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# OKLAHOMA POLITICS

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**LEDERHOSEN, RODEOS, AND LAPTOPS:  
COMPARISONS OF POLITICAL CULTURE IN  
OKLAHOMA AND BAVARIA IN THE AGE OF  
GLOBALIZATION**

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The globalization issue today remains complicated, generating as many questions as it does answers. This transformative phenomenon, however, contains the powerful countervailing trends of socio-economic disintegration and integration, ethnic nationalism and globalization, cultural diversity and homogenization, and the particular and the universal. Such forces are often contradictory in nature, creating economic, political, and cultural convergence and pluralism at the same time. Burning questions on the status of nation-states and even sub-national political entities in an increasingly interconnected world actually represent nothing new. Serious and thoughtful debates already had emerged as early as the first half of the nineteenth century about the rise of global economic and political trends and their impact on local and national identities. Both classical economists and classical Marxists had set the tone for various profound discussions that still resonate today. Though the current body of research regarding the globalization process is impressive, it mostly concentrates on countries' economic, political, and cultural characteristics in response to such trends. Based on both a broader perspective and a comparative approach, this study explores the distinctive sociopolitical and cultural features of the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in relation to the globalization phenomenon. In the context of their political ideology, constitutional setting, policies, customs, and religion, this paper examines how the conservative underpinnings of these sociopolitical features can be positioned in the debates on globalization trends and political culture. Our hypothesis holds that these

two jurisdictions or states exhibit similar cultural, economic, political and social institutions and practices, which similarly respond to the forces of globalization. In addition, both states' identities appear to remain resilient even in the face of significant global transformations. Not least of all, the findings suggest that Oklahoma can perhaps draw valuable lessons from Bavaria's own unique blending of tradition and change and reconcile them in the form of "progressive conservatism."

**The topic of globalization** has received wide attention in the social science research literature. For some, globalization means the ever-shrinking relationship between space and time often enshrined in the notion of a global village, while others emphasize the increasing exchange of information, goods, services, and cultures on a global scale, and the rise of globally integrated networks (Harvey 1989; Mittelman 1996a; Held et al. 1999; Fried 2001; Urry 2003; Friedman 2006). Time, space, and the global exchange of tangible or intangible properties constitute some of the critical dimensions that define globalization. The increasingly interconnected web of national economies engaged in trade and finance, the emergence and intensification of a global consciousness across nations, and the complex interaction among global forces, citizenship, ethnicity, and gender remain equally important to capture globalization's complex and dynamic nature (Gilpin 1987; Robertson 1992; Croucher 2004). Not least of all, the meaning of globalization is often discussed in the contexts of pursuing universal and classical liberal ideas, implementing economic development policies, and encouraging "cross-border advocacy networks and organizations [that defend] human rights, the environment, women's rights, or world peace" (Guillen 2001, 236-37).

The globalization phenomenon remains complicated from a conceptual and operational perspective. The forces of globalization can create economic standardization, but they can also contribute to cultural pluralism. Though the current body of research is impressive, it mostly concentrates on countries' economic, political, and cultural characteristics in response to globalization trends. Based on both a broader perspective and comparative approach, this study explores the distinctive sociopolitical



and cultural features of the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in relation to the globalization process. In the context of their political ideology, constitutional setting, policies, customs, and religion, this paper examines how the conservative underpinnings of these sociopolitical features can be positioned in the debates on globalization and political culture. After introducing the general themes of globalization and political culture, the paper describes the methodology and provides a brief background on the states of Oklahoma and Bavaria. The study concludes with an analysis and discussion of the findings. Our hypothesis holds that these two jurisdictions or states exhibit similar cultural, economic, political and social institutions and practices, which similarly respond to the forces of globalization. In addition, both states' identities appear to remain resilient even in the face of significant global transformations.

## **THEMES OF GLOBALIZATION AND POLITICAL CULTURE**

### **FRIEDRICH LIST VERSUS KARL MARX: EARLY CONSIDERATIONS**

Two prominent and visionary German intellectuals, Friedrich List (1789-1846) and Karl Marx (1818-1883), engaged in serious and thoughtful discussions as early as the first half of the nineteenth century about the rise of global economic and political trends and their impact on local and national identities. Political economist, journalist and lobbyist List considered matters of political culture in general as well as state and federal issues in both the United States and Germany. Living from the late 1820s to the early 1830s in the young republic, he observed first-hand what was taking place in American society. He soon felt the influence of Alexander Hamilton's national economic policies as well as Henry Clay's ambitious, but aborted, "American System." List came to endorse Hamilton's idea of economic nationalism, which emphasized trade protectionism and a strong domestic industrial base. For List, true economic power lay not in the ability to consume goods, but in the capacity to produce them. He opposed what he perceived to be the "cosmopolitanism" of free-trade advocates, who seemed more concerned with global affairs than their own countries.

Though promoting free trade within nation-states, List took exception with classical economists, who had viewed the individual and society as distinct entities. He believed that the nation-state, grounded as it was in a geographical region with its own unique history and culture, but as one part of the global fabric, nevertheless commanded the love and loyalty of individuals more so than the world. Instead, he considered individuals to be members of a given society or nation. In addition, he understood nation-states to represent something more than mere moral and political groupings in history; they also constituted economic associations. In his more organic view of society, economic activities and trade should adapt to particular national demands.

Significantly, List envisioned the nation-state serving as the necessary and proper intermediary between the individual and the wider world. Ideally, the nation-state functioned as an economic and political vehicle that preserved and protected people from the economic and political vicissitudes of the international arena. From this vantage point, this intermediate level of organization—between that of the individual and the world community—had up to this time received little or no emphasis in economic thought (Hirst 1965 [1909]; Smith 1970; Hetz 1975; Henderson 1983; Szporluk 1988; McCraw 1992). Significantly, he wrote in 1841 in his most famous work, *The National System of Political Economy*, that “[b]etween each individual and entire humanity . . . stands the Nation, with its special language and literature . . . origin and history . . . manners and customs, laws and institutions . . . with its separate territory; a society, which, united by a thousand ties of mind and of interests, combines itself into one independent whole” (174-75).

List held that the nation-state, which by the mid-nineteenth century was fast approaching predominance as the most innovative political institution and power-broker of its day, embodied the “highest union of individuals.” According to this view, nation-states protected not only political and cultural interests, but economic ones as well. For him, the industrialized nation-state—whereby national unity resulted from modern means—also harnessed economic capabilities and provided a catalyst to the dynamic creation of wealth.

List held, moreover, that nation-states functioned in a “community of nations.” They could therefore act as the ideal beneficent mediator between the individual and worldwide humanity, as evidenced by tariffs and trade protectionism, especially for less-developed and more vulnerable

peoples. Moreover, the national government held the right to subordinate local interests to the general or national one, thus at the same time integrating local and regional affiliations.

As a powerful counterpart to List, but equally well-grounded in the great German intellectual and philosophical traditions of the day (Bernard 1965; Stern, ed. 1973; Iggers 1983), German economist, sociologist, historian, journalist and political revolutionary Marx comprehended early on how global economic forces could erode the nation-state's viability and sovereignty, which he regarded as a historical construct of middle-class capitalism and as a transitory, albeit a necessary, phase of the incremental, "inevitable" movement toward international socialism.

Marx long maintained that capitalism would implode in time from its own internal contradictions. During the revolutionary outbursts of 1848, he wrote that unbridled free trade and global economic trends were in fact best suited to encourage world revolution. In particular, protective tariffs on the part of nation-states, for instance, were inherently conservative and opposed to the dialectic of history. He wrote: "The Protective system . . . is conservative, while the Free Trade system works destructively. It breaks up old nationalities and carries antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the Free Trade system hastens the Social Revolution. In this revolutionary sense alone, gentlemen, I am in favor of Free Trade" (Marx and Engels 1976, 465).

List's ideas parted with both classical liberalism and classical Marxism with respect to issues such as economic development, nation-state formation, and transitional historical stages of human development. In Marx's case, for example, the nation-state dominated by the capitalist middle-classes served as a stage or transition from the feudal to the socialist. A perceptive Marx already recognized at this time the transfer of more local loyalties to national ones, and perhaps the beginnings of transnational affiliations, even surpassing that of the Roman Catholic Church. For List, however, while the nation-state was able to unite local communities of shared heritage, the national community *remained* viable within this emerging modern global framework.

This divergence between List's and Marx's views can help contextualize the historical role of national sovereignty in this perceived era of increased globalization. Indeed, what appears to be occurring

now—i.e., the integration of nations or regions into a larger regional or even global framework—is perhaps simply a process on a much grander scale of what had happened at the local and national levels of consolidation in parts of the globe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as the case of the various German states or even the young United States. Yet local and regional identities within nation-states remain relatively intact even today, and in some cases are growing ever stronger.

In consideration of global trends, List's observations in retrospect are perhaps more salient than ever. In his ideal world, the nation-state in its various forms functioned as a mediator between the persistent reality of cultural diversity and local self-interests, on the one hand, and the growing homogenization and global transformations of the emerging modern world economy, on the other. Moreover, List's seemingly more organic cultural understandings of socio-economic forces and trends followed a less linear historical progression than Marx's more ambitious, albeit commendable, effort to construct a grand unified theory that embraced larger historical patterns and stages of human development. Both men recognized the enormous potential of the Industrial Age, to be sure, but their conclusions went their separate ways.

#### CONTEMPORARY CONSIDERATIONS

Scholar Vali Nasr (2007) perhaps best articulates this almost ethereal, but omnipresent, phenomenon of global transformation, writing that “[w]e live in an age of globalization, but also one of identity politics. It is as if our world is expanding and contracting at the same time. Diverse peoples embrace universal values, and once insular communities engage in unprecedented levels of commerce and communication with the outside world. Yet at the same time the primordial or near-primordial ties of race, language, ethnicity, and religion make their presence felt with dogged determination” (23). Some commentators, notably historian Samuel P. Huntington (1996), have predicted a “clash of civilizations” in this historical context. Certainly, given time, global integration and unity might materialize, but today it is significant that two powerful countervailing forces—socio-economic disintegration and integration, ethnic nationalism and globalization, cultural diversity and homogenization, and the particular and the universal—appear to be in play. The paradox

is that they give indications of feeding off each other and seem unlikely at this point to overwhelm the other completely.

In the legacy of List and Marx, a whole host of studies in recent decades has grappled with the increasingly apparent globalization phenomenon and its contradictions. Sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and other social scientists have shaped contemporary debates on the subject. Accordingly, as suggested and succinctly summarized by Mauro Guillen (2001), the following four major thematic questions of globalization can be identified: 1) Is globalization really happening?; 2) Does globalization produce convergence?; 3) Does globalization undermine the authority of the national states?; and 4) Is a global culture emerging? Given the complexity of globalization as an economic, political, and cultural phenomenon, and the different arguments made by the respective globalization scholars, a concise answer to the question of whether globalization is happening remains elusive. Driven by power politics, multinational corporations, and the “newfound power of individuals to collaborate and compete globally,” the world has shrunk from a size medium to a size tiny since 1492 (Friedman 2006, 10). Others discern a selective integration of certain global economic activities. According to Manuel Castells (1996), the “actual operation and structure [of the global economy] concern only segments of economic structures, countries, and regions...” (102). Similar to the broader argument made so far, evidence exists regarding political and cultural globalization, but so do the arguments that undermine it (Castells 1996; Tomlinson 1999; Cowen 2002).

As for the question of the global convergence of economics, politics, and cultures and the loss of the nation-state sovereignty within a global network, the literature suggests a mixed picture. Often those engaged in the globalization debate tend to take the phenomenon for granted without providing empirical data to support its existence and argue that it has been an uneven process that fragments or is mostly a regional phenomenon, limited to Western Europe, North America, and Japan. Convincing empirical evidence, however, supports the phenomena of increasing divergence and diversity, the survival of national governance structures, and cultural divergence as a result of or in response to globalization. The geopolitical changes since World War I, the rise of foreign policy responses to terrorist networks, and the enduring variety of economic policies pursued and customs cherished by nation-states

offer vivid manifestations of global heterogeneity (Smith 1991; Delamaide 1994; Guillen 2001; LaFeber 2002). On the other hand, the tensions created by the rise of trans-border human migrations and information-communication technologies, the spread of multinational corporations and international organizations, and the increasingly interdependent web of financial markets, question the notion of national sovereignty. All these developments permeate and undermine the regulatory power of states, thus reminding us all that we are living in an economy rather than a society (Vernon 1971; Sakamoto 1994; Cox 1996; Mittelman 1996b; Kettl 2000).

Finally, but equally relevant to the subject under consideration, is there a global culture in the making? Those who believe that a global culture is rising and that a sort of hegemonic *burger* (i.e., an urban, middle-class professional) imperialism is taking control clearly stand in the minority. Admittedly, the new information communication technologies bolster the dominance of English as the global language (Kaku 1998, 337). This observation, however, does not reflect the complex relationship between communication and culture. Based on Axelrod's adaptive cultural simulation, Michael Greig (2002) suggests that the expansion of communications promotes cultural homogeneity and, as a result of the increasing exposure to a variety of different cultural traits, sustains local cultural uniqueness at the same time. Following the argument made by Ronald Inglehart and Wayne Baker (2000) that country-specific changes in culture and values result from path-dependent rather than convergent ways, the global diffusion of consumer products and ideas through mass consumerism, cross-border migration, and the information communication technologies appear unlikely to create a deeper sense of homogeneity, but instead produce diversity, fragmentation, and a "resurgent affirmation of identities" (Cox 1996, 27).

Clifford Geertz argues that the world is "growing more global and more divided, more thoroughly interconnected and more intricately partitioned at the same time...Whatever it is that defines identity in borderless capitalism and the global village it is not deep going agreements on deep going matters, but something more like the recurrence of familiar divisions, persisting arguments, standing threats, the notion that whatever else may happen, the order of difference must be somehow maintained" (Geertz cited in Guillen 2001, 253). Acknowledging the *decentering* effects of globalization, Anthony Giddens (2000), similar to James

Mittelman (1996b), affirms that this *decentering* is contributing to the fostering of local cultures and identities in reaction to global homogenization.

The fostering of local cultures, as illustrated by Ulrich Adelt's (2005) research on the development of the German music television networks MTV Germany and Viva TV, represents an outgrowth of country-specific historical developments and also constitutes an economic necessity. MTV and Viva allow for the exposure of British and American music in Germany, but they also play music that "caters to localized desires to declare a redefined German identity in ironic or nostalgic terms" (Adelt 2005, 293). Given the dynamic and hybrid nature of globalization, it is feasible for country-specific, regional, and local cultures to interact with traits of a global culture. Eventually, they may co-exist with one another relatively peacefully in the West. The relationship between globalization and Islamic culture seems to be more complicated, however. Mustapha Pasha and Ahmed Samatar (1996) discuss the Islamic world's resistance to Western modernity. Though the privileged groups in Muslim society embrace modernity quite eagerly, many others, fearful of cultural penetration and dismayed by the perceived growing human misery, reject the prospects of Western modernity (Pasha and Samatar 1996).

Political culture represents an extremely important factor in globalization, but is sometimes dismissed as a mere component of modern geopolitical studies. Political culture remains so vital and significant, because it affects so many other aspects of the state and politics. In considering how a state is ordered, how power is allocated, and who rules, one must first appreciate the local social and cultural contexts in which human beings operate. Indeed, human behavior and human psychology remain central to a successful contemplation and conceptualization of politics. In this regard, the study of political culture proves as varied and rich as the human experience itself. As a result, the study of political culture might in particular regions or jurisdictions involve the examination of many diverse factors, whether historical, religious, ethnic, or racial.

The failure to examine these factors most certainly produces an adverse effect on the findings of any serious study and consequently presents an inaccurate or incomplete analysis of the case under consideration. For example, Floyd Hunter's landmark study on the power elite in Atlanta, Georgia, reveals such a pitfall. In his 1953 study

*Community Power Structure*, Hunter employs the use of the “reputational theory of power.” In this approach, Hunter gains most of his data on those who exercised power in Atlanta based upon asking local residents to self-report and identify those individuals and groups who were perceived to be the primary power-brokers. The utility of Hunter’s work can be defended and even praised; however, many scholars level a number of criticisms against his findings, not the least of which concerns his methodological orientation with respect to the question of “who has power in Atlanta.” One primary critique highlights the inadequate consideration of the cultural and social factors at play in Atlanta, notably the city’s racial dynamics in the segregated South. Consequently, respect for and an awareness of political culture proves indispensable for proper scientific inquiry when conducting political science research.

Recognizing its importance, a number of legendary and famed scholars pay considerable attention to the issue of political culture. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) have produced one such pioneering study. They assume that democratic states with representative institutions are democratic because of these societies’ inherently democratic values and norms. They also argue that “a democratic political system is one in which the ordinary citizen participates in political decisions, a democratic political culture should consist of a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, perceptions and the like, that support participation” (Almond and Verba 1963, 178). For this purpose, they study five nations where they find three different manifestations of political culture, which they refer to as parochial political culture, subject political culture and participant political culture.

Another important contribution to the examination of political culture and contemporary research comes from the Dutch-American political scientist Arend Lijphart (1968). He ranks as one of the world’s leading experts on the phenomenon of consociationalism, which considers the ways in which heterogeneous societies try to maintain democracies through power-sharing among diverse groups in a given community. His work recognizes the importance of political culture in plural democratic states such as the Netherlands, where numerous ethnic, religious and cultural groups co-exist within a diminutive European state. His findings demonstrate how clearer conceptions of political culture remain essential in efforts to manage conflict and share power among



disparate groups. Tom Rice and Alexander Sumberg (2001) make another important contribution to the study of political culture by exploring “the link between civic culture and government performance in the American states.”

Daniel Elazar (1984) perhaps has written the best-known American study of political culture. In his study, *American Federalism: A View from the States*, Elazar creates a three-fold typology, within which he classifies all fifty U.S. states. His typology establishes three distinct state political cultures, categorized as the moralistic, the traditionalistic, and the individualistic. Each of these is supposed to reflect a state’s unique social, historical, religious, racial and ethnic composition. In addition, he lists various state regions, assigning each with a state political-culture designation. Most states incorporate a variety of cultures. For example, Oklahoma is classified into two categories. Elazar describes the state’s eastern portion as a solidly traditionalistic political culture, while the region west of Interstate-35 contains a mixture of the traditionalistic and individualistic political cultures.

On the whole, Elazar arrives at his typology by studying each state’s history, especially their settlement patterns. For each state, he regards the various racial, ethnic, religious and cultural profiles of settlers and their descendants. He then extrapolates and theorizes about these groups’ values, attitudes, and beliefs and how these norms would contribute to a general consensus and political culture in each state. In his view, the moralistic political culture with its emphasis on using government to achieve the public good in a Utilitarian- and Jeremy-Bentham-style approach grows out of the rationalist basis of the Yankee Northeast. Moreover, the Midwestern states’ individualistic political culture and their characteristic emphasis upon utilizing the free-market economy to order society better originate in the thrifty and no-nonsense approach of practical farmers. Finally, he describes how the Old South’s traditionalist political culture with its reliance upon elite rule and the application of deeply held religious notions guides many state policies.

Though many continue to praise Elazar’s work, many of his assumptions in recent years have come under attack. Some skepticism concerns the manner in which the nation has changed since his book’s first appearance. Critics often point out that since the early 1960s, when Elazar researched and published his findings, a number of factors and conditions have conspired to render his research on political culture less

relevant today. For example, some often raise concerns about the issue of technology, maintaining that computer innovations, namely the Internet and television, now permit a greater diffusion of knowledge and ideas, which in turn tends to make local cultures less impermeable to change. They also argue that today the values, forms of entertainment, and ideas of one section of the nation have become available in ways that were simply impossible not even two decades ago. In addition, Americans more than ever make frequent moves in the pursuit of better employment, optimal educational opportunities, and other advantages. This behavior demands that people move from the state where they were born and raised, thus making them either leave behind or bring with them the values endemic to that state's political culture. They are now migrating across the nation into entirely new political cultures, further reshaping the political landscape. As such, the argument goes that it is now less likely that distinct political state cultures could even exist as Elazar described them. Despite criticisms of Elazar, this study endeavors to demonstrate the utility and importance of political culture in understanding the present geopolitical climate in regions across the globe.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **CASE SAMPLING, DEFINITIONS, AND DATA COLLECTION**

This study applies the multiple-case-study approach in order to arrive at a more insightful understanding of the local cultures in the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in the context of globalization. Multiple-case evidence is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as more robust (Yin 2003). In addition, this multiple-case study seeks to illustrate the ways in which distinctive political cultures thrive despite globalization. Given the qualitative nature of this research, the case-sampling tends to be purposive rather than random (Morse 1989; Kuzel 1992). Purposive-sampling remains the preferred method, because qualitative research often deals with a limited population and "partly because social processes have a logic and a coherence that random sampling can reduce to uninterpretable sawdust" (Miles and Huberman 1994, 27).

"Conservatism" is defined as a cautious attitude to change with an emphasis on maintaining traditions, moral principles, customs, and the

social value of religion. It remains the predominant political philosophy among the peoples of the states of Oklahoma and Bavaria. Both embrace a strong ethos of conservatism and remain embedded within a federal system of government that preserves their powerful identities. Accordingly, a series of sociopolitical categories help illustrate how Oklahoma and Bavaria each preserve and promote their conservative cultures in the face of the juggernaut of globalization and greater world inter-dependence. For comparison, the sociopolitical categories include: 1) political ideology as illustrated by party dominance; 2) state constitutional provisions and policies; and 3) customs and religion. The Oklahoman and Bavarian state constitutions, along with official policy statements and statistics compiled by government and church-related institutions, serve as the major data sources.

## CASE BACKGROUND

### *Oklahoma:*

Geography and human migrations have helped shape the state of Oklahoma, a Choctaw term which literally means “land of the red man.” Today, Oklahoma is a “heartland state” that lies at a cultural intersection between the Southern Plains, the American Southwest, and the Old South. Though native peoples had lived in the general region for many centuries, tens of thousands more from the so-called “Five Civilized Tribes” from the east were forced onto this newly designated Indian Territory as a result of the tragic Trail of Tears episode of the 1830s.

The Spanish under Francisco Vasquez de Coronado had explored this region as early as the mid-sixteenth century, followed by the French two centuries later. As the United States expanded, the first permanent white settlements were established around the 1810s and 1820s. It took time for those of European extraction—especially German, English, Scots, and Irish—to establish roots in Oklahoma, however. Oklahoma assumed statehood relatively late in American national history primarily because of the presence of 38 federally recognized native tribes, each with their own distinct language, culture, and religious tradition. A contingent of African Americans also came to the region, mostly at first during the slavery period under both white and American Indian slaveholders. Oklahoma had long represented the crossroads of cultures and peoples in the heart of the evolving American nation, and the

European arrival between the 1810s and 1910s only contributed further to Oklahoma's ethnic diversity. Geographically, some observers also consider Oklahoma to be the "belt-buckle" of the so-called "Bible Belt" of Evangelical Protestant Christianity, which extends across the southeastern United States.

Shortly before the start of the twentieth century, delegations in Indian Territory finally moved to make it a U.S. state. At first, efforts arose to establish an all-Indian state called Sequoyah (after the great early-nineteenth-century Cherokee leader), but Congress rejected it. In 1907, Oklahoma became the forty-sixth U.S. state, firmly establishing it within the American federal system. Early in its history, the state of Oklahoma was recognized not just as an agricultural producer, but also as a major oil-producing center (Gibson 1981; Baird and Goble 1994). In comparison with Bavaria, however, Oklahoma remains a relatively young political entity.

*Bavaria:*

History and geography in the heart of Europe helped produce the Free State of Bavaria (*Freistaat Bayern*). Some sarcastic Germans from other regions call it "*Frei statt Bayern*," which means "free, instead of Bavaria," implying that the rest of Germany does not quite measure up to Bavaria as a nation. The Free State has not only enjoyed a time when it was an independent kingdom, but over the past century and a half it has been able to preserve and promote its cherished identity through a more conservative political culture and by receiving certain privileges within various federal arrangements. Nevertheless, the development of the modern Bavarian state has been closely tied to the historical path of Germany and the impact of outside forces.

Following the demise of the ancient Holy Roman Empire in 1806, French dictator Napoleon Bonaparte erected the Confederation of the Rhineland in its place, which consisted of Bavaria and thirty-some other smaller German states (as compared with more than 350 German states under the old empire). In 1806, Maximilian I became the first Bavarian king under this reorganization and in subsequent years Bavaria was able to expand its territory considerably. The Confederation of the Rhineland only lasted until Napoleon's fall in 1815, but the victorious powers against France in effect kept this political structure mostly intact through the creation of the German Confederation.

As Bavaria tried to solidify its political structures on the basis of a monarchy after Napoleon, a series of short-lived revolutions raged across Europe, while neighbors Austria and Prussia fought for dominance over the German Confederation. In 1866, Prussia made its move against Austria within the Confederation, quickly achieving political supremacy and erecting the Prussian-dominated North German Confederation in 1867. At this time, only four south German states, including Bavaria, remained outside of this new confederation (Treml 1997).

These four predominantly Catholic German states, however, remained tied to Protestant Prussia through the free-trade Customs Union (*Zollverein*) established in 1819 as well as by a defensive military alliance. Established in 1871, Otto von Bismarck's Second Reich constituted a unique imperial German system, a particular political structure unlike anything seen before or since. This new German Empire was in fact a federal system, where individual German states still held considerable power, although not nearly so much as Prussia. These state powers concerned culture, education, state-level armies, and taxes, for example. The states even retained their own foreign ministries, though symbolic. The legal system created in the North German Confederation in 1867 under Bismarck had been transferred to the Second Reich, lasting until 1918. The end of World War I, the outbreak of the November 1918 Revolution in Munich, and the establishment of the Weimar Republic in 1919 all signaled the end of the Bavarian monarchy and a new beginning for Germany as a whole (Berghahn 1994).

The Weimar system functioned much like Germany's current federal system, but the Nazis moved to strengthen the national government during the 1930s and 1940s. The Nazi dictatorship helped to discredit German centralism and provided subsequent arguments for reverting back to some form of German federalism. Even before the end of World War II, the United States and Great Britain deliberated over what to do with a defeated Nazi Germany. Most familiar to the West was President Franklin Roosevelt's consideration of the Morgenthau Plan, which would have partitioned Germany and have turned it into a pastoral zone with no industrial capacity in order to eliminate any future military capabilities. Roosevelt rejected this radical proposal, however. Almost forgotten, but perhaps more intriguing, though, was British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's Danubian Plan, which would have in effect recognized the longstanding regional variations within the European state system, most

notably in Germany. To prevent another aggressive Germany from ever rising again, this postwar plan called for the severing of Bavaria from the rest of Germany and attaching it to Austria and Hungary into what would constitute one of several new federations established inside the new Europe; however, this daring proposal for a new central European federation also evaporated (Hull 1948, 1234, 1298-99, 1463; Churchill 1950, 802-07). Instead, Bavaria became part of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which emerged out of the Cold War divide in 1949. Guided by the FRG's Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), the creation of a new constitutional order also established the basis for a unified Germany in October 1990, consisting of 16 states or *Länder*.

## FINDINGS

### POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

#### *Oklahoma:*

With the exception of its late territorial and early statehood days, which witnessed a significant groundswell of support for socialist and populist politics, Oklahoma has arguably been a traditionally conservative state. For instance, Oklahoma was at one time part of the "Blue Dogs and Bo-weevil" caucuses of the old-time solidly Democratic South. When massive party realignment occurred in the 1980s via the phenomenon of the Reagan Democrats, many Oklahomans also changed their affiliation to the Republican Party. Though Oklahoma is now perhaps more electorally competitive than it has ever been, it remains overall a politically conservative state, regardless of the party affiliation of those in power.

