Making an Impact

The 2011 Annual Conference tackled some of the most pressing issues for scholars today under the theme – “Transforming Politics: New Synergies”. It connected the Association’s members with the wider political community while taking stock of some of the challenges facing our discipline. With over 700 delegates that included many international participants and a great line up of keynote speakers, the conference provided a stimulating environment for debate, networking, and establishing new research collaborations. The wonderful spring weather and the location contributed to creating a relaxed and conducive atmosphere. Panels were well attended and delegates were able to engage in robust exchanges, despite the temptations that London offers and the conveniently placed bar at the conference venue. 

Willetts Lobbied by Association

Vicky Randall
Political Studies Association Chair

Recent trends in government policy on social science and humanities research funding have occasioned growing unease amongst Political Studies Association members and within the Executive Committee. There are real concerns that government policy is increasingly encroaching upon the autonomy of the funding councils. Most recently there have been strong suspicions that the government put pressure on the AHRC to include additional references to the ‘Big Society’ in its mission statement. Against this background it was agreed to send an open letter to the Rt Hon David Willetts MP, as Minister of State for Universities and Science.

Haldane Principle

The letter states the Association’s firm belief in the (non-revised version of the) Haldane principle. It argues in particular, that relevant research funding bodies should have more say about how funds are allocated, with reference to the decision to discontinue the awarding of small, response-mode research grants.

continued on page 23
_Political Science Recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours List_

The contribution of Political Science to national life has been recognised in the Queen's bi-annual award of Honours list. The Queen’s Birthday list includes members of the political science profession and the citations to their awards note their vital contribution both to scholarship and public affairs.

Among those honoured are Ron Johnston, professor of geography at the University of Bristol, an active EPOP member and expert in electoral systems.

Other political scientists on the list are Christopher Hood, Gladstone professor of government at the University of Oxford and expert on the civil service, Nirmala Rao, pro-director of the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University and researcher on urban government and Professor Steve Smith, Vice Chancellor of the University of Exeter and an expert in international relations.

The Political Studies Association offers all of them its congratulations.
2011 Association’s London Conference: The Engagement Workshops

Helena Djurkovic
CEO, Political Studies Association

Impact and Engagement Workshop
As several speakers suggested at a one-day workshop on Impact and Engagement held on the Monday before the main Political Studies Association Conference in London, academics working in political studies might be expected to want to engage with policymakers and the media because of what they do and not just because of how they will soon be judged in the REF.

Steering clear of a debate about whether impact is an appropriate criterion on which research should be judged and how it should be defined, the workshop instead focused on how academics can help shape and inform the policy-making process and the practical measures that academics need to take to ensure their work is heard, understood and acted upon by the appropriate decision-makers.

Sellers and Buyers
During the first session on ‘Engaging the Media’ the audience heard from those both sides of the media divide, “sellers” – Nadine Smith, Director of Communications at the Institute for Government and Professor Phil Cowley – and “buyers” – Martin Rosenbaum, BBC Radio 4 Producer, and Sue Cameron, FT journalist. All four speakers stressed the need for preparation, a clear and simple message that can be expressed in a single sentence, timing (sometimes you need to hold back because you can make more impact later), accessibility and responsiveness, networks, social media – and patience.

“Sellers” and “buyers” also spoke in the session on ‘Engaging Parliament and Government’. Prior to becoming a Liberal Democrat peer, Baroness Parminter had been Chief Executive of the Campaign to Protect Rural England and Communications Director of the RSPCA at the time of the Hunting Ban legislation. She urged the audience to consider working with voluntary organisations, which frequently want to supplement their own work with academic research, and often have academics on their boards of directors and policy groups.

Useful Channels
Paul Evans, Principal Clerk for Select Committees at the House of Commons, explained that it was often easier to engage with clerks than politicians and that clerks could be very useful channels through which to operate as they were always looking for resources to inform their inquiries. He strongly encouraged academics to submit evidence to select committees without being asked – no invitation was necessary. He also observed that it was probably better for academics to engage with Parliament than with Government as the former was concerned with shaping thinking whereas the latter was more about taking action.

Professor Archie Brown and Professor Iain McLean spoke of their experience influencing government policy. Archie Brown’s influence reached the very highest level: he was instrumental in helping Margaret Thatcher recognise the critical importance of Mikhail Gorbachev as a reformer who could take the Soviet Union in a radical direction.

The sessions were chaired by Sir Mike Aaronson, visiting Professor at the University of Surrey, who also presented the final session, a case study on international intervention designed to give a practical example of engagement between the academic, practitioner, and policy-making communities. Lou Perrotta, Head of Lessons Learned at the UK’s Stabilisation Unit, spoke about the difficulties of impacting on the policy process even from within Government, given the multiplicity of political and institutional agendas, each with its own momentum.

Insiders Account
Geoff Loane, Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in London, gave an insider’s account of the current intervention in Libya and how concepts studied by academics such as “humanitarianism” translate into real-life, difficult, and fast-moving situations. Professor Marie Breen Smyth of the University of Surrey described her previous experience in establishing the Centre for Radicalisation and Contemporary Political Violence at the University of Aberystwyth and how the learning from this would inform the development of CII – the new Centre for International Intervention – at Surrey. Discussion centred on the serious lack of area expertise in Government, the normative dimension for academics, and the nature of critical scholarship: was it about influencing policymakers or changing the paradigm, and did academics need to become more politically astute?

The Programme Pitch: How to Sell an Idea to Radio 4
On the Tuesday of the conference, Martin Rosenbaum very generously returned to give a talk on “The programme pitch: How to sell an idea to Radio 4”. Martin is currently producing Professor Matt Flinders new three-part series “In Defence of Politics”, which will be broadcast in September, and has worked with Professor Phil Cowley and Professor Steven Fielding in the past. He explained the Radio 4 commissioning cycle and what was entailed in pitching an idea for a documentary. He invited ideas for programmes, making it clear that the BBC was not looking for detailed proposals but great ideas that could be finessed by Martin and his colleagues and developed into successful programme treatments. He stressed that since as much as two years could pass between a programme being commissioned and broadcast, it was vital that ideas had to be relevant for the future and not just today. He made clear, however, that the BBC occasionally engaged in reactive commissioning and so ideas could be pitched at any time if the idea was very current, very strong and the programme could be turned round in a few weeks. He ended by inviting proposals by 4th May, the formal commissioning deadline, giving the audience a few weeks to turn round their ideas. It was clear from the reaction that a number of people were ready to take on the challenge.
Emeritus Professor Richard A. Chapman, University of Durham

Michael Hunt
Sheffield Hallam University

Richard Chapman’s death from pancreatic cancer deprives the academic community of one of its leading scholars of public administration. His early reputation derived from his work for the Fulton Committee on the Civil Service and he continued his research on the civil service for much of the rest of his life. In particular he focused on the behaviour of public servants. This is reflected in his seminal work The Civil Service Commission 1855 - 1991: A bureau biography as well as in Ethics in the British Civil Service – a study of the working life of Sir Edward Bridges – and in the collection of essays that he edited entitled Ethics in Public Service. These were not simply academic studies. In examining standards of public service they drew attention to the ways in which these had changed in the latter part of the twentieth century as a result of organisational changes to the structure of government. A man of integrity and strong moral principles himself, Chapman was dismayed by many of these changes because they seemed to him to result in a loss of the fundamental values of public service and public duty for which the civil service had been historically renowned. It was no surprise that he took great interest in the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life nor that he saw the need for wider public involvement in securing the accountability of governments. A man of integrity and strong moral principles himself, Chapman was dismayed by many of these changes because they seemed to him to result in a loss of the fundamental values of public service and public duty for which the civil service had been historically renowned. It was no surprise that he took great interest in the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life nor that he saw the need for wider public involvement in securing the accountability of governments.

He was a popular teacher, renowned for the high standards that he demanded. His critical comments on a piece of work, although never harsh, left recipients in little doubt as to what should be expected in terms of logic and grammatical construction. He had a healthy scepticism for jargon and passing academic fancies (as well as, it seemed to him, the origin of life long friendships. He was always open to debate and discussion, and was not afraid to change his views as a result of interaction with others. His academic output together with his service to the academic community through his teaching and his encouragement of those at earlier stages of their career provide enduring legacies of an honourable man committed to scholarship and to university education in its widest sense.
Media Briefings Bring Fresh Perspective

Helena Djurkovic  
CEO, Political Studies Association

As part of its strategy to engage more widely with policy-makers and the media, the Political Studies Association organised a series of breakfast briefings for journalists and producers in the weeks leading to the local elections and AV referendum on 5th May. On the advice of Peter Riddell at the IFG, Sam Coates at the Times, Sue Cameron at the FT and a number of other journalists, the briefings had a strong (though not exclusive) data focus, brought fresh and diverse perspectives to familiar subjects and gathered together some highly respected academics. Held at 9am on consecutive Tuesday mornings at the Institute for Government in London, the first of the briefings, on the AV referendum, brought together Vernon Bogdanor (King’s College, London), John Curtice (Strathclyde) and David Farrell (University College, Dublin); the second, on the elections to the devolved assemblies, saw presentations from Charlie Jeffery (Edinburgh), James Mitchell (Strathclyde), Richard Wyn Jones (Cardiff) and Jon Tonge (Liverpool); the third and final briefing, on the English local elections, was delivered by Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher (Plymouth), Matthew Goodwin (Nottingham) and Stephen Fisher (Oxford). In all three briefings presentations were kept relatively short so as to ensure plenty of time was available for guests to ask questions and briefing packs were circulated not just to those who attended the briefings but to over fifty journalists and producers known to be interested in the issues covered.

