Greetings!

This issue of the PEP Report puts the diversity of our research area on full display. Our Featured Articles and Forum explore how executives work under varying political and administrative environments, which in many ways could be the label for the entire PEP section. We begin with two APSA award winning articles by Steve Weatherford and Rachel Potter. Steve’s article explores how presidents deal with agency independence in a time of serious crisis. Rachel examines agency control in the context of the rulemaking process, focusing on the strategies that result in policymaking power. Wayne Steger considers the role of ideology and polarization in driving the behaviors of President Obama and Congress, arguing that power hungry politicians have ultimately formed a “Hypocracy.”

Our Forum in this issue was organized by Brandon Rottinghaus and centers on the products of the recent conference on governors hosted by the Eagleton Institute’s Center on the American Governor. The diverse set of pieces explores gubernatorial power, state-level politics, state-level inter-branch relations, among other topics. Authors also discuss some of the data challenges and opportunities that this area of research presents. For example, a piece by Nathaniel Birkhead and Jeffrey Harden describe their efforts to collect “bill-level data on gubernatorial vetoes” as a means of expanding scholarship on gubernatorial action in the legislative arena.

On the teaching side, Jennifer Hopper offers insight and suggestions about how best to get students engaged in presidency research. She argues that using relatable people and experiences often times works better than abstract or historically distant anecdotes in driving student interest.

Once again, we have a healthy number of new books in this issue—more than a dozen in all—introduced by the ones who wrote them. A great sign of the productivity of our section! They cover a tremendous amount of ground from public opinion to elections to leadership. There is even a comparative executives book from Genevieve Kehoe exploring how term limits effect behavior.

Finally, we celebrate the careers of two longtime leading figures in our section: Mary Lenn Dixon, who has recently retired from Texas A&M University Press, and Tom Langston who passed away on April 14, 2014.

We hope you enjoy this (extended) issue of the PEP Report, and as always any questions, comments or concerns are welcomed!

Justin & John
The PEP Report is published twice annually on behalf of the Presidents & Executive Politics Section of the American Political Science Association.

The PEP Report serves the scholarly community in presidential and executive politics. The editors of the Report welcomes your submissions and ideas.

PEP OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Steven Schier
Carleton College
sschier@carleton.edu

VICE PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT-ELECT
B. Dan Wood
Texas A&M University
bdanwood@polisci.tamu.edu

SECRETARY-TREASURER
Brandice Canes-Wrone
Woodrow Wilson School and Department of Politics
Princeton University
34 Corwin Hall
Princeton, NJ 08544
bcwrone@princeton.edu

PAST PRESIDENT
Lyn Ragsdale
Rice University
lkgragsdale@rice.edu

PEP WEBMASTER
José D. Villalobos
University of Texas at El Paso
jdvillalobos2@utep.edu

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PEP EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITORS
Justin S. Vaughn
Boise State University
justinvaughn@boisestate.edu

John Hudak
The Brookings Institution
jhudak@brookings.edu

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Emily Parsons
emily.m.parsons@gmail.com

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Suspicion of the central bank has been around since Alexander Hamilton, but as the American economy – and the role of finance – grew over the post-war period, the arguments of neither the populist left nor the libertarian right could gain much traction. Through the 1990s and into the new century, monetary policy (more than the actions of the president or Congress) was widely seen as the source of sustained prosperity, and Fed Chair Alan Greenspan gained the status of a minor celebrity. The financial crisis that began in 2007 changed all that.

Initially, the Fed’s aggressive response to the bursting of the housing bubble and the credit crunch, including bailing out the investment bank Bear Stearns, garnered praise. As the crisis worsened in September 2008, however, the Fed placed the government’s main mortgage-guarantee agencies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, into conservatorship; allowed the investment bank Lehman Brothers to fall into bankruptcy; and announced that it would provide an $85 billion loan to the insurance giant AIG. “The biggest expansion of the central bank’s power in its 95-year history” shifted the political winds abruptly. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi asked of Fed Chair Ben Bernanke, “Why does one person have the right to grant $85 billion... without the scrutiny and transparency the American people deserve?” and the previously supportive House Financial Services Committee Chair Barney Frank worried that “the Fed and Treasury were intervening in markets without restraint.” Republican Jeb Hensarling attacked the bailouts for “setting a dangerous and unmistakable precedent... the appearance of a socialist and not a free-market approach to managing our economy.” Scholarly research underlined these concerns, tracking the expansion of the Fed’s role in the U.S. political economy and raising the question whether the electorally accountable branches should exercise more control over the central bank.

It is no exaggeration to denote the financial crisis, like the stock market crash of 1929, as a critical juncture, a potential inflection in the developmental trajectory of relations among major governmental institutions. From the perspective of economic policy, the Fed’s emergency actions not only altered the total amount of money in the system (the conventional role of monetary policy) but also committed future tax revenues to back loans, guarantee non-Treasury assets, and pay interest on bank reserves. From the perspective of political economy, some of the Fed’s actions crossed the boundary from monetary into fiscal policy, traditionally reserved for the President and Congress. Compared with the typical situation when investigating historical turning points, the recency of the financial crisis and
THE PRESIDENT, THE FED, AND THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

the on-going nature of its aftermath offer the opportunity to view key decisions from a perspective nearer to real time. Have the Fed’s recent actions amounted to a “power play” intended to sideline elected officials, especially the president as the usual agenda-setter on economic policy?

To answer this question, I begin by setting out a baseline – the pattern of relations between the Fed and post-war presidents – against which recent actions can be compared. Although consultation between the White House and the Fed varied, Fed recommendations always constituted an influential voice. Presidents came to realize that the Fed’s authority derived less from its formal status than from its institutional strengths compared with fiscal authorities: its specialized financial knowledge and experience regarding macroeconomic trends, and its capacity to respond quickly to crises. The Fed’s view of economic conditions has usually been close to the administration’s, but on those few occasions when they differed, the Fed has regularly implemented monetary actions in the absence of, and occasionally even in opposition to the publicly-announced preferences of elected politicians. Financial crises have elevated the Fed’s role, and over the last couple of decades, they have occurred with increasing frequency. Well before the 2007 crisis, the Fed took the lead in responding to stock market plunges such as Black Monday (1987), or the failure of large, interconnected financial organizations such as Long Term Capital Management (1998). These experiences strengthened the Fed’s capacity to develop and deploy policy tools attuned to the changing configuration of technology, trading instruments, and financial networks thrown up by a system driven by powerful incentives to innovate.

In light of this history, how does the recent pattern of interaction between the Fed and the elected branches compare? My analysis concentrates on three vital moments: the response to the crisis as it evolved during President Bush’s last year; the surprising decision by the Obama administration to continue the policy trajectory; and the pattern of stimulative policies implemented by the Fed during the Great Recession.

The economic policy apparatus of the Bush White House had consistently focused on enacting long-term tax and spending changes dictated by the President’s business-oriented, supply side ideology. Bush’s economic advisors were consistently bested by political strategists, and given the strong conviction that financial markets needed no government oversight, the administration was comfortable with the Fed’s taking the lead. Although Treasury Secretary Paulson was instrumental in negotiating early settlements, the administration began to press Congress to enact the TARP bailout only when the Fed Chair himself declared that the central bank had reached the limit of its legitimate involvement.

When Obama entered the White House, many observers expected him to alter the thrust of the policy he inherited, and when he did not it raised the question whether that outcome reflected the defeat of the President’s progressive intentions by a powerful external opposition. My analysis shows that this was not the case. The momentum of the complex of
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policies initiated in 2007-08 would have made it politically and administratively costly, perhaps impossible, to pursue a different path. And Obama’s staffing of his economic team – whose preponderant advice favored attending first to large money-center financial institutions rather than to housing, local banks and business – appears to reflect the considered thinking of the President himself, at least in the crucial first year of the new administration.

Finally, in the period since the financial crisis, the Fed has acted aggressively to prop up demand, by cutting short-term interest rates essentially to zero and by new, unconventional techniques such as quantitative easing and relaxing collateral requirements for loans and guarantees to banks. Economic criticisms of this course have cited the potential for future inflation, while Republican opposition has denounced the Fed for shoring up the administration. Drawing on the Fed’s formal pronouncements and on a statistical analysis of the timing of Fed actions, I compare two alternative accounts: that the Fed steadily loosened monetary conditions; and that Fed actions were targeted to the rate of job growth and the degree to which fiscal policy was stalemated by the standoff between the President and Congress. With a short time series, the analysis cannot be viewed as definitive, but the results show that monetary policy has not simply been continuously expansive but has changed in tandem with the growth of the macroeconomy and the fiscal policy actions of the Congress.

Fed Chair Bernanke repeatedly testified to Congress that the immediate material and human costs of persistent unemployment weigh more heavily than the uncertain possibility of future inflation, given the Fed’s mandate to attend to both growth and price stability. Against this standard, the Fed’s action does not appear excessive: stuck at nearly 8% for almost three years, unemployment signalled an historically anemic recovery, while both the actual inflation rate and the public’s inflationary expectations were falling. In the context – that is, given both the costs of prolonged stagnation and the unlikelihood that the elected branches will undertake compensatory fiscal policy actions – the Fed’s use of unconventional tools is well within its mandate and consistent with the pattern of post-war stabilization actions.

This article is a condensed version of the paper that won the Martha Joynt Kumar Founders Award for the best paper by a Ph.D.-holding scholar at the 2012 APSA Annual Meeting. This version omits footnotes, citations, and acknowledgments, which are available in the published version (Presidential Studies Quarterly 43:2 [June 2013], pp. 299-327)
Notice-and-comment rulemaking has become a fixture of the modern bureaucracy. The ubiquity of this (and other) administrative procedures is often attributed to its use as an instrument of control by a political principal; by instituting a process (or a set of processes) that an agency must follow when making a decision, the president or Congress ensures that the agency sets policy more in line with their own preferences (McCubbins et al., 1987).

