

Introduction and Comments

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The title of this journal—*Perspectives on Politics*—presupposes, at least tacitly, that even if we view it from a variety of vantage points, we can identify and agree upon some thing called politics. We spend a lot of time and effort arguing about those vantage points, the theoretical and methodological “perspectives” from which we explore our object of inquiry. Rarely, however, do we direct our attention reflexively and systematically on the ways our own practices and institutions themselves are infiltrated by politics. The lead article in this issue, a study of how gender inequality operates, sometimes subtly, sometimes much less so, among faculty and administrators at one prominent American university. As the authors Kristen Monroe, Saba Ozyurt, Ted Wrigley, and Amy Alexander note at the outset, not everyone immediately sees how this topic fits within a conception of politics. Like the authors, I find it difficult to grasp that perspective. Monroe, Ozyurt, Wrigley, and Alexander not only chart in an innovative manner the ways that women faculty at a prominent research university encounter gender inequality but the strategies they have devised for responding to the predicaments that inequality creates for themselves and their colleagues. I am pleased to be publishing this provocative study and hope that it will generate much subsequent inquiry into this topic.

Monroe et al. rely on narrative analysis to identify nuanced patterns of gender politics in the academy. In our second paper, Ronald King and Thomas Langston use a typology of narrative strategies to categorize a seemingly disparate set of approaches to the study of American politics. While they themselves call their paper a “review essay,” I see it instead as an effort to reform common understandings of the subfield. They remind us that our understandings of what counts as politics will trade upon the stories we tell ourselves about how we frame our inquiries. In that sense their paper offers a strong complement to Monroe, Ozyurt, Wright, and Alexander’s effort to broaden our conception of politics.

Kimberley Conger and Bryan McGraw take up a pressing issue of whether apparently “illiberal” political activists—in this instance, religious conservatives in the United States—present a threat to liberal political arrange-

ments. While they focus on a particular case with what many will consider surprising results, the broader theoretical question they raise is of great importance. Their paper is followed by a study by Alexander Pacek and Benjamin Radcliff that aims to establish a positive causal connection between welfare state provision and reported life satisfaction among citizens. Like Conger and McGraw, the authors base their argument on subjective self-assessments provided by their subjects.

Desmond King and David Rueda examine the importance of “cheap labor” of different sorts in advanced economies. They aim to identify the range of roles that such labor plays across cases and to draw conclusions about the policy consequences of those differences. In particular they argue that countries relying upon “standard” forms of cheap labor are less likely to develop extensive reliance on “non-standard” cheap labor. As will be clear from this one sentence summary of their conclusion, King and Rueda advance an argument that is both empirically rich and analytically refined.

This issue concludes with an exchange that actually started with an article published in the *American Political Science Review* (2005) by John Alford, Carolyn Funk, and John Hibbing. That original article, “Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted,” has elicited a vigorous response from Evan Charney. We begin our exchange here with his criticism of Alford, Funk and Hibbing. We then have two responses to Charney, first from Alford et al. and then from Rebecca Hannagan and Peter Hatemi. This second intervention was prompted by what, in my estimation, was an insightful and acute referee report that Professor Hannagan provided on the initial version of Charney’s manuscript. On the basis of that report I solicited her participation in the public exchange. We close the exchange, for now, with a brief reply from Professor Charney. I will not attempt to summarize the issues at stake in this dispute other than to say that questions about the possible biological bases of politics mark one frontier of work for the discipline. I will also say that I already have received yet another intervention in this debate that will appear in a future issue of the journal.

Editor's Note

This is the second time we have published a controversy that began elsewhere. The other was the exchange between Tali Mendelberg and Gregory Huber and John Lapinski in our last issue. In publishing these exchanges I hope to challenge a convention among editors. It seems to me that what ought to guide our publication decisions

is the importance of the ideas at stake and the sharpness of the ensuing debate, rather than the proprietary question of where the controversy originally began. We learn from argument and our journals should be in the business of encouraging it.

Notes from the Managing Editor

Forthcoming

The following articles and essays have been scheduled for publication in a forthcoming issue of *Perspectives on Politics*.

Nathan J. Brown. "Reason, Interest, Rationality, and Passion in Constitution Drafting."

Christian Collet. "Minority Candidates, Alternative Media, and Multiethnic America: Deracialization or Toggling?"

Neta Crawford. "Homo Politicus and Argument (Nearly) All the Way Down: Persuasion in Politics."

Clement Fatovic. "The Political Theology of Prerogative: The Jurisprudential Miracle in Liberal Constitutional Thought."

Jane Junn and Natalie Masuoka. "Asian American Identity: Racial Status and Political Context."

Diana Kapiszewski and Matthew Taylor. "Doing Courts Justice? Studying Judicial Politics in Latin America."

Robert C. Lieberman. "The 'Israel Lobby' and American Politics."

Catherine V. Scott. "Imagining Terror in an Era of Globalization: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Construction of Terrorism after 9/11."

Piki Ish-Shalom. "Theorizing Politics, Politicizing Theory, and the Responsibility That Runs in Between."

Sherrill Stroschein. "Making or Breaking Kosovo: The Case for Non-Territorial Autonomy."

Irene Wu. "Who Regulates Phones, Television, and the Internet? What Makes a Communications Regulator Independent and Why It Matters."