



Goodbye & Good Luck!

November 2011

A Newsletter for Department of Government Alumni and Friends



In This Issue

Europe on the Brink
by James Galbraith

Italian Given Worst Job in Europe
by Ben Carliner

Constitutional Reform in Eurasia
by Julie A. George

Who Won the Iraq War?
by Ali Rawaf

We Have Never Been Secular
by Bill McCormick

Women in the 2012 Elections
by Megan Moeller

Disgust, Politics and Participation
by L. Matthew Vandebroek

Influence from Abroad:
How Foreign Voices Shape U.S. Public Opinion
by Danny Hayes

Alumni Interview:
The Honorable Edward C. Prado

Contributors

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James K. Galbraith holds the Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr. Chair in Government/Business Relations at the LBJ School, and a professorship in the Department of Government. He recently returned from a lecture tour to Greece, Austria, Switzerland, France and Ireland.

Julie A. George received her Ph.D. in 2005. George is an assistant professor at Queen's College, the City University of New York. In 2010 her first book was published, "The Politics of Ethnic Separatism in Russia and Georgia."

Danny Hayes received his M.A. in 2004 and Ph.D. in 2006 (and a journalism degree in 1998). Hayes is an assistant professor at American University. His research focuses on political communication and political behavior in American politics.

Bill McCormick is a Ph.D candidate. He studies medieval political thought and anything related to theology and politics. A native Texan, McCormick graduated from the University of Chicago in 2007 and has recently returned from a year studying Thomas Aquinas at the University of Cambridge. When not doing all of that, he enjoys horses, whiskey and collecting flags.

Megan Moeller is a Ph.D. student. Her fields of study are American Politics and Methodology, with specific interests in legislative institutions, gender and politics, and public policy. She was recently awarded the competitive Janet Box-Steffensmeier scholarship for women in the social sciences to attend the ICPSR summer program in quantitative research methods. Megan received a B.A. in political science from the University of Michigan.

Edward C. Prado received his B.A. in 1969 (and J.D. in 1972). In 1984, Ronald Reagan appointed Prado to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas. In 2003, George Bush appointed Prado to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. In 2009 Prado received the Texas Exes Distinguished Alumnus Award; you can watch his acceptance speech at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lC_gUN0m-w

Ali Rawaf is a government junior and political blogger from Baghdad, Iraq. In 2004, Ali began blogging with Friends of Democracy, an Iraqi group that promoted democracy and women's rights in Iraq. You can read his blog about politics, religion and life after the fall of Saddam Hussein at <http://theiraqifuture.blogspot.com/>

L. Matthew Vandebroek is a Ph.D. candidate. His areas of expertise are voting behavior and turnout, political psychology and emotions, and experimental methods. Vandebroek's dissertation, "Principled Abstention: A Theory of Emotions and Nonvoting in U.S. Presidential Election," investigates the relationship between emotional reactions to politics and electoral turnout.



Gary P. Freeman, Chair

Letter from the Chair

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is my great pleasure to present the Fall 2011 issue of *Goodbye and Good Luck*.

Leading off are two pieces of commentary analyzing the European financial crisis threatening the stability of the global economy and raising the most serious skepticism in recent memory about the long term viability of the European Union. Is the European project on its last legs, or will it stay true to historical form as a prosperous child of crisis? James Galbraith begins the issue with firsthand observations made while he was on a European tour, and his piece, "Europe on the Brink," raises serious and thoughtful questions about the current challenges facing Europe's leadership, and renders the harshest of criticisms.

Ben Carliner follows Galbraith with a more technical analysis of the European crisis, as well as some trenchant insight of his own into the very political subtext bubbling beneath Europe's monetary policymakers.

Any discussion of Europe's future cannot ignore the continuing saga of the continent's Humpty Dumpty: the USSR. With Putin's Russia hovering over its former empire, Julie George reports to us from Moldova, analyzing the struggles of three postcommunist states in Eurasia as they attempt to hobble together institutions capable of governing.

Moving to the Middle East, we are fortunate to have a contribution from Ali Rawaf, who ponders the future of Iranian influence in the region, arguing that the pending U.S. troop withdrawal will mean that the ultimate outcome of war in Iraq is victory for Iran.

Bill McCormick's piece speaks to one of our country's enduring and fascinating intellectual debates about the relationship between religion, reason and politics. Perhaps most noteworthy about McCormick's comments is the suggestion that these debates are not merely academic, but have very real implications for our individual lives and communities, and the questions and answers are not nearly as self-evident as we may have come to believe.

