

Notes from the Editors

It is our pleasure to present Volume 107 Issue 2. The majority of the articles in this issue are manuscripts that were originally processed by the UNT team. As always, we will continue the tradition of providing a brief introduction summarizing the basic arguments of each article that appears in the issue. The introduction is organized to provide the reader with a quick glimpse of the content of the issue, so as to pique the interest of the reader. Thus, rather than a synthesized essay, our introductions will provide clear and straightforward summaries of each piece.

This issue contains several articles that should be of great contemporary interest to the readers of the Review. We believe that the articles that appear in this issue speak to a number of timely and enduring questions in political science, as well as opening exciting new lines of research. These include such questions as: What is the relationship between electronic communication and political protest and violence? What was the real meaning of “*Marbury v. Madison*”? What impact does the presence of openly gay legislators have on the views and voting behavior of their straight counterparts? How do individuals form opinions on public issues when they have limited substantive knowledge or direct experience? How are patterns of social and ethnic identification shaped by conflict? And, of course, the continuing debate over the importance of “genopolitics” in American political behavior.

IN THIS ISSUE

In “Technology and Collective Action: The Effect of Cell Phone Coverage on Political Violence in Africa,” Jan Pierskalla and Florian Hollenbach address the impact that the spread of cell phone technology has had on violent collective action in Africa. In a very timely argument, they contend that the increased availability of cell phones on the continent has allowed political groups to overcome collective action problems more easily and to improve in-group cooperation and coordination. Combining spatially disaggregated data on cell phone coverage and on the location of organized violent events in Africa with careful empirical analysis, they convincingly demonstrate that the availability of cell phone coverage significantly and substantially increases the probability of violent conflict. This article should prompt considerable interest in the effects of electronic communication on political mobilization more broadly.

In “Capitol Mobility: Madisonian Representation and the Location and Relocation of Capitals in the United States,” Eric Engstrom, Jessie Hammond, and John Scott examine an important but seemingly underappreciated component of American political development and institutional design—the geographic placement of capital cities. They argue that decisions to locate capitals in the United States have been made in accordance with the theory of representative gov-

ernment that originated in this country, especially as articulated by James Madison. Using historical census and political boundaries data, the authors convincingly demonstrate that the original placement and subsequent relocation of state capital cities, as well as the placement of Washington, DC, follow a consistent pattern of being at or near the population center of the relevant jurisdiction, thereby maximizing citizens’ access to their seat of government.

In “Cold Case File: Indictable Acts and Officer Accountability in *Marbury v. Madison*,” Karen Orren and Chris Walker do some sleuthing to uncover a long-lost secret of this most familiar of all Supreme Court cases. The failure of James Madison, and by extension his boss Thomas Jefferson, to deliver *Marbury*’s commission was potentially a criminal act. Therefore, one of the delicate matters that Justice John Marshall was confronted with in this case was the possibility of triggering prosecutions of members of the Jefferson administration and a government crisis of the first magnitude in the young republic. Marshall’s clever side-stepping of this outcome is remembered today only for launching judicial review; however, Orren and Walker argue that it also had the fateful consequence of inaugurating the tradition in American constitutional law of virtual immunity from prosecution of public officials. Digging deeply into English and colonial American legal history, they argue that this immunity was by no means required by the precedents Marshall had before him.

Andrew Reynolds, in a novel piece titled “Representation and Rights: The Impact of LGBT Legislators in Comparative Perspective,” presents cross-national data to demonstrate that more and more openly gay candidates are winning office. More important, his analyses show that the presence of openly gay legislators has a transformative effect on the views and voting behavior of their straight counterparts. Importantly, it does not take a large proportion of openly gay legislators for their presence to have an impact on the passage of laws that enhance gay rights. Even small gains by openly gay legislators in winning elective office pay large dividends in social and legal progress.