While the logic underlying this argument is compelling, administrative procedures function quite differently in practice than in theory. That is, administrative procedures are not self-executing. Instead, they must be implemented by the very agencies whose behavior they are designed to constrain. And agencies typically have a significant degree of discretion when it comes to managing the administrative process. For instance, in the notice-and-comment rulemaking process agency bureaucrats must decide how long to set the public comment period and when to publish a proposed rule. They also choose whether to publish a pre-rule (formally known as an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking), to host hearings during the public comment period, to extend the initial public comment period or reopen the rule for a secondary comment period, amongst myriad other decisions.

These decisions are not trivial. Agencies churn out dozens of rules each year,¹ allowing bureaucrats to become familiar with the nuances of administrative procedures and how they tend to play out for their agency. In this paper, I examine how bureaucrats leverage this insider knowledge, along with their administrative discretion, to steer the notice-and-comment rulemaking process in their preferred direction. Specifically, I argue that agency bureaucrats manipulate the administrative process in ways that make it more difficult for members of Congress to interfere with a rulemaking.

Agencies use procedures strategically to stave off the possibility that Congress will reverse an agency’s proposal. Agencies dislike rule reversals because they invest considerable time and resources in the rulemaking process (West, 2009). Drafting a proposed rule can take an agency anywhere from several months to many years. The proposed rule that is published in the Federal Register represents all of the effort, research, and internal compromises that the agency has made. Congress can undo all of this by writing a law that overwrites the agency’s rule, attaching a limitation rider barring the rule to an appropriations bill, or overturning

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¹ In total, federal agencies issue an average of approximately 3,500 rules each year (www.gao.gov/fedrules/). However, there is considerable variation in volume by individual agency.
the rule using authority granted under the Congressional Review Act.2

So, how do agencies stave off congressional incursions using rulemaking procedures? While there are many possible ways that an agency might do this, I identify two. First, if the agency anticipates that congressional powers might not be favorably disposed to their rule, they can select a longer public comment period for their proposed rule. Although counterintuitive at first glance, granting more time allows stakeholder groups to get organized and build coalitions (Kerwin and Furlong, 2011). While scholars have identified numerous benefits to agencies of engaging in broad external consultation (Carpenter, 2001; Moffitt, 2010), in this case by inviting more groups to the table the agency can tap into a set of allies that supports the policy. In doing so the agency builds support for their proposed rule, making intervention more costly; Members of Congress will be less likely to intervene when doing so requires them to confront entrenched supporters.

A second strategy is for the agency to time the public comment period associated with a proposed rule to make it less likely that members of Congress learn about the proposal and also make it more costly for them to respond when they do. Specifically, when faced with an ideologically distant Congress, they can manipulate the timing of the release of the proposed rule (i.e., when the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register) - and, importantly, when the comment period occurs - to coincide with periods when Congress is less likely to respond. In other words, the agency can make sure the comment period, the time when interest groups are empowered to pull fire alarms (McCubbins and Schwartz, 1984), comes at an inopportune time for Congress (e.g., when Congress is in recess).

These two strategies are flip sides of the same coin, both serving to preempt congressional incursions into agency rulemaking. In the paper, I find empirical support for both strategies using a new dataset of approximately 5,000 proposed rules from 24 agencies from 2000 – 2010. I look at both the length and the timing of the public comment period and show that agencies employ these strategies when they are ideologically distant from Congress. Of course, these strategic behaviors are important in so much that affect policy outcomes, not just behavior. While case evidence suggests that agencies are more likely to finalize a proposed rule after employing these strategies, future work would do well to systematically address how these strategies affect the outcomes of the rulemaking process.

In sum, although we often think of administrative procedures as a “solution” to the problem of political control of the bureaucracy, the institution of these procedures is not the end of the story. That is, agencies can commandeer these procedures to steer policy in their preferred direction. This paper begins a conversation about the evolving and dynamic nature of the principal-agent relationship in the context of political control of the bureaucracy.

2 These reversal powers stand in addition to the usual avenues that Congress can punish a wayward agency, including slashing agency budgets and dragging agency leaders to testify in hostile committee hearings.
COMMANDEERING THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS: HOW AGENCIES USE RULEMAKING PROCEDURES TO PURSUE POLICY

This piece is a condensed version of the paper that won the David Naveh Founders Award for Best Graduate Student Paper

REFERENCES


As a member of the minority party in the Senate in 2006, Barack Obama joined his party in voting against raising the debt limit. Obama argued that interest on the rising federal debt would crowd out spending on infrastructure, education and social services, and would impose a burden on future generations. As President, Obama dismissed his earlier action as a “political vote” arguing that “we can’t play around with this stuff.”

Obama’s change in position is typical. Most Representatives and Senators of both political parties adopt a fiscal conservative position when they are out of power while taking a responsible governing position when their party is responsible for governing. The debt ceiling votes in January of 2013 illustrate the point. A majority of Senate Democrats voted for the increase while the majority of the Senate Republicans voted against it. The same bill passed in the House with a majority of Republicans voting for it, while a majority of the Democrats voted against it.

Fiscal conservatism on debt ceiling votes has emerged as a political strategy used by the minority party to deny the majority party the ability to deliver benefits to its party constituencies. Since the Reagan years, Republicans have accepted deficits to secure spending on programs like defense and to cut taxes without making the more politically difficult trade-off of cuts in other programs. For their part, Democrats run deficits to finance a wide range of programs. The majority party in Congress needs to raise the debt ceiling to be able to deliver benefits to their constituents. Thus in the past, the majority of the members of both parties have voted to raise the debt ceiling when their party is in the majority while voting against it when their party is in the minority of their chamber.

Politics—not ideology, drives the decisions of most members of Congress. The rise of asymmetric polarization of the political parties in Congress, however, threatens to destabilize the politics of debt ceiling authorizations. The threat of primary challenges, backed by money from national organizations affiliated with the Tea Party movement, keeps many congressional Republicans from taking the responsible government position that the majority party in Congress has always taken. After the January 2013 votes, Americans for Prosperity, Freedom Works, American Heritage Action, and other groups sought to mobilize Republican party activists against an increase in the debt ceiling (without off-setting spending cuts). In October of 2013, for the very first time, a majority of the majority party in the House voted against raising the debt ceiling. The bill passed with the support of a minority of House Republicans and a majority of House Democrats. The majority of Republicans in the
FISCAL CONSERVATISM: IDEOLOGY OR PURSUIT OF POWER?

House stood firm in their opposition despite an unpopular partial government shutdown and dire warnings of financial catastrophe if the federal government were to default on debt.

Politics rather than conviction are driving the appearance of ideological action by House Republicans. First, note that nearly all House Republicans switched their positions between January and October of 2013—an act that is not consistent with the motivation of ideological conviction. Second, the main electoral threat to most Republicans is in the primaries where a Tea Party-backed opponent has a better chance of defeating them than would a Democrat in the general election. Third, since Obama sits in the White House and Democrats control the Senate, the House Republicans could not use their majority to deliver tax cuts to their constituents. Thus there are more immediate political costs and less policy benefits for House Republicans in voting against a debt ceiling increase—as long as someone else votes for it.

The apparent hypocrisy of politicians of both political parties results from their efforts to reconcile their pursuit of power and ideology from positions of strength and weakness. This gives rise to Hypocrisy—governance by hypocritical politicians.

1 Barack Obama, Speech on the U.S. Senate floor, March 16, 2006.
4 The exceptions to this majority/minority party switch have been Senate Republicans in 2002, 2007 and October of 2013 voting to increase the debt ceiling. In two occasions, Senate Republicans voted with the president of their political party. Reeling from the blame of a partial government shutdown, 60% of Republicans voted with Democrats in the Senate to raise the debt ceiling in October of 2013. Thus we have a paradox in which Democrats have—in the aggregate, been more likely to oppose raising the debt ceiling than have Republicans.
IN MEMORIUM
THOMAS S. LANGSTON
(1960-2014)

After bravely fighting cancer for an extended period, Tom Langston passed away on April 14.

Tom spent most of his career at Tulane University and served as its chair three times. A distinguished scholar in the field of American politics, Tom’s research focused on U.S. presidency studies, American political development, and civil-military relations. He was the author of numerous academic books, including *With Reverence and Contempt: How Americans Think about Their President* (1995), *Uneasy Balance: Civil-Military Relations in Peacetime America* (2003) and *Ideologues and Presidents* (1992, 2014). A native of New Braunfels, Texas, he earned an undergraduate degree at the University of Texas and a doctorate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He was active in both the American Political Science Association and the Southern Political Science Association, and he served as a board member of the Presidency Research Group. At the time of his death, Tom was serving as series editor for Transaction Publishers’ American Presidents series and editor for *Presidential Studies Quarterly*’s “Historical Presidency” feature. PSQ editor George Edwards remembered,

> I depended on Tom to work with authors in developing pieces for this feature. He never failed. Indeed, he was a consummate professional. He had high standards and did not hesitate to exercise them. He communicated in a straightforward and civil fashion. And he had wonderful judgment. As a result, he helped many authors produce pieces that were much better than their original submissions. It was not unusual for authors to write me to tell say how grateful they were to have had the opportunity for Tom’s feedback, even though they had to spend months meeting his requests for improvement.

Among the affiliations of which Tom was most proud was his participation as Program Director and Adjunct Professor in Tulane’s A.B. Freeman School of Business partnership with Zhejiang University and its Chukochen Honors College and Graduate Institute of Business. This partnership, and Tom’s relationship with it, also included a several-years engagement of teaching “Introduction to Western Civilization and Society” for Tulane-bound Chinese students in Hangzhou. He further participated in the Freeman School’s Pre-Executive MBA Program for Chinese Managers, again as Program Director and Adjunct Professor.

Tom was a devotee of running, cycling, and competitive “Iron Man” trials. For many years he taught the popular TIDES course, “Adventure, Discipline, Obsession: A Running Conversation,” a class on running and endurance training, conducted *while running* through a variety of New Orleans neighborhoods. Among his many and varied athletic endeavors were marathon and half-marathon races, including New Orleans’ Crescent City Classic. Most recently, Tom had participated in early 2013 in the famous two-hundred-mile Death Valley bike ride. He inspired several colleagues to join him for long bike tours, and he enjoyed cycling in the Arizona mountains as well as along the levee path from Orleans through Jefferson Parish.

