Human Security A Critical Analysis and Proposed Framework for Global Soil Health

Healthy soils are an essential foundation of economies, the environment, and society. However, global soils are rapidly depleted which decreases the ability for soil to function properly. When soil functions are compromised, it poses a significant threat to local communities and international stability. For those reasons, soil protections must be prioritized in existing and ongoing international agreements. Healthy soils are required to meet sustainable development and maintain international peace and security. This paper explores the role of healthy soil in ensuring future human security and proposes key policy recommendations to implement soil mitigation strategies. Well-managed soils provide numerous benefits, including increased resilience to climate change, decreased severity of natural disasters, continued food production, and improved water quality and access. This paper examines the major drivers of soil degradation, and the consequential impacts of those degraded soils. Healthy soils and human security elements are interwoven, specifically water security, environmental security, food security, economic security, and health security. Effective soil management strategies are urgently needed, this is best achieved through a comprehensive standalone strategy. Proposed recommendations include integrating soil mitigation strategies in existing international agreements and forums; establishing a comprehensive monitoring system and setting global standards of soil health; securing and mobilizing funding; developing and mobilizing mitigation strategies; and the US administration should incorporate soil mitigation practices domestically. These proposed recommendations work simultaneously through implementing preventative adaptation measures, coordination, and building upon previous international frameworks. Healthy soil is a vital life-supporting system for humankind, unhealthy soil is an active threat to future security. Adequate soil adaptation measures must be implemented to address this need.

Sharyl Cross, St Edward's University

Russia's Geopolitical Civilizational Narratives and Strategic Direction in the Contemporary Multipolar World Order

Abstract: This article sets forth the foundations for Russia's evolving geopolitical civilizational narratives influencing Moscow's contemporary foreign policy behavior and future direction of the Russian "civilizational state" in the global multipolar world order. This article is not intended to provide justification for Russia's foreign policy choices and actions, but rather the purpose is to explain Moscow's official geopolitical narratives aiming to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the considerations informing Russia's foreign policy behavior. Vladimir Putin has been at the helm of leadership in Russia exerting unparalleled influence as President and Prime Minister since 1999. Putin has offered straightforward and often extensive statements and assessments providing a critical source for understanding the development of the material and ideational considerations operative in Russia's foreign policy priorities and actions. Primary sources for this article concentrate on Vladimir Putin's speeches and writings, statements of the predecessors of Russia's President, official foreign policy documents and analysis and debate offered by leading experts of Russia's foreign policy and international relations academic community. Writings of leading International Relations experts based in Russia affiliated with the Valdai Club and annual Valdai international conference closely intertwined with Russia's policy and defense community have been particularly helpful in defining factors shaping geopolitical civilizational narratives and possible future regional and global scenarios and vision for the Russian Federation. The analysis aims to contribute to the literature establishing the ways that national interest considerations (NATO enlargement and other strains in Russia's bilateral relationships with the West) and distinctive cultural-historical experience influence geopolitical civilizational narratives holding promise for yielding insights for both the academic and policy communities. The article contributes to elucidating challenges that nations motivated by unique civilizational experience present for the existing Western liberal international order. Russian foreign policy; geopolitical civilizational narratives; Putinism; major power conflict; world order

Theresa Dabruzzi, Saint Anselm Colege

It's Not Easy Being Green: The Environmental Advocacy of Pope Francis

In this chapter we will follow Pope Francis' journey starting with his history of environmental activism. He has made a point throughout his Papacy to discuss environmental concerns and the need for immediate action. His suggestions for optimal communication, not only between nations but amongst their people, will be examined. We will note the Church's previous actions regarding the environment. Looking at the history of environmental concern and engagement from previous pontiffs the recognition of environmental issues and messages will be surveyed. Impacts of the climate crises are suffered most by those who have contributed to the crisis the least, and Pope Francis outwardly voices his opinion on such inequities. His concern for our shared home is coupled to the suffering of those in need. The chapter will conclude with a message of hope. It is not an easy task for us to work together and create systemic change, but we must if our global community is to take action against the climate crisis.

Lauren Dagan Amos, Bar Ilan University

India in the Middle East: Modi's Strategic Realignment and Key Partnerships

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office in 2014, India has significantly expanded its engagement in the Middle East, signaling a shift from its traditionally cautious stance. Modi's foreign policy in the region is driven by India's need for energy security, robust economic partnerships, and enhanced defense cooperation. This chapter explores India's ability to balance strategic relationships with key players such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt, while maintaining its policy of strategic autonomy. India's relationship with Israel has flourished under Modi, particularly in the defense and technology sectors. Simultaneously, India has deepened its economic and diplomatic ties with the UAE, its third-largest trading partner, and Egypt, which has emerged as a significant strategic ally. These partnerships illustrate India's growing influence in a region marked by complex geopolitical dynamics. This chapter will also address the challenges India faces in the Middle East, including regional instability, sectarian tensions, and the growing competition among global powers. By examining Modi's foreign policy approach, this chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of India's evolving role in the Middle East and its broader global strategy.

Rosabella Daraoui, Saint Anselm College

Gender Dynamics and Diplomacy: How Female Leaders Respond to Interstate Conflicts

Scholarly literature has found that female leaders respond to gender stereotypes of women's peacefulness and inability to navigate conflict by acting contrary to these stereotypes. However, this literature has focused on interstate conflicts in which these leaders are directly involved. This raises the question: how does the gender of a leader affect how they respond to interstate conflicts to which they are not a direct party? This study employs a most similar case design, using the Nordic and Baltic leaders' responses to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. I found that gender does not play a role in how the sample leaders responded to the conflict. In fact, all of the leaders in the sample exhibited high levels of multilateral cooperation, an approach that is considered to be feminine. This region has high levels of gender equality and a high percentage of parliamentary seats held by women which may have a pacifying effect on the leaders as they do not feel the need to demonstrate a masculine leadership strength as a reaction against stereotypes. I further found that this region has a norm of cooperation and a common history that proved to be more salient to the leaders in how they responded. As more women are stepping into leadership roles, these findings emphasize the importance of further research to fully understand women's norm of behavior as foreign policy makers in the international sphere and how they respond to their domestic gender environment.

Anthony Dell'Aera, Worcester State University

Going Against the Flow: Anti-Fluoridation Water Policy in the City of Worcester, Massachusetts

This paper examines the public health impact of anti-fluoridation policy and why the anti-fluoridation movement has been successful in Massachusetts, with special attention given to the case study of Worcester. Fluoridation of community water has been cited by the CDC as one of the ten most important public health breakthroughs in the twentieth century, reducing tooth decay by approximately 25% and significantly reducing the number of fillings, extractions, and oral procedures performed on children and adults. The safety and efficacy of community water fluoridation has been widely demonstrated, and it is recommended by nearly all public health, medical, and dental organizations including the American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, US Public Health Service, and World Health Organization. Yet, there is resistance to this practice, with opposition bearing many similarities to anti-vaccination and broader anti-science movements. Typically, decisions about water fluoridation are made at the local level. In Massachusetts, state law allows local boards of health to order water fluoridation but enables opponents to force a public referendum via petition. Despite the demonstrated public health benefits, over 150 cities and towns in the state have opted not to fluoridate their community water, and voters in 11 cities and towns actively rejected attempts by their local boards of health to fluoridate. Those declining fluoridation include some of the state's larger and poorer cities with diverse populations such as Worcester and Springfield, where access to dental care and oral hygiene products is lagging, with the impact particularly felt among communities of color. Attempts to adopt fluoridation policies in these communities have been met with resistance similar to that of anti-vaccination movements, but there are notable differences that add to our understanding of collective action movements and political ideology in Massachusetts.

Robert Dietterick, Brown University

Subnational Policy Action on Gun Control and the Crisis of Mass Shootings

Do mass shootings affect policy action on gun safety in state legislatures? The literature on mass shootings and public policy has focused on political engagement and electoral outcomes. In this study, the incidence of mass shootings is theorized to impact policy action in state legislatures to enact gun safety legislation. Leveraging publicly available data on mass shootings, school safety legislation, interest group expenditures, and survey data into a panel dataset, multiple regression models are presented to examine if mass shootings affect policy action, considering also how interest group activity and public mood may affect potential outcomes. The findings of this study suggest that the amount of mass shootings in a state is positively correlated with policy action, despite polarization and policy fragmentation. Additional findings regarding interest group activity and public mood are inconclusive.

Nhat-Dang Do, Trinity College

Voter Captains & Social Network Mobilization: A Civically-Engaged Study Among Racial Minorities in Hartford, CT

Voter mobilization through canvassing has been shown to significantly impact turnout compared to other types of mobilization (Gerber and Green, 2000; Sinclair, McConnell, and Michelson, 2013). Recent research suggests that leveraging preexisting personalized social connections is a powerful strategy for enhancing voter mobilization. Green and McClellan (2020) found that a new relational organizing model, which relies on contacts within the same social network, significantly impacts turnout. This study investigates whether a relational organizing model effectively mobilizes voters in urban, racial minority neighborhoods. We propose implementing and evaluating a network contagion Get Out The Vote (GOTV) program in one of these communities: Hartford, CT. Given the existing knowledge about voter turnout among racial minority groups, we seek to identify the most effective strategies for voter engagement through this model. We hypothesize that a socio-cultural narrative-based approach, which engages targeted voters' identities, experiences, and values, will be particularly effective for racial and ethnic minorities. This paper outlines the design and methodology for a project to test this mobilization approach while integrating the principles of civically engaged research (CER). Additionally, we present preliminary results and lessons learned from the implementation. We detail the process and challenges of recruiting and training a cadre of "Voter Captains" and illustrate how researchers can collaborate with community-based organizations to increase voter turnout in a racially diverse city.

Gloria Donkor, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Fashion Companies & Take-Back Programs: A content Analysis of Social Media to Assess Efforts & Influence in Encouraging Textile Recycling

This research explores the prevalence of retailer take-back programs in the fashion industry as a means of promoting sustainability and reducing textile waste. These programs enable customers to return used clothing items to production companies, contributing to reverse logistics: a process where products flow back from consumers to manufacturers for recycling or remanufacturing purposes. Despite challenges such as uncertainty about material composition and fiber quality, an entrenched circular model can ensure products are designed for reuse. By analyzing social media content, particularly Instagram posts from fashion brands with and without take-back programs, this research assesses the communication strategies employed to engage consumers in sustainability initiatives. Using the consumer culture theory this paper examines how manufacturers advertise recycling to their consumers. This study aims to provide insights into the role of producer responsibility in fostering a sustainable fashion industry.

Robert Downes, University of Connecticut

Haudenosaunee vs. Habermas: Indigenous Democratic Traditions and the Boundaries of Deliberative Democratic Theory

This essay juxtaposes the democratic principles of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy with Jürgen Habermas's model of deliberative democracy, drawing from both the history of Indigenous traditions and contemporary radical Native thought. It challenges core assumptions in Western democratic theory, positing an alternative model grounded in interrelationships of reciprocity, care, and responsibility. The Haudenosaunee governed through consensus, kinship-based accountability, and eco-civic balance, achieving collective sovereignty through decentralized, participatory structures rather than through elite or centralized authority. By contrast, Habermas's deliberative democracy emphasizes communicative rationality within formal institutions, assuming that legitimacy arises from discourse mediated by state structures and uniform rule of law. This essay argues that the Haudenosaunee model provides a compelling alternative, where legitimacy is derived from decentralized community networks and reciprocal obligations rather than the institutionalized debates of political elites or the coercive powers vested in state authority. Three key arguments are advanced: First, Haudenosaunee governance exemplifies consensus decision-making as a resilient democratic process, challenging Habermas's reliance on structured discourse and hierarchy. Second, the Confederacy's kinship-based networks establish accountability and collective responsibility beyond state-dependent models, promoting face-to-face self-governance at a human scale. Third, Haudenosaunee principles of ecological responsibility deliberately add an environmental dimension to citizenship and participation, an aspect often absent in democratic theory. This analysis underscores deliberative democracy's limitations by acknowledging non-Western, non-hierarchical, and non-state governance models, suggesting that Indigenous political thought offers powerful insights for a more robust democratic theory based on relationality, reciprocity, and ecological responsibility. By situating the Haudenosaunee model within the normative discourse of democratic theory, this essay invites a re-evaluation of democracy's relationship to state power, Indigenous sovereignty, and the participatory ideals of radical democracy.

Darrell Driver, United States Army War College

A New 'Agonizing Reappraisal'? American Military Leadership in NATO and Its Potential End

The NATO Command Structure was barely two years old in John Foster Dulles threatened European Allies with an "agonizing reappraisal" of U.S. military leadership in Europe if allies did not approve a plan that would have seen Germany rearmed and its military strength added to that of NATO. The rearmament of Germany was a demand that U.S. military leaders levied if the U.S. was to deploy more troops in Europe and assume command of all NATO forces by putting an American in the newly created position of Supreme Allied Commander Europe. Today we are witnessing another such agonizing reappraisal threat. Such voices range from those who would simply see us pivot more forces from Europe to the Atlantic to those that would have the U.S. pull completely out of the NATO Command Structure or even the Alliance itself. This paper discussing the role U.S. military leadership has played in NATO since the end of the Cold War and the implications for both U.S. and European security policy if the U.S. refused to continue to play this crucial role.

Mark Duckenfield, United States Army War College

Present at the Destruction: The Erosion of International Institutions for Trade and Finance

The peak of globalization has led to a political backlash across the developed world. This is increasingly manifesting itself in the erosion of existing international economic institutions and in some cases the rise of alternatives. This paper looks at the economic implications of undermining or outright abandoning the trade integration and monetary cooperation that began in 1944 and which reached its peak in the late 1990s. This paper traces the political causes of these challenges to the successful expansion of both international institutions and the European Union in the 1990s. It argues that the failure of governments in Western Europe and the United States to deal with the economic transformations stemming from increased globalization laid the groundwork for undermining domestic support for the liberal world order.

Elizabeth Duffin, Saint Anselm College

Is No News Good News for Democracy? An Analysis of Voter Representation within the News Deserts of the American South

This study examines the impact of news deserts on voter turnout and representation in the American South, a region heavily affected by the decline of local journalism. With nearly 2,900 newspapers disappearing nationwide since 2005, many rural areas are left without reliable local newspapers, creating "news deserts"—communities with limited access to critical information for civic engagement. Using a quantitative case study of voter turnout data from Southern counties, this research investigates the relationship between local newspaper count and voter participation, focusing on race, age group, and party affiliation. The results challenge the prevailing assumption that local newspapers boost electoral participation: as the number of local news outlets increases, voter turnout decreases. Notably, counties in Georgian news deserts exhibit higher turnout, suggesting that national political campaigns and spending may offset the effects of newspaper loss. Demographic analysis also reveals that local newspapers do not effectively reduce racial or generational turnout gaps, nor do they significantly impact party-based turnout. This study calls for a reevaluation of the role of local media in fostering democratic participation, particularly in rural and economically marginalized areas. It highlights the growing divides in American politics, proposing that local media's historical role in building social cohesion and increasing civic engagement may no longer be effective in the age of nationalized politics and elite-driven messaging.

David Dulio, Oakland University

Congress and Religion: A Lifetime of Tension and Coexistence

This examination is both historical and contemporary. It explores three areas of the intersection of religion and Congress: the historical context of religion in Congress, religion and the activities of members of Congress, and religious impacts on policy. The interaction between Congress and religion is complex and multifaceted, shaped by the principles of religious freedom and the separation of church and state outlined in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Congress has been including a chaplain among its officers since 1789, as per the Constitution's provision that the House and Senate determine the officers of each body. And since the First Congress, it has been customary for the chaplaincy to open each legislative session with a prayer. Many aspects of this tension are examined, including religious-related laws that are regularly debated and passed by the legislative branch. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, for instance, prohibits discrimination based on religious beliefs. Additionally, laws like the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 aim to protect individuals' religious exercise from government interference. An increasing number of legislative debates evolve around religiously influenced social and moral issues, such as abortion, LGBTQ rights, and healthcare. The issue of prayer, religious displays, and the use of religious symbols in public schools or on government property is an almost perennial topic on Capitol Hill, while religious holidays and observances are regularly acknowledged by both sides of the aisle. Congress also establishes rules regarding the tax-exempt status of religious organizations. In short, this important intersection is examined in myriad ways.

Marc Eisner, Wesleyan University

With Fingers Crossed: The Political and Institutional Constraints on Risk Management in the United States

The federal government has devoted enormous attention to managing the risks of low probability, high impact events. Yet, performance has been compromised significantly, as revealed by the significant failures of the post-2000 period. This period witnessed the greatest financial collapse since the Great Depression, the largest oil spill in US history, and the most consequential pandemic since the Great Influenza epidemic of 1918-20. The paper examines some of the common problems associated with these policy failures, arguing that performance was undermined by the need to layer risk management efforts on top of pre-existing policies and institutions that had shaped by anti-statism and assumptions regarding the proper balance of power between the public and private sector.

James Elekwachi, University of Massachusetts - Boston

Consumer Acceptance of Cultivated Meat and Seafood among GENZs

There is growing evidence that the current meat production system is not sustainable, given that it may be resource-intensive and harmful to the environment. It also leads to animal cruelty and possible health issues for potential consumers. Reducing the environmental and public health risks associated with it without having to reduce consumption will require an alternative meat production system. Cultivated meat grown from animal cells in a laboratory condition is one proposed way to address these issues. This study is an empirical assessment of United States and Nigeria's GEN Z acceptance of cultivated meat and seafood by administering an online survey to 1162 college students. Our preliminary findings indicate that GENZs are willing to try cultivated meat and seafood but will wait for others to try them over time before accepting it. They also expressed concerns about food safety, nutrition and food quality as factors that will influence their willingness to accept. Other factors like cost, environmental impact, and animal welfare are also important part of their considerations.

Giuliano Espino, Framingham State University

Diplomacy in a New Era: Grappling with Taylor Swift's Power in International Relations

The New York Times dubbed 2023 as "the year of Taylor Swift." Despite extensive literature on the role of music in cultural diplomacy, international relations scholars have yet to grapple with the implications of global fascination with "Swifty" culture. This article is intended to serve as an introductory roadmap to establishing a research agenda on the impact of Taylor Swift as a subset of cultural diplomacy. We analyze Swift's global influence through the three major lenses of international relations theory: realism, liberalism, and constructivism. First for realism, we examine geopolitical tension over countries' securing shows for the Eras alongside countries' use of Swift imagery in promoting political influence campaigns. Second for liberalism, we discuss the role of Swift in fostering global economic integration and nascent attempts by states to use her as a tool of democratization. Third for constructivism, we cover Swift's influence as a global norm entrepreneur how her fans' fascination has taken on a life of its own in global governance. The strengths and weaknesses of applying each theoretical framework to Swift's influence are discussed to provide the foundation for a full-fledged future research agenda. Archival research of diplomatic documents from governments around the world play the central role in this paper's demonstration that states of all types have worked to grapple with Swift's global influence.

Alec Ewald, University of Vermont

Why prisoners don't vote: evidence from a survey of incarcerated people in Vermont

This paper discusses the results of one of the first academic surveys specifically gauging the political ideas of incarcerated people, with a particular focus on their ideas about voting. In a small number of U.S. jurisdictions, people in prison following a felony conviction retain their voting rights. Available data suggests very few of these voting-eligible incarcerated people cast ballots. Theories vary as to why that is. These potential voters face some of the same choices as non-incarcerated voters, but also are presented with a very different set of questions and challenges. Their reasons for abstaining from voting matter a great deal. For example, if someone chooses not to vote because they consider political activity to be pointless, or see government as a hostile force over which they have no control (that is, for attitudinal or ideological reasons), that has very different implications than a person not voting because they find the process opaque and burdensome (a more institutional reason). Following human-subjects review and with the cooperation of the Vermont Department of Corrections, the author distributed surveys at three Vermont prisons in the weeks prior to the November 2024 elections. Incarcerated respondents completed a total of two hundred seven surveys. Open-ended survey questions included queries about respondents' knowledge of voting rules; their own voting history; their thoughts about the most important problems facing the country; and their partisanship. Likert-scaled agree-or-disagree questions, meanwhile, specifically attempted to gauge respondents' levels of political alienation. Results have important implications for better understanding the experience of incarceration and also for designing policies enabling prisoners who do have an interest in voting to do so.

Grace Fabrycky, Yale University

On the Political Thought of Du Bois and Douglass

In this essay, I undertake a textual analysis of a selection of the political writings of W.E.B Du Bois and Frederick Douglass. In doing so, I investigate how Du Bois is uniquely drawing upon, and altering, elements of the republican intellectual tradition. Similarly, I investigate how Douglass is taking on, and amending, components of the liberal intellectual tradition. Finally, I ask what the implications of these modifications are. Drawing these two thinkers together, I investigate three themes in my reading of Du Bois and of Douglass. The first theme is how each thinker conceives of freedom. The second theme is how each thinker characterizes the obligations that citizens have to one another. The third, and final, theme is how each thinker conveys a perspective about the proper relationship between the private and the public spheres. Focusing on these themes enables me to concretize how Du Bois and Douglass both offer singular perspectives vis-à-vis republicanism and liberalism, respectively. Du Bois and Douglass each build a political theory that is expressly sensitive to race, and to American racism. Better understanding how each thinker constructs a distinctive political theory that is directly concerned with race will, I believe, unearth dynamics that are important for conceptualizing a liberal democratic state theory that properly attends to the multiracial modern American polity. For my analysis related to Du Bois, I draw upon segments from Souls, Dusk of Dawn, and Darkwater. For my discussion of Douglass's political thought, I read My Bondage and My Freedom, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July," and "It Moves."

Renato Fakhoury, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Unity in Diversity? National Slogans and Ontological Security in Heterogeneous Societies

Brazil's national slogans, from the military dictatorship's "Brazil: Love it or Leave it" to Jair Bolsonaro's "Beloved Homeland Brazil" and Lula da Silva's "Union and Reconstruction", have long served as symbols of national identity. However, in a country as socially, racially, and politically diverse as Brazil, the use of a single slogan to convey a cohesive national identity presents a significant challenge. This paper investigates how Brazilian administrations have employed these slogans to address national anxieties and guide policymaking, while also exploring how Brazil's internal diversity complicates its Ontological Security—the sense of stable identity necessary for a nation's security and governance. This study examines how different administrations used rhetorical devices to manage identity crises and project stability. The paper also draws on the framework of Ontological Security to analyze how these slogans resonate differently across Brazil's diverse population, revealing how the concept of national security is shaped by varying group identities. By examining the interplay between slogans, governance, and societal divisions, the paper offers new insights into the challenges of maintaining a stable national identity in a heterogeneous state.

