Gov 92r Project Postings
Spring 2017

Danielle Allen
Surveying the Declaration
The engrossed and signed parchment Declaration of Independence is just one thread in a rich tapestry of broadside, newspaper, book, and manuscript versions of the Declaration produced since July 4, 1776. The study of these myriad editions allows us to track the spread and popularity of the text, and determine how anomalies entered the print and manuscript tradition. The research assistant will help build the first database of all known editions of the Declaration of Independence from 1776 through the 1820s. They will collect data on each of these versions, produce accurate transcriptions, and analyze contextual information to assess the audience, printer's bias, and potential political associations of each edition.
Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): At least one course in American history and/or politics required. Experience working with primary sources and conducting historical research preferred.
Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Emily Sneff, Research Manager of the Declaration Resources Project, emilysneff@fas.harvard.edu

Danielle Allen
Historical Settings for Educational Video Game
We are currently developing a video game about the Declaration of Independence for middle and high school students called "Portrait of a Tyrant". The game is set primarily in the years leading up to July 4, 1776, and each level explores a different location, to emphasize the notion that the Declaration was the product of thirteen diverse colonies. In each chapter, the main character -- a teenaged time-traveller named Briana -- encounters a different aspect of tyranny through grievances pulled directly from the Declaration of Independence, and the colonists she meets tell the real historical context of these grievances. The research assistant will collect information on real events, locations, and individuals to build a narrative for each historical setting in the game.
Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): At least one course in American history and/or politics required. Experience working with primary sources and conducting historical research preferred.
Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Emily Sneff, Research Manager of the Declaration Resources Project, emilysneff@fas.harvard.edu

Ana Catalano Weeks
Parties and Work-Family Policies in Advanced Democracies
How, and under what conditions, do political parties address work-family issues? Perhaps the largest gender gap in policy preferences in advanced democracies is over the issue of maternal employment (women being more progressive than men by an average of ten points). Yet, we know very little about political party attention to these issues in comparative perspective. The goal of this project is to collect, clean, and code political party positions related to work-family policies (parental leave, child care, family allowances, flexible working, etc). This data does not exist, despite a huge project coding party manifestos for other issues like education and social justice. The RA will be involved in collecting and cleaning the data, helping devise a coding dictionary and methodology, and coding for different issues. In addition, the RA may perform other tasks like compiling literature reviews and beginning to analyze the data that they coded. We will use this new database to perform text analysis to identify the effect of political gender quotas and women's representation on work-family positions, among other potential research projects.
Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Ability to read in another language would be helpful, but not required (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Flemish, Dutch,

Danish, or Icelandic). The student should be familiar with Microsoft Excel. Other data management skills and /or familiarity with STATA or R are helpful, but not required.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Dr. Ana Catalano Weeks: catalan@fas.harvard.edu

Ana Catalano Weeks and Colin Brown
Reimagined Constituencies: The Populist Radical Right and "Identity Politics"
How do populist radical right (PRR) parties influence "identity politics" in mainstream political parties? A growing body of work shows that PRR parties can influence the salience and passage of immigration policies, but there is little work on how other issues are affected. The goal of this project is to assess the impact of PRR parties on other parties' commitments to inclusiveness. Do successful populist radical right parties cause mainstream parties to avoid "identity politics" (not only relating to ethnic minorities, but also women, LGBTQ people, and other groups), or does the support base that remains in older parties push them towards further efforts at inclusiveness, on the ballot and in the party? The RA(s) will be involved in collecting and coding data related to political party diversity and inclusion, such as measures that promote or validate an emphasis on identity. This will be a largely quantitative and Europe-focused project.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Required: at least two Government courses and basic familiarity with Excel, Stata, SPSS, or some other data analysis software. Preferred: a background in at least one European language beyond English and at least one upper-level (1000/2000-level) course in Government.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Dr. Ana Catalano Weeks catalan@fas.harvard.edu and Dr. Colin Brown brown4@fas.harvard.edu

Horacio Larreguy
Do media lead to government accountability and public good provision? Evidence from Mexico.
The project intends to examine how the media in Mexico might help hold government accountable and thus encourage governments to provide the public goods that voters want, but would not otherwise receive. This project first entails compiling a large data base on the original documents granting permission for radio and TV stations to broadcast. There should then be an opportunity to analyze the data.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Experience working with data and basic statistical analysis, and a high competence in reading Spanish.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Professor Horacio Larreguy at hlarreguy@fas.harvard.edu.

