

PRESIDENCY RESEARCH



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Volume IX, number 1 Fall 1986

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NEWS AND NOTES

Matthew Holden, Jr., Henry L. and Grace M. Doherty Professor of Government and Foreign Affairs at the University of Virginia, has made available "Cabinet Departments with Domestic Responsibilities: A Working Note and Bibliography, 1933-1981." As he writes in the introduction, he seeks to provide "a convenient summary of scholarly and popular information that focuses directly upon the departments with domestic responsibilities."

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy (\$7.50) should write in care of the Institute of Government
University of Virginia
Charlottesville 22903

A supplement on the departments of State and Defense is also in the works and will be made available for purchase at a later date.

The Institute of Government at the University of Virginia also has available the first in the series Working Papers in Public Administration, "The Centrality of Administration to Politics: Some Elements of a Research Program", by Matthew Holden, Jr. Copies are \$3.00. Send inquiries to the above address.

The newly appointed members of the Neustadt Award Committee for this year are: Steven Schull, University of New Orleans
Joseph A. Pika, University of Delaware
Lyn Ragsdale, University of Arizona

Congress & the Presidency, a journal of political science and history, is devoted to the publication of research on the presidency, Congress, the interactions between them, and national policymaking. The following articles will appear in the Autumn issue, available in December.

- Bert A. Rockman, "The Modern Presidency and Theories of Accountability: Old Wine and Old Bottles."
Bernard Morris, "Presidential Accountability in Foreign Policy: Some Recurring Problems."
Stephen E. Ponder, "Executive Publicity and Congressional Resistance, 1905-1913: Congress and the Roosevelt Administration's PR Men."
Jacob O. Stampen and Roxanne Reeves, "Coalitions in the Senates of the 96th and 97th Congresses."
David C. Nice, "In Retreat from Excellence: The Single Six-year Presidential Term."
Heinz Eulau, Commentary on "The Presidential Campaign and the Future of Election Studies" by Michael Margolis (Autumn 1985).
Michael Margolis, Rejoinder to Heinz Eulau's Commentary.
Michael Mezey, "The Congress, The President and Public Policy: A Rejoinder." (to Joseph Cooper, Spring 1986)
Review Essay on "Presidents and Policy" by Douglas Shumavon.
Review Essay on "A Dilemma in Constitutional Theory and Practice" by John

Gates.

Subscriptions to Congress & the Presidency are \$10 per year (institutions: \$12 per year), and should be sent to:

Editors Jeff Fishel and Susan Webb Hammond

Congress & the Presidency

School of Government and Public Administration

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New subscriptions can start with either the Spring or the Autumn issue. Please note that new subscriptions are being offered at a 20% discount to LSS members (\$8/year; \$16/two years).

Copies of the Spring 1986 issue are still available. It includes articles on Legislatures by Michael Mezey and Joseph Cooper; Floor Amendments to Appropriations Measures by Stanley Bach; Democrats and Civil Rights in the 1950s by Gary Reichard; Federal Advisory Committees by Mark Petracca; a Colloquium on the History of Congress by Michael Les Benedict, Allan Bogue, and Joel Silbey; and a Review Essay on Books on the 1984 Elections by James Lingle.

The Editors also welcome the submission of manuscripts. These should be submitted in triplicate to the editors at the above address.

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP: DIRECT EXPERIENCE VS. FORMAL RESEARCH

Joseph Freeman
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I. INTRODUCTION.

An unusual roundtable discussion was held at the annual convention of the American Political Science Association in Washington, D.C., on August 30, 1986. Though the number of participants was relatively small, as was the audience at the Saturday morning hour, the roundtable's initial presentations were more animated than is often the case, and the discussion afterward with the audience was extraordinarily lively. It was as if a long-dammed channel of communication had finally been opened, and a host of concerns, reactions, ideas, and lessons came tumbling out on a wave of enthusiasm.

