Chair’s Report

Dear colleagues and friends,

We are now only a few days away from the American Political Science Association’s annual meeting in San Francisco and the African Politics Conference Group is now firmly rooted as an APSA section. Thanks to the dedication of our former co-chairs, Claire Adida and Ken Menkhaus, the APCG will have no less than a dozen sponsored and co-sponsored panels, as well as poster sessions (listed under Division 53, p. 46 of the program). Jennifer Brass, our secretary, has already sent out an electronic announcement with further details on the matter. I encourage all of you to attend as many panels as possible. We will also have our business meeting and social event on Thursday, September 3. The details have been sent to you by our Secretary. Our new APSA committee co-chairs, Melinda Adams and Bruce Magnusson, are already working to make sure that we maintain the same level of quality shown during our last meetings.

Our Organization is strong and our membership continues to grow. Yet, as a condition to maintain our organized section status, we need to have at least 250 members who are also members of APSA. Therefore, if you have not yet paid your dues continued on page 10
APSA 2015 Africa Workshop: A participant’s view
Enock Mudzamiri,
DPhil et DLitt student in Politics, University of South Africa

It was a great pleasure for 26 participants including myself to be part of the APSA 2015 Africa Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya from 19 July to 31 August 2015. Many thanks to the co-leaders of the workshop, Professors Beth Whitaker (University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Pamela Mbambazi (Mbarara University of Science and Technology-Uganda), Kennedy Mkutu (United States International University-Kenya), and John Clark (Florida International University), for bridging the knowledge gap between emerging scholars within and outside Africa. Credit must also be given to the APSA for the financial and logistical support and to APCG for publicizing the call for applications. Besides the highly illuminating thematic discussions on different aspects of conflict and political violence, each participant was given an opportunity to present a manuscript relating to the theme of the workshop. From these presentations, each participant received feedback from the co-leaders and fellow participants on areas of further improvement towards eventual publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Hence, besides providing a platform for sharing and feedback on ongoing research, the APSA 2015 Africa Workshop opened up avenues for future collaboration on areas of mutual interest between participants and co-leaders. It also gave birth to networks for professional development among emerging scholars. It is hoped that as a result of the workshop, emerging scholarship within and beyond the continent develops a synergy in the production of knowledge that informs both academic and applied research in efforts to understand and provide lasting solutions to conflict and political violence. As a practical expression of that goal, Beth Whitaker challenged the group of 30 people (26 participants and 4 co-leaders) to have a total of 30 articles accepted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals within a year. Much gratitude to APSA, the APCG and the co-leaders for this life-changing experience.

Participants
Seidu Mahama Alidu (University of Ghana, Ghana), Doreen Alusa (United States International University, Kenya), Ndubuisi Christian Ani (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa), Tarila Ebiede (Niger Delta University, Nigeria/University of Leuven, Belgium), Mary Ejang (Gulu University, Uganda), Dalaya Ashenafi Esayiyas (University of Johannesburg, South Africa), Anne Christine Frugé (University of Maryland, USA), Temilola A. George (National Defence College-Abuja, Nigeria), Kevin Greene (Michigan State University, USA), Ahmed Sharif Ibrahim (City University of New York, USA), Zachary Karazsia (Florida International University, USA), Kathleen Fitzpatrick Klaus (University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA), Aditi Malik (Northwestern University, USA), Lucy Massoi (Mzumbe University, Tanzania), Bamlaku Tadesse Mengistu (Haramaya University-Dire Dawa, Ethiopia), Enock Mudzamiri (University of South Africa, South Africa), Odette Murara (University of the Western Cape, South Africa), Mbangu Anicet Muyingi (North West University-Vaal Triangle, South Africa), Eric Blanco Niyitunga (University of Johannesburg, South Africa), Hassan Njifon Njoya (University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon), Christian Ifeanyi Onyekwelu (University of Botswana, Botswana), Jacob Dut Chol Riak (University of Juba, South Sudan), Kizito Sabala (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, South Sudan), Josiane Toussé (University of Yaoundé II-SOA, Cameroon), William John Walwa (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), Corianne Wielenga (University of Pretoria, South Africa)
Introduction

The limitation of presidential terms is emerging as an important regional norm on the African continent. Presidential term limits are enshrined in many African constitutions and internationally brokered peace accords. National and international actors are increasingly advocating for the respect of these restrictions. According to recently released Afrobarometer data, three quarters of polled citizens in various African countries under presidential or semi-presidential systems favor term limits (Dulani 2015). Despite this emerging norm, African leaders continue to try to hold on to power by pinpointing legal loopholes, introducing constitutional amendments or pursuing other ways of circumventing terms constraints (Baker 2002, Opalo 2015).

Over the last months, the African continent has seen several popular uprisings, in which people have taken to the streets to demonstrate against their leaders’ willingness to extend their time in office. In October 2014, thousands protested in Burkina Faso against a constitutional amendment bill that would have suspended the two-term limit enshrined in the country’s fundamental law. In April 2015, thousands of Burundians demonstrated for weeks in the capital after the ruling party announced a renewed, controversial candidacy of the country’s President. While the Burkinabé uprising culminated in the flight of President Blaise Compaoré to neighboring Ivory Coast and a political transition with new elections scheduled for November this year, the Burundian popular demonstrations were severely repressed by the regime and did not result in the withdrawal of President Pierre Nkurunziza’s candidacy. Instead, the regime pushed for highly contentious elections, which were heavily criticized by a large majority of traditional international donors, such as the United States, Belgium, Germany, and, to some extent, France. Burundi is among a number of Central African nations, including the two Congos and Rwanda, in which Presidents are trying to find ways to prolong their stay in power.