Brigid Flaherty Staab, Assumption University

'As time and experience…may render proper': Joseph Story and Constitutional Change

Many members of the founding generation recognized Article V's amendment process as an essential support to a republican government intended to last for generations. Yet more recent scholarship has suggested that the amendment process fails to fully address the challenges of intergenerational politics. Some even argue that the Article V process is broken. While scholars have considered the varied problems of the amendment process, few studies have considered why certain kinds of amendments are more capable of being pursued through the Article V process. This paper seeks to identify the kinds of amendments most likely to succeed in the Article V process by turning to Justice Joseph Story. Story's theory of constitutional change reveals two kinds of reform encouraged by the Article V process. These two kinds of constitutional change can be sorted according to constitutional time—that is, the generations involved in recognizing the needed change. Story's theory thus helps us to understand successful constitutional reforms by highlighting the generational experience of constitutional failure. After presenting Story's theory of constitutional change, this paper tests Story's view against several ratified amendments.

Paul Foote, Murray State University

Government Censorship of Social Media: The Problem of Standing and the Strategy of Delay

Recent attention has been focused on attempts by many individuals and agencies within the federal government to pressure social media platforms to delete or demote content that the administration considers false or misleading. In some instances, these attempts may be aimed at removing or downplaying content that is politically damaging or contrary to the policy objectives of the incumbent administration. Opponents of these policies claim that these government efforts to persuade social media companies to "moderate" objectionable content constitutes a violation of the first amendment. In the case of Murthy, et al. v. Missouri, et al., the United States Supreme Court heard a challenge to the federal government's efforts to affect what social media platforms permitted as postings. The Court majority never addressed directly the merits of the case, but instead ruled that those challenging the government did not demonstrate that they had standing to sue. This paper examines the arguments of the majority as well as the dissenters, but then elaborates on how the precedent set in this case may affect future practices by the government as well as legal challenges by those who believe themselves to be aggrieved by these practices. A decision tree is introduced to depict the rational strategies of both government agencies and those challenging their actions. The paper concludes by showing how government strategies to adjust behavior in order to delay an unfavorable court decision may make first amendment challenges virtually impossible to win.

Jerome Foss, Saint Vincent College

The Fourteenth Amendment and the Idea of Rights

This paper examines the congressional and ratification debates over the Fourteenth Amendment with a particular emphasis on the ways the Amendment was thought about vis-à-vis individual rights. Its relationship to the original language of the Constitution and the first ten amendments are of primary concern. John Bingham's arguments are tracked closely, but the paper also looks carefully at his interlocutors and critics. The paper sheds light on the ways in which Americans after the Civil War thought about liberty, rights, federalism, and the notion of a Bill of Rights.

William Friedman, University of Chicago

The Utility of Economic Sanctions as the Preferred Instrument Under International Law: A Ukraine-Russia Sanctions Case Study

Using quantitative and qualitative methods, this paper provides a comprehensive analysis of economic sanctions imposed on Russia following its 2014 annexation of Crimea and 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It probes into the critical question of whether these sanctions have achieved their intended goals, using a multi-dimensional test to evaluate their effectiveness. While the sanctions have not succeeded in halting Russian aggression, they have inflicted significant economic damage on Russia, reshaping Russia's political, military, and economic landscape. The study challenges prevailing views, suggesting sanctions rarely succeed in coercing governments directly. Instead, it emphasizes the broader, often overlooked impacts, such as their role in limiting Russia's military capabilities, disrupting its wartime economy, affecting the international political economy, and deterring future violations of international law and norms. Incorporating game theory and empirical analysis, the study shows how sanctions have shifted Russia's trade and financial systems toward greater self-reliance and closer ties with non-Western countries. It also highlights the unintended collateral consequences, such as stronger relations among BRICS members, particularly Russia-China relations, and their efforts to challenge U.S. dollar dominance. Finally, utilizing surveys conducted by the University of Chicago, the study underscores the domestic utility of sanctions, demonstrating strong public support in the U.S. as a key instrument in economic warfare.

Molly Gahagen, Dartmouth College

Don't Say Climate Change?: The Influence of Local Accountability and Framing Effects on Climate Change Policymaking in Florida

Political polarization and the nationalization of politics have led to the two major parties having policy stances that are diametrically opposed to one another, with party members displaying virtually no distinctions among national, state, and local officials. This study evaluates whether this shift in the American party system — causing the erosion of the electoral connection between elected officials and their constituents — has resulted in a decline in the role of local accountability in influencing legislative behavior in state legislatures. Using the case study of Florida, I look at sea level rise initiatives in the Republican-controlled state legislature to examine whether local Republican officials adhere to their national party's messaging on climate change by refusing to act on the issue or if they act according to their constituents' demands by legislating on climate-related issues. By analyzing whether bills' success rates differ when sea level rise is explicitly framed in terms of its connection to climate change versus when it is not, this study finds that bills that use the term "sea level rise" but exclude the term "climate change" were more successful in passing in the state legislature than those that include both terms. This signals that Republican state legislators will support climate-related initiatives and satisfy constituent demands when they do not present considerations that conflict with their national party's stance and confirms that the language of climate change has negative framing effects that adversely impact Republicans' likelihood to support initiatives.

Tobias Gibson, Westminster College

Counterterrorism in Film

Terrorism, and subsequently counterterrorism, has long been a staple of the cinema. Similarly, the study of terrorism, and subsequently counterterrorism, is a staple of international security studies. This paper seeks to use movies, including The Battle of Algiers; Unthinkable; Eye in the Sky; Body of Lies; and Hotel Mumbai to illustrate how counterterrorism is depicted on film—and, importantly, what these popular depictions miss from the actions taken by governments and advocated for by counterterrorism experts in government and academic positions. For example, a recent chapter by Paul Pillar notes that there are many ways in which terrorism can successfully be countered, including "… dissuading individuals from joining terrorist groups, deterring groups from using terrorism, reducing the capability of terrorist groups, erecting defenses against terrorist attacks, and mitigating the effects of attacks." Unsurprisingly, film depictions of counterterror activity tend to focus on, for example, the active deterrence of terrorism rather than the effective, but less dramatic, erecting of defenses—including the use of urban planning and innovative architecture.

Jamie Gillies, St. Thomas University

Canadian Populism in 2025: 'Common Sense' Marketing and Branding in Canadian Politics

With the second Trump administration beginning, Canada is at an inflection point, in which MAGA-style, albeit distinctly Canadian, populism is mixing with a strong public connection and deference to government institutions. This will likely be a popular branding and marketing theme as Canada goes to the polls in 2025. But Pierre Poilievre is also not Donald Trump and it remains to be seen how far populist appeals can work with a Canadian electorate that is politically well to the left of the United States. In this paper, I consider an unresolved problem for Canada, in essence, the fundamental challenge of populism: those simple, emotional and performative solutions that politicians champion do not work well as policy mandates and usually end up hurting the very people the message is targeting. Meanwhile, without policy competence as culture wars and populism play out, inequality grows and government programs decline the more populist leaders promise populist solutions. Poilievre is marketing and branding 'common sense' populist appeals but at the same time is setting himself up for a 'you break it, you bought it' election, one in which if he forms government can very quickly lead to the same levels of unpopularity that afflicts current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Miguel Glatzer, La Salle University

Debating Women's Role in the Church

Like many religious denominations, the Catholic Church faces cross-cutting pressures on the role of women in its organizational structure. Traditional forms of incorporation of women in the church, such as becoming nuns, have experienced a long and precipitous decline in both numbers and prominence. At the same time, and particularly in the U.S., a growing movement has called for greater roles of women in church functions and decision-making. On the opposing side, defenders of tradition have resisted change. Through an analysis of Pope Francis's statements and organizational changes, this paper examines how he has navigated conflicting calls for the role of women in the church. Although the ordination of women as priests remains off the agenda (despite regionally significant shortages of priests), Pope Francis has nonetheless taken steps to give greater voice and recognition to women in the church.

Samantha Godwin, Yale University

Consent as Address

Consent is understood to make the otherwise impermissible permissible. Some theorists maintain that the normative transformation takes place via the formation of the right mental state, such as intending to waive a claim-right against another's action. Others propose that consent accomplishes its normative transformations when it takes the form of the right performative – such as an appropriate speech act. Mental state accounts of consent have an advantage in that they can take seriously the presence or absence of the subjective harms that seem to give rise to the power to consent, and explain the wrong of failing to respect another's refusal to consent. It is unclear, however, how mental states, absent their manifestations, modify the permissibility of another person's action. Performative accounts do not have this difficulty, but risk treating evidence of consent as if identical to consent in miscommunication cases. This paper introduces an account of consent that accommodates these problems: a consenter first waives their claim-right in a manner addressed to the consentee, but the consentee is only released from their corresponding duty upon receipt of this waiver. I term this two-stage model of consent as "consent as second-person address": in consenting, a consenter asserts a mutually recognized authority, or Hohfeldian power-right, which they address to one or more consentees. In receiving consent, a consentee who understands themselves to have a Hohfeldian liability in relation to the consenter updates their normative reasons with regard to how they ought to act in deference to the consenter's authority.

Carson Goh, Dartmouth College

Assessing the Effects of Independent Redistricting Commissions on Electoral Competition and Minority Representation

Independent Redistricting Commissions (IRCs) are becoming an increasingly popular method of redrawing legislative boundaries because they are seen as a way to combat partisan gerrymandering and create more fair electoral districts. Despite their increased use for drawing state legislative and congressional districts, few empirical studies have considered whether IRCs are better than state legislatures at drawing maps that foster electoral competition. Additionally, existing research on the impacts of IRCs on electoral outcomes has relied on sophisticated, but inherently limited statistical techniques that may not facilitate comparisons among disparate units of observation. To address these limitations, this study employs a synthetic control model to develop plausible comparisons (or "counterfactuals") even when they do not exist in the real world. In particular, I utilize synthetic control techniques developed by Abadie, Diamond, and Hainmueller (2010) to analyze the eight states that have implemented IRCs, constructing counterfactual states to determine the effects of IRCs on the number of electorally competitive districts as well as the number of majority-minority districts. The results help examine whether IRCs foster political competition and given the litigation IRCs have faced regarding minority representation, illuminate how IRCs affect minority representation. This study aims to highlight future applications of synthetic control models to redistricting studies and provide a better understanding of the impacts of IRCs on the electoral process.

Mark Graber, University of Maryland School of Law

"Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment from the Perspective of Section Two of the Fourteenth Amendment"

The Supreme Court in Anderson v. Trump interpreted Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment from the perspective of Section One of the Fourteenth Amendment. From this perspective the Fourteenth Amendment is about limiting state governments. The persons responsible for the Fourteenth Amendment, however, put Section Two at the heart of constitutional reform. From this perspective, the post-Civil War Constitution has a three tiered protection of rights. Rights will be protected where there is black suffrage. Where there is not black suffrage, northern Republicans in Congress will protect rights. The Supreme Court, at most, is a fallback. This paper explores how Anderson should have been decided consistently with what the framers actually did. Note all of my stuff could be Politics and History, and I prefer Friday if possible

Angela Graves, SUNY Alfred State College of Technology

Reimagining Civic Discourse in Higher Education: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Dialogue Across Difference

Amid rising concerns over political polarization, civic discourse is becoming a crucial competency within higher education curricula. This paper proposes a reconceptualization of civic discourse that is grounded in principles of political culture and democratic citizenship but can be used to foster dialogue across difference beyond traditional social science boundaries. By reimagining civic discourse as a flexible, interdisciplinary skill set, this framework empowers students to become informed, engaged citizens capable of navigating and contributing to diverse professional and social landscapes. The goal is to develop graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped to engage constructively across differences in any context.

Justin Greenman, Yale University

"A No Man's Land Somewhere between the Legislative and Executive Branch: John C. Calhoun, John Nance Garner, and the Creation of the Modern Vice Presidency"

How do we explain the modern vice presidency? For so many years denigrated as an insignificant position given to lesser men, today the Vice President is a crucial and visible symbol of the federal government, a close and important ally of the President to whom he or she serves, a title desired by many, and an office viewed as a stepping-stone to the presidency. Traditionally, this transformation has been viewed as a result of presidential action alone, with a President enabling his Vice President as part of the long-term expansion of the executive branch. But this narrative ignores the original constitutional vision of the Vice President as a national figure independent of the President with whom he was elected and as a primarily legislative officer, as well as the role select Vice Presidents played, through their autonomous actions, in creating the modern dynamic. John C. Calhoun and John Nance Garner uniquely contributed to this evolution because they used their office as an independent mechanism of anti-administration sentiment and action. Though neither sought out to do so initially, as their own public and private words demonstrate, by the end of their tenure they were perceived as the leaders of an opposition movement. Their independence, and the backlash it engendered, resulted in permanent procedural changes in how the Vice President is selected that transformed the office from an independent legislative officer to a dependent executive officer. Calhoun and Garner, through their independence and the crushing of it, developed the standard model for what Presidents did not want in a Vice President and laid the foundation for how to ensure such cases would not happen again. This paper will chart the vice presidencies of both men, from the early days of acquiescence and comity to ideological and procedural tension and presidential backlash.

Gabriel Greenstein, Southern Connecticut State University

A Better Brand for Bernie

Income inequality is reaching historic levels, even as our country stares down the barrel of a growing onslaught of existential threats, including but not limited to artificial intelligence & workforce automation, climate change, globalization, trade wars, natural disasters, pandemics, record breaking federal debt, and general political disfunction. While there are many possible solutions which could help lead to a more equitable and sustainable society and future, the political will and consensus needed to enact meaningful policy changes seems to be woefully lacking. Incredibly, working class voters who might stand to benefit the most from a rebalancing of societal resources, are often statistically among the most ideologically opposed to these changes. This paper hypothesized that socialism and related policies suffer from a toxic brand image that negatively affect the discourse around economic inequality. It was proposed that antagonism to this brand is largely the result of associations with historical communist states, perceptions of ineptness by the federal government, perceptions of redistributive policies being unfair, concerns about the national debt, and general confusion about how socialism and other systems are defined. Finally, views on the social safety net in historical and hypothetical crises scenarios were investigated. The major findings of the literature review represented a confirmation of the stated hypotheses, while helping to explicate guidelines for the development of potential interventions. This project therefore concluded with a proposal for further research to test a variety of rebranding strategies, administered through the media of survey research, focus groups, and interviews to see if these approaches can change the discourse, and soften antagonism to social welfare policies. The purpose of the various research methods is to help inform social welfare policy makers like Bernie Sanders and to provide them with new ideas that could help gain more popular support for important social programs.

James Greer, United States Department of the Treasury

One (Important) Source of Urban Policy Failure

Policy failure is poorly understood. Borrowing from the ooncept of market failure we can formulate analyses of policy failure that point to structureal inequalities of of private actors creating acceptable results in private markets. As Lindblom and others have emphasized public policies are frequently implemented through markets. Scholars commonly ignore that this sharply narrows of success to those programs that are profitable to corporations or correspond to the material interestsof individuals of consumers.

Luke Guimond, University of Ottawa

The Distinction between Individuality and Uniqueness: An Exploration of Ontological Claims in Emmanuel Mounier's Thought

Society communicates to individuals that they should represent themselves authentically. It encourages them to show their individuality, but the message that society communicates is that this individuality ought not to deviate too far from the norms of society, if one wants to succeed. Emmanuel Mounier rejects this conformist view. Instead, we find in his thought a rich understanding of the (human) person and her desire to develop her uniqueness. Against the grain of conformity, the person develops a unique understanding of herself and how she fits into the broader community of persons. This paper explores the ontological claims made by Mounier about personhood via the development of the concept of 'uniqueness.' Uniqueness differs from individuality insofar as it nourishes equally the person's unique understanding of herself and what makes her be as well as her relationship with others.

Christine Gustafson, Saint Anselm College

Mission from the Periphery: Pope Francis's Distinctive Perspective on Development and Democracy

In a global context of weakening support for democratic institutions, and authoritarian and populist calls for a return to "traditional" values, Pope Francis and the Catholic Church occupy a complicated space. What difference does it make that the Pope is from the Global South? This paper examines Pope Francis's often misunderstood perspective on political economy by exploring the Latin American and Argentine context that formed him, both theologically and politically. It begins with a brief and very general history of the Catholic Church's political and social role in the region. It then describes key Latin American and Argentine events that plausibly helped shape Francis's distinctive approach to church and political economy. Finally, the paper uses this foundation to ask what the Pope's views are on the populist and authoritarian challenges that have arisen in the last several years of his papacy. Using his writing and statements, as well as secondary analyses, it explores his currently complicated and seemingly contradictory views on democratic governance.

Evan Haglund, United States Coast Guard Academy

From Barracks to Badges: Military Academy Cadet Norms and Knowledge on Law Enforcement Authority

From the Whiskey Rebellion to Reconstruction to the Bonus March to January 6th, and from the Insurrection Act of 1807 to the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, policymakers, scholars, and practitioners have both debated the theoretical arguments for and against a military role in law enforcement and argued over the consequences of choices to involve the military throughout American history. Drawing on more than 3000 responses on a short, 3-question law enforcement module in the civil-military relations survey administered to US Air Force Academy (USAFA), US Military Academy (USMA), and US Coast Guard Academy (USCGA) cadets from 2022 to 2024, I highlight the general levels of knowledge about and general support for military law enforcement and provide an initial look at differences across the academies as well as by ideology and gender. This element of a broader project on civil-military relations norms and knowledge among military service academy cadets focuses on what attitudes and baseline understanding these students and future officers have about the role of the respective services in the enforcement of domestic law.

Aynal Haque, Bucknell University

Energy, Environment, and Politics: Local Activism, National Priorities and International Influence on Bangladesh's Climate Mitigation Effort

Bangladesh, one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, has made significant progress in climate mitigation, reflecting a complex interplay of energy demands, environmental concerns, and national politics that shape country's mitigation efforts. These efforts are significantly influenced by coalitions of local, national and international business and environmental groups, broadly categorized into pro-climate mitigation and counter coalitions. In 2014, the pro-climate mitigation coalition successfully pressured the government to halt the Phulbari coal mining project, driven by grassroots protests and international pressure. However, the coalition failed to prevent the advance of Rampal coal power plant project in 2022, despite heightened global calls to cut emissions and phase out fossil fuels. Thus, a critical question emerges: why did the coalition succeed in Phulbari but fail in Rampal? Applying the advocacy coalition framework (ACF), and based on qualitative content analysis and first-hand interview data, the study examines the contrasting outcomes of these two high-profiled coal projects. The findings reveal the complex interdependencies between local activism, national decision-making and international influence in climate governance in Bangladesh. The study underlines the challenges of balancing development goals with environmental sustainability in Bangladesh, offers critical insights for engaging the ACF in similar contexts, and highlights the necessity for strategic coordination among the participatory groups in policy advocacy.

Nadya Hayasi, Georgetown University

The Politics of Belonging: Generational Differences in Immigrant Issue Priorities in the 2024 Elections

In recent decades, immigration has emerged as a primary driver of population growth, surpassing natural increase and fundamentally reshaping the demographic landscape of the United States. This shift reflects not only the growing number of individuals and families arriving from diverse regions of the world but also the subsequent generations born to immigrant parents. Together, these populations now account for a significant and growing portion of the electorate, making their political preferences increasingly relevant in shaping the country's governance and legislative agenda. This paper examines issue priorities among first- and second-generation immigrants in the United States. By focusing on key areas such as healthcare, the economy, national security, foreign policy, immigration, the environment, abortion, and education, the study sheds light on the unique priorities of these groups and how they compare to the general electorate. The analysis investigates variations in issue salience across generational divides, highlighting the interplay between cultural heritage and political assimilation. The research leverages data from an original, nationwide survey conducted immediately after the 2024 elections, where participants evaluated the importance of a range of policy issues. This survey design allows for a nuanced understanding of generational differences and the evolving priorities of immigrant communities in the U.S. Ultimately, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on immigrant political behavior, offering insights into how generational shifts impact policy preferences and voting patterns. It underscores the importance of understanding the heterogenous experiences of immigrant communities to inform equitable policy-making and foster more inclusive political discourse. The findings have implications for scholars, policymakers, and campaign strategists aiming to engage immigrant populations in a rapidly diversifying electorate.

Sam Hayes, Trinity College

New Lines, New Districts, New Representation: Institutional Decisions in Congressional Reapportionment

Who makes decisions and how those decisions impact everyday Americans are fundamental questions in U.S politics and government. This paper examines how the different decisions made by political institutions during the reapportionment process impacts congressional representation of politically vulnerable groups in the United States. Using an original data set from the past 50 years of congressional redistricting plans and affected populations, we evaluate how the type of redistricting institution drawing a congressional map affects the consistency of the congressional boundaries and the demographic populations most affected during the reapportionment process. Ultimately, we find that certain redistricting institutions are more likely to impact district boundaries and constituent minorities under certain redistricting environments: partisan state legislatures are more likely to shift foreign-born populations when a congressional district is added (or lost) to the state; economically vulnerable populations are likely to experience change regardless of whether a state is adding (or removing) a congressional district. These findings have normative implications for the quality of representation for both minority

Tristan Hightower, Bryant University

Local Networks, National Influence: How Geographic Ties Affect Interest Group Success in Congress

The relationship between interest groups, financial resources, and legislators has long been a central topic in political science. While studies have produced mixed findings regarding the direct impact of money on lobbying outcomes, it is widely accepted that interest groups wield significant influence, especially when they work with supportive legislators (Hall and Deardorff 2006). This study shifts the focus to the local dimensions of interest group influence, examining how the geographic ties of interest groups shape their effectiveness in influencing congressional representatives. Focusing on Rhode Island's congressional delegation, we find that interest groups with deep, localized roots are more successful in advancing their agendas with local legislators. While financial contributions remain a key factor in political influence, this research highlights the importance of community ties and local engagement in fostering meaningful relationships with elected officials. By broadening the scope of what constitutes "access," this work contributes to both the interest group and congressional scholarship, offering new insights into the dynamics of influence and representation in Congress.