He is remembered by all who knew him for his wry sense of humor and unflappable good sense.

Editors Note: We thank George Edwards and Mike Sherman for their contributions to this letter.
Brandon Rottinghaus is an Associate Professor and the Senator Don Henderson Scholar at the University of Houston. His research interests include the presidency, executive-legislative relations and public opinion. He is author of *The Provisional Pulpit: Modern Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion* (Texas A&M University Press). He is also the co-director of the Presidential Proclamations Project.

**FORUM RESPONSE**

**introductory Note**

As chief executives, presidents and governors share many common institutional and political features. They both face challenges involving divided government, a truculent media, judicial oversight, political scandals, staffing and removal issues, and inter- and intra-party strife. They are also offered the opportunity (but not the guarantee) to lead public opinion, control legislative agendas, dominate local media and influence their party’s chances for political success.

The prospects for success and failure for both actors are often similar, making the study of chief executives important to understanding the function of government and a meaningful separation of institutional powers at both the state and federal level.

The short articles presented in this special features section of the PEP Report focus on American governors but implicitly highlight to the similarities and differences between state and national chief executives on a range of interesting subjects. These recent works (which are really just the tip of the iceberg) suggest a useful cross comparative study of chief executives which should be of interest to those who study the presidency. While each institution clearly retains their unique position and special functions, expanding the study of chief executives can provide greater insight into both institutions.

Special thanks are due to the PEP Report editors, Justin Vaughn and John Hudak, for giving us a forum to present this work on American governors and to Rutgers University’s Eagleton Institute of Politics Center on the American Governor for generous funding of many of the projects described here.

In recent months, controversies involving New Jersey Governor Chris Christie (aides closing part of a bridge) and Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell and his family (possibly illegal acceptance of gifts) remind us of the long history of governors who have bent or broken laws and or been involved in personal scandals which damaged or ended their political careers.

But, are state executive scandals really becoming more commonplace? For instance, the news media and scholarly research often over-emphasize a few scandals, particularly marital affairs (for instance, Governors Stanford, McGreevey and Spitzer). However, political scandals involving state executives have not been subjected to systematic, scientific study. This note and my expanded work on the subject tease out these patterns and describe the institutional effect of scandal on both national and state executives.

**Locating Governor Scandals**

As the first step towards an explanation of the impact of scandals on executive governance,
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the scandals (and the individuals associated with them) must be identified. The definition of scandals I employ requires that a state scandal must involve verified allegations of illegal, unethical or immoral wrongdoing of the governor, their staff, appointees or immediate family. Using the definition defended above, I identified 316 gubernatorial level scandals (involving 356 individuals) between 1972 and 2012.

The Frequency of State Executive Scandals

There is a great deal of divergence in the number of scandals in individuals states—some states have several while others have none. Florida is the leader with twenty five scandals, followed by California, New Jersey and Illinois with eighteen each. Perhaps not surprisingly, these states also rank high on lists of the number of individuals charged with corruption. States with fewer scandals include Arkansas (five), Louisiana, Illinois and Utah (six) and Rhode Island and Nevada (seven).

Serious scandals are rarer than regular scandals, and the states which have more serious scandals are a different set than those that have more total scandals. The leader in serious scandals is Illinois with seven total, a state who saw, from 1980 to 2010, saw four of seven governors go to prison. New York and New Mexico are next on the list with six serious scandals each driven by the Pataki Administration in New York and the Richardson Administration in New Mexico. In both instances, the primary cause of the scandal was alleged illegal activity surrounding “pay for play” scenarios where officials were charged with accepting bribes in return for political favors (state contracts or parole). Utah, Missouri and North Carolina are the only three states to have more than five scandals but no serious scandals.

As for governors who had several scandals, Governor Doyle's (Wisconsin) administration had 8 total scandals in eight years (2003 to 2011). Farther down the list were governors from other states with multiple scandals. For instance, Governor Ryan of Illinois had six in his term in office, most of which were related to charges that officials in his administration fraudulently accepted bribes to provide drivers licenses as well as the eventual cover-up of these actions. Governor Jim Gibbons of Nevada had five scandals, three of which involved his messy divorce from his wife, using state funds to text with his mistress and accepting gifts from a CEO who wanted to do business with the state, although he was eventually cleared of the latter charge.

Governing in Scandal

As these findings make clear, there is a great deal of state-level variation in the presence and impact of scandal. In forthcoming and future work, I examine these trends from an institutional and governing perspective.
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NEW BILL-LEVEL DATA ON GUBERNATORIAL VETOES

We are currently collecting bill-level data on gubernatorial vetoes with the support of a grant from the Center on the American Governor at Rutgers University. Our aim is to understand what factors affect the probability of a veto, and whether the impact of these factors depends on the variation in state institutions. Focusing our efforts at the bill level enables us to be far more precise in our analysis of veto usage than an aggregate analysis (e.g., a count of vetoes) permits. We plan to test two prominent theoretical frameworks from the Presidency literature: do vetoes occur as the result of the ideological distance between the executive and legislature, as a spatial proximity model would predict (see Rohde and Simon 1985)? Or are vetoes driven by high veto configurations of divided government and large opposition to the president in the legislature (Cameron 2000)? The following is a brief look at the data from North Carolina and Oregon during 2005-2012.

First, we find that party control of government is a strong predictor for the governor’s use of the veto in both states. We find that vetoes are far more common with a large opposition in the legislature than under unified government. In North Carolina, there were 25 bills vetoed from 2005-12, and the overwhelming majority (19) took place in the 2011-12 session, when the Republicans first took control of the General Assembly and established a 15 seat advantage, while Democrat Bev Purdue occupied the Governor’s mansion. Similarly, the majority of bills vetoed in Oregon took place when Republicans controlled the House in 2005. After attaining unified Democratic control in 2006, veto activity dropped substantially.

On the whole, vetoes were unlikely to take place in unified government. When they did take place, we found no evidence of “bargaining vetoes,” that took place in iterated veto chains. Rather, when the governor did veto the legislation passed by co-partisans, they appeared to be of the “take-it-or-leave-it” variety. This is particularly notable because, like the US President, the governor of North Carolina governor is not afforded line item veto privileges.

Second, we found that while bills vetoed had a lower number of supporters than other bills, the size of a bill’s supporting coalition was not a strong predictor of a vetoed bill. Thus, vetoes were offered often for symbolic, rather than policy related, purposes.

Quite commonly, governors issued vetoes even when the initial passing coalition exceeded the veto override threshold. For example, of the 25
bills vetoed in North Carolina in our time period, 6 were passed by majorities exceeding the “3/5 elected” threshold, while another 6 were within a 2-3 vote margin of the override. Similarly, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski vetoed several pieces of legislation that were supported by a coalition that exceeded the “2/3 present” threshold.

With only two states, it is difficult to make general comparisons. Yet, we are optimistic that the states will offer interesting variation to enhance our understanding of executive-legislative interactions. As we clean our dataset, we look forward to the explanatory leverage to answer these questions in a more comprehensive manner – both by including additional states, but also in executing more sophisticated models.

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**COURTS AND EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY: JUDICIAL DECISION-MAKING ON EXECUTIVE POWER CHALLENGES IN THE UNITED STATES**

Gbemende Johnson is currently an Assistant Professor of Government at Hamilton College. Her research interests include American Institutions, Judicial Politics, and Executive Branch Politics. Her research has appeared in the American Journal of Political Science and is forthcoming in State Politics and Policy Quarterly.

When do judges rein in executive power? Executives at the state and federal level are equipped with many privileges that allow them to manage executive branch structures. Executive institutional capabilities include the use of executive orders, appointment/removal power, and the veto. Despite the potency of these management tools, it is not uncommon for an executive to find her use of institutional authority challenged in court. Litigants who challenge executive power can argue that the executive has incorrectly utilized her institutional privileges, or that the executive undertook unilateral actions not recognized by the constitution. Ruling on executive power can place judges in a politically sensitive position because the executive is responsible for enforcing a ruling that potentially restricts the scope of her own institutional capabilities.

Researchers have examined the relationship between judicial decision-making and federal executive power, however the 50 states provide

**REFERENCES**


an ideal setting to analyze the influence of institutional variation on judicial decision-making. When ruling on disputes involving executive authority, I argue that state judges will be supportive of executive branch power in environments with powerful state executives. Although scholars have extensively examined judicial decision-making within a separation of powers context, the focus of most of these analyses is usually the relationship between the court and the legislature (Rogers 2001, Epstein, Martin, and Knight 2001, Langer 2002; Clark 2009). Examining how variation in executive institutions influences judicial decision-making presents the executive as a more “active” player in inter-branch conflict by considering the role of executive institutional retaliation (in addition to enforcement resistance).

Using an original dataset of 235 cases involving challenges to state executive power adjudicated between 1980 and 2010, I empirically analyze the conditions under which judges will rule in favor of executive power. Using logit analyses, I find that politically retained state supreme courts are more likely to rule in favor of executive power. Specifically, the probability of a ruling in favor of executive power by a state supreme court, retained by the state legislature, increases by 34 percent (when compared to state supreme courts with life tenure). State supreme courts are also more likely to rule in favor of politically popular state executives. Political popularity is operationalized using gubernatorial election vote share. A 12 percent increase (two standard deviations) in election vote share increases the probability of a vote in favor of executive power by 24 percent. Finally, in environments where the capacity for institutional retaliation is high, state supreme courts are more likely to vote in favor of executive power. When state executives have increased capacity to unilaterally retaliate against judicial budgets, the probability of a ruling on favor of executive power increases by 42 percent.

