

Political Science **NEWS**

Summer 2008, Number 2



Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the second issue of the Emory political science newsletter. This could hardly be a more interesting year for politics, with the historic 2008 presidential election approaching; the war in Iraq continuing to grind on; leadership transitions in Russia, Cuba, and elsewhere; the politically charged summer Olympics in Beijing; and the emergence of a consensus in American politics on the need for new directions to confront the linked problems of rising gas prices, dependence on foreign oil, and climate change.



Chair Dan Reiter

This issue of the newsletter tracks a few contemporary issues in politics and developments in the political science department. Alan Abramowitz, an expert in predicting the outcomes of presidential elections, explains who will win and why in November. Jessica Harrell, a graduate student, describes her dissertation work on how women campaign for political office, providing some special insight into Hillary Clinton's 2008 campaign. We also profile one of our star undergraduates and one of our most successful PhDs. And, as always, we are pleased to report alumni news and department news. Last, we are very saddened to report the passing one of our most beloved faculty, Eleanor Main, who has been with us since 1969.

We are always eager to hear from you. If you have your own alumni news you wish to share, please email us at www.polisci@emory.edu. If you are interested in making a tax-deductible donation to the Department of Political Science, you can do so at www.polisci.emory.edu/Generalinfo/donate.htm.

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Best,

Dan Reiter
Chair, Department of Political Science

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EMORY



Can McCain Overcome the Triple Whammy?

Electoral Barometer Shows Huge Democratic Advantage

By Alan I. Abramowitz

Alben W. Barkley Professor of Political Science
Emory University

With the long and contentious Democratic nomination race finally over, the attention of the media and the public is beginning to shift to the general election. In November, voters will face a choice between two rather atypical presidential candidates. The Republican Party, which has seen its popularity and electoral fortunes plummet since 2004, will pin its hopes on John McCain—an individual who has frequently clashed with his own party's leadership. And McCain's Democratic opponent will be Barack Obama, the first African American ever to receive a major party presidential nomination.

The unusual characteristics of the two major party candidates have led to considerable uncertainty among political observers about the outlook for the November election. While President Bush's low approval ratings and overwhelmingly negative perceptions of the economy suggest a very difficult political climate for Republicans, John McCain's reputation as a maverick and Barack Obama's problems uniting Democratic voters behind his candidacy have led some analysts to suggest that a Democratic victory in November is far from certain.

Polling data seem to support the conclusion that despite the unpopularity of his party, John McCain has a realistic chance of keeping the White House in Republican hands. McCain has been running neck-and-neck with Obama in some recent national polls. In the May 21 Gallup tracking poll, for example, Obama held a narrow 47 to 44 percent lead over McCain.

However, such early horserace polls are not very accurate predictors of the actual election results. Polls in the spring of 1988 showed Michael Dukakis with a comfortable lead over George H. W. Bush. Polls in June of 1992 showed Bill Clinton running third behind both Bush and H. Ross Perot. So recent polls showing a close race between McCain and Obama may not tell us much about what to expect in November.



Instead of using early horserace polls, political scientists generally

rely on measures of the national political climate to make their forecasts.

Instead of using early horserace polls, political scientists generally rely on measures of the national political climate to make their forecasts. That is because the national political climate can be measured long before the election, and it has been found to exert a powerful influence on the eventual results.

Three indicators of the national political climate have accurately predicted the outcomes of presidential elections since the end of World War II: the incumbent president's approval rating at mid-year, the growth rate of the economy during the second quarter of the election year, and the length of time the president's party has held the White House. The higher the president's approval rating and the stronger the growth rate of the economy, the more likely it is that the president's party will be victorious. However, if the president's party has controlled the White House for two terms or longer it is less likely to be successful. Time-for-change sentiment seems to increase after eight years regardless of the president's popularity or the state of the economy.

These three factors can be combined to produce an Electoral Barometer score

that measures the overall national political climate. The formula for computing this score is simply the president's net approval rating (approval minus disapproval) in the Gallup Poll plus five times the annual growth rate of real GDP minus twenty-five if the president's party has held the White House for two terms or longer.