#### *Bavaria:*

Before and since the founding of the FRG, Bavaria has stood as a bastion of political conservatism. Organized in 1946, the conservative Christian Social Union (CSU), the sister party of the center-right Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), has dominated state politics. Despite the fierce electoral competition among the CSU, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Liberal Party (FDP), the Bavarian Party (BP), and the League of Expellees and Disenfranchised (BHE) between 1950 and 1962, the CSU generally managed to gain a clear majority in

the Bavarian State Parliament. With the demise of the BP and the BHE by the 1960s and their subsequent inability to gain any seats in the State Parliament, the CSU turned into the dominant party in Bavaria. Within the context of Bavaria's economic transformation from a mostly agrarian to an industrialized state, the SPD, as the CSU's major competitor in local, state and national politics, achieved its best electoral result in 1966 at 35.8 percent, while the CSU received 48.1 percent. Neither the electoral success of the SPD or the short-lived rise of the radical National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) during the minor recession of 1966 undermined the CSU's hegemonic position. Except for the most recent state election in September 2008, the conservative CSU has continued to garner more than fifty percent of the electorate and, as such, not only has advanced to the status of an all-Bavarian party, but has consistently been able to form the government under the leadership of a state premier (Zofka 1994).

## STATE CONSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES

### *Oklahoma:*

As for its genesis and philosophical orientation, the Oklahoma State Constitution first drafted in 1907 follows the so-called positive law tradition. That is, a state's constitution acts as that state's fundamental law. This philosophy, however, also stresses the formation of a state constitution that tends to include many lengthy and often times excessive details and provisions in artificial and unnecessary ways. Containing such trivial matters as "establishing the flash point for kerosene at 115 degrees for the purpose of illumination," the Oklahoma State Constitution represents one of the longest and most exhaustive of all state constitutions in the country.

The primary motivation of this approach is to create a constitution that tends to restrain legislative power by rendering swift lawmaking less likely and more difficult. This tendency in turn tends to benefit local political and economic elites, who often seek to maintain the status quo. In this way, we can discern a link to Elazar's notion of traditional political culture, which he himself identifies as evident in eastern Oklahoma.

Thus, by design, the state constitution can be viewed as a document that further encourages conservative government. Yet what can be said of the substance of its specific provisions? A number of interesting points

appear evident here. First, the Oklahoma State Constitution contains a provision in Article 13-Section 7, which states that “the legislature shall provide for the teaching of the elements of agriculture, horticulture, stock feeding and domestic science in the common schools of the state.” In this way, the constitution helps promote, protect and perpetuate a particular industry within the state.

Another constitutional provision concerns the issue of same-sex marriage. Emboldened by the passage of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and in response to the efforts of advocacy groups who might attempt to overturn DOMA and thus move to induce the federal courts to require states to recognize the validity of other states’ same-sex marriage laws, the Oklahoma State Legislature amended the state constitution with respect to the issue of same-sex marriage in order to reflect a traditional view of marriage. Article 2-Section 35 defines marriage as a union of one man and one woman and denies the legitimacy and recognition in Oklahoma of same-sex marriage licenses from other jurisdictions. This provision, however, goes even a step further by declaring it to be a misdemeanor for anyone knowingly issuing a marriage license to a same-sex couple.

In addition, Article 2-Section 26 establishes a rather conservative view toward gun ownership, wherein the constitution states that citizens may bear arms “in defense of his home, person or property or in aid of the civil power.” In this sense, the Oklahoma State Constitution harkens back to the original idea behind the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, whereby citizens might themselves constitute the state militia.

Another manifestation of the constitution’s adherence to populist conservative values in the face of outside pressure concerns Oklahoma’s application of the death penalty. While it ranks around twenty-eighth in population, the state is consistently ranked third in the nation for the total number of executions performed in the United States each year, just trailing Texas and Virginia in that order. According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Death Penalty Information Center, Oklahoma also executes .0235 inmates per 10,000 of its state citizens. Consequently, Oklahoma claims the highest execution rate of any U.S. state per capita. Besides the numbers, perhaps one of the most striking manifestations of Oklahoma’s prolific use of the death penalty pertains to the passage of a law that made repeat child rapists eligible for capital punishment. In



recent years, this policy reached a climactic moment, when Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, a Roman Catholic, was actually petitioned by none less than Pope John Paul II for clemency regarding an impending Oklahoma state execution. Keating, though respectful, stated his firm conviction that clemency should not be granted in this case, and thus the state performed the execution.

Perhaps the most evident of the Oklahoma State Legislature's more recent conservative actions concerns the passage of House Bill 1804 in 2007. Some describe this bill as the most restrictive piece of legislation ever crafted at the state level dealing with illegal immigration and illegal immigrants. Among its many provisions include penalties for those hiring and knowingly transporting illegal aliens, as well as denying public services such as education to illegal aliens. Such legislation is not out-of-line with the thinking or design of the Oklahoma State Constitution, however. For instance, Article 22-Section 1 effectively prohibits illegal aliens from owning property in Oklahoma and provides for the legislature to pass laws specifically dealing with aliens and property ownership.

Perhaps, then, Oklahoma is responding to various trends and issues arising from external stimuli. Consider the issue of the state's extensive use of the death penalty. What accounts for this phenomenon? It concerns the nexus between the state's local political culture and traditions coupled in part with its reaction to national trends and globalization. Government-sanctioned executions took place prior to statehood in 1907. But why does the state not only maintain this practice, but continue to make prolific use of it? The reasons concern the type of retributive justice system the state has created, which is, of course, largely a product of the more Protestant-influenced views of crime and punishment. Drawing much from a Baptist-influenced, predominantly Old Testament reading of the proper balance between justice and forgiveness, denominations such as the Southern Baptist tend to support more punitive and harsh legal codes than do, for example, the modern Catholic Church.

This religious worldview is coupled with the prevailing sentiment that "outsiders" and "activists" such as Bianca Jagger, Susan Sarandon, and other non-Oklahoman "interlopers" (whether visiting the state in person or via global media outlets) might pressure the legislature to end the death penalty and thereby overturn the popular will of Oklahomans (Jagger, 1999). For many state residents, an "outsider" or "interloper" could just as easily include anyone coming from other parts of the country

or from abroad. This concern tends to cause people to resist change that they regard as alien to and coming from outside their sphere of control. Celebrities such as Jagger and Sarandon tend to support the legal notion of “norming,” whereby nations abandon their own traditional legal codes in favor of agreed-upon international norms and legal standards in the name of pursuing a form of universal human rights. Many Oklahomans are prone to view this trend as not contributing to human rights so much as it does to a loss of sovereignty and control over their own desires and interests.

The same observation could be applied to the same-sex marriage ban that Oklahoma passed in 2004. This law responded to the widespread belief, whether real or imagined, that “outsiders” might seek to provoke a test case in federal court that would allow a same-sex couple from another state to force recognition of their out-of-state marriage under the full faith and credit clause of the U.S. Constitution. Quite remarkable about this state constitutional amendment is that it was adopted in 2004, eight years after Congress had passed DOMA. For some reason, state officials and their citizens still felt compelled to expand clarification and to codify further their positions on this matter. What accounts for these actions in Oklahoma? Again, it is at least partly attributable to the confluence of the notion of “outside” forces perhaps trying to change established beliefs coupled with a conservative state political culture that does not generally favor such an abrupt change from established practice.

A parallel example is found in the passage of House Bill 1804 concerning illegal immigration. A statewide perception was building that the federal government was unwilling to take seriously the issue of illegal immigration. On the contrary, many began to view the federal government as complicit in the problem. As such, key legislative leaders like Randy Terrill began pushing with overwhelming public support for the bill’s passage. In a recent online blog, Terrill (2008) states that “[t]hose critics [of HB1804] miss the point. The illegal immigration debate is about a whole lot more than just economics. It’s about fundamental principles and values: respect for the rule of law, upholding our state and national sovereignty, basic human dignity and the immorality of exploiting cheap illegal-alien slave labor, and protecting taxpayers from waste, fraud and abuse.” Such political support is not to be couched so glibly as perhaps because of xenophobic reasons, but rather because of the pervading

belief that globalization is undermining U.S. and Oklahoma state sovereignty. The passage of House Bill 1804 demonstrates the efficacy and salience of these fears, again whether real or imagined, that exogenous forces are at work and undermining Oklahomans' ability to control their own destiny.

*Bavaria:*

The U.S. Military Occupation Governor of Germany, General Lucius D. Clay, understood the concrete policy implications of democratization after World War II, despite his initial hard line policies regarding demilitarization, denazification, and deindustrialization. He also emerged as one of the leaders calling for both elections and the creation of a state constitution in what later would become the Free State of Bavaria. Following French resistance to the establishment of a democratic autonomous German government as specified by the 1945 Potsdam Agreement, the United States, increasingly focusing on its occupation zones, established three administrative units, including today's Bavaria. With the purpose to create a state government and a sense of democratic legitimacy, Clay asked the Bavarian government, then under the state premiership of Wilhelm Hoegner, to prepare for a Bavarian constitutional assembly. Dominated by the conservative CSU, the assembly overcame several inter- and intra-party conflicts regarding the status and structure of the Bavarian state government within a future federal system. Eventually, the final product reflected "Bavarian particularism" and, as such, "was more conservative than that of the other U.S. zone Länder" (Hudson 2004, 140-41). Final approval of the State or Land Constitution by both the United States military government and the Bavarian people between October and December 1946 signaled the official adoption of the Bavarian State Constitution (Gunlicks 1998; Hudson 2004; Fait 2006).

The Bavarian Land Constitution, similar to those for the Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saarland, was "influenced strongly by Christian thought in reaction to the value-neutral Weimar Constitution and the total disregard of Christian principles by the Nazi regime" (Gunlicks 1998, 111). Consisting of more than 180 articles, which, like the U.S. Constitution, are divided into sections, the Bavarian State Constitution is considerably longer than any of the fifteen other state constitutions. It begins with a basic description of the local administrative units and government structures and continues with the enumeration of civil

liberties, political rights, and social rights. In addition, the Bavarian Constitution devotes a substantial part of its provisions to the meanings and roles of marriage, family, and children. Guided by traditional values, Article 124 stipulates that marriage and family are “the natural and moral basis of human society and shall enjoy the particular protection of the State.” Other articles, especially 125 and 126, stress similar conservative themes. For example, children are considered the “most valuable possession,” while the “maintenance of the purity of the family” and the parents’ “paramount duty to bring up their children in soundness of body, mind and spirit” represent additional priorities to direct family life.

The underlying provisions regarding the goals and functions of schools and education also adhere to conservative values. According to Article 131, schools are obligated to instill spirit and character into their pupils. In conjunction with the character-building function of education, the “paramount educational goals are reverence for God, respect for religious persuasion and the dignity of man, self-control, the recognition of and readiness to undertake responsibility, helpfulness, receptiveness to everything which is beautiful, good and true...” At the same time, the Bavarian Constitution, among others, also emphasizes respect for democracy, love for country, and the instruction of family-related and moral subject matters. Article 131 states that “children shall be educated in the spirit of democracy [and] to love the Bavarian homeland.” Schools are also mandated to teach infant care, the upbringing of children and housekeeping. Finally, Article 137 stipulates that instruction on the fundamentals of morality must be provided to those pupils who do not participate in religious instruction.

The important role families play in the social fabric remains a cornerstone of the CSU’s party platform and also guides policy discussions. According to the party platform, “marriage and family is under the special protection of the state. Through the family, fundamental moral principles are transferred from generation to generation. The family is the fundamental link among people and the foundation of nation and state” (CSU Party Platform 2008a). Guided by this confession, Bavarian premiers, including Edmund Stoiber, a Roman Catholic, and Günther Beckstein, the first-ever Protestant Bavarian premier, have promoted traditional family values accordingly. In a widely publicized speech in 2006, Stoiber called for a broader debate in Germany regarding the social value of family and children. Moreover, he urged policymakers at

the federal level to implement policies aimed at increasing the desire for children among young Germans (Stoiber 2006).

Following Stoiber's strong convictions regarding families in society, the current Bavarian premier, Beckstein, also promotes family-friendly policies. Speaking before the spring 2008 Bavarian Catholic Diocese Convention, Beckstein stressed the fundamental meaning of family for society and a "Christian policy that shall always value the prominent significance of family and promote it accordingly" (Beckstein 2008). Additionally, recent policies implemented in Bavaria provide financial support for families with children, coupled with the promotion of kindergartens.

Besides pro-family attitudes, Bavarian policymakers, especially Stoiber, have consistently voiced their conservative opinions regarding immigrants, calling for policies that would force foreigners living in Germany to integrate and adopt the country's *Leitkultur* (leading or dominant culture). As with family policies, the CSU party program devotes considerable attention to the integration of foreigners into German society. Stressing that the integration of foreigners requires tolerance and effort, while also acknowledging the freedom of religion and rule of law in Germany, the CSU argues that immigrants have the "duty to integrate" into society (CSU Party Platform 2008b). Recently, the Bavarian Secretary of the Interior, Joachim Herrmann, has reiterated these sentiments before the 2008 Islam Conference in Berlin. Given the prevailing values of freedom, equality, democracy, and the rule of law in Germany, Muslims who want to be part of German society must recognize its *Leitkultur* "without if and but" (Herrmann 2008).

Though conservative and Christian principles support the constitutional setting and guide family and immigration policies in Bavaria, other developments clearly illustrate the progressive side of conservatism. As an integral part of *Mittleuropa* (Europe's Heartland), which economist Delamaide designates as a "superregion" of the European continent because of its highly industrialized nature, Bavaria is home to major international corporations, including the Bavarian Motor Works (BMW), Siemens and Allianz. Moreover, following Stoiber's "lederhosen and laptop" approach that emphasizes a blending of tradition and high-tech modernity, Bavaria has continued to defend traditional values and to spearhead innovative policies in the technology arena, a stance similar to the Irish economic "miracle" observed in the 1990s. Since the 1960s,

the Bavarian state government has consistently developed and dramatically changed its research infrastructure. It supports numerous universities, several Max Planck Institutes, and institutes of the Fraunhofer Society, while also investing approximately fifteen percent of its state budget in technology infrastructure. Bavaria, under the Stoiber administration, has initiated a far-reaching technology program designed to make the state fit for the globalized high-tech future in numerous areas, including biotechnology, aerospace, satellite navigation, sensor technology, and nanotechnology (Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology 2008).

## CUSTOMS AND RELIGION

### *Oklahoma:*

In Oklahoma, the sport of football is king. The bedlam experienced between the University of Oklahoma Sooners (OU) and the Oklahoma State Cowboys (OSU) literally divides the state into camps of orange and black against crimson and cream. Stadium crowds at OU games often exceed 80,000. On crisp fall Friday nights, football fans must attend games early, or else they will not be able to find a good parking spot at the local high school even just to watch the least important game that carries no playoff implications. The sport of football contains special meaning for those who have participated in it and constitutes an important cultural phenomenon to the point that sometimes it even appears to be a leadership prerequisite for holding political office. For instance, J. C. Watts served both in the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and as a U.S. Congressman for the Fourth Congressional District, and Jack Mildren in 1990 served as the state's Lieutenant-Governor. Both politicians had played as OU quarterbacks. Thus, in many respects, perhaps leadership in the form of football and politics appears related in Oklahoma.

However, if the sport of football reigns supreme in Oklahoma, it appears that the co-regent or heir-apparent to the throne could be rodeo. Few pastimes capture the spirit and zest of the southern plains state and its colorful history like the rodeo. The names of famous Oklahomans such as Will Rogers and Jim Shoulders attest to this fact. One of the best manifestations of rodeo's elevated status in the state is the Oklahoma State Prison Rodeo. Held every summer at the state penitentiary in

McAlester, the rodeo is considered to be “among the last of its kind, is that most incongruous kind of American pageantry, a mix of Main Street piousness and patriotism, and unabashed Coliseum-style brutality” (Schwartzman 2005, 2). This statement refers to the essence of the meaning of the prison rodeo, which in some ways skews the reality of the prisoners’ actual situation. Though it involves a carnival-like atmosphere complete with enthusiastic fans in a Western-style setting, the event involves “the worst of the worst” in Oklahoma’s criminal justice system. The prison should be the time and place for punishment and rehabilitation. Instead, the event becomes a time to forget the cold hard realities of prison life. Ironically, despite the fact that the rodeo takes place behind prison walls, the spectacle provides inmates with a brief psychological escape from the confines of their incarceration.

The aforementioned remark also encapsulates the rodeo’s expression of the state’s political culture by integrating the use of a well-respected Western sporting event with the notion of crime and punishment. The sentiment expressed here is that even “the worst of the worst” can and should participate in this ritual of local culture. Participation represents something more than a simple *Schadenfreude*, as the Bavarians would say, and it offers something more than a base desire to witness the carnage of man versus beast. It embodies a much deeper manifestation of meaning than the event itself. One of the best examples of this sense of community occurs with the “grand entry,” when rodeo participants carry the American and Oklahoma State flags with deep honor and respect into the arena before an audience of removed hats and bowed heads of convicts and free citizens alike (Schwartzman 2005, 2). Combine this scene with Christian prayers and supplications to the Almighty for the protection of contestants, and the rodeo provides all with an officially state-sanctioned spectacle of Oklahoma’s socially conservative culture.

The willingness to maintain the prison rodeo is related to the perception of the forces of globalization. Though many animal-rights groups tend to oppose rodeo in general and regard it as degrading and inhumane to animals in general, they also often attack what they perceive to be “state-sanctioned” animal cruelty. In this sense, many opponents of the Oklahoma State Prison Rodeo tend to behave as such because of their opposition to the state itself sanctioning this type of behavior. They argue that it is improper for a state government to lend its stature and

authority to such cruel activity. Meanwhile, rodeo proponents claim that it is more than a simple athletic event. Rather, they intimate that the rodeo celebrates Oklahoma's culture, one which "outsiders" judge unfairly. These "outsiders," they claim, do not understand the nature of the state and its citizens. Consequently, opposition to the rodeo tends to draw the ire and suspicion of many traditional Oklahomans, who fear that non-Oklahomans might impose "norming" on the state, thereby introducing a foreign set of values upon it. At the heart of this confrontation lies a resistance to national and global trends.

Religion also plays a crucial political role in Oklahoma, and it is manifested in a number of ways and is empirically demonstrable. For example, the state's religious composition is significant. According to a study in 2000 conducted by Glen-Mary Research Center of Nashville, Tennessee, the total number of Southern Baptist congregations in Oklahoma reaches 1,578. In other words, nearly 25 percent of all Oklahomans are Southern Baptists in the sense of full-time and confirmed members. This number does not include church visitors, underage children, and others.

Clearly, Southern Baptists by far surpass the membership of any of the other denominations and religious faiths in Oklahoma. Why is this factor significant, and what is its connection to Oklahoma politics? The answer lies in the nature and teachings of the Southern Baptists themselves. By their very essence, Southern Baptists embody a missionary church and people. Their religious outreach originates in their interpretation of the "Great Commission," whereby they believe that Jesus commanded his followers to go out and preach the Gospel to all people in all the nations. Thus, they are not likely to keep their beliefs to themselves. Rather, they often seek to transform the things that they see as either antithetical or anathema to the Gospel.

The Southern Baptists' efforts appear in stark contrast to less missionary-based faiths such as the so-called "hard-shelled" Baptists, who adhere to a more Calvinist streak and tend to believe that all people are the products of divine election and predetermined fates. As such, missionary efforts and political involvement carry less priority. The Southern Baptists, however, support the publication of *The Baptist Messenger of Oklahoma*, which contains articles on issues of faith and inspirational stories. It also encourages members to be aware of and involved in an assortment of conservative causes, ranging from pro-life legislative measures in the state legislature to judges' rulings on home-schooling issues.



Thus, arguably the Southern Baptists appear to be one of the most politically, socially and economically conservative of Protestant denominations. Since this group claims the greatest total number of adherents in the state, combined with a belief in the need to be active on many fronts, it is not difficult to measure religion's impact on Oklahoma politics.

*Bavaria:*

One Munich resident told visiting scholar John Ardagh (1995) not too many years ago that "I feel Bavarian first, European second, and German third." A senior Bavarian official explained to him as well that "Yes, we have had to give up our formal sovereignty since Bismarck's day, but we are still in many ways masters of our own destiny" (33). Part of that mastery of destiny is reflected by Bavarians continuing to practice their customs. The traditional costumes collectively known as *Tracht* and centuries-old folk music and dialect songs remain staples of many special occasions. *Dirndls* and *Lederhosen*, the traditional *Tracht* for females and males respectively, provide the essential clothing during the *Maibaum* or Maypole celebration—a celebration that goes back to the Middle Ages. The Landshuter Wedding, a detailed re-enactment of the wedding of George the Wealthy in 1475, and the Oberammergau Passion Play, a religious play that dates back to 1633, also embrace Bavarian traditional customs that have survived devastating plagues and wars and continue to thrive in the midst of globalization (Roth 1998). With the purpose to "transform the nationalistic upsurge in the wake of French revolutionary wars into a tool to bolster a faltering monarchy," the Munich *Oktoberfest*, initiated by Maximilian I in honor of Crown Prince Ludwig's marriage to Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen in 1810, and the official endorsement of native *Tracht* by Maximilian II more than thirty years later, represent cultural artifacts of great significance (Bendix 1998, 133).

There is also a strong cultural connection to foods among Europeans (Toke 2004). This practice certainly holds true for Bavaria, which since the 1990s has pursued policies aimed at cataloguing and registering many of its traditional foods with the European Commission. With the support of the Bavarian Ministry of Agriculture and other experts, Michale Besch, a professor at the Technical University of Munich, has developed an extensive database of more than two hundred Bavarian food specialties

in order to retrieve and disseminate information easily about their origin, meaning, preparation and culinary tradition. Moreover, based on Directive 510/2006/EU, formerly known as Directive 2081/92/EEC, numerous Bavarian specialties, including a variety of beers, cheeses, sausages, and pastries, are now protected by law (Sutor and Jack 2007).

Religion remains an important factor in the Free State as well. As one observer of Bavaria noted, the “region’s religion, like its beer, is simply a way of life. In Traunstein [the native home of Pope Benedict XVI], in fact, as in much of Bavaria, the local church is steps away from the town biergarten, and many parishioners visit both in succession on Sundays” (Perry 2005, 35). A closer examination of the distribution of church membership at the federal in comparison to state levels clearly substantiates religion’s important function in Bavaria. By the end of 2005, 25.4 million Germans belonged to the Evangelical Church (i.e., Lutheran), while 25.9 million were members of the Roman Catholic Church (Evangelische Kirche Deutschland 2007). This almost equal distribution at the national level vanishes at the state level, however. The Evangelical Church generally dominates the eastern part of Germany, but the western part, especially the states of Saarland and Bavaria, are home to most of Germany’s Catholics. According to statistics provided by the Evangelical Church of Germany and the Catholic German Bishop Conference, 21.3 percent and 57.2 percent of the Bavarian population are members of the Evangelical and Catholic Churches respectively.

Given the Catholic domination of Bavaria, the conservative CSU as the political powerhouse takes its cue from the pulpit. Numerous associations, directly or indirectly associated with the Catholic Church, also try to influence Bavaria’s current sociopolitical debate. Operating throughout Germany with branch headquarters in the Bavarian city of Nuremberg and other centers across Germany, the Association of Catholics in Business and Administration (ACBA) seeks to shape major international and domestic issues on the policy agenda. Recently, the Bavarian ACBA, in concert with the Central Committee of the German Catholics, has called upon the Secretary of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, to grant Christian refugees from Iraq asylum in Germany (Verband der Katholiken in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung 2008a). Domestic issues remain equally important to the Bavarian ACBA. Criticizing Ula Schmidth, the Secretary of Health, for her attack on “Catholic Welfare”

(*Caritas*), the ACBA urged policymakers and church-related organizations to promote adequate care for the elderly (Verband der Katholiken in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung 2008b).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Conservative political cultures might in fact preserve uniqueness and diversity in the global age, thus conserving or holding onto something, even behaving as almost the opposite of what is generally assumed about them today. It is equally true that some of the most ardent multiculturalists or diversity proponents favoring globalization at times are unwittingly endorsing homogenization and integration to the detriment of tradition and variety.

The traditional (classical) liberal or today's conservative warm embrace of unrestricted free trade and universal value systems might also actually contribute to the undermining of traditional systems of government and culture. Modern-day conservatives who hold power or influence also might demand within certain parameters the integration of minorities or outsiders into the leading or dominant society, while multiculturalists or diversity advocates might seek to stem the tide of this perceived leveling of identities within such political systems.

Intentionally or not, both conservatives and non-conservatives, however defined, seem to serve as countervailing forces, as a check on each other. Like examining two sides of the same coin or the shifting sands on a beach, it is perhaps more prudent to claim that an even higher level in the blurring of distinctions, motivations, and actions on this fluid political spectrum and nexus of human behavior is taking place. Of course, the grand paradox remains that what used to be mostly localized or sectional antagonisms within emerging nation-states among dominant and subordinate groups is now occurring simultaneously to an even greater degree at regional and transnational or global levels as well.

On this matter of tradition and change in the age of globalization, the findings offer new tantalizing perspectives specifically for Oklahoma, whose history is much younger than Bavaria's. In particular, Bavaria as such has proved quite capable of adopting innovations and new technologies on its own terms without necessarily diluting its own political identity and traditions in the globalization era. Since the turn of the last

century, Oklahoma has transitioned itself over the years to a more populist conservative identity. Oklahoma can perhaps draw valuable lessons from Bavaria's own unique blending of tradition and change and reconcile them in the form of "progressive conservatism."

Certainly not every law, custom or tradition pursued in Oklahoma or Bavaria today is directly attributable to a reaction to outside forces. Yet continuity and change might co-exist. For instance, consider the growth of gaming in Oklahoma. Only a few short years ago, the idea of a lottery and expanded gambling in such a conservative state would have been incomprehensible. Today, however, the state is becoming friendlier to such interests. This tendency proves that as such Oklahoma is not immune to external forces and can adapt to new trends and ideas. Of course, it is also important to recognize the federal government's impact in this regard with the passage of relevant legislation that helped pave the way for some changes, such as the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which in most cases has required the states to negotiate compacts with tribes for gaming purposes. The change in Indian Country has thus transformed the general public's view toward gaming in general.

Burning questions about the place of nation-states and even sub-national or regional political entities in an increasingly interconnected world actually represent nothing new, as evidenced by List and Marx more than a century and a half ago. The last great shift in world history began in 1492, when the West Europeans served as the unwitting catalyst that helped bind together long separated continents and civilizations. This truly global process has only accelerated and deepened with the advent of the Second Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions after the eighteenth century, touching both Bavaria and Oklahoma in myriad ways. This study's comparison of political culture between both states highlights the need for scholars from an interdisciplinary perspective to examine more closely the durability and persistence of particular identities despite powerful global forces.

It is quite "American" to resist outside changes and to let the states express their own individuality. For Bavarians, the longstanding ritual has been to preserve all things "Bavarian" and more recently to project this unique identity to the community of nations. In view of the recent ascent of Euroskepticism and other general trends challenging transnational or global identities, both cases reveal these fundamental truths: political culture does matter, and globalization is powerful, but

both have their limits. The pressing issue of political culture in the era of globalization demands further investigation.

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## **THE LAST TERM PROBLEM: SHIRKING, REPUTATIONS, AND SELF-POLICING**

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The last term problem is potentially particularly acute for term limited state legislatures, such as Oklahoma, as a large number of representatives are likely to be serving their last term at any given time. Empirical evidence regarding shirking in the last term is mixed. This article suggests that applying branding theory to the last term problem provides a theoretical basis to better understand whether and how the last term problem might actually be a problem. Evidence, from the first application of term limits to the Oklahoma legislature, suggests that representatives in their last term are more likely to miss votes than those earlier in their careers. But, effects are not universal. Further evidence demonstrates that legislators concerned about their brand (reputation), or at least those who parlay their reputation into a prestigious post-legislative appointment, do not shirk, but that those who have no such concerns often shirk quite substantially. It concludes by offering suggestions for the theoretical application of the last term problem to legislators leaving office.

**The American term limit movement** had its roots planted in Oklahoma in 1989. Predictions of all varieties regarding the consequences of term limits marked the debate as the movement grew throughout the 1990s. Pundits, proponents, opponents and political scientists, alike, projected into a future under term limits. Projections and analyses were necessarily limited by the lack of experience with term limits, especially within the American system. As a result, predictions were often highly speculative. The best prognostications came from political scientists who offered interpretations based on the application of existing theories to new circumstances. The areas where we had most confidence were where our theories were best. Among such theories that reflected confidence was one referred to as the “last term” problem.