Federal-level institutional design creates theoretical and empirical limits on analyses of judicial-executive interaction in the U.S. context. Scholars should increasingly take advantage of state-level variation to further explore inter-branch conflict between judicial and executive institutions. The results of this analysis indicate that courts respond to potential threats by validating executive power in the face of legal challenges.

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FORUM RESPONSE

Chris Larimer is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Northern Iowa. He is a past president of the Iowa Association of Political Scientists, and his research focuses on voter turnout, experimental methods, and state politics.

The executive branch in Iowa has been one of unique stability. When Iowa Governor Chet Culver lost his reelection bid in 2010 to former Iowa governor Terry Branstad, he became the first incumbent governor of the state to be defeated since 1962, when Norman Erbe lost to Harold Hughes. Between 1969 and 1999, Iowa elected just two governors, Republican Robert Ray for 14 years (5 terms) and Republican Terry Branstad for 16 years (4 terms). Remarkably, the average margin of victory across those nine elections was 12.5 percentage points. Even among states that do not have term limits, Iowa remains an outlier with an average time in office of 10.5 years for each governor between 1969 and 2011. Terry Branstad is back in the governor’s office serving an unprecedented fifth four-year term as Iowa’s governor, the longest stint in Iowa history, and should he win his quest for a sixth term in 2014, he would become the longest serving governor in the history of the United States.

To better capture why modern Iowa governors have been able to stay so long, particularly during down economic times, I adopted a mixed methods approach. Thanks to a grant from the Center on the American Governor at Rutgers University, I was able to collect data from three unique sources: 1) a longitudinal model of gubernatorial popularity in Iowa, 2) interviews with select politicos from around the state, and 3) a statewide survey of randomly selected Iowa voters.

The extant political science research indicates governors are evaluated on the basis of federal and state economic conditions, and that such evaluations are filtered through a partisan lens and not devoid of presidential politics. While I find some evidence to support such claims, the results obtained thus far in the project suggest that perceived personal and behavioral traits are also relevant.

First, using 164 job approval measures of Iowa governors from 1976-2011, I find national and state economic conditions, as well as fluctuations in presidential approval, to be significant predictors of gubernatorial popularity. Linear models run separately for three recent governors for which data are available, however, show considerable variation. For Governor Culver, who lost his reelection bid in 2010, the popular explanation is that his loss was the result of a confluence of events, including backlash against a 2009 Iowa Supreme Court ruling allowing for same-sex marriage, the rise of the Tea Party movement, and a significant economic downturn. However, I find significant but relatively weak support for state economic conditions as significant predictors of Governor Culver’s popularity.

Interviews with politicos around the state have suggested an alternative explanation: governors who are perceived as “working
hard” are given a break during tough economic times, and that Governor Culver did not have this perception. Moreover, according to the interviews, and substantiated in the popularity model, governors tend to fare better when working with a split legislature, again something Governor Culver lacked (Culver is the only recent governor to have unified control during his entire time in office).

The analysis of the survey data is not complete, but thus far the staying power of Iowa governors seems to be related to the perceived personalities of Iowa governors and their relationships with legislators and citizens, rather than economic factors alone.

To what extent do identity-based factors matter in executive politics? Some argue that individual determinants, such as race, gender, and partisan affiliation dominate elite decision making. Others argue that structural factors, often relating to context, are more important. Students of executive politics refer to the first possibility as a “president-centered” account, and the second as a “presidency-centered” explanation. In my ongoing research, I expand the investigation by also including two understudied variables: religious identity and religious context.

Debate between the two schools of thought has raged for some time (Heclo 1977; Rockman 1986; Moe 1993), and a number of quantitative studies have pitted the two theories against each other (Hager and Sullivan 1994; Shields and Huang 1997; Gilmour 2002; Eshbaugh-Soha 2003; Bridge 2013). While it is significant to note that research provides some empirical support for both theories, there are methodological problems inherent in exploring the question via study of the presidency. The
43 non-consecutively serving presidents are a rather homogeneous lot when it comes to identity-based factors. And, furthermore, study has often concentrated on actions—like the veto decision—wherein there is little theoretical reason to expect that individual level factors will matter much.

To overcome these problems, I shift analysis to the study of American state governors, and concentrate analysis on the rhetoric chosen in a common public speech—the State-of-the-State Address (SoSA). More specifically, I examine whether a governor chose to include mention of “God” (or its equivalent) in SoSAs that were given from 2000 to 2013. Given the importance of religious rhetoric in politics and the dearth of information that exists on the impact that religious determinants have on executive behavior (however see: Calfano, Friesen, and Djupe 2013), I argue that this is an excellent way to enter into multiple important discussions. Furthermore, since there are numerous cases to examine (n = 658), significant variation amongst governors on key independent variables, and compelling individual, partisan, and strategic reasons for governors to behave in predictable ways, this might be considered the fairest head-to-head test yet administered.

Probit regression analysis suggests that while context matters, the governor’s race / ethnicity and partisan and religious affiliations are even more influential to their decision. So, for example, the impact of being a Democrat lowers the probability of a governor mentioning God 15.18 percentage points, while being Jewish lowers it 18.19 points. However, being a Roman Catholic raises the probability 13.46 percentage points, while being non-white raises it 13.16 percentage points. As such, a governor like Oregon’s John Kitzhaber—a white, Jewish, Democrat—is 33.37 percentage points less likely to mention God than the mean state chief-executive; while Louisiana’s governor, Bobby Jindal, an Asian Catholic Republican, is 26.62 percentage points more likely. The partisan, ethnic, and religious make-up of the state populations also structure this decision, but less substantively so.

This study recommends examining hypotheses about executive leadership, often generated in presidential studies, via analysis of the governors of the American states. As Klarner and Karch suggest, “the states represent a promising venue in which to evaluate claims” (2008: 582).

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Woodrow Wilson’s presidency (1913-1921) marks him as the most consequential representative of a major American reform tradition—the pragmatist tradition, drawing on the ideas of philosopher William James. Yet scant attention has been paid to the influence of Jamesian ideas on Wilson’s presidency. Even less has been paid to their influence on his New Jersey governorship (1911-1913), which laid important groundwork for his presidential turn.

As president, Wilson’s constructive legislation gave form to a democratic ideal propounded by John Dewey, Louis Brandeis, Walter Lippmann, and other reformers consciously indebted to James. These pragmatist progressives believed a genuinely democratic system should embody principles of mutual deliberation and obligation rather than absolute rights, and emphasized the Constitution’s adaptive rather than timeless quality. Wilson encountered pragmatist ideas before his presidency and worked with self-consciously pragmatist advisers during it.
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Despite signal exceptions (especially regarding racial justice) his policymaking exemplified the core pragmatist belief that societal problems are best solved empirically and communally, and always solved provisionally.¹

Wilson’s New Jersey governorship formed a bridge linking pragmatist theory to presidential practice. Most of Wilson’s New Jersey reforms occurred before his presidential campaign. But it was during his campaign and lame-duck governorship that pragmatist ideas began directly to shape his reformist agenda, through the influence of lawyer Louis Brandeis. The “New Freedom” initiatives they formulated together—tariff reform, corporate regulation, democratized credit through the Federal Reserve—were efforts to translate pragmatist political ideals into legislation that could address immediate needs and adapt to future change.

It was during this same period that Wilson tackled New Jersey’s trusts, resulting in the so-called “Seven Sisters” laws prohibiting production limits, price-fixing, and other monopolistic or collusive practices. These laws were inspired by Wilson’s presidential campaign rather than vice versa. Wilson pursued them only after Brandeis made “regulated competition” his central campaign theme late in the contest. Many of Brandeis’s national policy suggestions were codified in the Seven Sisters legislation. One, elicited by the Supreme Court’s recently articulated “rule of reason,” was for specific enumeration of prohibited practices, to prevent conservative courts declaring effectively anticompetitive practices theoretically reasonable.²

Wilson’s lame-duck laws had national impact. They were seen as harbingers of his federal antitrust program and became central to debates over it. Wilson’s earliest national effort, the Clayton bill, resembled the Seven-Sisters model, specifically enumerating a roster of illegal practices in order to close the “rule-of-reason” loophole.³ Yet neither in the Seven Sisters laws nor the Clayton bill did Wilson advocate Brandeis’s most distinctively pragmatist proposal: an independent trade commission, with power to investigate potentially harmful practices not specifically prohibited by statute and to suggest prosecution or new legislation in response. Brandeis considered this crucial to ensuring that antitrust law and administration kept up with economic and social change.

As the Clayton legislation evolved, the New Jersey program’s virtues and defects were widely discussed. These discussions profoundly shaped the ultimate product. The result, Wilson later admitted, was disappointing, incorporating the defects of New Jersey law while undermining its advantages. New Jersey’s purely statutory approach, lacking means to assess the consequences of business practices across scales, was hampering smaller corporations and driving larger ones to Delaware, unreformed. Attempting a remedy in the Clayton Act, the Senate made the effects of prohibited practice (rather than the practice itself) the test of liability, but created no commission to perform the necessary interpretive task. The result was difficulty prosecuting anyone for anything.

Wilson’s 1912-1914 antitrust campaigns suggest two lessons. First, states can indeed serve as
national policy laboratories. But state policies are shaped by existing national dynamics, even while implemented under differing constraints. Thus the Seven Sisters laws reflected Wilson’s national antitrust agenda yet proved a flawed guide to its implementation. Second, the pragmatist principles of empiricism, deliberation, and broad public participation in economic and political life should apply not only to policies, resulting in designs that foster these virtues, but policymaking, ensuring a process that embodies them to ensure both justice and quality control. The Seven Sisters, popular when passed, were not pursued in a pragmatist spirit and failed as both state law and national model. Messier but fuller deliberation led to a wiser FTC Act and more durable template of governance.


As I age but somehow the undergraduates I teach continue to look younger and younger, I become increasingly concerned about using examples in the classroom that are relevant and relatable to my students. When discussing the presidency with many of the 18 to 22 year olds in my American politics courses, the Bush administration is a dim childhood memory and the Clinton years are ancient history. While any effective stand-alone presidency course or unit of an introductory U.S. politics course must certainly deal with presidents from both the recent and distant past, I have found my students particularly benefit from emphasizing the Obama administration in our assigned readings and discussions. The Obama case helps connect the sometimes more abstract concepts they are learning in the classroom to the real-life political events that affect their daily lives, and encourages them to be more informed, critical inhabitants of the country in which they live.