Electoral Barometer readings for the fifteen presidential elections since the end of World War II have ranged from -66 in 1980 to +82 in 1964. A positive reading generally predicts victory for the incumbent party, while a negative reading generally predicts defeat. The Electoral Barometer has predicted the winner of the popular vote in fourteen of the fifteen presidential elections since World War II.

The information required to calculate the final Electoral Barometer score for 2008 will not be available until August. However, it appears very likely that the Republican Party is dealing with the dreaded "triple whammy" in 2008: an unpopular president, a weak economy, and a second-term election. Based on President Bush's net approval rating in the May Gallup Poll (-39), the annual growth rate of the economy during the first quarter of 2008 (+0.6 percent), and the fact that the Republican Party has controlled the White House for the past eight years, the current Electoral Barometer reading is a dismal -63. The only election since World War II with a score in this range was 1980. In that election Jimmy Carter suffered the worst defeat for an incumbent president since Herbert Hoover in 1932.

The current national political climate is one of the worst for the party in power since the end of World War II. No candidate running in such an unfavorable political environment has ever been successful. If John McCain manages to overcome the triple whammy of an unpopular president, a weak economy, and a second term election, it will be an upset of unprecedented magnitude. **PS**

Graduate Student Spotlight: Do Women Campaign Differently?

Jessica Harrell is an advanced doctoral student in political science. She plans to defend her dissertation on the topic of gender and campaign strategy in 2009.

The 2008 election will be a historic event, in part because for the first time in American history, a woman was a competitive contender to win a major party's nomination for president. Although Hillary Clinton is not the first woman to run for president, she is by far the most viable female candidate to contest a presidential primary. Senator Clinton's candidacy has sparked interest in the ways that gender influences campaigns. Journalists and other political pundits frequently speculate on how Clinton's gender might have affected her chances of winning both the Democratic primary and the general election. Events such as Clinton's "emotional moment" while speaking to a group of New Hampshire voters, hecklers displaying an "iron my shirt" sign at a Clinton rally, and Clinton's treatment in the early Democratic primaries have all been scrutinized in editorials, blogs, and Sunday morning news programs as evidence of sexism. On the other hand, Clinton's support among women voters is characterized as an advantage conferred by her gender. But beyond this attention on the direct, overt effects of gender on female candidates' electoral fortunes, political scientists have focused on the more subtle effects of gender.

Numerous studies confirm that voters evaluate female candidates differently than their male counterparts. Women are viewed as better able to handle social welfare issues such as health care, education, welfare, and social security. Men, on the other hand, are viewed as better able to handle issues related to the economy and foreign policy. Campaign consultants and pundits frequently disagree about how candidates, particularly women, should respond to these perceptions. Some argue that women should try to counter gender stereotypes by emphasizing "male" issues like the war on terrorism and economic policies. Others argue that women should play up their strengths on social welfare



Jessica Harrell

issues and downplay other issues. It is still not clear though how gender stereotypes actually influence candidate's behavior on the campaign trail. The evidence is mixed as to whether stereotypes lead women and men to emphasize different issues in their campaigns.

My dissertation research attempts to fill this gap by investigating how these stereotypes shape gender differences in congressional campaign strategies. Specifically, when and why might women and men emphasize different issues? And why

of issues, influences the extent to which women and men campaign differently. In fact, all of these factors actually limit the likelihood of gender differences in issue emphasis. For example, given the importance of the Iraq war in the 2006 mid-term elections, it would have been difficult for any candidate, male or female, to avoid discussing Iraq in his or her campaign.

