

The Center Page

The APSA Centennial Center for Political Science and Public Affairs is an invaluable resource to political and social scientists. Since its opening in September 2003, the Center has housed more than 100 scholars in Washington, DC, as well as supported a host of APSA members conducting field work in the United States and abroad. Full details on the Center and the Visiting Scholars Program are online at <http://www.apsanet.org/centennialcenter>.

To provide you with a glimpse of the variety of scholars and their projects, we include a brief description of three of our visiting scholars who will be in residence over the next three months.

DORIAN B. KANTOR

In mid-April, Dorian B. Kantor arrived for a five-month residential dissertation (a working title of “Politics as Law: Juridified Executive Unilateralism and the Conservative Legal Movement”) stay from the Freie Universität of Berlin’s Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. His stipend draws on the Centennial Center’s Presidency Research Group and supplements a larger German Research Foundation grant. Dorian is a true product of a multicultural background having been raised in Europe and North America, undertook undergraduate political science studies at Trinity College in Hartford, CT, master’s degrees from both Heidelberg and Budapest’s Eotvos Lorand University, and now the Freie Universität in Berlin. While Dorian has a solid background in constitutional law, his current project does not focus on legal reasoning. Rather, he is interested in the ways in which legal decision-making has come to dominate traditional executive politics and inter-branch interaction. To Richard Neustadt’s model of the presidency that was predicated on coalition building and persuasion while discounting the legal-constitutional dimensions of presidential power, Dorian’s research project adds the impact of the juridification of executive politics.

For most US scholars, the more European prevalent concept of juridification is a rather ambiguous concept with a variety of descriptive and normative applications. In Dorian’s context the focus is the changing nature of executive power from an intra-branch perspective and an examination of executive constitutionalism and the use of legal tools (signing statements, Office of Legal Counsel memos, and executive orders) to advance political aims. Through a number of several presidential administration case studies such as Watergate and post-9/11, Dorian analyzes such concepts as the Unitary Executive Theory as a potent legal theory that has essentially empowered lawyers as policy makers. He is examining the ways in which the scope condition of juridification facilitated the formation of an interest coalition between the post-Watergate resurgent presidency and the conservative legal movement. Building on what has heretofore been long-distance correspondence, Dorian plans to utilize a number of DC political scientists to facilitate semistructured interviews with members of the Carter and Bush administrations and the Federalist Society. Among the implications of his research is Why do we see a change in the nature of executive power after Watergate and why did it happen.

HELEN CHANG

Helen Chang, a department of political science doctoral student from City University of New York, is spending June through August at the Centennial Center on a Warren E. Miller Fellowship in Electoral Politics. Helen received her BA from Stanford and her MA from New York University (her thesis was on “Outcomes in Democratic Transitions: An Analysis with Game Theory and Theory of Moves”) and will be continuing her dissertation research on “Looking Beyond Electoral Institutions: Explaining Variations in Electoral Behavior and Outcomes.” A major focus of the dissertation addresses the extent to which our knowledge about institutional effect depends on formal, enforced rules, not informal, poorly enforced, and/or transitional contexts. According to her dissertation advisers, the research has the potential to make a major contribution to the institutional, electoral, and transitions literature as well sparking a more systematic analysis of how the expected effects of various electoral rules might vary between formal and informal, stable and transitional, and peaceful and violent contexts.

As Helen describes her project, comparative political science has generally acknowledged that electoral institutions make a difference and include the electoral formula, average district magnitude, and ballot structures as well as apportionment, fixed terms, and voter and candidate eligibility. While electoral politics literature describes regular relationships between electoral institutions and electoral behavior and outcomes, the focus has frequently been in established democracies. However, the electoral process in some transitioning and post-conflict democracies has shown considerable deviation from predicted behavior and outcomes. One hypothesis she expects to pursue at the Centennial Center is that differences in institutional strength and social-historical factors can explain the variance in electoral behavior and outcomes between established democracies and transitioning democracies. While in Washington, Helen will conduct preliminary interviews with elections experts. The interviews should help target specific case studies to test her hypothesis.

THOMAS HOLYOKE

Thomas Holyoke from California State University, Fresno, will spend a sabbatical month at the Centennial Center doing research for a book he has under contract titled *In the Pursuit of Interests*. A veteran of the Center in 2004, 2005 and 2006, his current work continues a long-standing focus on interest group politics, most recently documented in his 2011 Georgetown University Press book *Competitive Interests: Competition and Compromise in American Interest Group Politics*. As part of his current work, Tom studies such questions as: Has widespread use of the internet and social media changed the way lobbyists use their organization's members to lobby Congress? Does involvement of these members through the internet influence lobbying strategies, and does great member involvement constrain a lobbyist's freedom to make painful compromises on policy? Answering these questions is important for understanding how organizations provide representation to groups of citizens in the digital age. He already has survey data

on how groups use the internet, but wants to interview lobbyists and congressional staff in DC to learn more about how electronic participation influences advocacy.

During his month at the Center, Tom plans on using a rolling interview method to guide his conversations. Beginning with lobbyists he already knows from business associations and citizen's groups he will branch out to other subjects, including congressional staff, recommended by his initial interviewees with the hope of being able to conduct fifteen to twenty interviews during his month's stay. As he sees it, the best way to understand what all of the new survey research on internet lobbying means for interest group advocacy is to get first-hand accounts from those on both the delivering and receiving ends of it. How are lobbyists employing the internet to inform and motivate their members and how have they used it successfully in their advocacy? From the legislative viewpoint, do staff feel that the new technology has significantly increased the quantity of contacts as well as their quality? He hopes to find out. ■

The Centennial Center, located in the APSA headquarters near Dupont Circle, provides a great base of operations for scholars researching in the DC metro area. The Center offers visiting scholars furnished work space, telephone, fax, computers, Internet access, conference space, a small reference library, and access to George Washington University's Gelman Library. Visiting scholar stays range from a few days to 12 months. Space is limited to APSA members and is available for faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, and advanced graduate students from the United States and abroad. Scholars are expected to cover their own expenses and a modest facilities fee for the use of the Center. Prospective visiting scholars may apply at any time. APSA sponsors a number of funds to help finance research. Many of these funds can support your stay at the Centennial Center or elsewhere. Details are available at the APSA website www.apsanet.org/centennialcenter. Positions are awarded on a space-available basis.