Two Former U.S. Congressmen—Three Current Questions

Q & A with Bonior and Leach

**Q**: What is your take on the government shutdown/budget process/debt ceiling debate in the current Congress? Particularly, does it reflect your experiences in Congress during the 1995 shutdowns? Or, are the current issues in the House something altogether different?

**A**: Bonior: I feel a mixture of disgust and sadness. The Tea Party members in Congress are holding America hostage. In 1995, we still had a decent number of Republican moderates who wanted to cut spending but also believed in cutting deals. This is a Kamikaze mission for the Tea Party Republicans.

Leach: There are analogies to 1995 when Newt Gingrich, the newly elected Speaker of the House, led a budget show-down with a politically vulnerable President. The Congress sent to the White House a budget that President Clinton vetoed for being insufficient. Historically, Presidents generally exercised their veto authority to eliminate programs and reduce rather than increase spending. The Republicans assumed that for the President to veto an approach that was restrained, in this case an inflation adjusted fiscal freeze, would be quite unpopular, causing the public to side with House of Representatives. Instead, the public sided with the President, and the Congress had to capitulate, leading to a resurgence in Presidential popularity.

What is different today is one of degree that might be considered a matter of kind. The 1995 House was led from the top-down. Today’s Republican caucus is more unruly, with the energy flowing bottom-up, from a more ideologically-bent membership. The social environment of the mid-1990s was also less angst-ridden. We had just fought a brief, successful war in the Gulf with few casualties. The war was largely financed by allies in the region, and our economy was benefitting from technology driven productivity gains. Today, the domestic economy
Q: Do you think the election process for the House has changed since the days you ran, with the Supreme Court decision opening up corporate donations and the DCCC/ NRCC involvement in candidate recruitment?

A: Bonior: Yes it has. It was trending undemocratic in the 1990’s. My last five races for re-election cost my campaign an average of two million dollars per election. The recent court decision, “Citizens United”, further skewed the money race in favor of large institutions and wealthy individuals. Ironically citizens did “unite” through technology and small contributions to level somewhat the inequality that favors the wealthy on the left, but mostly on the right (Koch Brothers). Still today House members and their challengers spend far too much time raising campaign funds. The party campaign committees heavily weigh a candidate’s personal financial wealth in recruitment. Like the government, the campaign process is broken.

Leach: The country confronts a host of policy challenges from wars abroad to health care at home, but our capacity to deal with these problems is undermined by the growing loss of public confidence in government itself. This confidence gap is in no small part a consequence of the deepest blemish in our political system – the legalized conflicts of interest that characterize candidate indebtedness to interest groups. It is these conflicts that are magnified by the “Citizens United” ruling. Compromise may have once been the art of politics, but intransigence is the new art of political survival. If an elected official in today’s environment chooses to compromise on an issue, that official becomes vulnerable to a primary challenge. Activists will insist that a “real” liberal or “real” conservative represent their preferred party, and interest groups can be expected to make a pile of money available to insure ideological purity.

Q: What factor(s) is most to blame for what many consider to be the “hyper-partisan” nature of the House today?

A: Bonior: 1) Candidates and parties are too tied to the chase for campaign funds, polarizing the ideological spectrum to the extremes; 2) Poor leadership in setting the calendar and schedule; the work of the country cannot get done every other week and on just Tuesday and Wednesday; 3) Lack of comity: they should argue without being hyper argumentative. This does not preclude passion, but passion with respect; a trait Jim Leach was the best at.

Leach: Today’s gridlock relates in part to declining representation of the center right and center left in Congress, but the bigger factor is the decline in mutual respect between the two parties. David and I served in Congresses with a mix of leaders – liberals like Ted Kennedy, Bill Bradley, Tip O’Neill, Tom Foley, and John Brademas; moderates like Sam Nunn, David Boren, Howard Baker, Lee Hamilton, Barber Conable, and John B. Anderson; and conservatives like John Rhodes, Bob Michel, Jack Kemp, and Guy Vander Jagt. Members could be expected to disagree but they had in common a respect for each other. They battled on practical and philosophical grounds but always sought constructive outcomes. Dysfunctionality was neither a strategy nor a goal. It is when a rupture develops in the ethos of governance being a shared responsibility that instability, perhaps even chaos, follows.