Although my research, like most of the work on gender politics, focuses on congressional elections, Senator Clinton's presidential campaign provides a unique opportunity to explore gender stereotypes and candidate behavior in a different electoral context. Gender differences in issue emphasis may be even more infrequent in presidential contests—it is hard to imagine a potential commander-in-chief

My theory of candidate behavior demonstrates that a variety of factors beyond gender, including candidates' strengths and weaknesses, their opponents' strengths and weaknesses, and the salience of issues, influences the extent to which women and men campaign differently.

might some candidates be more likely than others to promote "women's issues" in their campaigns, regardless of their gender and/or party? My research aims to predict and explain why, for example, some Democratic women avoid talking about health care issues while some Republican men emphasize health care heavily, even though their behavior contradicts both gender and party stereotypes.

I argue that while gender stereotypes may play a significant role in the strategic campaign calculations of both women and men, these stereotypes constitute one of many factors that candidates must take into account when formulating a campaign strategy. My theory of candidate behavior demonstrates that a variety of factors beyond gender, including candidates' strengths and weaknesses, their opponents' strengths and weaknesses, and the salience

ignoring foreign policy issues in her campaign, regardless of gender stereotypes. Of course, given the lack of female presidential candidates, it is more difficult to draw conclusions about gendered behavior in presidential campaigns. However, Hillary Clinton's 2008 campaign will play, undoubtedly, a key role in future investigations of gendered behavior on the presidential campaign trail. [PS](#)

Political Science News is a publication of the Department of Political Science. For more information, please call 404.727.6572 or email polisci@emory.edu.

Managing Editor Dan Reiter
Graphic Designer Michael Hooten

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Eleanor Main: A Life of Influence and Compassion

Eleanor Main, a leading member of the Emory community for nearly forty years, died on February 8, 2008. Services were held at Emory's Cannon Chapel.

A partisan Queens, New York, native and Hunter College graduate, Main earned a PhD in political science at the University of North Carolina. She joined the Emory Department of Political Science as a professor in 1969 and would later serve as chair. That position was the beginning of her years of service to Emory University, culminating in her directorship of the Emory Division of Educational Studies.

Her contributions to the Department of Political Science and to the entire University community were many and varied. She established the first internship program in the department and was instrumental in creating the Georgia Legislative Internship Program, which she headed for thirteen years. The political science BA/MA program was her conception, a model later adopted by other departments. She helped create the University-wide, nationally recognized Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity (TATTO) program, to train graduate students as teachers.

Main, a woman of much skill and energy, is fondly remembered by her peers. Professor Harvey Klehr, a long time colleague and friend, spoke of her warmly at



Eleanor Main

the Cannon Chapel service: "All of us who benefit from our association with Emory owe her a gigantic debt of gratitude for her unstinting tough love for the school." Professor Klehr also noted that at the heart of all the positions she held at Emory was a love for the political science department: "She was justifiably proud of the role she had played in building political science

and imbuing the department with a sense of political and disciplinary pluralism."

She took her expertise beyond Emory and served many roles in her adopted state. Three governors of Georgia appointed her to various task forces and advisory committees, notably the Governor's Committee on Women in Politics in 1975, the task force on Merit Pay for Teachers and, in 1992, the Department of Juvenile Justice Board.

Remembered for her academic and governmental success, Main inspired also a fierce sense of loyalty in her friends. She was loyal to her beloved University of North Carolina Tar Heels basketball teams and to colleagues of every discipline. Professor Thomas Walker summed up the feelings of many in his comments to the *Emory Report* website on February 18, 2008, "I have never known a more loyal, steadfast, and caring friend."

The University has established an Eleanor Main memorial fund to be used to support Challenges and Champions, a program that offers academic and athletic summer programming for middle school students, and graduate education at Emory. Individuals interested in contributing to the Eleanor Main fund should contact Joshua Newton in the Development and Alumni Relations Office (jnewto@emory.edu). ^{PS}

Undergraduate Interview: Meg McDermott 08C

Meg McDermott 08C, a political science major who graduated this past spring, typifies the curious, problem-solving, multidimensional individual who attends Emory and is drawn to the Department of Political Science. While attending high school in Texas, McDermott recognized that Emory offered wonderful opportunities for her to pursue her interests in international affairs. She had been interested in international affairs ever since she lived in the Middle East when she was young. When she arrived at Emory, she was at first

undecided whether to take a cultural or political approach to studying the world. After enrolling in Introduction to International Politics, however, McDermott became drawn to the political side, and she decided to major in political science.