Positive Response

The media responded extremely positively to the briefings. The quality of those attending was extremely high (James Landale and Laura Kuenssberg from the BBC, Gary Gibbon from Channel 4 and Adam Boulton from Sky News among others) and many came to all three briefings (including David Cowling, Editor, BBC Political Research). Most importantly those working in the media have come to view the Association as an important source of expertise on which they can, and do, now draw.

The popularity and impact of the series was inevitably enhanced by the publication of the Association’s Briefing Paper on the Alternative Vote by Alan Renwick (see page 6). Together they generated mentions of the Political Studies Association in a wide array of titles and programmes, including the Guardian (several articles and an exclusive) data focus, brought fresh and diverse perspectives to familiar subjects and gathered together some highly respected academics. Held at 9am on consecutive Tuesday mornings at the Institute for Government in London, the first of the briefings, on the AV referendum, brought together Vernon Bogdanor (King’s College, London), John Curtice (Strathclyde) and David Farrell (University College, Dublin); the second, on the elections to the devolved assemblies, saw presentations from Charlie Jeffery (Edinburgh), James Mitchell (Strathclyde), Richard Wyn Jones (Cardiff) and Jon Tonge (Liverpool); the third and final briefing, on the English local elections, was delivered by Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher (Plymouth), Matthew Goodwin (Nottingham) and Stephen Fisher (Oxford). In all three briefings presentations were kept relatively short so as to ensure plenty of time was available for guests to ask questions and briefing packs were circulated not just to those who attended the briefings but to over fifty journalists and producers known to be interested in the issues covered.

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Warm Words

Unusually for those working in the media, many of those who attended wrote to thank the Political Studies Association for organising the briefings. Perhaps the warmest words of thanks came from David Cowling who wrote: “May I say how grateful I am for the three sessions you held on 5th May 2011 voting? The cast of speakers was superb and the information distributed of the highest quality. It was an inspired decision to bring together Political Studies Association members and journalists and it worked very well. Thank you, once again.”

The Association has every intention of building on this sense of goodwill and respect. More media briefings and briefing papers can be expected to follow.

Finally, thanks to Phil Cowley for coming up with the idea and helping design the three briefings and for all those who gave up their time to make this initiative such a success.

Association Conference 2012

The Association’s next Annual conference will take place Tuesday 3rd - Thursday 5th April 2012 and will be based at the Europa Hotel in Belfast city centre. The theme will be “In Defence of Politics”. We will have the graduate conference on Monday 2nd April. The annual dinner will be held in the Ulster Hall on Wednesday 4th April.

We will accept submissions up to Friday 14th October. Strong preference is for Panel proposals.

We are hoping to keep the costs down to c. £250 for the full package (excluding accommodation) and £100 for day delegates. These rates would include lunch(es) and tea/coffee breaks. There will be a range of hotel accommodation available ranging from 2 through to 5* with rates rising accordingly but we have rooms in the 4* Europa on a bed and breakfast basis for £85.

For more information please contact: convenor@psa.ac.uk, papers12@psa.ac.uk or c.gormley@ulster.ac.uk

Martin Rosenbaum, BBC who attended the Association’s Annual conference in April
The Media Briefing Paper on the Alternative Vote

Alan Renwick

Reading

Referendum debates are rarely edifying, and the debate that preceded May’s referendum on whether to change the voting system was no exception. Both sides pushed arguments that were either exaggerated or outright false. It was difficult for the general public – and even for seasoned journalists – to find unbiased information on which they could judge the alternatives.

Here the Political Studies Association stepped in. Political scientists have an important role in encouraging evidence-based debate about political issues. Over the years we have collectively developed a wealth of knowledge about the implications of different electoral systems.

While we cannot predict exactly what the effects of an electoral reform would be, we can say a lot about the likelihood of different outcomes. For example, we can draw on both simulations and experience in other countries to present an informed view on the likely frequency of coalition governments under different systems. We can present evidence on whether the safety of an MP’s seat affects her or his behaviour. It is important that we convey such knowledge to a broad audience.

The Association published a briefing paper on AV in late March. Mine is the name on the cover, but I was greatly assisted by an international panel of experts who offered invaluable comments on earlier drafts. The paper was launched at the first of the Association’s Media Briefings (see page 5), at which Professors Vernon Bogdanor, John Curtice, and David Farrell presented. The paper and the presentations are all available on the Association website.

The response to these briefings has been enormous. The briefing paper was downloaded over 22,000 times. It was regularly cited on television and radio and in the print and online media. Both the Yes and the No campaigns themselves used it to counter their opponents’ more farfetched claims. We can claim to have made the whole debate at least a little more soundly based than it would otherwise have been. And hopefully we have shown to a wider audience the real value of engaging with political science research: we have answers to important questions about the political system that no one else is able to provide.

Political Insight Makes a Splash in London

Political Insight celebrated only its second anniversary at the London conference in April but already the magazine is proving a big hit within the political studies community. A reception, sponsored by Wiley-Blackwell, publisher of Political Insight, attracted well over 100 delegates and there has been a fantastic reaction to the first issue of the magazine’s second volume.

‘Since last year the number of positive emails from academics, teachers and civil servants has been amazing. At the moment, with every issue the feedback just gets better – which is great for everyone involved,’ commented Political Insight’s author Peter Geoghegan. ‘There is clearly a huge interest in timely, interesting research on politics and international studies that appeals to a broader audience than traditional academic journals.’

The magazine, which is published three times a year, has also attracted a significant amount of interest from outside the politics studies community and is proving an excellent vehicle for academics looking to engage with the media. Last year, Muhammad Idrees Ahmad, a sociologist at the University of Strathclyde, appeared on Al Jazeera’s popular news programme Inside Story after the show’s producers read his article on the Pakistani Taliban in Political Insight’s first issue.

‘As well as showcasing the best in new research, ideas, and opinions, Political Insight is a great place for academics to get their work out to the widest possible audience,’ Peter Geoghegan continued. ‘The political world is constantly changing and Political Insight is a great place for Association members to contribute to, and even influence, emerging debates and issues.’

Forthcoming issues of Political Insight will feature work from prominent members of the political studies community including Robert Hazell, Jon Tonge, John Curtice and Rachel Gibson. Out in September, issue two of 2011 will look in detail at a range of issues including the recent local and devolved elections, the AV vote, the role of technology in politics, the OECD at 50 and the politics of Pakistan.

Peter Geoghegan welcomes submissions and ideas from Political Studies Association members to Political Insight. For more information visit www.politicalinsightmagazine.com
Political Science Day a Great Success

The Agricultural Economics Society and the Political Studies Association generally hold their annual conferences around the same time. Last year they were meeting at the same time in Edinburgh. Advantage was taken of this timing in 2011 with a special ‘political science day’ on 18th April before the opening of the two conferences the following day. Organised by Alan Swinbank of Reading University, nine political scientists offered papers to the meeting at Warwick University.

Alan Greer of the University of West of England combined with the director of corporate affairs at the National Farmers’ Union, Tom Hind (a Warwick Politics graduate) to discuss the implications of co-decision for the future reform of the CAP, possibly leading to ‘indecision’. Carsten Daugberg came from Aarhus University to present work with Linda Botterill on the global private food standards organisation – GlobalGAP. Wyn Grant posed the question ‘what has political science ever done for agricultural economics?’, the reply coming from an economist in the audience, ‘absolutely nothing’.

The day was judged to be a great success with a large audience of economists coming to hear the political science papers.

MPSA Conference a Great Experience

Andreas Murr
Essex University

The Political Studies Association overseas grant enabled me to attend the MPSA conference in Chicago. As a second year PhD student, I found attending such a big conference very valuable for my own professional development. The conference was a great opportunity for meeting people, discussing ideas, learning about new topics and presenting my own research, but also seeing how other people present their research. I particularly enjoyed the wide variety of topics and formats.

Similarly, the format included presentations and roundtable discussions. I particularly liked the roundtable discussions. I think it is just great when researchers who study the same topic in different ways come together and talk to one another and discuss the research agenda. Moving on to the format of presentations, I found it interesting to see different styles of presentations – from the standard PowerPoint presentation to Ken Benoit’s 20-slides-with-20-seconds-per-slide challenge (PechaKucha) and to John Bullock’s story-telling approach without any slides at all. These differences in style taught me a great deal.

