Questions in Politics

VOLUME XI   2024

Questions in Politics Editorial Team

About the Georgia Political Science Association

Founded in 1968, the Georgia Political Science Association (GPSA) is the professional association for political science practitioners and educators in Georgia. Membership is drawn from the public, private, and academic sectors. We welcome members, attendees, participants, and students from around the world.

Questions in Politics is the official journal publication of the GPSA.

Visit the GPSA website for more information visit www.gpsa-online.org.

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Preface

It is with great pride that we present Questions in Politics, Volume XI, as the official peer-reviewed publication of the Georgia Political Science Association. This year's collection of papers reflects the continuing tradition of diverse and rigorous scholarship that the GPSA fosters. The 2023 GPSA annual meeting in **St. Simmons Island** was a vibrant gathering, bringing together scholars who presented cutting-edge research across various fields of political science. The breadth and depth of the topics covered in this volume are a testament to the dynamic nature of political inquiry within our community.

About the Issue

Volume XI contains four peer-reviewed papers that highlight pressing and innovative discussions in contemporary political science. This year's selection, while smaller in number compared to previous years, is notable for the high quality of research and the timeliness of the topics addressed. The organization of the issue reflects both the thematic coherence of the selected papers and their individual contributions to the broader discourse in political science.

The first article, "Strength in Numbers? Political Disadvantage and Coalition Formation in Public Law Cases," by Ted D. Rossier, examines how politically disadvantaged groups leverage coalition-building to succeed in public law litigation. The study explores the theory of political disadvantage, which posits that groups representing marginalized constituencies—such as racial minorities, women, and the poor—often turn to the courts as a primary venue for policy change due to their lack of influence in traditional political arenas. Rossier uses qualitative and quantitative methods, including case studies of organizations like the National Center for Law and Economic Justice (NCLEJ) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), to demonstrate how these groups form coalitions to pool resources and enhance their litigation strength. The findings suggest that coalition formation is a critical strategy for disadvantaged groups, allowing them to overcome resource limitations and increase their chances of success in the courts. This article won the McBrayer Award for the best paper presented at the 2023 GPSA Annual Meeting.

Following this, the article "Fear and Loathing in American Politics: The Trump Candidacies and Affective Polarization" by Joseph Gershtenson explores the rise of affective polarization in American politics, particularly during Donald Trump's presidential campaigns in 2016 and 2020. The study uses data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) to trace the increasing divergence in sentiments toward presidential candidates and political parties from 1968 to 2020. Gershtenson finds that polarization has become more intense, with negative feelings toward the opposing party growing faster than positive feelings toward one's own party. The research highlights that while polarization was already on the rise, Trump's divisive rhetoric and presidency have significantly exacerbated it, leading to the highest levels of affective polarization in recent history. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding these dynamics, as continued polarization poses significant challenges to political discourse and governance in the United States.

The third article, "Black Market Politics: The Importance of Parallel Governance" by Jerry Mark Silverman explores the concept of parallel governance, where non-state actors assume governance functions typically expected from formal governments, especially in contexts where official governments are ineffective. Silverman argues that in many low- and middle-income countries, informal organizations often provide essential services and governance, especially among impoverished communities. These parallel systems arise when formal governance is either absent or insufficient, and they play a crucial role in poverty alleviation by being more accountable and attuned to local needs than formal government bodies. The article emphasizes the need for formal governments to recognize and collaborate with these parallel governance structures to create

effective poverty reduction strategies. By leveraging the strengths of both formal and informal sectors, Silverman suggests that more sustainable and inclusive governance can be achieved, particularly in regions where traditional state governance fails to meet the needs of the population.

The article "Gender Gap in Social Welfare Policy Attitudes" by Vivian Cassaniti examines gender differences in public opinion on social welfare and related policies in the United States. Using data from the 2021 General Social Survey, Cassaniti explores how men and women diverge in support for national spending on welfare, childcare, defense, and crime reduction. The study confirms that women generally support social welfare spending, aligning with the "compassion issues" theory, while men favor increased spending on defense and crime policies. However, the findings also reveal unexpected patterns, such as men's higher support for childcare spending, challenging traditional gender role assumptions. The study highlights the complexity of gendered political attitudes, influenced not only by gender but also by political ideology, race, class, and other demographic factors, offering a nuanced understanding of the gender gap in American politics. This article won the 2023 GPSA Pajari Award for best undergraduate paper.

Each paper advances scholarly understanding in its respective field and offers practical implications for addressing some of society's most critical issues. We are confident that readers will find the discussions within this volume enlightening and thought-provoking, and we look forward to the continued dialogue these papers will inspire in the academic community and beyond.

Thanks to the Reviewers

As always, we are deeply indebted to the reviewers for Volume XI. We received an excellent slate of papers for this volume, which required us to find an outstanding slate of reviewers. In addition to the editors, each article received peer reviews from scholars whose expertise could speak to the quality and significance of the submitted manuscript. Our reviewers' expertise and suggested edits and revisions increased the quality of the work you see in this journal. Being a journal reviewer is often a thankless task, and—while it may not be much—we want to extend our heartiest "thank you" to our reviewers.

The reviewers and their affiliation for Volume XI of *Questions in Politics* are as follows:

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Toby Bolsen
Georgia State University

Jeff DeWitt
Kennesaw State University

Judd Thornton
Georgia State University

Jeffrey M. Glas
University of Georgia

Mike Evans
Georgia State University

Brian Webb
Averett University

Brian Smith
Georgia Southwestern State University

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For those who present at the 2024 GPSA meeting, please consider submitting your work to *QiP*. To find more information about submitting to *QiP*, please consult the [GPSA website](). The deadline for submissions for Volume XI is December 31, 2023.

Sean Richey & Ben Taylor

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