

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

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POLITICS AND POLICY IN AMERICA

Session Moderator: John Wilkerson, Political Science

284 MGH

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Buying Votes as Public Service: The Electoral Implications of Federal Stimulus Spending

James William (James) Ganas, Senior, Political Science

Mentor: John Wilkerson, Political Science

Mentor: Nicholas Stramp, Department of Political Science, Center for American Politics and Public Policy

Earmark spending has proven to be a popular political tool for members of Congress because it allows them to claim credit for a concrete economic benefit for their districts. I ask whether expectations of political benefits similarly influence large-scale stimulus spending allocations and, more importantly, whether these allocations have political benefits for the incumbent president. This research project examines the link between federal spending and shifts in election outcomes. It asks whether spending in the stimulus package of 2009 substantively influenced President Obama's share of the popular vote in 2012. Other things equal, did competitive regions of the nation receive disproportionately more spending, and was that spending associated with increased vote shares for the incumbent president between 2008 and 2012? To answer these questions I examine government spending and popular vote shares in over 3,000 counties from 2008 to 2012. I also control for underlying social and economic issues by county, such as foreclosure and unemployment rates. Finally, I control for other political influences on stimulus spending, including whether certain counties had representatives in powerful congressional roles. Overall, this study will promote understanding of the political implications of large-scale federal spending. It will also shed light on the political dynamics of "swing counties" and whether stimulus spending is a useful political tool for winning these counties.

The Legacy of *Marbury v. Madison* in *United States v. Lopez*

Erik Larson, Senior, Politics, Spanish, Whitman College

Mentor: Helen Knowles

Among the limited powers that the U.S. Constitution grants

to Congress, the power to regulate commerce among the states is one of the most important. Over the past one hundred years, Congress has sought to use this power to pass a wider and wider range of legislation, from labor laws to drug laws. The members of the Supreme Court have had to use the power of judicial review to determine the limits of the commerce power, but have disagreed about where to place them. The two major approaches to judicial review in commerce clause cases came to a head in *United States v. Lopez* (1995), in which the Court overturned a law on Commerce Clause grounds for the first time since the New Deal era. Through an examination of all six opinions written for this case, I argue that those of Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justice Kennedy respond to the strengths and weaknesses of both traditional approaches to judicial review. In doing so, Rehnquist and Kennedy's opinions are the only ones to take on the task of judicial review as it was originally envisioned in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803).

Partnering for Health: Emerging Forms of Health Governance in Washington State

Helen Elizabeth Olsen, Senior, Geography, Public Health-Global Health

Mary Gates Scholar, Undergraduate Research Conference Travel Awardee

Mentor: Lucy Jarosz, Geography

Mentor: Sarah Elwood, Geography

My research details how the austerity measures enacted at the federal, state and county levels have impacted women's reproductive healthcare in Washington State since 2008. This project examines how public-private partnerships have emerged in response to widening disparities and cutbacks in women's reproductive healthcare access and provisioning. Through a case study of an NGO dedicated to enhancing women's access to reproductive health care, I demonstrate that new models of public health provisioning are emerging to fill the void left by the neoliberal rollback of state spon-

sored public health programs. In order to examine the ways in which austerity measures have impacted women's access to reproductive healthcare services in Washington State, I engaged in archival analysis of State budget documents detailing cutbacks/shifts in public health funding for the past five years. Additionally, I interviewed employees of the Washington Department of Health (DOH) and King County Public Health (KCPH) about the impact of funding decreases on their service provision programs. After establishing this broad landscape of state disinvestment, I moved into an examination of my case study organization and the ways in which shifts in funding structures for public health have facilitated the creation of new models of health governance.

An Examination of the Complexities of Prison Health Care

*Jennifer Luong, Senior, Biochemistry, Anthropology:
Medical Anth & Global Hlth*

*Mary Gates Scholar, Undergraduate Research
Conference Travel Awardee
Mentor: James Green, Anthropology*

Around 650 health services professionals in the Washington State Department of Corrections provided care for over 24,000 inmates in the last year, and the number of people being housed in correctional facilities is on the rise. Discourse abounds regarding the necessity and adequacy of health care provided to this growing population in the US, yet the bulk of this discourse applies a biomedical lens. This exploratory study employs qualitative methods to examine the role of the health care provider in the prison environment in an effort to understand the factors within the correctional system that influence the provision of health care in prisons. Through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and cognitive mapping, this study aims to shed light on the interactions among the medical staff, correctional staff, and inmates. All research is conducted at a single Washington state prison. Interviews are conducted with around 10 health care professionals who volunteered to be interviewed; field notes are taken during the course of interviews and observations; and diagrams expressing inmates' perceptions of the process of receiving care are collected. For analysis, open coding is performed to identify significant themes in the data, and closed coding is performed to explore the themes more deeply and make connections among them. An understanding of how these major players in correctional health care perceive health care and perceive each other has the potential to help increase the effectiveness of care.

Behind Bars: The Prevalence and Consequences of Jailing Juveniles in Washington State

*Max T (Max) Burnham, Senior, Political Science, Law,
Societies, & Justice*

*Victoria Kathleen (Tori) Bishop, Senior, Law, Societies, &
Justice, History*

Marc Neman Meyer, Senior, Law, Societies, & Justice

Lauren Martin, Senior, Law, Societies, & Justice

*Martha Renata (Martha) Muldowney, Senior, Law, Societies,
& Justice, Sociology*

*Sandy Cathy (Sandy) Nguyen, Senior, Law, Societies, &
Justice*

EIP Scholar, McNair Scholar

Anu Sidhu, Junior, Law, Societies, & Justice, Economics

Elizabeth Zippora Kent, Senior, Law, Societies, & Justice

Mentor: Steve Herbert, Geography

In Washington State, the majority of juvenile offenders are handled by the juvenile criminal justice system. However, juveniles who commit serious violent crimes undergo a process known as declination, in which they are processed as adult defendants in adult courts. These juveniles are typically housed in jail with adult inmates, an experience which nation-wide studies have shown to be severely damaging to both their mental and physical well-being. Research regarding the prevalence of this practice in Washington State is slim. Our report aims to rectify this dearth of information by examining relevant statutes and case law, by interviewing various actors in the criminal justice system—including incarcerated youth themselves—and by sending information requests to all 39 counties in Washington State. The first section of our report will detail the types of declination in Washington and how to distinguish between the four main holding facilities: the Juvenile Detention Center, Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, jail, and prison. Part two will present statistics regarding the number of declined juveniles held in each county jail since 2009, as well as county policies surrounding these declined individuals. Our preliminary research shows that hundreds of juveniles have been declined and held in jails since 2009. The third section will analyze the repercussions of incarceration on a juvenile's life, as well as detail our personal interviews with several inmates from the Green Hill Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration. Our final section will analyze the differing opinions on the declination process, as well as present some of our own recommendations for improving the current system. We hope that these ideas will lead to the adoption of policies that will protect both public safety and the well-being of the inmates themselves, and provide these youth with the tools they need to successfully reintegrate into society.