

# Working Class Blues?

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## The Annual Presidential Address

We have the honor and privilege to publish this year's Presidential Address, "Crises, Race, Acknowledgment: The Centrality of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics to the Future of Political Science," by Paula D. McClain of Duke University. Professor McClain has had a distinguished career. Before her present position at Duke, where she serves as Dean of Social Sciences and the Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Social Sciences, she taught at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Arizona State University, and the University of Virginia. She has also served as the President of the Southern Political Science Association and as Vice President of the International Political Science Association.

Her research centers on the politics of race and urban politics. She is the award-winning author and editor of several books including "*Can We All Get Along?*" *Racial and Ethnic Minorities in American Politics* (seven editions between 1995 and 2017, co-authored with Jessica D. Johnson Carew and Joseph Stewart, Jr.), *Race, Place, and Risk: Black Homicide in Urban America* (co-authored with Harold M. Rose, 1990), and *Alienation and Resistance: The Political Behavior of Afro-Canadians* (1979). The first edition of "*Can We All Get Along?*" won the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Human Rights in North America Award for Outstanding Scholarship on the Subject of Intolerance. *Race, Place, and Risk* won the National Conference of Black Political Scientists' 1995 Best Book Award for a previously published book that has made a substantial and continuing contribution. She is also the author of fifty refereed articles and chapters. This will be her first in *Perspectives on Politics*.

Paula McClain has also been a major transformative force in the discipline. She has long been the Director of the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute. It has been instrumental in preparing undergraduates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups for the rigors and challenges of doctoral study in political science and in keeping the discipline focused on issues that ought to matter to all Americans. The list of alumni from the Institute is a remarkably distinguished group of scholars. The Ralph Bunche Summer Institute has thus been one of the major engines of the progress we have made in the discipline to this point. Her achievements, leadership,

and service have been recognized through her receipt of the Midwest Political Science Association's Women's Caucus Outstanding Professional Achievement Award (2017), Southern Political Science Association's Manning Dauer Award for Exceptional Service to the Discipline (2015), and the American Political Science Association's Frank J. Goodnow Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions to the development of the discipline (2007). She was elected as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2014.

In "Crises, Race, Acknowledgment: The Centrality of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics to the Future of Political Science," Professor McClain turns the tools that she has used to conduct research on Race, Ethnicity, and Politics (REP) throughout her career onto the discipline and the Association. She begins with a discussion of our current epidemiological crisis and how its burdens have been unevenly distributed across racial and ethnic hierarchies. She then turns to how past crises in American history have often fastened onto different racial and ethnic groups as scapegoats in order for people to make sense of them. Given this long national legacy, McClain then pivots to focus on the origins of our discipline and argues that from the very beginning it has seen the study of race as important, though not in ways we would find acceptable today. Here she focuses on the racial views of such foundational scholars as Woodrow Wilson and John Burgess and their exclusionary impact both politically and in the discipline. She shows how the intellectual origins of the discipline were embedded in efforts to justify the post-Reconstruction racial order. She closes the essay by showing that the racist views of scholars like Burgess have not disappeared from the discipline and how they still continue to resurface. While acknowledging the progress that REP has made, she argues that we need to stay focused on the inequalities within our discipline that also reflect those within our society.

## Special Section: Working Class Blues?

The class with radical chains did not quite live up to its billing (Marx 1994, 69). Despite not being a universal emancipatory agent, this does not mean that the working class has not played an important role in the progress

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of democracy and equality, historically and globally. For instance, a case can be made that the question of working-class incorporation is central to modern regime formation (Collier and Collier 1991). The early incorporation of the working class into the system of electoral contestation has been seen as one of the keys of early and successful democratization. In this sense, the United States was spared the more disjunctive road to democracy that plagued a number of European nations (Ahmed 2015). Where the working class was denied suffrage, labor and social democratic parties responded by being more disciplined, better organized, and more united (Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992). For this reason, capitalist development in such cases required overt political, rather than market, regulation of capital-labor relations. If the price of labor peace was redistribution, then democracy was feasible as social-democracy (Berman 2006). If coercion was used to control labor, fascist or bureaucratic-authoritarian dictatorship was the result (Luebbert 1991; O'Donnell 1973; Moore 1966).