Why and how have presidential term limits emerged as a regional norm? Do presidential term limits enhance democratization? Why are some regimes susceptible to popular uprisings? Why do some popular movements achieve their objectives? When do popular uprisings fail to induce change? What are the long-term implications for societies that experience such contestation? In this article, I briefly discuss some of these questions through the specific lens of recent events in Burundi, where I have undertaken my doctoral field research over the last two years.

Term limits disputed: Overstaying one’s constitutional welcome versus ignoring the will of the ‘silent majority’

Presidential term limits emerged in the 1990s with the objective of burying the ‘big-men syndrome’ that many African nations have known after independence (Vencovsky 2007). Term limit advocates argue that these restrictions are crucial for democratic development allowing for democratic alternation and consolidation. Critics, for their part, assert that they impede voters’ choices (Armstrong 2011). In Burundi, support for term limits has seen an important shift over the years due to the strong advocacy by civil society and opposition groups. While only 51 percent of polled Burundians supported term limits in 2012, this number climbed to 62 percent in 2014 (Dulani 2015). Despite these numbers, the country’s ruling party has argued that a large majority of Burundians support another term for President Nkurunziza. According to party officials, this claim is reflected in the fact that popular contestation was mostly limited to some neighborhoods in the capital and that the President was recently comfortably reelected (with predominantly high scores in the interior of the country). Worth noting, however, is the extreme difficulty in evaluating the President’s support in the rural areas, where his backing stems from a mixture of genuine support and intimidation campaigns orchestrated by the ruling party’s youth movement.

Protests unpacked: Lack of preparation and failed coup paving the way for Nkurunziza’s third term

Burundi’s civil society groups launched a massive campaign, baptized Halte au troisième mandat, in 2014. Despite the inherent call to potentially take to the streets, the modalities of the protests were not planned in detail. In addition, arrest warrants (issued during the first hours of the protests), death threats
and the assassination of a key opposition leader forced the majority of opposition leaders into hiding or exile, which made the organization of the protests even more difficult. Consequently, the demonstrators in the contestation neighborhoods were often left to themselves to auto-organize the protests. This underscores the importance of the collective action problem as well as organization and preparation for the success of any popular mobilization.

When the Burundian regime violently repressed the protest movement, several military officers launched a military coup. However, the putsch failed only a few hours later. The presidential guard strongly supported incumbent President Nkurunziza and most of the army remained mute. In the aftermath, the presidential camp intensified its repression against demonstrators, who were equated with coup supporters, resulting in the eventual cessation of the contestation movement. This highlights the important role that a country’s security institutions play during popular uprisings. While the national army had enjoyed much trust from the demonstrators during the first weeks of the protests (unlike the national police), the failed putsch effectively broke this bond. The abortive coup also illustrated that the military establishment was much more supportive of President Nkurunziza than widely anticipated.

Conclusion

The limit of presidential terms has emerged as a key issue in discussions on African prospects for democratization. However, this topic, vividly covered and discussed by national and international media, should not minimize other key features of democratization. Recent research has shown that a robust and well-organized opposition presence in parliament is key for democratization (Opalo 2012). Yet, as the case of Burundi illustrates, the obsession with presidential elections often evacuates other important issues, including the question of political programs. For months, local political discussions in Burundi, be it in the media, political circles or bars, concerned almost exclusively the third term at the expense of other topics leaving Burundians uninformed about the political visions of their political parties.

In addition, the third mandate controversy over-shadowed the fact that the demonstrators’ grievances transcended the alternation issue. The protest movement’s slogan “Sindumujia” (translating to “I am not a slave”) incarnated the decade-long disappointment with a regime that was supposed to bring change to decades of authoritarianism and civil war. The anti-third term protests are just one example of growing popular unrest over the last years. Only time will tell what kind of impact the series of popular uprisings and their brutal repression will have on Burundi’s society. As Branch and Mampilly (Branch and Mampilly 2015) have underlined, scholars should not only look at the success of protest movements in bringing about immediate formal political change, but instead also be sensitive to the broader political implications for a society marked by popular uprisings.

Selected References


Dulani, Boniface. 2015. African publics strongly support term limits, resist leaders’ efforts to extend their tenure. In Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 30: Afrobarometer.


In Africa more democracy means more vote buying
Carolien van Ham and Staffan Lindberg
University of New South Wales, Sydney and Gothenburg University

Since the end of the Cold War, elections have spread around the world. Elections are now regularly being held in Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia. For all but a handful of countries, holding multi-party elections has become the norm.

This global spread of elections produced an outburst of optimistic scholarship about the prospects for democracy around the world, as it seemed democracy was increasingly becoming the ‘only game in town’. However, at the turn of the millennium, the early optimism gave way to increasing scepticism. As more and more regimes appeared to have made only cosmetic shifts towards democracy, adopting its formal institutions but not its substance, concerns about democratic backsliding and democratic reversal are now increasingly common (Diamond 2015, Plattner 2015, Fukuyama 2015).

Early on, observers noted that new democracies, while holding elections, lacked many other vital elements of democracy, such as civil liberties and the rule of law (O’Donnell 1998, 2004; Diamond 2002; Rose and Shin 2001; Zakaria 1997). Increasingly, however, it also became clear that the elections themselves were often quite problematic, as elections were rigged, manipulated, and subverted to such an extent that they appeared to sustain authoritarianism rather than functional democratic institutions (Schedler 2002, 2013; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009). Elections held in countries as varied as Egypt, Mozambique and Afghanistan, purportedly among the worst elections held globally in 2014, are cases in point (Election Integrity Project, Year in Elections, 2014).