We will continue this interesting conversation on April 24th with Congressmen Bonior and Leach and members of our Advisory Board at a public forum at the University of Iowa addressing divided government in an era of extreme opinion polarization.
“The Iowa Promise,” the University’s strategic plan, commits our College (CLAS) to excellence in four key areas. Taking those pledges into account, the Department has been able to identify four areas of strength. Each strength is aligned with current year faculty achievements which are highlighted below.

**Political Violence**

In September, Professor Sara Mitchell was invited along with seven professors and experts in the areas of political science and law, to discuss perspectives on the Syrian civil war. The panel focused their discussions on the legal, political and moral dimensions of military intervention, as well as the potential effect the intervention could have on the rest of the Middle East. A reporter from the Des Moines Register dropped in on Assistant Professor Alyssa Prorok’s class on civil wars, where the discussion on Syria continued as Prorok explained how a nation’s natural resources can influence the onset of civil wars.

**Elections, Representation & Policy**

Professor Caroline Tolbert discussed her research on Internet access and the digital divide on Iowa Public Radio in September, when Governor Branstad unveiled a new statewide initiative to bring high speed Internet access to all Iowans. Tolbert has been studying the importance of digital policy for more than a decade; she is the author of three books on the topic and several scholarly articles. The significance of this research lies in broadband’s status as the most important infrastructure challenge of the twenty-first century.

**Political Methodology**

This May, the department was very excited to be the first university, besides Washington University, to host the 6th annual SLAMM! Conference (St. Louis Area Methods Meeting), the premier regional methods meeting in the country. Professor Fred Boehmke hosted the event and delivered a program filled with high quality political methodology research and an experience harkening back to the smaller, more intimate political methodology summer meetings of the past. The conference was an all-day event featuring our department’s faculty, students and outside guest speakers.

**Minority Politics**

Since 2004, Professors Kelly Kadera and Sara Mitchell have hosted eight Journeys in World Politics Workshops which bring together women working in International Relations. The conference includes research presentations by junior scholars, feedback from conference participants, sessions on career and gender topics, and oral autobiographies by senior scholars. Journeys’ funding has come from the Department, CLAS, and the National Science Foundation. Professors Kadera and Mitchell are seeking funding opportunities for future workshops.

**New Speaker Series**

The Comparative Legislative Research Center in the Department of Political Science began a new speaker series in the 2012-2013 academic year. The series is designed to bring high-profile and up-and-coming legislative scholars to campus to give talks on new research in legislative studies.

In 2012-2013, the CLRC hosted two speakers. The first, Ryan Vander Wielen of Temple University, gave a talk on “Dynamic Elite Partisanship.” The second speaker, Tracy Sulkin of the University of Illinois, presented her research on “Commitment and Consequences.”

In the current 2013-2014 academic year, the Center looks forward to welcoming two more legislative scholars to campus – Michele Swers of Georgetown University and Bruce Oppenheimer of Vanderbilt University.

For more information on the past and future speakers to the department, visit the News and Events section of the Political Science Department’s website.
Every four years the media spotlight shines on the state during the prelude to its first-in-the-nation Iowa Caucuses and University of Iowa political experts are in serious demand. One expert who is helping the University leverage this publicity opportunity is Tim Hagle. To see his observations on local, state, and national politics year-round, follow him on Twitter@ProfHagle

Political science professors have the opportunity to travel, especially if they study countries overseas. Since July of 2010, when I attained Emeritus status, I have given myself full-time to teaching and research in places that intrigue me. This work (or pleasure in my case, since I’m a gnome – gnomes like work) has provided me extended residence in Italy, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Slovenia, Portugal, Ireland, Turkey, and Spain. Below I highlight the fruits of some of these stays, including courses taught, scholars met, and efforts published. (I’ve published about 6 books and 60 articles over this period).