As for the contemporary working class in Trump's America, it is often treated by contemporary authors as a critical component of the Republican base, having abandoned the redistributive trade union politics of the past in favor of traditional religion, low taxes, guns, anti-abortion and traditional family values (Frank 2005; Vance 2016; Hochschild 2016). However, this view of the American working class can verge on nostalgia for the days when it was largely white and male. For this group of authors, the turn away from the left is seen as a product of liberal arrogance, while others see it as the long-term product of modern globalized capitalism which has flattened organized labor and disembedded working class populations from the protections that the safety net provided in the past (Davies 1999). In this view, the dream of secure employment at wages that support a family has been replaced by intermittent periods of steady employment and precarity (Thelen 2019). Furthermore, today those who work for wages in the United States are far more diverse in terms of race and gender. Both these views of the working class are examined, then challenged or qualified by the articles in this issue's special section. Despite movement away from their traditional homes in the parties of the center-left, the big takeaway from these five articles is that, where workers are organized, they continue to fight for their collective welfare, and their political impact decidedly works for the interests of the less well-off.

In our first contribution to the section, "Financial Solidarity: the Future of Unions in the Post-*Janus* Era," Leslie K. Finger and Michael T. Hartney discuss the impact of *Janus v. AFSCME*, which imposed a "right to work" legal regime on the government workforce. While *Janus* was expected to further weaken unions by diminishing membership, they argue a cost-sharing that transfers resources from strong labor states to weaker ones has the

potential to blunt this. Using the National Education Association (NEA) as an example, they test whether such "financial solidarity" works to preserve organized labor and its influence.

In "*Paper Stones* Revisited: Class Voting, Unionization, and the Electoral Decline of the Mainstream Left," Jonas Pontusson and Line Rennwald return to the classic work by Przeworski and Sprague (1986). They trace the abandonment of the parties of the mainstream left by workers and union members in the period 2001–2015. The article shows that as the left tries to expand its reach into populations beyond its traditional base, it does so at the cost of losing its working-class support. Furthermore, the authors show that unionized workers who abandon the mainstream left are more prone to move to parties further to the left, rather than to the center right. Finally, they show that workers are more prone to move to the radical right than non-workers who support mainstream left parties, and that union membership has no effect on this defection.

Nicholas Carnes and Noam Lupu return to the questions about "The White Working Class and the 2016 Election." They challenge some widespread popular perceptions and place the results in a more evolutionary, historical perspective. Using surveys from the past to the present, they examine four common claims: "(1) that most Trump voters were white working-class Americans; (2) that most white working-class voters supported Trump; (3) that unusually large numbers of white working-class voters switched from Obama in 2012 to Trump in 2016; and (4) that white working-class voters were pivotal to Trump's victory in several swing states." They find that the available survey data only supports one of the four claims. Further they also show that white working-class Americans have been moving to the Republican Party over time and that Trump's support is part of this long-term trend, not a disjunctive change.

In "Schooled by Strikes? The Effects of Large-Scale Labor Unrest on Mass Attitudes towards the Labor Movement," Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Suresh Naidu, and Adam Reich explore the political impact of strike activity. They examine how job actions by one of the best organized sectors in the U.S.—teachers—affect mass attitudes towards organized labor and strikes. Here they consider the large-scale job actions by teachers in 2018. Conducting an original survey in the aftermath of the strike wave, they found that the parents of children who experienced strikes firsthand became more interested in the labor movement and increased support for the teachers.

The last piece in the special section, "Reducing Unequal Representation: The Impact of Labor Unions on Legislative Responsiveness in the U.S. Congress," by Daniel Stegmüller and Michael Becher, looks at the political impact of unions on inequality through representation. Research on inequality has argued that the unequal responsiveness of legislators in favor of the well-to-do has contributed to growing inequality. Bringing together data on constituency

preferences, Congressional roll-call votes, and union density, the authors find that districts with higher union membership substantially increase Congressional responsiveness to the concerns of the poor, equalizing responsiveness and thus reducing favoritism towards the affluent.

Finally, readers interested in more on this topic from the current issue of the journal should turn to the Book Review Section. The “Critical Dialogues” feature an exchange between Benjamin Page and Martin Gilens (authors of *Democracy in America? What has Gone Wrong and What We Can Do About It*) and Erik Engstrom and Robert Huckfeldt (authors of *Race, Class, and Social Welfare: American Populism Since the New Deal*). Their discussion productively considers many of the themes taken up in the special section.

### Additional Articles

In “The Kazanistan Papers: Reading the Muslim Question in the John Rawls Archives,” Murad Idris considers Rawls’s later writings on international politics through the conceptual lens of a fictional Muslim state—“Kazanistan”—of Rawls’s own invention. Idris’s article, based on painstaking archival research, carefully maps and interprets Rawls’s part in constructing what recent scholarship has called the “Muslim Question.” This is the alleged problem of whether Muslims can and will become sufficiently assimilated to liberal principles in Europe and America such that they can be tolerated. Idris historicizes and traces the development and transformation of Rawls’s engagement with Islam through Kazanistan to argue that his work demonstrates a characteristic, and problematic, logic in liberal theory: Its tendency to deflect discussion of issues such as inclusion, exclusion, and toleration away from their historical roots in empire and imperialism, and instead to frame them as abstract theoretical questions about hypothetical societies. The result, he suggests, is both to create the “Muslim Question” while also fundamentally misperceiving it.