Masters at Work

My own presentation was in the standard style, but nevertheless seeing masters at work made me substantially revise and rehearse my own presentation for the better. After the presentation, I received valuable feedback from my discussants. The discussants were very professional and detailed in their comments and I found their responses to my work fruitful to think about. In their discussion of the papers in general, the discussants often first tried to synthesise all papers pointing out the similarities and connections but also the differences between the papers. The discussants then discussed each paper in turn by summarising the main argument, pointing out strengths and weaknesses but also suggesting ways in which to improve the paper. Besides these formal parts of the conference – presentations, roundtables, discussants, etc. – the informal parts of the conference were interesting as well. Conferences bring together many people and are therefore a great way to meet people and talk to them. People were very approachable after their presentations and happy to discuss their work in greater detail. To conclude, I loved attending the conference and am already thinking about going there again next year. I am grateful to the Political Studies Association for providing the overseas conference grant to support its members.

Santiago López Cariboni
Essex University

Attending the Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association – one of the American Political Science Association’s ‘regional’ affiliates – was a major experience. Over four days in Chicago, IL, USA, participants were able to choose from a large number of panels allocated in 73 different sections.

The magnitude of this event provided an opportunity for me to interact with other scholars with similar research interests. Bringing my own research work to such an exciting environment was highly stimulating, and my paper benefited from the comments I received. It is an experience that I strongly recommend to any other graduate student in political science. I would like to express my gratitude to the Political Studies Association for the support offered.
ECPR-IPSA Conference a Great Experience

Lawrence Sáez
School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

The ECPR and IPSA held its first joint conference in São Paulo, Brazil, on 16th - 19th February. The central theme of the conference was: 'Whatever happened to North-South'. In other words, it was an exploration of the continuing relevance of the international North-South dichotomy. The conference operated under three broad themes. The first theme dealt with changing patterns of international relations and regional integration. The second theme examined political regimes, democratic consolidation and the quality of democracy. The third theme examined economic trends and political, social and cultural changes.

Areas of Concern
It is hard to measure the concentration of subjects that appeared to motivate much of the research in this conference, but informally one could see some emerging issue areas of concern. Within the international relations panels, the main focal points were changing patterns of global governance and the emergence of regional security mechanisms. Not surprisingly, the impact of the global financial crisis (of the North) on the South was a hot topic of discussion. Brazil has produced a wealth of comparativists and some Brazilian political scientists (like Guillermo O'Donnell) have made an important impact on the study of democracy. As such, it appears that examinations of democratic consolidation in developing countries, the relationship between institutions and the quality of democracy, and the comparison between hybrid and authoritarian regimes seemed to be the driving force on many of the panels.

Methodological Consensus
I presented a paper on the relationship between political variables and interest payments on the debt by India’s subnational governments. Although I used a case study of India, my research approach had parallels with other panel papers dealing with fiscal federalism in Argentina and Brazil. Although federalism is often seen as a tedious academic subject matter, the issue of federalism has a great deal of policy relevance in Latin America. My paper was well received and we engaged in an in-depth discussion about issues relating to fiscal indiscipline at the subnational level in federal systems in developing countries. One of the most striking things about the papers presented in my panel was there was a great deal of methodological consensus among the papers presented. As an observer to the type of methodological approaches that are popular in Europe and the United States, it is worth noting that all of the papers in my panel used multiple regression analysis as the principal empirical tool. In my view, this represents the impact that North American approaches in political science have had on Latin American scholarship and constitutes a significant difference with the type of methodological pluralism that is prevalent in British political studies. As a partisan of quantitative methods, I think that one of the benefits of exposing British and European scholars to Latin American scholarship approaches is the realisation that quantitative rigour need not be the domain of North American scholarship.

Notable Glitches
Just as it is hard to eat a bad lunch in Paris, it appears that it is impossible to have a bad conference in Brazil. Although São Paulo can appear to be an impersonal megalopolis, the Brazilian spirit of friendliness is infectious. However, there were some noticeable glitches in the implementation of the conference. The main conference site was located in a part of the University of São Paulo that is quite detached from the main city centre. Most delegates that I spoke to thought that the transportation from the hotels to the conference centre was expensive, inconsistent, and chaotic. Nevertheless, the occasional inconveniences that emerge in a conference setting are far more palatable in Brazil than, say, if they occurred in certain rainy parts of the UK. Once again, Brazilian charm, splendid weather, and a couple of caipirinhas (a Brazilian version of lemonade) did much to weaken any type of transportation anguish.

It is no secret that IPSA and the ECPR have recently faced some important governance, organisational, and financial challenges. In uniting their efforts to host a major international conference together these two institutions undertook a huge gamble. In my opinion, it appears that IPSA and the ECPR have stumbled into a very interesting idea. My suggestion for improving future joint ECPR and IPSA conferences would be to replicate some of the ECPR’s strengths at an international level. From my perspective, the ECPR workshops are an excellent forum for presenting one’s work. Rather than following the format of IPSA international conferences, I would suggest that IPSA consider hosting international workshops akin to the type of workshops that the ECPR has been so successful at a European level. In the meantime, I cannot wait until the next conference in Brazil.

ECPR Council Holds Extraordinary Meeting

On 15th April, the Council of the ECPR held an extraordinary session, called by the Executive Committee, to discuss among other things a set of constitutional reform proposals aimed at reorganising the governance structure of the organisation. In part, these reform proposals were motivated by the staffing issues in Central Services during 2010, which resulted in the tabling of Motions by four Official Representatives who were critical of the Executive Committee’s management of these issues.

The three main outcomes of this meeting were: first, a rejection of any further review of the staffing events of 2010 than that already conducted by the Executive Committee itself, thus drawing a definitive line under those events; second, the establishment of a Committee of Three ORs to look into ‘how situations of this type can be avoided in the future’, with its terms of reference specifically precluding making any judgements on the staffing events of 2010; third, the deferral of consideration of the Executive Committee’s proposals for constitutional reform ‘until Antwerp Joint Sessions in spring 2012.'
Association at APSA 2011

The Political Studies Association is co-sponsoring two outstanding panels at APSA’s Annual Meeting to be held in Seattle, WA, USA, from 1st - 4th September 2011.

Membership and conference details can be found at www.apsanet.org. This is the largest worldwide gathering of political scientists, and the Association has been supporting members to join and participate in its national research and teaching conferences, and regional conferences, all held annually.

The Politics of Rights in the UK
Co-sponsored with British Politics Group

Panel Chair
❖ Dr Bonnie M. Meguid, University of Rochester, USA

Panel Discussants
❖ Dr Terrence Case, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, USA
❖ Professor Terrell Carver, University of Bristol, UK

Panel Participants
❖ Mr Jerold Waltman, Baylor University, USA
❖ Professor James Mitchell, University of Strathclyde, UK
❖ Dr Mark P. Shepard, University of Strathclyde, UK
❖ Dr Anika Gauja, University of Sydney, Australia

France at the EU, G8 and G20: International governance in question?
Co-sponsored with French Politics Group

Panel Chair
❖ Professor Alistair Cole, Cardiff University, UK

Panel Discussants
❖ Professor Alistair Cole, Cardiff University, UK

Panel Participants
❖ Dr Sophie Meunier, Princeton University, USA
❖ Dr Jonah Levy, University of California at Berkeley, USA
❖ Dr Helen Drake, Loughborough University, UK
❖ Dr Cecile Hoareau, University of California at Berkeley, USA

Delegates from the Korean PSA at London 2011

The Political Studies Association was pleased to host ‘exchangers’ from the Korean Political Science Association. Pictured are (far left and far right) Professor Taewan Kim from Dong-eui University in Busan, and Professor Jae-Jin Yang from Yonsei University in Seoul. Professor Terrell Carver (pictured centre) is Chair of the Political Studies Association’s International Relations Subcommittee.

The two associations have exchanged delegates annually for more than 3 years. Any Association member interested in presenting their research in Korea should contact psa@ncl.ac.uk

Not so Thick Brazilian

Monica Threlfall
London Metropolitan University

Thanks to the Political Studies Association Travel Grant, I was able to join a panel on Participatory Democracy at the IPSA (International Political Studies Association) joint conference with the ECPR in Sao Paulo. IPSA is always a mammoth event, but luckily the printed programme was under 1 inch thick this time, so people could actually find the sessions in which they were interested in.

The highlight was Phillippe Schmitter’s plenary. He spoke on the decentering of political science away from US dominance – a phenomenon he welcomed, and so did our Brazilian hosts of course. He also gave a riveting account of how the Chinese government supports the development of political science teaching and research in China, particularly democratic theory!

IPSA also produced for me that typical academic phenomenon where you have to travel to a far continent to find out what colleagues next door – France in this case – are doing in your field. So I made some good new contacts too.
Liberals and Conservatives Hold Opportune Conference

The British Liberal Political Studies Group and Conservatives and Conservatism Specialist Group conference on the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government was held at an opportune time for British politics. As it was being held on 25th March 2011 at the LSE, protestors for the large TUC march against the coalition cuts were beginning to arrive in London.

The Conference was organised by Professor Russell Deacon (UWIC), with the assistance of Professor Tim Bale (Sussex), and fielded both academic and political speakers.