Looking forward to the 2012 elections, we next present two articles from current graduate students studying American politics. Megan Moeller offers her insight about the role women, as candidates and voters, might play in the upcoming election cycle, and Matt Vandebroek writes for us about how people's disgust with politics leads to a drop in political participation. Rounding out our commentary on American politics, Danny Hayes reports his latest research about the media and politics, sharing with us the ways in which U.S. public opinion is shaped by media attention to opinions voiced from overseas, a phenomenon that to this point political scientists have largely failed to recognize.

Finally, we are honored to have conducted our first alumni interview with one of our most distinguished alums, The Honorable Edward C. Prado, federal judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Prado was most gracious to sit down with us and speak quite openly about the U.S. legal system, the challenges and rewards of being a judge, and a variety of other issues.

Until next time.

Sincerely,

Gary P. Freeman,
Chair

Europe On the Brink

by James Galbraith



Athens this October was a city on the edge, and not just because of the protests. Rather it was the empty storefronts, the addicts sprawled on the sidewalks, the beggars and the squeegee men that caught my eye. And there was the polite conversation with working professionals about their 40% pay cuts, their escalating taxes, and moving their money out of the country while they can. The data show total output falling at a 5% annual rate but specialists are sure the final figures will be worse. The business leaders I spoke with all said there is no hope at all.

Greece is a country with weak public institutions and they are being destroyed. It is a country with fairly low wages and they are being driven down. The government has accepted the terms imposed upon it, but the cuts and tax increases are never enough, and the “troika” comes back time and again for new measures, such as breaking the national wage bargain or (as I heard) using up funds held in reserve to protect the banks. Looming in the background is a plan to place all of Greece’s public assets under private management from abroad. Though floated by a consultant, this was described to me, by a high European official, as the “secret German plan.”

It is obvious that nothing happening today in Greece will produce economic recovery or forestall default. On the contrary, even though the Greek government refuses to take the step of defaulting, it will be forced into that position whenever the Germans and French pull the plug on new loans. This they are plainly preparing to do. Meanwhile, they are punishing Greece and the Greeks — not for any specific crimes, but in order to make sure that when Greece is permitted to default and restructure, the other peripheral countries and especially Italy will not be tempted down the same path. This is called “ring-fencing.” It is also called the principle of collective guilt, destroying the livelihoods of 13 million people for political reasons.

This is economic policy as moral abomination. It is not designed to succeed as economics. And it will also fail as object lesson. What it may achieve, is stringing out the destruction, as it proceeds eventually from Greece to Ireland and on to other countries, so that the effect of the popular rebellion now getting under way does not shake the foundations of the Eurozone. But then again, maybe it won’t even do that.

There are technical solutions; these were discussed and debated at a workshop at the LBJ School on November 3-4, sponsored by the European Center of Excellence, with participation from faculty in the Government Department. These proposals involve European bonds, bank recapitalization and an investment program. But the obstacles are political, insofar as important constituencies in Germany and France oppose them, and then financial, insofar as they would require recognition of losses to European banks that the banks would like to deny. The issue is therefore whether the political leadership in Berlin and Paris is interested in technical solutions. It may be that Europe’s leaders place their political survival in first place, the survival of the European project second, and the people of the periphery dead last.

That being so, it is only a matter of time before desperate populations erupt in revolt, forcing a change of course — or a crack-up. GGL

Italian Given Worst Job in Europe

by Ben Carliner



The Onion famously announced the election of Barack Obama with the headline: Black Man Given Nation's Worst Job. It noted that the position "comes with such intense scrutiny and so certain a guarantee of failure that only one other person even bothered applying for it." On November 1 an Italian, Mario Draghi, became President of the European Central Bank, a job so terrible that the only other candidate for the position — Germany's Axel Weber — had to resign as head of the Bundesbank in order to avoid being appointed the ECB's new boss.

How did this job become such a hot potato? The Eurozone is experiencing a classic run. The Greek debt crisis was a shock to the capital markets. Doubts began to grow about other borrowers, and investors began to run for the exits. These fears were compounded by a design flaw at the heart of the monetary union. Eurozone members all suffer from Original Sin — they borrow in what is effectively a foreign currency — leaving governments, and not just banks, vulnerable to runs.

Solvent but illiquid borrowers are now at risk of collapse simply because investors are scared. They are not sure which banks are hiding large losses on their balance sheets, or whether Italy will be able to grow its way out of its debt burden. Such doubts can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If borrowing costs keep rising, illiquidity could lead to default. Runs are not a new phenomenon. We know how to stop them: a lender of last resort — the very *raison d'être* of central banking.