Many introductory American Government or presidency courses hit upon similar themes, and I would like to highlight three subareas in which I have found teaching using the Obama experience helps advance learning objectives. One strategy I employ is assigning students two different types of readings on the same topic: one a book chapter or journal article by a political scientist, and the other a news or commentary piece by a journalist from the popular media. My hope is that the reading of each text informs the other, and students begin to see the work of presidency scholars as engaged with the "real world" of politics, helping shed light on its complexities.

For instance, when covering presidential persuasion and the chief executive’s relationship with the public, I have students read excerpts of George C. Edwards’ work (2003; 2009; 2012) alongside Ezra Klein’s “The Unpersuaded: Who Listens to A President?” from the March 2012 issue of The New Yorker. I then encourage students to challenge the main ideas of the readings in class discussion, evaluating the presidential power to persuade by assessing first-hand the effectiveness of President Obama’s efforts to shape public opinion, on recent topics ranging from health care to the government shutdown. On presidential personality and decision-making, I like to pair Stephen J. Wayne’s 2011 article, “Presidential Character and Judgment: Obama’s Afghanistan and Health Care Decisions” with Matt Bai’s “Obama vs. Boehner: Who Killed the Debt Deal?” from The New York Times. Students can draw their own conclusions about Obama’s personality and how it affects his role as president from the Bai piece, and we have compelling class discussions about their own impressions of the president’s psychology and character. Finally, when I teach about the
BRINGING THE PRESIDENCY INTO THE PRESENT: TEACHING UNDERGRADUATES USING THE OBAMA EXPERIENCE

presidency and war, students read Andrew J. Polsky’s “The Presidency At War: The Window of Agency in Wartime Presidential Leadership” from Nelson’s The Presidency and the Political System (2014) with The New York Times article, “Secret Kill List Proves A Test of Obama’s Principles and Will,” about the president’s counterterrorism strategies. My students engage in some of the most passionate and contentious debate I have seen in the classroom on the topic of drone strikes, and discussion often veers into unexpected yet valuable intellectual territory. When in doubt, I also find that video clips, such as Representative Peter King (R-NY) appearing on CNN saying, “There’s evil people in the world. Drones aren’t evil, people are evil. We are a force of good and we are using those drones to carry out the policy of righteousness and goodness,” quickly get students talking!

Some distance removed now from the excitement amongst young people that candidate Obama generated in the 2008 election, it is fascinating to hear my students’ perceptions of now-President Obama, and they have helped inform my own understanding of how Americans view the contemporary presidency. Teaching using the Obama experience aids my students in becoming critical readers of the presidency literature, and more discerning observers of present-day American politics.

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This piece was previously presented at a 2012 APSA short course on teaching the presidency.
Mary Lenn Dixon, long-time member of the Presidents and Executive Politics section of the APSA retired at the end of 2013 after 40 years in Political Science and editing. Most PEP members know her from conversations at the Texas A&M University Press exhibit and her regular attendance at the PEP meetings at the annual APSA conventions. Her colleagues at TAMU Press describe her as a “legendary editor,” a master of publishing in several disciplines in addition to political science.

One reason for Mary Lenn’s special interest in political science is that she won a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for graduate school and earned her PhD in Political Science at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in the 1970s, where she was a contemporary of both George Edwards and me. After field work in Paris, and completing her dissertation on the effects of regional planning on policy innovation in France, she accepted a position teaching political science at Texas A&M University.

After a few years, Mary Lenn became intrigued with scholarly publishing and the newly created TAMU Press. She applied for a position and began her publishing career as a copyeditor at the young press. She soon moved up to Managing Editor and also became the acquisitions editor for Texas history, one of the strong areas of scholarship at the Press. As TAMU Press grew in size and stature, her responsibilities grew with it, moving full time into acquisitions and becoming Editor-in-Chief in 2000. In addition to political science and communications, she was also responsible for history, including military, western, women’s, and Mexican-American history; physical anthropology and archeology; and borderlands and immigration. Editing so many areas of scholarship kept her on the road attending eight to ten professional conferences each year, a grueling pace.

TAMU PRESS EDITOR MARY LENN DIXON RETIRES

The Hughes Series on the Presidency and Leadership began in 1996, when Mary Lenn asked me to edit the series. We have published 39 books, including two winners of the Richard E. Neustadt Award for the best book on the presidency: Janet Martin, The Presidency and Women: Promise, Performance, and Illusion (2004); and Michael Korzi Presidential Term Limits in American History: Power, Principles, and Politics (2012). Mary Lenn actively sought out promising, young scholars as well as well-established academics. She was always open to new perspectives in scholarship, publishing several books on women and the presidency, for example.

As editor of the Hughes series, I watched in awe and admiration as her editing advice improved many adequate manuscripts to publishable quality and fine tuned excellent ones. She was unfailingly gracious, and one of her great strengths as an editor was the way that she could deliver both good and bad news to prospective authors. If a manuscript had to be turned down, her letters to authors pointed out the potential strengths of the manuscript and suggested ways to make it publishable or pointed to a different, more appropriate outlet for the scholarship. She could make the rejection of a manuscript feel more positive and helpful than many acceptance letters from other editors.

Mary Lenn’s strengths as an editor flowed from her genuine interest in the subjects of her book series, her own knowledge of the scholarship in the fields, and the skills she developed for thinking critically and writing clearly. After reading a prospectus or manuscript, she could cut to the heart of the intellectual matter and suggest how an author could improve a manuscript to make it publishable. Her advice to young authors was always positive and encouraging. But as award-winning author Mary Stuckey said, as a “teacher/editor,” she was “ruthlessly dedicated to the quality of the work.” Her standards for scholarship and writing were high, and she refused to publish merely mediocre work. George Edwards, who served on the Faculty Advisory Committee of TAMU Press, through which every book must pass, emphasized the importance of Mary Lenn’s insistence on “upholding the standards” of good scholarship.

Regarding her mentorship of young scholars, Hughes series author, MaryAnne Borrelli observed that her editing is personal as well as professional. In MaryAnne’s words, “Mary Lenn engages with the person – not merely the manuscript. She really talks and listens to people, with the result that she mentors with a light and influential touch.” Mary Lenn “really loves ideas, arguments, and writing; she is such a talented practitioner of the art and the craft of creating a book.” She is “so deeply engaged and passionate, and yet so clear-sighted and forthright. And those are just the qualities that an author needs, but so often finds difficult to sustain in refining their own work."

In 2014 Mary Lenn has retired only from her editing career. Her friend and political scientist Alberta Sbragia (Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, University of Pittsburgh) observed that she is now dedicating “the same intelligence, insight, and resilience” she demonstrated as an editor to her new position as Deacon at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in College Station. That and spending time with her two grandchildren will keep her as busy as she was as Editor in Chief of TAMU Press.
NEW IN PRINT: BOOKS ABOUT THE PRESIDENCY AND EXECUTIVE POLITICS

DELIVERING THE PEOPLE’S MESSAGE: THE CHANGING POLITICS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MANDATE

We are living in an age of mandate politics. Since the late 1960s, mandate rhetoric has become the norm for presidents seeking to explain their agenda to the electorate, the press, and other elites. Why are contemporary presidents so compelled to justify their actions in terms of their campaign promises and the expectations of those who elected them? As I explain in Delivering the People’s Message, mandate rhetoric has become more important for presidents in an era of declining public esteem for the presidency and intensifying party polarization. Drawing on qualitative case studies and an original dataset of presidential communications from Hoover through Obama, I find that presidents use mandate language defensively to bolster the case for their use of power. Party polarization has sharpened the need for defensive posturing, as presidents find themselves subject to more vociferous critiques from partisan opponents. It has also driven presidents to affirm their commitments to their own supporters as a means of maintaining political capital.

After a presidential election, journalists regularly pose the question of whether the election gave the new (or re-elected) president a “mandate.” Commentators run through a typical range of possibilities: mandates for change, mandates for the status quo, mandate for party ideas or for bipartisan cooperation, for specific policies or for general ideals. Election results can lend themselves to a range of interpretations: a small majority, a thin margin, or even a plurality victory can be spun into a clear message from the electorate.

While the news media engage in this post-election analysis, scholars have struggled with, and in some cases, dismissed, the idea of presidential mandates. In light of the debate about how to interpret elections – and whether that is even possible – I approached this project with the goal of looking empirically and systematically at the use of mandate rhetoric, rather than trying to categorize election results or link mandates with legislative outcomes. This inquiry yielded surprising results: presidents with mixed or minimal electoral victories used election interpretation rhetoric with relative frequency; those elected in landslides often demonstrated restraint in speaking about the election. Not only was this pattern counter-intuitive, it also challenged the assumption that all presidents will try to use mandate rhetoric if they think that they can get away with it. What explains this variation?
The answer to this question derives in part from presidential history. The concept of an electoral mandate emerged during debates in the early American republic about the legitimate sphere of presidential influence. Woodrow Wilson reinvigorated the concept during the progressive era, as presidents as well as parties were renegotiated as part of American political life. I find similar dynamics at work in the wake of Watergate and Vietnam, when presidents faced the need to reestablish the legitimacy of the office and link strong executive action with democratic ideals. References to election results and campaign promises fit this need. Ongoing challenges since that era – flagging approval levels, high expectations, deepening party polarization – have created a need for presidents to emphasize their democratic credentials as the source of legitimacy for their actions.