Alex Hindman, College of the Holy Cross

Justice Hugo Black's Constitutional Evolution on Legislative Oversight

Federalist No. 51 notes that "the interests of the man must be connected to the constitutional rights of the place," arguing that constitutional institutions shape the behavior of officeholders. This study examines the transformation of Hugo Black, who transitioned from an aggressive Senate investigator as chairman of the New Deal-era Senate Lobbying Committee to a staunch defender of individual rights as a Supreme Court Justice. As a close ally of Franklin Roosevelt, Senator Black led oversight efforts from 1935 to 1937 targeting influential press figures like William Randolph Hearst, Frank Gannett, and Robert McCormick. Yet, Justice Black's opinions in Watkins v. United States (1957), Barenblatt v. United States (1959), and Gibson v. Florida Legislative Investigation Committee (1963) reflect a robust defense of individual rights against legislative overreach. Drawing on original archival research from Senate Lobbying Committee files and Hugo Black's papers, this project explores Black's institutional and ideological shift between his legislative and judicial roles. The paper argues that this evolution underscores the Constitution's formative role in shaping the contexts and priorities of constitutional officeholders. Finally, this research sheds light on early debates that have defined the paradoxical relationship of legislative oversight balanced against individual rights through the example of Justice Black, the last Associate Justice to serve in Congress before joining the bench.

Matthew Hodgetts, Case Western Reserve University

Hope, Fear, and (Realistic) Dreams of Climate Utopia

Utopias are not supposed to be achievable, almost by definition, and yet we find ourselves in an era of what Kim Stanley Robinson calls "necessary" utopia in the face of the climate crisis. Hans Morgenthau once argued for the necessity of utopia in response to the potential for nuclear apocalypse. The former is motivated by hope and the latter by fear. The latter emotion seems to be winning out in today's climate discourse, perhaps understandably so, with the rise of "climate anxiety". In fact, hope seems to be all but lost. This paper develops an original argument, drawing on everything from normative political theorists to Star Trek, for how to best understand the important roles of both hope and fear within the climate discourse, advocating for the presence of both, but in what I call their "productive" forms. This is paired with the observation that the absence of either, but also the presence of either or both "unproductive" forms, is counterproductive.

Emma Hoffman, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Artistic preferences and political views: A study of the American public

Are visual art preferences directly linked to political views? Studies utilizing psychological frameworks such as the Big Five personality test have separately found a relationship between personality traits and both aesthetic preferences and political behaviors. Individuals high in openness often prefer both abstract art and progressive policies, while those with higher conscientiousness, associated with a preference for order and structure, tend to favor both representational art and conservative policies, though these preferences have not typically been studied together. However, a 2019 study by Noah Carl, Lindsay Richards, and Anthony Heath found that British individuals who preferred realistic art were more likely to support Brexit, suggesting that there may be a relationship between the two preferences. Building on this, our research explores whether Americans' art preferences relate to vote choice, partisan identity, and attitudes on immigration, racial equality, and gender rights. Developed with guidance from Professor Jesse Rhodes of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, this study hypothesizes that those favoring realistic art will be more likely to hold conservative values and support Donald Trump. In contrast, those favoring abstract art will lean liberal and support Kamala Harris. We test these hypotheses using a survey of 700 U.S. adults. This survey asks participants to select preferences between realistic and abstract artworks, report their voting behavior and party affiliation, and share views on key socio-political issues. This interdisciplinary approach combines art history, political science, and psychology to explore the intersection of cultural and political identities. By uncovering connections between art and politics, this research offers fresh insights into identity and behavior in a polarized society, bridging gaps across the social sciences and humanities. Carl, N., Richards, L. and Heath, A. (2019), Preference for realistic art predicts support for Brexit. Br J Sociol, 70: 1128-1134. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12489

Lisa Holmes, University of Vermont

Party Differences in the Use of Courts in U.S. Presidential Campaigns

This paper is part of a larger project on parties and the use of the judicial in presidential election campaigns in the United States. Specifically, in this paper I analyze the 2024 presidential election with respect to the extent and the nature of attention to the judiciary during the campaign. In the broader project, I find that theories regard differences between the two main political parties in the contemporary United States are reflected in the extent to which and how the courts are discussed during the campaign. In recent decades, Democratic candidates have tended to connect courts to issues related to the diversity of the party's constituency. Republican candidates, on the other hand, have been more likely to discuss judicial philosophy and to connect the courts to a wide variety of other issues of interest to their constituency. Since the rise of the Tea Party movement, the gap between how much the Republican Party has focused on the judiciary during presidential campaigns compared to the Democratic Party has widened further. For this paper, I plan to provide an overview of the main arguments being made in the broader project while providing an analysis of the 2024 presidential election.

Matthew Ingram, University at Albany, SUNY

Detecting Clandestine Graves in Mexico: A Mixed-Methods Approach

This project advances a new approach to detecting clandestine, mass graves in Mexico that is based on a mixed methodology. Mexico has a large number of clandestine graves, which have primarily been attributed to the violence of criminal networks. There are more than 100,000 missing persons, and many of these individuals are believed to be in these graves. Further, fear and insecurity remain persistently high, and trust and confidence in justice institutions remain persistently low. Thus, identifying these graves contributes to broader efforts to combat impunity and insecurity. The approach here proceeds in six steps. First, using existing, publicly available data, we identify documented locations of clandestine graves in Mexico. Second, we collect images of publicly available maps of these locations. Third, we crowd-source information on the physical contours of known graves and known non-graves. Fourth, we collect publicly available satellite images of these locations. Fifth, using the crowd-sourced boundaries, we process the satellite images for relevant data. Sixth, using data from images of known gravesites and non-grave sites, we divide the data into training and testing samples, and employ predictive modeling to anticipate where other, yet undiscovered clandestine graves are located. This is a work in progress and data are being collected on an ongoing basis. The approach is generalizable across the entire country, and can be extended beyond graves to detect other types of illicit behavior (e.g., illegal logging or mining).

Mohsen Jalali, Midwestern State University

Supporting Conspiracy Theories: Does It Imply Belief?

In this research project, I ask participants to complete a few paragraphs starting with the phrase "I am not a conspiracy theorist but… ." The objective is to identify patterns of thinking among people who may or may not display belief in conspiracy theories. What meaning do they assign to their interactions with these conspiracy theories and with other believers in conspiracy theories? What does the belief in these conspiracy theories tell us about how ordinary people perceive political processes work and how does these assumptions impact their political behavior, including voting, political deliberations, and news consumption? It is often argued that people believe in conspiracy theories because they are anti-science, lack an understanding of the scientific process, suffer from "crippled epistemology," exhibit some forms of paranoia, or they are simply reacting to elitism, though it is unclear who these elites are. My hypothesis is that people do not concern themselves much with the content of the conspiracy theories they interact with. Conspiracy theories are not often about facts. This is to go away from fact-checking approach. Conspiracy theorists are more focused on power relations. From my preliminary research, it seems to me that people are ambivalent in their interactions with political conspiracies circulating in their environment. It is unclear whether people believe in conspiracy theories that they sometimes support or not; when one engages a conspiracy theory, it does not necessarily mean believing in it. I remain, however, open-minded as more data becomes available. The research is in its early stages. I plan to collect qualitative data by interviewing around 70 residents of a small city in Northern Texas. The city is a stronghold of the Republican Party. I will present my early findings at NEPSA for discussion.

Jason Jividen, Saint Vincent College

Tocqueville and the Contemporary Critique of Liberalism

In recent years some conservative commentators have enlisted the aid of Alexis de Tocqueville as an intellectual ally in their critique of the liberal tradition, particularly as liberalism bears on the principles, culture, and institutions of the American regime. Some, such as political theorist Patrick Deneen, even appeal to Tocqueville's thought in heralding the end of liberalism as a viable guide for political life. This paper will explain and critically assess the appeal to Tocqueville in such arguments. The paper will consider the strengths and potential limitations of invoking Tocqueville as a critic of contemporary liberalism.

Angie Jo, Massachussetts Institute of Technology

From Crisis to Capacity: Federal Interventions and the Evolution of State Welfare Institutions

What happens to billions of dollars in emergency social policy enacted by the U.S. government during a welfare crisis? This paper examines whether discretionary federal funds allocated to state welfare agencies foster long-term structural reforms or serve merely as temporary relief that fades once the crisis subsides. Focusing on foreclosure prevention policies from the 2008 Financial Crisis, I use a quasi-experimental regression discontinuity design, archival data, and interviews with former bureaucrats to study the impact of the Hardest Hit Fund (HHF)—a federal aid program aimed at reducing household mortgage burdens and distress from local unemployment—on the generosity and development of recipient state-level housing finance agencies. This design compares states receiving HHF aid in 2010 to non-eligible but similarly "hard hit" states, assessing whether these resources led to differences in policy orientation (cash compensation vs. debt restructuring) or long-term state capacity by the time the program was revived and expanded nationwide as the COVID-19 Homeowner Assistance Fund in 2021. Findings clarify the relationship between federal crisis interventions, state-level policy choices, and institutional evolution. The results carry theoretical and practical implications for understanding how Liberal welfare states adapt over time and across levels of government, offering insight into the enduring impact—or lack thereof—of emergency social policy on welfare state capacity and resilience to crises.

Adanna Kalejaye, University of Massachusetts - Boston

Leapfrogging Water Systems: Policy and Institutional Pathways to Climate Resilience and Adaptation in Coastal Cities.

This research seeks to explore the feasibility, readiness, and enabling conditions under which coastal cities can bypass traditional, incremental developmental stages by the process of leapfrogging in adapting water systems to address the escalating climate crisis. Coastal cities, characterized by dense populations, significant infrastructure investments, and rich natural resources, face heightened risks from climate change due to their proximity to vulnerable coastal ecosystems. These vulnerabilities necessitate urgent and innovative strategies to enhance resilience and sustainability in urban water management. The concept of leapfrogging, often associated with advancements in technology and industrial processes, is reimagined in this research as a transformative approach applicable to urban water system transitions. Leapfrogging, in this context, represents a holistic approach to achieving efficient, accelerated, sustainable development trajectories that reduce the impacts of environmental degradation. Using policy diffusion theory and institutionalism, the study explores how policy processes and institutional frameworks facilitate leapfrogging in water systems adaptation. It also examines whether the attitudes, perspectives of government stakeholders and their decision-making processes can influence cities to adopt leapfrogging strategies. The research employs a multiple embedded case study design, focusing on four diverse coastal cities; Boston and New York in the Global North, Lagos and Warri in the global south to capture the complexities of urban systems, multi-layered governance structures, and stakeholder interactions across various levels. My embedded case study design will rely on archival research, content analysis of publicly available documents, survey research with bureaucrats and policymakers as participants, and in-depth interviews with key informants and other respondents from the survey. The expected outcomes from this research are the factors associated with leapfrogging behavior in coastal cities' water systems adaptation, policy processes through which these outcomes are achieved, the role of institutions in adopting such policies, and policy learnings that are transferrable to other coastal cities.

Nicholas Kapoor, Fairfield University

Mixing, Matching, and Winning? The Electoral Effects of Fusion Voting in Connecticut and New York State Legislative Elections 2012 - 2020

This paper examines the electoral effects of fusion voting in Connecticut and New York state legislative elections from 2012 to 2020. Fusion voting, where multiple political parties endorse the same candidate, has historically provided a path for third parties to influence elections in the United States. By analyzing the cross-endorsement strategies of minor parties such as the Working Families Party and the Independent Party in Connecticut and New York, the study explores whether fusion voting impacts election outcomes, particularly in the context of increased political polarization. Using logistic regression, the paper investigates how fused ballot lines influence electoral success, focusing on factors such as major and minor party votes, incumbency, and party affiliation. The findings indicate that while fusion voting increases visibility and vote share for candidates endorsed by minor parties, it rarely changes the ultimate electoral outcome, as the majority of winning candidates still prevail on their major party line. This study contributes to understanding fusion voting's role in enhancing third-party visibility and influence, even when it does not result in third-party electoral victories.

Denis Kennedy, College of the Holy Cross

Caught between principles and politics: UNRWA and the humanitarian aid battlefield in the Gaza War

In the geopolitically fraught terrain of Gaza, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Near East (UNRWA), has long relied on humanitarian principles to secure operational space. The 2023 Gaza War, while devastating for Palestinians, has also had consequences for UNRWA, which has been targeted militarily and politically. To what extent, and for what purposes, has UNRWA articulated core humanitarian principles in its public statements during the Gaza War? Evidence is drawn from a quantitative content analysis of public statements from UNRWA, Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Amnesty International (AI) to compare humanitarian and human rights discourses. A census sample of press releases, reports, and official statements from the first 10 months of the war was analyzed. The research finds that UNRWA was more likely to articulate humanitarian principles, particularly humanity and impartiality, than AI and HRW, whose discourse was more politicized. UNRWA's use of these principles spiked following key events that threatened UNRWA's physical and organizational survival, including after Israel's allegations that UNRWA staffers participated in the October 7 attacks. This research provides deeper insight into how humanitarian organizations respond to reputational and operational threats and how humanitarian principles might be employed strategically to diminish such threats.

Jim Kenny, Royal Military College of Canada

A Tale of Two Dams: Debating Hydroelectricity on the International St. John River, 1950-70

Throughout the period 1950-70 American and Canadian engineers, politicians, public utilities, and the International Joint Commission planned the full development of the international St. John River, with large storage and hydro dams upriver in northern Maine, at Rankin Rapids-Dickey-Lincoln, and smaller hydro operations downriver in New Brunswick, most notably at Mactaquac. A draft St. John River Treaty, based on the Columbia River Treaty, was even negotiated, although not ratified. Supporters argued that plentiful and cheap electricity produced by these dams would rejuvenate local economies in both countries and lower power costs in the northeast through a regional power grid. But the projects also encountered resistance from preservationists, conservationists, and environmentalists in both jurisdictions who were concerned about the ecological, cultural, and aesthetic impacts of the dams and from a powerful private power lobby in New England. This paper explores why, in the end, only New Brunswick pursued hydro development on the river. Despite significant opposition, Mactaquac was ultimately built because there was a public consensus in New Brunswick around a public power regime and the idea that hydro would lead to economic growth and modernity. This was not the situation in Maine where private power companies mobilized against development both because of cost and the fact that it was to be a federal public project. These objections had particular resonance in Maine because of a long history of local resistance to federal activity in the state. Moreover, while river preservationists and ecologists opposed hydro on both sides of the border, they were most effective in Maine where they joined forces with the broader wilderness movement and private forest companies. New Brunswick environmentalists had no such allies and were dismissed by a government and public power utility that was able to portray dam construction as "progressive" and "modern."

Farhan Khalid, Government Murray Graduate College Sialkot Punjab-Pakistan

Indo-Pacific as the theatre of new great game: The Dynamics of United States- Canadian Policy Paradigms

The global politics reflects and behave like a chess board game where some certain characters and actors are posted in specific boxes and areas to find their turn and opportunity to play and win the game. In the end one wins who uses the wisest of intelligence, tricks, strategies and application of both realistic and functional approach. The myth of international politics in historical and contemporary perspective seems dynamical in nature likewise the game of chess where players like; United States and Canada essentially change their place and position. The great game of global politics has been ever played through the cards of various flashpoints, military alliances, and security reservations, geo-economic and political priorities. The polarization of global politics has been placed out with the specific role and contribution of different regional powers like Canada, Japan, China, India and Russia in the contemporary global politics. How the United States and Canada as the member of five eyes to play commanding role in the forthcoming geo-strategic, economic and military environment of Indo-pacific? The state security, containment of china's emerging role in Indo-pacific, conflict resolution, human and economic development, Indo-china rivalry, peace and stability through the concerned players of the great game would be the key determinants of the future US and Canadian role in Indo-pacific. The study seeks what are the expected prospects, implications and outcomes of power politics and rivalry on the theatre of Indo-pacific as the future great game? Key words: Indo- pacific, State security, Geo-military, Dynamics, Policy paradigms

Joshua King, United States Military Academy

The Cost of Collapse: The Just War Tradition and Moral Responsibility in War

The just war tradition frequently employs the phrases jus ad bellum and jus in bello to describe two spheres of moral analysis. The first asks what a state should consider or do in order to begin a just war. The second asks how the agents of that state must conduct themselves during the war to remain just. Recent scholarship has claimed that these terms make no appearance in the historic texts of the just war tradition but are innovations of twentieth century international law, effectively collapsing questions of justice into questions of legality. I examine the argument behind this claim and explore the work of three authors from the just war tradition to argue that these nuanced dimensions of the just war tradition exist in both substance and form by the time of Vitoria and have become so influential by the time of Grotius that he contrasts this moral framework against the norms of war. Finally, I claim that international law and the just war tradition are different ways to raise ethical questions about the tactics and the outcomes of military violence. A full moral dialogue necessitates maintaining independence between the two because international law and the law of armed conflict offer, at best, very limited protections for non-combatants and few opportunities for dissent among military personnel. Soldiers and citizens are, in effective, left with little more than the power of reflective judgment. It is here that the just war tradition is indispensable.

Brennan King, United States Coast Guard Academy

Fishing For Answers: Identifying Best Practices to Combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing in the Gulf of Guinea

The persistence and growth of illicit norms related to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUUF) throughout coastal sub-Saharan Africa are not only threats to local human security, but they are also understood to have grave implications for US national and global security. IUUF is increasingly empowering local and international networks of inter-related illicit activities. Existing legal frameworks such as Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Bilateral Agreements (BA) are increasing, but enforcement of agreements continues to lag. Improving upon the methodology used in the IUUF Fishing Risk Index, we expand this approach to measure the success of RFMOs and BAs. Through quantitative data analysis and qualitative case studies, this project examines these frameworks, including how RFMOs and BAs have impacted the countries in the Gulf of Guinea. Countries in this region are making efforts to combat IUUF and hold the answers to the effectiveness of the RFMOs and BAs. We conclude with policy recommendations for the U.S. and partner nations who are combatting the daily and growing harsh consequences of rampant IUUF.

Hyunsup Ko, Syracuse University

Decoding Provocations: US-ROK Alliance Cohesion and North Korea's Strategic Behavior

This study investigates the relationship between the cohesion of the US-ROK alliance and the frequency of North Korean provocations. While North Korea's provocations are often attributed to internal challenges or reactions to US policy, this research hypothesizes that shifts in South Korea's policy—distinct from the broader alliance—can independently influence North Korea's actions. The study focuses on the role of the protégé rather than the patron, which has received the majority of attention in existing literature. Employing a game-theoretic model, large-N analysis, and qualitative methods, the research examines whether higher levels of alliance cohesion result in fewer provocations, particularly considering how joint policy alignment or divergence impacts deterrence strategies. The findings aim to bridge gaps in the literature on alliance politics, provide insights into the dynamics of asymmetric alliances, and offer practical recommendations for enhancing policy coherence and regional stability. Furthermore, the study's framework can be applied to other asymmetric alliances, where a protégé's distinct policies toward a common threat differ from those of its patron.

Oleg Kodolov, University of Toronto

2024 British General Election: Key Issues, Campaign, Consequences

The paper discusses major campaign issues and party positioning in July 4, 2024 British general election, with attention to the campaign dynamics, voter attitudes, and key political consequences of the election outcome. It highlights historic nature of the election in regards to the reasons for very poor performance by the Conservative Party, proportionality of the election outcome and of the Labour Party landslide victory, and success by the third parties, with an advance by the Reform Party being of major long-term political significance. Paper presentation further assesses some of the shorter-term consequences of Labour victory and the extent to which Labour actions in power so far correspond to its long-term agenda.

Jeffrey Kraus, Wagner College

Health Care Policy in New York in a time of uncertainty

New York State was one of the more enthusiastic adopters of the Affordable Care Act. Ignoring opposition from the Republicans who controlled the State Senate, Governor Andrew Cuomo established the "New York State of Health," the Health Insurance Exchange (now known as the Health Insurance Marketplace), to enroll uninsured New Yorkers in several private health insurance plans, as well as the state's Medicaid program. New York's participation in the program expanded the state government's longstanding commitment to expanding healthcare access. The state has attempted to expand access while containing costs. The paper will examine the state's efforts to expand health care access to New Yorkers in the years before the adoption of ACA; the implementation of the ACA in New York, and how the program has expanded access to health care. It will also review the ongoing efforts to contain increases in healthcare spending by state. With Donald Trump's return to the White House, there is a strong possibility that the Affordable Care Act, as it was during his first term, will be a "target" for repeal, at the very least, significant change. Therefore, the question is whether New York will be able to maintain its existing program or be forced to make changes.

Chantal Krcmar, Southern New Hampshire University

Breaking the Binary: Complexities of the Construction Industry in India

While some scholars have argued that the complexity and nuance of the informal economy must be acknowledged, and local contexts must be taken into account, many gaps remain. The global construction industry, for example, employs millions, drives local economies, and creates numerous (mostly informal, insecure and dangerous) jobs. Despite its magnitude, very little research has been done on the varied conditions and worker experiences on informal construction sites. My grounded approach highlights the complexities and nuances of the informal construction sector in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, India, as well as the limitations of the informal vs formal binary. Despite all being informal laborers, the participants in my study had different subjective experiences of their work, varied material circumstances, and different notions of how to improve their work conditions. Policies designed to improve the security of construction workers in India failed to do so, and construction companies had wildly varying practices. This view from the ground shows that the informal economy cannot be fully understood with dualistic theoretical approaches. Knowing the features of the informal construction sector that are most valued by laborers is essential to aiming for effective interventions to enhance their working conditions and experiences.

Yangmo Ku, Norwich University

Diplomacy Driven by Court Rulings? Explaining South Korea's Foreign Policy toward Japan, 2012-2024

Why has it been so difficult for the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Japan to move beyond their historical disputes despite their shared strategic interests? How and to what extent post-2011 South Korean court decisions over comfort women and forced laborers have affected South Korea's foreign policy toward Japan and their mutual relationship? This paper argues that post-2011 South Korean court rulings over comfort women and forced laborers have notably influenced South Korea's assertive policy toward Japan, further complicating longstanding ROK-Japan historical disputes. The 2011 South Korean Constitutional Court ruling over comfort women prompted South Korean political leaders to take more assertive attitudes toward the Japanese government, thus dampening ROK–Japan relations. Furthermore, the 2012 and 2018 South Korean Supreme Court rulings over forced labor brought about the politicization of courts within the ROK while agitating Japanese leaders and further straining the ROK–Japan relationship.