The roundtable had been added to the convention program in the spring, a rather late date for making and securing the array of commitments necessary for a successful convention event. The decision to try to hold the roundtable grew out of conversations between the APSA Program Chair, Matthew Holden, Doherty Professor of Government at the University of Virginia, and Joseph Freeman, Professor of Political Science at Lynchburg College. Both had served in public office, Holden as Public Service Commissioner in Minnesota and later as a member of the Federal Power Commission, and Freeman as Council Member and Mayor of the city of Lynchburg, Virginia. Both felt puzzlement and concern over the indifference of professional political science to direct political and governmental experience and the inability of political science to foster research that illuminated the practice of politics and government for those actually engaged in it. In the hope of generating knowledgeable discussion they chose as the title for the roundtable "The Collision Between Direct Experience and Formal Research: Different Modes of Political Knowing." Those invited to participate in the panel were either scholars who had also served in public office or who had taken an experience-oriented approach to research and publication. Despite the somewhat belated start on the effort to assemble the roundtable, those contacted agreed readily to serve.

Two scheduled participants were unable to attend the convention. The four who did participate were: Robert C. Wood of Wesleyan University, whose notable public career includes having served as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and as Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools; Eugene Lewis of New College, whose highly-regarded book Public Entrepreneurs has become a landmark use of biographical material in the study of public administration;¹ Brad Patterson, Senior Staff Member at the Brookings Institution, who served on the White House Staff during the Eisenhower, Nixon, and Ford administrations, and Freeman who served as chair.

The roundtable began with initial presentations by the participants, made from notes, followed by questions from the audience, plus wide-ranging discussion among the panel members and members of the audience.

¹Public Entrepreneurship: The Organizational Lives of Hyman Rickover, J. Edgar Hoover, and Robert Moses. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.

What follows is a reconstruction² of three participants' initial remarks from notes, and an edited transcript of the discussion that did actually get recorded. Finally, a conclusion assessing the significance of the roundtable is offered.

II. THE INITIAL PRESENTATIONS

Robert Wood's recent article in PS³ had been circulated to the members of the roundtable in advance, and so his remarks elaborating on that article were a welcome beginning. In that article he had expressed a basic optimism about the relevance of political science for the practice of government: "in truth, we do not do badly in preserving 'the juices'." For the roundtable, Wood affirmed that political scientists have something important to offer the world of political government and politics. However, it is not a simple and straight-forward contribution: the knowledge imparted by political scientists (the "profs") may be used by politicians (the "pols") for purposes quite different than the "profs" had in mind. The relation between "pols" and "profs" is a transactional one. "The trick is how a "prof" concerned with general propositions can convey [knowledge and information] to a "pol" involved with the particulars." The worst combination is a "bad news pol" and a "naive prof"; the "prof" may end up putting very general knowledge in the hands of someone who is unscrupulous and who will use the knowledge at will to serve his own ends. And Wood expressed his fears about the combinations of "so-called knowledge and so-called power." But with appropriately modest expectations and enough prudence, the movement back and forth between government and the academy can be worthwhile for the faculty member and his or her students. One caution that elicited much comment from the panel was that practitioners returned to the academy "forswear the temptation to tell war stories."

Scholars can benefit from the exposure to direct political experience, adding the components of uncertainty, rush, and confusion that are essential to the scholar's understanding of political phenomena. Similarly, the practitioner can benefit from bringing in professional and obviously rigorous political science knowledge to the political arena where most actors customarily indulge in the gross oversimplification of issues. The blending of the two perspectives, properly undertaken, can make for both better policy practice and scholarly explanation.

Eugene Lewis' initial presentation centered on a metaphor of political life as a prism, with the political participant on the inside and the scholarly observer on the outside. Lewis' prism has three facets: first, aggregations of interest and power, like voting, market forces, and interest group competition; second, the press of historical factors which foreshadow policy processes - hierarchies, means-ends chains, rational organization; and third, institutional structures that impose an order on the "blooming, buzzing confusion" of the world.

²A tape recorder had been set up to record the entire proceedings, but it mysteriously malfunctioned during the first hour.

³"Bridging the Gap: Political Scientists on the Public Merry-Go-Round." PS, 1986, 19, 252-254.