The “menu” of strategies available to political actors to manipulate elections is vast (Schedler 2002). Ranging from manipulation of electoral legislation to gerrymandering, to opposition and voter intimidation, to flawed voter registries and biased media and campaigning, to actual ballot box rigging and vote count manipulation, the variety of methods that can be used to manipulate elections and undermine election integrity is dazzling (Calinaert 2006, Norris 2014).

In our article “From Sticks to Carrots: Electoral Manipulation in Africa 1986-2012” (http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/gov.2015.6), we investigated how political actors choose between different strategies of electoral manipulation. In particular, we examined how the context in which actors make decisions, in particular the level of democratization of a country, affected the possibilities for actors to engage in certain types of manipulation.

We classified manipulative strategies into three categories: coercion, co-optation and institutional manipulation. To study the trade-offs between these types of electoral manipulation in Africa, we empirically analysed manipulation of the electoral management institutions, government intimidation, and vote buying in national elections in Africa between 1986 and 2012.

We argue that – all else being equal – political actors will choose to engage in forms of manipulation that are cheaper, less visible, and more effective. Manipulating elections requires organizational and financial resources, and some forms of manipulation are more costly than others. For example, manipulating electoral institutions may be relatively easy for incumbent political actors, while vote buying often requires more extensive financial resources and organisational networks (Schaffer 2007). Political actors will likely opt for ‘cheaper’ forms of manipulation first. In addition, actors will want to avoid forms of manipulation that
are highly visible in order to avoid formal and informal sanctions in the form of legal prosecution and/or losing legitimacy among citizens. Finally, political actors will likely opt for forms of electoral manipulation that are most effective in achieving electoral gain.

We argue that institutional manipulation is likely to be the least costly, least visible and most effective type of manipulation: electoral management institutions are highly accessible to incumbent political actors, they do most of their work 'behind the scenes', and manipulating the influence of electoral management institutions over the administration of elections and tabulation of results is likely to be most effective at achieving electoral gain. Institutional manipulation is followed by coercion, as even though intimidation is more visible, it involves relatively little cost and is quite effective. Vote buying is the most costly and least effective type of manipulation, and hence we expect actors in general to prefer institutional manipulation and coercion to vote buying.

However, the “menu of manipulation”, i.e. the strategies of electoral manipulation that are available to actors, are likely to differ depending on the political and economic context in which elections take place (Schedler 2002). For example, political actors will not be able to get away with manipulation of electoral institutions or intimidation in more developed democracies where independent media and judiciaries will denounce (and prosecute) such behaviour. Manipulating electoral institutions may really only be a manipulative strategy available in more hegemonic electoral authoritarian regimes, where the rule of law is weaker and the state bureaucracy is more vulnerable to partisan capture. Hence, we expect that democratization will lead to increases in vote buying as “cheap” forms of electoral manipulation available to incumbents such as intimidation and manipulating electoral administration become less viable.

Paradoxically, this means that as countries move towards democracy, we expect a shift in electoral manipulation strategies from institutional manipulation and coercion to vote buying. Hence, democratization will lead to an initial increase in vote buying.

We tested these hypotheses in 286 national elections in Africa between 1986 and 2012, using the new Varieties of Democracy data. This is a new comprehensive dataset on democracy that collects data on almost 400 fine-grained indicators of democracy in 173 countries around the world from 1900 until 2012, engaging over 2,300 country experts worldwide to collect data (Coppedge et al. 2014).

We find that there is indeed a trade-off between different types of electoral manipulation: when institutional manipulation and coercion is higher, vote buying is lower. We also find that vote buying increases as democratization progresses: vote buying is most prevalent in the most democratic countries in Africa.

The future of democracy in Africa thus promises elections where the administration of elections becomes better and better, but at the same time, vote buying will increase. Not all good things go together, at least not all the time. The future of democracy in Africa will mean more money in politics, more patronage, and more clientelistic offers thrown around, at least in the short-to-medium term. Whether money politics will eventually decline as democratization progresses remains to be seen.

We are currently analysing a global sample of elections to find out whether the increase in money politics as the result of democratization also occurs outside Africa. If confirmed, this poses new questions about the quality of democracy in established democracies, and underscores the importance of more research into the connection between money and politics globally.
Across Sub-Saharan Africa, many have advocated presidential term limits as a way to ensure that sitting executives do not remain entrenched and political opportunities are created for competitive elections and alternations in power. Attempts by sitting African presidents to extend or remove term limits have led to conflicts – sometimes resolved by reaffirming term limits, but at other times leading either to prolonged political disorder or authoritarian stability. The future of presidential term limits on the continent is still evolving, as many countries contend with the difficulties of building democracy.

Campaigns to establish or defend presidential term limits have been pivotal to democratic political change in Africa, for various reasons. These provisions have been used to circumscribe the power of presidential incumbents in countries where control and resources are highly centralized and loyalty to the ruling party has been the ready route to public benefits. Campaigns for term limits have also enabled opposition parties to unite, and to overcome fragmentation and divisions among contesting leaders to mount concerted efforts to oust incumbents. Civil society organizations also support term limits as a way to avoid partisan splits and advance the rule of law. Term limits likewise show a possible pathway to uphold the legal autonomy of the judicial system. Public opinion is often mobilized around campaigns for term limits, enabling collective action to challenge offenses or corruption by the ruling regime. And, finally, struggles for term limits offer openings for international pressures on behalf of neutral application of the law and the establishment of preconditions for more competitive democratic elections.

Because of the many ways term limits can facilitate transitions to democracy and the rule of law, observers often presume that campaigns to install or defend them are invariably healthy and worthy of support from civil society organizations, the general public, and international actors committed to furthering democracy. However, actual data on political battles and transitions in African nations show that alternative outcomes are possible when term limits are at issue:

• When incumbent executives in sub-Saharan Africa have launched campaigns to repeal term limits, those efforts have very frequently succeeded. In Uganda, for example, President Yoweri Museveni struck a bargain with other political elites when he bundled a repeal of term limits with a constitutional change to allow multiparty competition. Similar repeal bargains favoring continued incumbency happened in Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, Namibia, and Niger.