Historical Theme
On the historical side there were a number of papers. Dr Thomas Otte, University of East Anglia, discussed his in-depth study on this history of coalitions in his paper entitled ‘Lessons of History? Are Coalitions Bound to Fail?’ The historical theme was also followed in Professor Deacon’s paper on the legacy of the 1922 Newport by-election which brought about the downfall of the Lloyd George coalition government. Peter Sloman (Oxford) explored ‘Policy and Coalition Formation: 1931 and 2010 compared’, while Dr Matt Cole (Hansard Society) explored the ‘Historical precedents of the Lib-Lab Pact’.

Fatally Embracing
The more contemporary side of coalition politics was covered by Tim Bale (Sussex) in his paper: ‘Should have seen it coming: the likely consequences for the Lib Dems of Cameron’s fatal embrace’. That was followed by a paper on ‘Coalition politics: How does the Cameron-Clegg relationship affect the role of Prime Minister?’, jointly authored by Dr Richard Heffernan (OU) and Dr Mark Bennister (Canterbury Christchurch), and by Dr Alistair McMillan (Sheffield) who examined Liberal Democrat voters and party coherence in 2010.

Professor Russell Deacon one of the conference organisers said: ‘This was a very successful conference at a very important time for examining the change in the nature of British politics. With both academic and political participation we were able to explore in considerable detail what makes a successful coalition and what risks bringing one down.’

The conference had been made possible by a special subject group grant by the Political Studies Association.
Sport and Politics: A Day of Debate

The 5th Sport and Politics Specialist Group Annual Conference took place on 18th March at the University of Birmingham, hosted by the College of Social Sciences, Department of Sport Pedagogy. The event attracted over 40 delegates to engage in debate and discussion on sport policy in times of austerity.

Sport Policy
A busy day saw seventeen presentations delivered in panel sessions that explored the impacts of the recession on sport policy, youth sport and physical education. The event had three keynote speakers: Professor John Horne (University of Central Lancashire) who spoke on the Olympic Games under the politics of austerity; Margaret Talbot (President, International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education), who examined the highly charged processes behind raising physical education as a public policy concern; and Prof David Kirk (University of Bedfordshire), who interrogated the challenges facing School Sports Partnerships, a key site for a reversal of policy in the first year of the Coalition Government.

Highly Critical
The tone of much of the day was highly critical of the Coalition Government and its approach to sport. (A full conference report can be found at www.sportpolitics.net for more detail on each presentation). A rousing final presentation was given by Prof Mike Collins (University of Gloucestershire) who identified a scenario of worsening social inequalities within sport as a result of funding cuts and who delivered a forthright message about the need for the academic community to find a critical voice within practitioners and policy circles to challenge the short-termism of current sport policy making.

The Group’s 6th annual conference is scheduled for 24th - 25th February 2012 at Southampton Solent University.

Podcasts on Greek Politics, Emotions & the Crisis

As part of its effort to disseminate research, facilitate debate and explore new formats of scholarship, the Greek Politics Specialist Group is delighted to continue its Podcast Series with six presentations on the theme of “Politics, Emotions & the Crisis in Greece”.

Following last year’s successful podcasts on public policy in Southern Europe, this latest collection features some of the leading experts on the field of emotions, populism and extremism:

❖ Prof. Barry Richards (Bournemouth University), "Emotional Governance, Extremism and the National Stage"
❖ Prof. Yannis Stavrakakis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), "Discourse, Affect, Enjoyment: Lacanian Political Theory and the Economy"
❖ Dr. Roman Gerodimos (Bournemouth University), "Extreme Emotions: Victimhood and Populism in the Discourse of Greek Anarchists during the December 2008 Riots"
❖ Prof. Nicolas Demertzis (University of Athens), "The Emotions-Politics Nexus: Approaching the Crisis"
❖ Giorgos Katsampekis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), "Populism in post-democratic times"
❖ Dr. Sappho Xenakis (ELIAMEP/University of Oxford), "In the eye of the beholder: Accounting for the role of emotions in Greek politics"
❖ Dr. Roman Gerodimos (Bournemouth University), "Extreme Emotions: Victimhood and Populism in the Discourse of Greek Anarchists during the December 2008 Riots"

The talks were given during the GPSG’s panels at the 61st annual conference of the Political Studies Association in London. The GPSG would like to thank the Centre for Public Communication Research (CPCR) and the Centre for Journalism & Communication Research (CJCR) at Bournemouth University for co-sponsoring the two panels on politics and emotions.

The podcasts can be downloaded from our website at http://www.gpsg.org.uk
Politics at Cardiff University has undergone considerable development in recent years. Located within the School of European Studies, the Politics Department currently has 260 undergraduates and 60 taught postgraduates as well as 28 PGR students. In addition to long standing strength in European and Comparative Politics, Political Theory, Public Policy and language-based Area Studies we have built expertise in International Relations and in Welsh and Territorial Politics, both of which are being supplemented with new appointments this year. Cardiff is also looking forward to hosting the 2013 Political Studies Association annual conference at its location in the heart of a thriving capital city.

Research
Politics research is organised through three Research Units and several Research Centres which underpin our international reputation for quality research and a strong RAE performance where we ranked second on research power in European Studies.

European Governance
The European Governance, Identities and Public Policies Research Unit (EGIPP) is a large research grouping that examines and compares continuity and change in the institutions, politics, policies and societies of leading European states. Four conceptual themes predominate: Europeanisation, convergence, multi-level governance, and identity formation. EGIPP draws on the in-depth expertise that we possess on the leading EU states and considerable strength in language-based area studies, with attention focused on France, Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain.

Wales Governance
Linked with EGIPP, the Wales Governance Centre (WGC), expanding under the Directorship of Richard Wyn Jones, pursues research on the politics, public policy, political economy and law of Wales and on territorial governance more generally. It has a close working relationship with the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government, and with honorary professors Rhodri Morgan and Baroness Eluned Morgan. The WGC is also home to Wales Legislation Online and the prestigious annual St David’s Day Lecture. Both the WGC and EGIPP work closely with the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data & Methods (WISERD), a £4,000,000 project funded by WAG and ESRC to develop research capacity in economic, social and political sciences.

Political Theory
The Political Theory Research Unit is an unusual concentration of expertise in Contemporary Theory, International Theory and the History of Political Thought. This has fostered long-term collaborative work on justification and diversity and facilitates close work with honorary professors Carole Pateman (current President of APSA), Rex Martin and Andrew Vincent. It is home to the Collingwood and British Idealism Centre. This is the foremost centre for the study of these important figures and, in addition to hosting visiting researchers from all over the world, publishes Collingwood and British Idealism Studies, executive editor David Boucher. The Centre for Ideology Critique and Žižek Studies critically explores the formation of ideologies against the background of changing capitalist societies, drawing on Lacanian and Marxist frameworks at the intersection of politics, psychoanalysis, history and culture.

International Affairs
The newly formed International Affairs Research Unit is an interdisciplinary forum for researchers in global and international issues, including Global Justice, International Law, Security and Foreign Policy and Just War. It is an intellectual meeting place for scholars, practitioners and community groups and offers the opportunity to transcend disciplinary boundaries. It has close links with the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, the United Nations Association and a wide range of NGOs.

Politics staff include fellows of the British Academy (2), the Royal Historical Society (10) and the Learned Society of Wales (7) and academicians of the Academy of the Social Sciences (4) and have held visiting posts all over the world including Harvard, Boston, Oxford, Taiwan and Canterbury. We are also active participants in Political Studies Association specialist groups including British Idealism, French Politics, British Politics, Italian Politics and Politics Teaching & Learning.
Teaching
The breadth of research expertise underpins a thriving postgraduate research culture, recognised by AHRC block grant status in History and Philosophy, an ESRC Doctoral Training pathway in language-based Area Studies and a shared pathway in Politics and International Relations (with Aberystwyth and Swansea). Recent PhD graduates have gone on to work in York, Bristol, Sheffield, Birmingham and Swansea, as well as Johannesburg and Rome III. Cardiff is also home to a growing taught postgraduate body drawn from all over the world to study International Relations, Political Theory, Politics & Public Policy, European Governance & Public Policy and Welsh Politics & Government. This success is reflected by Political Science at Cardiff achieving the ranking of excellent in the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE) Excellence Ranking which rates the School among ‘the most interesting places in Europe for doing your master’s or doctoral degree.’ Cardiff was one of only twenty-one universities in the United Kingdom to be ranked excellent on the basis of publications, citations and mobility.

Politics at Cardiff features a wide range of undergraduate programmes under the Directorship of Edwin Egede including Politics, European Politics & International Relations and many joint programmes including those with Law, History and Languages. Cardiff students are also able to take advantage of our innovative double-degree scheme taught with the internationally-renowned Institut d’Études Politiques, Sciences Po, in Bordeaux and a similar postgraduate scheme with Turin University.

Recent Events
Politics hosts a high profile lecture series on International Relations & International Law, recently featuring speakers such as Bertrand Ramcharan, former United Nations Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights, Lord David Hannay, former UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, Sir Emrys Jones-Parry, former UK Permanent Representative to NATO and the UN Security Council and Malcolm Evans, UK member of the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture. Other recent events include lectures from Slavoj Žižek, David Lidington, MP and Minister for Europe and Rhodri Morgan, the longest serving Welsh First Minister.