From her first semester at Emory, McDermott's interests in international affairs focused on Latin America. Minor-ing in Spanish, she traveled to Argentina and Peru in the summer of 2006 as part of an Emory study abroad program. While there, she received a special service learning grant, enabling her to teach English to

South Americans. The summer program's emphasis on cultural issues dovetailed with the political emphasis in her political science classes as well as the focus on contemporary political issues she took as part of her job at the Americas program at The Carter Center. She came to understand that she was best served by embracing both a political and cultural perspective to understanding the region, and she now sees great value in the well-rounded approach to studying Latin America she pursued at Emory. "My interest in Latin American cul-

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Meg McDermott 08C

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ture, language, and politics has allowed me to explore many opportunities and experiences,” she explains. “It is difficult to address political issues without having some grasp of the cultural ones, and vice versa.”

McDermott excelled in her coursework and was invited to participate in the political science department’s Honors Program in her senior year. She wanted to design her own project, building on her Carter Center work on electoral accountability in Latin America. She conducted a comparative study of “Access To Information” legislation in Mexico, Argentina, and Nicaragua. By examining the legislative and executive

branches in each of these countries, she was able to describe the conditions under which these governments would be more or less likely to embrace transparency.

McDermott’s interests go beyond politics and international affairs. She recognizes the importance of “maintaining balance between right- and left-brain activities,” and has danced for four years with the Emory Dance Company. “It’s quite different from being in the political science classroom,” she notes, “and especially this past year, it’s been a form of relaxation.”

While finishing her honors thesis, she received Emory’s prestigious Bobby Jones Scholarship. This award supports the recipient’s pursuit of graduate study at St. Andrew’s University in Scotland, where

McDermott will study international relations this fall. She hopes to continue pursuing her interests in government transparency and fair elections, before eventually launching a career in the field. In taking this path, she represents the political science department’s greatest ambitions for its undergraduates, that they should address important topics through rigorous scholarship and then set off to use their knowledge to make the world a better place. Looking back at her years at Emory, she says, “I feel very honored that I’ve been able to take a relevant policy issue and examine it through an academic lens, especially with such supportive and intelligent people on both ends at Emory and at The Carter Center.” **PS**

Department News

Robert Bartlett received the Arthur Blank/National Endowment for the Humanities Distinguished Teaching Professorship.

Clifford Carrubba and **Jeffrey Staton** received a National Science Foundation grant to study the institutional determinants of judicial independence.

Nicole Baerg just finished her first year as a doctoral student and served as a summer intern in summer 2008 at the Atlanta Federal Reserve with Stephen Kay.

“Journals in the Discipline: A Report on a New Survey of American Political Scientists,” written by James C. Garand and **Michael W. Giles**, was ranked as the second-most-downloaded article of *PS* by the American Political Science Association and Cambridge University Press.

Eleanor Main passed away in February 2008. She was a member of the political science faculty, and chair of the educational studies department. She arrived at Emory in 1969 as an assistant professor of political science. During the past forty years, she amassed a remarkable record of service to the University and community, serving in a number of important administrative roles in Emory College and the Graduate School. She served on Governor Zell Miller’s Committee on Governmental Effectiveness and the Economy in 1991. The following year, Governor Miller appointed her to serve on a committee studying funding for K–12 education in Georgia. In 2003, she received Emory’s Thomas Jefferson Award for University Distinguished Service and Leadership.

Megan McDermott 08C won a Robert T. Jones Jr. scholarship to study international relations at St. Andrew’s University, Scotland.

Rachel Zerkowitz 08C won the Lucius Lamar McMullen Award, given to a graduating senior who exhibits “outstanding citizenship, exceptional leadership, and potential for service to his or her



community, the nation, and the world.” The donor’s intention is to allow a student to do something he or she wouldn’t otherwise be able to do with the accompanying cash prize of \$25,000.