The ECB has, unfortunately, been unwilling to explicitly backstop sovereign governments. Why? One possibility is moral hazard, or the risk that the ECB will let politicians off the hook and allow them to avoid meaningful reforms. Once again, the crux of the issue is confidence. Perhaps the real reason the ECB has been so reluctant to backstop sovereigns is because it doesn't trust Europe's politicians.

In a monetary union, countries that lose competitiveness cannot rely on a currency devaluation to bring down the prices of their goods on world markets. They must devalue internally — by cutting wages and making structural reforms. Politicians who hope to be reelected are often reluctant to take such harsh medicine.

Earlier this summer, yields on Italian bonds began to rise as contagion spread to the world's third largest bond market. This intensified pressure on the Italian government to enact a broad package of economic reforms and austerity measures.

In the meantime, liquidity began drying up for many European banks, forcing the ECB to take decisive action by purchasing sovereign bonds. Fundamental structural reforms were put off soon after the ECB's intervention succeeded in (temporarily) driving down yields.

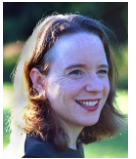
Did this experience convince the ECB that whatever negotiating leverage it had over national governments would be lost as soon as it credibly committed to backstopping sovereign debt?

If so, this is a dangerous game the ECB is playing. What Europe needs now is confidence, not confidence games. The ECB is not wrong to be worried about moral hazard. But there is a word to describe the ECB's negotiating tactic of threatening to allow financial mayhem: it is a bluff.

In the end, maybe this is why the job of heading up the ECB became such a hot potato. Any threat to allow EU capital markets to disintegrate in a systemic financial crisis is no threat at all. The ECB will have to step in and buy massive amounts of sovereign bonds. Mr Draghi will surely come in for harsh criticism for doing what is necessary, but the ECB has little negotiating leverage over national governments, and its bluffs will be called. GGL

Constitutional Reform in Eurasia

by Julie A. George



Snow started falling today in Chişinău, Moldova, where I have come to study state reforms and their impact on secessionist politics and territorial fragmentation. It is my third country in five months; I was in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) this summer and am spending most of the fall in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The countries share some interesting history that makes for rich comparison. All are postcommunist. All have stated aspirations of democratic governance. All profess a need to enhance the capability of the state to implement reforms. All experienced secessionist war in the 1990s and continue to face state fragmentation. In the case of Moldova and Georgia, the regions of Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia operate as de facto independent states, with their own institutions of government, foreign policies and, in the case of Transnistria, their own currency. The 1995 Dayton Accords kept Republika Srpska inside the pre-war boundaries of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but its separatist rhetoric has increased of late, making state governance in BiH challenging.

It is early yet to draw theoretical conclusions. My fieldwork is incomplete and as yet I am caught in a mire of domestic politics and country-specific nuance that bedevils parsimony. Yet some interesting parallels deserve mention. All three countries are exploring constitutional change. Political elites promise that the reforms under consideration would have an almost existential effect on the politics of the day. Some political leaders in Moldova and Bosnia-Herzegovina predict that institutional change will permit the implementation of political, economic and social programs that have been stymied by political infighting and territorial fragmentation. In Georgia, the ruling party casts constitutional reform as a way to finally achieve real democratic governance.

In Moldova, the president is selected by super-majority of parliament; in a multi-party system with a coalition in power, the high-threshold requires support from not only the three parties in the ruling coalition, but also some members of the opposition parties — a deadlock that led to the dissolution of parliament in 2009 and a current stalemate. The Dayton Accords included a constitution for Bosnia-Herzegovina that constructed an ethnicized state with three presidents (Bosniak, Croat and Serb) and each major ethnic group given essential veto power over any law in the case that it “destroys the vital interest” of that group. This clause has been invoked for almost any instance of central state reform, including efforts to construct a country-wide tax system (ultimately successful) and significant police reform (ultimately a failure). Underscoring the dramatic politics in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a view amongst the Bosniak population that the veto power held by Republika Srpska was obtained through ethnic cleansing of that territory’s Muslim population. In both Moldova and BiH, powerful political forces seek constitutional change to subvert coalition politics and ethnic fragmentation. At the time of writing, both countries have failed in this endeavor.