We look forward to welcoming you to Cardiff for the 2013 Association Conference.

Politics at Birkbeck

Personalia
The Department of Politics at Birkbeck has changed markedly in recent years (not least in name, from ‘Politics and Sociology’ to ‘Politics’). Yet it continues to build on foundations laid by the late Paul Hirst and Bernard Crick, and their three colleagues (including the highly active Sami Zubaida) who founded the Department in 1972. The Department has grown continuously since its foundation, and has expanded significantly in recent years to its current size of 22 full-time members and several part time lecturers. With the promotion of Deborah Mabbett and Eric Kaufmann to Professor in 2011, the Department now counts 5 Professors as well as 4 Senior Lecturers and 1 Reader.

The Department caters to mature students who take classes in the evening. Most of our students study part-time. 60 percent are enrolled on postgraduate degrees but undergraduate provision has grown almost as fast: total enrolment has more than doubled from 280 in 2000-1 to 600 in 2009-10, the last year of record. We also have a long-standing doctoral programme, with five students completing last year. Our central London location permits easy access to Westminster, Whitehall, and the major think tanks as well as close interaction with other Bloomsbury/University of London colleges, libraries and centres such as the London Consortium. Staff members are also involved in cross-Birkbeck initiatives like the Institute for Social Research and Institute for the Humanities.

Clusters of Strength
Clusters of strength include international politics; public policy; British politics; gender and politics; religion and
identity politics; European politics; and political/social theory. In international politics, the Department has strength in international political economy, IR theory, American foreign policy, war and politics, Middle East politics/political Islam and nationalism in the interstate system. Public policy research has focused on equality policy, political recruitment and public management. In 2010, a new Centre for the Study of British Politics and Public Life was launched, led by Joni Lovenduski, Rosie Campbell and Jason Edwards. Areas of expertise in this area include British politics, gender and voting in Britain, political careers, Northern Ireland politics and multiculturalism.

Work on gender encompasses equality policy, gender and voting, feminist theory and gender and political ritual. In terms of religion and identity politics, members study church-state relations, Shiite and Sunni Islamist movements, nationalism and ethnic conflict, multiculturalism and the political demography of religion and ethnicity. In European politics, specialists work on the politics of the European Union, the domestic politics of European integration, the politics of monetary union, European political economy and Russian politics. The social/political theory cluster features research on social and political theory, the history of social and political thought, critical theory, feminist theory, legal theory and the philosophy of the social sciences.

Recent Events and Highlights

The Department routinely hosts seminars and conferences. Most recently, Tony Wright, MP, who joined the Department as a Professorial Fellow in 2010, convened a seminar by Jonathan Powell. A debate on AV was held jointly with nearby UCL in April 2011, featuring, among others, Billy Bragg, Peter Kellner, Peter Facey, Tony Wright and leaders of the national ‘yes’ and ‘no’ AV campaigns. The Department has, in recent years, held conferences on the following themes: the work of Paul Hirst; the Political Studies Association Women and Politics Group Conference; ‘The War on Terrorism and American Empire after the Cold War’; ‘New Directions in Marxist Theory’; ‘Neoliberalism and the New York Intellectuals’; ‘Social Democracy and European Integration’; ‘Preference Formation and the Future of the European Union’; ‘After the 2010 Election’, ‘The National Coordination of EU Policy in the new Member States’; as well as four ESRC research seminars on Modelling Political Accountability: Principal-Agent Relations in Government’; and ‘African Development and Diaspora’.

Strong Research Culture

The Politics Department has a strong research culture and a tradition of engaging in public debate. Recent research projects include Joni Lovenduski’s shared Leverhulme Programme grant on ‘Gendered Ceremony and Ritual in Parliaments’; Diana Coole’s Leverhulme Professorial Fellowship for her work on the political theory of global population change; Dionysios Dimitrakopoulos’ ESRC award for ‘The Implementation of EU Policy’; Eric Kaufmann’s Belfer Center Fellowship at Harvard’s Kennedy School and his Leverhulme Trust award for a project on religion and political demography; and Deborah Mabbett’s grants from Hanse Wissenschaftskolleg and the WZB on ‘The Regulatory State and the Welfare State’.

Staff publish in a wide range of journals. Notable recent articles by Diana Coole and by Rosie Campbell and Joni Lovenduski have appeared in the British Journal of Political Science. Monographs published recently by members of staff include Dermot Hodson, Governing the Euro Area in Good Times and Bad (Oxford UP 2010); Eric Kaufmann, Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth (Profile Books 2010); Antoine Bousquet, The Scientific Way of Warfare (Hurst and Columbia UP 2009); Robert Singh (with Tim Lynch), After Bush (Cambridge UP 2009); Sami Zubaida, Beyond Islam (IB Tauris 2011); Barbara Zollner, The Muslim Brotherhood (Routledge 2009) and Colleen Bell, The Freedom of Security (UBC Press 2011). Singh and Lynch’s book won the Association’s annual Neustadt Prize for the best book in American Politics. Kaufmann’s book was extensively reviewed in British newspapers and Bousquet’s work has been widely discussed in US military circles.

Major Recognition

Diana Coole and Joni Lovenduski have both been recognised as Academicians of the Academy of Social Sciences. Lovenduski was elected a Fellow of the British Academy and won the Political Studies Association Special Recognition Award for her contribution to political studies in 2007. In 2009 she was awarded the Gender and Politics Award of the ECPR Standing Group on Gender and Politics. Eric Kaufmann won the Association’s Richard Rose Prize for scholars under 40 in 2008. Members of staff appear regularly in the television, radio and print media in Britain and abroad. They have also advised, among others, the Foreign Affairs Select Committee of the House of Commons; the report of the Speaker’s conference of the House of Commons; the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; the US Office of Net Assessment; the House of Lords EU Subcommittee on Economic and Financial Affairs; the European External Action Service; the UK aid ministry (DFID), think tanks such as Chatham House and NGOs such as the Fawcett and Hansard Societies.

Members of staff are active in professional associations and on journals. Joni Lovenduski chairs the editorial board of Political Quarterly. Samantha Ashenden is Managing Editor of Economy and Society. Simon Susen is Managing Editor of the Journal of Classical Sociology, and Eric Kaufmann is a Vice-President of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism and an editor of Nations and Nationalism. Members of staff are also active in Theory and Event, European Journal of Social Security, Historical Materialism, Religion State and Society, Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy (CRISPP) and many other journals.

Through it all, the Department continues to uphold the interdisciplinary focus of its founders and Birkbeck’s mission to provide high-quality, research-led teaching for working Londoners.
Cameron and the Conservatives: The Transition to Coalition Government

As the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government approached its first anniversary, the Centre for British Government within the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) at the University of Leeds, organised a conference in April to consider its implications from a Conservative Party perspective. Entitled Cameron and the Conservatives: The Transition to Coalition Government, its proceedings will be published by Palgrave and will be co-edited by the conference co-convenors Dr Timothy Heppell and Dr David Seawright.

The conference brought together seventeen academics from across nine different politics departments, including Professor Andrew Gamble of Cambridge University; Professor Lord Philip Norton of Hull University and Professor Tim Bale of Sussex University, the latter of whom is the convenor of the Association’s specialist group on Conservatives and Conservatism. All of the members of the Centre for British Government within POLIS participated, with Professor Kevin Theakston, Dr Stuart McAnulla and Dr Victoria Honeymon contributing alongside the conference co-convenors.

Transition from Opposition
A range of policy issues, and how the Conservatives have developed these during that transition from opposition to a coalition government were considered – for example, economic, European, immigration, social and welfare, foreign, territorial and gender. Within a broader political context contributors considered how to interpret Conservative modernisation and the meaning of the Big Society; the performance of Cameron as Prime Minister and campaigning techniques; Conservative party management and internal divisions; and how Labour have set about critiquing the Conservatives.

For further details on the forthcoming Palgrave book contact either Dr Timothy Heppell (t.heppell@leeds.ac.uk) or Dr David Seawright (d.seawright@leeds.ac.uk). For further details on the Centre for British Government contact Professor Kevin Theakston (k.theakston@leeds.ac.uk).

International Politics at Aberystwyth

New Developments
The Department of International Politics is pleased to announce the launch of two new Masters degrees in September 2011. The new multidisciplinary Masters degree in Food and Water Security looks at the greatest challenges facing the world today in terms of the sustainable provision of food and water. The new International Relations degree provides a complementary and innovative package of modules that encompasses cutting edge theoretical and empirical perspectives within the field of IR. In addition, as part of a reconceptualisation of our Masters provision, the Department of International Politics is introducing a new generic core module for all Masters degree schemes that emphasises innovative teaching practice, employability and engagement with the big issues in international relations.

New Staff
The Department is delighted to welcome four new academic members of staff in fields of security studies and intelligence studies. They are: Dr Carl Death, Dr Claudia Hillebrand, Dr Daniel McCarthy and Dr Jan Ruzicka.