In “Enforcers beyond Borders: Transnational NGOs and the Enforcement of International Law,” Mette Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Jason Sharman explore both how NGOs monitor compliance by other international actors, as well as their role in direct enforcement through court actions. This has become an important aspect of enforcement due to the increased role of law in the international order and the decreased capacity of states to ensure compliance. The theory is richly illustrated with case studies from the areas of environmental conservation and the fight against corruption.

### Reflections

This issue includes two Reflections. In “Testing Theories about Advocacy and Public Policy,” Paul Burstein examines the vast literature on how organized interests and contentious political actors affect public policy. In an analysis of the scholarship in both political science and sociology since 2000, he identifies nineteen distinct theories that have been subjected to testing. There are different

sets of theories for different types of organizations which often do not talk to each other or justify why their scope is limited only to interest groups, lobbying, social movements, and the like. The piece closes by proposing ways to reduce the number of extant theories and broaden their scope to improve future theory-testing.

Rachael Sarah McLellan and Ruth Carlitz explore the difficulty in using data from dictatorships in “Open Data from Authoritarian Regimes: New Opportunities, New Challenges.” In comparison to the past, when many dictatorships hid data, there are new international incentives for them to make data public. The authors argue, though, that using data produced by authoritarian states poses new challenges for researchers. They note how missing, distorted, or selectively released data can lead to false inferences and demonstrate how this can happen using data from Tanzania. They close with a discussion of methods to identify manipulated data and a set of suggestions to minimize the risks of using cooked data that yields misleading results.

### “The Qualitative Transparency Deliberations: Final Reports”

*Perspectives* worked with the co-chairs of the Qualitative Transparency Deliberations, Alan M. Jacobs and Tim Büthe, to prepare a summary of its process and the main findings of this critical discussion of best research practices and ethics for qualitative researchers. The initiative came in response to the Data Access and Research Transparency Initiative and the Joint Statement by Political Science Journal Editors (DA-RT 2015). It was organized under the Qualitative and Multi-Methods Research section of the Association after a substantial number of political scientists called for a delay in its implementation to consider what its implications would be for a range of qualitative, interpretative, and normative forms of inquiry.<sup>1</sup>

While the initiative quickly garnered the support of the Association’s leadership for implementing the DA-RT standards in the *American Political Science Review* and from the editors of twenty-seven journals who signed the Joint Statement, many journals were resistant to adopting its recommendations whole hog.<sup>2</sup> *Perspectives* was among the journals that did not sign on, and our predecessor, Jeffrey Isaac, was an outspoken critic of the initiative (Isaac 2015). The present editors, one of whom has done fieldwork on political opposition under authoritarian conditions and one of whom is a political theorist, also have our doubts about the universality of standards for transparency across different modes of research.

Thus, we continue to exercise skepticism, though we have introduced some changes to the journal. For the quantitative parts of the discipline that have well-founded data transparency standards, we follow those standards and require the submission of data and code so others can replicate their findings. We have made this mandatory and created our own Harvard Dataverse page to house the files

(<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/perspectives>). We have also made it possible, through the good graces of Cambridge University Press, for those who have published with us before to add links to their replication files on the Cambridge Core webpage associated with their article.

Simultaneously, we maintain the journal's preexisting, somewhat different, policy regarding qualitative data, which states that

Authors of works relying upon qualitative data are encouraged (but not required) to submit comparable materials that would facilitate replication where feasible, and that would allow readers to clearly evaluate the evidentiary basis of arguments for interpretive research in which "replication" is not an appropriate standard. In many cases article endnotes properly citing all sources and references are sufficient.<sup>3</sup>

We have taken advantage of Cambridge University Press's generous policy of allocating space for the posting of appendices on Cambridge Core, and many qualitative authors have used this opportunity to showcase how they make their inferences in new and original ways.