Zaid Ahmed 08C won the Marion Luther Brittain Award, presented each year at commencement to a graduate who demonstrates exemplary service to both the University and the greater community without expectation of recognition.

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Department News

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Benjamin Cook 08C and **Romi Savova 08C** jointly won the Levitas Award given by the Department of Political Science to the most outstanding graduating seniors majoring in political science or international studies. **Elliot Levitas 52C**, an Emory Rhodes scholar and current partner in Kilpatrick Stockton LLP, was on hand to give the award.

Randall Strahan was promoted to full professor in the department.

The department welcomes two new assistant professors in fall 2008, **Justin Esarey**, who just completed a PhD at Florida State University, and **Tom Clark**, who just completed a PhD at Princeton University.

Patricia Hamilton and **Dominique Tremblay** joined the department as undergraduate coordinator and program administrative assistant, respectively.

Bethany Blackstone will be serving as an American Political Science Association congressional fellow for the 2008–2009 academic year; she was also awarded a National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant through the Law and Social Sciences Program to hire research assistants in summer 2008 to collect data for her dissertation project.

Beth Reingold received a \$107,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for a collaborative project, Representation and the Intersections of Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the U.S.

Robert Bartlett received an \$18,000 grant from the Earhart Foundation in support of work on his edition of the Nicomachean Ethics.

Alumni Spotlight: Ashley Leeds 08G

Ashley Leeds 08G is one of the graduate program's greatest success stories. She flew through the department's PhD program with great energy, intelligence, and curiosity. While completing her dissertation in 1998, she landed a tenure track job at Florida State University. She now teaches at Rice University, where as an award-winning teacher she is an Albert Thomas Associate Professor. Rice understands Leeds's great value, as she is associate chair of the political science department.

Her swift rise up the academic ranks has been driven by a very strong record of scholarly accomplishments. Leeds's dissertation explored perhaps the most prominent question in all of international relations: Without a world government to enforce international agreements, why do states cooperate with each other? The dissertation developed and analyzed the central idea that democracies are especially likely to work together.

From there, Leeds expanded her research theme outward. She built a major new data base on all international alliances between states during the last two centuries and then used these data to explore an array of different ideas about cooperation, such as when do states form alliances, when do states comply with their alliance commitments, and when do states end their alliance commitments. Her historical research has generated a




Working directly with faculty on research projects and coteaching classes really prepared me to hit the ground running when I accepted a faculty position. I'm so glad that I chose a small graduate program that nurtures graduate students.

series of important findings, perhaps most notably that states abide by their international commitments far more frequently than had been previously thought. She has received a string of major research grants and published a dozen scholarly articles, many in leading journals in the field. She is also very active in the profession, serving as associate editor for the leading international relations journal *International Studies Quarterly*, on the editorial board of an international relations series for Lexington Books, and on several committees for professional associations. She also gives back to her local community in Houston, having been active in the local Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization and having served on the academic committee of the Houston Holocaust Museum.

This year, Leeds received her most prestigious academic recognition to date. She was the 2008 recipient of the Karl Deutsch Award, given by the International Studies Association “annually to a scholar

in international relations under age forty, or within ten years of defending his or her dissertation, who is judged to have made, through a body of publications, the most significant contribution to the study of International Relations and Peace Research.” This is the most prestigious recognition a young international relations scholar can receive. Since the award's inception in 1985, Leeds is only the second woman to receive this award.

Leeds greatly values her Emory education. “The training I received at Emory” was outstanding, she recalled, “but probably even more important for me was the individual attention I received from my professors. Working directly with faculty on research projects and coteaching classes really prepared me to hit the ground running when I accepted a faculty position. I'm so glad that I chose a small graduate program that nurtures graduate students.” 

Alumni News

1950s

Jimmy Booth 59C is the owner of Jimmy Booth PR in Dahlonega, Georgia.

1970s

Charles Stewart III 79C is the head of the Department of Political Science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor. He received a PhD in 1985 from Stanford and was a national fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University.