Americans love to rank things. In business there is the Fortune 500; in crime the FBI’s Most Wanted; in the world of entertainment David Letterman made his name by composing a daily Top Ten List. It is no surprise that since the 1948 Schlesinger survey of presidential leadership, there has been scholarly rankings from best to worst. In fact, for over a half-century the practice of ranking has only become more popular. Universities, public opinion polls, and news services have been among the most prominent surveyors. These surveys have ranked presidents through a calculus of leadership skills, but they are not the only measure. Lay surveys have also become more popular.
tracking everything from presidential sexiness to political legacy. Yet until 2011, no such scholarly ranking had ever been conducted abroad.

For the very first time in 2011, UK scholars of American history and politics have turned their hand to such an endeavor. Coordinated and analyzed by Professor Iwan Morgan (University College London), the UK survey included nearly fifty British and Irish scholars who graded presidents on their foreign and domestic policies, moral authority, vision, and historical significance. The survey closely resembled past American exercises, purposely, but was inherently designed to provide a unique UK perspective on presidential leadership. After analyzing the scholarly impressions, Prof. Morgan produced an interactive website to display and compare the results. The site allows the public to see exactly how well presidents ranked in each category and included a summary of the findings which spurred substantial commentary in the UK and internationally.

This book seeks to build on the success of this 2011 survey. It offers an extended commentary and inter-disciplinary analysis of thirteen presidents and uses the UK survey results as a starting point for an analysis of presidential leadership. The authors are among the most prominent scholars of presidential history in the UK, Ireland, and Canada and include several participants in the 2011 survey. The authors are also a diverse group of scholars including historians, political scientists and American Studies experts. The introduction to the collection, by Professor Morgan, firmly establishes the theoretical background and frames the individual chapters. Professor Morgan’s experience as the practitioner of ranking presidential leadership in the only UK scholarly survey gives this book a distinctive appeal. Each chapter thereafter delves into an individual presidency to uncover, in interdisciplinary ways, how presidential leadership has been received.

Perspectives on Presidential Leadership is an examination of presidential legacy, and while some chief executives may be considered a success, some a failure, and others just average, the historical and contextual frame of reference is always changing.
In this book I analyze the reasons and justifications for, as well as instances of executive emergency power, in political thought and action. After the attacks of September 11, 2001 many questions arose regarding the presidential authority to respond to such attacks, could the actions taken be unilateral, or rather should the actions be legislated? My fellow scholars began to address and answer the questions in many great books, yet I thought another answer was viable. Rather than thinking that presidents are acting within the established theories of presidential behavior, I considered whether their actions were revealing a new theory of presidential behavior. This new theory of presidential behavior is what I termed the cavalier presidency. I argue in this book, and substantiate the argument, that presidents are becoming increasingly cavalier and recklessly. Even just recently many pundits, journalists and even the President of the United States are beginning to call the current use of emergency power, cavalier.

My approach was to analyze and test hypotheses that considered the reasons for executive emergency power. I began analyzing the theory of executive emergency power across a wide breadth of philosophical history, from Ancient Greek, Renaissance, through modern American political thought. This analysis indicates that in political philosophy two models exist for determining and using executive emergency power: an unfettered executive prerogative or a constitutional dictatorship. The modern American approach to executive emergency power is an unfettered executive prerogative, whereby the executive determines what emergency power is and how to use it.

The book addresses the fundamental question of whether executive power in times of crisis may be unfettered and discretionary or rather does the law define and restrain executive emergency power?

I reviewed and analyzed seven U.S. presidencies that handled a domestic crisis—Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Jackson, Lincoln, G. W. Bush, and Obama—to show that presidents become extraordinarily powerful during crises and act unilaterally without oversight. The use of executive emergency power undermines the normal processes of democratic republicanism and harms the rule of law. I analyzed the U.S. Constitution, formerly classified Department of Justice Memos, primary sourced letters, signing
THE CAVALIER PRESIDENCY: EXECUTIVE POWER AND PREROGATIVE IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

statements, executive orders, presidential decrees, and original founding documents to comprehensively conclude that presidential prerogative determines what emergency powers are and how they are to be executed.

The analysis of the empirical data, conducted using simple regressions and spatial models, indicated that Cavalier presidents vastly declare more executive orders, write more controversial signing statements, while ignoring and sometimes abusing the law. In comparison, peace time presidents sign fewer executive orders, write benign signing statements, and promote adherence to the rule of law.

Finally, this book challenges the claim that presidents determine their emergency power with appropriate congressional oversight or consultation. The analysis of the empirical data indicates that presidents do not consult with Congress prior to determining what their emergency powers are and how the president wants to use them.

In the end, the War on Terror has reinvigorated the Executive branch not towards the law, rather towards a cavalier presidency, whereby the law becomes increasingly burdensome, a nuisance, a hindrance, or an obstacle to protecting and preserving the Union. The fate of the Republic rests on the shoulders and the heart of the cavalier president.

SPEAKING WITH THE PEOPLE’S VOICE

The seed for Speaking with the People’s Voice was planted in 2003 by my graduate work at the University of Wisconsin. As a rhetorically trained scholar studying presidents and public opinion, I wondered: If polls are so important to presidential politics, why don’t modern presidents talk about them very often in their national rhetoric? Over time, the project evolved to question how presidents use invoked public opinion—or speak with the people’s voice—in their major speeches and what this invoked public opinion means for presidential leadership.

As citizens, we have become accustomed to hearing presidents talk about the beliefs and desires of average citizens and recognize citizens as heroic models for others to emulate. It seems unlikely that presidents would invest so much time and energy into invoked public opinion if there was no rhetorical purpose. So rather than dismiss invoked public opinions as populist platitudes, this book considers the argumentative forms and functions of these appeals.
Speaking with the People’s Voice offers an analysis of more than 220 presidential speeches (from JFK to GWB). In particular, I found that presidents tend to use invoked public opinion through three different, recurring argumentative patterns tailored to various situations, goals, and audiences. Two of these patterns agree with public opinion but do so for different audiences; bandwagon appeals use one public’s opinion to persuade a different public of a conclusion while identity appeals use one public’s opinion to persuade that same public of a conclusion. The third patterns argues against public opinion by offering alternative criteria for reaching the president’s conclusion. I draw from more than forty years of presidential speeches to offer brief illustrations of the functions of each argumentative appeal and each chapter provides a case study of a different speech to illustrate the contextual force of that kind of appeal.

Beyond outlining the typology of appeals, I argue that invoked public opinion helps modern presidents balance two different, and often competing, rhetorical demands of leadership: political representation of the people and presidential power over policy making. While political scholars have often recognized this tension—loosely defined as a distinction between being a delegate or being a trustee, between leading or following public opinion—I illustrate how invoked public opinion is one of the few rhetorical strategies that enable presidents to do both, to advocate for their own political initiatives while simultaneously representing the beliefs and values of the American people.

I hope that this book will provide novel insight about the relationship between presidents and public opinion as I explore a less concrete and discrete form of public opinion than poll results. In the end, Speaking with the People’s Voice asks those in fields such as politics, rhetoric, history, and American studies to seriously consider how modern presidential rhetoric—particularly invoked public opinion—serves as political representation alongside or in place of the traditional focus on persuasion.
Each president brings to the White House a distinct set of personal characteristics and a preferred leadership style, but just how much have individual presidents shaped domestic policy? To understand and assess what factors determine one president’s success and another’s limited accomplishments, it is important to examine both the individual’s leadership roles and the circumstances that shape opportunities for success. This book systematically examines the first terms of every president from FDR to Obama and assesses leadership style, the policy agenda, and the “political opportunity” facing each president. The success of each president in bringing about landmark legislation and other policy change is shown to hinge on the opportunities facing each president, his leadership style, and finally, his skill managing a variety of institutional and public relationships. Not all presidents are created equal, but some can implement strategies to overcome formidable obstacles, rising into the vaunted ranks of the “Great Presidents.”

The second edition of this timely book adds chapters on George W. Bush and Barack Obama and focuses on the significant domestic policy challenges of their respective times. Tax cuts, education policy, and homeland security are featured for the Bush era, while health care reform, economic policy initiatives, immigration, and gun control are highlights for Obama. Both offer insights into contemporary presidential leadership in a highly partisan age. In addition, the authors have reconfigured the analytical framework of the book to take into account the “dynamic opportunity structure” that emerged during the George W. Bush administration.
Final-term presidents should be more properly termed “soaring eagles” rather than “lame ducks.” Significant things are pushed and accomplished, precisely because these presidents are free from reelection constraint and enthused by legacy to pursue bold projects—and they have the power to make it happen. The central question of this book is: Do presidents of different countries behave similarly when faced with the common constraint of term cycles? If presidents are permitted to serve in more than one term, yet restricted to a set number of consecutive terms, presidents are forced to operate in two distinct frames of reference for choice and desire. When reelection is possible “survival” defines presidents’ frame of reference, and when it is not, “terminal logic” defines that frame. I hypothesize that the change in the imperative for action from one of “survival” to that of “terminal logic” causes a unique behavioral pattern to emerge – a rapid and otherwise unexplainable increase in policy activity. This project seeks to mount evidence in support of the conclusion that as presidents near the end of their tenure, they become predictably more aggressive. They succumb to what I call in this research, Terminal Logic Behavior (TLB).

What this study uncovers is significant. For decades presidents have issued decrees (executive orders, memoranda and proclamations) at extraordinary rates at the end of their tenure, particularly when they are in the final weeks of their last term, after their successor has been named. This is true not only for presidents of the United States, but for presidents in Argentina and Brazil who also operate under the two-term structure. This is not an American phenomenon – this is a phenomenon of term-limited presidents. TLB is linked to decrees not only of foreign, domestic and environment policy but also to presidents’ use of national emergency powers. A systematic pattern of use exists even for decrees meant to be reserved for times of inherent crisis.

This book is unusual in that it is part U.S. and part comparative political science. It largely revolves around the study of U.S. presidents, but, in conjunction with the presidents of the United States, I examine presidents of Argentina and Brazil. Studying the two-term executive structure in these three countries is constructive because many other governments, both at the national and subnational levels, maintain a similar form of tenure for their executive officeholder. Findings here could have implications that reach far beyond U.S. borders. TLB may help explain why nearly one-third of the more than 92 countries that have
had presidents in the past twenty years have contravened their term limits.

