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Newsletter of the Urban Politics Section

URBAN NEWS

American Political Science Association

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THE 2008 URBAN POLITICS SECTION OFFICERS

President, 2008-2009: Susan E. Clarke, University
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President-Elect, 2009-2010: Karen Mossberger,
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Executive Council, 2007 - 2009:

Georgia Persons, Georgia Tech University
James Lance Taylor, University of Southern Florida
Joel Rast, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
Mitchell Rice, Texas A & M University
Paul Kantor, Fordham University
Peter Burns, Dartmouth College
Richard Stren, University of Toronto, ex officio
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Martin Horak, University of Western Ontario
Jessica Trounstein, Princeton University
Thomas Vicino, Wheaton College
Reuel Rogers, Northwestern University
Michael Owens, Emory University
Lorraine (Lori) J. Minnite, Barnard College

Secretary-Treasurer –

Lenneal Henderson,
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2009 Program Chairs

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Kristin Good, Dalhousie University
Kristin.Good@Dal.Ca

2009 Nominations Committee

Chair: Jill Gross, Hunter College-CUNY
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Stephanie Chambers, Trinity College
stefanie.chambers@trincoll.edu
Alethia Jones, State University of New York at Albany
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Bob Benedetti, University of the Pacific
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2010 Program Chairs

Mara Sidney, Rutgers University-Newark
msidney@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Michael Owens, Emory University
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2009 AWARDS COMMITTEES

1. The Best Dissertation Award for the best dissertation on urban politics completed and accepted in the previous year. Hard copies (or electronic, if preferred by committee member) of dissertations completed and approved in 2008 should be sent to each committee member by **March 1, 2009**.

Chair: Reuel Rogers, Northwestern University

r-rogers@northwestern.edu

Dorian Warren, Columbia University
dw2288@columbia.edu

Lorraine (Lori) J. Minnite, Barnard College
lcm25@columbia.edu

2. The Best Book Award for the best book on urban politics published in 2008. Hard copy of books should be sent to each committee member by **March 1, 2009**.

Chair: Martin Horak, University of Western Ontario

mhorak@uwo.ca

Megan Mullin, Temple University
mmullin@temple.edu

Traci Burch, Northwestern University
traci.burch@gmail.com

3. The Best Paper Award is given for the best paper given at an Urban Politics Section panel at the previous year's APSA Annual Meeting.

Copies of papers presented at the APSA Urban Politics panels in 2008 should be sent electronically to the committee members by March 1, 2009.

Co-Chair: Melissa J. Marschall, Rice University
marschal@rice.edu

Co-Chair: Lester Kenyatta Spence, Johns Hopkins University
invictus@jhu.edu

Paru Shah, Macalaster College
shahp@macalester.edu

4. The Byran Jackson Dissertation In Ethnic and Racial Politics Research Support Award is given to a graduate student studying racial and ethnic politics in an urban setting. Hard copies (or electronic, if preferred by committee member) of approved dissertation proposals should be sent to each committee member by **March 1, 2009**.

Chair: Jessica Trounstein, Princeton
jtrounst@princeton.edu

Andra Gillespie, Emory University
andra.gillespie@emory.edu

Matt Thomas, California State University at Chico
mothomas@csuchico.edu

5. Norton Long Career Achievement Award

The Norton Long Award is presented biannually to a scholar who has made distinguished contributions to the study of urban politics over the course of a career through scholarly publication, the mentoring of students, and public service. Nominations and 2 supporting letters submitted to all committee members by **March 1 2009**:

Chair: **Marion Orr, Brown University**
marion_orr@brown.edu

Hank Savitch, Louisville
hysavi01@louisville.edu

Richard Stren, University of Toronto
restren@gmail.com

APSA – URBAN POLITICS SECTION General Business Meeting Agenda – August 28, 2008 Hynes 102