According to the last term problem, legislators have reason to behave differently during their last terms because they are no longer beholden to constituents, party leaders, or others who might otherwise constrain their behaviors. As a result legislators might engage in a variety of nefarious behaviors generally classified as shirking, but that might include everything from not showing up for work to selling their votes. Of course, with term limits, there would be many more legislators each session who would be in their last term making the consequences of this problem more severe.

Not all views of the last term problem are negative. In fact, proponents of term limits, in some ways *sought* to have a persistent “last term problem.” That is, they wanted a legislature where members even when in their first term would act like they were in their last term—they wanted legislators who would not feel beholden to parties, interest groups, and even citizen pressure, but would, instead do the “right thing.” One reason so many proponents of term limits were virulent advocates for a six year limit is because that model reflects the kind of legislature sought—one where members are freed of the electoral and other bonds and would act in the best interests of their state or nation from the beginning of their service.

This article, using the case of Oklahoma, examines the theoretical basis of the last term problem and how it might apply to term limited legislatures. After briefly reviewing some of the initial expectations regarding the last term, it reviews research that examines the last term problem before offering a more carefully conceptualized version of the

model relying on branding theory. It follows that conceptualization by testing it in a setting where there are term limits and where the last term problem is most clearly found. Specifically, I look at whether term limited legislators in Oklahoma were systematically less likely to vote in their last year in office and whether there was a difference between those concerned with protecting their brand and those without that concern.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR TERM LIMITS AND THE LAST TERM PROBLEM**

Any review of the goals and expectation for term limited legislatures quickly reveals that expectations seemed to follow one's position on term limits rather than lead them. On the one hand, proponents view term limits as a way to achieve a "citizen legislature" or in the view of others, such as George Will (1992), a more republican form of government. (There is also no doubt that others were attracted to term limits as a way to achieve a more Republican government.) Opponents tend to see the movement as an attack on the role of legislatures in the American polity and fear the weakening of those bodies. They are concerned about loss of expertise, skill and experience, and fear power flowing into the executive, legislative staff, and interest groups (e.g., Carey 1996)

One clear case where theory guided interpretations of the consequences of term limits revolves around the last term problem. While not always expressed in formal terms, much discussion centered on the consequences of severing ties between the elected legislator and her or his constituents and, perhaps, from party leaders, interest groups, or others. Proponents consciously sought that break while opponents fretted about the consequences of it.

### **THE LAST TERM PROBLEM IN FORMAL TERMS**

The last term problem is embedded in principle-agent theories of legislative behavior. Legislators are seen as agents of any of a variety of potential principles, including constituents, parties, and interest groups. (See Maltzman 1998, for a review.) Legislators are seen as agents who are expected to serve the interests of those principles. They

represent constituents; serve the needs of their parties; and/or advocate for interest groups. But, legislators have their own set of goals: reelection or advancement, power, and prestige. Their interests may not correspond directly with those of their principles and they may try to act independently of those interests. The problem for the principles is to monitor the behavior of their agent-legislators to be sure that they meet the interests of the principles.

While monitoring is inherently challenging, the main set of tools available to monitors in this case is the ability to withhold rewards when evidence of shirking is uncovered. For constituents that means withholding votes; for party leaders they can withhold favored positions of power and committee assignments; and for interest groups they can withhold campaign contributions. Most consequences are most relevant to members who seek to make a long-term career in the legislature. Legislators, of course, work to insulate themselves from these consequences even when they plan to seek reelection (Parker 1992), but their efforts are always tempered by the knowledge that their principles can influence the achievement of their goals.

In the context of American legislative offices, principles seem to be relatively successful in overseeing their agents. Kalt and Zupan (1990), Lott (1987) and Bender and Lott (1996) explore the idea of politicians' brand or reputation as politicians' key commodity, especially as it serves a barrier to entry for potential electoral opponents. Legislators' positive reputations serve as an effective deterrent to potential electoral competition. The desire to protect their most precious commodity - - their brand - - serves, then, as an effective deterrent to shirking, according to this argument. In fact, this line of research leads Bender and Lott (1996) to conclude that "[t]he evidence is consistent with political markets efficiently sorting politicians [who shirk]" (p. 89)

But when members are serving in their last term, most of the effective checks on their behavior become irrelevant. Contributions and votes lose their value when legislators do not intend to seek reelection. Party leaders rarely punish a sitting member in the midst of a term even in the case of wayward behavior. As a result, during the last term legislators have the opportunity to act as essentially free agents.



## THE LAST TERM PROBLEM THROUGH THE EYES OF OPPONENTS

Opponents of the term limits see the breaking of the ties between principles and agents as a serious problem. Depending on the personal interests or ambitions of the various legislators, they may opt to vote and or advocate for legislation that is contrary to the interests of their constituents. They may act against the interests of the interest groups who have financed them; or, more seriously perhaps, they may become wholly owned subsidiaries of interest groups who may offer some promise of future benefits. Parties may no longer be able exert pressure on members meaning they can no longer rely on fellow partisans for key votes. In short, the agendas members focus upon and the votes they cast may change as they find themselves in their last term.

We may also find shirking in the form of simply not doing their job as one normally expects. Legislators may quit showing up for work. They may skip committee meetings, quit meeting with constituents, interest groups, and party leaders. They may quit voting. All of which are possible because there are no longer can suffer repercussions for their lack of dedication to service.

Some political scientists also have serious reservations about term limits because the last term problem produces more “free agents” who may change their voting behavior or engaged in other activities to the detriment of their principles (e.g., Glazer and Wattenberg 1996). In fact, a number of scholars produce predictions that members will change their voting behavior and/or participate less than they otherwise might. (López 2003 reviews this literature.) That expectation is reflected in the general hypothesis tested in this study: legislators in their last term of service will have lower rates of participation on roll call votes than do their colleagues.

## THE LAST TERMS PROBLEM THROUGH THE EYES OF PROPONENTS

What opponents of term limits see as a problem, proponents see as constructive. One of the problems with American legislatures, in their eyes, is that legislators are not sufficiently free to make independent judgments and to make common sense decisions that serve the interests

of citizens. Legislators, in their view, are too concerned with personal career goals and therefore, become dependent on both their constituents and on their party leaders to achieve their goals. But if those elected understand from the beginning that they cannot establish a career in the legislative institution, they are less concerned with those career goals and will be more inclined to act responsibly.

Many term limit advocates support a general theory of a more republican form of government. They want a legislature that is not beholden to any interests, but rather is composed of citizens who will reflect the values of their communities, state, and the nation and act independently to serve those interests. They seek a movement away from a legislature that reflects interest group pluralism and instead that promotes the values of their constituents in a common sense manner. Legislators are expected to do the “right thing” rather than the expedient thing. Expediency is defined as what constituents demand as short term benefits, what interests groups request in exchange for campaign support, and what party leader seek to enhance their goal of controlling the legislative body. The goal of supporters *is* to break the principle-agent bonds to promote legislative bodies composed of people who have as their goal the betterment of the state/nation.

Moreover, it is that view that led to the hardened position on the part of many term limits proponents in favor of a strict six year limit. That limit would serve to temper the ambitions of elected legislators by letting them know from the beginning that they cannot make a career in the legislature. The goal essentially was to set up the last term problem from the beginning; not just to have the last term problem in the last term. Of course, they did not see the problem as a “problem,” but rather as an opportunity to have free agents making sensible decisions.

#### SHIRKING AND THE LAST TERM PROBLEM IN THE LITERATURE

Just as the views of polemicists are mixed, so, too, is the evidence presented by scholars regarding shirking by Members of Congress during their last term (Herrick, Moore and Hibbing 1994; Carey 1994; Lott 1990; Zupan 1990; Lott and Reed 1989). Studies of state legislatures under term limits also provide inconsistent evidence on how term limits affect legislative behavior, especially shirking. Carey, et al. (2003) find

evidence of a “Burkean” shift where members are less likely to promote narrow constituent interests and are more state-oriented. Herrick and Thomas (2005) find evidence in their surveys that term limited members are more policy-oriented. But, Wright (2004) finds no evidence of policy shifts and concludes that “participation does not appear to be any less in TL states or among last term members within the TL states.” Clearly, work remains in terms of understanding the application of the last term problem.

### CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In this section, I develop theoretical arguments that will help clarify why the last term problem might not be uniform across states or across individuals. First, I look at how the length of the limited term might influence the consequences of the last term problem. I do so, in part, to explain why Oklahoma is an ideal test case for the theory. Second, I explore who, among the various legislators, should be most likely to manifest last term behavior. That discussion sets up the empirical analysis that will follow.

If advocates of the six year term limit are correct, then the length of the term matters. A legislator in the first year of her or his twelve year limited service is very likely to behave much like any other (non-term limited) legislator. But, a member in the early part of a six year term is likely to feel some of the last term phenomenon almost from the beginning. So, when that legislator actually reaches her or his last term, behavioral changes should be less obvious. But, one who reaches the end of a twelve year term might show more evidence of change. The split over six year limits as opposed to longer limits nearly tore the movement apart; the guess here is that the split was for good reason. Below, I will explain why that conclusion leads to Oklahoma as an ideal test for the shirking hypothesis.

Second, not all members should react the same way when reaching the end of the road. Herrick and Thomas (2005), for example, demonstrate higher levels of progressive ambition among term limited legislators. Presumably one’s behavior will be different if they intend to run for higher office as opposed to return to the hardware store.

Parker (2005) provides a theoretical basis for sorting through who is more or less likely to be affected by the last term problem. In his

work on ethical behavior by legislators, Parker provides the discipline's most careful application of branding theory to the behavior of politicians. He argues that members are concerned about the integrity of their name, i.e., their brand. Developing that point, Parker argues that what members have (in fact, their only commodity) is their reputation and that most of the time they work to protect that "brand."

Parker ties branding theory to the last term problem by arguing that those who seek prestigious post-career appointments are more likely to protect that brand by behaving ethically; they "self-police" - - even in their last term. Those with lesser ambitions no longer need to protect their brand and might shirk to achieve other personal goals. But, those seeking prestigious positions self-police and are less likely to shirk during their last term.

For term limited legislators in their last term, I hypothesize that state legislators who seek prestigious post-legislative career positions should also self-police and be more likely to behave in ways that are considered appropriate. Their actions should be more consistent with other legislators, that is, they should be faithful to principles and less likely to shirk. Since the focus on this work is participation, we would expect to see less drop-off in participation for those who self-police because they seek prestigious post-legislative career positions than for those not seeking prestigious positions.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research is designed to test whether the last term problem, i.e., shirking, is found in a term limited legislature. More specifically, it tests the hypothesis that term limited legislators in their last term who have reason to care about their brand because they seek prestigious post-legislative career appointment are less likely to shirk than those who have no reason to protect their brand. The indicator I will use as evidence of shirking is missing floor votes. If I find that both groups of term limited legislators, i.e., both those concerned about their brand and those not, shirk then we have evidence of a general last term problem. If I find no shirking, then the findings would raise serious questions about the last term problem as a general theoretical proposition. If my hypothesis is supported, it would suggest that the last term problem is not general, but rather confined to those who lack ambition for higher

positions. I use the first imposition of term limits in Oklahoma as the setting for my research.

Most analyses of term limits think of them as some form of a natural experimental design. For those interested in the last term problem, the distinction is important because other designs that look at the last term problem using those who voluntarily retire from non-term limited legislatures may have some selection bias. While that thought has some merit, it tends to gloss over some key elements. First, other types of selection bias in using term limited legislators might be found, such as who seeks office to begin with or the exercise of progressive ambition. Additionally, some designs fail to consider the differences that the length of the term makes. Oklahoma's implementation of term limits provides some advantages in addressing both of those issues.

While Oklahoma was the first state to enact term limits, it was last to have them take effect. The limits in Oklahoma are for twelve years and the first group to be affected was removed 14 years after the voters imposed the limits. Moreover, those already in the legislature were "grandfathered," i.e., their previous service did not count. When legislators were finally forced from office in 2004, most of those affected looked very much like career legislators. Therefore, we have a cleaner test of the consequences of the last term effect (as opposed to term limits more generally). It also largely avoids selection bias based on who might seek office in a term limited state.

Focusing on a single state with a large number of term limited legislators also allows us to try to take into account Parker's theoretical point regarding branding by being able to look in detail at individuals and their post-legislative ambitions. But because 2004 was the first application of limits there was a fairly large number of members removed from office—28 in the state house.

Another condition that makes Oklahoma a better test than most for the issues raised by the last term problem is the combination of the long (12 year) limit and the fact that because legislators were grandfathered, most had served longer than twelve years. In fact, only five of the 28 house members turned out of office had only served 12 years; eight had served at least 20 years. As a result, most legislators did not really look like "citizen" legislators but rather like professional politicians. Of all the term limited legislators, this group should be the group most likely to change behavior as they moved into their last term. Of course, that conclusion means we need to be careful about

generalizing to term limited legislatures from this analysis, but it provides a clear test of the last term problem.

The basic research design compares the participation rates on roll votes for members who were in their last term to those who were not being forced from office. The large number of votes cast and the relatively unsophisticated records of the legislature make analysis of all votes very challenging. As a result this article looks both at the first 100 votes cast in the session and the last 100 votes. The basic statistical analysis takes the form of conducting a difference of means test on the number of votes missed by term limited legislators as opposed to those not limited.

To test whether the branding theory for legislators proposed here has explanatory power I follow Parker and consider what members did after their term ended. There are two fundamental problems with that effort: one theoretical and one practical.

The practical problem is the challenge of identifying what individuals have done after they left the legislature. To determine what members did, I utilized personal expertise, talked to other knowledgeable observers, and conducted Google and newspaper searches for retired members. My goal was to classify their post-legislative career as prestigious or not prestigious. Still, in a small number of cases, I was unable to determine anything conclusive about the member's post-legislative career. In those cases, I operated on the assumption that if knowledgeable observers knew nothing of them and if I could not find anything during computer searches, then those individuals were not holding prestigious positions and considered them retired.<sup>1</sup> (In many cases, they were also among the oldest members forced from office, supporting the conclusion that they probably have retired from public life.)

The theoretical problem is that the concept of "prestigious position" is, of course, fuzzy. To help me make judgments, I considered the theoretical origins of the concept. The question I used to make that judgment is whether one's reputation likely influenced whether one would gain that position. Both a second expert and I coded all the positions as prestigious or not (without regard to missed votes, of course). I focused only on proximity positions after leaving the legislature rather than following long term careers. The question used was not whether being a former state legislator would help, but whether being a former state legislator with a positive reputation would make a difference in whether or not that person received her or his new position. The other expert and I agreed on the classification of all but

one case and were able to resolve that difference with some discussion. A few notes might help. First, I coded anyone running for office as seeking a position with prestige. I also coded as prestigious all members who had a spouse seek election to the retiring member's seat. Those who became lobbyist were treated differently depending on for whom they lobby. The University of Oklahoma lobbyist was treated as a prestige position. As was one other person who represents a number of major organizations in the state. Part-time lobbyists were not treated as holding a prestigious position. One easy case is a former representative who returned to law practice, but who turned up on eBay while doing my Google search. He was trying to sell a rock that is "naturally shaped like the Virgin Mary." He is classified as not being concerned about his reputation.<sup>2</sup>

### ANALYSIS

Like most legislatures, participation rates are high. The mean number of votes missed by legislators for the first 100 votes is 3.1; for the final 100 votes, the mean is 2.8. I first look at whether members being term limited out of office behaved differently from those not term being removed from office. Table 1, examining the first 100 votes of the session, shows a weak

**TABLE 1**

**Votes Missed, of First 100, by Term Limited**

	Mean*	SD
Not Term Limited (n = 72)	2.4	7.5
Term Limited (n = 28)	5.0	8.6

\*Difference significant at the .10 level

relationship. The mean number of votes missed by those not being removed from office is 2.4; for those being term limited, the mean is 5.0. The difference is significant at the .10 level. The standard deviations for the two groups are similar, but slightly smaller for those continuing in office.

Table 2 draws the same comparison for the last 100 votes cast in the legislative session. Here the differences are quite pronounced. The mean number of missed votes for those not term limited is only 1.7. (This analysis removes a legislator who late in the session was arrested and missed over 50 of the final votes while unable to get to the floor to cast them.) For term limited legislators the mean number of missed votes increased to 5.5. The

TABLE 2

**Votes Missed, of Final 100, by Term Limited**

	<u>Mean***</u>	<u>SD</u>
Not Term Limited (n = 71)	1.7	3.1
Term Limited ( n = 28)	5.5	8.4

\*\*\*Difference significant at the .01 level

difference is significant at the .01 level. The large standard deviation for term limited legislators suggests that they behaved in quite divergent manners, but regardless, the last term problem appears to be supported: term limited legislators were more likely to shirk by not casting votes than were non-term limited legislators.

A small number of legislators voluntarily retired at the end of the

TABLE 3

**Votes Missed, of Final 100, by Seeking Reelection**

	<u>Mean**</u>	<u>SD</u>
Seeking Reelection (n = 65)	1.8	3.2
Not Seeking Reelection ( n = 34)	4.6	7.9

\*\*Difference significant at the .05 level

session. Since filing for reelection follows the end of the session by about six weeks, it is reasonable to assume that they had already decided not to seek reelection. Table 3 compares those in their last term (regardless of



reason—but still excluding the arrested lawmaker who did not seek reelection) with those who did seek reelection. That table shows the same basic pattern, though slightly less pronounced than when considering only term limited members.

Having concluded that term limited legislators were more likely to shirk, we turn attention to whether that pattern is consistent across those being removed from office. Both the large standard deviations for those members and the reputational theory proposed above suggest that we should find differences among the term limited members.

Based on the classification described above, Table 4 provides overwhelming support for the hypothesis that desire for a prestigious position leads one to protect her or his reputation and to not shirk, at

**TABLE 4**  
**Term Limited Members Votes Missed, of Final 100,**  
**by Prestige of Future Position**

	Mean***	SD
Not Prestigious (n = 15)	9.4	10.0
Prestigious (n = 13)	1.0	1.6

\*\*\*Difference significant at the .005 level

least not in regard to not voting. The mean number of missed votes for those who did not end up with a prestigious position is 9.4 with a standard deviation of 10. Those who did end up in a prestigious position missed an average of 1 vote, with a standard deviation of 1.6. The difference is significant beyond the .005 level. One member missed 29 of the 100 votes and three members missed about one-fourth of the votes. All of those who missed at least ten percent of the votes were members who seemed to have little reason to be concerned about their reputation. Of course, not all such legislators shirked. Four missed no votes and a number missed only a handful. But, to be sure, those who had no obvious reason to be concerned about their reputation were much more likely to miss votes.

A second test of the reputational hypothesis uses data from a sample of 97 votes (which is one of four roll calls) cast in May, the last month of

the session. These votes were collected by Patterson (2005) and prove to be similar to the final 100 votes cast. In fact, among term limited legislators, the number of missed votes from the two sources have a Pearson correlation of .76. Still, the collection of votes across May allows us to look beyond just the final days to a more inclusive sample, in terms of the time frame. The pattern in Table 5 is quite similar to that in Table 4 with means of 11.1 missed votes for the group who did not

**TABLE 5**

**Term Limited Members Percent Votes Missed  
by Prestige of Future Position, May Sample**

	<u>Mean**</u>	<u>SD</u>
Not Prestigious (n = 14)	11.1	12.7
Prestigious (n = 13)	3.1	3.9

\*\*Difference significant at the .05 level

have reputational concerns and 3.1 for those with reason to be concerned about their reputation. The difference is significant at the .05 level.

## CONCLUSION

The evidence presented here supports the conclusion that, at least under some circumstances, a last term effect can be found in term limited legislatures. This research was designed to provide a clear test of the hypothesis regarding last term effects derived from principle agent theory. The measurement of shirking used is the most public of expressions: not voting. It was tested in Oklahoma where members in the last term were likely to look like career legislators in that they had all served at least twelve years and most had served more. Additionally, I explored the hypothesis that not all legislators will respond to the potential freedom from constraint that the last term provides.

In Oklahoma we found that as the legislative session wound down the average term limited legislator missed about three times the number of votes

as a legislator not being term limited. The overall number of missed votes was not extensive, but still clearly outside of the norm for the body. We also found that term limited legislators varied quite substantially in how they responded to the termination of their legislative careers. Many such members behaved normally when it came to casting a vote. But, there were also a number who missed about one-fourth of the final 100 votes cast.

Branding theory was used to help differentiate between shirkers and non-shirkers. Those members who had an obvious reason to be concerned about protecting their reputations as they were about to move into prestigious post-legislative careers were much more likely to continue high rates of voting participation.

But, those who did not have such a motivation were much more likely to shirk. In fact, compared to legislators motivated to protect their reputations, those shirkers missed about nine times as many votes. Having concluded that reputational concerns are important, it is also the case that many individuals whose reputational concerns are nonexistent or not obvious also continued to participate at high rates.

## IMPLICATIONS

The direct implications of this analysis are more theoretical than practical, but there are elements of both. In light of the fact that empirical work on the last term problem is not consistent in their conclusions, it is useful to clearly demonstrate a last term influence on behavior, and to build a theoretical basis for determining when it exists. This work is an especially important counter to Wright's (2003) work that reaches the strong conclusion that at the macro level there is no such effect on participation. To the contrary, the analysis presented here provides clear evidence of the last term effect, but points to the need to clarify when it influences legislative behavior.

The most significant finding is that we can overlay branding theory with the last term problem and get a better understanding of when we expect legislators to shirk. But it also demonstrates some of the challenges in doing so. If we conclude that the most valued possession of a legislator is a good reputation (brand) that they want to preserve, the question is how to apply that theory to specific situations. The problems are both practical and theoretical. At the practical end, the question of identifying who is interested in preserving her or his brand is

problematic. Parker suggests we should look at their post-legislative career, which is the recommendation followed here. But, doing that requires a pretty intensive awareness of the circumstances of that career and, necessarily, slippery judgments. It is certainly not a task that Wright could have hoped to undertake while looking across a multi-state sample.

Theoretically it raises the question of when a legislator will want to preserve her or his brand. Are there motivations other than a career in public life that might be adequate to keep legislators dedicated to their service? Is reputation among family, friends and supporters enough? Is a sense of self-worth enough to leave legislators wanting to preserve their brand? My impression for some Oklahoma legislators is that some non-shirkers who might have been predicted to shirk by my model were concerned about their reputation, but not necessarily because they have further political ambitions.

Moreover, the cost of voting is generally pretty low so reputational concerns probably do not need to be very significant to keep members from shirking. One might think “in ten years I might run for Congress” or “if my party captures the governorship, maybe I will want a cabinet appointment.” That vague potential payoff might be enough to keep some potential shirkers dedicated.

Further, while this research took a straight-forward definition of shirking (not voting) there are many other components that are also important, but harder to gauge. Perhaps some legislators who look like they are not shirking in my analysis are engaging in a different form of shirking. They could be voting because they have abandoned their constituents and are serving as the agent of some interest group who promises the future of gainful employment. Participation would be high but the shirking would be quite serious. Even ideologically-based voting analyses might not turn up that form of shirking.

On the practical side of what these findings mean for term limits, the implications are less obvious. Clearly they suggest that shirking does take place, but I am hesitant to conclude how broadly we find that phenomenon. First, as just indicated, this analysis might be missing other forms of shirking so the problem could be even more widespread than suggested here.

Second, Oklahoma is a strong case for this analysis because it seems that the likelihood of shirking would be great. Those who were in this analysis looked very much like career politicians; would those in

states with short terms behave the same? On the one hand, if the goal of electing “citizen legislators” is achieved, then the problem might play out quite differently. Proponents would argue legislators would be motivated towards service and not react to reaching their final term because they know they are on a short leash from the beginning. On the other hand, opponents might argue that the last term problem exists from day one and that shirking would be present in the first term as well as the last...and everything in between. Of course, those are different sides of the same coin. If, though, Herrick et al. (2005) are correct then we have more progressive ambition in term limited states so we might expect not to see high levels of shirking.

Regardless, this work does fit with a body of work that suggests that post-legislative career incentives might help prevent shirking (Carey 1994). Lott (1990) found evidence of shirking in Congress but that it could be limited if Members of Congress (or their family) sought to continue in governmental office or lobbying. But, he tends to attribute this to the control that other institutions, such as party, might have on the opportunity structure for retiring members. Still, his findings are consistent with mine and suggest that concern for future opportunities might constrain shirking.

Hard work remains. For both theoretical and practical reasons, it will be valuable to further clarify both theories about the last term and branding and to understand their empirical applications. We need to clarify and develop research strategies to detect different forms of shirking. One of the implications of this work is that we need more intensive work on small numbers of people to understand both who is concerned about her or his reputation, and why, and to explore alternative ways that shirking might present itself. This work suggests that such efforts should be fruitful.

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## **GUIDING THE VOTE: THE *DAILY OKLAHOMAN* AND VOTING ON MORAL ISSUES**

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This note replicates and combines two threads of research to better understand the influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* on voting outcomes of state questions involving moral issues. Multiple regression models are developed with the vote on four ballot proposals as the dependent variable, with the county-level circulation rate of the *Daily Oklahoman*, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, and 2002 county vote for Governor Henry as independent variables. The analysis reveals that the *Daily Oklahoman* circulation rate was marginally related to the voting outcomes on the state questions, while several of the other independent variables showed stronger relationships.

**This research note replicates a study** conducted in the early 1990s examining the influence of *Daily Oklahoman*<sup>1</sup> on referenda constraining the activity of Oklahoma's legislature. Gathering election and demographic data on Oklahoma's 77 counties, Rausch (1994) found

evidence to support the proposition that the *Daily Oklahoman* has some influence on voting on referenda affecting the legislature. Influence was measured using newspaper circulation rates. This note revisits that research and expands it to examine the influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* on votes on moral issues.

Since 2002, Oklahomans have decided several ballot questions dealing with moral issues. This note examines four of those votes. Surprisingly, all four were successfully enacted by the voters. This is surprising because one of the votes enacted a state lottery, a proposal that failed at the ballot box in 1994.

This paper examines voting patterns on four state questions involving moral issues: (1) State Question 687, which banned cockfighting in the state; (2) State Question 705, which created a state lottery; (3) State Question 711, defining marriage as being between one man and one woman; and (4) State Question 712, expanding gambling by allowing race tracks compete with Indian casinos while also dedicating a percentage of the proceeds to fund state government. State Question 705 was approved in 2002. The other three questions appeared on the November 2004 ballot.

Satterthwaite (2005a; 2005b) finds evidence that religion and religious affiliation plays a role in the voting outcomes of moral issues. This paper adds the additional variable of *Daily Oklahoman* influence to more fully specify Satterthwaite's models. Using data collected from a variety of sources, the present research combines the findings in Rausch (1994) with the findings presented by Satterthwaite (2005a; 2005b) to explain the role of the *Daily Oklahoman* in voting on referenda dealing with moral issues.

## **DIRECT DEMOCRACY IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN OKLAHOMA**

Since the history of direct democracy in the United States and in Oklahoma has been examined elsewhere (Cronin 1989, Chapter 3; Magleby 1984, Chapter 2; Meyer 1979), only a brief discussion is needed here. Oklahoma was admitted to statehood during the Progressive era; thus it is not surprising that the Oklahoma constitution would include the Progressive version of direct democracy (Goble 1980; Morgan, et al. 1991).

The referendum and initiative are outlined in Article V of the Oklahoma Constitution. An initiative requires that eight percent of the voters petition to have any legislative matter or constitutional amendment placed on the ballot. The referendum device stipulates that “5 percent of the voters or an absolute majority of the legislature may require that a bill passed by the legislature be submitted to the voters for approval” (Morgan, et al. 1991, 74). In Oklahoma, state questions are worded in a manner that the “yes” vote changes the status quo.

The role of media and money in voting on ballot issues has been demonstrated (Cronin 1989, Chapter 5; Donovan and Snipp 1994; Paul and Brown 2001; Stratman 2006; Zisk 1987). Effective use of the media is an important factor in the success or failure of an initiative campaign. Cronin (1989, 116-117) contends that effective use of the media may even be more important than a campaign’s application of campaign financing.