Mark Kuhlberg, Laurentian University

"Our industry depends on Canadian pulpwood:" Reconsidering The American Paper Industry's Fight Against Canada's Pulpwood Embargo, 1920-30

A significant amount of literature has addressed the debate over Canada's export of pulpwood to the United States during the first third of the twentieth century, and its focus has been the domestic discourse surrounding this issue. This is especially true of accounts that addressed the 1920s, when the dominion government proposed implementing an embargo on this trade but never implemented it. In analyzing the dynamics that affected this issue, the consensus is that forces within Canada determined its outcome. Viewing the affair through American archival sources, however, paints a different picture. Leading pulp and paper makers in the US viewed continuing the supply of pulpwood from Canada as an existential issue. Consequently, they mounted a well-funded, multi-pronged campaign to protect their interests. Among other tactics, the Americans sought to influence fundamentally the work of a Canadian Royal Commission that was investigating the matter. They also engaged political insiders in Ottawa, Canada's capital, and in the major pulpwood-exporting provinces. These officials served as invaluable conduits to the corridors of power north of the border and performed several other valuable functions. They also employed local agents within these provinces to be the face of the American pulp and paper firms, thereby creating the appropriate optics in Canada. In concert, analyzing these actions reveals that the Americans played a major, if not preponderant, role in shaping both the debate surrounding this controversy and the manner in which it was resolved.

Thomas Lacourse, Saint Anselm College

The Pope in Mongolia? How Pope Francis Changed Papal Travel

On September 1, 2023, Pope Francis began a four-day visit to Mongolia. Although it was the first time a pope had visited the country, Francis's itinerary was notably predictable. He met Mongolian political leaders, celebrated mass, and opened a charity center. All activities popes traditionally engage in while traveling outside Italy. However, the religious demographics of Mongolia make it unlike any previous papal travel destination. There are only about 1,400-1,500 Catholics in Mongolia. The country is remote, making it difficult for other Catholics to travel there, and lacks any Catholic cultural history. Previous papal trips have been occasions for large crowds of Catholics to gather. Between six and seven million people attended mass during Francis's 2015 trip to the Philippines. The lack of a large Catholic audience in Mongolia demonstrates that Francis's trip deviates from existing papal travel norms. Pope Francis's trip to Mongolia is only one example of a broader pattern: trips to destinations with populations less than ten percent Catholic, once rare, account for 40 percent of trips during Francis's pontificate. Even in familiar destinations, like the United States, Francis does things no other pope has done, like addressing a Joint Session of the U.S. Congress. This chapter seeks to explain how and why Pope Francis approaches travel differently than his predecessors. It begins by analyzing the patterns and motivations of modern papal travel and evaluating how Pope Francis breaks these patterns. It then analyzes the papal exhortation Evangelii Gaudium to develop an explanation of why Francis breaks these patterns. When traveling, Pope Francis's destinations and itineraries have a weaker connection to Catholicism than those of previous popes; this weaker connection is the result of Francis's vision of a church on the margins rather than an abandonment of evangelization as a fundamental goal of papal travel.

Austin Lamb, Boston College

The Conditional Imperative: Smith and Kant on Moral Duties

In Book III of The Theory of Moral Sentiments, Smith speaks of duty, "the only principle by which the bulk of mankind are capable of directing their actions." But although duties are to be "regarded" as fixed "rules of justice," and even "regarded as the commands and laws of the Deity," Smith's analysis shows that duties in fact arise as an abstractions from ordinary moral experience: they are "founded upon experiences of what, in particular instances," the natural operations of sympathy reveal to us. Strictly speaking, Smith's moral law is not a law at all: moral duty does not legislate so much as describe or indicate proper conduct in most cases. Kant--who is said to have referred to "der Engländer Smith" as his "Liebling" writer on moral passions--attempts to address this defect by deducing a system of moral duties from the paper dictates of pure practical reason. Where Kant's imperative is "categorical," that is, deduced from pure reason, Smith's imperatives are conditional, that is, induced from the very ordinary experience which Kant denies can be a basis for moral rules. Only if duty is legislative and binding, Kant argues, can we speak of duty in the precise sense. This paper aims to use these conflicting accounts as an entry point into what I identify as a tension in the Enlightenment moral law tradition between the deduction of moral or political duties from pre-political experience (be it in a state of nature or in a natural "moral sense") and the authority those duties are supposed to wield over the individual. I end by speculating on the possible origin of this tension in the divorce of rights from duties in modern political thought, and whether classical political philosophy offers any resources with which to synthesize Smith's and Kant's moral insights.

Christine Landry, Saint Anselm College

Does a new wind blow? Comparing the public perceptions of Cape Wind and Vineyard Wind in Massachusetts

Between 2001 and 2017, the Cape and Islands region of Massachusetts was paralyzed in a debate over an offshore wind development in Nantucket Sound. This project, known as Cape Wind, faced a robust and highly mobilized opposition, which contributed to its ultimate failure. However, less than four years after the abandonment of Cape Wind, construction began on Vineyard Wind, another offshore wind development in the region. This paper examines the following question: How has public perception of offshore wind projects shifted between the proposals of Cape Wind and Vineyard Wind? To answer this question, I conducted a content analysis of public forum comments from both projects. I also conducted a media analysis to examine the framing of each project. Comparing the public perceptions of Cape Wind and Vineyard Wind is a valuable research opportunity. Since both projects were located in the same region, the general public remained more or less the same. This provides the unique opportunity to examine how perceptions of offshore wind developed over time among residents of the Cape and Islands, the results of which could yield valuable information about the siting of offshore wind projects in the future. Results show that the aesthetic, environmental, and local economic factors caused the greatest difference in the public perceptions of Cape Wind and Vineyard Wind.

Ryan LaRochelle, University of Maine

The Great Society, State Power, and Conservative Backlash, 1964-Present

Lyndon Johnson's Great Society initiatives--the Economic Opportunity Act, Medicare, Medicaid, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and civil rights legislation--dramatically increased the scope of central state power in the United States. Whereas previous expansions of state power, namely Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, did not interfere with America's racial caste system, the Johnson administration deployed central state authority in ways that radically altered race relations. The Community Action Program bypassed state and local authorities, which allowed the federal government to deliver funding directly to low-income communities of color. In order to receive for health care funding, local hospitals had to provide equal access for black and white citizens. Schools were ordered to desegregate more rapidly than they had in the aftermath of Brown v. Board of Education in order to receive ESEA funds. And the federal government deployed civil rights inspectors to local precincts to ensure access to the ballot. These new central state interventions led to a robust conservative backlash, one that was much more powerful and coherent than previous episodes of conservative counter mobilization. This paper demonstrates how the expansion of state power under the Great Society paved the way for our contemporary political divisions.

Alison Lawlor Russell, Merrimack College

Information control strategies of China and Russia

This paper provides an examination of Russia and China's information control strategies in peacetime and wartime. Russia and China both have official strategies for cyber security and control of information communication technology and information itself. Many of these types of information control are in the form of censorship and disinformation, which governments, particularly authoritarian governments, have done throughout history. Information technology provides a new avenue for regimes to continue to practice the art of information control.

Heon Lee, University of Delaware

Kindle the Flame: Psychological Underpinnings of Democratic Resilience

Does the experience of overthrowing an autocratic leader through peaceful protests and constitutional principles strengthen democratic resilience? The unprecedented erosion of democracy in South Korea in December 2024—the abrupt imposition of martial law by the president—and the consequent citizen-led reactions to protect democracy offer an opportunity to investigate how democratic resilience develops in response to threats. Building on prior research on democratic resilience and backsliding, we expect that a constitutional transfer of power following a critical authoritarian breach will strengthen citizens' commitment to democracy and mitigate their anti-democratic tendencies. We test these hypotheses by conducting a two-wave survey in South Korea before and after the anticipated Constitutional Court ruling of the presidential impeachment. We also examine the degree to which public reactions converge or diverge among individuals with differing partisan identities, media diets, and levels of political engagement. Our study sheds light on how an engaged public and well-established institutions can safeguard democracy, even though a transition of power may lead to new political cleavages.

Kenneth Andrew Andres Leonardo, Hamilton College

Re-Existence and the Possibility of a Universal Authenticity

Many scholars have struggled to determine the correct response to European colonialism and the legacy of the Western tradition. In this paper, I investigate the concept and practice of re-existence as described by scholars concerned with decoloniality. I trace the origins of re-existence in the scholarly literature and place it in context with other relevant themes such as the coloniality of being as well as the myriad contemporary notions of authenticity. From this point of view, I consider the possibility of a universal conception of authenticity that transcends the Western and non-Western dichotomy.

Sara Levenstein, Boston College

The Bureaucracy of School Accountability

With the politicization of public education over the last 70 years, there has been an ever growing debate of how schools should be held accountable for their role in educating students. This debate has grown exponentially in recent years with the growing cost of education, lower student test scores, and many teachers leaving their career. To understand this debate we must ask how school districts implement new educational policy from the states? Who in the district should be held accountable for the implementation and success of these policies? What is the best method for evaluating the success of these policies? How do these policies affect educational outcomes? Using James Q. Wilson's analysis of bureaucracy, this paper aims to understand how schools are currently being held accountable and the issues with that system when it comes to the success of students and teachers. This paper concludes with possible solutions to improving student education and teacher retainment.

Caroline Lewis, Fairfield University

Crisis & Activism: Youth Political Participation in the Late Nineteenth -- and Early Twenty-First Centuries

The youth vote has been shaped by the crises of its time, influencing levels of political engagement and electoral outcomes (Della Volpe 2022, Grispan 2016, Childers 2012). In the late nineteenth century young people were active, voter turnout reached unprecedented levels in the 1876 election, through the tumult of the Civil War and Reconstruction, but declined soon thereafter (Grispan 2016). In recent years, data from polls and focus groups, as well as voter turnout rates, suggest a resurgence in young people's willingness to engage in politics (Della Volpe 2022). The enhanced youth participation has, again, been shaped by crises; such as the Great Recession, climate change, the Parkland school shooting, George Floyd's murder, and the pandemic. This paper will investigate the mechanisms by which crises, in different eras of US history, shape youth civic participation. It will focus on two eras - the late nineteenth century and early twenty first century, utilizing public-facing and personal narratives of select youth activists including (i) memoirs, (ii) statements delivered before congressional committees and sessions of Congress, (iii) newspaper opinion writing and (iv) social media posts. Through the exemplary actions and voices of both nineteenth century youths including William Howells, Oscar Lawrence Jackson, George Washington Plunkitt, and Samuel Tilden, and twenty-first century youths, including Darnella Frazier, Emma (X) Gonzalez, David Hogg, and Greta Thunberg, this research seeks to answer these questions: (i) how does crisis act as a catalyst for youth activism and participation, (ii) how do current youth activists process and respond to crisis compared to their peers in the nineteenth century, (iii) what role do political actors and parties play in captivating youth activism then and now, and (iv) through the use of social media, the news, and Congress, how are young activists fostering a world they want to be a part of?

Peter Lindsay, Georgia State University

What rights can be denied to felons?

Democracies commonly recognize that certain rights can be denied to individuals convicted of a felony offense. In the U.S., forty-eight states deny the incarcerated the right to vote and only thirteen states will restore that right upon release. In the rest, individuals have to wait until their parole or probation is over, or, in the case of eleven states, they may never get the right back, depending on their crime. Other examples of rights denials abound. Incarceration obviously denies any rights of mobility, and it is common that persons on parole and probation have limitations placed on travel outside the state or country. Incarcerated individuals have only limited rights against search and seizure, and their rights to property are heavily circumscribed. While there exists in the United States no right to employment or housing, there do exist rights not to be discriminated against with respect to either, and these rights are heavily attenuated for many of those who have already served their prison sentence. This paper explores the justification for such rights denials. The analysis uses as its framework the common justifications for legal punishment: retributivism, deterrence, quarantine and rehabilitation. In each case I explore what the reasonable scope of punishment with respect to rights is. What precise punishment should any particular justification entail?" I will supplement this analysis with my own reflections – reflections based on eight years teaching in Georgia's maximum-security prisons and working with the formerly incarcerated.

Sam Little, Boston College

The Mischief of Harmony: Single-Issue Interest Groups and Party Assimilation

Much has been written about the increase in interest group activity in American politics in recent decades. There has been a proliferation of the number of groups as well as in the amount of money in politics. At the same time, formal party structures and other intermediate political institutions seem to have become "hollowed out" (Schlozman and Rosenfeld 2024) unable to perform their traditional function as intermediaries between candidates, interest groups, and voters. A factor that may help to explain these developments is the tightening bonds between political parties and the interest groups with which they are aligned. As onetime single-issue interest groups work closely with one party and against the other, they become part of an extended party network and develop an interest in their party's electoral success. This may create incentives to take positions unrelated or even hostile to their primary interest in order to help their chosen party. This paper will examine whether such single-issue groups still have "no permanent friends, only permanent interests," or whether long term connections to a single party change interest group behavior to the point where groups put the interests of party over rank-and-file members. It will focus on the changes in interest group structures in the wake of declining social capital and civic engagement (Putnam 2000), and on the consequences of rising polarization and party asymmetries for interest group environments (Grossman and Hopkins 2016). Groups examined will include the NRA, ACLU, churches, and public-sector unions.

Jose Lopez, University of Massachusetts - Boston

Spanish-language Media and Candidate Emergence

The relationship between Spanish language media (SLM) and political engagement has garnered considerable scholarly attention. However, whether SLM serves as a benefit or a detriment to Latino/a/x communities remains unclear, as recent work suggests that ethnic media can be a source of both mobilization and demobilization. Moreover, the effects of SLM on political outcomes beyond voting—specifically, the emergence and success of minority candidates—remain underexplored. This study uses a novel dataset of first air dates for Spanish language media stations across the United States, leveraging their staggered adoption over time to evaluate their influence on local candidate emergence. Preliminary evidence suggests muted effects on both the share of city councilors who are Latino/a/x and the number of Latino/a/x candidates running for office. These findings indicate that, despite offering an accessible platform for candidates to broadcast their message and potentially activate ethnic identity among Latino/a/x voters, these stations may not significantly enhance descriptive representation.

Jennifer Lucas, Saint Anselm College

Benevolent and Hostile Sexism and Candidate Evaluations across Parties

How does hostile sexism interact with partisanship in candidate evaluations? Since 2016, studies suggest that sexism is predictive of voting and candidate evaluations. How might sexism be filtered through the lens of partisanship, and does this vary depending on the gender of the candidate within and across parties? The study relies on a survey of New Hampshire voters prior to the 2024 election, where women were five of the ten candidates for statewide or federal races (presidential, vice-presidential, congressional and gubernatorial). The results indicate that hostile sexism is correlated with favorability evaluations toward most candidates, with the exception of Republican congressional and gubernatorial candidates, two of whom were women. Benevolent sexism played a less consistent role, though was significantly related to favorability and other evaluations of the Republican woman gubernatorial nominee. Overall, hostile sexism remains an important predictor overall, though with more mixed results for Republican women candidates.

Max Lykins, Bowdoin College

"Words Do Not Bestow Valor": Populist Rhetoric in Sallust's Bellum Catilinae and Bellum Iugurthinum

This paper turns to the Roman historian Sallust's War with Catiline and War with Jugurtha for insight into the nature of populism. While the concept of populism is widely contested, Sallust's works, treating the increasing destabilization and internal conflict of Roman politics in the late 2nd and 1st centuries BCE and featuring characters who engage in demagogic rhetoric and antagonistic class politics, bear critical similarities to the phenomena that contemporary scholars of populism analyze. Specifically, Sallust's characters Catiline and Gaius Marius engage in (highly rhetorical) deprecations of speech in favor of deeds. The durability of this style of rhetoric across the ancient and modern worlds suggests that rhetoric is more important to populist politics than often thought. Moreover, Sallust shows how the theoretical ideas underlying such rhetoric help account for populism's destructive tendencies.

Emily Lynch, University of Rhode Island

Beyond Red v. Blue: Place Identity and Place Resentment in the Rhode Island Electorate

Recent Rhode Island elections indicate a distinct 'place' dichotomy in residents' political behavior, suggesting that voting patterns reflect place resentment and place identity rather than purely partisan preferences. This study analyzes and interprets original 2024 Rhode Island survey data compiled by YouGov as well as Rhode Island election data to enhance political science and sociology scholarship on the roles of place resentment and place identity as determinants of political behavior. Scholars in sociology, geography, environmental psychology, and beyond have offered a variety of theoretical frameworks to understand how place and society are linked (e.g., Agnew, 1987; Gieryn, 2000; Hernández et al., 2007; Sebastien, 2020). The concept of place identity–and rural identity in particular– has long been a focus of rural sociologists (e.g., Bell, 1994; Stedman, 2002). More recently, an expanding body of work in the social sciences on place identity, place resentment, and politics has sought to improve our understanding of political behavior across urban-rural lines (e.g., Cramer, 2016; Kelly and Lobao, 2018). This study builds on this work to understand how voting behavior among Rhode Islanders is shaped by place resentment and place identity. Our analysis uses a validated scale of place resentment (Munis, 2022) and measures of place identity from the 2024 RI Survey Initiative, along with Rhode Island election data. Rhode Island offers a compelling case study of place resentment and place identity as determinants of political behavior, as the state's small size places rural and urban communities in close proximity, enhancing the frequency and intensity of interaction between these communities.

Tun Tun Lynn, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Can Pandora's Box be Closed? How Myanmar's Keyboard Fighters Circumvent the Military's Efforts to Minimize Access to Online Information

In 2012 the Myanmar government abolished its censorship board, effectively opening a Pandora's box of free speech in the previously cloistered information environment and raising hopes that the country was poised to become a democracy. In 2021, these hopes were dashed when the military staged a coup. In the months that followed, the military limited internet access but they could not entirely shut it down. People in Myanmar initially used Facebook to share information about the military's repression and mobilize protests. When the military blocked access to Facebook, people used VPNs to access and share information. The military tried to outlaw the use of VPNs, but were they really able to close Pandora's box? And how do people who have been primed to distrust media because of government interference discern trustworthy sources from misinformation? We interviewed local experts in Myanmar who reported that people continue to rely on the internet and social media for news and information in spite of the risks involved. We analyzed these interviews about people in Myanmar's internet and media use before and after the coup d'état to assess how they access and identify trustworthy sources in this changing mediascape.

Alynna Lyon, University of New Hampshire

"How many divisions has the pope?" Pope Francis and Global Diplomacy

In 2015 Pope Francis remarked to journalists that the world is in "a third world war in stages" and "wars, migrants, and the wave of people that are fleeing wars and fleeing death." During that same visit, he described the "world is thirsty for peace" and heralded the need for a "victory for the culture of encounter and dialogue." Within the last two years war rages in Ukraine with the shadow of Buchra, with close to 10,000 civilians killed and 500,000 military casualties. In late 2023 devastating violence erupted in Gaza and Israel with mass civilian deaths, terrorism, and mass atrocities. The world appears consumed with suffering, anger and a culture of retraction and vengeance. There are few moral voices at the global level to help both world leaders and humanity navigate the most challenging of tensions. Pope's have engaged in global diplomacy for centuries. While the papacy has little formal power, Popes are called upon to navigate the global community away from war, genocide, poverty, and famine. At times, some are activists and seek a more public role with independent initiatives, and their actions (and inactions) have considerable moral consequences. Pope Francis is active in global issues and has made several attempts at "Vatican Diplomacy." This project explores how Pope Francis views the global conflicts of the day, with a focus on his thoughts, words and deeds in global diplomacy through a case study on his 2023 initiative to mediate a cease-fire between Russia and Ukraine.

Paul Manuel, Georgetown University

Social Movements in Portugal Since the 25 April Revolution

Daniela Melo and Paul Manuel propose a presentation of their soon-to-be released edited volume, "After the Carnations: Social Movements in Portugal Since the 25 April Revolution" (Liverpool University Press, August 2025). Fifty years after the start of the Portuguese Revolution, there remain many unanswered questions. Their volume presents a leading group of specialists on social movements in Portugal who explore how social movements that mobilized during the revolution contributed to democratic practice in the post-revolutionary period. They will examine two main questions. First, what are the key characteristics of the differing social movements in Portugal since April 25. Second, how have these various social movements been able to contribute to the articulation of a robust civil society in Portugal post April 25. The Portuguese revolution of April 25, 1974, has drawn much well-deserved scholarly attention: it offers an innovative example of a leftist military-led revolutionary process that unexpectedly resulted in the transition to a West European-style social democracy. Although much of the existing scholarship has logically focused on the emerging political elites and institutions of the period, there is much more to consider about the revolution's ramifications to the Portuguese social-movement sector. Melo and Manuel will explore the practical consequences of these social movements to Portuguese civil society. Which post April 25 social movements have survived? How did those movements adapt to the new institutional context? How have they remained relevant? Which issues/impacts did these organizations have that are still resonant today? Which repertoires of contention remain in the toolkit of tactics that current social movements use? What has been their impact on the quality of Portuguese democracy?

Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, Southern Connecticut State University

Building Community through Inclusion and Diversity

The paradox of community is that it is a synergy between individual identity and collective identity. For the United States, this notion is embodied in its motto, "e pluribus unum,": "Out of many, one." The parallel motto of the European Union is "United in diversity." In Christianity, the parallel is the idea of the body of Christ, from Paul's description likening the church to a human body that can function only with the cooperation of its various organs—the various roles of congregants (1 Corinthians 12:14-27). Although historically churches have been considered civil society organizations, because of their ability to form strong communities and thus expand social capital, church membership has been declining in recent decades. Congregations have faced this decline in different ways. For the Spring Glen United Church of Christ, the answer has been to embrace diversity in a way that hearkens to Paul's metaphor of the body of Christ—to build what Dr. King called the Beloved Community, one based on inclusion, equity, love, and trust. For this congregation, diversity is more than a slogan. It is a core value and a motivating force for action. This paper is a case study of this congregation's approach to building community.

Thomas Massaro, Fordham University

The First Jesuit Pope: The Contribution of his Jesuit Charism to his Political Views

As the first Jesuit pope, Francis brings to his office a distinctive set of social and political concerns that build upon the "playbooks" of previous popes but also displays some features that mark his papacy in noteworthy ways. Francis urges the large community of Catholic faithful across all lands to "meddle in politics" in ways that contribute to the common good in several distinctive ways--by promoting such values as peacebuilding, labor justice, greater economic equality, healthy family life, constructive refugee resettlement and ecological sustainability. This paper unpacks the most prominent features of these stances (and resulting moral exhortations in documents, spoken words and highly visible deeds) and traces them to the pope's personal background, particularly the ways he has inherited Jesuit spirituality and congruent social priorities. Beyond some institutional analysis of the Roman Catholic Church, this paper draws upon theological discourse, spirituality and particularly Jesuit history in tracing the root concerns of Pope Francis and how he has advocated for a particular vision of social justice throughout the dozen years of his papacy. Multiple insights arise from an examination of core Jesuit documents, including the Jesuit constitutions and the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The "Jesuit charism" has come to include a particular dedication to careful discernment and to building the conditions for peaceful resolution of conflicts and broad participation in political and social life, in line with core values of Catholic social teaching, such as universal dignity and the pursuit of the common good. The "Jesuit DNA" of Pope Francis is readily evident in numerous of his social and political stances, as well as in his bold advocacy of particular visions of social justice. Francis drinks deeply indeed from the wellsprings of his Jesuit spiritual background.