• In a significant minority of cases, contestations around term limits have led to prolonged conflict and even civil war. In Burkina Faso, for example, the government dissolved after mass protests in 2014, leading to a military take-over. International pressure led to a transitional government with power-sharing between civilian and military forces, but elections remain in doubt.

• Across sub-Saharan Africa, term limits have been included in 34 constitutions implemented since the 1990s. But these provisions have been fully respected in only one-fifth of the countries. Conflicts over limits are typical. In Benin, for example, President Mathieu Kerekou reportedly offered members of Parliament substantial bribes to support a third term, but civil society mobilization and opposition politicians successfully pressed for abandonment of the attempt. In other countries including Nigeria and Zambia, amendments to get rid of limits were defeated by normal institutional means.

Overall, divergent pathways have been and continue to be possible. Where term limits are repealed, authoritarian stability is typical, as the incumbent president and party stay in power. Even when the rule survives, it can sometimes be circumvented, as happened in Burundi and Senegal where incumbents exploited technicalities to run for further terms. And term limits have at times persisted without challenge because a dominant or authoritarian party has well-established procedures for replacing the top brass with new leaders, as in Tanzania.

In more than a third of African countries, we do not yet know what may happen when presidential term limits are put to the test. Transitions from strong-man executives and entrenched ruling parties are
Presidential Term Limits, Riedl, continued from page 7

always fraught with tension and uncertainty. As one fledgling African democracy after another tries to navigate these tricky waters, international policymakers can help – by supporting domestic forces working to create more openings for democratic contestation, and sometimes by helping previously entrenched presidents make graceful exits to new roles in regional and international bodies. Presidential term limits are not a panacea, but when respected they can facilitate peaceful transitions and democratic contestation.

*Riedl’s article first appeared in the Scholar’s Strategy Network Key Findings Series

Dataset Review: The Quality of Government Standard Data

Amanda B. Edgell
University of Florida

Imagine you are working on a project that requires time series data from the World Development Indicators, the Database on Political Institutions, Freedom House, Polity IV, and AidData. The problem: all of these databases come in varying formats with different country identification systems. As researchers, we have a couple options. We could merge these data together by manually matching the country identification codes for each of the datasets, a process that requires long hours and risks coding errors. Alternatively, for some datasets we could merge data files through an automated process using the EUGene software (Bennett and Stam 2000) or open source Github files (e.g. UCIMerge by Pierce 2015). These tools are useful, but still require coding effort and skills on the part of the researcher.

The Quality of Government standard dataset provides an off-the-shelf solution (Teorell et al. 2015). The QoG standard data is a repository for many of the databases that social scientists frequently consult for operationalizing outcomes, causes, and controls. As of January 2015, the time-series format includes nearly 2,000 variables compiled from 87 existing datasets, covering 211 countries from 1946 to 2014. Meanwhile, the cross-sectional format covers roughly the same set of variables and countries for the year 2010 (or thereabouts). The data are available in Stata, SPSS, Excel, and CSV formats, making it accessible to users of most statistical programs.

QoG standard data covers a variety of topics of interest for political scientists conducting large-N research on the African region – including quality of government, economy, education, health, welfare, judiciary, political system, elections, environment, energy and infrastructure, conflict, civil society/population/culture, media, and migration. It would be impossible to highlight all of the available data; however, some of the popular datasets include Polity IV, Freedom House, World Development Indicators, AidData, Correlates of War, FAO, Transparency International, Inter-Parliamentary Union, OECD, UN Statistics, and many more. The data also contains ISO-3166-1, Correlates of War, and World Bank country codes, which allow researchers to merge additional data of interest.
QoG standard data is a useful dataset to have on hand, providing many of the variables you might want to use in one convenient ready-to-use location. This makes using off-the-shelf data a breeze. For example, Figure 1 compares the level of democracy in Zimbabwe as measured by Freedom House and Polity IV using the QoG standard time-series data. The plot includes normalized combined scores for both Freedom House (scale-inverted) and Polity IV revised scale. The entire process from data download to graph output took about 5 minutes.

The contribution that the QoG standard data makes cannot be understated. However, as the writers of QoG caution, users should be thoughtful in selecting variables for their study’s unique needs. As with all pre-existing datasets, the choices other scholars have made in their measurements may not align with theory or the requirements of a particular research project. For example, QoG simplifies the effort needed to assess the impact of democratization on conflict by combining common measures of both conflict and democracy in one dataset. However, as scholars we must ask ourselves whether the available measures of democratization and conflict are suitable operationalizations for these concepts (for example see Bernhard, Bayer, and Orsun 2014). Thus, while QoG provides an impressively convenient array of variables, the onus is on the individual researcher to determine whether any of these variables are appropriate for formulating and/or testing the theory. The developers of QoG encourage users to revisit the original codebooks for the data included in their standard dataset. This will help researchers avoid Sartori’s classic cat-dog problem (Sartori 1991).

Likewise, as additional compilation datasets like QoG become available, fishing expeditions and p-hacking may become more of an issue in observational political science research. The convenience of having massive amounts of data in one place may encourage researchers to mine for statistically significant relationships without developing coherent theories to explain why these relationships might indeed be causal rather than spurious. Theories developed post-hoc are then reported as if they were guiding the research from the start. On the flipside, researchers may be tempted to massage the data or restructure their models until statistical significance of some pet variable is achieved. Of course datasets like QoG are not to blame. The bias in political science journals toward statistically significant results and the promotion structure in U.S. academia encourages this behavior (see Miguel et al. 2014).