Georgia, which is not encumbered by powerful opposition forces, coalition politics or free-wheeling political competition, faces conditions of too much executive energy. Its state capacity reforms fall in a dizzying array of efficacy, leading to expansion of gas and electricity infrastructure, new roads across previously impassable mountain territories, a new tax and customs system, and a total eradication of petty corruption. Memorably, this regime also permitted a brutal crackdown on protesters in 2007 and a war with South Ossetia and Russia in 2008. Georgia’s executive-dominated system has recently undergone overhaul with little discussion and negligible parliamentary opposition. The new constitution, which will come into full force after the current presidential term expires in 2013, creates a parliamentary system with a powerful prime minister and a weak, although directly elected, president.



The Mostar Bridge, Bosnia-Herzegovina, destroyed during the Bosnian War and then rebuilt, divides the city of Mostar on Bosniak and Croat sides (Photo by Julie A. George)

What conclusions might we draw? Institutions matter, yet in new states, among newly empowered elites, they are avenues to obtain and maintain personal influence. They likewise can be altered to maintain that hegemony. Georgia has amended its constitution significantly at least twice since it was first ratified in 1995. Moldova has overhauled its constitution once; the proposed changes will enhance the power of the ruling coalition and be a death knell to the formerly dominant Party of Communists. But new constitutions also can freeze untenable political conditions. The constitution of Bosnia-Herzegovina was designed to end a war, not to run a state. The outcome is an impoverished polity that must maintain three separate administrations for each dominant ethnic group, isolates non-Slav ethnic minorities, and cannot even create a tax system without nationalist struggle. Small wonder that they cannot combat corruption. GGL



Near Lake Paravani, in Southern Georgia — the road is newly paved thanks to Millenium Challenge Funds (Photo by Julie A. George)

Who Won the Iraq War?

by Ali Rawaf



Last month, President Obama announced the end of the Iraq war, saying the last few thousand troops would withdraw by Dec. 2. While polls show a majority of Americans support the president's decision, Iraqis have become significantly concerned over increased meddling from Iran. The State Department has warned Iran against interfering in Iraqi internal affairs after the troops leave and also told the Iraqis that Iran will not be a problem in the future. The truth is that U.S. officials underestimate Iranian influence and control in Iraq and the region.

Iraq's Prime Minister, Nuri Al-Maliki, who didn't win the last elections, was able to form a government only because Iran, a Shi'ite state, pressured the Shi'ite groups in the country to rally around him and give him the vote of confidence. Al-Maliki, a divisive figure even amongst the Shi'ites, has been returning the favor to Iran ever since. He has sent the Iraqi army to crack down on Mujahidee Khalk, an Iranian opposition group that has been based in Iraq for a couple of decades. Despite calls from international human rights groups to halt the attacks on the group's camp, Al-Maliki still periodically sends Iraqi troops to intimidate them. He has vowed to remove the group from the country at the end of the year.

Iranian influence goes well beyond Iraq. In Syria, Iran has been transferring weapons to the Assad regime and abetting Assad's crackdown on protestors opposing the regime. Last month, California-based BlueCoat said that internet surveillance devices which were sold to the Iraqi government were later found to be used by the Syrian regime to crack down on protestors. How did that happen? The Iranian regime bought those devices for Syria under the name of the Iraqi Communications Ministry.

Al-Maliki is also returning a favor to Iran by keeping quiet about the developments in Syria. As the Syrian regime employed the army to crack down on its people, Al-Maliki hosted a group of Syrian officials and entrepreneurs to strengthen economic ties with the Syrian regime. And recently, Al-Maliki's foreign minister said Baghdad is committed to preventing any action against Iran.

In the Palestinian territories, Iran funds Hamas, the militant group blocking Palestinian-Israeli peace, and Hezbollah, the anti-western, militant Shi'ite group in Lebanon. In Yemen, Iran funds extremist, militant Shi'ite groups.

If Iran is this influential without nuclear weapons, I can only imagine what happens when Tehran acquires such weapons.

If the U.S. follows through with a complete troop withdrawal, Iran would be the sole winner of the Iraq war. The war would have only cleared the way for Iran to exert more influence in the region. After the president's announcement of a U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq, an Iranian delegation visited Iraq and signed economic and political agreements with the Iraqi government, whereas there have been mere talks about such agreements between the United States and Iraq.

Iraq's strategic location in the Middle East would have served as a good check on the encroaching Iranian regime. Now, Iraq can't even protect its airspace and its borders. While a prosperous and democratic Iraq would set a good example for the band of countries where people are demanding democracy, a failed one would serve as poster child for how democracy can fail in the Middle East. There is still a chance for negotiations to resume and possibly leave a couple of thousand troops in Iraq. If these negotiations fail, Iraq will be in the hands of Iran and the lost lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and thousands of American soldiers would have been in vain. GGL

We Have Never Been Secular

by Bill McCormick



“Secularism” is an academic word that somehow slipped into everyday conversation, but what in the world does it mean?