Bee Mayberry, Mount Holyoke College

Praise Jesus (And Trump): Language and Indoctrination Strategies Used by the Alt-Right and Christian Nationalists

Ever since Donald Trump won the 2016 presidential election (a win that came as a shock to American voters, academics, and politicians alike), researchers have spent years studying how two controversial communities helped secure his win: the online Alt-Right and Christian Nationalists. It was these groups who helped push Trump to victory by promoting him in Church sermons, trolling supporters of other candidates, and indoctrinating more moderate conservatives into Trump's collection of far-right followers. Putting these communities in the spotlight also showed researchers the unique language and indoctrination strategies these two groups use to radicalize new and established members. My research aims to bridge the gap between the research on the online Alt-Right and Christian Nationalists and answer the question: What are the parallels between the online Alt-Right and Christian Nationalists in their indoctrination practices; more specifically, what language and social norms do both groups utilize to indoctrinate and further radicalize new members? I intend to answer this question by looking at what linguistic strategies both groups use to indoctrinate new members, as well as what shared ideologies, such as white supremacist and paternalist values, are emphasized when speaking to new and established members alike. My research will show that the similarities run deeper than surface-level ideology: although expressed in different ways, the online Alt-Right and Christian Fundamentalists utilize similar strategies when attempting to indoctrinate and radicalize new members, such as utilizing personal stories of indoctrination, indoctrination rituals, and unique language to identify in-group versus out-group members.

William Mayer, Northeastern University

News Media Owners in America: An Ideological Portrait

Many theories of media bias argue that news media corporations are owned by wealthy conservatives and for this reason have a conservative bias, especially on economic issues. Yet no one has actually examined the ideology of major media owners. In this paper, I assemble a list of major media owners in the period from 1975 to the present and then try to determine their ideology.

Eileen McDonagh, Northeastern University

"What's Wrong with American Democracy? The American Revolution, That's What"

Today, many seek to understand what's wrong with American democracy. This paper points to the American Revolution that derailed democracy in four major ways. In 1833, England prohibited slavery in its colonies, but, by that time, America had become a nation that constitutionalized slavery. In addition, the American Revolution spawned a political culture glorifying violence, as in "bombs bursting in air," in the national anthem. Similarly, it legitimized the people's use of violence to express disagreements with government. Finally, it retarded the development of a robust welfare state by institutionally and ideologically destroying the legitimacy of monarchies, which many contend destroys the principle that the government is analogous to the family as an institution, and, thus, the government is responsible for providing to people what they need but do not have as do parents in the family. Using cross-national and historical comparisons between the political development of democracy in the United States and other Western European nations, this research illuminates why the American Revolution was unnecessary, unoriginal, and responsible for catastrophic APD disasters that followed, including the Civil War and an American culture saturated with racism. We can't undo the American Revolution, but we can desist in its celebration.

James McHugh, University of Akron

Pope Francis, Modernism, and Liberal Democracy

Modernism, as a phenomenon within the Catholic Church, is a label that has been applied by its opponents to movements and ideas that seek to accommodate the concepts and developments of modernity as they apply to theological and doctrinal understandings of the Church and its role in the world. The anti-Modernist position was especially strong within the Church hierarchy during the 19th and 20th centuries, though its influence has persisted to the present day. But Pope Francis has demonstrated a different perspective in this respect, which has been evident in his positions on science, gender and sexuality, and individual freedom. That perspective includes his support for liberal democracies that are more conspicuous and consistent than previous pontiffs, including his immediate predecessors. Francis' apparent rejection of anti-Modernism and his *rapprochement* with liberal democratic norms and institutions indicates a potentially more progressive change for Catholic interaction with the political world.

Scott McLean, Quinnipiac University

The Final Blue Wall: Political Culture and New Hampshire's Swing Electorate

In 2024, Donald Trump swept every swing state except New Hampshire. New Hampshire is also the state where Trump face his greatest opposition in the primaries. Though Kamala Harris won narrowly, is New Hampshire likely to swing in 2028, or will it become more like its solid-blue neighboring states? This paper will explore how New Hampshire's cultural groupings are gradually changing as a result of migration, urbanization and education. It seems more likely that even if Democrats do not come to dominate as they have in other New England states, New Hampshire's electorate is coming to resemble other blue states, at the presidential level of competition. Part of the explanation for the high frequency of ticket-splitting in New Hampshire is the mismatch between the national political parties and the state's own political culture and political traditions.

Peter McNamara, Arizona State University

Adam Smith on Resistance and Revolution

Adam Smith on Resistance and Revolution Peter McNamara Arizona State University Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations was published in 1776; that is, at the beginning of the "Age of Revolutions". Smith, however, was not an advocate of revolution. He rejected social contract theories as both wrong and dangerous. He was a "sceptical Whig," as Duncan Forbes termed him. This paper will examine Smith's commentaries on the American Revolution and the Jacobite Rebellion. The paper will also try to identify areas where Smith might be truly identified as a radical.

Carol McNamara, Great Hearts Institute for Classical Education

Shakespeare's Grasp of the Feminine: Power and Purpose - The Political Skill of Shakespeare's Cleopatra

What do women want?" was the question Betty Friedan asked in her ground -breaking 1963 book, The Feminine Mystique. But long before Friedan posed this question, William Shakespeare was mulling over for himself the character and ability of women. We often focus on Shakespeare's versatility in writing both comedy and tragedy, history and poetry, but less often do we examine his extraordinary ability to develop female characters and portray their longing and ambition clearly and fully. This essay will explore Shakespeare's insight into the feminine nature, and political skill and ambition through an examination of his Cleopatra. Cleopatra is Shakespeare's oldest female lead. She is in the prime of her life and long, powerful rule over Egypt. What does Shakespeare teach us about Cleopatra's character and political wisdom and capacity that enable her to govern Egypt and maintain her throne for over 20 years, while Roman leaders rose and fell?

Daniela Melo, Boston University

Diasporic Mobilization and U.S. Foreign Policy: The Case of Portuguese Americans during the Portuguese Revolution of 1974-75

In 1974, Portuguese-Americans received the news of the Carnation Revolution with great hope and expectation. Yet, as the revolutionary process unfolded towards ideological polarization and radicalization, they also worried that Communists might overtake democratic forces and permanently damage the Atlantic relationship between Portugal and the USA. With their eyes set on Portugal, the diaspora organized and mobilized to promote their interests in both Portugal and the USA. This presentation explores the varied and sophisticated ways in which Portuguese-Americans mobilized to influence US foreign policy towards Portugal. While the role of diasporic groups in influencing US foreign policy is well-researched, no scholars have examined the Portuguese-American diaspora in this light. I use State Department Archives and collections at the Ferreira-Mendes Archive to unpack the strategies pursued by Portuguese-American groups in New England, as they activated local and state-level networks to get all the way into the Oval Office.

Martin Mendoza-Botelho, Eastern Connecticut

Leadership and democratic legitimacy. Latin America's ongoing dilemma

The past decades have been challenging for many (if not most) Latin American democracies despite electoral progress in the form of regular elections and large popular participation. A particular element in this region is the prevalence of a personalistic culture that favors the will of charismatic individuals. This is not necessarily a new phenomenon and has received many labels in the past, such as delegative democracies, electoral authoritarianism and many others. An interesting difference is that elected authoritarian leaders, who resemble classic caudillos from the past, not only represent different poles in the political spectrum but have also been very skillful legitimizing their actions by using existing institutional settings, bending those to their side. In terms of the political spectrum, while countries such as El Salvador and Argentina have right tendencies, countries like Bolivia and Colombia are solidly positioned on the left, so clearly this phenomenon transcends ideologies. Moreover, an important commonality is the open intentions of securing full control of the state via control of key institutions. This strategy has proven successful, and executives were able to extend their control throughout the political system, from parliaments, to electoral and constitutional courts with little challenge from within. This paper discusses how this new generation of elected authoritarian leaders continue using democracy as a mean to power, but once elected show little regard in maintaining a constitutional order. Instead, they use popular support to undermine institutions opposed to their political projects and are not shy controlling or dismantling democratic safeguards that are on their way. More specifically, this paper focuses on the role of key institutions that have facilitated this authoritarian control of the state under democratic means, including El Salvador's Legislative Assembly (parliament) and Bolivia's Plurinational Constitutional Tribunal as a way to compare similar tendencies throughout the region.

Eric Miller, Brandeis University

Christian First, Conservative Second?: Examining the Relationship Between Religion and Candidate Favorability

Political scientists have established that religion affects voters' political behavior across several dimensions, including the evaluation of candidates. However, less scholarship explores how religion affects voters' favorability of intraparty candidates, i.e. liking or disliking those running for office within the same party, during an election cycle. Using American National Election Studies data from the 2020 election, this paper seeks to begin filling this gap in the literature by examining whether religious denominations, theological interpretations of the Bible, and fluctuations in church attendance affect the feeling thermometer scores for President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, two Republicans who shared a national ticket despite clear ideological and religious differences. Multivariate regression analysis is executed throughout, and I run separate models for respondents based on party identification. These findings demonstrate that the expected effects of Christian religiosity on candidate warmth occur within the electorate for Pence, but not for Trump. The strongest predictors of candidate favorability for the GOP ticket are biblical textualism and Evangelicalism.

John Moriarty, Hillsdale College

Strauss on Xenophon's Socrates as a Response to Nietzsche and Heidegger

This paper continues the recent line of scholarship detailing Leo Strauss' response to Nietzsche and Heidegger. This scholarship has ably shown how Strauss' interpretation of the history of political philosophy responds to Nietzsche and Heidegger's views of philosophy. More should be said, however, about Strauss' writings on Xenophon and Xenophon's Socrates, for Strauss stated that, after having reminded ourselves of the critique of Socrates by Aristophanes, there is a prima facie case for starting with Xenophon when evaluating what he called the "anti-Socratic position" of Nietzsche and Heidegger. Thus, we may reasonably regard Strauss' writings on Xenophon as the proper starting-point for understanding Strauss' response to Nietzsche and Heidegger. This paper claims that these writings contain the basic articulation by Strauss of the possibility of philosophy as the "actualization of a human possibility which, at least according to its own interpretation, is trans-historical, trans-social, trans-moral, and trans-religious." Because Xenophon was willing to be an historian, Strauss looks to Xenophon's portrayal of Socrates in order to determine whether this human possibility was, in fact, actualized in a distinct way of life, or whether this so-called human possibility is merely imaginary, such that philosophy does not and cannot have an essential character distinct from those things which condition all other ways of life. In Xenophon, Strauss finds a Socrates that, relative to Plato's, is purer and simpler, and consequently not likely to be blurred or confused with a ruler or a prophet. Thus, Strauss' writings on Xenophon's Socrates provide the starting-point for understanding Strauss' view of the philosophic way of life which, in its fullest integrity, is in fact separate from all non-philosophic ways of life, and which, at the same time, supplies the natural standard for evaluating the relative nobility or baseness of non-philosophic ways of life, or political life generally.

Kevin Muir, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

States, Firms, and the Weaponization of Interdependence: Corporate Ownership Strategies in a Geoeconomic World.

Due to growing geopolitical tensions the cross-border investment decisions of firms are increasingly viewed by states as a source of vulnerability as well as a key tool for pursuing geoeconomic strategy. The world's largest economies, including those that comprise the core of the 'Liberal World Order', are expanding the number and scope of 'Investment Screening Mechanisms' (ISMs) and resuscitating industrial policy to protect core technologies and promote 'national champions'. In addition, states are today more than ever engaged in transnational investment through Sovereign Wealth Funds (SOEs) and State-owned Enterprises (SOEs). Yet despite the abundance of discussions concerning 'derisking', 'decoupling', and 'deglobalization' in media, policy, and academic spheres such inquiries largely ignore the topic of corporate ownership. This is a glaring lacuna given the significance of corporate ownership in explaining the structural power of Western states and firms and likewise in shaping the strategies of emerging markets seeking to improve their position in global value chains. The central purpose of this study is thus to empirically assess the extent to which transnational ownership networks are responding to the increasing multipolar and contentious nature of the global political economy. To do so I draw on firm-level ownership data from the Thomson Refinitiv and Orbis datasets with the key outcomes of interest focused on two dimensions of transnational investment: the level and type of ownership claims and share of foreign ownership. In terms of analysis I examine trends in the average ownership level of cross-border investments as well as the share of foreign ownership of firms from 2005-2024 across a sample of 50 countries comprising 95% of global GDP. I then test several explanatory variables to explain variance across dimensions including development class, geopolitical alignment, and firm characteristics such as sector, multinational activity, and asset composition.

Carol Nackenoff, Swarthmore College

How Organized Women Mobilized State Capacity to Rescue Chinese Women and Girls During a Strongly Anti-Immigrant Era

This paper examines the relationships turn-of-the-century Presbyterian and Methodist Mission Home women in San Francisco forged with the state as they worked to rescue Chinese children and young women from slavery and prostitution and to keep those they deemed worthy from being deported. Primary focus is on the Presbyterian Mission Home, a dominant player in this effort, making use of archival records. They worked with new juvenile courts, anti-vice groups, police, lawyers, and federal immigration officials. They forged a network of rescuers and often gained legal custody over minors. Their efforts offer one illustration of the ways progressive era women worked creatively to expand the scope of activity of the American state in pursuit of their goals. Their accomplishments are all the more striking because of the virulent assault on the Chinese in America during the early years of the 20th century.

Helena Najm, CUNY Graduate Center

Mothering the Contemporary American Right

What role does the concept of motherhood play in contemporary reactionary right-wing sentiment? In this paper, I explore how the concept of motherhood is being used by conservative politicians and influencers to critique the advent of more fluid gender and sexual roles in the 21st century. For anti-feminists, feminists are categorically viewed as rule-breakers, subverting a norm that had allowed men to feel more secure in their position of authority by virtue of their gender, and presented women as being more secure because of their capacity to rely on a dominant male authority for protection. This is evidenced by anti-feminists' use of representations of motherhood in the nuclear family as opposed to other forms of motherhood that conservatives attribute to post-modern instability, such as single motherhood or IVF. Motherhood as a category of analysis also adds to conservatives' reliance on the biological language of gender to reinforce sex binaries. Here I engage with the conservative shift in reaction to feminism, largely mediated through engagements with the home and the family as units of analysis. I will use the cases of conservative "parents' rights" groups such as Moms for Liberty and their involvement in driving national political change to elaborate upon the connection between expressed views online and policy.

Sarada Prasad Nayak, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Case Backlogs and Bias in Timely Justice Delivery in the Indian Judiciary

Understanding bias in the judicial decision-making process is crucial for ensuring fairness and justice in the legal system. To date, scholarship on judicial bias focuses overwhelmingly on the American legal system, focusing on case outcomes or judges' voting behavior. In this paper, we shift the focus outside of the U.S. and beyond case outcomes. To do this, we examine judicial delays in India, where prolonged legal processes often serve as a form of punishment. We theorize that bias may infiltrate the amount of time it takes to dispose of cases based on the gender and religion of the judge who is assigned the case, as well as those of the defendants. To subject these expectations to empirical scrutiny, we analyze hundreds of thousands of criminal cases decided in India's lower courts. Our results indicate that Muslim defendants experience shorter delays when their cases are heard by Muslim judges, providing evidence of in-group bias. However, there do not appear to be differences in the timing of case outcomes based on the defendant or judge gender. This study contributes to the literature by highlighting how judicial delays in less developed countries may reflect subtle forms of bias, mainly along religious lines.

Lugyi No, University of Massachusetts - Lowell

Crime and Corruption in Post-Coup Myanmar: Community Perceptions and Governance Challenges

The February 2021 military coup in Myanmar has led to a significant increase in crime and corruption, resulting in severe governance and social challenges. This study investigates these dynamics through interviews with 62 respondents from various townships and regions. Findings reveal that weakened law enforcement and disrupted governance have created environments where theft, extortion, and violence thrive. Additionally, entrenched corruption, including bribery and embezzlement, undermines public institutions and erodes community trust. Community perceptions indicate a loss of faith in governmental and law enforcement institutions, leading to feelings of hopelessness and injustice. Using Social Disorganization Theory as a lens, the study examines the impact of these disruptions on crime, corruption, and community trust. The analysis underscores the urgent need for effective governance and peace-building to stabilize and rebuild post-conflict Myanmar.

Nicole Norval, Eastern Connecticut State University

Can AI Reduce Business Corruption - and Prevent Another FIFA … Another FTX?

Regulators consider artificial intelligence ('AI') an inevitable tool for compliance with regulations such as anti-corruption laws. How should we regulate AI to improve regulatory compliance without sacrificing the right to privacy? Can we regulate AI to prevent corrupt business practices and improve human rights outcomes? Unifying existing and forthcoming AI regulation in multiple jurisdictions (primarily the United States and the European Union) in a matrix of business corruption reforms, results in a useful legal model. This paper concludes by applying the model to the decades-long Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) corruption scandal and the recent FTX cryptocurrency exchange bankruptcy to understand the benefits and limitations of this legal framework. We examine why AI is an inevitable tool for regulatory compliance, comparing, AI regulation, guidelines, and recommended practices in the United States, the European Union, and other jurisdictions, in order to extract common objectives of AI regulation such as protecting privacy rights and improving human rights outcomes. We discuss business corruption reforms in general, focusing on the financial services sector as a business sector crucial for such reform initiatives. Integrating these financial services sector reforms with common AI regulation objectives, we construct a legal model for application to business corruption events. We apply this legal model to two business corruption events with significant negative financial impact in order to establish whether the use of AI to identify business corruption signifiers would have reduced these negative financial impacts, protected privacy rights, and improved human rights outcomes. We conclude by identifying limitations and benefits of our legal model for future improvement, examining the moral imperative and impact of this research, and identifying further areas of research.

Anna Ohanyan, Stonehill College

Supercontinent or a Sinkhole? The Promise and the Peril of Eurasian Continentalism for World Order

The Eurasian continent as a geopolitically cohesive entity is hard to envision. Eurasia as a geopolitical whole is a misnomer and a mirage, to many scholars. With the exception of trade connectivity of various depth and scope in different historical periods, the continent has been predominantly defined by wars and imperial clashes. And the legacies of such systemic fractures and imperial legacies continue to reverberate in forms of modern formations of armed conflicts, persistent illiberalism and weak statehoods Yet the rise of China and the growth of Europe as two major economic drivers of increasingly deepening continental connectivity, raise series of questions. This paper examines the impact of these developments on global order broadly defined. It present the two major narratives that define "Eurasian Studies" - Eurasia-skeptics, largely defined by realist analysts, and Eurasia-enthusiasts, shaped by scholars who point to the dividends from economically more integrated Eurasia. The paper will then examine the implications of more fractured and connected scenarios for this continent for the global order, particularly as the US hegemonic position in it continues to decline.

Glory Okereke, Florida International University

Power and Authority: A Social and Technological Analysis of US and China Competition

The paper examines the strength and influence of superpowers in asserting dominance in international relations through Culture and technological and cyber-power redistribution. The paper is divided into four parts to analyze what constitutes power and authority using realist and constructivist approaches. The second section explores strategic examples of how superpowers assert themselves through values, ideology, and technological warfare, focusing on the redistribution of authority. The third section evaluates whether these strategies enhance power or create greater risks, applying traditional theories of Realism and Constructivism. Finally, the paper challenges these traditional theories by highlighting the risks associated with the quest for power, drawing on the Copenhagen School's Securitization Theory.

Masako Okura, Columbus State University

Beyond Gender: Political and Historical Dimensions of Japan's Imperial Succession Crisis

What does the succession issue reveal about Japanese politics, and how can these vulnerabilities be addressed? Historically, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Japan has yet to find a solution to the succession crisis in the Imperial family. This ongoing issue threatens the raison d'être of the imperial family and Japan's constitutional monarchy as a political system. Currently, there is only a 17-year-old heir presumptive in the next generation, while all other alternatives are female members who lack succession rights, despite the historical precedent of reigning empresses. If the agnatic succession policy remains unchanged, the number of imperial household members will dwindle to just one in the near future, as the older generation passes away and younger female members marry out and leave the imperial house. Should the heir presumptive and his future wife fail to produce a male child, it could spell the end of the imperial family's long history and Japan's existence as a constitutional monarchy. The Japanese imperial succession crisis is often framed as a gender equality issue, focusing on the discriminatory treatment of unmarried imperial princesses. However, the issue extends beyond gender. While this perspective is valid, it oversimplifies a complex problem with deep historical and political roots. Furthermore, the crisis exposes vulnerabilities within Japan's political system. Despite widespread public support for female succession, political actors remain hesitant, steadfastly adhering to the agnatic succession policy. This paper examines how the imperial succession crisis reveals structural weaknesses in Japan's political system, tracing these vulnerabilities to historical transformations and post-war reforms. By analyzing the gap between public opinion and political decision-making, the study explores potential solutions and their implications for the future of the imperial family and Japan's constitutional monarchy.

Patricia Olney, Southern Connecticut State University

Trump, AMLO and the 2024 Elections: Implications of the Tug of War between Strongmen and Rule of Law for U.S.-Mexico Relations

This paper will examine the implications of the 2024 elections in both Mexico and the U.S. on the bilateral relations and erosion of rule of law in both countries. The two countries are struggling with a similar cultural battle between the strongman-populist model associated with traditional polities and the more modern system of institutionalized rule of law. In both cases, democratic institutions have lost legitimacy and are not trusted by large swaths of the population to represent their interests. In both cases, too, institutions are seen by some to have been hijacked by elites willing to sell out their country and betray its most sacred values. If the political crisis in the U.S. is due to democratic decay, as Political Scientist, Francis Fukuyama suggests, what does this mean for emerging democracies, especially those in Latin America, long considering the U.S. their model for the rule of law they aspire to? Given that the populist autocrats seem to have most of the electorate behind them in both countries, what impact would this have on bilateral issues like immigration, drug and gang-related trafficking, crime and violence, free trade agreements, and environmental cooperation, to name a few? This paper will aim to provide a first cut exploration of some of these issues.