The QoG standard data provides a much-needed service to the discipline by combining openly available datasets into one format. While concept misformation, atheoretical data mining, and p-hacking may be unfortunate side-effects of large-scale open datasets, these phenomena are neither unique to nor should they diminish the valuable contribution of projects like the QoG standard data in making data more accessible and research more replicable.

Join the APCG Discussion Forum!

http://groups.google.com/group/discussionAPCG

A public/open forum for APCG members. APCG members who sign up can communicate with each other in an open format. Want to discuss this issue’s symposium, advertise a new book, talk about an Africa-related issue, find a conference roommate, or get info on a research location? You can do that here!
Chair’s Report... (continued from page 1)

to APCG or to APSA, please do so.

The APCG is also doing very well with the other main Associations we are affiliated to. As you know, MPSA has its own African Politics division, so we do not have to select panels there. However, the APCG was visible at this year’s conference and we were able to have a social meeting on April 16th. Our ASA committee (John Heilbrunn, Martha Johnson, and Lindsay Whitfield) and ISA committee (Kevin S. Fridy, Milly Lake, and Joseph Yinka Fashagba) have also worked hard to organize the panel each association has allocated us. Our secretary will send out an electronic announcement in due time to remind you to attend these panels as well. As you know, the APCG has a special link with ASA. Our Organisation was initiated at ASA and we usually present our incoming officers and hand over duties to them at the ASA annual meeting. I am glad that APCG former chair, Anne Pitcher, has been elected ASA Vice-chair. I congratulate her on behalf of the APCG and on my own. Knowing that political scientists represent one of ASA’s most important disciplinary group, her election is an opportunity to strengthen our position.

Cheeseman, we have two excellent candidates nominated for each position and their bios are included in this issue. Our candidates for Vice-chair are Josephine J. Dawuni (Howard University) and Laura E. Seay (Colby College); and for Secretary, Kevin S. Fridy (University of Tampa) and Cara E. Jones (Mary Baldwin College). All four candidates are accomplished scholars and all four have been committed to APCG for many years. I would like to thank them for accepting to run. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the nominations committee for identifying candidates who are deeply familiar with APCG and have already served it in many different capacities. We will be in good hands with any of them and I encourage all of our members to vote. The electronic ballot will be announced in early September. Also, shortly after that, the Vice-chair and I will be sending calls for new conferences, nominations and awards committee members. Those who are willing to serve may then contact us directly.

Finally, as the current issue of the newsletter is the last one to appear before they step down, I would like to express here my deepest gratitude and the gratitude of the Group to our Vice-chair Lauren MacLean and Secretary Jennifer Brass. It is only when you have served on the steering committee that you really measure the time and effort it takes to be APCG officers. I have been lucky when elected chair to begin my term with Lauren and Jennifer who came on board a year before me. Their deep knowledge of the APCG and of the work of the associations we are affiliated to have greatly facilitated my tasks. They have always worked tirelessly and wholeheartedly to get things on the right track. So thanks to Lauren and Jennifer!
Continued from 10

I look forward to seeing all of you at APSA.

Mamoudou Gazibo
University of Montreal

African Data Sources Sought

We are in the process of compiling a list of data sources for our group.

For the current list, go to:

From the Editors

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to the fall edition of the APCG newsletter. Included in this issue is the usual assortment of member news and announcements, lists of recent book and article publications, and a timely symposium on electoral trends and transitions across sub-Saharan Africa. The fall newsletter also contains candidate statements for Vice-Chair and Secretary on the APCG Executive committee. A quick note about the upcoming call for editorial team members: Our two-year term as newsletter co-editors expires after publication in February, at which time we will hand over the editorial reins to another set of capable hands. We encourage all of you to get involved and consider submitting an application for editor. Please contact us if you have questions about the position. We are happy to offer whatever guidance we can during the transition process.

And as always, remember that the newsletter is a collaborative endeavor and that your continued participation in the creation of each issue is most welcome. If you have a symposium suggestion, idea for a feature, or anything else that you would like to see addressed or improved in these pages, let the editors know.

We look forward to hearing from you in the months ahead. All the best for a very happy and productive fall,

Stephen Marr, Malmö University
Cara E. Jones, Mary Baldwin College
Candidate Statements, Vice-Chair

Josephine J. Dawuni, JD, Ph.D.
Howard University

Biography

I am an Assistant Professor of African politics in the Political Science Department at Howard University. I have a Juris Doctor (JD) from the Ghana School of Law (2001) and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Georgia State University (2010). My current research focuses on the politics of gender and the law in Africa. In particular, I examine how women gain entry into the legal and judicial professions in Africa and how they navigate the multiple contested power structures within the two inherently male dominated professional tracks. My first co-edited book, (forthcoming, November 2015, by Routledge) Gender and the Judiciary in Africa: From obscurity to parity? (with Gretchen Bauer, University of Delaware), examines nine case studies cutting across the continent of Africa, on how women become judges, the roles they play and their contributions to gender rights and changing judicial norms. I am currently working on my single-authored book, The Politics of Gender and the Law in West Africa. In 2010 I was accepted as a participant in the APSA Africa Workshop in Tanzania. In 2014, I was a Fellow in the APSA Women of Color in Political Science Workshop. In 2015, I was a Fellow in the Early Career Workshop of the Law and Society Association in Seattle Washington. In November 2015, I will be a Fellow at the University of Copenhagen iCourts program where I will be conducting research on African women judges in international tribunals. My works have appeared in the Oxford Dictionary of African Biography, Studies in Gender and Development in Africa, Journal of African law (forthcoming) and Africa Today (forthcoming).