With the exception of Howard (1979) and Rausch (1994), little has been written about the *Daily Oklahoman*’s influence on politics in Oklahoma. King and Catlett-King (2007) argue that the print media, including the *Daily Oklahoman* may have been a determining factor in the successful 2001 right-to-work referendum. Editorial page editor Patrick McGuigan remarked that “We’re [the *Oklahoman*] trying to change the political culture; we’re trying to make Oklahoma a conservative bastion.” He continued on to discuss a number of other moral issues that the *Oklahoman* editorial page would confront. He wanted the page to “help people understand what’s important in life is pro-free enterprise, anti-regulation,” supporting a strong military defense and favoring conservative social values. The editorials would show that the paper is “not buying into the gay rights agenda” by not using “the word ‘gay’; we use ‘homosexual’ and ‘lesbian.’” (Risser 1998). It is important to note that McGuigan left the paper in 2003.

The Oklahoma City newspaper has an analogue in New Hampshire: the *Manchester Union Leader*. New Hampshire’s leading circulation newspaper has been described as having “screaming headlines, signed editorials on the front page, biased choice of lead stories, and tendentious writing.”<sup>2</sup> The paper’s influence on New Hampshire politics has been recognized (Veblen 1974) and often it is privately derided for that influence (Moore 1987, 105). In the past, the *Daily Oklahoman* was similarly derided for its influential political views, but it is unclear if it has the same level of influence today.

The *Daily Oklahoman* editorialized in support of all four of the state questions under examination in this paper. This support was a dramatic change from the paper's position in 1994. In an editorial published a few days before the election in May 1994, the paper opined, "Voters statewide should reject the ill-conceived state lottery."<sup>3</sup> Ten years later, the same paper argued, "The time has come from an education lottery in Oklahoma."<sup>4</sup>

### STATE QUESTIONS ON MORAL ISSUES

Before proceeding, a brief description of each state question is in order. State Question 687 was approved by voters on November 5, 2002. The initiative enacted a statute banning cockfighting in the state. State Question 687 had the support of 56.2 percent of Oklahomans who voted.

Oklahoma voters approved a state lottery when they voted in support of State Question 705. As a candidate for governor in 2002, Democrat Brad Henry made a state lottery a major focus of his campaign. After his election, Henry worked to have his promise enacted into law. He was not able to find legislative support to approve a lottery, but he was successful in getting the legislature to send the lottery to the voters for their decision. As they did in 1994, churches in the state, especially the Oklahoma Baptist General Convention, worked to defeat the proposal. Lottery opponents were handily outspent by lottery supporters (Satterthwaite 2005b, 7-8). The state question appeared on the ballot over a year after it was approved by the legislature (Satterthwaite 2005b, 5-6). About 65 percent of the voters supported the lottery.

By approving State Question 711, Oklahoma voters added an amendment to the state's constitution defining marriage as being between one man and one woman. Oklahoma voters joined the voters in 11 other states banning same-sex marriages (Rausch 2006). Churches actively supported this proposal. When compared with the other measures on the ballot, very little money was spent by either side of the amendment (Satterthwaite 2005b, 9). Over 75 percent of the voters supported the amendment, an outcome similar to the other states considering marriage amendments.

State Question 712 was a somewhat complicated measure. In an effort to increase revenue at horse racetracks, the horse racing industry called on the legislature to authorize the presence of gaming machines at racetracks. Working with the Native American tribes, the racetrack owners and managers were able to get the legislature to place State Question 712 on the November 2004 ballot. Churches worked hard to defeat this measure, while supporters drew a lot of money from out-of-state gaming interests (Satterthwaite 2005b, 8-9). The measure was successful garnering almost 60 percent of the vote (Satterthwaite 2005b, 6).

## METHODS

Data to test the hypotheses that the way Oklahomans vote on state questions involving moral issues is influenced by the editorial position of the *Daily Oklahoman* were collected from a variety of sources. This study employs aggregate data collected at the county level. While individual-level data collected by a survey would be preferable to county-level data, the level of aggregation I have chosen is more practical. The reliability of the data is much greater than a survey because respondents would have to recall four votes, one of which was cast in 2002 and the others that were part of a package of nine state questions on the ballot. Much error in recall would be realized with a survey design. A strategy involving surveys before, during, and after each initiative campaign also would have yielded more specific information regarding the political influence of the *Daily Oklahoman*, but would have been costly and complex to manage.

## MEASURES

### VOTE ON MORAL ISSUES

The dependent variable, vote on state questions involving moral issues, is measured by the percentage of voters in each of Oklahoma's 77 counties who cast a ballot in favor of the four questions. There is substantial variation among the voting by county on each of the questions. The highest percentage of votes for SQ 687 was 72.40 percent with only 19.39 percent of the voters in one county supporting the measure (mean county vote=43.86 percent). The lottery (SQ 705) gained the

support of every county with the highest county vote at 73.49 percent and the lowest support at 51.63 percent (mean county vote=62.75 percent). Every county supported marriage definition (SQ 711) with the highest percentage of “yes” votes at 87.62 percent. The lowest county vote was 68.78 percent (mean county vote=80.06). The maximum county vote for State Question 712 was 63.84 percent with the lowest county vote at 44.27 percent (mean county vote=57.56 percent).

Factor analysis reveals that the questions share some commonality. There is one factor explaining 60.59 percent of the variance; thus, there is some underlying structure tying the votes together. Despite this commonality, each question is examined individually, a necessary strategy since the votes occurred over two different election cycles.

### ***DAILY OKLAHOMAN* READERSHIP**

While the optimal method for measuring the readership of the *Daily Oklahoman* would be to conduct a survey of Oklahomans, this study utilizes a more economical method. Readership is measured by the total daily circulation of the paper in each of Oklahoma’s 77 counties. The data are presented as a percentage of total households who subscribe to the paper. The figures come from an analysis of circulations conducted in 2003 and obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulations in Illinois. Since commercial enterprises use this data in planning advertising strategies, it can be assumed that many of the households subscribing to the *Daily Oklahoman* actually read it. Since it is a statewide paper, the *Daily Oklahoman* circulates through almost all of the counties with the highest circulation in the western and southern halves of the state and the lowest circulation in the counties around Tulsa in the northeast (mean=13.21 percent ; standard deviation=8.74; range=35.27).

At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the *Daily Oklahoman* had a weekday circulation of about 205,000 and reached 41.8 percent of the homes in Oklahoma City (Selcraig 1999). According to data appearing the *Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media*, the *Oklahoman* circulation dropped to about 191,000 by 2008.

## RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Data were collected on the proportions of county residents affiliated with different religions. Although religion has been involved in American political life for a long time, social scientists have only seriously researched the role of religion in politics for about the past quarter century (Jelen 1998; Satterthwaite 2005a, 2005b; Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005). Jelen (1998) reviews much of the literature that specifically examines the role of religion in political behavior. For example, the Catholic Church has worked in coalition with other groups to enact restrictions on abortion at the state level (Day 1992; O'Hara 1992). Religious conservatives became actively involved in the Republican Party in the late 1970s and early 1980s to advocate their positions on a number of social issues (Guth 1983; Oldfield 1996). It was during the period when religious conservatives began to more actively and more successfully participate in politics that social science experienced a growth in interest in the role of religion in American politics. Recent research has found that religious affiliation played a role in the results of the marriage definition amendment votes (Cadge, Olson, and Harrison 2005; Campbell and Monson 2005; Satterthwaite 2005b; Smith, DeSantis, and Kassel 2005). Religious groups were well-organized in Oklahoma to offer support and opposition to the state questions under examination.

The present research incorporates three variables for religious affiliation: evangelical Protestants; mainline Protestants; and Catholics. Using data from the Glenmary Research Center (Jones 2002), the proportion of county residents who are *Evangelical Protestants* was calculated using the "List of Religious Bodies" found at the American Religion Data Archive website.<sup>5</sup> The percentages ranged from a high of 97.9 to a low of 20.3 percent. The mean was 50.39 percent with a standard deviation of 14.31.

It is expected that counties with greater percentages of evangelical Protestants will exhibit greater support for the marriage definition amendment and greater opposition to the lottery question and the gaming machine question (see Satterthwaite 2005b). It is not clear how conservative religionists would fall on the question involving cockfighting. Concentrations of evangelical Protestants can be found in rural counties where opposition to the cockfighting prohibition may be strongest as well as in suburban counties where residents are the strongest supporters of any law to ban cockfighting.

A similar procedure was used to calculate the percentage of *Mainline Protestants*. The range among all counties was from 1.6 to 56.9 percent with a mean of 14.01 and a standard deviation of 9.23. Because mainline Protestants tend to be more liberal on social issues (see Fowler, Hertzke, Olson, and Den Dulk 2004, 93), mainline Protestant counties are expected to exhibit lower support for the marriage definition amendment. In fact, the United Church of Christ voted in July 2005 to affirm equal marriage rights for couples regardless of gender.<sup>6</sup> Satterthwaite (2005b) finds that mainline Protestant population is positively associated with vote on marriage definition, at least in Oklahoma. It is not clear how mainline Protestants feel about gambling and the lottery, although some mainline Protestant pastors publicly opposed the state questions expanding gambling opportunities.

The percentage of *Catholics* in each county was determined using the Glenmary data. Only the category labeled "Catholic" was included in this classification. The percentage of Catholics ranged from zero to 27.9 percent. The mean was 3.60 percent with a standard deviation of 4.34. Counties with greater populations of Catholics are expected to show more support for marriage definition. Catholics could be more supportive of the state questions establishing the lottery and expanding gambling.

#### CONTROL VARIABLES

Indicators of socioeconomic status (SES), demographic variables, and a measure of support for Democratic Governor Brad Henry are included as control variables. SES is measured by the percentage of each county's population with a high school diploma, each county's median age, and the median household income in each county. The percentage of each county's population who are African-American also is included in the analysis. To control for the rural/urban split, a measure of the percent of county that lives in a rural area is included. This variable is expected to be significant when examining the vote on the cockfighting ban.<sup>7</sup> The percentage of the 2002 county vote for Governor Brad Henry is included to control for party and the fact that his campaign focused on the lottery.



## ANALYSIS

The present study expands the findings presented by Rausch (1994) and Satterthwaite (2005a; 2005b) to better understand any influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* on the voting outcomes of state questions dealing with moral issues. For each of the four state questions, a multiple regression was run with *Daily Oklahoman* circulation, percent rural, percent evangelical Protestant, percent mainline Protestant, percent Catholic, percent high school graduate, median age, median household income, African-American percent, and percent of county vote for Henry in 2002. Standardized regression coefficients (Betas) appear in Table 1. The level of prediction ( $R^2$ ) for the state questions is moderate ranging from .368 to .746.

*Daily Oklahoman* circulation does not seem to have a significant relationship with the voting outcomes of these four state questions. The circulation rate is a significant predictor in the model for State Question 705 on creating a state lottery and State Question 712, expanding gambling into horse racetracks and Indian casinos.

The *Daily Oklahoman* circulation variable appears as a marginally significant predictor (Beta=.224,  $p=.048$ ) of the county vote for State Question 705, creating a state lottery. The strongest predictor of the vote is the 2002 county vote for Governor Henry (Beta=.444,  $p=.005$ ). County vote for SQ 705 also was negatively related to the percent of rural residents in a county (Beta=-.425,  $p=.006$ ). Also negatively related was the percent of county residents affiliated with an evangelical Protestant denomination (Beta=-.281,  $p=.033$ ). This final relationship supports the findings presented in Satterthwaite (2005a; 2005b). The model appears underspecified with an adjusted  $R^2$  of only .272 ( $p=.000$ ). There are additional variables at work here that need to be uncovered. It is possible that local political considerations played a role in causing some interactions among the variables in the model.

In counties where the circulation is high, the vote on SQ 712 also was higher than in other counties. The stronger predictor of the vote on SQ 712 is the county vote for Democratic Governor Brad Henry in 2002 (Beta=.617,  $p=.000$ ), an interesting finding considering the negative relationship between county vote and the percent of rural residents in a county. Median household income also plays a significant role in the vote on SQ 712 (Beta=.376,  $p=.019$ ). Counties with residents having

**TABLE 1**  
**OLS Regression of County for State Questions on *Daily Oklahoman* Circulation,  
 Religious Affiliation Variables, and Control Variables.**

	SQ 687		SQ 705		SQ 711		SQ 712	
	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p
<i>Daily Oklahoman</i> Circulation	-.037	.605	.224	.048	.064	.446	.234	.037
Percent Rural	-.541	.000	-.425	.006	.278	.016	-.381	.013
Percent Evangelical	.010	.899	-.281	.033	.405	.000	-.231	.076
Percent Mainline	.113	.187	.218	.107	-.010	.917	.088	.509
Percent Catholic	-.254	.003	-.093	.475	.283	.005	-.170	.192
Percent High School Graduate	-.109	.189	-.053	.686	.243	.015	-.013	.921
Median Age	.005	.960	.103	.487	.103	.354	.130	.378
Median Household Income	.161	.112	.190	.232	-.054	.649	.376	.019
County Vote for Henry	-.460	.000	.444	.005	-.217	.065	.617	.000
African-American Percent	.026	.723	.045	.694	-.098	.259	-.119	.298
	R <sup>2</sup> =.746 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =.707 p=.000		R <sup>2</sup> =.368 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =.272 p=.000		R <sup>2</sup> =.645 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =.592 p=.000		R <sup>2</sup> =.376 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =.281 p=.000	

greater household incomes were more supportive of the proposal to expand gambling into racetracks and Indian casinos. None of the religious affiliation variables were significant in this model.

The vote on State Question 687 to ban cockfighting was a rural versus urban issue. The negative direction of the rural variable in the model indicates that as the percent of a county's population living in a rural area increases, the vote for the ban decreases (Beta=-.541, p=.000). It is interesting to note that a negative relationship also exists between the vote on the state question and the vote for Henry in 2002. Apparently counties with a high level of support for Henry had a much lower level of support for the cockfighting ban. A check of the correlation between the vote on State Question 687 and the vote for Henry reveals a moderate Pearson's  $r$  of .227, significant at the .05 level. The robust adjusted  $R^2$  of .707 allows for confidence that the model is properly specified.

Examining the model for State Question 711, putting a definition of marriage into the Oklahoma Constitution, we see that evangelical Protestant affiliation plays an important role in explaining the county vote (Beta=.405, p=.000). Catholic affiliation also is significant with a Beta of .283 (p=.005). Counties with greater percentages of high school graduates also supported the amendment (Beta=.243, p=.015). It is possible that the strong level of approval of marriage definition hides the diversity in voting.

## DISCUSSION

The present research seeks to identify the factors behind the voting outcomes on Oklahoma state questions dealing with moral issues. Specifically, the research examines the possible influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* in those voting outcomes. While the evidence is far from definitive, it is difficult to assert that the *Daily Oklahoman* played a significant role in influencing voting outcomes on moral issues.

It is possible that the paper is no longer the solid conservative drumbeat it once was. This theory could be tested by a content analysis of editorials from several decades in the paper's history. Has the paper become more "liberal" or "progressive" in its editorial positions? If the paper's message has become less reliable it is possible that the influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* could be mitigated or mediated by other factors such as religious affiliation and support for Governor Henry. Any ideological change in *Daily*

*Oklahoman* could have been the result of the departure of Patrick McGuigan from the paper's staff. Additional research is necessary to tease the influence of the *Daily Oklahoman* from the influence of these other factors.

Finally, the present research did not consider other sources of political information such as political commercials and the editorials published by more local newspapers. Satterthwaite (2005b) identifies some of these potential sources of information. Voter guides prepared by interest groups affiliated with evangelical Protestant denominations reviewed the marriage definition amendment as well as the gambling and lottery questions. He also notes "the campaigns for and against [gambling and the lottery] brought in millions of dollars of advertising" (Satterthwaite 2005b, 9). This money paid for some sophisticated television and print advertising as well as a number of engaging advertising sites on the Internet.

It is clear that the *Daily Oklahoman* exhibits less influence on voting outcomes on moral issues in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century than it did on state questions constraining the legislature in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. More research at the individual-level is necessary to determine the degree to which Oklahomans continue to rely on the paper's editorial positions to assist in voting decisions.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The *Daily Oklahoman* changed its name in October 2003, dropping the *Daily*. The paper is now known just as *The Oklahoman*. The present research uses *Daily Oklahoman* throughout, largely because it is more convenient for the author.

<sup>2</sup>The Oklahoma newspaper has been described similarly. Carter (1984) records that Edward K. Gaylord, the early publisher of the *Daily Oklahoman*, "believed in making his opinions clearly known in editorials on the front page of the [paper]."

<sup>3</sup>"Lottery No, Lucas Yes," *Daily Oklahoman*, 8 May 1994, p. 219.

<sup>4</sup>"Our Choices On the Nine State Questions," *The Oklahoman*, 31 October 2004, p. 27A.

<sup>5</sup>[http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/RCMS\\_Notes.asp](http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/RCMS_Notes.asp). According to the American Religion Data Archive, their classification scheme was derived from Steensland, et al. (2000). When denominations were not included in the

Steensland, et al., classification, the religious bodies were classified based on Melton (1999) and Mead and Hill (1995).

<sup>6</sup>Shaila Dewan, "United Church of Christ Backs Same-Sex Marriage," *New York Times*, 4 July 2005, p. 10A.

<sup>7</sup>Chris Casteel, "Cockfighting Vote Highlights Urban/Rural Gap," *Daily Oklahoman*, 30 October 2002, p1.

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**IS THE FOX GUARDING THE HEN HOUSE?:  
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT PERVADE THE ONE  
HUNDRED-YEAR HISTORY OF THE OKLAHOMA  
INSURANCE COMMISSION**

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Although the Oklahoma Insurance Department Commissioner Kim Holland has recently created two new reforms to deal with misconduct in the wake of former Commissioner Carroll Fisher's conviction, these reforms still fall short. These two policy changes focus on "things of values" and moonlighting, while well meaning, ignore several types of historical conflicts of interest—self dealing, influence peddling, post employment, and campaign finance—that historically pervade this state-wide office. Through a reconstruction of a timeline from the *Daily Oklahoman* archives and a more recent examination of data from the Oklahoma Ethics Commission and the National Institute on Money in State Politics' *Follow the Money* (2008), a larger picture is drawn detailing conflicts of interest unacknowledged by the current Department's reforms. With the spotlight on past conflicts of interest, it may be possible to foster a new understanding of needed policy reforms to deal with many potential conflicts of interest, keeping the current office holder from "conviction" in the public square if history unfortunately repeats itself yet again. However, some conflicts of interest are structural and need Constitutional changes to fix.

**One state-wide elected official,** Carroll Fisher will begin a new journey from a once respected state-wide elected official to now a three-year jail inmate for corruption charges as the former Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner.<sup>1</sup> Even though Fisher is the only Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner to have been both impeached and convicted, allegations of misconduct in this office is commonplace.

In reaction to Fisher's misconduct, Oklahoma's Insurance Department Legislative Liaison Jennifer Burchett says in a person interview that the department is cleaning up its act with two new policies. First, employees "are required to avoid any action that creates the appearance of using state employment to obtain a private or inappropriate benefit for themselves or others," according to a Department memo.<sup>2</sup> Burchett explains "this means that employees can't even accept a cup of coffee" from those they regulate.<sup>3</sup> Second, Oklahoma Insurance Department employees cannot work outside the agency because it creates "a conflict of interest or a violation of state ethics provisions."<sup>4</sup> Kim Holland, newly appointed by Governor Henry in the wake of Fisher's impeachment, declared in the *Oklahoman*: "I plan to be an ambassador for this office, rather than one who shames the office."<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, are Holland's two reforms the necessary and sufficient way to deal with the Insurance Department's corruption that seems to flourish in this state department, or does she need to do more? I find in this study that while it has become clear that the Oklahoma Insurance Department needs reform measures in the wake of the recent scandal with former Commissioner Fisher, approximately three-fourths of the Oklahoma Insurance Department's history is mired in scandal. In this study, I specifically explore the varieties of conflict of interest that arise in the Department's history in comparison to Holland's current reforms.

## BACKGROUND

Oklahoma's founding fathers instituted the Oklahoma's Insurance Department in the Oklahoma Constitution (Markwood 2005). Before statehood, insurance men arrived from out of state to set up shop in the new territory. The debate was whether to make the new insurance commissioner appointed or elected, which would beholden this office to

the people (Ibid). Oklahomans were suspicious of these out-of-state insurance men. In 1905, the *Daily Oklahoman*, it says that the insurance industry assumed that these companies are primarily benevolent institutions. The recent investigations have demonstrated conclusive enough that such is not the case. They are money making concerns, for the benefit of the clique that happens to be in control, and will continue to be.<sup>6</sup> The need for regulation and oversight within the industry was clear even then.

The Oklahoma State Insurance Department, as the regulatory agency for the state's insurance industry, collects premium taxes totaling almost \$200 million annually, according to the Department's 2005 annual report. These collections support the fire and police pension funds and the State Fire Marshal's office, according to the report. The Department regulates 1,500 insurers within the state. The Department's Consumer Assistance and Anti-Fraud Division received almost 40,000 inquiries in 2005, recouping more than \$10.7 million to policyholders, according to the report.

According to the *Daily Oklahoman* archives, the Insurance Department began in 1907 and has had 14 commissioners since, two of which were interim positions. Of the 14, eight commissioners were appointed because the previous commissioner was either forced out of office, resigned, or died. Five of the eight commissioners, who were originally appointed, ran for office and were subsequently re-elected.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To answer the question of whether the current Insurance Commissioner Kim Holland's reforms are likely to produce a less scandal-plagued office? It is important to examine the literature regarding conflict of interest and how it might apply to allegations found. Holland has two reforms she has implemented that fall into line with the conflict of interest literature, which divides conflict of interest into seven basic categories. Of the Kernaghan and Langford's (2006) seven types of conflict of interest, Holland has implemented two in her office: 1) Accepting benefits and 2) Outside employment or moonlighting. The five other types of conflict of interest are not included, but are noted in Kernaghan and Langford's (2006) types, including: 3) Self-dealing; 4) Using your employer's property for private advantage; 5) Using confidential

information; 6) Influence peddling; and 7) Post employment. I describe each type of conflict of interest in more detail in the findings of this paper.

Warren (2006: 803) says allegations of misconduct are important venues for research because “corruption undermines the culture of democracy.” Warren (2006) argues that corruption, even perceived, makes citizens lose confidence and become cynical about the government. Ideally, public officials who hold administrative positions are acting impartially in the public interest. However, may respond to political pressures (Thompson 1995; Warren 2006).

## METHODOLOGY

I conducted a historical analysis of the *Daily Oklahoman* archives and the *Oklahoma Almanac* to explore what kinds of conflicts of interest emerge in the Insurance Department’s history. Because the Oklahoma Insurance Department and the Oklahoma Department of Libraries do not contain a history, I reconstructed who the insurance commissioners were at the time. I searched the *Daily Oklahoman* from 1907—the inaugural year of the state’s first Insurance Commissioner T.J. McComb—to Kim Holland in 2007, Oklahoma’s current Insurance Commissioner. Governor Brad Henry originally appointed her before she won re-election two years later in 2006. Although this method of analysis falls short in acquiring a picture of its history more fully, the *Daily Oklahoman* is one of the few existing public records with the potential to be assembled for examination this state’s insurance department.

In an analysis of campaign finance, I utilized two electronic databases, beginning as far back as 2002. One was associated with the Oklahoma Ethics Commission and the second was the National Institute on Money in State Politics’ *Follow the Money* (2008). In this section, I trace specifically how much money candidates received and how much of it came from the insurance industry. Future research might focus on physical reports from the ethics commission prior to 2002.

## FINDINGS

Of the 14 insurance commissioners to hold office since statehood in 1907, I find that eight Oklahoma commissioners have faced allegations

of misconduct (See Appendix I). Of these eight commissioners, one, Carroll Fisher was convicted, four resigned before action could be taken against them, one died in office, one was acquitted after his removal, and finally, one lost his re-election. This means that eight of 14, or 57 percent, of Oklahoma Insurance Commissioners have found themselves facing allegations of misconduct. When one considers that two of these Commissioners served in an interim capacity and in office for only a year, this percentage increases by removing the two said Interim Commissioners; the number becomes 8 of 12, which is 66 percent. This is startling, especially when one considers the additional fact that 8 of eleven or 72 percent of the elected Oklahoma Commissioners before Kim Holland have had their offices tainted with allegations of misconduct. In the context of the last 100 years, 63 years were under the auspices of Insurance Commissioners with scandal-plagued tenures. This means that 27 years of state history had commissioners who did not possess tenures mired in conflicts of interest that are apparent from doing this historical research.

In an analysis of all 14 Oklahoma Insurance Commissioners, Holland's reform regarding accepting benefits, or what her memo calls, "things of value" is on target. I found three instances making the news in the *Daily Oklahoman* that insurance commissioners are specifically receiving "things of value." The most glaring example is former Commissioner Carroll Fisher who received more than \$20,000 in furniture.<sup>7</sup> A lesser known example involves the U.S. District Court forcing former Commissioner Gerald Grimes to give back \$130,000 in campaign funds from an uninsured insurance company.<sup>8</sup>

I did not find instances of Holland's second reform dealing with employee moonlighting other than during the current Insurance Commissioner's term in 2005.<sup>9</sup> From the *Daily Oklahoman* and in an interview with Burchett, it appears like she has dealt with this form of conflict of interest in accordance with her policy memos.<sup>10</sup>

Although these two Oklahoma Insurance Department policy reforms are positive steps toward fixing the department's less than ethical reputation, these reforms fall short. Consider, for example, the simple fact that former Commissioner Carroll Fisher was impeached by the state legislature and subsequently resigned for embezzling. Holland's reforms do not respond to embezzling either. Specifically, the state impeached Fisher for placing a \$1,000 of campaign contributions into

his own personal account – in essence defined as self-dealing (McDonald 2007; Kernaghan and Langford 2006).

McDonald (2007) describes “self-dealing,” in this case, as a government employee who uses his or her official position to secure something for him or herself or his or her family (See also Stark 2000). The Blue Book, published annually by the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws, defines conflict of interest for the Oklahoma Ethics Commission in regard to self dealing as:

Public members may not participate in the discussion, vote on, influence or attempt to influence official action they, their immediate family members, or entities they are associated with have a pecuniary interest or reasonably foreseeable benefit from (including detriment to) a competitor.<sup>11</sup>

I find seven instances where self-dealing appeared in the history of the Oklahoma Insurance Department. For instance, E.W. Hardin also deposited state money into his personal account in the early 1920s; he resigned during a state house investigating committee.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, in 1971, the state senate investigated former Commissioner Joe Hunt, accusing him of arranging a second mortgage loan from the company his wife was involved with.<sup>13</sup> In another instance, former Commissioner Cathy Weatherford allegedly approved a Tulsa insurance company sale in order to facilitate the \$200,000 in commissions that would go to her father.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to self-dealing, I found six instances of influence peddling, what McDonald (2007) describes, in this case, as the commissioner using his or her influence in office to unfairly benefit someone else. For instance, in 1915, former Commissioner A.L. Welch was accused of attempting to force a company to furnish a bond to secure support for a campaign. He also allegedly refused to license certain insurance companies until they employed a friend.<sup>15</sup> Mr. Welch resigned before an impending impeachment hearing. The former allegation deals with influence peddling and the latter involved both influence peddling and self-dealing as he used his influence to get a job for a personal friend. In a more recent example, the Oklahoma Ethics Commission chastised former Commissioner Carroll Fisher for using his position to acquire private employment documents on his 2002 election opponent.<sup>16</sup>

In a third form of conflict of interest that Holland's office does not address, but is found abundant in the history of the state's insurance department, is that of Post Employment (McDonald 2007; Kernaghan and Langford 2006). Post employment, according to these authors, occurs when a regulator leaves a job; and then obtains a new job from same area the person was formerly regulating. This type of conflict of interest may be the most difficult one to expose because it is structurally embedded in the Oklahoma Constitution. Article six, section 22 of the Oklahoma Constitution specifies that the "Insurance Commissioner shall be at least twenty-five years of age and well versed in insurance matters."<sup>17</sup> Because of this Constitutional and legislative requirement, all of the former commissioners as well as the current commissioner come from the insurance industry in some capacity. In this regard, Holland is typical of the previous Insurance Commissioners in Oklahoma's past. She comes from the insurance industry. For example, she worked for 20 years with the Team Insurance Group, once known as the Quarles Group. According Oklahoma Statute 36; section 302 requires the Commissioner to have had "at least five years' experience in the insurance industry in administration, sales, servicing or regulation." Seven of the last 12 commissioners returned to the insurance industry. Although the *Daily Oklahoman* may not have followed every commissioner's career, there is definitely a "revolving door" between the insurance industry and the Insurance Department in which the post employment conflict of interest problem may arise.