Call to Order – Pres. Richard Stren, University of Toronto

Old Business

President's Report – Richard Stren

New Business/Reports

1. Secretary-Treasurer's Annual Report – Lenneal Henderson, University of Baltimore
2. Program Chair Report – Melissa Marschall, Rice University
3. Announcement of 2009 Program Chairs – Richard Stren (Peter Burns, Loyola College; Kristin Good, Dalhousie University)
4. Section Affiliation with Urban Affairs Review – Susan Clarke

5. Other new business

Awards and Acknowledgments

1. Best Book – Martin Horak, University of Western Ontario (Presented by Paul Kantor, chair of nomination committee).
2. Best Paper – Melissa Marschall (Rice University), Paru Shah (Macalaster College), Katharine Donato (Vanderbilt University)
3. Best Dissertation – Traci Burch, Ph.D Harvard University
4. Byran Jackson Dissertation in Ethnic and Racial Politics Support Award – Ravi Kumar Perry, Brown University.

Nominations and Elections

Report of the Nominating Committee – Michael Pagano, University of Illinois at Chicago
Elections – Richard Stren presiding.

Introduction of the new President – Susan Clarke, University of Colorado.

**RECEPTION – BEACON F, SHERATON,
7:30-9:00 PM
(Hosted by Urban Affairs Review)**

2008 URBAN POLITICS SECTION AWARD WINNERS

Best book in 2007 in urban politics:

Martin Horak, University of Western Ontario, Canada.

"Governing the Post-Communist City: Institutions and Democratic Development in Prague"
(University of Toronto Press)

Best dissertation award:

Traci Burch, "Punishment and Participation: How Criminal Convictions Threaten American Democracy." The Dissertation Chair was Professor Jennifer Hochschild, Department of Government, Harvard University.

Byran Jackson Dissertation in Ethnic and Racial Politics Support Award:

Ravi Kumar Perry, Department of Political Science, Brown University, Title: 21st Century Black Mayors, Non-majority Black cities, and The Representation of Black Interests.

Best Paper Award:

Melissa Marschall (Rice University), Paru Shah (Macalaster College), Katharine Donato (Vanderbilt University)

"Schools and Parental Involvement Policy: A Macro-Level Analysis of Immigrant Gateway Districts"

BOOK OF INTEREST

The 2008 Outstanding Book Award of the Global Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems was awarded to Michael Peter Smith and Matt Bakker of the University of California, Davis for their book

Citizenship Across Borders: The Political Transnationalism of El Migrante (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

The goal of the award is to encourage critical scholarship in the areas of global studies and social problems. The Book Award Committee characterized *Citizenship Across Borders* as follows in its award announcement:

“At a time when many theories of contemporary globalization predict the increasing hollowing out of states and consequent erosion of citizen rights, Smith and Bakker point to a politically intriguing and empirically grounded new discourse on citizenship that is transnationalist in conception, and that locates empowering identities and practices among a diverse range of actors. ...Their analysis highlights the continuing significance of territorial identifications and state policies ...in cultivating and sustaining transnational connections and practices.”

Temple University announces a new PhD in Urban Studies

www.temple.edu/gus

A Program for the 21st Century

- **multiple disciplines** including geography, planning, economics, sociology and several others.
- **multiple theoretical** approaches from the multiple disciplines.
- **multiple scales** from inner cities to metropolitan regions to national systems to the global urban system.
- **multiple methods** focusing on spatial analysis (especially GIS) and other quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Applications are invited for fall admission by January 15, 2009. The program requires 61 credits and admits students holding a bachelor's degree or master's degree in a related field. Information about applying to Temple University, including an online application, is accessible at the Admissions section of the Graduate School website at www.temple.edu/grad. Applicants may compete for financial aid—teaching and research assistantships and fellowships—that cover tuition and pay a stipend.

Urban versus American: Some comments for the APSA panel on Innovations in Urban Political Theory.