Statement of Candidacy

It is a great honor to be invited to run for the position of Vice Chair for the APCG. As a member of the American Political Science Association, I look forward to coming onboard as an executive member, and to work with colleagues with diverse backgrounds and research interests focused on Africa. Having served in different leadership roles, including the Vice Chair of the Africa Council of the University System of Georgia (USAC) and as an Executive Board member of the Georgia Political Science Association (GPSA), I am well prepared to lead and serve in the capacity as Vice Chair of APCG.

Once elected, I will steadfastly work with all members to strengthen the core values and mission of the conference group through the introduction of programs aimed at recruiting new members. In particular, my focus will be on recruiting graduate and early career professionals into the group through the creation of a network of mentoring opportunities between faculty members and graduate students.

Second, my focus will be on bridging the gap between scholars based in North America and those based in universities and colleges across the continent of Africa. This gap has undoubtedly resulted in limited and sometimes ad hoc communication between scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. My focus on bridging this gap will result in a win-win for all. Working with universities across the continent, I plan to build institutional networks through the sharing of ideas for research collaboration and opportunities for cross-national teaching fellowships.

Third, I will focus on increasing the diversity in the membership and active participation of minorities at the business meetings. I believe that through such diversity, APCG stands to gain through the free flow of information and ideas across cultures, across nationality and across identities.

Fourth, I will contribute to building new and stronger ties within other associations I belong to, such as the African Studies Association, International Studies Association, Law and Society Association and the National Women's Studies Association. Thank you for this opportunity to serve and move APCG to the next level.
Candidate Statements, Vice-Chair

Laura E. Seay, PhD
Colby College

I am deeply honored to be nominated to serve as Vice-Chair of the African Politics Conference Group. I have been a member of APCG since 2008 and have served on several committees, including ASA panel selection, best dissertation, nominations, and best graduate student paper. Currently, I chair the best book committee. As a graduate student and junior faculty member, the support and resources of the APCG have been invaluable for my professional development, and I would be greatly honored to continue the tradition of outstanding leadership in building and sustaining the organization.

If elected as vice-chair, my top priority would be to continue APCG’s work to include more of our African colleagues, especially those based at African universities, in our professional activities. As the APSA Africa Workshop program draws to a close, we need to think creatively about ways to effectively provide resources and ensure that our African colleagues have the same opportunities to publish, publicize research findings, and compete for funding that we enjoy. These are significant challenges, but there are already conversations among donors (in particular, the Carnegie Foundation) underway as to improving professional and research funding opportunities for Africa-based scholars, and APCG should play a critical role in those conversations. We can also strengthen existing and create new collaborations with the Afrobarometer Summer School, the African School of Economics, CODESIRA, and other continental institutions to improve access to recent publications, apply for grants with our African colleagues and peer institutions, and consider creative means to facilitate more participation by Africa-based scholars in international scholarly networks.

One easy and practical step that the vice-chair can take is increasing APCG outreach to African and European publishing houses and institutions for awards nominations. Serving on the best dissertation and best book committees has been a wonderful opportunity for me to read the latest and best research in the field, but the number of nominations for works by African scholars is often woefully low. We can ask more publishing houses and our colleagues on the continent for nominations. It’s also worth considering whether we should broaden our consideration for awards to include works published in French and Portuguese.

My other top priority as vice-chair will be to promote and develop more opportunities for APCG members and our African colleagues to promote their work, especially to policy makers. Kim Yi Dionne and I serve as regular contributors responsible for Africa at The Monkey Cage, the political science blog of the Washington Post at which we and scholars explain recent research findings for general audiences. We have a huge readership at TMC, and when we feature APCG members’ work, government officials invite those scholars to conduct briefings, books sell out press runs, and debates begin on social media over policies regarding various conflicts, development efforts, and proposed legislation. There is enormous demand for scholarly expertise on a wide range of subjects relating to African politics, and blogs are just one way that APCG members can share their findings with the public without the burden of a journal paywall. I would love to see APCG sponsor conference workshops or roundtables to help members understand how to use blogs and other social media tools to share their research, and to draw on the expertise of senior APCG members who regularly share their findings with governments, aid agencies, and NGOs around the world. By doing so and by increasing access to professional development opportunities for our African colleagues, I hope to build on the strong legacy established by current and past leaders of the APCG.
Candidate Statements, Secretary

Kevin Fridy
University of Tampa

Biographical Statement:

Kevin S. Fridy (PhD, Florida) is an Associate Professor of Government and World Affairs at the University of Tampa where he teaches courses on African Politics, the Politics of Development, and Identity Politics as well as more general offerings in the Political Science core. Every May he takes a group of students from his university to learn about community-based development projects in Ghana’s Upper East region. A cursory interest in studying Africa was bolstered by a semester abroad at the University of Ghana Legon as an undergraduate. In graduate school Kevin was a three-year Foreign Languages and Area Studies fellow in the Ghanaian language Twi and was awarded a Fulbright-Hays to conduct his dissertation research in Ghana during the 2004/5 academic year. In 2009 he served as a leader in the second edition of APSA’s African workshop series based in Accra. For the APCG he has served as chair of Best Graduate Paper Award Committee (2009/10), member of ASA Panel Selection Committee (2012/13); and chair of ISA Panel Selection Committee (2015/16). Kevin’s research interests in have tended toward the nexus between social understandings and formal institutions. He has looked at party interaction with social cleavages, the conflict between formal and informal governance at the local level, and is currently working on a project that explores partisanship’s relationship to personality traits. Over the years he has conducted a half dozen independent surveys and has published in journals including African Affairs and the Journal of Modern African Studies. Having traveled extensively throughout West Africa for conferences and research, Kevin has been to nine of ECOWAS’ fifteen countries. His best experience in Africa was watching his beloved Accra Hearts of Oak win the CAF Confederation cup in 2004 with a cold Gulder in one hand and a bag full of hot kelewele in the other.