Over the three years that we have edited the journal, we have tried to open its pages to a range of diverse perspectives on this thorny issue. Thus, working closely with QTD to give their landmark proceedings greater visibility was a natural for us. The overview by Jacobs and Büthe is joined by summaries of findings of each of its many working groups. Its collective authorship includes: Ana Arjona, Leonardo Arriola, Eva Bellin, Andrew Bennett, Lisa Björkman, Erik Bleich, Zachary Elkins, Tasha Fairfield, Nikhar Gaikwad, Sheena Chestnut Greitens, Mary Hawkesworth, Veronica Herrera, Yoshiko Herrera, Kimberley S. Johnson, Ekrem Karakoç, Kendra Koivu, Marcus Kreuzer, Milli Lake, Timothy Luke, Lauren MacLean, Samantha Majic, Rahsaan Maxwell, Zachariah Mampilly, Robert Mickey, Kimberly J. Morgan, Sarah E. Parkinson, Craig Parsons, Wendy Pearlman, Mark Pollack, Elliot Posner, Rachel Beatty Riedl, Edward Schatz, Carsten Q. Schneider, Jillian Schwedler, Anastasia Shesterinina, Erica Simmons, Diane Singerman, Hillel David Soifer, Nicholas Rush Smith, Scott Spitzer, Jonas Tallberg, Susan Thomson, Antonio Y. Vázquez-Arroyo, Barbara Vis, Lisa Wedeen, Juliet Williams, Elisabeth Jean Wood, and Deborah J. Yashar. These authors represent a broad cross-section of the discipline, including a large number of highly distinguished practitioners, as well as a host of younger scholars of great promise. The discipline owes them a debt of gratitude. The full reports of each subgroup are provided as appendices on the piece's Cambridge Core webpage and we will host a broad range of materials from the deliberation process on our Dataverse page to expedite investigation and research on the topic. One of our colleagues who participated in QTD, Kendra Koivu, tragically passed away, far too young, just over a year ago.<sup>4</sup> We mourn her passing and dedicate this entire issue to her memory.

## Notes

- 1 A petition from 1,173 political scientists including ten former presidents of APSA was sent to the journal editors who signed the JETS statement. In the interest of full disclosure Michael Bernhard was a signatory of the petition. For the full text see <https://dialogueondart.org/petition/>.
- 2 For the statement from President Jennifer Hochschild, President-Elect David Lake, and Immediate Past President Rodney Hero, see <https://politicalsciencenow.com/data-access-and-research-transparency-initiative-da-rt/>.
- 3 See <https://dialogueondartdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/public-statement-on-evidentiary-support-vf.pdf>.
- 4 See <https://polisci.unm.edu/news-events/news/kendra-l.-koivu.html>.

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# Statement of Mission and Procedures

*Perspectives on Politics* seeks to provide a space for broad and synthetic discussion within the political science profession and between the profession and the broader scholarly and reading publics. Such discussion necessarily draws on and contributes to the scholarship published in the more specialized journals that dominate our discipline. At the same time, *Perspectives* seeks to promote a complementary form of broad public discussion and synergistic understanding within the profession that is essential to advancing scholarship and promoting academic community.

*Perspectives* seeks to nurture a **political science public sphere**, publicizing important scholarly topics, ideas, and innovations, linking scholarly authors and readers, and promoting broad reflexive discussion among political scientists about the work that we do and why this work matters.

*Perspectives* publishes work in a number of formats that mirror the ways that political scientists actually write:

**Research articles:** As a top-tier journal of political science, *Perspectives* accepts scholarly research article submissions and publishes the very best submissions that make it through our double-blind system of peer review and revision. The only thing that differentiates *Perspectives* research articles from other peer-reviewed articles at top journals is that we focus our attention only on work that in some way bridges subfield and methodological divides, and tries to address a broad readership of political scientists about matters of consequence. This typically means that the excellent articles we publish have been extensively revised in sustained dialogue with the editors to address

not simply questions of scholarship but questions of intellectual breadth and readability.

“Reflections” are more reflexive, provocative, or programmatic essays that address important political science questions in interesting ways but are not necessarily as systematic and focused as research articles. These essays often originate as research article submissions, though sometimes they derive from proposals developed in consultation with the editor in chief. Unlike research articles, these essays are not evaluated according to a strict, double-blind peer review process. But they are typically vetted informally with editorial board members or other colleagues, and they are always subjected to critical assessment and careful line-editing by the editor and editorial staff.

Scholarly symposia, critical book dialogues, book review essays, and conventional book reviews are developed and commissioned by the Associate and Book Review Editor, based on authorial queries and ideas, editorial board suggestions, and staff conversations.

*Everything* published in *Perspectives* is carefully vetted and edited. Given our distinctive mission, we work hard to use our range of formats to organize interesting conversations about important issues and events, and to call attention to certain broad themes beyond our profession’s normal subfield categories.

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