Samantha Olsen, Trinity College

A Good Sign: The effect of community signaling lawn signs on racial minority turnout

Scholars have empirically shown that there is a persistent voting gap among racial minority communities. Bridging this gap is important since it has implications for representation, the allocation of resources, and government responsiveness. A key puzzle in the voter mobilization literature centers on methods and ways to effectively turn out underrepresented, racial minority voters. A study shows that street signs aimed at mobilizing the vote can increase voter participation by stimulating an individual's intrinsic sense of civic duty that reinforces the social norm of civic duty. We will evaluate these findings through a localized natural experiment in Hartford, exploring voter turnout patterns. Hartford is a clear example of a mid-size city with historically low voter turnout rates and issues of underrepresented communities. This study tests whether non-partisan signage, created and hand-painted by local community members, has a positive effect on the likelihood of voting. Signs hand-painted by Connecticut residents are expected to increase voting engagement for racial minorities since they may be considered more authentic and trustworthy than generic signage perceived to be from outside sources. The signs have the potential to be unifying for the community. This paper presents a non-partisan experimental design. We expect to find a significant and positive effect on neighborhoods exposed to hand-painted community signaled signs compared to neighborhoods that did not receive them.

Nathan Orlando, Benedictine College

Imperium: Douglas MacArthur and the 20th Century

Magnanimous statesmen guided by virtue are rare in the history of the world and intensely studied for that reason. Vicious statesmen guided by ambition and avarice are more common, and they represent the other end of the spectrum. In an age of liberal democracy, however, the extremes are less common and less understood. General Douglas MacArthur was a singular example among 20th century statesmen, able to speak the language of democracy without being beholden to it. In the latter stages of his career, he wielded unparalleled imperium over the Pacific Rim with few—if any—limits. In this capacity, he rebuilt a hostile Japan into a friendly democracy, contained Soviet expansion to the East, and prosecuted an inconclusive war in Korea in a conclusive manner until his dismissal. What guided him in these endeavors was neither wholly virtue nor yet vice. He offers a revealing case of an anachronistic statesman adapting pre-modern virtues to the spirit of the times. This essay, as part of a broader exploration of power and morality in international politics, explores the tensions present for the modern statesman—between image and actions, between virtue and vice, between a man and his political community—in an age of democracy. Ultimately, MacArthur reflects a fleeting compromise between these poles, able to demonstrate the continuing potency of the individual even amidst the mass effects of modern life.

Claire Oto, University of Virginia

Nationalist Rhetoric, Foreign Policy Politicization, and Electoral Consequences

Foreign policy has become increasingly politicized, playing a surprisingly central role in the 2024 U.S. presidential election according to exit polling. Despite this apparent increase in its salience, voters do not seem to be more educated about issues like tariffs or alliances. This change in issue salience belies the decades of research that finds that, on the whole, the public does not tend to pay attention to foreign policy. What might be causing this counterintuitive trend? This article examines the relationship between nationalism and the salience of foreign policy in public opinion. I establish a dataset of U.S. presidential and congressional candidates from 1992 to 2024 and their levels of nationalist rhetoric through text analysis, scoring candidates on two dimensions—populism and isolationism. I then capitalize on the unique properties of "Don't know/No opinion" answers in national surveys to explore the trends in foreign policy salience over that same period. Diving deeper into mechanisms affecting these trends, I analyze the content of television campaign advertisements and exit polling post elections to determine how often candidates mentioned foreign policy issues, under what conditions, and to what effect. Through this, I find that, through a combination of the creation of strong in and out group identities and priming effects, foreign policy becomes more salient in the minds of voters as campaigns for national office employ nationalist rhetoric. With heightened nationalist rhetoric around the globe, increasingly polarized elections, and an avalanche of disinformation ever prevalent, issues on the international stage are drawing increasing amounts of attention. In this environment, it is important to understand what triggers a change in politicization of a topic—especially one that is generally low salience like foreign policy.

Michael Paris, College of Staten Island (CUNY)

"The Road After Brown and the Roads Not Taken: An Exploration of Legal Doctrines and the Politics of Reform."

This paper explores trhe history of the U.S. Supreme Court's school desegregation jurisprudence from Brown though the end of the 1970's. It has three objectives. First, it highlights the connection between post-war racial liberalism and the Court's jurisprudential choices. These choices badly misrepresented the probelm of school desegregation and the reasons for solutions. Second, the paper uncovers and explicates three alternative doctrinal paths. These were possible paths, but they ended up being the roads not chosen. Third, it applies a legal mobilization perspective, with its distinctive approach to law and the politics of reform, to understaning this history and this history's relevance to conflicts over school desegregation today.

Girma Parris, Case Western Reserve University

Path Dependency, Drift, Conversion, Layering, and the Standard of Objectivity: The State of a Hallowed Media Tradition

Elite and mass critiques of the contemporary news media suggest the core problem is recapturing a lost ideal: the standard of objectivity (OS). OS refers to the journalistic ideal of providing a detached, neutral, impartial rendering of political news. Politicians on the right but increasingly on the left run against the news media both on the campaign trail and as governors. Public opinion polls have shown public trust of the media below 40% since the first decade of the 21st century. Criticism centers around the problems of biased media, implying objectivity is the normative ideal. Consensus among media observers is that the news media has become more partisan over the last two decades. Yet most news media professionals/ outlets promote themselves as objective despite being conspicuously not. How has OS maintained this normative hegemony despite these countervailing trends? Treating OS as an institutional order, this paper employs four theoretic concepts of institutional change – path dependency, drift, conversion and layering – to discuss the evolution of the standard of objectivity. Through process tracing and close rendering of secondary sources, the paper interrogates OS's historical trajectory to bring into relief some reasons why it is still the normative paradigm despite the news media's loss of public and elite trust.

Kate Perry, Georgia Southern University

Drones and child labor trafficking: using modern technology as a tool against exploitation

Though states and NGOs have spent decades attempting to stop child labor trafficking, progress has been slow, and many efforts have failed. As the security realm becomes more and more technologically advanced, many experts are beginning to suggest new ways of thinking about solutions to global security problems, solutions that adopt new technologies as well as new theoretical approaches. In the chapter to follow, I discuss the potentially fruitful application of drones to tracking and stopping child labor trafficking. I begin by giving a brief overview of drone technology and some of the various uses of drones, followed by some information on the human rights concerns surrounding drone use. I then discuss the problem of child labor trafficking, the challenges to addressing this criminal enterprise, and the important differences between children's rights and rights for adults. Finally, I bring together these discussions and explain how drone technology could specifically aid in investigating and punishing child labor trafficking, with the understanding that children also have human rights that must be protected. I end the chapter with a brief consideration of possible avenues for future work in this research area.

David Plazek, Vermont State University

Realist or liberal? Lester Pearson's time as Prime Minister

The realist/liberal internationalist debate in international relations has been on-going in the modern era dating back to Carr and existed in earlier eras in less explicit terms. Lester "Mike" Pearson is seen by many as liberal through and through in terms of his foreign policy preferences. No all agree with that assessment. This research seeks to determine the extent the portrayal of liberal fits Mike Pearson's foreign policy behaviors while in the position of Prime Minister. The findings suggest that Pearson was liberal in orientation, but that realism can be applied in some cases.

Samuel Ponessa, Fairfield University

The Christian Question: Interpreting Rousseau's Civil Religion Through the Lens of Rome and a Civically Imperfect Christian Faith

At Rome's founding, Numa Pompilius was willing to subvert religious truth for the sake of political efficacy. Augustine rejected this, prioritizing Christianity and its doctrinal Truth as the only metric through which a civil religion should be realized. What followed was a debate: must a civil religion be spiritually authentic (i.e. True) or merely politically beneficial (i.e. true)? Although Jean-Jacques Rousseau's answer to this question is widely seen as definitive, many argue that he fails to present a civil religion that is both politically viable and spiritually potent. This paper proposes an alternative reading that sees Rousseau as successful in a broader context. It posits that Rousseau, following a Hobbesian framework, is able to "reunify the two heads of the eagle" in a way that satisfies both Numa's requirement of political utility (truth) and Augustine's of religious authenticity (Truth). This is realized, even as its fullest manifestation is only theoretically possible, in Jesus Christ's return to earth as God-King.

Joseph Popcun, University at Albany, SUNY

What It Means to Fail: Ordinary Policy Failures through the Eyes of State Policymakers

Ordinary failures in public policy are abundant in practice, yet scarce in literature. Compared to the scrutiny received by extraordinary failures at the national government level, ordinary failures are the frequent, small-scale, low-profile dysfunctions that happen during the process of policymaking and policy implementation. While these malfunctions are intrinsic to how policy and politics is actually – and frustratingly – performed, it has largely escaped in-depth exploration in American political science, particularly at the subnational level. The most popular theories fall short in understanding these failures and the people that are closest to them: state-level policymakers. In other words, we know far less about run-of-the-mill failures in subnational policymaking from its practitioners than we should. This paper presents the current literature on policy failures and how it aligns with, and differs from, practitioner insights gleaned from semi-structured interviews with more than a dozen executive-level policymakers in New York State. Through this research, I seek to find points of failure that may have been overlooked, better understand their causes and effects, offer new ways they can be studied, and, ambitiously, improve the craft of policymaking. In doing so, I start to unravel what failure means to those who fail – the policymakers within the system – and how failure can impact not only those practitioners, but politicians, the press, and the public. When we study the ordinary, we develop a fuller account and deeper appreciation of how policy is framed, forged, and put forward to the public... for better or worse.

Catherine Raacke, Providence College

Genuine or Deception: Empirically Confirming Autocratic Legitimation Strategies that Use Gender Equality and Democracy

Gender washing is a new term coined by Bjarnegård and Zetterberg. Gender washing means an autocratic regime implements gender reforms under the assumption that it is a bundled norm with democracy. Once reforms are adopted or implemented, the autocracy expects the international community to turn a blind eye to the typical authoritarian practices that still occur. The aim of this research is to answer Bjarnegård and Zetterberg's call for empirically testing their autocratic legitimation framework that suggests a strong case for gender washing within the country being studied. This will be done via a comparative case study of Jordan and Morocco by quantitatively analyzing their gender quota implementation, running a content and discourse analysis on their respective King's speeches, and re-examining historical scholarship regarding the co-optation of women's rights.

Raza Raja, Syracuse University

The Co-optation of Islamist Movements: Impacts on Electoral Performance in Pakistan

This research explores how the integration of Islamist movements into mainstream political parties has shaped the electoral prospects of Islamist parties in Pakistan. It examines how the incorporation of religious groups into broader political coalitions has diminished the uniqueness and electoral draw of Islamist parties, hindering their ability to perform well in national elections. By analyzing critical periods in Pakistan's political history—such as collaborations between religious factions and military regimes, as well as the use of religious narratives by major political entities—the study argues that Islamist parties struggle to stand out in a political landscape heavily influenced by religion. The paper further compares this situation with Turkey and Tunisia, where Islamist parties have retained their independence and successfully leveraged the secular characteristics of their political systems to achieve electoral gains.

Faizan Rashid, University of Massachussets - Amherst

Democratic Backsliding and Post-Foundationalism: Lefort on Democracy as the empty place of power

There is unanimity among scholars of democratic theory that political developments such as populism, the rise of far-right movements, and other aggressive forms of nationalism, pose a threat to the existing liberal democratic order. These movements and the challenges they pose have forced democratic theory to address the questions concerning its legitimacy. These endangerments to democratic regimes have generally been subsumed under the broader social phenomenon of democratic backsliding. Backsliding, removed from its religious context, has been adopted to explain de-democratization while retaining the underlying assumptions of the concept as the degradation from a higher normative state. The theoretical models that have problematized backsliding has mostly come from the social sciences (positivism, behaviorism) and analytic political theory. So much of the literature on democratic theory offers checklist approach where the visibility of certain features is deemed to suggest deterioration. Lack of representation in the governing body, electoral malpractice, executive aggrandizement are the common features that are pointed towards to suggest democratic decay. In this paper, I will be moving away from ostensive conceptualizations of backsliding towards an alternative theoretical model. My research paper is attempting to bring the tools of post-foundational democratic theory to bear on tensions within democracy and on the conceptual and normative questions they raise. The paper analyses Claude Lefort's understanding of democracy as an empty place of power based on his conceptualization of the political difference. In order to provide an alternative theoretical framework, Lefort's conception of democracy offers a conceptual explanation as to a) why certain political developments such as populism or the rise of far right movements constitute the deterioration of democracy and b) a normative deficit in his understanding of the public sphere as a space of conflict, provides theoretical tools to reform institutions that are vulnerable to regressions.

Vincent Raynauld, Emerson College

Masculinity on the Ballot: Social Identity Appeals on the Right of the Political Spectrum and the 2024 US Presidential Elections

The 2024 US presidential election was marked by important changes in the voting attitudes and behaviors among certain slices of the electorate. Among them include many men of all socio-demographic backgrounds (e.g., Latino men, Asian-American men, Black men) who threw their support behind the republican presidential contender Donald Trump, as evidenced by polling and voter turnout data. While many scholarly works have taken interest in the uses and effects of identity appeals for political communication in and out of elections on the left of the political spectrum, this paper contributes to the academic literature on the role of identity for electioneering on the political right. Specifically, it adopts a political marketing lens to theorize and analyze how elements of masculinity can be used to develop a social identity-infused message and brand in the context of political campaigning. While some politicians have leveraged this approach unsuccessfully in recent years, including conservative party leader Erin O'Toole during the 2021 Canadian federal election, others have benefited from it. Building on Emerson College Polling survey data from state and national surveys conducted throughout the 2024 US presidential election, this paper offers a deep dive into the marketing potency of masculinity as a social identity construct for political marketing during elections. In doing so, it complements the growing academic literature taking interest in patterns of identity marketing and lays the groundwork for much-needed research to further understand these dynamics that are likely to gain in importance, especially ahead of several national elections in 2025 (e.g., Canada).

Vincent Raynauld, Emerson College

Not Too Distant From Political Science: A Conceptual Look at Political Marketing

Back in 1969, Kotler and Levy pioneered the study of the marketing strategies and techniques used to package, promote, and sell political candidates and policies much like commercial goods and services. Since then, research on political marketing —viewed as the complex, but unavoidable, marriage between politics and marketing—has evolved, intensified, and diversified significantly. Despite this growth, political marketing has remained a largely under conceptualized area of study and practice as it stands at the intersection of several interconnected, but distinct, academic disciplines. Among them include political science, communication, psychology, and marketing. Several scholars have argued that existing political marketing research often rests on loosely defined conceptual frameworks lacking clarity and needing more robust ties with other conceptual constructs. This paper addresses and fills this gap in the academic literature. It proposes a more holistic theoretical conceptualization of political marketing that delineates the similarities and distinctions it has with its conceptual cousins, including campaign professionalization, Americanization, permanent campaign, and political advertising. Through a comparative analysis, the paper leverages existing marketing theoretical frameworks to compare and contrast these concepts as well as positions political marketing within its conceptual ecosystem. Specifically, it utilizes visual tools like non-intersecting Venn diagrams to map the theoretical landscape in which political marketing inserts itself. In doing so, this paper spotlights the features of political marketing that go beyond campaign strategies and that influence political practices as well democratic life. More importantly, it lays the groundwork for additional research work in this area of political marketing.

Matthew Reilly, Southern Connecticut State University

A Comparison of Historical Pre-Election Polling and Partisan Turnout in US General Elections

The bandwagon effect is a well-known social phenomenon in the world of politics. Everyone likes a winner. Referencing this theory, this study attempts to measure the effects of pre-election political campaign poll reports on partisan voter turnout by using the rate of change of a widely publicized poll such as Gallup and comparing it to the partisan turnout data collected by the American National Election Studies (ANES) at the University of Michigan.

Nolan Reisen, Baylor University

Eros and Rhetoric in Plato's Phaedrus

I contend that rhetoric is the primary theme of Plato's Phaedrus, with eros being a closely connected but ultimately secondary theme. More precisely, the Phaedrus suggests a way in which the philosophic rhetorician can make use of eros in order to lead individual human souls toward philosophy and their highest contentment. It is all the more important to understand the nature of rhetoric given Socrates' reminders that persuasive speeches can not only affect public policy, but they can also have the power to found entire political orders or regimes. That is, rhetoric is a deeply political topic that deserves careful consideration by political scientists and theorists—indeed, by all human beings who of necessity live in political communities. We may also say any political state—democratic or otherwise—will tend to (or need to) make use of a founding story or myth in order to bolster a citizenry's attachment to the state itself, even to form a people politically. The political consequences of rhetoric are vast. What may be less obvious, however, is the political importance of eros. We may say that eros presents strong attachments of individuals that may draw them away from the demands placed on them by their political community—eros elicits a selfish desire in a person over and above his understood duties. Still, eros is politically important in another way, which I will attempt to show through this project: eros (or an appeal to one's erotic desire) may be a most potent form of or material used by rhetoric, potentially in service of political goals. Eros itself can be a source of strong attraction, and so it too can be used as a strong source for bolstering attachment.

David Rezvani, Dartmouth College

Termination Conditions of Partially Independent Territories

Under what conditions do partially independent territories tend to sustain themselves and under what conditions do they tend to come to an end? This paper will discuss how sustainability or termination of such unions between core states and partially independent territories are a function of perceptions of fairness with regard to the division of power and mutual benefit. The differences in power between core states and partially independent territories are perceived as justifiable and fair as long as the core state is able to furnish an attractive set of public goods. However, as the economic capacity of the core state and the partially independent territory increasingly equalizes, the inequality in the distribution of power becomes increasingly unsustainable. This paper will therefore illustrate how most partially independent territories that have terminated have done so when the core state has a GDP that is less than ten times the size of its associated partially independent territory. The paper will discuss some arguable trends and policy options for a number of different partially independent territories that are below or near this termination tendency point (including Hong Kong, Scotland, Catalonia, Vojvodina, and the Kurdish Territories).

Jesse Rhodes, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Economic, Ideological, and Group-Centric Factors and Support for Republicans in 2024 among Communities of Color

Increased support among Americans of color was critical to Donald Trump's victory in the 2024 U.S. presidential election (Sanders et al 2024). This would seem surprising given Trump's long record of racist behavior. But Trump's success continues a trend of increased support for the GOP among communities of color (e.g., Fraga et al 2024). What factors motivated significant numbers of African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans to support Trump in 2024? We examine the influence of three families of potential explanations of support for Trump among African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans, respectively. We anticipate people with lower objective economic status and higher dissatisfaction with the economy will express greater support for Trump and the GOP. We also expect those who identify more strongly as Republicans and conservatives to express more favorability toward Trump and Republicans. Finally, we predict that individuals with more negative attitudes toward racial out-groups and less in-group solidarity, with their racial group and with people of color overall, will be more supportive of Trump and the GOP. We use the American Multiracial Panel Study (AMPS), a nationally representative panel survey of American adults, to examine the correlates of support for Trump and Republicans. We leverage the third wave of the AMPS, fielded after Kamala Harris became the Democratic nominee, which includes large samples of African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans and oversamples of Republican identifiers among these groups. This study will illuminate similarities and differences in the correlates of Republican support between different communities of color. Fraga, B. L., Velez, Y. R., & West, E. A. (2024). Reversion to the Mean, or Their Version of the Dream? Latino Voting in an Age of Populism. American Political Science Review, 1–9. Sanders, L. (2024). How 5 Key Demographic Groups Voted in 2024. AP News. November 7.

Sawyer Rogers, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Changing the Rules of Deliberation and Decision-Making: From Participatory to Plebiscitary Democracy

This study investigates what impact shifting decision-making power from deliberation to ballot voting has on democratic participation. Starting in the late 1990s, New Hampshire towns and school districts switched from the open town meeting to the official ballot referendum (OBR) governance model. Deliberation and decision-making occur at the same time at the open town meeting. While deliberation and decision-making occur separately in the official ballot referendum model. This study compares the levels of thick and thin democratic participation among New Hampshire's 221 towns as some switched to the official ballot referendum while others remained using the open town meeting. The study hypothesizes that thick participation is higher when deliberation and decision-making are combined while thin participation remains the same regardless of whether deliberation and decision-making are separate. The study takes a mixed methods approach by using reflexive thematic analysis on archival documents to understand the debates around the change which then contextualized the regression analysis testing the impact of the change on different forms of participation.

David Rovinsky, United States Department of State

Prairie Populism and the Canadian Constitution

In each setting, conservative populists direct their grievance onto a different target. In Canada's Prairie provinces, the target is the Laurentian Elite of Toronto, specifically the constitution and federal system. In Alberta and Saskatchewan, they accuse the federal government of thwarting "the people" of the Prairie West, primarily by permitting the federal government to appropriate local natural resource wealth for Ontario's use. The accusation against central Canada is that it insists upon a Quebec-centric dualist vision of Canada irrelevant to the West. Since the fading out of the patriation/Meech Lake era, contention has shifted to economics and the culture war. The new focus has joined traditional Prairie grievances about a constitution that gives the central government too much power and that the federal government ignores. The paper will consider how populist governments led by the United Conservative Party of Alberta and the Saskatchewan Party have pushed against the federal division of powers and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It will look particularly at the Sovereignty Acts in both jurisdictions, as well as Alberta's Provincial Priorities Act, Saskatchewan's Parents' Bill of Rights, and the latter's refusal to collect the federal carbon tax. It will consider how these conflicts reflect a populist attitude toward liberal democracy, and whether these incidents simply reflect partisan polarization against the Liberal Party of Canada or deeper questions about national unity. It also will place this Canadian phenomenon within the broader context of populism as a global event, especially during the 21st century. That context will be interpreted through the development of Canada's political culture and the role of regionalism and national identity within the country. Furthermore, it will assess that development from the perspective of the country's relationship to liberal democracy and its relevant political institutions within Canada.

Marc Rugani, Saint Anselm College

Pope Francis and Synodality as Political Process

Synodality, an approach to listening, speaking, and discerning in community through the analogy of "journeying together," has become the focal point of the Catholic Church's recent global effort at reimagining its self-identity and mission. Long a part of its tradition, though forgotten or suppressed, this approach to self-organization and decision-making is eminently political. Both supporters and detractors have passionately expressed widely disparate opinions on the success of the first two of three stages of the current synodal process, revealing deep divides on the Church's fidelity to its fundamental principles, structures, and activities in an increasingly pluralistic world. These often reveal commentators' relative access to the prevailing channels of influence and power within the standing structures and offices of the Catholic Church's hierarchical organization. With the 2021-2024 Synod on Synodality in progress at the initiative of Pope Francis, the forthcoming results of the Catholic Church's experiment in renovating an ancient way of proceeding will have historic effects on the intraecclesial politics of the Church itself, but may also have an impact on other non-religious institutions seeking an alternative to status-quo divisive politics by reexamining the process of political and social discourse itself. In this essay I argue that Pope Francis offers an alternative political vision for not only the Catholic Church but also other polities and political institutions struggling with dysfunctional partisanship to engender unity in diversity through the model of "journeying together." Having been an outsider to the prevailing Eurocentric circles of curial politics in the Catholic Church and informed by strands of liberation theologies, Francis inverts the priority of theory in favor of praxis. Moreover, the synodal process embodies the four permanent principles of Catholic social doctrine, dignity of the human person, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good, more faithfully to the mission that informs and enlivens its identity.