The eminent Canadian political and moral thinker Charles Taylor recently offered a three-fold understanding of the concept, and it’s a worthy beginning to unraveling this complicated term. The two obvious senses of secularism are (1) the autonomy of public spheres from God or religious concerns and (2) the decline in religious practice among individuals. Yet secularity also involves, Taylor writes, (3) a shift from a society in which belief in God is axiomatic to one in which such belief is simply one among many options.

This shift affects everyone, and not only because any and all would-be truths are questionable, including those of science, but because now no one can ignore the question it raises: if belief in God is no longer the unquestionable foundation for goodness and truth, for what makes us human, has man any such foundation? And can human community survive with such uncertainty as we grapple with this question?

I write that “everyone” must feel this shift, but that is not quite true, as Taylor makes clear. This is a story about the West, a confluence of Greek, Jewish and Christian traditions that were in different ways very ambiguous about the relation between politics and the divine. We not only ignore this history when we act as though the modern “separation” of religion and politics were simply self-evident, but risk hypocrisy when we embrace notions of rights, the person, conscience, liberty, universality and even the “secular” that are distinctly Judeo-Christian legacies. When one hears modern Westerners discussing whether Islam distinguishes between politics and religion, one must wonder: can a Westerner really know what such a statement even means?

Such amnesia is not our only problem. For what seems to characterize our age is not merely a fuller sensation of man’s autonomy, but also a deep and lingering dissatisfaction with it. We claim to have emancipated politics from questions of transcendence, yet we have little trust in human reason. We claim to have developed a post-religious society, but we take a poor view of other people and are far from any consensus on the common goods of our society. The resultant desolation, alienation and plain anger are amply reflected in our art, our literature, our friendships and our politics.

It might then seem surprising that, for many political theorists interested in religion, the first question is not “Where is God?” but “Where is reason?” Yet even if one disagrees with Taylor’s definitions of secularism, he is surely right that the doubtful status of secularism reopens not only the relation between religion and politics, but also the connection between faith and reason, or our time’s images of faith and reason, anyway. Thus the great thinkers of recent times, whether religious, atheist or somewhere in between, have recognized that faith and reason must be re-evaluated together.

Are humans capable of forming rational communities that seek their good? Does man even have a purpose, a good that he must seek? If he does, how would he uncover it? Could it bind him in peace to other people? These are urgent questions, and there can be no “neutral” answer to them. Yet the fear of observers like Taylor is that we will stop asking them, either because we think they are no longer genuine questions, or in despair of finding answers to them. Whether we take up their challenge is at present another unanswered question. GGL

Women in the 2012 Elections

by Megan Moeller



The 2012 elections will be noteworthy for women in elected office. The number of women in the Senate is currently at a historic high of 17. The 2012 elections will also see a historic high of female Senate incumbents up for re-election — one Republican and six Democrats. Five other women — four Democrats and one Republican — are the presumed nominees in Senate races, meaning 12 women could be vying for Senate seats next year. The 113th Congress would have the greatest number of female Senators ever if at least eight of them win.

But since many of the candidates are Democratic, a losing year for Democrats could mean a losing year for women in the Senate. If just one female incumbent loses a seat with no new women winning, the number of women in the Senate would decrease for the first time in 34 years. Such a blow would come on the heels of 2010, when the number of women in the House decreased for the first time in 30 years. Whether we see a new ‘Year of the Woman’ or the continuation of a losing trend for women, the 2012 elections will likely prove notable for female representation in Congress.

Women will also be crucial in the 2012 elections as voters, as they hold great weight in determining electoral fortunes. The female vote was pivotal to Barack Obama’s success in 2008: Men’s votes were split between John McCain and Obama while Obama earned 56% of the female vote. Additionally, women turned out at a rate of 65.7% compared to the 61.5% rate of their male counterparts, according to the Pew Research Center. Female voters are historically important to a Democratic victory, but in 2010 less than half of them voted for Democrats — possibly cause for concern for Obama and Democrats in 2012.

Of likely voters in the Republican primaries, most recent polls (through October 2011) reveal that women would most like to see Mitt Romney as the Republican presidential nominee, followed by Herman Cain. When asked for whom they would vote if the election were between Obama and Romney and held today, 50% of women surveyed in a Quinnipiac University poll said that they would vote for Obama and 38% for Romney.