A fourth type of conflict of interest not mentioned by Kernaghan and John Langford (2006) or McDonald (2007), but which is prominent in this office is campaign finance, which can create an appearance of impropriety. The state convicted former Commissioner Carroll Fisher for perjury for not disclosing that he placed \$1,000 in campaign money in his own account without reporting it to the ethics commission, according to the final report for the state House of Representatives.<sup>18</sup> Fisher's two impeachment charges carrying the most weight had to do with campaign finance, in addition to one of Holland's reforms dealing with receiving "things of value." Additionally, beyond the Oklahoma State House of Representatives report, Fisher faces charges of illegally receiving \$25,000 in campaign contributions from Texas business man Gene Phillips. Holland's two reforms do not speak to campaign finance questions. This may be connected to her receiving nearly one-third of

her re-election campaign contributions from the same industry she regulates – insurance.<sup>19</sup> This article that chastised Holland for the insurance industry’s largess, says she is sending mixed signals when she asserts that her employees could not accept “even a cup of coffee” from insurance agency representatives. According to Money in State Politics, she accepted \$159,447 in state contributions from the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate interests; thirteen of her top 20 contributors were from this industry and gave \$5,000 or more to her campaign.<sup>20</sup> Her opponent in the 2006 race raised approximately 1.5% of his \$222,570 in total campaign funds from the same monied-interests.<sup>21</sup> In 2004, Carroll Fisher did not raise nearly as much money, but nearly 38% of his \$56,305 total campaign money came from these same monied-interests.<sup>22</sup> Fisher raised \$367,178 for his 2002 race and more than 50% came from the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate interests.<sup>23</sup>

The literature is underwhelming in regard to whether lobbyists influence public officials, particularly on the state level. The “Chicago” model of economic regulation, which has focused almost solely on legislators in the literature, contends that interest groups contributing to political campaigns do so with the expectation that they may see some return on their investment, specifically policy outcomes (Box-Steffensmeier and Dow 1992; Denzau and Munger 1986). Although most focus on candidate contributions and lobbyist influence is focused on the federal level and little on the state level, the state level is important to examine because of the lack of resources states have in enforcing the few existing regulations they do have (Malbin and Gais 1998). For example, in Oklahoma, the state’s Ethics Commission Executive Director Marilyn Hughes notes that her office is understaffed and underfunded.<sup>24</sup> For instance, the son of Gene Phillips, who is the head of May Trust, which owns many insurance firms, recently won approval of a key bill in the Oklahoma State House of Representatives out of committee.<sup>25</sup> The bill allows Texas insurance firms to employ in commercial real estate contracts. However, it was Brad’s Phillips father who is the same person who gave Carroll Fisher \$25,000 in contributions and \$20,000 in furniture in exchange for preferential treatment, according to the House impeachment report.<sup>26</sup> Even if a campaign contributor from the insurance industry does not break a law, the appearance of a quid pro quo might bring this to mind for voters.



## CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted with the explicit intention to foster understanding and potentially reform if need be to improve the state's insurance department. In this case, reforms can take shape in many ways. First, the commissioner can create policy memos that reflect the past conflicts of interest that pervade this office, including, self-dealing, influence peddling, post employment, and campaign finance irregularities. Self dealing and influence peddling are two forms of conflict of interest that should hold stiff penalties beyond being forced from office or otherwise resigning. Post employment is difficult to detect because it is muddied through the Oklahoma Constitution in Article six, stipulating that an Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner be "well versed in insurance matters."<sup>27</sup> In addition, Oklahoma Statute 36 actually requires the Commissioner to have had "at least five years' experience in the insurance industry." It is not surprising then that because of this structural requirement, it is natural to observe a cozy relationship between the commissioner and those he or she regulates due to a previous prior working relationship. In addition, it makes sense that these commissioners would go back into the same field they once occupied and later regulated in order to make a living. More specifically, it is a conflict of interest if a public official appears to utilize contacts or information obtained while in office to benefit him or herself to secure his or her future financial security through their state service (Kernaghan and Langford 2006). Although at the time of statehood it is thought that a governor's appointment of such an office might help buffer it from the industry, history shows that, eight of the 14 commissioners, including Holland herself, were initially appointed. Five of these appointed commissioners later ran for election and subsequently won. Appointment to this office does not seem to have the effect of necessarily keeping commissioners ethical.

Additionally, with Oklahoma's deep populist roots, this might be a hard sell to the public. Populism resonates with Oklahoma residents, our states' founding fathers of the Oklahoma Constitution originally feared a concentrated power in the Governor's administration so his cabinet was widely elected, not appointed. Only 17 members of the executive

branch are elected in this pluralistic system, with the number down to only 11 today (Faltyn 2005).

Campaign financing can create, at the very least, a conflict of interest in the mind of voters with some insignificant results on whether campaign money influences office holders. To engender additional trust in this department, is it possible to either construct the office as appointive or perhaps Holland herself might publicly self-reform by claiming she will only accept, say, 10 percent or less from the insurance industry? A third option is to follow New Mexico's lead. New Mexico in 2003 passed the Voter Action Act, which is a voluntary public financing law for candidates who campaign for a seat on the Public Regulation Commission, according to the New Mexico Governor's taskforce report.<sup>28</sup> The office is responsible for oversight of state public utilities. Similar to the full-public finance laws in Arizona and Maine, the report states that candidates who raise a threshold amount of one-fourth of one percent of the number of votes cast of all governor candidates in the last general election may receive full public funding for their campaigns if the candidates agree not to accept additional private donations. This public financing system is funded, the report continues, by a surcharge on the companies regulated by the commission in an amount equal to the average of contested commission elections for the four previous election cycles. In 2007, New Mexico added public financing for candidates for judgeships on the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of New Mexico.<sup>29</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Nolan, Clay. "Ex-official begins jail time." <http://newsok.com/article/3123208/1189485874>. 2007.

<sup>2</sup> "Revised Policy on Employee's Receipt of Things of Value." 2006. Insurance Department document.

<sup>3</sup> Burchett, Jennifer. Telephone Interview. 9/21/07.

<sup>4</sup> *Oklahoma Insurance Department's Employee Handbook*: 14.

<sup>5</sup> "New insurance commissioner vows integrity" *Daily Oklahoman*. 2/5/05. Access World News.

<sup>6</sup> "Insurance Clauses for the New Constitution." *Daily Oklahoman*. 11/4/1905: 26. Access World News.

<sup>7</sup> Clay, Nolan and John Greiner. "Investigation continues: Three felony charges still loom: Impeached Fisher resigns." *Daily Oklahoman*. 9/25/04. Access World News.

<sup>8</sup> "Suit Filed for Return of Campaign Monies." *Daily Oklahoman*. 9/18/86. Access World News. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

<sup>9</sup> "Ex-insurance official says he was force out for publicity." *Daily Oklahoman*. 6/25/05. Access World News. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>

<sup>10</sup> *Oklahoma Insurance Department's Employee Handbook*: 14.

<sup>11</sup> Oklahoma Ethics Commission for your use from the Blue Book, which is published annually by the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws.

<sup>12</sup> "State Commissioner of Insurance Quits." *Daily Oklahoman*. 1/3/24.

<sup>13</sup> "Joe Hunt Welcomes Senate Probe, Denies Wrongdoing." *Daily Oklahoman*. 5/12/71: 18. Access World News.

<sup>14</sup> Godfrey, Ed. "Top Insurance Official Accused of Collusion." *Daily Oklahoman*. 11/11/93. Access World News.

<sup>15</sup> "Charges of Moral Turpitude, Incompetency and Corruption in Office Included in Findings." *Daily Oklahoman*. 3/2/15. Access World News.

<sup>16</sup> "Special Committee to Investigate the Insurance Commissioner." Oklahoma House of Representatives, *Final report*, August 30, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Oklahoma State Constitution, Article 6, section 23: "Commissioner - Election - Term of office - Qualifications." However, the *Oklahoma Almanac* for many years says at the bottom of the State Insurance Commissioner entry that the qualifications are actually 10 years of experience in the insurance business in addition to being 25 years old.

<sup>18</sup> "Special Committee to Investigate the Insurance Commissioner." Oklahoma House of Representatives, *Final report*, August 30, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> "Campaign cash Commissioner sends mixed signals." *The Daily Oklahoman*. 9/6/06. Access World News.

<sup>20</sup> Follow the Money – Holland, Kim D. <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/StateGlance/candidate.phtml?si=200636&c=416780>.

<sup>21</sup> Follow the Money – Case, Bill. <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/StateGlance/candidate.phtml?si=200636&c=428097>.

<sup>22</sup> Follow the Money – Fisher, Carroll. <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/StateGlance/candidate.phtml?si=200436&c=57310>.

<sup>23</sup> Follow the Money – Fisher, Carroll. <http://www.followthemoney.org/database/StateGlance/candidate.phtml?si=200236&c=23714>.

<sup>24</sup> Marilyn Hughes Executive Director, personal interview. 9/12/07.

<sup>25</sup> Hinton, Mick. "Texan with ties to Fisher push key bill." *Tulsa World*. 3/6/07.

<sup>26</sup> "Special Committee to Investigate the Insurance Commissioner." Oklahoma House of Representatives, *Final report*, August 30, 2004.

<sup>27</sup> Oklahoma State Constitution, Article 6, section 23: "Commissioner - Election - Term of office - Qualifications." However, the *Oklahoma Almanac* for many

years says at the bottom of the State Insurance Commissioner entry that the qualifications are actually 10 years of experience in the insurance business in addition to being 25 years old.

<sup>28</sup>*Governor's Ethics, and Campaign Finance Reform Task Force Discussion Group Report*. 2007. <https://repository.unm.edu/dspace/bitstream/1928/2607/1/Campaign+Finance.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup>“Public Financing in States.” Common Cause. 2007. <http://www.commoncause.org/site/pp.asp?c=dkLNK1MQIwG&b=507399>.

Appendix I (Reconstructed from the Daily Oklahoman)			
Commissioner	Year	Allegations	How Left Office
T.J. McComb	1907-1909	None	Resigned for a better job within the industry
Milas Lasater	1909-1910	None	Interim
Perry Ballard	1910-1913	Bribery; graft in office; accused of taking \$200 from an insurance company for issuing a charter and receiving a \$10,000 insurance policy from a company with the first year's premiums paid.	Impeached; found not guilty of bribery
A.L. Welch	1913-1921	Charges against him included having an excess number of employees, putting state funds in a Purcell bank and allowing the bank to draw interest on the money. Attempted to force a company to furnish a bond to secure support for a campaign, refused to license certain insurance companies until after they employed his friend.	Elected; resigned before impeachment; acquitted in senate
E.W. Hardin	1921-1924	Appointed; better business offer while being probed by the house investigating committee; deposited money in personal accounts	Faced allegations of misconduct; investigated by the house investigating committee; soon after resigned as office probed 1/3
F.E. Young	1924-1925	None	Interim
Jess Read	1925-1946	None	died in office
Donald Dickey	1946-1954	None	Did not run again
Joe B. Hunt	1954-1975	Senate investigating committee; investigate personal relationships to insurance companies he regulates; cleared of wrong doing. Also, \$7,800 2nd mortgage loan from the company made by his wife, connected to receivership.	died in office 2/9/75
Gerald Grimes	1975-1991	Appointed; U.S. District Court forces Grimes to return \$130,000 in campaign funds(10a); Helped his campaign manager's plan to regulate Pre-paid legal services, inc. even though his manager Angela Ables, represented the group. Appearance of a conflict of interest	Resigned
Cathy Weatherford	1991-1994	Controversy as given position as a chief fundraiser for Walters; sold insurance firm to give father \$200,000 in commissions; lawsuits filed against her.	Resigned
John P. Crawford	1994-1998	Connected to \$150,000 computer software contract with American Standard (his son); blocks audit; favors to abstract companies; received large donations from abstract companies	Lost election; cleared of wrongdoing
Carroll Fisher	1998-2004	Indictment on several felony charges. Fisher resigned after being impeached by the House to avoid a Senate trial; allegations \$20k in furniture; \$25k bribery; operated a charity illegally; used office to get info on a 2002 opponent says gifts did not affect him.	Impeached; convicted(7a)
Kim Holland	2004-2007+	1/3rd of her campaign funds come from out of state.	Still in office.

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# **PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TAXATION AND GOVERNANCE OF NATIVE AMERICANS**

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Current attitudes towards self governance and taxation practices of Native Americans were examined using a survey of over 900 undergraduates at Oklahoma State University. Results show strong resentment towards the Native American community, with large support for policies that would harm the Native American community. However, these results are contingent on factors such as racial status, awareness of the Native American community, partisanship and favorability towards tribes. Those who are in closer contact, in terms of awareness and favorability, with Native Americans, as well as minorities and Democrats are the most supportive of policies that would benefit the Native American community.

Research concerning attitudes toward minorities has grown in recent years. However, research focusing on perceptions towards Native Americans is severely lacking. One reason is that Native Americans represent only 1% of the population in the United States. Oklahoma provides a unique context to examine perceptions towards Native Americans because this group constitutes 8% of the population within Oklahoma. Given the large Native American population within Oklahoma, we ask, to what extent are attitudes towards Native Americans within Oklahoma supportive of the Native American community?

Using a more populated region to study perceptions towards Native American was used within upstate New York. Here the Native American community is more numerous than the national average (Smith 2005; Smith 2007). Overall, the results of this research suggest very favorable attitudes towards Native Americans exist within the general population, as related to issues of taxation and self governance. These results are especially important because general support for current practices within the Native American community can translate into additional supportive public policies. On the other hand, more negative attitudes from the public could pose a threat to the Native American community if current practices are revoked or altered. Following the study of upstate New York, it is of interest to further develop this research by focusing on additional regions with large Native American communities, such as Oklahoma.

To expand the above research and consider another geographic region with a large population of Native Americans, we conduct a survey of student attitudes about taxation and self governance of Native Americans within Oklahoma. Results show strong resentment towards the Native American community, with large support for policies that would harm the Native American community. However, these results are contingent on factors such as racial status, awareness of the Native American community, partisanship, and favorability towards tribes. Those who are in closer contact, in terms of awareness and favorability, with Native Americans, as well as minorities and Democrats are the most supportive of policies that would benefit the Native American community. To explain these results, we review the literature of perceptions towards



Native Americans, and then outline the survey used to gauge current student perceptions. Next we highlight the important findings from the survey and discuss their implications.

## **PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS NATIVE AMERICANS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Perceptions of Native Americans have varied across time. To understand current perceptions related to taxation and self governance, a brief overview of taxation and governance policies is necessary to place subsequent perceptions in context.

### **TAXATION AND SELF GOVERNANCE OF NATIVE AMERICANS**

#### *Taxation*

Article I of the U.S. Constitution declares that Indians cannot be taxed and that Congress “shall have the power to...regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the states, and with the Indian tribes,” providing a foundation for U.S. authority over Indian tribes and individuals (Hamilton 1999, 509). By the 1790’s, U.S. Indian policy suggested that through “training in civilization,” and the “promotion of commerce under fair regulations,” including “land purchases by orderly methods,” the Indian Problem might be solved (Debo 1970). These objectives formed the basis of U.S. policy towards tribes for the next 200 years. These taxation policies are still in place today.

#### *Self Governance*

The issue of self governance has roots within the Indian removal practices of the 1800s. Indian removal policies were adopted to provide land for white settlement and to resolve land disputes between some southern states provided much of the context for early 19<sup>th</sup> century relations (Bordewich 1996). Rhetoric hardened on both sides of the Indian removal debate after Andrew Jackson’s election emboldened

Alabama and Georgia to deny Indians civil or legal rights by using the idea of state sovereignty based on a strict interpretation of the Constitution (Debo 1970). Jackson explained to the tribes through official and secret envoys (Perdue and Green 2005) that the federal government was “helpless to interfere with state laws” (Debo 1970, 115-116). Subsequent litigation, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia 1831*, *Worcester v. Georgia 18* (Bordewich 1996, 45), affirmed the inherent sovereignty of tribes and produced the doctrine of retained sovereignty, or the “retention of attributes of sovereignty not explicitly surrendered” (Wilkins 1997, 20-21), echoing sentiments of those against Indian removal who saw Indians as human beings and entitled to receive the same treatment as others (Deloria 1984).

Intertwined with self governance and sovereignty is the issue of citizenship. The extension of citizenship to Indian tribes by Congress was contentious. Some in western states favored the citizenship and allotment in several provisions of the Dawes Act believing that such provisions would lessen the influence of the federal government in local affairs (Hoxie 2001). Others argued that the “backward” Indians could not defend their holdings from exploitation by whites, and that the federal government was obligated to maintain a paternal/guardian relationship with Indian tribes (Hoxie 2001). Federal government policies attempted to straddle the fence by providing Indians with greater federal protection without appearing to retreat from the government’s commitment to Indian citizenship (Hoxie 2001).

The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act was intended to resolve the conflicting goals of Indian autonomy and assimilation (Walch 1983). Central provisions of the act sought to prohibit further allotment of tribal land, and reclaim previously allotted lands, establish tribal governments with control over tribal funds, and establish a revolving loan fund for the use of tribes and individual Indians (Debo 1970). Critics on both sides of the 1934 act charged that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) still controlled too much of tribal governments and required tribes to Anglicize governmental institutions and abandon tribal models (Walch 1983). Other critics saw tribal governments as too communistic, or believed that provisions of the act would give tribes an unfair economic advantage regarding land and natural resources (Walch 1983; LaGrand 2002). By the late 1940s substantial budget cuts for reservation programs and development and the resignation of the primary drafter of the 1934 IRA

and BIA Commissioner Collier led Congress to consider policies to more rapidly assimilate Indians (Walch 1983). The debate over termination would be framed by Congressional proponents in terms of equality and freedom for individual Indians.

In 1949 the Hoover Commission recommended termination. The Commission mandated that Congress no longer recognize Indian sovereignty (Wilkins 1997). One advocate of the policy Senator Arthur Watkins of Utah extolled the new found freedom of the Indian: "Following in the footsteps of the Emancipation Proclamation... I see the following words emblazoned in letters of fire above the heads of Indians- These People Shall be Free!" (Berkhofer 1979, 186). Termination policies, which also freed the federal government from the Indian, began in 1953 with the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 108 and Public Law 280 which called for tribes to be freed from Federal supervision and control (Walch 1983), and transferred tribal court jurisdictions in five states to the respective state court systems (Berkhofer 1979). By 1954, the federal government had terminated recognition of "110 tribes and bands" in the U.S. as sovereign nations (Walch 1983). Overall, Native American tribes remain sovereign today.

## **RECENT PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS NATIVE AMERICANS**

Policy practices towards Native Americans have set the groundwork for negative public perceptions. Contemporary discussions of Indians are often framed within "an assumption of unearned privileges" that tend to mirror old dichotomies by reducing NAs to lazy drunks or as a minority interest group that relies on the misplaced guilt of Americans in Congress and more importantly, the courts (Kidwell 2007). However, recent research into tribal/state/federal taxation and sovereignty disputes in New York suggests that currently New Yorkers are largely supportive of tribal positions in these disputes, respect treaty obligations, and tribal sovereignty generally (Smith 2005).

To assess attitudes towards Native Americans, Buffalo State University studied public opinion of NAs by other New Yorkers. Data from focus groups and surveys of more than 450 western New Yorkers showed a willingness to support Indian sovereignty issues generally, that many stereotypes (positive and negative) expressed by respondents

were instilled in elementary school, and that proximity to reservations or other contact with NAs allows for the introduction of countervailing information lessening public acceptance of common NA stereotypes (Smith 2005). Western New Yorkers' support for NA sovereignty was very strong at 81%, while support for NA sovereignty among respondents who patronize tribal businesses reached 93% (Smith 2005). Though the majority of respondents were sympathetic to the positions of Indian tribes some views expressed in the focus groups mirrored historical stereotypes: "They are alcoholics and drug dealers...the reservation is a no-man's land, bare and lawless" (Smith 2005, 8).

Zogby International essentially reached the same conclusions as the Buffalo State research. Using a telephone survey and a sample of 902 interviews from western New Yorkers, Zogby found that 78% of respondents agreed with tribal claims regarding state taxation and that these supporters were uniformly consistent across ages, genders, and political affiliation and orientation (Smith 2007). The survey also shows that nearly 60% favor casino gambling in New York generally, in Buffalo specifically, and support the Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino in particular. Further, both Democratic and Republican voters, as well as men and women, favor casinos. Overall opinion of Indians in the poll was 55% favorable, nearly four times more than those who said they hold a negative opinion (16%) (Zogby 2006).

The recent survey research seems to show that perceptions of Indians have become more positive and that there is room for improvement. The Buffalo State and Zogby research showed that people are supportive of some degree of tribal sovereignty along with modifications to treaties that are fair and equitable to all involved.

### **EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS NATIVE AMERICANS**

The purpose of our research is to extend the analysis of New York to Oklahoma, where Native Americans makeup 8% of the state population. To assess current perceptions towards Native Americans, two specific policy arenas were chosen: taxation and Native American self governance. In terms of taxation, we focus on perceptions toward tax exemptions of reservations, including if this policy should apply to non-Indians as well, and if taxes should be collected and given to the

state government. With respect to self governance, we are concerned with perceptions supporting or opposing the continued practice of Indian self governance, rather than governance by the state.

Taken together, these two arenas present two clear sides. On the one hand, opinions could support current practices and policies that benefit Native Americans. On the other hand, opinions could represent the opposite and indicate support for actions that would in essence disadvantage the Native American population. For example, allowing taxation on reservations to benefit the government removes a special exemption for Native Americans and could decrease sales on reservations due to additional taxes, which again would disadvantage the Native American community. By using these two sets of issues, we hope to find clear patterns exist with respect to support for or against practices that benefit Native Americans.

To analyze perceptions towards Native Americans, we chose to implement a survey to students at Oklahoma State University. The use of student samples has been questioned in past research. However, two points need to be addressed with respect to the sample. First, in choosing this sample, we relied on socialization research that supports the attainment and persistence of political attitudes during pre-adult years (Searing, Wright and Rabinowitz 1976; Jennings and Niemi 1981; Achen 2002). Given that college aged students have been socialized within the home and school, previous research supports the notion that that these students have formed valid opinions that are central to our study. Further, the above research documents the staying power that these attitudes have. Political attitudes are remarkably stable over time, even those formed during these pre-adult years. Given this, we do not feel the results would differ substantially by using a different population. Second, although we have confidence in the sample chosen, we do acknowledge previous critiques of samples drawn using students and we do not wish to over-generalize our results to a much larger population. Instead, our results should be taken as a sample within Oklahoma and we will frame them as such.

Our sample of students comes from all students enrolled in Oklahoma State University's introductory political science course, which is a required course for graduation. From all sections of this course, 964 students chose to participate for extra credit given by their instructors. Data were collected via a forty eight question survey, with responses

recorded onto scantrons.<sup>1</sup> The responses were then scanned and transferred into a data file to be used for analysis. Our sample does address consistency across the state of Oklahoma in terms of key demographics. First, women represent 50.7% of Oklahoma residents and 48.94% of our sample. Within Oklahoma, 78.93% of residents are white and 79.07% of our sample are white. Further, 8.00% of the Oklahoma population are Native American, compared to 9.50% of our sample. Overall we find good consistency between our sample and the larger Oklahoma population in terms of race and gender.

## DEPENDENT VARIABLES

In analyzing perceptions towards Native Americans, two areas were of interest and serve as the main focus of the analysis. Within each area, dependent variables were selected based on the survey questions asked.

### *Taxation*

Our first interest is general taxation issues central to Native Americans. To assess preferences within this issue group, three survey questions were used. First, respondents were asked about their views for sales tax exemption for reservations with the following question, "By federal law and treaties, sales of products and services on Indian reservations are not subject to state tax. Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion? a) This policy should apply to both Indians and non-Indians, or b) This policy should apply only to Indians." For this question, the responses for "b" were given a 0 and the responses for "a" were given a 1. Second, preferences towards collecting taxes from Native American business were assessed by asking, "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Oklahoma State government should begin to attempt to collect sales taxes on items sold on Indian reservations." Responses were coded as -2 "strongly disagree," -1 "disagree," 0 "no opinion," 1 "agree," 2 "strongly agree." Lastly, respondents were asked who should benefit from a sales tax if implemented among reservations. The question was, "If there was a sales tax on products purchased on Indian reservations, who should receive the tax revenues?" Responses were coded as 0 "Native Americans," 1 "Oklahoma State government."

*Native American Self-Governance*

Our second interest is general opinion about self-governance of Native American tribes. To assess these preferences, the following question was asked, "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: American Indians should continue to govern themselves, independent of the state." Responses were coded as -2 "strongly disagree," -1 "disagree," 0 "no opinion," 1 "agree," 2 "strongly agree."

Together, these two areas and the related dependent variables constitute the focus of the subsequent analysis. For each set of dependent variables factor analysis and correlations were conducted and for each, significant differences existed with correlations below 0.20 and uniqueness factors above 0.90. Overall, it was decided to use separate dependent variables rather than create factors or scales.

## INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

In addition to the above dependent variables, demographic questions were asked. These questions provide the basis of our explanatory variables. For each set of dependent variables, specific independent variables were used to help explain the set of dependent variables. Taken as a whole, the independent variables gauged knowledge of local events, hometown size, proximity of hometown to an Indian reservation, awareness of Native American culture, racial status, party identification, ideology, and both favorability towards Native American tribes and casinos.

Knowledge of local events was included as an explanatory variable because it was assumed that perceptions would be based on awareness of local cultures and events within the state. Given this, knowledge of local events was coded as 1 "very unaware," 2 "unaware," 3 "aware," 4 "very aware."<sup>2</sup> Based on the responses given, 44% of the respondents reported being either unaware or very unaware, while 56% of the respondents reported being aware or very aware of local events. Closely related to knowledge of local events, awareness of Native American culture was assessed. Again, awareness was expected to correspond with more supportive attitudes towards Native Americans. Here awareness of Native American culture was coded as 1 "very unaware,"

2 “unaware,” 3 “aware,” 4 “very aware.”<sup>3</sup> The responses show 51% of the respondents indicated they are unaware or very unaware of the Native American culture, while 49% indicated they were aware or very aware.

Beyond local events and forces shaping perceptions, perceptions should be guided by town size and proximity to a reservation. Residents from larger towns generally exhibit more liberal attitudes, while proximity to a reservation should lead to an understanding of the needs and issues of the Native American community. First, hometown size was coded as 1 “large,” 2 “middle-sized,” 3 “small.”<sup>4</sup> A diverse group of respondents was found, with 38% of respondents from large towns, 33% from middle-sized towns, and 29% from small towns. Second, proximity to an Indian reservation was coded as 1 “less than 10 miles,” 2 “between 10-15 miles,” 3 “more than 25 miles,” 4 “don’t know.”<sup>5</sup> Similar to the diversity in town size, proximity to an Indian reservation showed a diverse group of respondents. 19% indicated living less than 10 miles from a reservation, 18% are between 10-15 miles, 25% are more than 25 miles. The remaining respondents did not know how close their hometown was to an Indian reservation.

Racial status was included in the analysis because it was assumed that minorities would be more responsive to issues concerning their own or another minority group. Racial status was coded as 1 if the respondent reported being a minority, 0 if the respondent reported being a white, Caucasian.<sup>6</sup> Overall, 24% of the respondents reported minority status. Within this group, 21% were African American, 44% American Indian, 16% Hispanic, and 19% mixed, bi-racial.

In addition to the above explanatory variables, two variables were used to assess political leanings. Since the dependent variables deal with policy issues, we suspected Democrats and liberals should be more responsive to the needs and issues of the Native American community. To assess political leanings, variables for party identification and ideology were included. First, party identification was coded as -1 “Republican,” 0 “Independent,” 1 “Democrat.”<sup>7</sup> Here we found 60% of the sample were Republicans, 12% Independent and 28% Democrat. Second, ideology was coded as -1 “conservative,” 0 “moderate,” 1 “liberal.”<sup>8</sup> In terms of ideology, 42% reported being conservative, 41% moderate and 17% liberal.