Horacio Larreguy
The introduction of biometric voting technology on electoral outcomes: Evidence from Uganda
We are interested in studying how reforms to electoral processes affect political outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa. We intend to explore the impact of the introduction of biometric voting technology in Uganda in the 2016 elections. With preliminary results suggesting substantial benefits enjoyed by the incumbent party, this project will help to develop a fuller understanding of how technological interventions reshape the cost of political participation and affect electoral results. Specifically, the project will involve the cleaning of data from the complete Ugandan voter register, processing data to match it to electoral outcomes, and the merging of socioeconomic variables from existing data sources. Preliminary data analysis to explore variation will also be involved, and some basic literature searching may also be needed.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Experience with common data analysis programs (Stata or R) is required. Experience with web scraping would be preferred, and an interest in African politics would be a plus.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Professor Horacio Larreguy at hlarreguy@fas.harvard.edu.

Horacio Larreguy

The effect of traditional chiefs on political participation: Evidence from Liberia

How do traditional chiefs affect political participation and voting outcomes when chiefs are government employees? Previous literature have shown that chiefs have great power over their constituency's political preferences (e.g., see Baldwin's work in Zambia) because voting with the chief increases benefits with regards to public goods provision for the village. In contexts where chiefs are employed by the government however (see, e.g., de Kadt and Larreguy's work in South Africa), the chief has incentive to solicit votes for the incumbent party and retain his/her job. This project explores the local administration structure and provision of public goods in Liberia to identify ways in which traditional chiefs act as intermediaries, both with regards to voting for the presidency, as well as with regards to voting for the representatives. The student would help with a database construction, which would entail digitizing original documents, data cleaning and data management.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Basic coursework in quantitative methods, and some experience in Stata or R. Some experience in ArcGIS experience preferred.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Professor Horacio Larreguy at hlarreguy@fas.harvard.edu.

Payam Mohseni

Iranian Regional Security Policy and Sectarian De-Escalation in the Middle East

This project focuses on sectarian politics in the Middle East and Iran's regional foreign policy. In specific, this project focuses on the "Axis of Resistance" comprising of Iran, Iraq and Syria as well as various non-state actors such as Hezbollah, Iraq's Hashd al-Shaabi and other militia actors. We will be looking at larger geo-political struggles, social transformations, and political thought affecting Axis players. Researchers may also be required to undertake analysis of Saudi and GCC state foreign policies, as well as Sunni Salafi movements in the Middle East. Responsibilities will include news and analysis monitoring, collecting and synthesizing secondary scholarship, and attending and summarizing talks/events pertaining to the research project.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Reading ability in Arabic or Persian is preferred but not required.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Dr. Payam Mohseni, Payam_Mohseni@hks.harvard.edu

Payam Mohseni

Civil Society Organizations in Authoritarian and Hybrid Regimes

This project focuses on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) across various regions in the world, specifically focusing on CSO regulatory restrictions, authoritarian learning, and the color revolutions. Researchers will be expected to engage with theories in comparative politics, collect and synthesize secondary scholarship, and help code regime types and CSO regulations.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Familiarity with comparative politics and global development literature preferred. Researchers should have strong analytical skills and ability to potentially carry out data-driven research tasks.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Dr. Payam Mohseni, Payam_Mohseni@hks.harvard.edu

Yascha Mounk

The People versus Democracy: How the Clash Between Individual Rights and the Popular Will is Destroying Liberal Democracy

I am writing a book about the crisis of liberal democracy--especially pressing in the age of Donald Trump--and will need qualitative research assistance: identifying key texts in particular debates; finding captivating stories to

illustrate my arguments, and so on. The key thesis of the book is this:

The economic and ideological preconditions that have allowed liberalism and democracy to hold together for the past century are rapidly eroding. As the living standards of average citizens stagnate and representative democracy's claim to be the most feasible way of allowing the people to rule is undermined by new technologies, the people are less and less willing to give existing political players the benefit of the doubt. As a result, we are witnessing a polarization of liberal democracy into two new regime forms: "illiberal democracy" and "undemocratic liberalism."