Following the ‘Year of the Woman’ in 1992, women have made impressive gains in their share of congressional seats. But since then, pre-election polling numbers have consistently underestimated the eventual vote share for female candidates in Senate and gubernatorial races. Christopher Stout and Reuben Kline dubbed this phenomenon the “Richards Effect” (after former Texas governor Ann Richards) in their September 2011 article in *Political Behavior*. The “Richards Effect” is most pronounced in states that hold more culturally conservative views regarding gender roles.

In a recent AP poll, 83% of respondents indicated that the gender of the candidate in a presidential election would have no effect on whether they would vote for that candidate, and 9% of respondents said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate if the candidate were a woman. Michele Bachmann, the only female candidate participating in presidential debates, has polling numbers averaging in the single digits for the last three months (through October 2011). It appears Republican women are no more likely to support her than are Republican men, as gender differences in preferring Bachmann as the Republican presidential nominee are within the margin of error. It looks doubtful the Richards effect or voters’ willingness to elect a woman will be enough to help her chances in the election. GGL

Disgust, Politics and Participation

by L. Matthew Vandenberg



Perhaps you've heard nonvoters complain about "dirty" politics, or vow, "I'll hold my nose when I vote for (so-and-so)." What are they really saying? It's not very likely these individuals literally see dirt on politicians or smell something foul as they cast their ballots. Rather, they are metaphorically invoking disgust, a uniquely human and powerful moral emotion.

Political scientists have recently reinvigorated inquiry into the links between emotions and political behavior. It may be tempting to see this as a new frontier for the discipline. However, emotions have captivated classical political thinkers for centuries. Thomas Hobbes, for example, wrote of the "sudden courage" inspired by anger. The Federalists' concerns about popular "passions" were so dire that they proposed to cure their effects with widespread participation. What is new about recent work in political psychology is the seemingly perverse possibility of emotions being not destructive and irrational "passions," but rather guides to more rational political behavior. Scholars have recently shown that anxiety, for example, snaps citizens out of thoughtless habits and predispositions, heightening attention to political news. Anger, meanwhile, is shown by other political scientists to increase an individual's likelihood of participating.

Disgust may be often invoked in political conversation, but its effects on political participation are heretofore understudied. So far, there is some anecdotal evidence. For example, a 2000 Harvard survey found that more than one-third of nonvoters said they were abstaining because "politics disgusts me and I don't want to get involved." Long form interviews and focus groups also reveal frequent references to disgust. My research attempts to systematize these rhetorical claims, grounding them in psychological theories of how emotions are elicited and their influence on our behavior.

My dissertation proposes that many Americans withdraw from politics, avoiding political news and actively refusing to vote, when they believe the political system routinely flouts their moral expectations of how the system ought to work. To be sure, people often confuse terms like disgust and anger, but psychologists argue that disgust is a unique emotional reaction to perceived threats of moral contamination by poisonous ideas. Disgusting events and people are not ones we can fight back against (as in the case of anger) or run away from (as in the case of fear). Rather, when we are disgusted, we simply reject and avoid the perceived contaminant. When politics is the poisonous idea, individuals become disgusted and repulsed by politics, and like spitting out a sip of spoiled milk, they refuse to vote.

This proposed theory appears to bear out in data I gathered through the Department of Government's questionnaire on the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study. Turnout in the 2010 midterms was nearly 18% lower than average among individuals whose most frequent emotional reaction to politics was disgust (rather than anger, anxiety or enthusiasm). This relationship holds in a multivariate model of turnout controlling for well-established predictors of voting such as education, party identification and political interest. All else equal, moving from never being disgusted by politics, to often being disgusted by politics, corresponds with a one-third decrease in the probability of turning out to vote. Among the emotions measured, only disgust predicted less participation.

To further test my theory, I am currently in the midst of experimental studies which directly induce disgust and then offer an opportunity to participate in a political exercise. While preliminary, results using UT-Austin undergrads suggest disgust diminishes participation when the target of the emotion is politics, as well as among morally traditional individuals. Next, I will conduct the final test, a nationally representative simulated campaign experiment funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation. GGL

Influence from Abroad: How Foreign Voices Shape U.S. Public Opinion

by Danny Hayes



As Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi sought to suppress a popular uprising threatening his decades-long hold on power, a March 13, 2011 CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll reported that 56% of Americans favored “the U.S. and other countries attempting to establish a no-fly zone” in the North African nation. Just a week later, 70% of Americans supported the action. Why did opinion shift so quickly in favor of intervention?