Lastly, respondents were asked their favorability toward tribes,<sup>9</sup> Native American business people,<sup>10</sup> and casinos.<sup>11</sup> For each the



responses were coded as -2 “very unfavorable,” -1 “unfavorable,” 0 “no opinion,” 1 “favorable,” 2 “very favorable.” These questions were included because they are directly related to the above dependent variables. For favorability towards tribes, 11% of the sample indicated an unfavorable opinion, 34% indicated a favorable opinion, and the remainder indicated no opinion. For favorability towards Native American business people, 11% of the sample indicated an unfavorable opinion, 24% indicated a favorable opinion, and the remainder indicated no opinion. For favorability towards casinos, 30% of the sample indicated an unfavorable opinion, 38% indicated a favorable opinion, and the remainder indicated no opinion.

### **ANALYSIS**

Overall, a series of models were constructed based on the set of dependent variables. Explanatory variables were included based on the assumption that these variables would explain the set of dependent variables. The analysis will proceed by discussing the results for each set of dependent variables.

### **TAXATION**

Knowledge of local events, hometown size, proximity of hometown to an Indian reservation, awareness of Native American culture, racial status, party identification, ideology, and favorability towards Native American tribes and favorability towards Native American business people should explain preferences towards taxation of Native Americans and reservations. To test this expectation, three dependent variables were used and the above independent variables were included in the analyses. For the dependent variable collecting taxes from Native American businesses, an ordered logit analysis was conducted due to the ordered nature of the dependent variable. For both reservations subject to sales tax and recipient of Native American sales tax, logit analysis was used, given the binary nature of these variables. Table 1 presents the results of the three models.

Taxation preferences concerning Native Americans are strongly predicted by racial status and favorability towards tribes. Both minorities

TABLE 1

## Preferences Toward Taxation of Native Americans

	Reservations not Subject to Sales Tax	Collect Taxes from Native American Businesses	Recipient of Native American Sales Tax
knowledge of local events	-0.05 (0.14)	0.12 (0.11)	0.25* (0.13)
hometown size	0.31** (0.11)	0.13 (0.08)	0.10 (0.10)
proximity to reservation	0.02 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.06)	0.01 (0.07)
awareness of NA culture	-0.06 (0.11)	0.12 (0.08)	0.07 (0.10)
minority	-0.45* (0.19)	-0.52*** (0.16)	-0.50** (0.18)
party identification	-0.11 (0.11)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.10)
ideology	0.05 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.10)	0.04 (0.12)
favorable view of NA business people	-0.22 (0.14)	-0.28* (0.11)	-0.02 (0.14)
favorable view of tribes	-0.34* (0.13)	-0.72*** (0.10)	-0.69*** (0.13)
Constant	1.11 (0.56)		-0.20 (0.50)
Cutpoint 1		-2.08 (0.43)	
Cutpoint 2		-0.54 (0.42)	
N-size	836	847	827
Lr chi2, df, prob	42, 9, 0.00	136, 9, 0.00	75, 9, 0.00

Note: Models with cutpoints represent ordered logistic regression; models with constants indicate binomial logistic regression.

Standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.10.

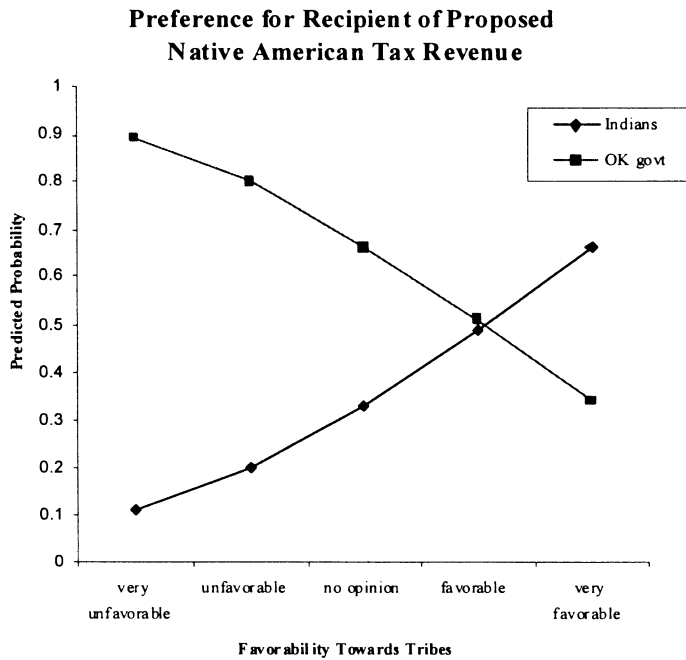
Preferential business treatment of Native Americans: -2 "strongly disagree," -1 "disagree," 0= "no opinion," 1= "agree," 2= "strongly agree" | Reservations not subject to sales tax: 0= "This policy should only apply to Indians," 1 "This policy should apply to both Indians and non-Indians." | Collect taxes from Native American businesses: -2 "strongly disagree," -1 "disagree," 0= "no opinion," 1= "agree," 2= "strongly agree" | Recipient of Native American sales tax: 0= "Native Americans," 1= "Oklahoma State government" | knowledge of local events: 1= "very unaware," 2= "unaware," 3= "aware," 4= "very aware" hometown size: 1= "large," 2= "middle-sized," 3= "small" | proximity to reservation: 1= "less than 10 miles," 2= "between 10-15 miles," 3= "more than 25 miles," 4= "don't know" awareness of Native American culture: 1= "very unaware," 2= "unaware," 3= "aware," 4= "very aware" | minority: 1= minority, 0=white, Caucasian | party identification: -1= "Republican," 0= "Independent," 1= "Democrat" | ideology: -1= "conservative," 0= "moderate," 1= "liberal" | favorable view of Native American business people: -2= "very unfavorable," -1= "unfavorable," 0= "no opinion," 1 "favorable," 2= "very favorable" favorable view of tribes: favorable view of casinos: -2= "very unfavorable," -1= "unfavorable," 0= "no opinion," 1 "favorable," 2= "very favorable"

and those with favorable views of tribes are more likely to maintain preferences in line with current practices, while whites and those with unfavorable views of tribes are more likely to advocate taxation policies that would harm the Native American community. To better understand the magnitude of these effects, predicted probabilities were calculated for each significant explanatory variable while holding all other variables constant at their means. First, with respect to agreement with reservations being exempt from sales tax, minorities are more likely to agree with this current practice. Minorities have a probability 0.08 larger than whites in favor of this policy. On the flip side, whites are more likely to indicate that this policy should apply to both Indians and non-Indians, showing a probability 0.08 larger than minorities in support of this. Clearly differences between these two groups exist. Minorities also differ in their preferences for collecting sales taxes from Native American business and who the recipient of the taxes should be. Whites have a probability 0.11 larger than minorities in agreeing with a policy to collect taxes from Native American businesses. Further, whites are more likely to favor the taxes being given to the Oklahoma government (probability=0.66) compared to Indians as the recipient (probability=0.34). For minorities, the preference supports taxes being given to the Oklahoma government (probability=0.54), but the difference between the preference of recipient is only 0.08, while the difference between whites and minorities is larger.

These same trends apply when favorability towards tribes is considered. First, with respect to agreement with reservations being exempt from sales tax, those with a favorable view towards tribes are more likely than those with an unfavorable view to think this policy should only apply to Indians (probability difference=0.22). On the other hand, those with an unfavorable view of tribes are more likely to think this policy should apply to both Indians and non-Indians (probability=0.89). Those with a favorable view of tribes have a probability that is 0.22 lower than this.

Favorability towards tribes also affects preferences for collecting sales taxes from Native American business and who the recipient of the taxes should be. Those with an unfavorable view of tribes support collecting sales tax from Native American business (probability=0.76). However, those with a favorable view of tribes only have a 0.15 probability of supporting collecting a sales tax. Clearly the issue of taxes is divisive

FIGURE 1



depending on prior favorability towards tribes. Similarly, preferences for the recipient of the sales tax show differences among these two groups. To illustrate this difference, Figure 1 presents a graphical representation of the predicted probabilities.

Those with an unfavorable view towards tribes are more likely to support the tax being given to the Oklahoma government (probability=0.89) compared to those with a favorable view of tribes (probability=0.34). For this group, the preference is for the recipient of the tax to be Indians (probability=0.66). Overall, prior favorability towards tribes corresponds to support for maintaining existing taxation policies, and if these policies were to change, preferences support that tax revenues should be given to tribes. Strong preferences against tribes prove to have strong effects with respect to preferences in support of taxation on Native Americans and taxation policies that negatively affect Native Americans.

## NATIVE AMERICAN SELF-GOVERNANCE

Currently within Oklahoma, Native Americans are self-governed and have governmental structures within the tribes, as opposed to being subject to Oklahoma State government. To assess preferences towards maintaining this practice, respondents were asked if they support this policy. Again, knowledge of local events, hometown size, proximity of hometown to an Indian reservation, awareness of Native American culture, racial status, party identification, ideology, and favorability towards Native American tribes and favorability towards casinos should affect preferences for self-governance. To analyze this, an ordered logit analysis was conducted with the above independent variables, and

TABLE 2

Preferences for the Continued Self-Governance of Native Americans

	Self governance
knowledge of local events	-0.08 (0.11)
hometown size	-0.01 (0.08)
proximity to reservation	-0.07 (0.06)
awareness of Native American culture	-0.23** (0.08)
minority	0.59*** (0.16)
party identification	0.04 (0.08)
ideology	0.16+ (0.10)
favorable view of casinos	0.14* (0.06)
favorable view of tribes	0.77*** (0.09)
Cutpoint 1	-2.22 (0.43)
Cutpoint 2	-0.51 (0.42)
N-size	845
Lr chi2, df, prob	738, 9, 0.00

Note: results based on ordered logistic regression.

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.10.

self governance: -2 "strongly disagree," -1 "disagree," 0= "no opinion,"

1= "agree," 2= "strongly agree"

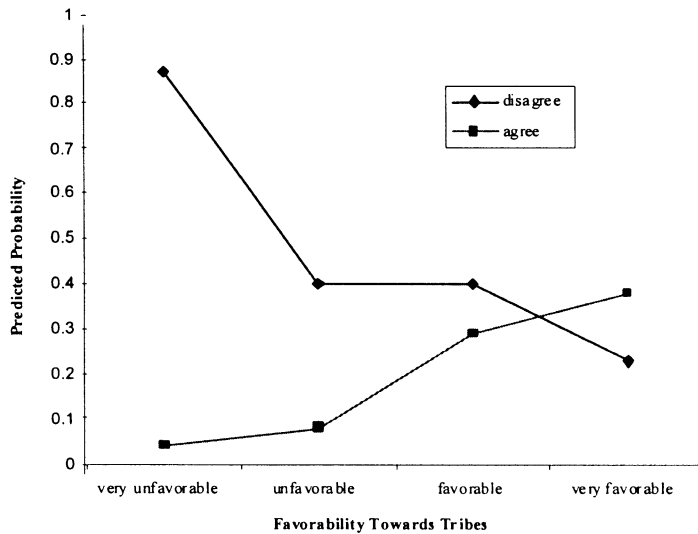
predicted probabilities for each significant explanatory variable were generated while holding all other variables constant at their means. Table 2 present the results of this analysis.

As found with taxation policies, preferences for self-governance were influenced by awareness of Native American culture, racial status, and favorability towards tribes. In short, minorities and those with favorable views of tribes were more likely to support self-governance compared to whites and those with an unfavorable view of tribes (probability difference=0.10 and 0.34, respectively). Instead, whites and those with unfavorable views of tribes were more likely to oppose self-governance (probability=0.57 and 0.87, respectively). Figure 2 displays the effects of favorability towards tribes on preferences towards self-governance.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, favorability strongly affects preferences towards self-governance.

While both racial status and favorability towards tribes both meet our expectations, awareness had an unanticipated affect. Awareness of the Native American culture actually predicts opposition towards self-governance. Those who are more aware of the Native American

**FIGURE 2**

**Agreement with Self-governance of Native Americans**



culture are more likely to oppose self-governance (probability=0.51), while those who are less aware are more likely to support self-governance (probability=0.40). These probabilities are smaller in magnitude of support and opposition than we find for favorability, but clearly, awareness does affect preferences for self-governance and not as anticipated.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, the results show consistent negative perceptions towards current taxation and self governance policies among Oklahoma State University students. These attitudes are mitigated by factors such as racial status, partisanship and favorableness towards Native Americans. Given the population diversity within Oklahoma, these results can have important ramifications for policies affecting Native Americans. Additional research is needed within Oklahoma to discover the extent to which these attitudes are confined within the age group examined, or indicative of a widespread trend within the general population.

Compared to the results found in upstate New York, the results within our sample of students within Oklahoma are quite different. The difference in support for tribal taxation issues in Oklahoma and New York may be a true measure of preferences in both populations. It may also be related to different data collection processes between the two surveys. Respondents in New York were taken from a quota sample based on race and sex. Fifteen interviewers administered the questionnaire to 30 subjects each, resulting in 426 usable questionnaires. In addition, the NY survey was administered at varying locations and at varying times of day in March, 2005. Locations included reservation smoke shops, bus terminals, and coffee shops. The Oklahoma survey also used a convenience sample. Nine-hundred sixty-four undergraduates enrolled in an introductory American Government class served as subjects, but no attempts were made to ensure demographic quotas. However, the gender and racial composition of the students do mirror the Oklahoma population at large. Further, the surveys were administered by one interviewer on the campus of Oklahoma State University during September 2007. Respondent selection and sampling frame biases, as well as interviewer effects (variance in appearance,

manner, and facial expression) may be the cause of the differences. For example, clustering interviews around locations like reservation smoke shops may very well distort the findings of a survey by over-representing the preferences of respondents who frequent smoke shops (and are likely to support tribes in taxation issues). Again, additional research within the general population of Oklahoma will be necessary to better understand the extent to which these negative attitudes prevail.

At the same time, the suggestion to widen the sample should not suggest that these results are not valid. We justify our sample on a couple of reasons. First, childhood socialization is a leading predictor of adult attitudes (Searing, Wright and Rabinowitz 1976). Children learn attitudes from their parents and environment, and these attitudes persist throughout their lifetime (Searing, Wright and Rabinowitz 1976; Jennings and Niemi 1981; Achen 2002). In fact, attitudes are extremely hard to change. Therefore, using a student sample does give an indication of attitudes within the state and what future attitudes might be. Further, attitudes strengthen over the course of one's lifetime. Therefore our results can be assumed to strengthen overtime among our sample. This means the strong results we did get can be taken with confidence. Weaker results might be showing an initial pattern that will strengthen and develop overtime.

One of the results worth noting is the presence of no opinions in the sample. For most issues about 30% of the sample reported having no opinion. This result could be produced for a couple of reasons. First, students might genuinely hold no opinion on these issues. However, the question wording of the survey included a no opinion category and students who did not take the survey seriously might have been more likely to indicate no opinion rather than take the time to fully answer the survey. One of the future goals of this research is to implement this survey on a larger scale within other universities in Oklahoma, as well as with a representative sample of non-students. In doing so, we plan to force a response from respondents by eliminating the "no opinion" category. While the amount of no opinions might look large, we would like to point out the large probabilities in many sections of favorable and unfavorable views. Given this, we are not concerned with the proportion of no opinions, though we would correct for this in subsequent surveys.

Overall, the results suggest a lack of support for current taxation and self governance policies of Native Americans within Oklahoma



college students. As future policies are developed, and current policies reviewed, it is important to understand the climate towards Native Americans within Oklahoma. At the same time, factors did lead to more supportive attitudes. One of the most important is favorableness towards tribes, Native American business and casinos. The extent to which Oklahoma can promote a more favorable context, the more likely these attitudes will be supportive.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Additional policy areas and questions were used, but the analysis of these is beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> The question asked, "How aware do you think you are about local and state-wide current events?"

<sup>3</sup> The question asked, "How aware do you think you are about American Indian society, culture and history?"

<sup>4</sup> The question asked, "Is your hometown considered large (such as Oklahoma City or Tulsa), middle-sized (such as Stillwater) or small (under a few thousand people)?"

<sup>5</sup> The question asked, "How close is your hometown from a reservation or Indian Nation?"

<sup>6</sup> The question asked, "In which of the following ethnic/racial categories do you identify yourself?"

<sup>7</sup> The question asked, "What would you consider to be your political party affiliation?"

<sup>8</sup> The question asked, "Which of the following best describes your political outlook?"

<sup>9</sup> The question asked, "Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Oklahoma Indian tribes?"

<sup>10</sup> The question asked, "Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Indian business people?"

<sup>11</sup> The question asked, "Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of casinos?"

<sup>12</sup> Agreement includes those who agree or strongly agree; disagreement includes those who disagree or strongly disagree.

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**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OKLAHOMA  
MARRIAGE INITIATIVE TO INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING  
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES**

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The Oklahoma Marriage Initiative (OMI) is the first large scale program in the country to promote marriage. One of the main audiences for marriage promotion is low-income families. This study provides the historical context and background of how the OMI has been implemented. In particular, this study examines the implementation of the OMI to TANF recipients. This study provides the background of the OMI and raises some issues related to its implementation. These issues include how the goals of the program are defined, lack of caseworker reinforcement, and the need to address other issues related to poverty that impedes the development of healthy relationships.

**In 1999 Oklahoma** launched a large scale statewide initiative to promote marriage. The goal of the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative (OMI) is to strengthen marriages and reduce the number of divorces in Oklahoma. The OMI is far reaching and not limited to one particular audience. A major focus of the OMI is to train individuals to lead marriage

education workshops that promote marital stability through the teaching of communication and relationship skills. Since it began, OMI has trained thousands of workshop leaders from many backgrounds including the religious, public, and not-for-profits sectors. The funding for OMI has come almost entirely from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. TANF was created as a part of federal welfare reform legislation that was enacted in 1996. One of the goals of welfare reform was to encourage two-parent families, particularly among low-income populations. Although OMI is broader than just low-income populations, it has several particular programs that are geared toward low-income individuals. One program in particular, Within My Reach (WMR), was developed specifically for low-income individuals, not couples. Currently the WMR curriculum is being offered to TANF clients in several Oklahoma Department of Human Services offices across the state. The focus of this study is the implementation of OMI and how WMR is presented to TANF recipients.

This paper is a case study of policy implementation in one particular site. This study uses qualitative techniques of interviews and observation. While it contains some elements of both the top-down and bottom-up perspectives, this study fits into the implementation literature as a bottom-up approach (Hill & Hupe 2002; Lipsky 1980). It contains an interesting story of a bottom-up policy implementation. This paper does not test any specific hypothesis, but rather is intended to provide a historical background and context for the way in which the OMI has been implemented to TANF clients. The first section deals with the research related to marriage in the low-income population. The next section deals with the history, goals, and methods of OMI. Research for this section was based on statements of public officials involved with the beginning of OMI. The next section looks at OMI from bottom up approach and deals with how OMI is implemented in one particular welfare office. Data is gathered from interviews with six agency staff, two TANF clients, and a WMR class observation. The focus of the study is how OMI reaches TANF clients and how it came to be that way. In particular, this study examines the Within My Reach curriculum and how it is administered to TANF clients. Finally, this study concludes with a discussion of some potential implementation issues. It is hoped that this study can provide a starting point for further research and analysis.

## MARRIAGE AND POVERTY

The importance of family structure in relation to poverty first gained attention in the mid 1960s with the Moynihan Report. The report, entitled, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action” was written by Daniel Patrick Moynihan when he was an employee of the Labor Department early in the Johnson administration. It argued that much of the poverty among African-American families was related to the decline of the number of two biological parent families among African-Americans. The report was controversial and was seen at the time as “blaming the victim” (Benson-Smith 2005). Since that time research has been conducted on family structure and child well-being. Seefeldt and Smock (2004) note that, “The upshot of this research is that, on average, children fare better when living with their married, biological parents, provided the marriage is a low conflict one” (10). They continue, “Children who grow up in other contexts face somewhat increased odds of experiencing negative outcomes such as lower school achievement, and behavioral and emotional problems” (10). McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) argue that about half of this difference in outcomes is related to higher socio-economic status among married couples. They note that, “Low income – and the sudden drop in income that is often associated with divorce – is the most important factor in children’s lower achievement in single-parent homes, accounting for about half of the disadvantage” (3).

Concern about family structure became a major issue in the debate over welfare reform in 1996 (Haskins 2006). The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and replaced it with TANF. Critics of AFDC claimed that it both reduced work effort among recipients and produced a disincentive to marry (Fagan 2001; Haskins 2006). TANF was designed to address these concerns. First, it required thirty hours of work-related activities from participants in exchange for assistance. Second, it encouraged the formation and maintenance of two parent families. TANF laid four specific goals that are related to work and family structure. They are,

- 1) To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the home of relatives;

- 2) To end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- 3) To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
- 4) To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families (Children).

As a result of welfare reform policy makers and researchers begin to examine ways to encourage marriage among TANF recipients. Kathryn Edin (2000), using several hundred qualitative interviews, has identified five potential barriers to marriage among low-income women (Edin, 2000). They are “affordability, respectability, control, trust, and domestic violence” (Edin 2000, 118). Affordability deals with the many economic concerns that low-income women face. Theoretically, bringing a male partner into a household will increase the total household income. Edin (2000) finds that this is not the only concern among low-income women. She notes that, “though the total earnings a father can generate is clearly the most important dimension for mothers, so is the regularity, of those earnings, the effort men expended finding and keeping work, and the source of his income” (Edin 2000, 117). Other research has indicated that inflation adjusted income for men with lower levels of education has declined over the same time period that the number of mother-only families has increased. Some researchers have argued that this decline in earnings among men has played a part in the decline of two-parent families (Seefeldt & Smock, 2004). In addition, a study by Bitler et al. found that the emphasis on work surrounding welfare reform may in fact lead to decreases in marriage as more work leads to more women becoming economically self-sufficient (2004).

The second issue of respectability is also related to economic concerns. Edin (2000) points out that, “Even within very poor communities, residents make class-based distinctions among themselves” (120). She continues that most of the women she interviewed held the “eventual goal [to] become ‘respectable,’ and they believed that respectability was greatly enhanced by a marriage tied to a routinely employed partner earning wages significantly above the legal minimum” (Edin 2000, 120). This observation ties into other research that has found that the goal of many low-income women is marriage



and that low-income women hold the same views of marriage as those with middle and upper incomes (Ciabattari 2006; Litcher, Batson, & Brown 2004; Mauldon, London, Fein, Patterson, & Sommer 2004).

The third barrier that Edin identified was control. She noted that many low-income women believed that potential male partners would hold authoritarian views of his role in the home. They feared that these men would want to “take charge” and be the “head of the house” (Edin 2000, 121). They were also concerned about giving up control over how their children are being raised. In addition, most women expressed concern about time restraints and how a husband might take time that a mother might otherwise spend with her child (Edin 2000).

The fourth barrier is trust. Most of the women expressed concern about the infidelity of potential male partners. Most of the women had personal experiences with men being unfaithful or had known of such experiences by their “friends, relatives, and neighbors” (Edin 2000, 125).

The final barrier that Edin discusses is domestic violence. Research has shown that between 20 and 32 percent of welfare recipients are currently experiencing domestic violence, while between 55 and 65 percent have experienced violence in the past (Postmus 2004). Edin identifies two possible explanations for the higher incidence of domestic violence among low-income couples. “First, mothers sometimes linked episodes of violence to fathers’ fears about their ability to provide, especially in light of increased state efforts toward child support enforcement” (Edin 2000, 126-127). The second explanation offered for domestic violence is that, “some mothers living in crime ridden, inner-city neighborhoods talked about family violence as a carry-over from street violence” (Edin 2000, 127). For any marriage initiative to be successful it must find ways to deal with the barriers that Edin has outlined.

In 2002, the Bush administration proposed the “Healthy Marriage Initiative” which aims to “help couples who choose marriage for themselves develop the skills and knowledge necessary to form and sustain healthy marriage” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families as quoted by Seefeldt and Smock 2004, 12). The federal initiative in many ways reflects the state based Oklahoma Marriage Initiative.

## THE OKLAHOMA MARRIAGE INITIATIVE

The marriage initiative grew from a report that was issued by economists from the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. The focus of the report was on raising the per capita personal income in Oklahoma. As Governor Keating noted in his State of the State address in February 1999, the report made four recommendations. These recommendations included, a) infrastructure investment, including bridges and highways, b) tax policy, including reducing, “those taxes that discourage investment, saving, and productivity” c) increase the number of college graduates in Oklahoma, and lastly, d) make Oklahoma a right-to-work state (Keating, 1999). In addition to those factors, the report also concluded that there were several social indicators that seemed to hinder Oklahoma’s economic growth. Testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee then director of the Oklahoma Health and Human Services Department Jerry Regier (2001), stated that the report’s authors, “mentioned Oklahoma’s high divorce rate, high rates of child deaths due to child abuse, and equally high rates of out-of-wedlock births” as issues that hindered Oklahoma’s economic growth (2). Regier went on to quote an editorial by an economist from Oklahoma State University that stated, “Oklahoma’s high divorce rate and low per – capita income are interrelated. They hold hands. They push and pull each other. There’s no faster way for a married woman with children to become poor than to suddenly become a single mom” (2). As a result of this report Governor Keating laid out several policy goals in his 1999 State of the State address including, a) reducing the numbers of divorces in Oklahoma by one third by 2010 and b) reducing the rate of out-of-wedlock births in Oklahoma by one third by 2010. To help reach these goals, Keating convened a Conference on Marriage in March 1999 (Keating, 1999). Regier notes that Keating invited “30 leaders from each of seven sectors,” these seven sectors included, “community service providers, education, business, media, religious, government, and legal” (2). The OMI began in 1999 as a result of this conference. Governor Keating laid out four large scale goals when OMI began. They are, “Reduce the divorce rate, Reduce out-of-wedlock births, Reduce alcohol and drug addiction, and Reduce child abuse and neglect” (Regier, 2001). Since its development, OMI has remained popular among policy makers in Oklahoma. Its implementation has continued under a new governor,

Brad Henry, and under a new director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Howard Hendrick (Dion 2006).

The OMI is an umbrella organization that houses several different programs. To achieve its broader goals, OMI's current focus is to "strengthen families and build healthy marriages through readily accessible marriage education services" (Dion 2006, 3). The marriage education that OMI offers includes workshops that teach couples communication and relationship skills, trains individuals to be workshop leaders, and offers "Family Expectations" a program geared toward couples expecting a baby or who have just given birth. In addition, OMI provides research on marriage and child well-being (OMI). Each of these services are offered free of charge and are not means – tested in anyway. However, "in exchange for receiving free workshop training from the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP) curriculum developers, volunteers agree to provide at least four free workshops in their communities" (Dion 2006, 5). The majority of funding for OMI comes from the TANF block grant from the federal government. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services has set aside 10 million dollars of TANF funds for OMI. As Regier testified in 2001,

Oklahoma has dramatically reduced welfare roles by 80% over the past six years, leaving approximately \$100 million in 'surplus.' This welfare surplus provided an excellent resource and Governor Keating boldly asked the DHS Board to set aside 10% or \$10 million for Marriage Initiative programs and services. The Board concurred and the money has been reserved to fund strategies to strengthen marriage and reduce divorce (3).

OMI established a contract with the public relations firm, Public Strategies Inc. (PSI) "to develop and manage the initiative" (Dion 2006, 2). The development of OMI proceeded largely along two tracks. The first was a media campaign to educate Oklahomans about the benefits of marriage. The second track was to develop services that could be provided to couples to strengthen relationship skills (Dion 2006). The second track was chosen as the higher priority for two main reasons (Dion 2006, 2). As Dion notes,

First, the OMI expected that focused services would be necessary in order to create not just attitude change, but behavior

change. Second, OMI leaders were concerned that media campaigns stressing the importance of healthy marriage could stimulate demand for services that could not be met until capacity was developed (2).