In summer 2010, I was Visiting Faculty at the European Consortium for Political Research Summer School in Ljubljana, Slovenia, offering a course in Election Forecasting. The students in the class were from Belgium, Columbia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Spain and Turkey. Under my direction, they eventually published election forecasting papers on their own countries, in the International Journal of Forecasting.

In fall 2010, I served as Visiting Researcher at the University of Lisbon, Portugal, working foremost with Marina Costa Lobo. Among other things, she and I co-authored a special issue of Electoral Studies, on the electoral effects of the economic crisis in Southern Europe. A second co-author of that special issue was Paolo Bellucci (an Iowa grad) and now Chair of the Political Science Department at the University of Siena, Italy, where I was Visiting Professor (January-June 2011), giving a course in Advanced Regression analysis.

In fall 2011, I was granted Visiting Senior Scholar status at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, where I worked with Rune Stubager and his students. We have published a number of articles, and are now preparing a book on the Danish voter. In some ways, that book will be a follow-up to the book I just co-authored, entitled The Austrian Voter. In spring 2012 I had the pleasure of holding the Paul Lazarsfeld Distinguished Professor Chair at the University of Vienna. I worked most closely with Sylvia Kritzinger and Eva Zeglovits, who were my Austrian co-authors on the book, the first of its kind in that country. In the fall 2012, I was Visiting Professor at the University of Leuven, Belgium. One of their Ph.D. students, Ruth Dassonnville, and I collaborated on different macro-level papers about the economy and elections, the initial one having just appeared in Political Science Methods and Research.

Currently, I’m in Ireland, a Visiting Researcher at the University of Galway (working with another Iowa grad, Kevin Leyden), and a Visiting Professor at Trinity College, Dublin. Kevin and I are presenting a paper on Irish economic voting at the Political Studies Association of Ireland. After leaving Dublin, I will be in Madrid, to give seminars at the University of Madrid and the Juan March Institute in Spain. This involves continuation of my work on Spanish elections, with Marta Fraile.

At home in Iowa, I am maintaining my international collaborations. While in Belgium, I met Liisa Talving of Estonia, who was attending a conference I co-hosted. She is now in our department, working on her dissertation about economic voting in a sample of EU nations. She, as a good political scientist, is exploring her cross-Atlantic scholarly connections, benefitting from a long Iowa tradition of welcoming students and researchers from other nations. I hope you get a chance to know Liisa better, if you have not already done so.

In the Media!

Often movies help to explain the politics that Americans encounter from international relations to everyday lives. In two forthcoming books, John S. Nelson examines the politics in many well-known films.


- Politics in Popular: Rhetorical Takes on Horror, War, Thriller, and SciFi Films from Paradigm in May 2014.

Enjoy movies?

~ Michael S. Lewis-Beck,
F. Wendell Miller Distinguished Professor of Political Science
Institute on Civic Engagement

The University of Iowa and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Association have joined to create a summer Institute on Civic Engagement. The ondary school teachers and practical, first-hand incorporate public their courses and involve activities outside the as a two-semester teachers complete online Institute, and then come of panels and presentations by UI faculty, staff and other secondary teachers who have already constructed their own lesson plans and civic engagement projects.

This past summer, former Congressman Jim Leach gave the opening address, and the teachers also visited the Hoover Presidential Library, where they learned about Hoover’s own career in public service as well as the Library’s resources. Twelve teachers participated in the inaugural Institute. The 2014 Institute plans to expand to 30 teachers with the goal to create cohorts of teachers who will spread their experiences with and enthusiasm for civic engagement across the state. Cary Covington administers the Institute and teaches the graduate course. Visit the website at: http://itsnt842.iowa.uiowa.edu/civic_engagement/default.aspx

Professors Named Associate Editors

Politics & Gender, the journal of the Women and Politics Research Section of the American Political Science Association, recently named its new team of editors for 2014-2017. Along with two co-editors from the University of Oklahoma, Associate Professor Tracy Osborn will join six other associate editors in crafting the “Critical Perspectives” portion of the journal, addressing key topics in women and politics research.