Numerous possibilities arise, but most analysts would point to the efforts of domestic political elites, such as Barack Obama, who sought to mobilize opinion in support of military engagement. After all, decades of research in political science has shown that public opinion is typically driven by the positions taken by presidents, members of Congress, and other influential elites inside the Beltway. When our political leaders call for action, we line up behind them. But new research by me and Matt Guardino suggests another explanation: the pro-intervention rhetoric emanating from overseas elites, which was widely reported in American media outlets. In contrast to what political scientists have historically believed, the U.S. public sometimes does respond to foreign voices when those voices receive media attention.

In an article recently published in the *American Journal of Political Science*, Guardino, a postdoctoral fellow at Syracuse University, and I report the results of a study of media coverage and public opinion in the lead-up to the 2003 Iraq War. We found that although American news outlets paid little attention to dissent to the Bush administration’s plan for a pre-emptive strike from domestic sources — liberal Democratic members of Congress and anti-war demonstrators, among others — they devoted significant air time to opposition to the war from abroad.

For instance, in our analysis of every nightly network television news story about Iraq in the eight months before the invasion — 1,434 in all — foreigners constituted one of every three sources that appeared on the air. And these foreign voices — U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix, anti-war members of the British parliament, and officials from France, Germany and various European governments — accounted for 65% of all of the anti-war statements that appeared on the news.

The coverage had a substantial effect on public opinion, suppressing support for the Iraq invasion. According to our analysis of survey data, public support was about nine percentage points lower than it would have been without foreign opposition in the news.

Certain people were especially responsive to influence from abroad. College-educated Democrats, for example, were 37 percentage points less likely to support the war because of opposition from overseas. Independents with college degrees were 59 percentage points less likely to advocate invasion than they would have been in the absence of foreign dissent. Had the media ignored foreign consternation over the invasion, President Bush would have taken the country to war with an even larger reservoir of public support to draw on.

The Libyan intervention is, to be sure, not the Iraq War. For one, the United States and its allies were generally united about how to proceed in Libya. But there is no reason to think that the views of France, Italy and the United Nations were irrelevant to Americans as they contemplated yet another conflict in a far-off land. A growing body of research — including the Government Department’s own Terrence Chapman — suggests that the public does care what the international community thinks when the United State contemplates military action. And as people are increasingly exposed to perspectives from international actors — through the internet and other non-traditional media outlets — the potential for the influence of foreign voices on U.S. public opinion will only grow. GGL

Goodbye and Good Luck Interview with Judge Edward C. Prado, U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit



GGL: In 2009 you heard an appeal of a case brought by LULAC of Texas and the Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston, et. al. against the Texas Democratic Party (TDP). The plaintiffs had sued the TDP under the Voting Rights Act over concerns with how the TDP selected delegates for participation in the party's nominating conventions. You began your opinion with some strong language about the significance of the Voting Rights Act (VRA). What does the VRA mean to you?

Prado: Parts of the VRA do not apply to the whole country, just certain states. There has been recent criticism of the VRA that it is either illegal or should be done away with because times have changed. Some groups argue that certain parts of the VRA have served their purpose and are no longer needed. When the Supreme Court ruled on *Brown v. the Board of Education*, it fell on the courts of the South to take care of lots of civil rights issues. The Fifth Circuit played a major role on lots of civil rights issues, including the VRA. I am very proud to be part of a court that played such a major role in deciding civil rights law for the country. Whether it was a poll tax, voting rights, schools, transportation — these things came out of the Fifth Circuit and mostly white conservatives courageous enough to make rulings that needed to be made. There is such a great, rich history about the role of the Fifth Circuit in the civil rights era, I am sometimes in awe of sitting there.

GGL: What is the most challenging issue facing the federal courts today?

Prado: The financial crunch. The judicial branch makes up less than two-tenths of 1% of the federal budget, yet so much important work gets done by courts with such few resources, and government is in such critical economic straits that we've been asked to cut back. How do we continue doing the work we are doing with less resources? We don't dictate how many cases we get. Cases keep coming. People keep filing lawsuits. We can't control the work that falls on us. People on probation with drug problems, or people in trouble for child pornography — these people need to be supervised. Without probation officers to go visit them at work or at home, you can't keep up with these people, and some people will regress into crime because we don't have the resources to supervise. Or if someone files a lawsuit and the judge tells them the case cannot be heard for one-and-a-half years — some people can't wait that long for their day in court.

GGL: What is the most challenging issue you personally have faced as a federal judge?