Statement of Candidacy:

Receiving the nomination to run as Secretary of the APCG is quite an honor. Though I have been a member of the APSA, ASA, and SPSA at varying points in my career, APCG has always been the organization in which I have felt most at home. So fond of the organization am I that I have on more than one occasion made it to early morning meetings. I use the APCG to network, learn about interesting scholarship, and hang out with mentors and colleagues. When I read the online job description for APCG Secretary two responsibilities are included: (1) taking notes at General and Steering Committee meetings and (2) organizing elections. I know how to type and if the electricity fails us I just last week purchased a nice pen. I would not characterize myself as overly detail oriented but I am pretty good at grasping the big picture. I expect my notes to be straightforward and parsimonious but thorough enough to serve their purpose well. As far as elections go I was an official CODEO observer for Ghana’s 2004 elections. I have served as an executive faculty senator at the University Tampa for two years where one of my responsibilities is to conduct elections. None of the elections during my tenure has been described as anything but “free and fair.” Though I cannot say for certain whether or not I would accept a bribe to rig an election because I have never personally been in that position, I can say that the remuneration of serving in an elected position for APCG makes it extremely unlikely that anyone would offer me enough cash to come close to my temptation point.
Candidate Statements, Secretary

Cara E. Jones
Mary Baldwin College

Biography

Cara E. Jones earned her PhD in Political Science with a graduate certificate in African Studies from the University of Florida in 2013. She was a FLAS in Kiswahili and the recipient of a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship to Burundi. Her research focuses on rebel to ruler transformations in Africa’s Great Lakes region and post-conflict development. Having spent a lot of time in various places in sub-Saharan Africa, she can definitively say that hot sauce is an appropriate condiment for all foods. She serves as elections monitor, consultant, and development professional for a wide variety of acronymic organizations. Her work has been published in both academic and non-academic outlets, including Democratization, Foreign Policy, World Politics Review, and the Washington Post’s Monkey Cage blog.

Statement of Candidacy:

It is truly an honor that my colleagues imagine me to be responsible enough to hold the office of secretary, and its even more fitting that my fellow nominee is also a Florida Gator (and great friend). I have been involved in APCG since 2011, and can say it’s my favorite part of every conference. The colleagues are fantastic, and truly support each other in academic and non-academic endeavors. It’s this spirit that makes me eager to promote and grow the African Politics Conference Group, especially in our outreach to graduate students and our colleagues in sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. As the co-Newsletter Editor for the past two years, I’ve had the privilege to watch the development of the group as we have become an organized section of the APSA, a tremendous achievement that many of us feel helps to cement our scholarly and professional identities, as Africanist political scientists. As secretary, my job would be to not only take and distribute notes, but also to continue to grow and expand these identities and relationships. I love promoting and talking about APCG with new potential members, especially our African colleagues, and sharing great ideas, collaborations, opportunities for sharing writing and research inside and outside of academia, and helping young scholars to find their place. I look forward to the continued growth and amazing development of APCG, and can’t wait to see what the future holds. Thank you to the nominations committee and my colleagues for this opportunity.
Recent and Continuing Committee Members and Chairs

**APSA 2016 Committee**
- *Melinda Adams
  James Madison University
- *Bruce Magnusson
  Whitman College

**ASA 2016 Committee**
- *John Heilbrunn
  Colorado School of Mines
- Martha Johnson
  Mills College
- Lindsay Whitfield
  Roskilde University

**ISA 2016 Committee**
- *Kevin S. Fridy
  University of Tampa
- Milly Lake
  Arizona State University
- Joseph Yinka Fashagba
  Landmark University

**Nominations Committee**
- Gretchen Bauer
  University of Delaware
- Nicholas Cheeseman
  Oxford University
- *Peter Von Doep
  University of Vermont
- *committee chair
Announcements

Job Announcements

The School of International Service (SIS) at American University (AU) invites applications for six full-time, tenure-line positions to begin August 1, 2016. Applicants should possess a Ph.D. or the highest equivalent degree in a relevant discipline by August 2016.

We seek scholar-teachers whose work is theoretically grounded, empirically tested, and policy relevant. Candidates should demonstrate excellence in research and teaching and a commitment to university service. Candidates should also share the School’s commitment to diversity. Salary and benefits are competitive. Review of applications will begin September 15 and will continue until the position is filled. For more information about each position and to apply, follow the links below.

- Conflict and Development (One Assistant Professor): http://apply.interfolio.com/30416
- Emerging Powers (Two Assistant Professors): http://apply.interfolio.com/30417
- Mohamed S. Farsi Foundation Chair in Islamic Peace (One Associate or Full Professor): http://apply.interfolio.com/30418
- Transnational/International Security (One Assistant Professor): http://apply.interfolio.com/30421
- U.S. Foreign Policy (One Associate or Full Professor): http://apply.interfolio.com/30439

Workshop and Conference Announcements

The International Political Science Association (IPSA) will hold its World Congress next July in Istanbul, Turkey with its theme, “Politics in a World of Inequality”: https://www.ipsa.org/world-congress-istanbul-2016. In preparation for the conference, IPSA’s research committees are soliciting papers for closed panels.