In June, Associate Professor Kelly Kadera became an Associate Editor for International Studies Review, a scholarly journal that provides a window on current trends in international studies research across the globe. Essays published in ISR integrate strands of scholarship, clarify intellectual debates, provide new perspectives on research, and identify cutting-edge methodologies or theoretical approaches. Aside from handling manuscripts, Kadera is charged with publicity and public outreach for the journal.

Boehmke Promotion & Paper Award

Fred Boehmke was promoted to Professor by the Board of Regents last spring. This fall Boehmke will continue as the faculty advisor to the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative and as the Director of Graduate Studies.

On the research front, Boehmke has been writing papers on the diffusion of policies across the American states. His work in a new paper “Inferring Policy Diffusion Networks in the American States”, with colleagues Jeff Harden and Bruce Desmarais, uses network analysis to estimate the patterns of policy leadership among the states. The paper was recently recognized by the Political Networks section of the American Political Science Association as the 2013 Best Conference Paper in Political Networks.

WHO’S NEW?

We are pleased to welcome two new faculty members, Alyssa Prorok and Nicholas Grossman, to the Department.

Prorok earned her Ph.D. this year from the University of Maryland. Her research examines internal conflict, with a focus on civil war termination, outcomes of wars and the incentives of rebel and state leaders during conflict. Her recent research also addresses the role of international law in both civil and interstate conflict and in the settlement of interstate territorial disputes. Prorok joins the department as an assistant professor after participating as a Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow in the Foreign Policy Program at the Brookings Institution during the 2012-2013 academic year. She was also a Visiting Pre-Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University during fall 2011. She received the Don C. Piper student paper in political science at Maryland in 2011. She has published in the Journal of Conflict Resolution and the International Studies Association Compendium Project.

Grossman joins the Department as an adjunct lecturer after earning his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland with a dissertation on Robotics and the Future of International Terrorism. His research focuses broadly on the strategies of asymmetric competitions—situations where one side possesses fewer resources than its opponent whether it be in warfare, politics, business, or sports. He also studies how technological change alters the strategies of both sides of asymmetric conflicts. Currently he studies terrorism and insurgency broadly with a focus in the Middle East. Grossman will be teaching courses on terrorism and insurgency; national security policy; and 21st century technology and warfare, primarily robotic systems. In spring 2011, prior to joining our department, Grossman had presented on preemptive warfare to the Pentagon’s Office of Net Assessment.

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Annual Political Science Scholarship Award Winners

Due to the generosity of our donors, we are able to offer several scholarships that support our top students in their academic pursuits. The photo above is from this year’s undergraduate awards reception that was held in April.

2012-2013 Award Winners

David Atkinson Scholarship: Erin Regan
Vernon & Georgia Bender Scholarship: Madeline Welter
Joseph Domke Memorial Scholarship: Kelly Daniels
Donald B. Johnson Fellowship: James Cook
Donald B. Johnson Scholarship: Broderick DeBettignies
James & Patti Murray Scholarship: Drew Lakin
Third House Scholars: Joelle Brown and James Morris
William Jennings Bryan Scholarship: Zachary Tilly
Helen Fairall Scholarship: Katherine Valde

Johnson Intern Scholarship: Kelly T. Arndt, Megan E. Burnside, Samantha M. Farmer, Lucas J. Kane, and Matthew J. Uttermark

Jonathan Ring Ballard Seashore Award

The University of Iowa selected one of our graduate students, Jonathan Ring, as the recipient of the highly competitive Ballard Seashore Award for the 2013-2014 academic year. Jonathan’s dissertation tells the story of norm diffusion using agent-based modeling, event history analysis, and spatial econometrics. It draws on cultural evolution and complex adaptive systems to model diffusion processes. By identifying the unique over-time patterns associated with different diffusion mechanisms, he is able to predict which types of norms are apt to become globally relevant and the conditions under which states are likely to internalize new norms, such as gender quotas in legislatures.
Assistant Professor Julie Pacheco
Do the media influence policymaking? Julie Pacheco was recently awarded a $25,000 UI Social Science Funding program grant entitled “The Role of State Newspapers on Governmental Attention to Tobacco and Vaccines”. The project draws upon the 50 American states to explore the role of media on policymaking from 1990-2010 on two public health issues: tobacco and vaccines. This data will be the basis for an external grant proposal to be submitted next year. Pacheco’s article “Attitudinal Policy Feedback: The Impact of Smoking Bans on Attitudes towards Smokers, Secondhand Smoke, and Anti-Smoking Policies” was published in Public Opinion Quarterly in October 2013. This article considers how policies influence views toward target populations, educate the public about what is good/bad, and affect support for future policies.