This book is also timely. President Obama is now in his final two years in office. He himself believes “more flexibility” comes in his last term. In what he mistakenly mistook as a private moment with Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, Obama declared, “On all these issues, but particularly missile defense, this can be solved, but it’s important for him [Putin] to give me space . . . This is my last election. After my election, I have more flexibility.” According to an official who spoke to the Washington Post on the condition of anonymity, Obama said, “Let’s not focus on what’s possible or doable . . . Tell me what our goal should be, and let me worry about the politics.” Everything points to the conclusion that in Obama we have the making of a soaring eagle—not of a lame duck. Undoubtedly, an end-of-tenure Obama may be the most aggressive end-of-tenure president that we have seen yet.

The genesis of this book came during the 2004 presidential campaign in which John Kerry challenged George W. Bush. Though Kerry attracted the enormous attention befitting a major party presidential candidate, there was little notice paid to his religion. Despite parallels with the last Catholic Democratic senator from Massachusetts with the initials “JFK,” Kerry’s faith seemed to matter to the press and the public only when a few members of his Church’s hierarchy suggested that the candidate’s pro-choice position on abortion should preclude him from receiving communion. Indeed, polls showed that despite this controversy, most Americans—and most American Catholics—could not identify Kerry’s religious affiliation. And on Election Day, most Catholic voters opted for the Methodist candidate over one of their own.
A lot clearly had changed from 1960, when John Kennedy became the nation’s first—and only—Catholic president only after enduring intense scrutiny of his religion and winning an overwhelming majority of the voters from his church. The stark differences between 1960 and 2004 therefore sparked my curiosity as to what had happened in those intervening forty-four years to help produce such a radically different political environment. Why had Kennedy’s religion mattered so much, while Kerry’s religion mattered so little?

To find the answer, I ventured where no scholars had gone before. There are many general surveys of the socioeconomic and cultural trajectory of American Catholics from their roots in the Spanish conquest of the sixteenth century to their role in the Mexican migration of the twenty-first. Others had acknowledged the importance of Catholics in the election of American presidents. Catholics had also figured prominently in studies of specific issues and events. Yet no one had produced a book-length study on the interaction between American Catholics, led by their popes and bishops, and American presidents, before and after their election campaigns.

My examination of numerous primary and secondary sources between 1960 and 2004 has helped me solve the riddle which prompted my research. I have discovered that once American Catholics had achieved their well-documented socioeconomic success and cultural assimilation, Kennedy’s election became the springboard for over four decades of a heretofore largely overlooked political ascendancy. Having attained a prominent place in the society, economy, and culture of the United States by 1960, American Catholics would acquire in the ensuing years “what they wished for” — political clout on issues of war and peace, social justice, and life and death to match their advances outside of politics. In fact, American Catholics became so politically significant and anti-Catholicism became so politically insignificant that by 2004 a presidential candidate’s Catholic faith would barely register to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

In arguing that American Catholics had much to say about the leadership of their country during the administrations of John F. Kennedy through George W. Bush, I thus challenge the conventional narrative of the increasingly secular decades of the 1960’s and 1970’s, as reflected by the Supreme Court’s outlawing of school prayer and legalization of abortion, followed by the inevitable backlash of the 1980’s and 1990’s, as demonstrated by the rise of evangelical Protestants and the election of a Republican Congress. Throughout these tumultuous times, American Catholics warily yet wisely negotiated the political landscape by taking on the courts, playing off the political parties, fending off other churches, and fighting off the critics within their own ranks. Although Catholics never found shelter from the prevailing winds of this era, they more often than not were effective in steering those currents in the direction of their Church.
RESILIENT AMERICA: ELECTING NIXON IN 1968, CHANNELING DISSENT, AND DIVIDING GOVERNMENT

I argue that the story of the 1968 election and its aftermath, often told as one of American coming apart, is really one of American holding together through the resilience of its political system.

In addition to this broad thematic argument, I make these particular arguments about the election:

› Like Nixon in 1952 and 1956, Johnson was in serious danger of being dropped from the Democratic ticket in 1964 if President John F. Kennedy had lived.

› As president, Johnson faithfully pursued his predecessor’s policy in Vietnam and had reason to worry that he would be attacked as a weak leader by Robert Kennedy if South Vietnam fell to the communists.

› Among the dissident candidates in 1968, Wallace and McCarthy regarded getting their widely diverging points of view taken seriously as reason enough to enter the race. Kennedy had no interest in running unless he thought he could win.

› McCarthy’s surprise showing in the New Hampshire Democratic primary was facilitated by Republican contender George Romney’s withdrawal from the GOP contest, which freed up considerable media time and attention for the McCarthy campaign.

› Although Reagan posed the greatest risk to Nixon’s nomination, Nixon worried more about Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York. In many ways, Nixon’s insecurities and resentments toward Rockefeller resembled Johnson’s toward Robert Kennedy.

› Nixon, a risk-taker throughout his political career, ran a superb campaign for the 1968 Republican nomination. His main appeals to the voters—foreign policy statesmanship and cultural populism—reflected authentic aspects of who he was. But Nixon nearly lost the general election by running a cautious campaign for which he was temperamentally unsuited.

› In choosing a running mate, Nixon sought someone in his own vice presidential image: loyal, hardworking, and willing to attack the opposition relentlessly so that he could take the high road. He decidedly did not want someone like the languid, independent-minded running mate he chose in 1960, the Massachusetts patrician Henry Cabot Lodge.

› Of all the candidates who ran in 1968, only Nixon had a campaign organization that was talented and integrated from top to bottom. In the fall campaign, his was the only organization that had been battle-tested in the primaries.
Humphrey would have been nominated for president by his party even if Robert Kennedy lived and the contest came down to him, Kennedy, and McCarthy.

RFK’s death, the stalled peace talks with North Vietnam, and the president’s belief that he had a better chance to defeat Nixon in November than Humphrey led Johnson to seriously reconsider reentering the race on the eve of the Democratic convention.

Humphrey severely underestimated how much the power balance between him and Johnson shifted away from the lame-duck president when Humphrey became the nominee of the Democratic Party. As a result, he refused to make even a modest break with Johnson until just five weeks before the election.

The Wallace campaign was crippled by his offhand selection of former air force general Curtis LeMay as his vice presidential running mate. Wallace was too easily dissuaded by right-wing backers of his campaign from picking his first choice, former Kentucky governor A. B. “Happy” Chandler, an experienced campaigner.

Wallace’s supporters, so different in most ways from those attracted to the extreme left wing of the antiwar movement, resembled them in their certainty that the political system was controlled by a small elite that scorned their values and neglected their concerns.

The judiciary’s recent transformation into a political football kicked back and forth by the political parties was foreshadowed by the Senate’s reaction to Johnson’s nomination of Justice Abraham Fortas to be chief justice in June 1968.

As a way of channeling dissent into mainstream politics, the much-criticized reforms of the presidential nominating process that followed the 1968 election were of tremendous value.

McGovern’s landslide defeat in 1972, like Goldwater’s in 1964, helped lay the foundation for the future success of their parties.
Describing the University of Virginia Miller Center’s oral history of his presidency, George H. W. Bush has written, “The documentary record is vital” but interviews with members of the administration “add the human side that those papers can never capture.”

This book offers another dimension—scholarly analysis of the oral history interviews that expand our understanding of the Bush presidency, as well as the Cold War era and its aftermath. As a cooperative effort of the Miller Center and the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation, the Bush oral history project consists of fifty interviews with senior White House and Cabinet officials, conducted from 1999 through 2011. Interviews, which normally ran from seven to ten hours and were conducted by teams of two to four scholars, explored officials’ memories of their service with President Bush, along with their careers prior to joining the administration. Interviewees also offered political and leadership lessons they had gleaned as eyewitnesses to, and often shapers of, history. Cleared interview transcripts can be accessed at [www.millercenter.org/president/bush/oralhistory](http://www.millercenter.org/president/bush/oralhistory), and additional transcripts will be posted as their subjects agree to release them.

41 is based on papers presented at the 2011 conference that accompanied the debut of the Bush oral histories. Panels, which included Bush alumni, along with political scientists and historians, covered the Bush administration’s foreign affairs, defense policy, political ideology, and domestic issues. Participants commented on the contributions that the oral history interviews make to our knowledge of the forty-first president. Included in this volume are Professors Bartholomew Sparrow, Jeffrey Engel, and Robert Strong, writing on war and statecraft; Michael Nelson and Hugh Heclo, on Bush’s brand of conservatism; and Barbara Sinclair, Henry Abraham, and Barbara Perry, on relations with Congress and the Supreme Court.

Professor Russell Riley’s introduction combines his overview of the Bush oral history project, which he directed, with his analysis of how it refines our knowledge of the presidency. Professor Sid Milkis’s conclusion synthesizes the theories and evidence presented in each chapter into a portrait of presidential politics, policy-making, and leadership in the twentieth century’s last decade.
As Professor Philip Zelikow, who served in the Bush 41 administration, observes in the book’s foreword, “[T]he perceptive essays in this volume...portray Bush as a politician who was really, in some sense, outside of his time, an anachronism within his party and perhaps even in the world of American politics...[Those] who take their time with this volume and the underlying material will find both to be quite important in revising our understanding of this very important, misunderstood, and...somewhat peculiar president.”

The motivating spark behind my recent book, Pandora’s Trap: Presidential Decision Making and Blame Avoidance in Vietnam and Iraq (Rowman and Littlefield 2011/2013), came about while observing the debates over the Iraq War, and the common references made by academics and commentators alike to the Vietnam analogy. Having spent much of my career writing on U.S. presidential leadership style and foreign policy, the validity of this comparison immediately began churning in my mind. In previous books, I had explored Lyndon Johnson’s leadership style and use of advisers during Vietnam, interviewing many of his former-advisers like McGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara, Walt Rostow, Clark Clifford, Harry McPherson, George Christian, and Paul Nitze. It was this background that led to my immediately seeing important parallels, as well as differences, between Johnson’s style and use of advisers in Vietnam and George W. Bush’s in Iraq. Ironically, one finding is that Johnson’s inner circle was less dysfunctional than Bush’s
across the two cases – with the former primarily misreading the policy environment and intelligence and the later purposefully distorted it on a consistent basis.