IPSA’s Research Committee 50 (The Politics of Language) is currently seeking papers to create several panels: http://rc50.ipsa.org/. One such panel is entitled “Language Politics in Africa.” Here is the panel description:

Africa’s rich linguistic landscape presents dangers and opportunities, depending on one’s perspective: some see perilous fragmentation, while others see prospects for maintaining diversity. This panel solicits papers that address the relationship of language to contemporary politics in Africa. This topic coincides with the theme of inequality in many ways. A poor education generally might exclude one from learning official languages and therefore from political participation. A lack of opportunity for mother tongue education might reduce political efficacy or genuine learning. From an economic perspective, facility in administrative languages opens civil service jobs, while knowledge of a lingua franca provides access to regional trading networks. There are many ways that language capabilities reproduce inequality and many ways that policies about language can influence opportunities. Inequality can sometimes lead to violence. This panel seeks papers that illuminate the motivations behind official policies toward language groups in Africa as well as their effects. It also encourages papers that explore choices of individuals to learn multiple languages and the fluidity of language boundaries. And it welcomes those that investigate prospects for mitigation of language conflicts.

To be considered as part of this closed panel, please submit your paper proposal (abstract up to 350 words) to Ericka Albaugh, ealbaugh@bowdoin.edu by September 15th.
Michael Wahman (previously London School of Economics) has joined the Political Science department at University of Missouri as an Assistant Professor. His new article titled “Nationalized Incumbent and Regional Challengers: Opposition-and Incumbent Party Nationalization in Africa” has also been published as “online first” in Party Politics.

Claire Adida has published ”Do African Voters Favor Coethnics? Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Benin” in the March 2015 issue of the Journal of Experimental Political Science (Vol. 2, Issue 01). This article relies on the random assignment of ethnic cues based on President Yayi’s mixed ethnic heritage to show how a real-world politician can shore up support via subtle ethnic cues. And in June 2015, Adida received a Grand Challenges Explorations Grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to implement and evaluate a mobile-money school-fee payment system in northern Benin.

Amy E. Harth is now the African Studies area chair for the Midwest Popular Culture Association. The next MPCA conference is October 1-4 in Cincinnati, OH. Visit mpcaaca.org for more information. In addition, she and a colleague, Abour Cherif, at DeVry University co-created a webinar series focused on creating a supportive community for faculty and staff pursuing doctorates. The webinar series was recently honored with an Exemplary Model Program Award from the American Association of University Administrators.

Ken Opalo graduated from Stanford University in June 2015. In August he joined the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University as Assistant Professor of African Development. Ken is the latest faculty member of the African Studies Program within SFS and will teach classes on institutions, inter-state relations, and the political economy of development in Africa.

Robin Harding has moved from the University of Rochester to the University of Oxford, where he is now an Associate Professor of Government.

Karisa Cloward received the Robert O. Keohane Award for best research article published in International Organization by an untenured scholar, for her 2014 article “False Commitments: Local Misrepresentation and the International Norms Against Female Genital Mutilation and Early Marriage.”

Landry Signé was promoted to Associate Professor (with tenure) at the University of Alaska-Anchorage where he was appointed in 2013 after completing his Banting postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford University. Landry has also been honored as a World Economic Forum’s Young Global Leader and an Archbishop Tutu Fellow. In addition, he competed with applicants from over 130 countries and received honorable mention (with Matthieu Ostrander) at a World Bank/Wharton global policy competition on the Sustainable Developments Goals. He was named in the worldwide list of “35 Africans Under 35” making a “substantial impact on critical African issues and international affairs.”

Jeffrey Paller is now a postdoctoral research fellow at the Earth Institute at Columbia University, working with the Center for Sustainable Urban Development. In 2016, he will join the faculty of Politics at the University of San Francisco as an assistant professor.

Stephen Marr has been appointed a Guest Researcher at the Nordic Africa Institute located in Uppsala, Sweden. He will be there during the spring to conduct work on a comparative urban politics project, Rethinking Urbanity for the 21st Century: Social Infrastructure and the Politics of Everyday Insecurity in Lagos and Detroit.

Recently Published


Landry Signé’s recently published book entitled L’innovation en stratégies de développement en Afrique. Acteurs nationaux, régionaux et internationaux de 1960 à nos jours” (Foreword by Nicolas van de Walle), explains innovations and continuities in development strategies in Africa from 1960 to date with a focus on the role of interests/actor’s strategies, ideas/paradigms, institutions/policies, and history, as well as national, regional, and international actors. In addition, his recent policy paper “Mobilizing Resources for Africa: Financing and Capacity-Building Strategies for Effective Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals” has been published by the German Marshall Funds of the United States.
"*denotes items submitted directly by members. All other references were identified by the editors. We only include items that have already been published – covering the period from February —July 2015.

Books


Edited Volumes


Journals

African Affairs
Recent Publications, continued from page 19


African Security


African Security Review


Recent Publications, continued from page 20


Africa Spectrum

African Studies Review

Comparative Politics

Commonwealth and Comparative Politics


Democratization
Hassan, Mai. 2015. “Continuity despite change: Kenya’s new constitution and executive power” Democratization 22, no. 4: 587-609.

Development and Change

International Security

Journal of African Law

Journal of Contemporary African Studies
Adams, Samuel and Joseph Taabazing. 2015. “The promises and realities of Ghana’s decentralization: A case study from the
Recent Publications, continued from page 21


Journal of Democracy


Journal of Modern African Studies


Journal of Peace Research


Journal of Politics


Journal of Southern African Studies


Political Science Quarterly


Review of African Political Economy


South African Journal of International Affairs

Cabestan, Jean-Pierre. 2015. “China–Cameroon relations: Fortunes and limits of an old political com-

continued on page 23


Third World Quarterly


King, Sophie. 2015. “Political capabilities for democratisation in Uganda: Good governance or popular organisation building?” Third World Quarterly 36, no. 4: 741-757.


Other Publications, Book Chapters, and Papers


*Hughes, Melanie and Alli Tripp. 2015. “Civil war and trajectories of change in women’s political representation in Africa, 1985-2010” Social Forces 93, no. 4: 1513-1540.


Popular, Social and Web-based Media

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