Jay Rumas, Tufts University

Funding Atrocities in Plain Sight: How Myanmar Exploits Migrant Workers For Cash

In late 2024, the ruling Junta in Myanmar announced that migrant workers living abroad would be required to remit up to 25% of their foreign income in addition to a 2% compulsory tax for migrant workers living abroad. Remittances have made up a large part of Myanmar's economy in its recent history. The Junta's action strains the finances of migrant workers living in neighboring countries such as Thailand and Laos and offers a mechanism of funding its ongoing war against pro-democracy rebels and ethnic armies and atrocities, for which its leaders stands accused of war crime by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The obstacles that stand in the way of stopping this practice include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Thai government allowing for the taxation of Myanmarese expatriates in the country and Thai dependence on migrant labor from Myanmar. Myanmar's exiled government, known as the National Unity Government (NUG), has pressured the Thai government to end cooperation with the Junta, and migrants themselves have protested and refused to pay. However, none of these efforts have yet caused host countries such as Thailand to change their policy. This paper explores how business incentives push for the maintenance of this system and asks how the international community could push for the alteration or cessation of these MOUs.

Alison Lawlor Russell, Merrimack College

Information control strategies of China and Russia

This chapter will provide an examination of Russia and China's information control strategies in peacetime and wartime. Russia and China both have official strategies for cyber security and control of information communication technology and information itself. Many of these types of information control are in the form of censorship and disinformation, which governments, particularly authoritarian governments, have done throughout history. Information technology provides a new avenue for regimes to continue to practice the art of information control.

Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University

Alienated or Embraced? The Pedestrian in the City

When walking in urban areas, one is confronted with obstacles and opportunities. The most obvious obstacle is safety. In cities people and automobiles vie for limited transportation space, and despite the introduction of sophisticated safety features, pedestrian deaths have continued to rise in recent years, even as passenger deaths have decreased. The urban walker (and others who employ self-propelled transportation), to enjoy their preoccupation, must find a place to do so and navigate the hazards of modern urban life. At the same time, those who are on foot or bike have opportunities to learn. Cities offer a multitude of signs, monuments, and parks that invite people to think about what the city represents and a political decision about who belongs. The creation of political identity in urban areas is complex because cities are often destinations for migrants, people seeking anonymity, or escaping various forms of oppression, and, therefore, the ethno-national narrative of identity does not always apply. Employing comparative methods, this paper, which is part of a larger project on the politics of walking, examines how the private transportation of automobiles helps to shape the public landscape. Slow transportation allows for increased absorption of symbols, helping to build new identities in a diverse population. Because urban areas frequently contain a multitude of identities, cities offer histories and stories that emphasize diversity, music, and/or sports, facilitating a tenuous, shared identity. The paper uses examples from ten economically developed countries to demonstrate how cities employ visual clues to signal inclusion and tolerance, to residents and visitors, fostering a distinctive sense of urban identity. It concludes, for multiple reasons, that the politics of urban walking (as well as running and other forms of self-propelled transportation) is significantly different from walking in rural areas or hiking in the wilderness.

Isabella Santos, Simmons University

Assessing the Effectiveness of U.S. - Imposed Sanctions on the Maduro Regime and How Marco Rubio Should Respond

The relative effectiveness of U.S. sanction policy in Venezuela has been a long-debated topic in both domestic and international policy. Since Maduro, Venezuela has experienced an intense economic and humanitarian crisis as well as authoritarian backsliding. The United States began imposing both targeted and comprehensive sanctions that have only amplified pre-existing failures of the government. In Fall 2023, Maduro showed signs of being willing to bend to U.S. demands by agreeing to hold a 2024 election in exchange for a temporary ease of sanctions but ultimately failed to uphold democracy in the 2024 election. The U.S. now finds itself at a crossroads: it can either continue to press sectoral sanctions on Venezuela's most vital industries and hope that Maduro eventually negotiates, or it can use new policy tools to relieve the Venezuelan public of the ongoing humanitarian crisis and restore democracy. This study will assess the effectiveness of US sanctions on Venezuela and offer possible alternatives to addressing the Maduro regime. After careful analysis, the best set of actions for the U.S. to take is to focus its diplomatic energy and financial resources on strengthening multilateral targeted sanctions and funding the current United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) program.

Jack Santucci, Western New England University

The Structure of Mass Politics within and across American States

How is the electorate organized within and across American states? Is the two-party system better thought of as a coalition of factions, or of state parties, or both? Previous approaches to the issue have relied on qualitative assessments, unidimensional estimates of ideology, and/or measures of correspondence between public opinion and policy across issues as such. Meanwhile, research on national-level public opinion finds that (a) 'ideology' is best summarized by two or more dimensions and (b) that their explanatory power varies with respondent levels of political engagement. This paper hypothesizes that the national-level findings hold more for some states than others, then (as in past research) for more politically engaged members of the public. It tests these hypotheses by projecting survey respondents into a 'basic space' of American mass opinion and using their 'recovered ideal points' accordingly. My working hypothesis is that the two-party system is best understood not only as two coalition of factions, or only two collections of state parties, but rather a blend of both.

Dante Scala, University of New Hampshire

Split-Ticket Voters in New Hampshire: Cohesive Bloc or Random Jumble?

In 2024, New Hampshire voters produced a now-familiar outcome: a split decision. In elections for federal office, Democrats continued their winning ways; they have not lost a single election for president or Congress during the Trump era. But in elections for state office, Republicans held their own, retaining the governor's office in an open-seat election, as well as majorities in both legislative chambers. This repeated outcome raises the question: In an era of partisan polarization, who are these voters who split their tickets? Are they simply a random assortment of low-propensity, lightly attentive independents? Or can they be described as a cohesive bloc of voters who divide their ballots with a common set of intentions? To answer these questions, I will consider polling data from exit polls and academic surveys such as the Cooperative Election Study, as well as municipal-level electoral data.

Marie Schenk, Lehigh University

Everyday Mask Mandates: Understanding the Digital Conversations about Public Health in 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic presented a multitude of policy challenges, each with a unique set of stakeholders. Vaccine programs, for example, involved federal agencies, state health departments, and multinational corporations. Mask mandates, however, had little opportunity for bureaucrats to shape implementation. The success or failure of mask mandates relied almost entirely on citizens' willingness to embrace the policy. Thus, understanding the ways this policy was discussed is vitally important to understanding its success or failure. Much of public life is accomplished online, and this was all the more true in 2020, when many public spaces were closed and travel options were limited. Therefore, I answer this question with data collected from the website then called Twitter, which played a critical role in political discourse. Using an original corpus of tweets collected during Fall 2020, I analyze the way discussion of face masks was and was not politicized. Masks were the topic of a significant amount of "everyday talk" on Twitter; that is, talk that concerns public life but does not necessarily invoke a policy solution or entail any of the other traditional markers of deliberation about politics. In this paper, I describe the different kinds of conversations citizens had about masks and theorize as to how these varied styles of communication influenced the success, and failure, of public mask mandates.

Bilal Sekou, University of Hartford

Ensuring Every Citizen has the Opportunity to Vote: Adopting Early Voting in Connecticut

Connecticut's voting laws are enshrined in the state constitution, which strictly dictates the time, and place and manner of elections. Until recently, voters were mandated to cast their ballots during a primary or general election on Election Day unless they met one of the stringent requirements for voting by absentee ballot. In November of 2022, Connecticut voters approved a measure allowing in-person early voting. Connecticut was one of the last states to implement early

voting, years after most states allowed voters that option. Whereas voters once needed an allowable reason to vote by absentee ballot, early voting is open to all eligible voters. According to Public Act No. 23-5, An Act Implementing Early Voting, voters must get two weeks of early voting before the general election, a week before primaries, and four days before a special election. This article tells the story behind the passage of the Public Act No. 23-5. The adoption of a law permitting citizens to vote early was due to a combination of broad and idiosyncratic factors.

Barry Shain, Colgate University

Madison's Innovative and Almost Successful (Court) Constitutionalism: Backward Looking Monarchical and Forward Looking Liberal

In this paper, I argue that James Madison -- in contrast to the Country-animated American Revolutionary movement and Madison's later Democratic-Republican Jeffersonian politics -- in the late-1780s, articulated a Court dominated constitutionalism that in many elements was closer to a British monarchical essence than any earlier form republicanism. In doing so, he importantly followed Montesquieu's understanding of the mid-century British monarchy and, still more essentially, Hume's insistence on the necessity of individual corruption a la Walpole, though with important changes, to maintain a balance of power in a governmental system in which the popular branch was all too likely to unbalance the system in a democratic direction. In addition, too, Madison's late-1780s constitutionalism looked forward to important liberal protections of individual rights through Federal governmental protections. In both instances, in spite of his theoretical creativity, his late-1780s constitutionalism would fail to insure a balance of governmental powers while his most important liberal aspirations would end up in the United States having to wait until the Warren-Court's fulfillment of them in the mid-1960s. Constitutional and political theoretical creativity, nonetheless, deserve recognition.

Elizabeth Sharrow, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

The Politics of Exclusion: Lessons from Transgender Participation in College Sports

The political and social marginalization of American women has stimulated the organization of gender-based groups, in various domains, to seek inclusion and policy protections. Yet, at the same time, women often vie with other disenfranchised groups for status (e.g., the nuanced relationship between the women's suffrage movement and abolitionists). Here, we focus on transgender rights in the context of college athletics: this is a paradigmatic case where policies designed to meet the needs of a disadvantaged group (e.g., women) can generate political uncertainties rather than stable policy protections for another disadvantaged group, in this case a minority subgroup (e.g., transgender women). Specifically, Title IX provided access for women to athletic opportunities but left "women" undefined. This reflects the political contestation of who counts as a woman worthy of protection under sex non-discrimination policy (Sharrow 2017, 2023). These policies (including Title IX) became a vector for processes of what literature on group politics call "secondary marginalization" (Cohen 1999; Perez Brower 2024; Strolovitch 2007). Since March 2020, twenty-six states have adopted laws or policies that ban the participation of trans athletes on school-sponsored teams, most specifically barring trans girls and women from teams that align with their gender identity (MAP 2024; Sharrow 2021). How have women, particularly cisgender women within college athletics responded? We draw on multiple original constituent surveys and theories of group threat (e.g., Craig et al. 2018), tolerance (e.g., Sullivan and Transue 1999), and identity framing (e.g., Klar 2013) to argue that, in response to the politicization of trans inclusion in sports (i.e., increased salience of a distinctive marginalized groups), cis women within college sports became (1) more protective of a perceived exclusionary status quo, and (2) less likely to view trans inclusion as an equity issue. These dynamics result in less overall support for protections for trans athletes.

Yaokun Shen, George Washington University

Up against the Wall: An Empirical Study on the Ideology and Propaganda of Contemporary China

During the decade of the so-called "New Era" rules, the propaganda institution of the Chinese Communist Party encountered problems. Namely, the ineffectiveness of the party's propaganda machines caused by the lack of theory innovation and discourse capabilities, the traditionalist trends deviating from the orthodox principles, and the abuse of hyping and anecdotal narratives in its media campaigns have resulted in multiple flawed ca mpaigns and eroded its credibility and ideological legitimacy. The problems came from the unresponsiveness of the party-state authorities due to the destruction of institutionalization, the party's appeals to the conservative and nationalist sentiments among the society to sever its own needs and demands, and the overwhelmingly utilitarian beliefs of the propaganda machines led by its eagerness to restore its authority and influence to the public. These perils reflect not only the degeneration of China's public discussion atmosphere but also the vulgarization of propaganda, and how the CCP is managing to adapt to the contemporary society of China.

Siraj Sindhu, Brown University

Free Time and the Transformation of Work

Decades ago, political theorists began proposing that the historical mission of the working class had failed, and sought to re-identify history's "protagonist" (Habermas 1981, Gorz 1982, Laclau & Mouffe 1985). In more recent years, work's place in political life has reappeared as a central concern for political theorists (Gourevitch 2013, Anderson 2017, Roberts 2017, Chamberlain 2018, Apostolidis 2021, O'Shea 2021, Forrester 2024). Recent literature demonstrates that work is a core application of familiar ideals of freedom, but is divided regarding the forms of work organization such ideals recommend. Some defend "postwork" rejections of the "work society" (Weeks 2011, Srnicek & Williams 2016); others defend its refusal and/or reduction in non-abolitionist terms (Rose 2016, Gourevitch 2018); still others defend revalorizing work by resituating it within novel postcapitalist institutions (Jameson 2016, Hagglund 2019). This paper intervenes by showing that each strategy involves a revalorization of disposable time, whether for worker organizing, leisure, the pursuit of chosen ends, or philosophical humanist reasons. It then questions this revalorization by examining whether disposable time alone is compatible with the concepts of freedom these theorists defend. Does the reorganization of work according to the principle of maximizing disposable time, which Marx calls the "measure of wealth," satisfy the conditions of freedom? If not, what other principles should be involved in the reorganization of work?

Itai Sneh, John Jay College

Louisiana Purchase: Latin Influence on American Jurisprudence

Every scholar knows that Thomas Jefferson's 1803 treaty with Napoleon Bonaparte substantially increased the territory of the United States. The Louisiana Purchase transformed a fledgling country from primarily an Atlantic seaboard, Euro-focused entity into a continental juggernaut. This enormous transaction also cemented an alliance with France. This paper's contribution is to highlight the legal diversity, largely on private matters, that the Louisiana Purchase imported into new U.S. Jurisdictions. Whereas the original states' jurisprudence was based on the principles of Common Law, the Spanish and French legacy of Civil Law standards applied to property and personal status. Lessons from incorporating competing rules, customs, and norms from other systems of laws. in this formative period may be instructive now that America's Latin heritage is expanding culturally and politically. With respect to freedoms, Thomas Jefferson's democratic, grassroots' agenda of Empire for Liberty in the new areas was pioneering. Its aspirations hinted at revolutionary's France while contrasting with his predecessor's John Adams' era. Jefferson allowed 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts to expire, and escalated ideological and strategic adversity with conservative Britain, which culminated with the War of 1812. Finally, the delivered paper will also explore the consequences of the Louisiana Purchase on antebellum American perspectives on freedom.

Kaitlyn Soper, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

The Anatomy of Redistricting Reform: How Composition, Rules, and Procedures Shape the Success of Independent Redistricting Commissions

Public trust in democratic processes and institutions in the United States continues to decline. A major motivation for this erosion of trust is gerrymandering, a longstanding political strategy in which state legislatures manipulate district lines to gain a partisan advantage and reduce electoral competitiveness. In an effort to combat gerrymandering, lawmakers (and, in some cases, citizens via ballot measures) across the country are adopting independent redistricting commissions (IRCs), bodies separate from the legislature that are responsible for drawing new district lines for their state every ten years. Scholars who have studied IRCs have found varying degrees of success in the eight states that have used these commissions. While existing research on IRCs generally concludes that they can be effective in reducing partisan bias in electoral districts and increasing competition, we do not know which specific aspects of the IRC design are most responsible for this effectiveness. This paper addresses this gap in the literature by thoroughly examining the composition and design of each IRC, including the selection processes, standards for public engagement, rules for partisan makeup, independence, and voting processes. I argue that IRC composition matters greatly. Those IRCs that have an impartial member selection process, facilitate public engagement, have a balanced partisan makeup, and use consensus or supermajority based voting rules will be more effective at reducing the partisan bias of maps and increasing electoral competition. This research offers a more detailed understanding of what makes IRCs more or less effective in mitigating gerrymandering by identifying potential patterns.

Tony Spanakos, Montclair State University

The Diversity and Relevance of Political Realism: Negro, d'Ors, and Galli

This essay analyzes the tradition of political realism through the works of Dalmacio Negro Pavón, Álvaro d'Ors, and Carlo Galli, showcasing its robustness and diversity beyond the International Relations (IR) sub-discipline and Anglo-American mainstream scholarship. It critiques how the neorealism/neoliberalism debate of the 1980s/1990s narrowed IR's interdisciplinary scope. Although recent IR trends embrace interdisciplinarity, they often overlook paradigm development, limiting engagement with the political realist tradition. The authors represent ideological perspectives ranging from the Conservative Right to the Marxist Left, highlighting the diversity within political realism and countering claims of its pro-status quo bias and ethical limitations. Political realism connects power with purpose, examines the implications of violence, and critiques utopian moralism for its destructive potential. Critics and students often misinterpret realism as endorsing war, contrasting it with liberalism's emphasis on peace. However, realism seeks to understand the consequences of power deployment and advocates for nuanced interpretations of political action. Realism retains its relevance today, particularly in the context of constructivist ontology, which aligns with realism's recognition of complexity and its skepticism toward simplifying political reality through scientific emulation or quantification. Constructivism, like realism, acknowledges the external limits of political action. The essay argues for reinvigorating political realism by emphasizing its enduring insights into the dynamics of power, order, and crisis, while challenging artificial divisions within IR paradigms.

Ian Spears, University of Guelph

"States, State Formation & Conflict in the Middle East"

Abstract: This paper is part of a larger project that accounts for problems of conflict resolution in Middle East and Africa—the most conflict-prone regions of the world—in the context of comparative processes of state formation and, in particular, a European ideal of the nation-state. It argues that most analysis of conflict resolution focuses on immediate sources of political violence and ignores important structural causes associated with state formation. The broader research project argues that, over hundreds of years, Europeans managed their internal diversity by engaging in border gerrymandering, assimilation and political exclusion—practices that are now deemed outside the norms of acceptable state behaviour. Now in this paper, Middle Eastern states are presented as products of foreign-imposed boundaries. Here rulers must also contend with internal diversity but in political environments of territorial stasis and where there are strong and well-justified prohibitions on assimilation and exclusion. The result is that Middle Eastern states, like their African counterparts, are unable to escape the conditions that give rise to violence. In this chapter, particular attention is paid to Israel in its relations with its own Palestinian population.

Shyam Sriram, Canisius University

"Asian Immigration and Upcycled Religious Spaces in Western New York"

One of the most remarkable demographic stories in the United States has been Buffalo, New York experiencing a population increase for the first time in fifty years, as documented by the 2020 Census. The positive shift was also accompanied by a decline in non-Latino white people. These trends attest to an emerging story: the migration of thousands of Bangladeshis, Rohingya, and South(east) Asian Muslims over the last twenty years, coupled with the decline and fall of Catholic institutions. This has remade Buffalo's cultural practices and politics. Fewer churches are being built and extant communities are struggling to hold on to congregants. Many churches have been sold to Muslims and converted into mosques. How has the "conversion" of Catholic to Muslim spaces affected the religious geography of Buffalo? Despite the growing number of American Muslims, there is little scholarship on how spaces can be reconfigured to incorporate different religious traditions. Using a new theory of "religious upcycling" (Sriram and DeGlopper 2024), we argue that the conversion of religious space, from Catholic to Muslim, is emblematic of not only the idea of iconicity implied previously, but also fundamentally changes the way Americans understand neighborhoods and their features. This project will encompass a religious mapping and ethnography of Buffalo using a combination of individual interviews and focus groups with the Asian (American) Muslims; Catholic and Protestant congregants whose churches are now mosques; and Christian and Muslim religious leaders.

Tim Stap, Florida State University

How Representative is Ireland's PR-STV System? Small Party Power in Ireland

What would a change from one electoral system to another mean for Ireland? I assess this question by accumulating an original dataset of all Irish elections between 1937-2020 and calculating the Shapley value for each party, then comparing that value to a counterfactual pure proportional representation system. The Shapley value is used here to highlight how often a party is "majority pivotal", meaning that it measures how often each party in a possible combination gets the leading party to over 50%. I then compare this value both to the actual Irish electoral system of proportional representation by single transferable vote versus my pure proportional representation counterfactual. I find that relative to the counterfactual, PR-STV over-represents larger parties in terms of seat share, but that there is still a possibility for considerable influence even with the smallest of parties. I then consider the implications this would have both in Ireland and broadly.

Casey Stevens, Providence College

The Global Protected Area Mosaic and World Order

In terms of transforming the relationship of people with their land, colonization and decolonization had the most significant impacts in modern times. However, the transformation of over 15% of the land and a smaller share of the marine environment into formal protected areas has also been a significant transformation. While international relations has the tools to understand much of the impact of colonialization and decolonialization on world order and global patterns of violence, we lack such tools to understand the impact of protected areas. At lower levels of analysis, scholars have studied the impact of peace parks and conservation refugees on patterns of violence, but at the level of nation-states and at the international level such impacts are largely ignored. This paper presents an eclectic toolbox of concepts for understanding and assessing the impact of protected areas on global patterns of violence and world order. Rather than developing expectations from a single theoretical position, these concepts will seek to draw on diverse traditions to provide a robust scaffolding for understanding biodiversity and violence. The conclusion will explore empirical grounds for assessment and extensions of the conceptual tools.

Haley Stiles, University of Virginia

Voting, Winning, and Democratic Satisfaction in Close US Elections

How does partisan victory impact satisfaction with democracy among Americans? Traditional scholarship on democratic satisfaction examines European cases, typically only among voting citizens and scarcely putting forward causal arguments. To meet the three-fold goal of expanding the universe of cases, incorporating aligned but non-voting partisans into the sample, and investigating a causal relationship, this study implements a regression discontinuity design featuring close US House of Representatives elections between 2008 and 2020. Taking assignment to electoral victory as-if randomly assigned, I evaluate the effect of receiving treatment – one's party winning – to understand how democratic satisfaction may be colored by participation in, and partisan outcomes of, United States elections.

Stephan Stohler, Syracuse University

Political Orders and Constitutional Change: The Evolution of the Clear and Present Danger Test

Theories of American constitutional development aim to explain constitutional change, yet they diverge in how they prioritize different types of change and their explanatory success. This paper evaluates competing theories of constitutional development by examining the evolution of the "clear and present danger" test in First Amendment jurisprudence from 1919 to 1969. Analyzing 108 Supreme Court cases invoking this test, I argue that a political orders framework provides the most compelling account of how an emergent pro-free speech order supplanted a previously dominant anti-free speech order. Furthermore, this framework explains how the Warren Court's pro-free speech order later abandoned the test in favor of broader understandings of free speech. In contrast, alternative theories emphasizing "durable shifts in governing authority" and "intercurrence" fail to capture these pivotal transitions. The findings highlight the distinct advantages of a political orders approach for understanding constitutional change and suggest new directions for studying American constitutional development.