Professor Caroline Tolbert
Professor Caroline Tolbert and Assistant Professor Julie Pacheco were awarded a multi-year NSF grant to map Internet access and use across the United States, large cities and metropolitan areas in the U.S. The grant will provide new public use data on the actual percentage of the population online and engaging in certain activities, rather than infrastructure maps where broadband is available for purchase. Tolbert’s work on digital politics was recently cited in the New York Times in an article entitled “Most of U.S. Is Wired, but Millions Aren’t Plugged In.” The research was coauthored with UI grad student Chris Anderson and Professor Karen Mosberger (ASU). Tolbert was also awarded an external grant from “Fairvote” to study ranked choice voting elections in Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Cambridge, and Oakland.

Visiting Associate Professor Ambassador Ronald McMullen
The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) recently published “Foreign Affairs Oral History Project: Conversations with Ronald K. McMullen.” This 147 page document is based on 16 hours of oral history interviews given to ADST. McMullen also edited the final version. It is available online and at the Library of Congress.

Professors Vicki Claypool & Sara Mitchell
Claypool and Mitchell published “Women Don’t Ask? Women Don’t Say No? Bargaining and Service in the Political Science Profession” in P.S. Political Science & Politics. The article analyzes survey data for 1,400 political science Ph.D.s to determine if women do more academic service than their male colleagues and if women bargain less than men for resources. The findings were highlighted in Inside Higher Education.

Alumni Fellow
Howard Kerr (B.A. ’60)
Howard Kerr is an Iowa City native who served as Commanding Officer of U.S. Navy destroyers and as Commander of Destroyer Squadron Thirty-Three. Kerr served as a military aide to Vice Presidents Agnew and Ford, as a naval aide and deputy presidential counselor to President Ford, and as a military fellow on the Council on Foreign Relations. Upon leaving the military, he developed a successful private sector career, becoming president and CEO of Custom Technologies Corporation, Grabill Aerospace Industries, Ltd., and Pocklington Financial Corporation. We were honored to have Mr. Kerr visit the Department of Political Science as an Alumni Fellow after 50 years of being away. He made a guest appearance in Associate Professor Brian Lai’s Intro to Foreign Policy class and also presented “A Diverse Journey”, a public lecture on September 18, 2013. Mr. Kerr’s lecture covered his experiences after leaving the College and Iowa City. He discussed his many stops during the course of his journey through life and what each experience taught him along the way. The following day, he attended the Alumni Fellow Awards ceremony where he was honored as a 2013 CLAS Alumni Fellow recipient.

Mark Wrighton (Ph.D. ’97)
Promotion to Dean
Mark Wrighton recently became the Dean of the College of Public Affairs & Administration at the University of Illinois-Springfield (UIS). Previously he served as Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Southern Mississippi from August of 2009 to May of 2013 as well as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Associate Dean for Gulf Coast Operations in the College of Arts and Letters at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Wrighton collaborates with faculty members across a variety of disciplines at the forefront of UIS’ public affairs mission. Dr. Wrighton holds a B.A. from Louisiana State University, a M.A. from the University of Alabama, and both a M.A. (’93) and Ph.D. (’97) from the University of Iowa in Political Science.

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Send us your updates, accomplishments and news. Please get in touch by email (polisci@uiowa.edu) or by letter to the Department.
Updates from the Department of Political Science at UI!

There is a new 341 Schaeffer Hall! Main office renovations are finally complete. Please stop by to see this revamp and reminisce about your time at the University of Iowa.

You can view information about the Department, its faculty, students and alumni by visiting our website: [wwwclas.uiowaeducpolisci](http://wwwclas.uiowaeducpolisci)

And we want to hear from you: about the website, about yourself, about current events. Email us at: polisci@uiowa.edu

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