S. Kerry Tassopoulos 79C is vice president of government relations and compliance at Mary Kay in Dallas.

1980s

Carole Duncanson 82C is president of CLD and Associates, a governmental consulting and lobbying firm, dealing with the Florida Legislature and Executive Branch.

Judson Hill 82C is a Georgia State Senator who was elected in East Cobb County in 2004.

Belinda Hoffman 82C earned a law degree from Florida State University Law School and serves as deputy insurance commissioner for the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation.

Steven B. Horowitz 83C is the founding partner in the law firm Roth Horowitz and was named one of the Top 100 Labor Attorneys by the Labor Relations Institute.

Melanie A. Chastain 84C is the assistant dean for academic administration in the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory.

Jonathan Komp 88C serves on the Emory Alumni Board Marketing Committee.

1990s

Jay Carriere 90C is a manager of federal regulatory affairs for the MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company in Washington, D.C.

Keiffer Mitchell 90C is a Baltimore City Council member.

Stacie R. Hankins 92C has been a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. State Department since 2002 and is currently working as special assistant to the U.S. ambassador in Rome.

Tash Elwyn 93C is the regional director/senior vice president at Raymond James and Associates.

Ben Rabinowitz 93C is a regional sales manager at Campbell and Company in Maryland.

Andreas Sobisch 93G is the director of the Center for Global Education at John Carroll University.

April Rinne 96C is the director of Unitus, a global microfinance accelerator whose mission is to expand capital markets to reduce global poverty.

Ashley Leeds 98G received the 2008 Deutsch Award. The Deutsch Award is presented annually by the International Studies Association to "a scholar under age forty, or within ten years of defending his or her dissertation, who is judged to have made, through a body of publications, the most significant contribution to the study of International Relations and Peace Research."

Gregory Zale 99C received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Germany, had a summer internship with Puma in Austria, and graduated with an MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management in May.

2000s

Sarah (Knisely) Handy 01C is an appropriation specialist for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Robert Friedman 02C is in the government graduate program at Johns Hopkins University and concurrently in his last year at Georgetown University School of Law.

Carol Danko 02C is a legislative aide and press assistant for Congressman Peter King (R-NY).

Patrick Madden 02C is currently working as a reporter at WAMU 88.5 FM, the NPR station in Washington, D.C., and has worked for *Hardball with Chris Matthews* and C-SPAN.

Brianne Gorod 02C was recently selected to serve as a clerk for Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer.

Lauren (Giles) Wishnie 03C spent two years in Panama working on an environmental services project sponsored by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and Yale University. She then attended New York University (NYU) School of Law,

graduating in May 2008. She served as the editor-in-chief of the *Environmental Law Journal* at NYU. She has accepted a position at Davis, Wright, and Tremaine in Seattle, Washington.

Daniel Freifeld 03C graduated in May 2008 from NYU School of Law where he served as staff editor on the *Journal of International Law and Politics*.

Susan Allen 04G will be starting as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Mississippi in the fall.

Zaryab Iqbal 04G recently began an appointment as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science of Pennsylvania State University.

Jonathan Levy 04C is policy aide to Congressman Rahm Emanuel (D-IL).

Andel Koester 04C is a strategic communications consultant specializing in public relations and public affairs at Shepardson, Stern, and Kaminsky.

Asanka Pathiraja 04C received an MA at the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2006. She is currently working for an economic consulting firm specializing in the commodities sector.

Jason Scoggins 04C graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School in 2007 and will be clerking for the Honorable Diarmuid O'Scannlain of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in 2008.

Joshua Press 04C graduated in May from Northwestern University School of Law, where he served on the *Law Review*. He has accepted a clerkship with an appellate court judge sitting in Alaska.

Eric Twillman Brodie 06C has been appointed campaign manager for Paula Russell, candidate for State Attorney of Palm Beach, Florida.

Jane Winzer 06G will be starting a position as a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks in the fall.

Scott Wolford 08G will be starting as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Colorado at Boulder in the fall.