Visiting Speakers
The Department has attracted a wide range of international scholars and policy makers to give talks this academic year. These include General Sir Mike Jackson (former Chief of the General Staff), Lord Robertson (Former Secretary-General of NATO and UK Defence Secretary), Professor Barry Buzan (London School of Economics), Beatrice Souviron (Bolivian Ambassador to the UK) and Professor Robert Jervis (Columbia University).
Loughborough Builds on its Strengths

The Department of Politics, History and International Relations at Loughborough has been building on its strengths. We recently appointed three new colleagues – Thoralf Klein, Simona Guerra and Alexandre Christoyannopoulos – and we are about to appoint a Professor in IR and a Lecturer in History. These appointments together diversify our history, politics and IR provisions at a time when the Department is poised to merge into a single school with the University’s Social Sciences and Geography departments.

Vibrant Anarchists

Our vibrant Anarchism Research Group has welcomed several guest speakers, and our established Centre for the Study of International Governance has successfully hosted a roundtable on peacekeeping in Kosovo, a conference on effective multilateralism in international peacekeeping in Kosovo, a conference on the study of international governance and our established Centre for the Study of International Governance has welcomed several guest speakers, our Anarchism Research Group and our Centre for the Study of International Governance have successfully hosted a roundtable on peacekeeping in Kosovo, a conference on effective multilateralism in international peacekeeping in Kosovo, and our Centre for the Study of International Governance has welcomed several guest speakers.

Recent co-edited books include Michael Smith’s *International Relations and the European Union*, David Berry’s *New Perspectives on Anarchism, Labour and Syndicalism*, Matthew Wilson’s *Anarchism and Moral Philosophy* and Süreyyya Evren’s *Post-Anarchism*.

Broad Fronts

Oliver Daddow also recently co-founded BISA’s working group on ‘Interpretivism in International Relations’, Siobhan Lambert-Hurley has been leading an AHRC project on ‘Women’s Autobiography in Islamic Societies’, and Simona Guerra has enlisted the help of a research assistant for her EU-funded project on ‘Interpretivism in International Relations’. This is in addition to Helen Drake co-convening the ‘French Politics and Society’ and Ruth Kinna the Anarchist Studies Network specialist groups of the Political Studies Association.

Finally, Helen Drake was recently appointed Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques, while Michael Smith was bestowed a Lifetime Achievement Award in European Studies at the UACES 2010 Annual Conference in Bruges. Further details of our activities can be found on our website at http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/eu/.

New MSc at Royal Holloway

New Programmes

The Department is pleased to announce its new MSc in Transnational Security Studies, which is recruiting for September 2011. This programme traces the development of the security studies discipline from its traditional approaches through its evolution to include ever more transnational dynamics. It includes option courses in media and war, political violence, biopolitics, the law of targeting, and regional international politics and security studies.

Conferences

Dr. James Sloam held a successful one day conference, ‘A Pedagogy of Civic Engagement for Higher Education’, on 15th April. The conference was sponsored by HEFCE and Prof. Benjamin Barber was the keynote speaker.

Prof. Chris Rumford convened a one-day seminar on 17th February, ‘Twenty20 and the Future of Cricket’. Papers from this event will comprise a special issue of the journal *Sport and Society* at the end of the year.

Research Awards

Dr. Nicholas Allen was awarded £7,500 by the British Academy for a project on ‘Attitudes towards political ethics and misconduct in France’. Dr. Evelyn Goh was awarded an East Asia Fellowship by the East Asia Institute in Seoul for a project on ‘China, Japan, and the Great Power Bargain in East Asia’. The fellowship provides funding for a three-week lecture tour and field research in China, Japan and Korea in autumn 2011.

New ESRC Grant: The Internet and Everyday Rights

Sarah Oates and Vikki Turbine have received an ESRC grant for a project entitled ‘The Internet and everyday rights’. This two-year project examines the role of the internet in political life in Russia through an analysis of ways in which people seek to secure their ‘everyday’ human rights in gaining access to social services such as pensions and health care.

New British Academy Fellow

Carl Knight has been appointed British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow for three years. Carl is working on a project on Global Distributive Justice.
‘Public Administration: The Future of the Discipline’

A one-day colloquium on ‘Public Administration: the future of the discipline’ was recently held at Aston University. The event was sponsored by the Aston Centre for Europe in conjunction with the Association’s Public Administration specialist group and the Public Administration Committee of the Joint Universities Council.

The purpose of the colloquium was to consider the relevancy of Public Administration research to the present zeitgeist of austerity. Despite the shrinking public sector in the UK and beyond, presenters made the case that Public Administration research continues to retain its relevancy. Indeed, its interest in modern complexities and the reach of contemporary Government policy makes the study and teaching of Public Administration more salient than ever before.

Irrepressible Rhodes

Fifty academics and practitioners attended the event. A keynote address from the irrepressible Rod Rhodes outlined the robustness and rich history of this interdisciplinary discipline. Ironically, though this interdisciplinarity and diversity is a major strength of Public Administration research, it has also contributed to the fragmentation and the dispersal of specialists to Business and Management Schools, or in departments specialising in applied subjects (health, or education), rather than traditional politics departments.

Rhodes summarised these tensions by arguing that “like public administration elsewhere, British public administration does not have an agreed theoretical core and it grapples with, but does not resolve, the divide between pure and applied research. Colleagues will continue to bemoan the lack of a disciplinary core or our failure to engage with practitioners. Others will extol the virtues of the latest American intellectual fashion, and rail against British parochialism. We may have moved from order to chaos but that translates into diversity and controversy; it is a discipline in a melting pot of traditions and parochialisms. It also confronts the challenge of blurring genres, and perhaps Britain and the rest of Europe’s greatest contribution to the study of public administration is yet to come with the ‘interpretive turn’.”

Contemporary Challenges

Other journal editors, such as Martin Lodge (Public Administration), Karen Miller (Public Policy and Administration) and Joyce Liddle (International Journal of Public Management) added fine grained detail to the broad picture sketched by Rhodes reporting on the health of the discipline, whilst locating contemporary challenges within a international, historical and theoretical context.

Throughout the day, panellists considered a number of questions, including: Is public administration research still relevant to today’s policy context? Is the ‘public’ the problem in Public Administration, in a policy context where the size and scope of the state is being reduced? What can we learn from Public Administration research and education in other countries? How can, and should, the study of Public Administration relate to research and theory developed in related fields such as Politics and Public Management?

Speakers identified a number of challenges facing the discipline of Public Administration. These included increasing institutional fragmentation, lower availability of research funding, and a lack of confidence amongst potential students in a subject perceived to be only concerned with the public sector. They also detailed the challenges for politicians in making and delivering public policy, such as the global financial crisis, demographic changes and the social and political implications of social change and risks.

Upbeat Assessment

Speakers offered an upbeat assessment for the subject as well as demonstrating the richness and variety of Public Administration research. British Public Administration research regularly engages with other international audiences and is well placed to absorb insights from across the social and management sciences, as well as being open to innovations in theory and methodology from Europe and the US. Furthermore, many speakers argued that a Public Administration perspective was essential in order to better understand policy fields as diverse as policing, local government, healthcare, education, and even terrorism.

The lively debate at the colloquium, and range of ages, backgrounds and professional experiences of attendees, indicated the continuing importance of the subject of Public Administration, both to train and educate students about public policy-making and delivery, and also to better understand the activities of governments at all levels.

Those interested in joining the Public Administration Specialist group are most welcome and should contact Dr Claire Dunlop, University of Exeter c.a.dunlop@ex.ac.uk.

The Public Administration Specialist group is sponsoring doctoral students who want to attend the PAC conference ‘Public Service – Smaller Government’ 5th-6th September 2011 at Birmingham University. For more information, please see http://www.govsoc.bham.ac.uk/events/pac-2011/ or contact conference organiser Philip Whiteman p.whiteman@bham.ac.uk.
Link Up in Defence

The Insurgency Research Group, Centre for Defence Studies (King’s College London), and the Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups (CIWAG) US Naval War College held their first joint conference on Strategic Communications on 9th - 10th May 2011. The conference considered the current state of confusion in strategic communications, recognising the new, fragmented communications environment and the changing ways states and state-challengers interact with populations. Major General Lorimer, chief of strategic communications, MoD, who also gave a keynote address to the College on the 10th May on the role of the UK in Afghanistan, opened the conference. Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman, Vice-Principal (Strategy & Development), commented, “The quality of thinking on strategic communications has yet to catch up with its importance.”

Predictive Judgement
On 13th March, Correlli Barnett CBE gave a lecture entitled ‘Good Predictive Judgement – a Leader’s Essential Piece of Kit’ as part of The King’s Distinguished Visiting Fellow programme which is designed to bring academics of national and international calibre to provide a series of lectures at the college.

On 16th March, the Defence Studies Department and King’s Centre for Contemporary British History staged the ‘Britain and the 1991 Gulf War Witness Seminar’. This Seminar recorded the testimony of those British politicians and officials who were involved in the origins, conduct and aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War from political, diplomatic, economic, legal, intelligence and military perspectives.