Clarence Stone

George Washington University

During the APSA Meeting in Boston, I had the opportunity to serve as discussant for the panel on “Innovations in Urban Political Theory,” chaired by David Imbroscio. Some participants in that session urged me to circulate my comments to the urban section, and I am happy to do so. More dialogue is usually better than less. My comments (but not purely verbatim) below:

With limited time, five provocative papers, and several interwoven themes running through the five papers, I have tried to come up with a different way of fulfilling my role as discussant. Since the suggestion has been put forward that the urban field should make an effort to establish closer intellectual links with the mainstream study of American politics, I want to turn to a big picture level and use the papers here to suggest why that is a bad idea.

Let me start with a very large assertion. The mainstream study of American politics is a Newtonian universe of small movements within a fixed structure. The urban field is by contrast an Einsteinian universe in which nothing is fixed and all is relative.

Consider the following:

1. Mainstream – the study of politics revolves around constitutionally fixed institutions.

The panel papers collectively point to the opposite – change and fluidity are watchwords. For instance, city-suburb-metropolitan relations are far from fixed and rest on much more than constitutional grounding. Moreover, intercurrency rather than a single dominant institutional order is the prevailing pattern (on intercurrency, see Orren and Skowronek 2004).

2. Mainstream – Mass behavior is manifest mainly in voting behavior.

The panel papers collectively highlight the importance of a different form of mass behavior – locational choice is centrally important, and it is part of a wider process of adjusting to interdependence; by some actors some of the time that involves denial of interdependence and creating buffers. Group conflict is often manifested in struggle over the control of space. Residential position in a wider spatial order is a central consideration but not one addressed in most studies of national politics.

3. Mainstream – Politics in the U.S. can be considered apart from the rest of the world. American exceptionalism is the prevailing view.

The panel papers collectively offer a contrary position – urbanity is best understood as a global process, and that is a process that profoundly shapes cities. It affects both shifting employment opportunities and residential processes such as gentrification. Pockets of disinvestment are a major policy challenge.

4. Mainstream – Positivism is the preferred epistemology, and political research consists of finding an objective reality independent of the individual observer.

The panel papers collectively see that as an old-fashioned notion. For them observation is situationally colored, and this means that self-awareness and self-reflection are urgently needed. Feminist scholars have been path breakers on this point, and it has special relevance in a spatially segmented urban setting.

I concede that the urban field has significant weaknesses, but the way to strengthen it is not to draw closer to the mainstream study of American politics. If we did that we would be stuck with the world according to *Who Governs?*. Instead, the panel papers collectively pose a need to learn with discernment from history, anthropology, and sociology. We can usefully position such works by giving close attention to how inequalities manifest themselves in spatial relationships.

Methodological strengthening would come from multiple forms of observation, one of which is historical and another is ethnographic. We need

more not less observation; what we need is more than data sets with large Ns, and should aim for more vantage points from which to make observations.

In addition we should do a better job of being explicit (at least to ourselves) about our normative concerns and assumptions.

In sum, we should move away from rather than embrace mainstream political science. But we should be more self-aware and more thoughtful about how we go about it. I commend the five papers at the core of this panel. Collectively they move the field in a promising direction.

The five papers are as follows:

“Regionalism Paradigms and Urban Politics,” by Hank Savitch and Ronald Vogel.

“Recent Developments in Theories of Urban Politics,” by Jonathan Davies and David Imbroscio.

“Reflections on Urbanity: Objects of Study and Epistemology,” by Julie-Anne Boudreau.

“Understanding Urban Power and Inequality: Why Urban Politics Research Needs Constructivist, Interpretive Analysis,” by Mara Sidney.

“Bringing History Back In? Assessing the New Suburban History,” by Thad Williamson.

Brief comment on the discussion in the panel:

Of the four points I raised, the one that generated the liveliest discussion was the last one. We had a good back-and-forth about the fact-value dichotomy, with some participants urging respect for its usefulness as a basis for inter-subjective evidence, and others asserting its limitations. The panel was well attended, and indications are that a good time was had by all.

Urban News

Urban News is published three times each year as Spring, Summer, and Fall issues. Deadlines for submission of material are:

Spring issue	March 1
Summer issue	June 1
Fall issue	October 1

Abstracts, announcements and other contributions should be submitted electronically to baodong.liu@utah.edu

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