In *Pandora’s Trap*, I compare the leadership styles of both Texans, highlighting how each structured their advisory systems, used information and advice, and dealt with dissent within their inner circles. These comparisons illustrate the similarities and differences between Bush and Johnson, and how their styles influenced their decisions and the roles played by their advisers. The book’s analysis of presidential personality and style builds upon the personal presidency tradition of Neustadt and my earlier theoretical work in *The President and His Inner Circle* (Columbia University Press, 2001). Thus, it should be very useful for students of the presidency, U.S. foreign policy, or political psychology. This book is not a simple rehashing of the events surrounding Bush’s march to war in Iraq and its subsequent conduct of the war. Instead, it focuses upon how the personality and leadership style of President Bush shaped the structuring and use of his advisory system, the impact this had upon Iraqi policy making and the use of intelligence, and how the politics of ‘blame avoidance’ often played out within the administration. Similar to my Johnson work, extensive interviews with former-Bush administration officials throughout the government provides an ‘insiders-lens’ to the inner circle and bureaucratic dynamics that took place during the War on Terror and the Iraq War.

It’s worth noting that while writing *Pandora’s Trap*, I was also engaged in crisis management research exploring the use of ‘blame avoidance’ tactics and strategies by leaders dealing with negative blowback from their handling of situations. Since very little work applying such a focus to presidential foreign policy crises cases exists, I decided to add a focus upon blame avoidance strategies to the book as well. In many respects, Bush’s leadership style (much as Johnson’s had forty years earlier) exacerbated the president’s own weaknesses and failed to provide him with a foreign policy advisory system that could compensate and prevent the kind of insular, closed-off advisory dynamics and bureaucratic politics that characterized both Iraq and Vietnam. More importantly, the politics of blame avoidance often hinder a leader’s efforts to both maintain their ‘political’ health and make good policy choices, especially in cases of protracted conflicts, which lend themselves even more readily to a narrow focus by leaders upon blame avoidance strategies instead of upon improving the policy approach itself.

Overall, *Pandora’s Trap* explores how leader styles, blame avoidance strategies, and uses/misuses of intelligence can open the lid to a policy-version of Pandora’s box - unleashing disastrous long-term consequences when the ramifications of short-term actions are inadequately considered.
Policy retrenchment by lame-ducks has been a ritual of presidential transitions ever since the so-called midnight regulations of the Carter Administration. Because of the cyclical pattern of the presidency, there are regular and predictable opportunities for presidents to leave a lasting mark on public policy. Much as the “first hundred days” provide a window of opportunity to advance a legislative agenda, Howell and Mayer have noted the opportunities available to presidents during the “last hundred days.” The most consequential are the regulatory and deregulatory actions initiated through administrative rulemaking because once adopted, rules are resistant to reversal. Much of the scholarship on outgoing administrations is concerned with unilateral actions, especially executive orders, proclamations and pardons. However, transitions also are preceded by drastic increases in agency rulemaking. Incoming administrations may deride “midnight” rules, but they usually represent the culmination of months—or years—of development. There are good reasons to study these actions. First, they are frequently used to advance unfulfilled priorities in the areas of the environment, health, and safety policy, where legislative reform is precluded by deadlocked politics. Second, last-minute actions by outgoing presidents add up to a significant policy legacy because they are rarely challenged by their successors. Oftentimes, the most a successor can do is delay new administrative rules because the political cost of reversal is prohibitive.

In Eleventh Hour: The Politics of Policy Initiatives in Presidential Transitions, I analyze how five successive presidents— from Carter to George W. Bush— have cemented policy legacies at the end of their terms. Each one used the tools of the administrative presidency to achieve last-minute changes, bypassing Congress and using the executive branch’s authority under existing statutes. The case studies document an evolving strategy: as administrative policymaking became more centralized, the strategy of using the regulatory process to establish policy legacy became increasingly sophisticated. The transition from George W. Bush to Barack Obama in 2008-2009 shows how the eleventh-hour rulemaking strategy came to fruition. From rules to waive requirements of the Endangered Species Act to relaxing restrictions on mountaintop removal mining, nearly as many economically significant rules were promulgated at the end of the Bush presidency as in the final months of Clinton’s term. However, Bush largely avoided the charge of “midnight” rules by letting more of them take effect before
ELEVENTH HOUR: THE POLITICS OF POLICY INITIATIVES IN PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS

November. Over time, departing presidents have expanded their use of rulemaking, as well as executive orders and proclamations to entrench their domestic policies. The continued use of this strategy should be expected, given the paradox that modern presidents face: They make extensive promises but have limited means to deliver amid deadlocked politics. Therefore, it is likely that they will continue to rely on administrative policy tools when legislative options are unavailable or politically infeasible.

THE AMERICAN ELECTIONS OF 2012

JANET M. BOX-STEFFENSMEIER

STEVEN E. SCHIER

Vernal Riffe Professor
Department of
Political Science
The Ohio State University

Dorothy H. and Edward C. Congdon Professor
Department of
Political Science
Carleton College

This work brings together some of America’s top political scientists and journalists to analyze the American elections of 2012. It succeeds our similar volume on the 2008 elections.

In addition to closely fought races for the presidency and for many congressional seats, 2012 witnessed new peaks in fundraising and campaign spending and unprecedented importance of new media. To understand these issues and the many reasons for Obama’s reelection and the continuation of the status quo in the congressional balance of power, we have brought together the insights of leading
scholars and political journalists. Our focus here extends beyond the outcomes themselves to include extensive examination of the role of the media, public opinion, campaign money, and religious beliefs in the 2012 elections.

We intend this to be a useful volume for many undergraduate courses. It is a suitable supplementary text in American government survey courses but also can find a place in upper-level undergraduate courses on political parties, elections, political behavior, institutions, Congress, and the presidency. All the topics covered in the chapters that follow are regularly addressed in these courses, and students always respond well to seeing the abstract concepts and theories applied to the most recent election cycle, with which they will typically have some familiarity.

The coeditors’ plan for an edited volume on American elections arose some years ago after a breakfast meeting of political scientists who are natives of the Iowa counties of Henry and Lee, in the southeastern corner of the state. Jan hails from near West Point, Iowa, and Steve grew up in Fort Madison, Iowa, towns about ten miles apart. Fond memories of that area led to the book’s dedication to the people of southeastern Iowa.

The Rhetoric of Heroic Expectations: Establishing the Obama Presidency was first envisioned during a 2010 conference on Barack Obama that we organized at Texas A&M University. As the conference proceeded, we discerned a theme that linked many of the various plenary and panel presentations: the myriad burdens Obama shouldered as he first campaigned for and later established his new presidency. Later, with the conference behind us, we set out to collect the essays from the conference that best represented that theme while also upholding the standards of excellence the presidential rhetoric series on
THE RHETORIC OF HEROIC EXPECTATIONS: ESTABLISHING THE OBAMA PRESIDENCY

Texas A&M University Press. We were fortunate to receive the cooperation of a diverse range of scholars, both with respect to discipline and rank.

The essays are organized into three categories, which reflect the argument we advance in the volume’s introductory chapter – that presidents simultaneously contend with three important kinds of burdens: institutional burdens (the “glorious burdens” specific to the presidency itself); contextual burdens (burdens to the historic moment within which the president assumes and holds office); and personal burdens (burdens specific to the individual president).

Authors of these essays include political scientists Brandon Rottinghaus and Matthew Esbaugh-Soha, as well as familiar names from outside the discipline such as David Zarefsky and James Aune, along with rising stars in the field of presidential rhetoric like Dave Tell, Kathryn Langford, and Jason Edwards.
In our new book “The Presidential Expectations Gap: Public Attitudes concerning the presidency we examine the expectations gap: the difference between what the public expects of its presidents and the realities of presidential performance. The expectations gap is of particular importance because political scientists, historians, journalists, pollsters, presidential advisers, bloggers, pundits of sundry ideological stripes, and even presidents themselves regularly discuss its implications. On any given day one is liable to read a story about how the incumbent president failed to satisfy expectations (e.g., by providing lower gas prices) and as a result faces the prospect of lower approval ratings and an increased probability of electoral defeat. What is often missing from these stories is a discussion of the very real limits of presidential power and whether what the public demands is even feasible. Instead, the primary focus generally is on the president’s inability to satisfy basic public expectations.

For more than half a century presidential scholars have made the expectations gap one of the defining concepts of the presidential literature. Yet for all the attention it has received there has been little attempt to define what is meant by an expectations gap or to systematically analyze its actual effects. Still, in a field that is often criticized as devoid of theory, the expectations gap represents a key theoretical concept that may help us to better understand the power and influence of the modern presidency.

Our book uses a variety of techniques (quantitative, qualitative, and historical) to examine the nature and impact of the expectations gap, not merely during the era of the modern presidency (roughly 1933 to the present), but also throughout American history. We examine how the expectations gap evolved, its short-term beneficial effects, and its hypothesized long-term detrimental consequences. At the centerpiece of our work are five surveys we conducted especially for this project. They allowed us to develop several empirical measures of the expectations gap and to examine the gap in relation to two incumbent
THE PRESIDENTIAL EXPECTATIONS GAP: PUBLIC ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE PRESIDENCY

presidents, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. We also include a case study of the presidency of Barack Obama, as well as retrospective evaluations of nine past presidents. We focus on six basic questions:

› What is the expectations gap?

› Is there evidence that a gap exists between public expectations and presidential performance?

› If so, what impact does the gap exert on incumbent presidents of different political parties?

› Does the gap and public expectations vary over time?

› What are the expectations gap’s key determinants?

› Are expectations related only to the presidency or is the expectations gap related to the wider phenomena of political polarization and lower levels of trust in our governmental system?