In an "illiberal democracy," the will of the people determines public policy but individual rights are regularly violated. Forms of illiberal democracy are already apparent in Hungary and Turkey; if right-wing populists like the Front National continue their recent ascent, they may soon spread to much of Western Europe.

In what I call "undemocratic liberalism," by contrast, individual rights are respected but the mechanism for translating the will of the people into public policy has broken down—either because financial elites have outsized influence of the legislature, or because the will of elected representatives is checked by veto powers. On my view, much of Western Europe can currently be described as a form of undemocratic liberalism, a development which is owed not only to the influence of corporate lobbyists but also to the power of judicial review, the independence of bureaucratic decision-makers, and the growth of international institutions.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): none

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: mounk@fas.harvard.edu

Jon Rogowski

Understanding the Politics and Political Futures of Millennials

Millennials are America's largest and most diverse generation. Over the last year, the GenForward project (www.genforwardsurvey.com) has conducted monthly surveys to study the lived experiences and political views of young adults under the age of 30, with particular focus on young adults of color. Professor Rogowski seeks one or more students who are interested in contributing to this project. Students will contribute to the project by helping to design survey questionnaires, analyze data, write reports, and disseminate the findings.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Experience with one or more of the following is requested but not required:

- Survey design
- Statistical analysis of survey data
- Experience writing reports and other documents for public audiences

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Prof. Jon Rogowski; rogowski@fas.harvard.edu

Anne Sartori

Tug of War: Civil-Military Power Struggles and International Conflict

This research project investigates the relationship between civil-military relations and countries' entry into militarized, international conflict. The research assistant's role will be to collect and read articles and books (using keyword searches of Lexis-Nexis online, as well as print sources) in order to answer a series of questions about government purges of the military -- for example, whether any such purges occurred in a country in a given year, and if so, who ordered the purge(s), how many officers were purged and at what levels, and what the purpose of the purge was. The assistant will summarize his/her findings in writing and enter the information into a database.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): None.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Anne Sartori, Visiting Associate Professor in the Government Department, asartori@mit.edu

Daniel Smith

Candidates and Elections in Comparative Perspective

This project involves the collection of candidate-level and legislator-level biographical and electoral data from several democracies. The RA will be involved in collecting and cleaning the data, and in the process will learn about the electoral systems, candidate selection methods within parties, and patterns of representation in each of the countries included in the study.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Italian, Japanese, French, Spanish, Norwegian, or Swedish language skills are helpful, but not required. The student should be familiar with Microsoft Excel. Other data management skills are helpful, but not necessary. Students with more advanced data skills will work on more advanced projects.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Professor Daniel M. Smith: danielmsmith@fas.harvard.edu

Xiang Zhou

Inequality, Information, and Distributive Justice: Evidence from China

How does awareness of economic inequality affect individuals' perceptions of meritocracy and preferences for redistribution? Does information about inequality have heterogeneous impacts among individuals with different economic resources and ideological orientations? Answers to these questions have profound implications for understanding how media coverage of controversial issues shapes the contour of public opinion. To approach this goal, we plan to conduct a survey experiment among 2,000 Chinese netizens, examining how their policy preferences change in response to newly acquired information about rising inequality, and whether different segments of the population respond to the stimulus differently. In this project, the student will be involved in running a survey experiment on a Chinese crowd-sourcing website, collecting data from completed responses, and conducting basic data analysis.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): The student should be able to read and type Chinese. Knowledge of R or Stata is preferred but not required.

Contact: If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Prof. Xiang Zhou, xiang_zhou@fas.harvard.edu