The services that OMI decided to provide included the marriage workshops based on the PREP curriculum. PREP is in essence a communication improvement curriculum designed for couples. PREP was developed by clinical psychologists and family and marriage therapists (Stanley, Markman, Peters, & Leber, 1995). PREP's curriculum is roughly 12 hours and "was designed to teach partners skills and ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy" (Stanley et al. 1995, 393). It has shown effectiveness in several empirical studies; those studies however have dealt largely with white, middle-class couples (Boo 2003; Ooms & Wilson, 2004). PREP training is one of the main focal points of OMI. Since its inception, OMI has trained nearly 2,000 workshop leaders from across the state and across public and private sectors (OMI). In addition, several state agencies have trained personnel to provide PREP workshops. One reason that Dion (2006) notes for training agency staff is that, "public agencies tend to serve low – income clients, who otherwise may be difficult to reach" (5). Some of the targeted groups that have received PREP include,

high school students, adult students, GED class participants, prison inmates and their partners / spouses, adolescent first offenders and their parents, TANF recipients, adoptive and foster parents, low-income parents, and members of the military and their partners / spouses, base and post employees (Dion 5 adapted from chart).

PREP was first offered to TANF clients in Oklahoma in October 2003 (Bolerjack 2007). It began in the Midwest City office located in Oklahoma County (Bolerjack 2007; Kinzie 2007 ). Shortly after PREP began to be offered concerns were raised about the middle class tilt of the curriculum (Kinzie 2007 ). Since that time however, researchers associated with the development of PREP have developed Within My Reach (WMR), an education curriculum geared toward disadvantaged individuals. WMR curriculum has been taught to TANF recipients since October 2005 (OKDHS 2006).

WMR was developed specifically for low-income individuals that may or may not be in a romantic relationship. WMR “is a relationship decisions and skills program for helping individuals achieve their goals in relationships, family, and marriage” (Stanley, Pearson, & Kline 2005). It is based on PREP and was developed by many of the same researchers and developers. The most important difference between PREP and WMR is that WMR is designed for individuals, not couples. As Stanley et al (2005) notes, there are two “fundamental premises” to WMR.

The first is that virtually all people have aspirations for relationships that are happy, healthy, and stable – and that these aspirations are most often expressed in terms of a desire for success in marriage. The second [is] that the decisions one makes in romantic attachments will affect the possibility of success in every other aspect of life – especially in child rearing and employment (17-18).

Stanley continues, “Taken together, this new curriculum is designed to improve the chances for participants to attain relationship success for themselves and the benefit of their children” (18). Stanley goes on to outline four “relationship goals and outcomes” (18). They include,

- 1) Helping those in viable relationships to cultivate, protect, and stabilize their unions, and to marry if desired;
- 2) Helping those in damaging relationships to leave safely; and/  
or
- 3) Helping those desiring a romantic relationship to choose future partners wisely.
- 4) Helping those who are unsure about either the viability or health of their present relationship, or unsure about what they aspire to in the future, to understand more clearly their situation and how to move forward toward their goals (18).

Stanley also mentions that the WMR curriculum is useful for improving communication within any relationship, not just romantic ones. WMR is based on three broad areas of major focus (Stanley, et al 2005).

The first focus area “is about defining healthy and unhealthy relationships by focusing on the themes of safety, family background, [and] expectations” (Stanley et al 2005, 19). The idea of safety is defined by three major types. First is “emotional safety” defined as “being able to talk openly and well, being supportive, being able to talk without fighting, etc (5). The second safety type is “personal safety” defined as “freedom from fear of physical or emotional harm and intimidation” (5). The last is “commitment safety” which is “security of a clear future, mutual investment, and fidelity” (5). Participants discuss what constitutes a healthy versus an unhealthy relationship. In addition, participants are taught the “sliding vs. deciding” framework to evaluate decisions. Someone is understood to slide into a decision when they enter a “relationship transition” without clear forethought of potential adverse consequences. Deciding therefore implies a better understanding of the future risks and rewards of the relationship transition. The sliding vs. deciding framework came from research done on unmarried cohabiting couples. However, it “also provides a very useful way to discuss risks of various other types of relationship transitions that occur without clear decisions about potential longer term consequences: sexual involvement, pregnancy, cohabitation, marriage, and so forth” (21). Stanley notes that low-income individuals are not more likely to slide into decisions than middle and upper-income individuals, but that sliding into poor decisions has a disproportionately more negative impact for low-income individuals. Stanley also noted that TANF participants in Oklahoma experienced “an extremely strong reaction denoting relevance and usefulness for [the sliding vs. deciding] way of thinking” (22).

The second area of focus “is conflict management and affect regulation” (23). This part of the curriculum focus’s on “negative interaction and conflict” and on domestic violence in particular (Stanley et al. 2005, 23). Participants are taught about negative interactions between adults and the impact these interactions have on children living in the home. In addition, WMR outlines some behavior warning signs associated with domestic violence. Ideas about negative relationships are reinforced in this section and participants are encouraged to recognize the warnings signs, leave dangerous or potentially dangerous relationships, and to avoid such relationships in the future. Other areas of focus in this section are encouraging participants to take “time outs” when interactions start to become heated and to use the “speaker /

listener technique.” The speaker / listener technique encourages participants to listen and not speak while the other person is speaking. It also encourages participants to repeat back what the other person has said in the participants own words.

The final focus area encourages participants to “go deeper in their thinking about relationships, aspirations they hold, and the importance of various dynamics for how their children may do in life” (26). Stanley lays out several relationship issues that are considered in the final section of the WMR curriculum. They include,

gender distrust and infidelity, multiple partner fertility, risks to children of multiple transitions of romantic partners in the home, risks in partner choices and relationships that are associated with prior abuse, forgiveness, commitment risks and rewards, information about marriage and children, and complexities of how that information may or may not relate to the situation of a particular participants, and guidance for dealing constructively with step-parenting type dynamics with ex-partners (27).

In addition, participants are encouraged to examine their relationship goals and how those goals might be achieved. Additional considerations are discussed regarding how the issues taught in the WMR class are applicable to all types of relationships, including with the participants children, employers, and caseworkers.

### **TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES APPLICATION PROCESS**

To understand how WMR is implemented to TANF clients, it is important to understand how it fits in the context of the entire application process.<sup>1</sup> Most initial TANF applications are made on a walk-in basis to any Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) office. The client fills out an application and can either turn it in and wait to be contacted by a caseworker or can wait to see an initial caseworker that will screen the application. The initial caseworker then screens the application to determine presumptive eligibility and discusses with the applicant the information provided on the application and what programs the applicant may be eligible for. Once the initial worker determines that the client may be eligible for TANF the application is assigned to a

caseworker. The caseworker that is assigned the application provides the client with an appointment time for an interview and outlines items the client needs to bring to the interview to verify information provided on the application. Items may include paycheck stubs, third party statements to verify living situations, bank statements, school records for children, and identification. It is during this interview process that eligibility is determined.

Once the client is determined eligible they are required to participate in a week long (Monday – Friday) orientation class.<sup>2</sup> During the first day of orientation clients are given an education assessment to determine their reading and math levels. On Tuesday's client are administered the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI). This instrument is designed to determine the probability of a substance abuse problem (Institute). Clients that register with a high probability of substance abuse are required to have a urine analysis (UA). The SASSI test is also contracted out by OKDHS, although OKDHS employees can become certified to administer it (Mears 2007). On Wednesday's clients participate in the first session of WMR. The class is presented in a discussion / workshop format by someone trained by OMI. Thursday's are for "staffing," in which the client, caseworker and program representatives discuss what work-related activity the client will participate in. These activities can include GED classes, job-training, and/or job search. On the last day of orientation, clients participate in the second half of WMR

## **METHOD**

### **DATA**

Data for this study is qualitative. It was taken from interviews with clients and caseworkers and observation of a WMR class. The site chosen for this study was the OKDHS office in Midwest City, Oklahoma. Midwest City is a suburb of Oklahoma City and is located in Oklahoma County. This site was chosen because it was the first site for PREP and WMR in Oklahoma. Interviews were conducted with six agency employees. The first was with Social Service Specialist Gary Mears. The second interview was with John Bolerjack. Bolerjack is a former supervisor of TANF caseworkers and played a large part in the way that PREP classes were originally given to TANF recipients. John



is currently still employed by OKDHS, but is a supervisor in another area and no longer deals directly with TANF workers, clients, or cases. Interviews were conducted with three TANF caseworkers that wish to remain anonymous. These interviews were conducted and the WMR class was observed on Friday April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. A final interview was conducted on November 7, 2007 by telephone with Mary Jo Kinzie, TANF program field representative. Mrs. Kinzie works at the state office of OKDHS and she is the liaison between OKDHS and OMI. The class observed consisted of two TANF recipients. The class was lead by Gary Mears. Gary indicated that class sizes average from 2 to 5 participants. WMR classes at this site are given either by Gary Mears or Hazel Kesner. Hazel is a volunteer and former counselor and college professor (Mears 2007). Both Gary and Hazel received training from OMI with regard to leading workshops in both PREP and WMR.

## **RESULTS**

### **HISTORY OF OMI IMPLEMENTATION TO TANF CLIENTS**

Although OMI began in 1999, it did not become a requirement for some TANF recipients until 2003. It was first offered in the Midwest City office in October 2003. It started there almost by accident. Mary Jo Kinzie (2007 ) noted that the thinking on how to present the material to TANF clients operated on “two prongs.” One prong was at the OKDHS state office level, where they were “looking for ways to get the PREP material out” to more individuals and communities, particularly low-income communities (Kinzie 2007 ). The second prong was at the Midwest City OKDHS office. Representatives from OMI had come to the Midwest City office to encourage TANF caseworkers and supervisors to refer TANF clients to a PREP workshop that was being offered in Midwest City. It so happened that about this time a contract to run two days of the orientation class was set to expire. John Bolerjack, an OKDHS agency employee who at the time supervised TANF caseworkers, felt that the communication skills offered by the PREP curriculum would be beneficial to TANF clients. John discussed with OMI and PSI representatives the idea of filling this up coming vacancy in the orientation classes with the PREP curriculum. The idea was approved and PREP began being implemented in the orientation classes

in October 2003. Initially OMI sent trained individuals to the office to lead the classes, including Hazel Kesner. Eventually some agency staff, including Gary Mears, received the PREP training from OMI. Over the next six months John Bolerjack felt that he had noticed some changes in the way clients interacted with OKDHS staff as a result of the PREP curriculum (Bolerjack 2007). In an email to Mary Myrick, from PSI, dated May 21, 2004 he stated that,

I personally believe that we have experienced a great result from it. We have several specific clients that I watched change through this class. The change has been very noticeable in these individuals. Our workers have also commented on the improvement in certain individuals. Also, I speak with our client[s] personally in every other class [and] as a class, they are telling me that they are learning things that will help them with relationships and with family issues, the first goal of the class. One other big indicator is the raw number of calls of complaints about worker actions, they are greatly reduced, and this in a period of continued reduction in our TANF rolls. Our office has reduced the rolls by about 40% in the last 18 months and increased participation rates as well.

Gary Mears estimates that roughly 1,000 clients have been through either the PREP or WMR classes in the Midwest City office from October 2003 to April 2007. As a result of the perceived success in the Midwest City office, PREP began being used in more offices across the state in 2004 and 2005 (Mears 2007). In particular, other offices in Area III began to use PREP in their orientation process. OKDHS divides jurisdiction into six areas across the state. Area III includes Oklahoma County and Canadian County. Mary Jo Kinzie notes that much of the push for using PREP as a part of the orientation process came from the leadership of Area III director Debbie Sexton (2007). In October of 2005 the PREP curriculum was officially replaced by WMR (OKDHS 2006).

#### WITHIN MY REACH CLASS

The WMR class takes place in a conference room at the Midwest City office. Participants are given WMR workbooks that are provided

by curriculum developers. Gary Mears lead the class of two TANF clients. An overhead projector was used with WMR overhead materials provided by the developers. The class was done in a very informal discussion style with active participation by the TANF clients. The workbooks included several question and answer sections and Gary paused several times to allow clients to complete some of those sections. All the material in the workbook was covered, though not necessarily in the exact order of the workbook. Marriage was seldom discussed and most of the examples discussed, both by Gary and the clients dealt with communication between the clients and their children. Gary indicated in an interview that he “doesn’t push marriage” in these classes but instead hopes to improve client communication skills with their children and with future employers (Mears 2007). John Bolerjack indicated that he sees the classes, not as a way to push marriage on TANF clients but rather as helping clients learn to have “better relationships with every person in their lives through communication and to leave bad relationships sooner” (Bolerjack 2007). Mary Jo Kinzie also emphasized the focus on the enhancement of communication skills and the possibility of the WMR curriculum to help “families feel more in control” of their lives (2007).

## CASEWORKER INTERVIEWS

Caseworker interviews were conducted with three caseworkers to try to answer several questions. **What and how much did caseworkers know about OMI generally and WMR specifically?** Of the three only one felt that he/she knew much about the WMR curriculum. The other two mentioned that they “didn’t know enough about it” or “had not been trained on it.” The one with knowledge about WMR felt that it “doesn’t do much good.” All of the three had heard of OMI and understood it to have the goal of helping clients in their relationships. **Do they do any follow up to reinforce the WMR material?** All three caseworkers indicated that they did not attempt to reinforce any of the WMR curriculum. Opportunities for reinforcement could include the initial interview prior to the WMR classes, the end of orientation class when clients are assigned their work-related activity, and during the required 90 day follow up. One caseworker explained that after orientation class that they “concentrate on participation and

don't have time to follow up." Under TANF states are required to have at least 50% of their TANF caseloads participating in work-related activities for 30 hours a week. Each worker is required to keep their participation rate, the number of their total cases divided by the number of cases with individuals participating, at 50%. Each of the workers discussed the pressure they feel to keep their participation rate high and how that is where the majority of client communications is focused. **Do they notice any changes in client's communication skills after the orientation class?** None of the caseworkers felt that they noticed any change in client communication skills after the WMR classes. One caseworker noted that "some clients have mentioned that they learned a lot" but that caseworker notes that they "don't notice a change." **In general do they view marriage as an important goal for TANF clients?** Each of the caseworkers felt that marriage is a positive goal for TANF clients, but none felt that it was realistic. One of the workers noted that the clients "have enough trouble all ready" without having to worry about marriage. Another worker mentioned that clients have "basic needs that have to be met" before marriage could be an option. The third caseworker said that marriage would be a "good goal for the family and kids" but that the clients, "don't want to be married because they have the man, the kids, the sex, and the free money." That worker also indicated that he/she felt that the clients often were not honest about their relationships with the father(s) of their children and are often receiving some assistance from them that goes unreported.

#### CLIENT INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with both participants of the class that was observed. One client was a Caucasian female in her early 20's that has a four-year-old child and a nine-month-old baby. She stated that she is currently still legally married but had left her husband due to domestic violence. She stated that she has had another relationship since, with the father of the nine-month-old, but had ended the relationship due to substance abuse issues. The client indicated that she had substance abuse issues as well, but had recently been through treatment. The other client was an African-American female in her mid-thirties with a 20-year old and a 15-year old child. She stated that she has never been married and that "she never saw herself" as getting married. She also

stated that she had been sexually abused as a child and that she had issues with trust stemming from that abuse. Both clients felt that they had learned a lot from the WMR classes, particularly how to communicate better with their children and with other people in their lives.

### **DISCUSSION**

It must be noted that this study is limited as to how well it can be generalized across all OKDHS offices statewide. The focus of this study was on one particular welfare office. However, it can offer insight into some possible implementation issues. One issue is how goals are defined. If the goal of OMI, with regard to TANF clients, is to increase marriage among that population then it is not likely to be successful. As the research by Edin (2000) points out, there are several barriers to low-income individuals getting married and not all are addressed by the WMR curriculum. In particular, WMR does not address any economic concerns and those were deemed most important by low-income single mothers. This study was only concerned with how OMI is implemented to TANF clients, not the entire low-income population of Oklahoma. If OMI wants to increase marriage among the low-income population, it may need to explore other ways to reach that population. This is particularly true because of the sharp decline in TANF cases since welfare reform. Oklahoma went from an average monthly TANF case load of 13,127 in FY2005 to a monthly average caseload of 11,381 in FY2006, a decrease of 13.30% in one year (OKDHS 2006). As the number of TANF clients continues to decline the number of people that can be potentially exposed to the WMR curriculum declines. The WMR curriculum does deal positively with some of the other issues raised by Edin. In particular, is the strong emphasis it places on domestic violence. Clients are taught many of the warning signs that lead to domestic violence and are encouraged to leave those relationships. In addition, clients are taught what makes a healthy vs. an unhealthy relationship. Helping the clients make these distinctions is important and could possibly lead to healthier relationships in the future. Another problem with marriage as a goal is that it implicitly assumes that clients do not want to marry. As noted, research indicates that low-income individuals hold the same desire to marry as upper and middle income individuals. Therefore, the focus of OMI, at least with regard to low-income

individuals, should not be on attitude change. With these issues in mind the effectiveness of WMR should be measured not in terms of whether clients eventually marry, but rather in terms of how much they have learned about healthy relationships and effective communication. To achieve this goal it would seem that reinforcement from caseworkers would be essential. It is not likely that a two day exposure to WMR is enough to change client attitude or behavior. More research needs to be conducted, on a statewide basis, to determine the level of reinforcement by caseworkers of WMR and whether the level of reinforcement has any effect. As this research found, there is little or no caseworker reinforcement and there is also little notice of change after the WMR classes. Supervisor John Bolerjack noted that he noticed changes among clients after exposure to the PREP curriculum; however this observation was not noticed by the current caseworkers, who arguably have more direct contact with the clients. A possible explanation for the change, particularly the fewer complaint calls, that John noticed could be the fact that caseloads were reduced by 40% over the same time period. Fewer clients could mean fewer calls. In addition, John specifically mentioned a reduction in the number of complaints about worker actions; it's possible that the actions the clients were calling to complain about were caseworkers closing their cases. This could explain the initial volume of calls, the reduction of calls, and the 40% case reduction that was experienced over those six months. However, it may also be true that caseworkers have too micro a view to notice broader changes in TANF clients. As noted, caseworkers are most concerned with client participation in work activities. This focus may set up a more adversarial relationship between the caseworkers and clients. One of the caseworkers in particular seemed to take a more adversarial tone about TANF clients. In addition, as clients move in and out of the program time with caseworkers may be short and sporadic. This would make it difficult for caseworkers to notice any long term changes. Longitudinal research needs to be done that follows up with clients over the space of several time periods to see if attitude and behavior changes are present as a result of WMR.

Another implementation concern deals with the WMR materials. The curriculum is relatively new and untested. However, as Stanley et al (2005) noted the curriculum is based on empirical research and is currently being evaluated by OMI and PSI. The materials seem to offer

ways for clients to learn to improve their communication skills. However, as the caseworkers noted, clients face many more issues than successful communication skills. Both clients in the class that was observed had several barriers to overcome. Just between the two clients there was domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse, and lack of a high – school diploma. As Gary Mears noted, “nearly everyone that walks through the door has difficult problems” (Mears 2007). To be successful the barriers that clients bring with them must be addressed. Expanded services may be necessary to address the mental health, substance abuse, and other issues to which TANF clients are disproportionately exposed. Only when these issues are effectively dealt with can clients become successful employees and successful romantic partners. The WMR curriculum could play a role, but more may need to be done.

A second issue with the materials is how they are presented. The success of WMR, in some ways, depends on the quality of the person presenting it. OMI has seemed to take great care to standardize the curriculum, by requiring workshop leaders to attend training and by providing the workbooks and other teaching materials. Even so, evaluations of WMR may need to control for teacher quality.

This study looks at implementation from both the top down and the bottom up perspective in order to present a somewhat fuller picture. It is a study of policy implementation not a policy evaluation. It could serve as a guidepost for a full evaluation by identifying possible implementation issues that could affect the outcome. It also adds to the bottom up literature by showing an example of how agency personnel affected the way policy was implemented.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The application process detailed here is from one particular welfare office. However, the application process is similar statewide.

<sup>2</sup> The orientation process is made, for the most part of the local office level. However, the process described here is applied across all offices in Oklahoma County.

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**PROSPERITY BOUND:  
OKLAHOMA—100 YEARS AND COUNTING**

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Oklahoma's 100 year state history reflects an inconsistent economic prosperity. We seem caught in an endless cycle of Boom and Bust; never quite breaking free into substantial, sustainable growth. Given the state's diversity in material and human resources, the question explored in this essay is, "Why?" Building on Richard Hofstadter's pioneering chronicle of *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*, the hypothesis examined here suggests that religious fundamentalism and evangelicalism combine with political populism to foster an anti-intellectual environment in Oklahoma which is not conducive to solving long-term economic challenges. The dominant traditionalistic and individualistic political cultures these denominational imbalances carry with them sustain this cyclic status quo. Correlation analysis of county-level religious, political, economic, and demographic data shows support for the hypothesis.

**In 2007, Oklahoma closed the chapter** on its first century as a state; celebrating the tremendous achievements that have defined who and what we are. But, as we prepare to write the opening paragraphs of our second century, it is vital that we not overlook, nor diminish, the significance of our challenges, the most significant of which reflect the prosperity (or lack of it) that the state has experienced. Prosperity in Oklahoma is, at best, fleeting: always around the next bend or over the next hill... somewhere off in an ill-defined and less well envisioned day. To risk an unabashed Yogi Berra-ism, Oklahoma's future is in its future. In fact, Oklahoma's future has always been in its future, from the time of territorial expansion, through statehood just after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to today. At least, that is where one might be led to look as a result of a careful reading of the state's inconsistent economic, political and social past. At almost any point in Oklahoma's history, those in the know and in positions of political and economic authority directed attention to the future, even when the economic climate was experiencing a boom time. Thus, only twenty years after statehood was achieved, and after describing the tremendous wealth from what turned out to be the peak year of oil and gas production in the state (1927), Charles Gould, then Director of Oklahoma's Geological Survey, questioned what Oklahoma would fall back on when the oil and gas were gone. Listing vast mineral holdings of everything from coal, asphalt, zinc, gypsum and glass sands to novaculite, Gould judged that these minerals "are the very minerals which in fact form the basis of modern civilization and industry. Having these things, *any state is bound to develop.*" [emphasis added] (Gould 1928). Things might have been good, Oklahoma had just produced \$500 million dollars worth of wealth from oil and gas, enough (had it been equally distributed) for \$250 dollars for every man, woman and child in the state, and enough to rank Oklahoma second in the United States in per capita wealth production in 1927. But, Oklahoma's future was yet to come, or so Gould seemed to imply. Sixty years later, in the heyday of political confusion and economic uncertainty following the oil bust of the early 1980s, the Oklahoma state legislature would create a special public-private partnership designed to redirect economic development strategies in order to enhance the climate for economic growth and point the way to stable, economic prosperity for the state. Its name? Oklahoma Futures (Rosenthal 1993). Apparently, Oklahoma's future was still in its future. Today, over twenty years later, with few

specific bases for economic stability and direction clearly in sight, and with the economic hopes of some Oklahomans riding on such fragile dreams as the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority and Lockheed's (now ill-fated) VentureStar, Oklahoma's future still appears to be in its future.<sup>1</sup>

The question this essay addresses is, "Why?" Why does Oklahoma's prosperity always seem to be positioned at some vaguely (if at all) defined point in the future? Put another way, why has Oklahoma not been able to build an economy that is adequately diversified and modern, thus stable enough to withstand the devastating swings of boom and bust that characterize Oklahoma's economic and political history? Why have not the natural resource blessings so cogently identified by Charles Gould as essential to modern civilization been sufficient to found the basis of such an economy?<sup>2</sup> Why is Oklahoma's history, grounded firmly in the economics of frontier expansion, so seemingly at odds with its potential? Building on Richard Hofstadter's pioneering chronicle of *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* (1963), the hypothesis examined here suggests that Oklahoma's religious heritage (which has been dominated by Protestant evangelical and fundamentalist sects and denominations), combined with a political tradition forged in the fires of prairie populism, has fostered an anti-intellectual environment in Oklahoma that historically has militated against building a substantial, sustainable, growth-oriented economy. The dominant traditionalistic and individualistic political cultures these denominational imbalances carry with them sustain this cyclic status quo (Elazar 1970, 1972; Johnson 1976). Even as the state's history and the technologies of modern society have traveled into the future, the milieu of Oklahoma's political economy has remained on the frontier of its past; it has not progressed beyond that stage, maturing into a thriving, modern stable economic system.

### **HISTORY: LIBERAL ECONOMICS AND INTELLECTUALISM**

A starting point to understanding the complex interrelationship between religion, politics, and an immature economic environment is the observation that resources, by themselves, do not make an economy; people do. It is in the realm of people's beliefs, and in their actions that

reflect those beliefs, where the effects of populist political ideology and Protestant evangelical and fundamentalist sectarian viewpoints can be most powerfully observed. This is particularly seen in relationship to the emergence of western liberalism, key elements of which are political and economic freedom. Without either of these, proponents argue, economic prosperity will falter. In fact, it is one of the articles of faith underlying the western tradition of liberalism that a cultural environment characterized by political and economic liberty is an essential precondition for economic prosperity.<sup>3</sup> But there is much more to reaching prosperity (at the level of the entire economy) than this. Simple economic exchange—trade, acquisitiveness, and personal greed—and attitudes and actions toward economic problem-solving (aimed at long-term growth rather than short-term, spur of the moment problem solving), must be transformed if primitive economies are to evolve into complex stable ones. Something must engender the drive and vision that will allow (or encourage) individuals to exploit whatever resources are available to build what will become, in its totality, a prosperous economy within a context of political and economic liberty. Liberalism presupposes that what Max Weber termed the Spirit of Capitalism must emerge. If Weber was correct, a core component of that capitalistic spirit was (and would remain) the Protestant ethic as encapsulated in Martin Luther's concept of "the calling" (Weber 1998). Weber argued that capitalism first emerged in Protestant countries of Northern Europe where it sustained its initial success. Mapping the world of contemporary economic success would tend to substantiate the core (if not necessarily the causal force) of Weber's argument.<sup>4</sup> The Heritage Foundation's annual ranking of countries with respect to their level of economic liberty consistently finds the western European, largely Protestant countries at the top of the list. For example, of the top 29 countries in the 1999 Index of Economic Freedom, 19 have a Judeo-Christian heritage, 22 are listed by the Freedom House as "Free," and, 19 have *per capita* GDPs in excess of \$10,000 (Freedom House 2001; Johnson, Holmes, and Kirkpatrick 1999).

Refining, expanding, and in many ways deepening Weber's narrow conception, Michael Novak contends that the creative spirit which is central to Christianity in general (and Catholicism in particular) is the essential leaven in the bread of capitalism's success. "At the inmost heart of a capitalistic system," Novak writes, "is confidence in the creative

capacity of the human person. As Catholic theology teaches, and as experience verifies, such confidence is well-placed. Each person is made in the image of God, the Creator. Each is called to be a co-creator and given the vocation to act creatively. Every co-creator is free, that is, expected both to assume responsibility and show initiative” (Novak 1993). Without such spiritually endowed creativity, the very source of which directs its exercise into both initiative and responsibility, capitalism would not succeed.

In each of these qualities, Oklahoma would appear to be well-stocked. Citizens of the state enjoy the same political freedoms as do citizens of the remaining 49 states. Oklahoma’s constitution, with its populist and progressive roots, provides the basis of broad democratic egalitarianism.<sup>5</sup> Oklahoma’s religious roots trace back well before statehood, at least to the 1722 French expedition led by Bourgmont (though this did not lead to wide spread Catholic influence throughout the Territory).<sup>6</sup> Protestant missions would find greater success in early 19th century Oklahoma Territory (Dale and Aldrich 1978). This religious heritage follows through to current times, where many Oklahomans point out with pride that “Little Dixie” is in the heart of the Bible belt (some even laying claim to its being the buckle on that belt).

Nonetheless, Oklahoma and Oklahomans in general have not seemed to prosper to the extent of the promise hinted at in its vast human and natural resource potential. In fact, some statistical indicators associated with social well being would suggest that, far from leading the country into prosperity (as its potential might portend), Oklahoma all too frequently seems to lead in the opposite direction: rates of divorce and teenage pregnancy in the state rank among the country’s highest (Oklahoma State Department of Health 2000; Nigh 2000); measures of per capita income for 2004 show Oklahomans ranked 39<sup>th</sup> out of 51 (including the District of Columbia), receiving only 85 cents for every dollar the average American wage earner achieves (a slight improvement over the previous ten years) (U.S. Commerce 2006a; Oklahoma Commerce 2000); for 2003, Oklahoma ranked 10th highest among the 50 states in forcible rapes, aggravated assault, and burglaries per 100,000 (U.S. Commerce 2006b). In that same year, Oklahoma was the fourth highest state in the country in the percentage of its population not covered by some type of health insurance, and second highest in the percentage of children not covered by health insurance (U.S. Commerce 2006c).