On 14th April, the Air Power Division of King’s College London held its inaugural debate in their new Air Power Studies Debate Series on the motion ‘Autonomous Weapons and Morality in War are Incompatible’.

New Appointments at Northumbria

The Department of Social Sciences has recently made two new appointments. Edoardo Ongaro joins the Department as Professor of International Public Services Management. He has published extensively on the topic of administrative reforms at the national and European levels.

Keith Baker also joins the Department as a Lecturer in Public Services. His recent research focuses on the role of state power in managing the multi-level networks through which nuclear power stations are developed and different approaches employed by the British, French, Finnish and American governments.
Polanyi and Pupils

The University of Southampton’s Centre for Citizenship, Globalisation and Governance (C2G2) hosted a conference entitled ‘New Directions in Polanyian Scholarship’ on 12th and 13th March 2011 at Sarum College in Salisbury. The conference (arranged and convened by Dr Christopher Holmes) drew together internationally renowned academics from all over the world and, true to C2G2’s interdisciplinary remit, attendees came from a variety of disciplines, including not only political science and political economy, but also anthropology, philosophy and sociology. Papers were given on a diverse range of topics, both empirical and theoretical, but united in that they all either reflected upon or drew inspiration from the work of the mid-twentieth century political economist and anthropologist Karl Polanyi.

The workshop vividly demonstrated the value of Polanyi’s work at fulfilling the promise of inter-disciplinarity by providing a common language through which to converse about social scientific issues. Various coherent analytical themes emerged across the different papers presented, provoking spirited and productive exchanges between participants. Dr Holmes is currently in the process of editing a journal special issue including a selection of papers delivered at the workshop. This innovative project – the first ever special issue focusing on Polanyian social science – promises both to capture something of the growing buzz surrounding Polanyian research agendas and to showcase some of the most cutting edge work drawn from them.

Schools Event
On March 17th, PhD students, Anjelica Finnegan and Emily Rainsford, together with staff and students put on a public engagement event for pupils in three local schools. The theme of the day was to discuss how the pupils would like to contribute to their local, national and international communities in the coming year. Staff and PhD students contributed with their expertise with help from undergraduate and master students.

Outreach and Engagement
The event had multiple purposes. For the School of Social Sciences, it provided an opportunity to participate in an outreach and public engagement event, as well as giving the academic staff an opportunity to communicate their research to an audience they might not interact with very often. For the undergraduate and master students, this was an excellent volunteering opportunity that also gave them more insight into the research being conducted in the school. For the pupils, the aim was to put on an event that would go beyond the textbook but still be relevant to the Citizenship Education Curriculum. Moreover, they had the opportunity to spend the day at a Russell Group University and learn from leading academics in the field, as well as meeting Alan Whitehead, MP and Andrea Rennard, Volunteering Education Curriculum. The documentation of the day is in the process of being compiled into a document that will be sent off to policymakers and to the pupils themselves.

KPMG Internship at Oxford

On 1st February Neil Sherlock, Partner in charge of the Government Relations Team launched an essay competition for two Oxford University students to win an internship in his team. Neil Sherlock is an Oxford University PPE alumnus and strong supporter of recruiting politics graduates.

To enter the competition students had to submit a 1,500 word essay answering the question ‘England does not love coalitions’. Does Disraeli’s view still stand in 2010.

KPMG received 45 exceptionally high calibre essays answering the question and after much deliberation picked two winners: Jack Andrews and Philippa Byrne. They both joined Neil’s team at Easter to work with the Public Affairs team presenting KPMG’s policy views to Government, politicians, regulators and other stakeholders in the UK and EU.

Newly Elected Academicians

CONCEPT Holds Conference on Bonnie Honig

What ties humanity together? Many answers to that question have been offered – our reason, our language, our productive activity, our being made in the image of God. One possible and increasingly popular answer is our common mortality and capacity to suffer; this ‘tragic humanism’ was the subject of a recent conference hosted by CONCEPT, the University of Nottingham’s Centre for Normative Political Theory, which focused on the work of Bonnie Honig, Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University. Professor Honig gave the plenary address, deploying a reading of the story of Antigone to challenge the assumptions of tragic humanism. This was followed by a series of panels on various aspects of Professor Honig’s work, including papers from Alan Finlayson, David Owen, Marc Stears and Mark Philip.

Mathew Humphrey, Co-director of CONCEPT said: “Bonnie Honig is doing some of the most interesting and important work in political theory right now, on democracy and humanism in particular. This was a tremendous opportunity to develop engagement with UK-based scholars working in the same field.”
OCSID Sponsors Conference on the
Politics of the Great Recession

The Oxford Centre for the Study of Inequality and Democracy (OCSID) is hosting a conference entitled ‘Popular Reactions to the Great Recession.’ The conference, to be held on 24th - 26th June, is part of a three-year research project entitled ‘The Politics of Economic Crisis,’ funded by OCSID, Princeton University’s Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS) and Princeton’s Centre for the Study of Democratic Politics (CSDP). The project explores how a variety of democratic political systems respond to the current economic crisis, with the aim of accounting for the variation in policies adopted by different countries in response to the crisis and of tracing the economic and political effects of those policies.

Both Sides
The upcoming conference will examine the popular dimensions of the current crisis, exploring the dynamics and determinants of public reactions to the economic crisis that began in the fall of 2008. Specifically, the conference will explore how public opinion about the economy varies across countries and regions; whether voters tend to reward parties of particular ideological persuasions; whether patterns of popular mobilisation vary with crisis intensity; whether and how patterns of media coverage and categories of social identities affect attributions of blame; and how the economic crisis impacts public opinion on specific issues such as immigration and support for the Euro. The conference focus on popular responses to the crisis complements an earlier conference, held in Princeton in March 2010, where scholars from both sides of the Atlantic presented papers analysing the government responses to the financial crisis.

Please find full details at http://ocsid.politics.ox.ac.uk

Hanging Over the Edge of a Cliff?
How Teachers Might Help Rescue Politics

James Newell
University of Salford

How can the Association enhance its capacity to defend and promote the discipline’s interests in the currently unfavourable economic and policy environment? More active engagement with teachers of politics in schools may contain at least part of the answer. As colleagues will be all too well aware, public expenditure cuts and changes to the university funding regime are placing politics, along with the other social sciences, in a position whose precariousness is ever increasing. Indicative of this is, perhaps, the recent initiative of management at my own institution in launching a university-wide discussion of the future of the arts, humanities and social sciences at Salford. No doubt Salford is not alone in this. Indicative too, is the recent launch of the Campaign for Social Science to which the Association is an active contributor.

Raising Awareness
Against the current background, the Campaign is seeking to raise awareness of what social science is – and of the contribution it makes to collective wellbeing beyond academia – through a wide range of actions. These include a series of regional road shows providing an opportunity for discussing aims and strategies and the ways in which all social scientists can help. Meanwhile, the Association’s annual conference this year featured a well-advertised workshop on engagement – an event underpinned by recognition of the way in which the Research Excellence Framework and the current economic situation have presented academics with the twin challenges of ensuring their work is relevant to communities beyond their own and of assisting policy-makers and practitioners to do far more with far less.

Defending and Promoting
So the Association and its members are, it would seem, actively involved in a wide range of discussions and initiatives aimed at defending and promoting the discipline’s interests – and there can be little doubt that efforts in this area will need to increase in the coming months bearing in mind the way in which the new university funding arrangements from 2012 onwards have led some to conclude that fewer students will register for courses in politics and allied areas, and bearing in mind too that research funding is becoming ever more concentrated and difficult to obtain.

The range of initiatives the Association has taken to enhance its capacity to engage with teachers of politics in schools can help with this because, by speaking more effectively to teachers’ intellectual and professional concerns, the Association can expect to help raise the demand for politics places at University level and so increase the quality of politics graduates. Thereby its capacity to defend, and to raise the profile of, UK political scientists generally can be expected to increase. With this in mind it is worth reflecting on what the Association has done hitherto in this area – this with a view to encouraging debate and inviting the thoughts of members generally about possible further initiatives.

Considerable Obstacles
Having managed to recruit close on 100 school teachers over a period of twelve months between 2009 and 2010, we had assumed that we might then be able to move rapidly to establish a special Political Studies Association teachers’ section to give these colleagues their own organisational identity. However, we quickly became aware that this faced considerable obstacles thanks to the specific ways in which the work situations of teachers differ from those of political scientists in higher education.
From interviews we carried out with teachers in a wide variety of schools, we discovered, first, that those who teach politics invariably combine it with the teaching of some other subject, most frequently history, but sometimes sociology or economics. Consequently, and thanks to the discipline’s minority status (in terms of the numbers of pupils it attracts), politics teachers can sometimes feel isolated and would welcome the opportunity to network and exchange ideas with colleagues in other institutions. Third, teachers of politics in schools have many more teaching hours than academics (typically about 24 and upwards per week). Fourth, the opportunities available to them to access funds for CPD, conferences and such like are much more restricted. Consequently, they face two corresponding major challenges: finding the time to keep up-to-date, as the textbooks become out of date very quickly; getting hold of teaching resources that they can deploy with the minimum of preparation time.

