
EDITORS' CORNER

A presidential election in the United States is normally a time of excitement among a large segment of the membership of our professional association. For those of us who study American politics, the presidential contest, for better or worse, is the focal point of much of our political and economic life. For those who live in or specialize in the politics of other nations, or study international relations, even in a globalized world, the occupant of the Oval Office continues to have outsized influence.

The 2016 presidential contest is, however, anything but normal. No fewer than 17 major candidates contested the GOP nomination, and the eventual nominee—billionaire real estate developer and reality television star Donald Trump—continues to challenge many of our preconceptions and beliefs about American elections. On the Democratic side, a Democratic Socialist, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, battled Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who would eventually become the first female nominee of a major American political party.

We watched the campaign kick off in Iowa, courtesy of Caroline Tolbert and the department of political science at the University of Iowa, and as of this writing, the two major party conventions have just ended and the presidential and vice-presidential teams have been set. This is shaping up to be one of the most unique, and potentially divisive, elections in generations.

At *PS: Political Science & Politics*, we've responded by assembling an impressive and diverse set of elections-related contributions. This special issue includes our traditional forecasting symposium edited by Dr. James E. Campbell plus 22 additional election articles within the politics, profession, and teaching sections.

We want to give a special thanks to our managing editor, Celina Szymanski, who

copy edited and processed the election articles in record time to meet our publication deadlines while providing authors time to address the constantly changing landscape of the 2016 election. We also want to thank the 73 authors who contributed their scholarship to this project and the more than 40 individuals who assisted us with the compressed review process.

The articles included in this issue range from David J. Anderson's reflections on the Iowa Caucus and Diana C. Mutz's analysis of the relationship between Harry Potter consumption and support for Donald Trump, to Cohen et al.'s evaluation of "the party decides" theory of political parties and the nomination process, to Herbert F. Weisberg's personal reflections on the collaboration that resulted in *The American Voter*.

We are also pleased to include in this issue of *PS* an exciting symposium examining the field of political science from the perspective of Europe. Guest edited by Stokemer, Rashkova, Moses, and Blair, this symposium provides *PS* readers with a European perspective on several critical issues facing political scientists on both sides of the Atlantic.

This is the first time that we are aware of that *PS* has been able to complete a full issue on a single topic. Our experience reflects many of the opportunities and challenges that our discipline and academia in general faces as the news cycle accelerates, academic research (and academics) are prominently featured in media coverage, and technological change continues unabated.

There are opportunities here, as in many areas, for political science to contribute to the public dialogue. Already, many scholars are examining the sources of public support for a very non-traditional GOP nominee, and what implications we may draw about the future of American politics. Is the United States experiencing a new phase of democratic populism, as it experienced

in the late 19th century? Perhaps America has instead been caught in the same tides of right-wing authoritarian politics that swept over many European polities over the past two decades. Alternatively, it's possible that the Trump candidacy is a *sui generis*, a consequence of confluence of forces—too many candidates, too little party unity, and a uniquely angry electorate—that's unlikely to reoccur.

We are sure that many in the discipline will help to understand and explain the outcome of this year's elections, and we are sure that their findings will appear in *PS*.

As the same time, the challenge we face as scholars, and as editors, is how to balance a focus on "the now" while maintaining adherence to scientific standards of evidence, argumentation, and peer-review. Already, political science research is appearing in blogs and is featured in news stories prior to peer review. Our own publication timeline at *PS* meant that articles on the November election, to appear in an October issue, had to be submitted in June (and written in May).

PS has always occupied a unique niche in political science, acting as a glue within the profession and a bridge outside the profession. We continue to have active discussions within our editorial team, and with the Association, about how we can remain relevant, interesting, and timely, while at the same time honoring our commitments to high quality editorial leadership.

We hope you enjoy our special issue, and look forward to hearing comments and criticism. Praise would be accepted as well! ■

—Phillip Ardoine
Chair and Professor,
Appalachian State University

—Paul Gronke
Professor, Reed College



MEMBER OF THE MONTH!

The American Political Science Association Member of the Month program recognizes and highlights member achievements and professional milestones.

It is a celebration and appreciation of the outstanding contributions our members make to the community through their scholarship and teaching, championship of the profession, and support of APSA and its programs.

The APSA Member of the Month program recognizes one member each month. Nominations for the award (including self-nominations) may be submitted by members and nonmembers of APSA using the form available here: www.apsanet.org/motm

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Individuals must be a current member of APSA (all member types are eligible).
2. Individuals must have been a member of APSA at least one year.
3. Individuals may only be eligible to receive recognition once per calendar year.

Completed nomination forms should be submitted online to membership@apsanet.org or in hard copy to: **APSA Membership, 1527 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.** Forms submitted after the 15th of each month will be considered for the following month.