Prado: A lawsuit was brought by minorities claiming that the standardized test required to get a high school diploma in Texas is discriminatory and therefore unconstitutional. It was a personal struggle for me. I came from a barrio school, and initially college was challenging for me because I don't think I had an equal high school education. Personally I felt it not fair to require a person who had gone to a poorer school to have to take the same test, and I thought the answer was that you need to give those kids a better education. But I had to set that aside and look at it from a legal perspective and see if it was in fact unconstitutional, and I found that there were problems beyond that. Often parents were not around and there was nobody at home to help. There were social-economic problems beyond school that the school could not control. I determined that there were adequate opportunities given to students to pass the test, and the test was therefore constitutional, despite my personal qualms about requiring the test — I had a personal disagreement with my legal conclusion.

GGL: What is the most rewarding thing about being a federal judge?

Prado: The opportunity of resolving some very challenging issues. Knowing, hoping you are doing something that needs to be done. Answering questions that no one else can resolve. Answering difficult questions left open to resolve disagreements. Working so that people are given their rights and are treated fairly. There is great power, but great responsibility to do what is fair.

There is often frustration, and people lose patience, because people want justice, and I have to give it to them, but the law does not always give a remedy for every unfair situation, and I have to follow the law. Sometimes I cannot fix a wrong. Sometimes there is just no remedy available in the law. Let's say there is a car accident and it's the other guy's fault, but there are no witnesses. Just because it's his fault doesn't mean you're going to win. Sometimes you lose and it's unfair.

GGL: Does the U.S. legal system live up to its promise as adjudicator of a free society with liberty and justice for all?

Prado: I have had the opportunity of going to different countries and working with judges throughout Latin America, South America, Mexico, and it makes you appreciate our system. Our system isn't perfect, but compared to everything else there is, our system is pretty darn good. We are way ahead of everyone else. There is a lot of envy out there of our system. People generally have faith in the system. People do not always understand the system, but they generally respect the decisions and respect the system, and we are fortunate and lucky to have the system we have.

There are lots of poor people who can't afford a lawyer and who have issues and need legal representation. We have a segment of society that can't afford legal representation, so we don't have too many lawyers; we have not enough lawyers where we need them.

GGL: Can you give examples of how politics does and/or does not interfere with the work of the federal judiciary?

Prado: There is the issue of elected versus appointed judges. Politics enters into both, but the appointed system less. Once appointed a judge is free to make opinions that need to be made without fear of losing a job or being elected out of office. About 95% of the decisions we make are based on law and what is just and in the judge's mind right and correct. But judges come to the bench from different backgrounds. We each come with different experiences and we bring them to our jobs as judges, and they can't help but influence how we interpret the law. We must reach the right decisions anyway, but there is one teeny bit of law that could go either way. How can judges disagree? It's background, education, personal life — these are all brought to the table and some see it different than others.

GGL: What should the University of Texas be doing to ensure we are training the next generation of leaders?

Prado: A good quality education is so vital to people moving on in life. If you learn what has worked and what has not worked, when it has worked and when it has not worked, why it has worked and why it has not worked, it can make tomorrow's leaders well-equipped with the knowledge of how to conduct government business and how to get things accomplished.

GGL: What is the greatest attribute of the U.S. constitution?

Prado: It established our system of government and gave us all these rights that many times we take for granted. Over 200 years ago this document that set up this country is still there running our country, giving us basic rights and a government still in existence. It's amazing — how did they write this over 200 years ago? Could it be written today?

GGL: What advice do you have for young lawyers?

Prado: Your reputation is very important. In your advocacy for a client, don't sacrifice your reputation and your ethics. If you are dishonest, unethical, it will take a long time for you to undo that reputation. You want to be known as an ethical, good person. Don't sacrifice that for the sake of a client or the sake of a case.

GGL: Can you comment in general on issues such as search and seizure, individual liberties and freedoms, constitutional freedoms, drug cases, drug epidemics, violence, violent crimes, issues that come before you?

Prado: It concerns me with today's society that by the time someone comes before me it is almost too late. We concentrate all our resources to fight crime and charge criminals and send them to jail, and if we were to readjust and instead spend the money on this person in elementary or middle school, and maybe if we can get to these people before they start getting into problems, it will cost us less than the money we spend later. It's two or three times harder to turn them around when we have a high school dropout with a drug problem, and we have a low success rate. If there had been someone there earlier, maybe we could turn them around at an early age. Maybe we can save time, trouble and money by building better schools and fewer penitentiaries. I'm an example of how education can be the answer to a lot of issues. Poverty and discrimination — with education comes opportunities to move out.

GGL: Are crimes more heinous today than they once were?

Prado: Criminals and crime are more sophisticated today — there is more advanced criminal activity with the use of technology. And our kids are exposed to so much more than they used to be, and that causes new problems. GGL