In “Politics in the Mind’s Eye: Imagination as a Link between Social and Political Cognition, Michael Bang Petersen and Lane Aarøe offer a new explanation for how individuals form opinions on public issues when they have limited substantive knowledge or direct experience. They argue that individuals use their imagination, often referred to as “decoupled cognition,” to produce vivid mental pictures of relevant events and groups in mass politics. Using these vivid mental pictures as input, psychological mechanisms of social cognition help process and facilitate individuals’ reasoning about public issues. One of the strengths of this article is the repeated testing of their theoretical idea from a variety of angles. First they develop and thoroughly validate a scale for measuring individual differences in imagination. Then they conduct seven primary studies,

with five separate samples of individuals in the United States and Denmark, using explicit, implicit, and behavioral measures to test their empirical hypotheses.

Nicholas Sambanis and Moses Shayo in “Social Identification and Ethnic Conflict” address three important questions in the study of ethnic conflict: When do ethnic cleavages increase the risk of conflict? Under what conditions is a strong common identity likely to emerge, thereby reducing that risk? How are patterns of social identification shaped by conflict? They develop a simple model to address these questions and demonstrate how conflict and identification patterns reinforce each other. In particular they show how a small group of ethnic radicals can derail a peaceful equilibrium, leading to the polarization of the entire population, and they illustrate this process via the careful reexamination of several historical cases.

Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret Roberts in “How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression” examine how censorship of social media posts is practiced in China. In an impressive empirical effort, they located, downloaded, and analyzed the content of millions of social media posts originating from nearly 1,400 social media services all over China that were transmitted BEFORE the Chinese government was able to censor them. Using computer-assisted text analysis in Chinese, they find that—contrary to previous thinking on the subject—posts with negative criticism of the state and its policies are not more likely to be censored. Indeed, criticism of the state, its leaders, and policies is somewhat tolerated as an outlet for social frustrations. The authors argue that state censorship is targeted at curtailing collective action by silencing comments that seek to or spur social mobilization, *regardless of content*. This piece provides a new way of looking at the role of censorship and social communication in China.

In “Crossing the Line: Local Ethnic Geography and Voting in Ghana,” Nahomi Ichino and Noah Nathan, examine the proposition that voters support co-ethnic politicians because they expect politicians to favor their co-ethnics once in office. They point out that, because most of the goods that politicians can provide are nonexcludable, then this should affect the voters’ assessment of the ability of a co-ethnic candidate to deliver benefits. In fact, what they find (using a new dataset of geo-coded polling-station-level election results along with survey data from Ghana) is that similar voters are *less* likely to vote for the party of their own ethnic group, and *more* likely to support a party associated with another group, when the local ethnic geography favors the other group. They argue that this finding helps explain why there is not a direct correlation between ethnic identity and voter choice in Africa (and by implication elsewhere), and the study highlights the role of geography in explaining the role of ethnicity in politics.

Finally, in this issue we present a special forum section that focuses on the debate over genopolitics. In this section two sets of authors criticize an article published in the *APSR* in Volume 106, Issue 1. That article by Evan Charney and William English, titled “Candidate

Genes and Political Behavior,” was quite critical of earlier work that had argued in favor of the genetic basis for political behavior. In two rebuttals of the Charney and English piece, James Fowler and Christopher Dawes in “In Defense of Genopolitics” and Kristen Diane Deppe, Scott Stoltenberg, Kevin B. Smith, and John Hibbing in “Candidate Genes and Voter Turnout: Further Evidence on the Role of 5-HTTLPR” refute the criticisms of the genopolitics approach that appeared in the Charney and English article. In their rejoinder, Charney and English defend their findings and reiterate their criticism of existing work on genopolitics. This forum should do much in stimulating further debate over the role of genopolitics in the study of political behavior, not only in the United States but in other countries as well.

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¹ See <http://www.aapor.org/standards.asp>.

² One widely accepted guide to such norms is given by the American Anthropological Association's Code of Ethics, particularly Section III. Available at <http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/upload/AAA-Ethics-Code-2009.pdf>.

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³ *Behavior Genetics* 42 (2012): 1–2, DOI 10.1007/s10519–011–9504-zvi.

forums it does so very rarely. We do not publish rejoinders to rejoinders.

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