Niamh Stull, Brown University

The Effect of Partisanship on State Education Agencies

What explains subnational investments in state-level bureaucracy? Prevailing literature says that as the federal government becomes increasingly polarized, much of the policymaking is falling to the state level. Given this, it is important to look at state-level agencies' policies and how they are affected by partisanship control. I focus on state education agencies because they consume a large amount of the state government's budgets, and running a public school system is a part of a state's constitution. I use two difference-in-difference models with the treatment of a change in partisanship of the control of the state legislature and the governor's office. The dependent variable is the number of employees hired by state education agencies. I find significant results for a change in the governor's party. In addition to the quantitative analysis, I also give a qualitative analysis of the state education agencies of California, North Carolina, and South Carolina chosen for their differing, but long-standing partisan control. I chose these states because historically Republican-controlled states have more hierarchal bureaucracies than Democrat-controlled states.

Kathleen Sullivan, Ohio University

From Sanitation to Sustainability: What Happens When Governments Address Old Issues in New Ways

In 2016 when California adopted a law mandating diversion of organic food waste from landfills to reduce methane gas emissions, it essentially shifted waste removal from a centuries-old sanitation framework to a sustainability one. Under sanitation, garbage is taken out of city centers with the goal of promoting public health, but under sustainability, waste creation is reduced with the goal of mitigating the climate crisis. Although on paper the new goals for organic waste removal are relatively straightforward, in practice the law has required public and private infrastructure designed for one purpose to serve a very different one. When governments, like California, address an old problem in a new way, what resources do they have, what resources do they rely on, and, what effect do these shifting resource needs have? To answer these questions, we conduct a case study of California's SB1383's provisions to divert organic food waste, some of which is repurposed for food insecure Californians and some of which is sent for composting. We draw on government documents, newspaper stories, and public reports to map the resources--public, private, and nonprofit agencies and their infrastructure--already in place and the resources that California has as well as what the state needed to acquire. Our paper is well suited to panels on state and local government, public policy, and sustainability.

Lucas Swaine, Dartmouth College

Freedom of Thought: First of the Liberties

Does freedom of thought have any meaningful kind of priority with respect to other basic liberties? How does freedom of thought stand in comparison to cognate freedoms? Other basic liberties are not obviously any less primary than freedom of thought. For example, freedom of religion is sometimes claimed to be the "first freedom." It is the freedom listed first in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and religious liberty is plausibly also the earliest key freedom to be won in Western political history. Suggestive support for the priority of freedom of thought can be gleaned from notable statements in political theory. Benjamin Constant claims that "[t]hought is the basis of everything." Wilhelm von Humboldt maintains that societies should allow "complete" freedom of thought in order to facilitate improvement of "the mind and character of [an] entire nation." And John Stuart Mill contends that freedom of thought figures prominently in the "inward domain of consciousness," which he calls the "first" realm of human liberty. John Rawls provides further indicative support for the priority of freedom of thought by placing it first on his list of basic liberties. Freedom of thought is not just a sine qua non of other basic liberties. It is also a freedom that does not depend on social or political phenomena in a conceptual or a justificatory sense. What is more, the right to freedom of thought holds equally for all people and it ranges across all forms of thought. It is neither derived from, nor otherwise dependent on, the idea that there is an equal right to liberty. Freedom of thought provides analytical origins of the idea of a universal and equal right. These distinctive qualities illuminate freedom of thought as first of the liberties.

Nicholas Tampio, Fordham University

The Occlusion of Origins: Leo Strauss, Machiavelli, and Political Zionism

In this paper, I read Leo Strauss's Thoughts on Machiavelli as a text in conversation with Zionist authors about the foundation of the State of Israel. In his Zionist writings, Strauss mentioned Leon Pinsker, Theodor Herzl, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, and David Ben Gurion. One of the themes of Thoughts on Machiavelli is how leaders may create new modes and orders—the exact problem that Israeli leaders and political Zionists were confronting in the mid-twentieth century. Strauss disapproved of Machiavelli's publicizing the fact that founders create states through violence. At the same time, Strauss maintained that classical political philosophers knew about the sundry origins of states but had the good sense to be discrete about it. Strauss's message to Zionists, I argue, is that they should use Machiavellian violence to create and maintain the State of Israel and tell the world a story that will not offend its conscience. Read alongside his 1958 letter to the National Review, I argue that Strauss's work on Machiavelli suggests that Jews needed to displace Palestinians to form a Jewish homeland, and Israel should present itself as a liberal democracy to its most powerful benefactor: the United States. This article offers a new interpretation of one of Strauss's most important texts and sheds light on the political philosophy undergirding Zionist and neoconservative advocacy for Israel.

Owen Temby, University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley

Institutional and ideational features of Canadian-U.S. fishery governance networks: connectivity, coherence, and collaboration

This paper examines multilevel governance across the Canadian-U.S. border through the comparison of collaborative transboundary fishery management networks in three regions: the Salish Sea, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Maine. Transnational fishery management is an inter-organizational and multi-jurisdictional enterprise constituted by shared understandings of a suite of tasks and communications among the participants. We use survey and interview data to summarize the inter-organizational scale and participation in the networks, the centrality of different organization types, the factors that contribute to network formation, and other ideational network traits like inter-organizational trust, risk perception, and goal alignment. The results of our research provide the only broad account of the collaborative networks comprising the system of Canada-U.S. transboundary fishery governance.

Matthew Tokeshi, Williams College

Invisible: Asian Americans in the American Imagination and Why It Matters for Politics

Most research on racial prejudice in the United States understands prejudice to be a uniformly negative feeling of contempt toward an out-group. We argue that modern-day prejudice against Asian Americans is characterized in part by antipathy, but is also marked by invisibility: the idea that Asian Americans are not relevant to American social and civic life. Using an original survey, we show that most Americans know very little about the presence of Asian Americans and their experiences in the United States. For example, roughly 80% could not name a single prominent Asian American, could not name a significant historical event or policy relevant to Asian Americans, did not mention Kamala Harris' or Nikki Haley's Asian ancestry when asked to describe their racial backgrounds, or have not had a significant recent social interaction with an Asian American. About half (48%) could not provide an answer to any of those five questions. We also find that anti-Asian animus, which we measure using an original survey scale, is a strong predictor of scores on our invisibility measure even after accounting for respondents' levels of education and political knowledge. Finally, we show that Americans who score high on invisibility are more likely to support policies that negatively affect the status of Asian Americans and are more likely to support Donald Trump

Jesse Usher Barrett, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Fear and Loathing in the Party: Punishment and Rewards for Deviant Partisan Behavior

In an increasing polarized electorate, which increasingly sees the other side as a threat, it is important to understand if co-partisans will implement punitive measures against one another for aiding the opposite party. If simple acts, such as signaling a vote for an out-party candidate, contributing to their campaign, or supporting policies that are generally supported by the opposition, leads to punitive measures against co-partisans, the real-world implications could range from social ostracization to threats of violence or even death. This proposed study seeks to build off the findings of Iyengar and Westwood's "Fear and Loathing Across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization" by replicating their behavioral games to examine whether co-partisans will punish each other if the other player has aided the opposition. Conversely, it will also examine how out-partisans reward one another if they behaved in a manner that aids the respondent's party. In this proposal, players would be matched with co/out-partisans and information that a signal that "Player 2" has in acted in a way that aided the out/co-party such as donations to opposition candidates or signing ballot initiatives that support policies their party is generally opposed to. Examining this at different levels, such as local government or a congressional seat etc., as well geographical proximity, we could better understand partisan punitive and rewarding behavior to maintain coalitions and punish deviant members of their party and reward deviant members of the out-party.

Jesse Usher Barrett, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Partisanship, Democratic Hypocrisy, and the State Supreme Court Appointment Process

This study explores the intersection of partisanship, democratic norms, and judicial appointment processes, focusing on how partisan identities shape public perceptions and support for gubernatorial appointments of state supreme court justices during competitive election years. Using an experimental survey of 980 respondents, we examine the influence of co-partisan and out-partisan governors on public attitudes toward judicial appointments. Data for this paper was gathered in April of 2024 using the internet-based survey entity Lucid. Panel participants were selected to mimic national demographics, meaning the sample is non-random but still useful for extrapolation to the public. Findings reveal that partisans are significantly more likely to approve of the appointment process by co-partisan governors while opposing the process by out-partisan governors, demonstrating the prevalence of democratic hypocrisy in evaluating institutional processes. Contrary to expectations, affective polarization played a negligible role, with party identification emerging as the primary determinant of respondent attitudes. These results highlight the broader implications of the politicization of judicial appointments for state court legitimacy and public trust in democratic institutions. Future research should examine whether increased judicial knowledge can mitigate these partisan biases to uphold enduring institutional legitimacy.

Simon Vodrey, Carleton University

Gun Control & the Nexus of Political Polarization, Wedge Politics, & Anger as a Motivating Factor in Canadian Politics

Few would deny the fact that both Canadian and American politics appears to be more divisive and more visceral than in the not-so-distant past. Building on previous research that has examined the link between political polarization, wedge politics, and anger as a motivating factor in politics, this paper examines one particularly salient wedge issue that continues to embody the nexus of political polarization, wedge issues, and anger to mobilize voters: gun control. More specifically, this divisive issue is examined in the recent Canadian context by assessing the perception of the politically turbulent Bill C-21 An Act to Amend Certain Acts and to Make Certain Consequential Amendments (Firearms) and the steady flow of firearms bans via Order in Council that both proceeded and continued after Bill C-21 received Royal Assent in December 2023. In essence, I investigate how Bill C-21 and its associated firearms bans have made headlines, and also political headaches, for both the governing Liberal Party of Canada and the opposing Conservative Party of Canada between 2020 and now. To conduct a case study of this important topic, and to explore how it enables the three interrelated forces of political polarization, wedge politics, and anger as a motivating factor in politics, I use elite in-depth interviews with Canadian commercial marketers, political marketers, political strategists, political consultants, lobbyists, firearms industry representatives, firearms industry retailers, firearms researchers, and political staffers to investigate how and why the sweeping firearms prohibitions enacted via both legislation (Bill C-21) and executive fiat (via a variety of Orders in Council) since 2020 represent a key wedge issue that has increasingly been mobilized in Canadian politics over the past few federal election cycles and will likely be mobilized again in the next Canadian federal election.

Aaron Weinstein, Fairfield University

The U.S. Electoral-Industrial Complex: A Theoretical Exploration

In his farewell address, Dwight D. Eisenhower lamented the rise of the "military-industrial complex" (MIC). Over the last 60 years, the suffix "-industrial complex" has been widely used (and, frankly, abused) to connote any undesirable mixing of private industry with public good. The result is that Eisenhower's original point—that an MIC was dangerous because it removed the military from civilian democratic control, and that it threatened republican self-rule—has been lost. This paper proposes returning to Eisenhower's core concerns with democratic principles by focusing on arguably the clearest example of this threat today: what I call the "electoral-industrial complex" (EIC). I contend that elections during the era of permanent campaigns have become self-perpetuating and self-justifying economies that are more effective at raising and spending money than generating political legitimacy.

Paul Weisser, Baylor University

The Machine Stands Revealed: Heidegger on Technology and Metaphysics

Whether as artificial intelligence, nuclear weapons, or social media, technology is one of the most pressing political questions of the present age. Technology develops rapidly, forcing on us the question of how to deal with these new capabilities. Given this novelty, it often appears as if the past has little wisdom to offer concerning the present situation. And the one popular and outstanding example of philosophy applying itself to the question of technology in the work of Martin Heidegger is often criticized as being abstruse, abstract, and unhelpful. The purpose of this paper is to clarify Heidegger's thought on technology with respect to his aims in writing, his understanding of the danger technology poses, and the foundation of this danger in the history of Western metaphysics. This last element in particular is critical to understanding his famous Question Concerning Technology, which is too often read in isolation and without a proper appreciation of the connections between this piece and Heidegger's broader understanding of the history of metaphysics. By attending to that component of Heidegger's thought, we can see more clearly why and how Heidegger thinks that the rise of technology is primarily an intellectual development and that this event endangers our thinking more than our bodies. We will then be in a position to comment on Heidegger's proposed solutions, particularly a renaissance in thinking, which must be understood in the context of his account of prior Western thinking. Ultimately, such an account will permit us to see both the novel discoveries Heidegger makes with respect to the essence of technology and the limitations in terms of practical expectations that might be derived from his thought. Heidegger can help us know what technology is, a great benefit in itself, even if we must look elsewhere for concrete, practical policies concerning technology.

Gregory Williams, Simmons University

The Donald Trump of X: Global Trumpism as Ideology and Policy

Far Right leaders around the world are often compared to Donald Trump. Over the last few years, publics have seen the "Donald Trump of" nations such as Argentina, Brazil, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. This study explores commonalities and divergences in global Trumpism as an ideology and in policy. It argues that the contradiction in global Trumpism is its populist ideology paired with an elite-based policy agenda. As an ideology, global Trumpism puts national crises in mortal terms. In many cases, the Donald Trump of X finds scapegoats upon which to shoulder the blame. Such leaders have a sense of showmanship too, and ably use controversial statements to garner media coverage. In their refusal to follow campaign norms, they gain widespread mass followings and a reputation, at least among supporters, for "speaking the truth" about issues, such as low wages and access to health care. But once in government, the world's Donald Trumps tend to also defy their supporters in similar ways. They pursue traditional neoliberal policies in the form of cutting back social welfare benefits and tax breaks to the elite. And, many also turn to authoritarianism and look for nondemocratic ways to extend their time in office.

Wendy Wright, William Paterson University

Abolition's Arc: Tracing the development of abolitionist theory in Angela Davis's work.

Abolitionism is an emerging and vital political theory and movement that seeks to identify and create pathways to personal, collective, and political liberation. As a political theory, it has its roots in Black Feminist Theory and Critical Theory; as a movement, it emerges from anti-prison, anti-capitalist, and Black Power movements from the 1970s through today. At the nexus of these two pathways is Angela Davis and her fifty years of intellectual and movement work. This paper traces the development of several central concepts in abolition from Angela Davis's early work in the wake of her imprisonment through the rise of the anti-prison movement of the 1990s to the contemporary moment of abolition's unfolding as a practice of freedom against carcerality in all of its sites.

Katie Zuber, John Jay

At the Intersection of Public Policy and Social Construction: How the Government's Response to Opioids Shapes Political Learning

In October 2017, the opioid epidemic was officially declared a "public health emergency." In response, government officials implemented a myriad of new rules and regulations designed to curb its devastating effects. Such rules included boosts in federal funding to enhance access to drug treatment (National Council for Mental Wellbeing 2018); reduced restrictions on telehealth services (SAMHSA 2023); the elimination of licensing requirements to prescribe medication (SAMHSA 2024); and the expansion of unsupervised take-home doses of methadone (SAMHSA 2024). Despite these changes, thousands of people continue to die each year from drug overdoses. According to data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "[t]he number of people who died from an opioid overdose in 2022 was 10 times the number in 1999," (CDC n.d.). In 2022 alone, nearly 108,000 people succumbed to a drug overdose, with nearly 82,000 (or 76%) of those deaths attributed to opioids. In light of the opioid epidemic's ongoing continuation as a public health crisis, it presents the opportunity for researchers to better understand how government addresses social problems and what transpires as a result. Drawing on 245 interviews with 215 unique individuals, 81 focus group participants, and participant observation at 22 sites, we ask: (1.) What infrastructure does government have at its disposal to address the problem; (2.) How does the social construction of the target population influence its response; and (3.) what political learning occurs as a result? Focusing on government infrastructure, social construction, and political learning teaches us about the intractability of inequality in public policy.

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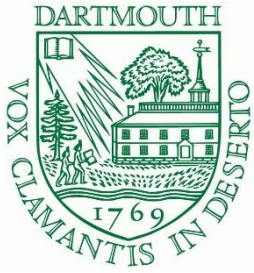

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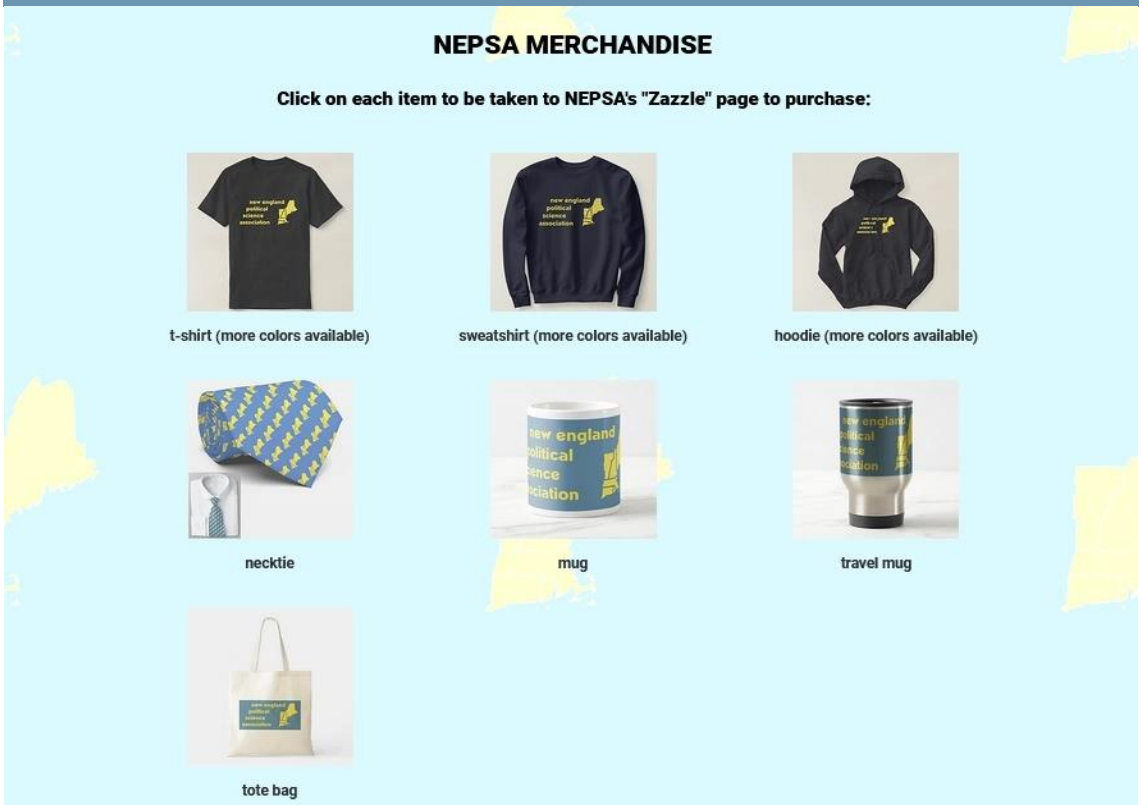

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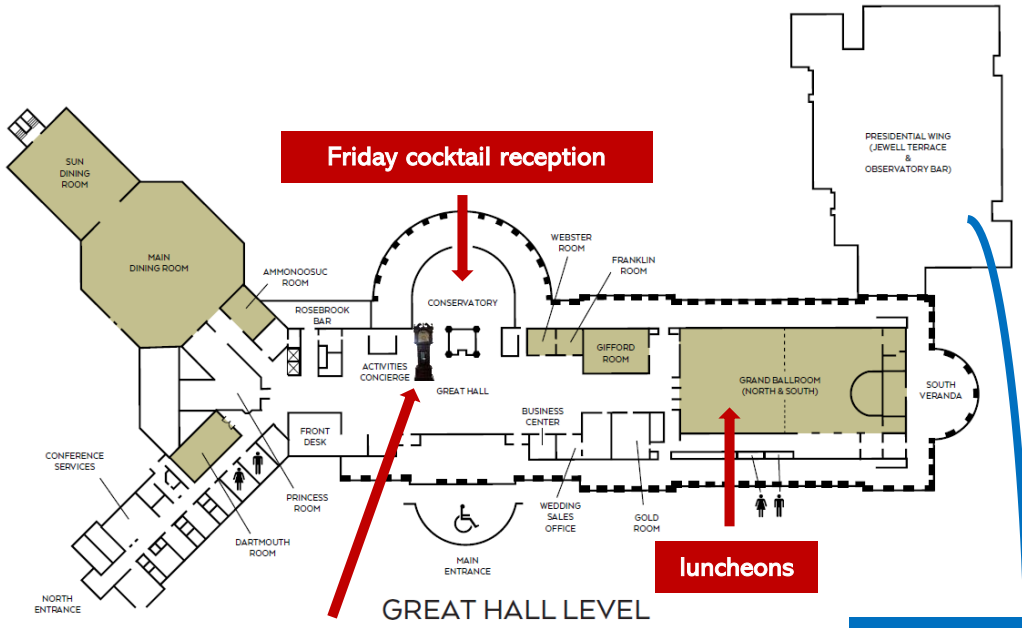

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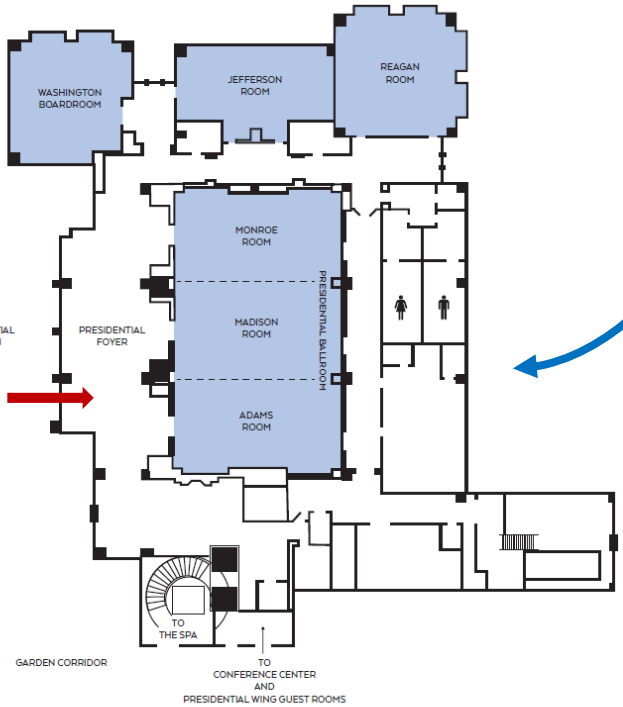
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