**Attracting Students**

Given all this, when asked about the kinds of resources and facilities they would welcome from an organisation such as the Political Studies Association, teachers were very clear in stressing that these had less to do with conferences, paper-writing and research, and much more to do with teaching and enhancing the attractiveness of the discipline to their students. With this in mind, we recently announced to teachers a series of new initiatives that we intend to develop and expand over the coming year:

- A speakers’ programme for schools: thanks to the offers of a large number of Association members, academics from across the discipline will be available to visit schools free of charge to give lectures to students on any subject of teachers’ choice related to the school politics curriculum.
- Free workshops on topics of interest to teachers and their students, the first of these being envisaged as one on the theme of ‘Applying to Study Politics at a British University’.
- A student video competition: This year we are inviting groups of school students to submit a short video on ‘Why Politics Matters’. Shortlisted groups will be invited to Parliament to discuss the ideas raised in their video to a panel of politicians, journalists and academics. The winning group will receive their award at the Association’s annual Awards Dinner in London on 29th November, broadcast on **BBC Parliament**, with accommodation provided for them and their teacher in a central London hotel.

In the near future we are also planning to launch an Online Resource Centre which will include a listing of events such as public lectures that may be of interest to teachers and their students, and a facility to enable teachers to exchange teaching ideas and resources with fellow teacher members.

**High Stakes**

These initiatives, which owe a great deal to the work of our Chief Executive Officer, Helena Djurkovic and her discussions with a circle of colleagues extending well beyond the membership of the Executive Committee, represent work in progress. If you have read thus far then please be encouraged to contribute ideas that will aid further progress: the stakes, in terms of the future of your discipline, have never been higher.

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**Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart win the 2011 Johan Skytte Prize**

The 2011 Johan Skytte Prize has been awarded to Ronald Inglehart (University of Michigan) and Pippa Norris (Harvard University) in recognition of their innovative ideas on the relevance and roots of political culture in a global context. The Johan Skytte Prize is among the most prestigious prizes in the political science field, with a cash award of SEK 300,000.

The 2011 Johan Skytte Prize for political science is awarded to two researchers who worked closely together to systematically investigate and highlight the importance of human values and value change for political behaviour and societal life. Ronald Inglehart, a professor in sociology at the University of Michigan, and Pippa Norris, a professor of political science at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, will share the prize for “contributing innovative ideas about the relevance and roots of political culture in a global context, transcending previous mainstream approaches of research.”

Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris will accept the prize at a ceremony in Uppsala on 24th September 2011.

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**Executive Politics Prize**

Julia Fleischer (German Research Institute for Public Administration, Speyer) is this year’s winner of the Executive Politics Prize for her Political Studies Association paper on ‘Administrative Elites in Executive Politics: Institutional and Sectoral Dynamics’. The Association’s specialist group on Executive Politics and Governance ran a series of panels at the 2011 annual conference and awards its annual prize to the best paper presented by a young career researcher.

For further information on the specialist group, please visit: [www.executivepolitics.org](http://www.executivepolitics.org)
Graduate Conference a Major Success

The Association Graduate Network organised another successful conference as part of the 2011 Annual Conference in London on 18th April. Once again it was a fruitful event for all delegates, who had the opportunity to present their work, in some case for the first time, in a friendly and supportive environment.

This was a one day event, including 11 panels, where 30 delegates from UK and international institutions presented papers on Democracy, Party Politics, IR, Public Policy, Institutions, European Politics, Social Movements and Energy Policy. Each panel allowed for lively discussions at the end of speakers’ presentations, offering delegates the opportunity to debate their work and exchange constructive feedback.

The Association also provided free Lunch with the Publishers, following the same format as last year. This year The Edwin Mellen Press was invited to answer questions on how to publish PhD theses. The Edwin Mellen Press publishes free of charge and its sole criterion for publication is that a manuscript must make a contribution to the literature. Publications are peer-reviewed and are published in English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Hebrew, and Welsh. For further information, please see their website www.mellenpress.com or contact the editors directly at editor@mellenpress.com.

The winner of this year’s Best Paper Competition was Magdalena Staniek, from Trinity College Dublin, who submitted a paper titled ‘What determines the Number of Parties in new Democracies? Effects of Culture, Institutions and Economics on Party Pluralism’. The winner was awarded £100. All papers submitted for the Best Paper Competition were given detailed feedback by the Association reviewers.

If you submitted a paper and you would like to receive feedback, please contact Kathleen Henehan at K.A.Henehan@lse.ac.uk.

Once again the graduate conference was a worthwhile experience for participants and organisers alike. Graduate conferences help young researchers to build presentation and networking skills and gain confidence and awareness about their work. If you have suggestions on how to improve or strengthen this format, please get in touch and let us know how we can make this a better experience for everyone.

Local Government Reform in Comparative Perspective’ Palermo, 8th - 10th September 2011

Call for Papers

Panel sponsored by the UK Political Studies Association’s Italian Politics Specialist Group.

Reforms at the local level across several European countries and beyond in recent years, have seen an emphasis on strong local executives and prompt decision-making. This has often translated into weak local councils vis-à-vis powerful mayors and their appointed cabinets and managers, posing important questions concerning checks and balances and the role of oppositions within local councils:

questions that institutional reforms often leave unresolved. However, institutional reforms are only one among many factors that are contributing to reshaping the current role of councillors in local politics and policy.

Explore Research

The purpose of this panel is to make it possible to explore research findings from different types of local government in democratic contexts, in order to advance understanding of local councils and their functioning and to develop research hypotheses about the effects of the re-positioning of councillors in local government. Papers are, therefore, invited which offer to throw light on one or more of the above issues.

Submissions

Paper proposals, including a brief abstract of 100 - 200 words should be submitted by 1st July to the panel organisers, Sonia Bussu (s.bussu@lse.ac.uk), Tullia Galanti (tullia.galanti@gmail.com) and Jim Newell (j.l.newell@salford.ac.uk)

For more information about the conference, please visit the SISP website at: http://www.sisp.it/convegno

Political Studies Association of Ireland Annual Conference 2011 ‘Political Reform in Ireland’ Dublin, 21st -23rd October 2011

Call for Papers

Further information is available from the PSAI website at www.psaie.ie

General enquiries should be sent to david.farrell@ucd.ie

Submitting a Proposal

Paper proposals should be 300 words and submitted by email to david.farrell@ucd.ie (Please put “PSAI” in the subject box.) The deadline for paper proposals is Friday 1st July 2011.
Building on Edinburgh Conference
As last year, the 2011 gathering was preceded by a day of specialist workshops and the post-graduate conference. Particularly important for the REF preparations was the workshop on impact and engagement, where academics and practitioners were able to discuss strategies for engagement with practitioners and exchange of ideas on best practice. The main conference programme was packed with interesting panels and plenaries. The highlights of the conference were the keynotes by Professor Iain McLean on coalition and minority governments in the UK; Professor Carole Pateman’s reflections on Participatory Democracy; Sir Mike Aaronson on international intervention in Libya; and Nik Gowing on the role of the ICT in promoting new social movements. The Annual Dinner was lively and the after dinner speaker Professor Tony Wright engaged the audience with a sparkling talk about challenges facing political institutions today.

Running up to the REF!
Finally, many of the issues raised during the four days of the conference highlight the nature of the future challenges that our discipline will face in the run up to REF2014. This makes next year’s conference theme – ‘In Defence of Politics’ – all the more pressing, as the Political Studies Association continues to position itself as a voice for the discipline. We look forward to seeing all you in Belfast next year.
Prizewinners at the London Conference 2011

Sue Pryce receiving the ‘Crick Prize for Outstanding Teaching – Main Prize 2010’

Gulshan Khan receiving the ‘Crick Prize For Outstanding Teaching – New Entrant Prize 2010’

Michael Neu, recipient of the ‘Sir Ernest Barker Dissertation Prize’

Roman Gerodimos, recipient of the ‘Arthur Mc Dougall Dissertation Prize’ with Carole Pateman, President, APSA

James D J. Brown, recipient of the prize for ‘Best Paper in Politics in 2010’ pictured here with Andrew Russell, Manchester

Vicky Randall, Chair, Political Studies Association; Roberta Guerrina, Conference Convener, Surrey; and Charlie Jeffery, Edinburgh

Ted Svensson, recipient of the ‘Lord Bryce Dissertation Prize’ with Vicky Randall

Claire Annesley, winner of the ‘Richard Rose Prize’ with Andrew Russell, Manchester

Janoslav Petrik and Josez Janovsky, Masaryk University, Czech Republic at the 2011 Association Conference

Other Prize Winners - not pictured

Harrison Prize for Best Paper in Political Studies in 2010
Mona Lena Krook

Best Paper in BJPIR in 2010
Timothy Ruback

Walter Bagehot Dissertation Prize
Jóhanna Jónsdóttir

David Hastings Dunn, receiving his prize for ‘Best Paper in BJPIR in 2009’