In fact, Oklahoma ranked 44th lowest in overall health status and was one of only two states (Arkansas was the other) that saw mortality rates increase between 1992 and 1997 (Ada Evening News 11/1/99). Finally, in the year 2000 Oklahoma led the nation in the number of executions per 100,000 residents (standing in second only to Texas in the absolute number of people executed in that year) (DPIO 2000). Oklahoma's motto—*Labor Omnia Vincit* (Labor Conquers All Things)—represents an ironic punctuation mark to the human tragedy these statistics condense all too quickly.

If the answer to Oklahoma's prosperity and social well-being seems always to be in the future, the reasons for that answer may be sought most productively in the state's past. It is no exaggeration, nor is it in any fashion original, to observe that Oklahoma's heritage is unique among the 50 states which comprise our union. Oklahoma reflects a dizzying array of complexities and (seeming) contradictions. Though carved out of the western frontier, Oklahoma exudes an aura of Southern mystique and charm (Goble 1994). Stories of legislative battles led by the fervent defenders of cock-fighting compete for the public's attention with reports of history-making medical and technological research at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center that include critical breakthroughs in Alzheimer's research (Kilborn 2000; Greiner 2000; Greiner 2001; Tatum 2000; Tatum 2001). It is the state of aviation and aerospace pioneers Wiley Post and Thomas Stafford. It is the fantasy staging of Rogers and Hammerstein exploited by the reality of the official state song. Oklahoma is a transportation nexus for the country, carrying people and productive wealth from throughout the nation across its borders and through its territory; and, it is a state that strives, and often fails, to keep its young people—the best and the brightest for that future—in the state because of a dearth of competitive jobs (Oklahoma Department of Labor 1998; Plumberg 1999). Oklahoma is a state where the individuality of the western frontier and the community hospitality of the south come together. It is a state where native and conqueror meet, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries blend (missing, somehow, the 20<sup>th</sup>), football and family are made for each other, and myth merges with reality.

The myth of Oklahoma's economy is that it is not diverse, but based largely (if not predominately) on oil and agriculture (built against a cyclorama painted with a panorama of cowboys and oil wells, teepees and Stomp Dancers). Oklahoma is, after all, Native America: its license



plates and state Department of Tourism advertisements proudly proclaim it so. The reality is that since peak oil and gas production in the state was reached in 1927 well-head production and the numbers of producing wells have both declined significantly. So, too, have the number of workers employed in the energy industry. By the 1970s, all energy production (and related economic support activity) in the state accounted for just 5% of Gross State Product and just 5% of employment statewide (Baird and Goble 1994). Today, that number is under 5 percent. Oklahoma agriculture has fared similarly, following the national trend toward increasing mechanization and agri-business that heralded the demise of the family farm decades ago. The devastation of the dust bowl and the Depression of the 1930s had long-since been restored: the parched earth by rain; the destroyed economy by a rain of checks flooding out of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. But the decline in agriculture was irreversible. By 1970, only one Oklahoma worker in 20 was a farmer (Baird and Goble 1994).

If current popular perceptions of Oklahoma's economic structure are based on myth, so too is the belief that the environmental devastation of the dust bowl years worked out its wrath uniquely on Oklahoma. Texas, Kansas, and, to a lesser extent, significant portion of the mid-west experienced the severe drought and rolling walls of airborne dust that epitomize our images of the dust bowl. So, too, the devastation of the depression was felt throughout the country, not simply in Oklahoma. The country recovered, as did Oklahoma (though perhaps to a lesser degree).

What went wrong? Or, perhaps more accurately, what did not go right? The gleam of an answer may be unearthed in exploring what the dean of Oklahoma historians, Edward Everett Dale, has termed the Sooner Spirit. Writing for the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* in 1923, Dale paints an eloquently romantic picture of, "a spirit of youth, of daring, of optimism, of belief in one's self, and in the future. It manifests itself in an eagerness for action, a desire for adventure, a willingness to take a chance. It is a pioneering spirit" (Dale 1923). The pre-eminent historian of America's frontier, Fredrick Jackson Turner (at who's figurative and literal knee Dale studied) could not have put it better. This was the frontier at its best (or worst). But Dale (at least implicitly) recognized the limitations and dangers of such a devil-may-care approach to life. "Admirable in many respects as is a society with such an inheritance

and thoroughly permeated with such a spirit, it is not without its weaknesses and dangers. In the midst of our activity, we have come to over-emphasize the importance of the man of action as compared with the man of thought.... There is too little regard for the wisdom that comes with age and experience and training.” Echoing the Apostle Paul’s warning to the Galatians concerning the fruits of the flesh warring against the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-22), Dale continues, “...[I]n his eager seeking after things of the flesh it was perhaps inevitable that the Oklahoma pioneer should neglect the things of the spirit....Physically speaking, materially considered, frontier conditions in Oklahoma have gone forever. But culturally we are yet in pioneers living upon our intellectual frontier. The material wilderness has been conquered, it yet remains to complete the conquest of the cultural and intellectual wilderness.” And, with a roseate optimism that dismisses his earlier fears, Dale concludes, with respect to victory over the intellectual frontier, “That we shall succeed no one can seriously doubt” (Dale 1923).

Here we have the rub. Dale expected Oklahoma’s intellectual frontier to be conquered by the same pioneers that subdued the physical frontier. But before the intellectual frontier may be conquered, the physical frontier must not only be physically subdued, the concept of the frontier must be replaced in the minds of those accomplishing the conquering in order that they may move on to more subtle, less immediately practical problem solving. This transition has never happened in Oklahoma. Oklahomans may have conquered the physical frontier, but they were conquered by that same frontier emotionally and conceptually. The frontier remained (and remains) an active image of Oklahomans about themselves and the state. The frontier remains to be conquered, only this time it is the frontier of the mind, not the prairie. And in this battle, Oklahoma’s political heritage of populism and progressivism, the Southern aspects of its cultural heritage, and components of the dominant fundamentalist evangelical religious heritage have blended synergistically to create a powerful barrier to emotional, intellectual, and cultural change.<sup>7</sup>

Reinforcing (perhaps) this barrier is the predominant political culture of Oklahoma which Daniel Elazar (1970, 1972) and Charles Johnson (1976) argue was carried with the religious heritage of those who populated Oklahoma through several waves of migration. According to Elazar, the traditionalistic political culture (which is particularly prominent

in the southern and eastern regions of Oklahoma) carries with it a strong desire for order, political elites who are more interested in holding on to power than in sharing it, and an intense desire to maintaining the status quo. It is in this particular blend of religious and political cultures that we may begin to see why Oklahoma has not yet been able to take full advantage of the abundant natural resource heritage identified by Charles Gould over eighty years ago to establish a critically diverse, stable economy whose vision sees something other than a frontier to be conquered, an immediate problem to be solved. And, the solutions that we see most frequently proffered today (lotteries, casinos, the single large employer, the flight of fancy into outer space) are of a kind with those that were effective in subduing the physical land: solutions of the moment, grand solutions based on the (figurative—and now literal) roll of the dice. It is a blended approach to problem solving and economic development which distrusts proposed solutions from sources other than proven, practical problem solvers (in other words, frontier conquerors). If true, this unique Oklahoma cultural blend distrusts attempted intrusions from what Richard Hofstadter refers to as the “life of the mind:” it is anti-intellectual in nature (Hofstadter 1963).

Anti-intellectualism is not unique to Oklahoma, nor is it of recent origins in this country in general. Hofstadter and others such as noted historian and past president of the American Historical Association Merle Curti (1955) note that anti-intellectualism has a long tradition in the United States. What is unique to Oklahoma is that it has emerged from several significant, powerful social sources, each of which (it is argued, often by intellectuals) brings its own flavor of anti-intellectualism to the feast. These sources are a political history of populism, a cultural history of Southern heritage, and a religious history largely comprised of fundamental evangelical denominations and sects.

That the inevitable imagery and stereotypes associated with this blended heritage exist is evident. What is not as evident is whether there is substantial evidence (beyond the anecdotal) that this (alleged) anti-intellectual *mélange* has had a substantial, negative influence on Oklahoma’s pattern of economic development. In order to assess the latter, we must explore (at least in a preliminary way, the former).

**CULTURE: RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL...AND SOUTHERN**

Several years ago, when I mentioned to some colleagues that I was about to embark on a teaching career at a university in Oklahoma, I was regaled with the clearly apocryphal story about the state's legislature changing the value of Pi to 3 because the irrational numbers following the decimal were just too hard for students to remember.<sup>8</sup> Since that time, I have heard the story told about the state legislatures of Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. In all cases, the story tellers were academics and the stories were related in academic settings. In no cases were the stories told about the states in which they lived, neither did the stories relate to any state above the Mason-Dixon Line. And, just as inevitably, smirks, chortles, and winks accompanied knee slaps and applause at the story's end.

While such stories reveal as much (or more) about the teller as the they do of the subject of the telling, they do reflect a common, non-southern stereotypic assumption concerning the intellectual prowess of those who live in the South that is often incorporated into a larger, predominately negative, image of the South: a bucolic land of warm, often humid climate, tall cotton and the smell of magnolia blossoms in the air, inhabited by slow (if not lazy), often quaint people who, generally, are not overly bright, but are bible-thumping, pew-running, holy-rolling, anti-intellectual fanatics (not infrequently portrayed as a cause and effect relationship-which is cause and which is effect is left unstated), a land liberally spiced with race car-driving, cock-fighting, Moon Pie™-eating, RC Cola™-drinking guys named Bubba who get all misty-eyed over the Confederate battle flag<sup>9</sup>. One might think that such negative stereotypes were held only by those who reside somewhere other than the South. But David Hutto (2000) argues that there is a tendency among southerners to accept, sometimes even embrace, such definitions by outsiders. To the extent that Hutto's observations are true, this tendency would reinforce resistance to change among those who would require it the most if the image of the frontier were to be replaced by an image more conducive to modern economic development. Moreover, if a spirit of anti-intellectualism has come to pervade and bound the conceptual image that Oklahomans have of themselves, constraining the range of strategies deemed acceptable to pursue prosperity and limiting the range of matters valued in the state, the creative (or

intellectual) spirit posited by Novak as necessary to the emergence of capitalism in its most prosperous form, may also be suppressed. In this, the role of Oklahoma's system of common and higher education might be expected to play a significant role.

If this is true, what should we expect to see in Oklahoma? Hofstadter suggests that religious fundamentalism and democratic populism are strongly associated with anti-intellectualism. Novak would seem to imply that anti-intellectual attitudes and values would be associated with lower levels of economic success and the absence of the elements of creative, entrepreneurial capitalism. The question is whether these forces would have their greatest impact on the individual level or would they be most significant in the aggregate? While it would be interesting to measure and assess the impact of anti-intellectualism on the individual level, the data is difficult to obtain.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the issue of state prosperity is one that spans the state; it is not an issue of whether or not specific individuals are (or are not) prosperous, but of the state as a whole. Consequently, as we are most interested in the aggregate effect, we should look at the aggregate level of data: county and state. Together, these forces should work most strongly in aggregate. Combined, these recommend the following hypothesis:

Oklahoma counties which exhibit higher levels of anti-intellectual measure should correlate more strongly with higher concentrations (rates of adherence) of evangelical and fundamentalist Protestant denominations and with higher rates of Democratic Party adherents, which in turn should correlate with lower degrees of economic success and poorer indicators of social and community health. Conversely, counties which reflect higher levels of intellectual measure should associate with stronger rates of mainline Protestant denominational adherence and Republican and Independent Party adherents, which should associate with stronger levels of economic and educational attainment, and stronger indicators of social and community health.

## **DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The Glenmary Research center conducted broad surveys of religious denominations, numbers of congregations and congregants, and rates of denominational adherence at the country and state levels in

1990, and again in 2000. The U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau's, State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, compiles data from the census. Department of Justice, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics to develop state and county level reports of per capita and household income, levels of educational attainment, morbidity and mortality rates, and crime rates (rape, assault, theft, murder, etc.). Data from these sources were merged into a single, county-level data set for analysis.

The first major methodological issue was to develop an appropriate, reasonable measure of anti-intellectualism. Intellectualism is a complex matter, broadly encompassing what Hofstadter refers to as "the life of the mind." Daniel Rigney (1991), working from Hofstadter's analysis, develops three separate forms of anti-intellectualism: religious anti-rationalism, populist anti-elitism, and what he calls unreflective instrumentalism. Given the limitations of available aggregate data, the following variables were used to create a preliminary, composite of anti-intellectualism that draws largely on educational measures. Support for education as measured by per capita expenditures on public education, and level of educational attainment are two variables that might reasonably be expected to reflect a measure of intellectual or anti-intellectual attitude on an individual level. Measured cumulatively, the scale of educational attainment on a county level could represent one measure reflecting a social attitude toward intellectual matters. A third measure, also at the county and state level, might be the over level of support for public libraries, as measured by Thomas Hennen's HAPLR score (Hennen's American Public Library Rating). Hennen's annual rating of each public library in the United States measures public library quality by 6 input and 9 output measures. The measure, which is weighted, includes measures of collection turnover, periodicals per 1000 residents, volumes per capita, and number of visits to the library per capita. This suggests the HAPLR score as a reasonable measure of broad public support for libraries and intellectual activity. Library scores within each Oklahoma county were averaged to obtain a county score; individual library scores within each state were summed to obtain a state average HAPLR score. In sum, an Anti-Intellectual Score was created for each county in Oklahoma, as well as for Oklahoma and the seven surrounding states on a state-wide level; it is a composite scale consisting of the z-scores of educational attainment, per pupil EIH educational expenditures, and

educational expenditures as a percentage of state spending (compiled from the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006), plus Hennan's American Public Library Ratings 2000 county average library rating (HAPLR Score).<sup>11</sup>

County-level economic and social health is measured through a variety of social and economic indicators. Economic health variables include disposable personal income, median family income, county-level retail sales per capita, and the county-level small business ownership rate. Social health is reflected in divorce rates, and robbery, assault, rape, burglary, and motor vehicle theft rates for each county.

## RESULTS

Preliminary analysis bears support for the hypothesis with respect to the relationship between anti-intellectualism, denomination, party, education and economics, but suggests the relationship between denomination and social health does not follow a clear denominational pattern. Tables 1 and 2 relate anti-intellectualism score correlations with religious, economic, social, and political variables within Oklahoma on a county by county basis. Table 3 compares Oklahoma's anti-intellectualism scores and religious, social, economic, and health indicators to those of the seven surrounding states.

The first part of the hypothesis, suggesting that evangelical and main line protestant denominations should have opposite correlations with respect to support for intellectual activity and economic development and success, finds support. Overall, counties with higher rates of evangelical denomination correlate strongly with anti-intellectual attitudes ( $r = .307$ ), less than high school graduation ( $r = .461$ ), and low median household income ( $r = -.536$ ). Particular evangelical denominations, specifically the Southern Baptist Convention, correlate even more strongly in the same direction. All these correlations are statistically significant at the .01 level.

Main line protestant denominations show a more mixed result. While all main line denominations (together) demonstrate little correlation with anti-intellectual measures ( $r = -.060$ ), specific denominations show a powerful, negative correlation. Counties with stronger Episcopal Church adherent rates ( $r = -.437$ ) and Presbyterian Church, USA adherent rates ( $r = -.446$ ) are strongly, and negatively, associated with

TABLE 1

## Oklahoma Denominations and Anti-Intellectualism: Association with Education, Income &amp; Social Indicators

Oklahoma, by County	Anti-Intellectual Score	HS or Less	BA or More	Median Household Income	Business Ownership Rate	Retail Sales per capita	Divorce Rate	Robbery	Assault
Correlation (n = 77)									
Anti-Intellectual Score	1.0	.468**	-.452**	-.415**	.473**	-.551**	-.044	-.295*	-.347*
Mainline Protestant***	-.060	-.475**	.313**	.144	.574**	.084	-.300**	-.004	-.029
Evangelical Protestant	.307*	.461**	-.359**	-.536**	.437**	-.152	-.150	-.192	-.238*
Catholic	-.353*	-.260*	.350**	.354**	-.036	.343**	-.290*	.140	.128
ELCA	-.232	-.310**	.279*	.174	-.175	.113	-.005	.146	.135
Episcopal Church	-.437**	-.354**	.489**	.278*	-.562**	.504**	.315**	.477**	.520**
Presbyterian, USA	-.446**	-.311**	.454**	.238*	-.449**	.402**	.064	.281*	.323**
UCC	-.054	-.237*	.116	.140	.174	.111	-.061	.017	-.007
UMC	.076	-.390**	.283*	.099	.638**	.034	-.338**	-.043	-.066
American Baptist Assn	.059	.314**	-.250*	-.343**	.033	-.101	.156	-.087	-.080
Assemblies of God	.010	.103	-.143	-.156	.097	.078	.106	-.020	-.016
Pentecostal COG	-.239	.187	-.126	-.199	-.282*	.020	.311**	-.075	-.037
Southern Baptist	.308**	.477**	-.377**	-.471**	.263*	-.164	-.042	-.184	-.219

\*\* correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed) \* correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*\* Denominations reflect rates of adherence per 1000 population.

## Data Sources:

Social, Income, and Demographic Data: The State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006. Data for 2000.

Anti-Intellectual Score: composite scale (z-scores) of educational attainment, per pupil EIHI educational expenditures, and educational expenditures as a percentage of state spending (compiled from the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006), plus Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2000 county average library rating (HAPLR Score).

Denominational Data: Religious Congregations and Membership Study, 2000, Principal Investigators: Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies ; downloaded from the Association of Religion Data Archive (<http://www.thearda.com>).

Crime Data: US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Statistics Data for 2000..



anti-intellectual measures. The United Church of Christ (UCC) and the United Methodist Church (UMC) rates of adherence in Oklahoma counties, on the other hand, show little correlation with anti-intellectual measures and education variables; the UCC is slightly negative and the UMC is slightly positive, but neither is statistically significant. Overall, counties with stronger rates of adherence among main line denominations tend to be more positively associated with higher degrees of education and higher household income rates than do counties with strong rates of adherence among evangelical denominations. At the same time, county-level aggregate small business ownership rates are strongly—and positively—correlated with anti-intellectual measures ( $r=.473$ ), mainline denominations as a group ( $r=.574$ ), and evangelicals as a group ( $r=.437$ ). Individual denominational rates of adherence demonstrate more mixed results: higher rates of Episcopal and Presbyterian USA adherence (both mainline denominations) correlate strongly—and negatively—with county-level small business ownership rates ( $r= -.562$  and  $r= -.449$  respectively), but both denominations correlate just as strongly—though positively—with rates of retail sales per capita. Evangelical rates in general, and Southern Baptist adherence rates in particular, associate negatively with the rate of retail sales per capita in Oklahoma Counties, though neither is at a statistically significant level (see Table 1).

Analysis of county-wide denominational rates of adherence with other indicators of social health shows a more mixed result. Counties with higher overall evangelical rates of adherence are generally negatively correlated with such social indicators as divorce rates and crime rates. But, running counter to the original hypothesis, counties with higher Episcopal and Presbyterian USA adherence rates have statistically significant, and positive, correlation with crime rates. And, county-level anti-intellectual measures are negatively associated with crime rates (see Table 1).

As with the distribution of religious denominational adherents, the distribution and rate of political party registration varies widely across Oklahoma counties. January 2007 party registration data from the Oklahoma State Election Board shows that the percentage of Democratic voters (of all registered voters) ranges from a high of 87.9% in Harmon County in far southwest Oklahoma to a low of 29.2% in McClain County in central Oklahoma. Republican Party registration rates run from a high of 65.6% in McClain County to a low of 7.6% in Pushmataha

TABLE 2

## Oklahoma Party Registration and Region Association: Religion, Education, &amp; Social Indicators

Oklahoma, by County Pearson's Correlation (n = 77)	Democratic %	Republican %	Independent %	Party Dominance (+ R/ -D)	Region (N,W,S,E)	Region 2 (N&W, S&E)
Anti-Intellectual Score	.301*	-.253	-.427**	-.197	.137	-.171
Mainline Protestant***	-.483**	.572**	-.026	.587**	.563**	.544**
Evangelical Protestant	.523**	-.529**	-.538**	-.404**	.225*	-.314**
Catholic	-.486**	.394**	.242*	.533**	.377*	.350**
ELCA	-.166	.160	.140	.025	-.078	.274*
Episcopal Church	-.226*	.183		.229*	-.416**	.155
Presbyterian, USA	-.277*	.195	.430**	.245*	-.292*	.207
UCC	-.313**	.320**	-.019	.312**	.365*	.285*
UMC	-.403**	.506**	-.082	.556**	.623**	.485**
American Baptist	.234*	-.399**	-.346**	-.304**	.004	-.279*
Assemblies of God	.125	-.138	-.198	-.124	.012	-.034
Pentecostal COG	.231*	-.325**	.050	-.313**	-.226*	-.418**
Southern Baptist	.582**	-.600**	-.439**	-.457**	.114	-.432**
HS or Less	.704**	-.783**	-.574**	-.580**	-.170	.630**
BA or Higher	-.526**	.588**	.601**	.628**	.133	.440**
Median Household Income	-.652**	.732**	.590**	.479**	.055	.500**
Small Business Owners %	.117	.054	-.557**	.121	.634**	.160
Retail Sales per capita	-.279*	.269*	.407**	.305**	.003	.150
Divorce Rate	.297**	-.361**	.115	-.143	-.411**	-.258*

\*\* correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed) \* correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed) \*\*\* Denominations reflect rates of adherence per 1000 population.

Data Sources: Social, Income, and Demographic Data: The State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006. Data for 2000. Anti-Intellectual Score: composite scale (z-scores) of educational attainment, per pupil EHI educational expenditures, and educational expenditures as a percentage of state spending (compiled from the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006), plus Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2000 county average library rating (HAPLR Score). Denominational Data: Religious Congregations and Membership Study, 2000, Principal Investigators: Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies; downloaded from the Association of Religion Data Archive (<http://www.thearda.com>). Political Data: Oklahoma State Election Board. Data for January, 2007.

County in far southeastern Oklahoma. There is a regional pattern to party registration in Oklahoma as well. Interstate 44 roughly bisects the state, running from Miami and Tulsa in the northeast part of the state, through Oklahoma City in the central part of the state, and Lawton and Altus in the southwest portion of the state. Counties north and west of this line tend to be dominated by Republican voters; counties to the south and east of this line tend to be dominated by Democratic voters.

Correlation analysis demonstrates support for the hypothesis. Counties with strong Democratic Party adherence correlate strongly, and positively, with measures of anti-intellectualism ( $r = .301$ ), lower levels of educational attainment (high school education or less  $r = .704$ ; bachelor's degree or higher  $r = -.526$ ), lower levels of family income ( $r = -.652$ ), lower levels of retail sales per capita ( $r = -.279$ ), higher divorce rates ( $r = .297$ ) and evangelical denominations ( $r = .523$ ). The more Democratic an Oklahoma county is, the less likely it is to be mainline religious denomination dominant ( $r = -.483$ ).

In the opposite direction, the higher the Republican and Independent registration rates in Oklahoma counties, the less anti-intellectual they tend to be ( $r = -.253$  and  $-.427$  respectively), the higher the levels of educational attainment and family income tend to be, and divorce rates among stronger Republican counties tend to be lower and they tend to have stronger rates of mainline religious denominational adherence. Individual mainline denominations generally follow this pattern as well (see Table 2).

These general patterns follow through on the state level when Oklahoma is compared to the seven states which surround it. Anti-intellectualism is associated with Evangelical Protestant denominations, lower median household and disposable personal income rates, higher infant mortality and overall mortality rates, and higher divorce rates (see Table 3).

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

All this suggests more research into the cause and effects relationships between religious denomination, political values and actions, political culture, and economic and social outcomes are both necessary and warranted. That such relationships exist there is no doubt. What needs further investigation is the detail of these relationships. For

**TABLE 3**  
**Impact of Anti-Intellectualism and Denomination on Selected Social Factors, Oklahoma and Surrounding States, 2000:**

Pearson's Correlation (n = 8)	Anti- Intellectualism Score	MHI 2000	DPI Per capita	Infant Mortality Rate	Violent Crime Rate	Property Crime Rate	Mortality Rate	Divorce Rate
Anti-Intellectualism Score	1.0	-.823(*)	-.743(*)	0.705	0.433	0.072	.724(*)	0.438
Mainline Protestant***	-.064	0.073	0.157	-0.060	-0.549	-0.133	0.445	-0.517
Evangelical Protestant	.851**	-0.561	-0.493	0.439	0.003	-0.131	.766(*)	0.291
Catholic	-.297	-0.084	-0.116	-0.083	0.684	0.403	-0.571	-0.058
American Baptist	.607	-0.386	-0.476	0.229	-0.134	-0.607	0.507	.836(*)
Assemblies of God	.707*	-0.507	-0.508	0.334	-0.076	-0.331	.759(*)	0.346
Episcopal Church	-.362	0.411	0.475	-0.371	0.153	0.559	-.830(*)	-0.324
ELCA	-.889**	.820(*)	.773(*)	-0.682	-0.665	-0.156	-0.563	-0.478
Presbyterian, USA	-.472	0.411	0.408	-0.330	-.729(*)	-0.347	0.143	-0.376
Pentecostal Holiness	.358	-0.267	-0.143	0.161	-0.030	0.273	0.405	-0.540
Pentecostal CoG	.659	-0.490	-0.554	0.200	-0.074	-0.517	0.649	0.722
Southern Baptist	.930**	-0.665	-0.555	0.544	0.271	0.136	0.684	0.185
UCC	-.603	0.581	0.535	-0.093	-0.506	-0.267	-0.026	-0.232
UM	.492	-0.381	-0.258	0.217	-0.224	-0.015	0.705	-0.312

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) \*\*\* Denominations reflect rates of adherence per 1000 population. | States are: Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.  
 Data Sources: Social, Income, and Demographic Data: The State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006. Data for 2000 Anti-Intellectual Score: composite scale (z-scores) of educational attainment, per pupil ELHi educational expenditures, and educational expenditures as a percentage of state spending (compiled from the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 2006), plus Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2000 State Ratings (HAPLR Score). Denominational Data: Religious Congregations and Membership Study, 2000, Principal Investigators: Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies ; downloaded from the Association of Religion Data Archive (<http://www.thearda.com>).

example, we know that both religious denomination and political culture are inter-related with educational and economic success, social statistics, and political outcomes. Which is more causally important? In a 1991 study of Oklahoma's 77 counties, Morgan and Anderson found inter-party competition lowered in counties dominated by traditional political culture, with more competition in counties whose political culture was predominantly individualistic. Do religious faith traditions (Mainline, Evangelical, Catholic, etc.) have the same effect? Is the effect as strong, less strong, or stronger? Are there differential effects, within faith traditions, by different denominations? Relevant research by David Campbell suggests community, political, and religious heterogeneity can act as both a suppressor as well as a facilitator of political and civic engagement (Campbell 2004). How does religious heterogeneity across faith traditions compare with the heterogeneity of political cultures in their impact on the intellectual environment necessary to build sustainable economic growth? Research is currently underway that will, we hope, shed additional light on answers to these questions.

In April 2001 former Oklahoma Governor George Nigh delivered the keynote address at the John Templeton Foundation funded *Conference on Religion, Freedom, and Prosperity in Oklahoma* held at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. Governor Nigh opened his remarks by observing, "Oklahoma, we have an image problem." To the extent that Oklahoma's image is a product of Oklahomans' mindsets about themselves and their state, he was certainly correct; but these data suggest that the state's economic prosperity challenges are more deeply seated than image alone. Oklahoma has a rich cultural history that reflects its birth out of the western prairie. Political populism and Evangelical Protestantism are two pivotal components of that heritage. A traditionalistic and individualistic political culture both carry and reinforce social attitudes that are resistant to change and suspicious of intellectual life—two quintessential elements on which a mature, prosperous economy must be built. Robert Swierenga has observed that "people act politically, economically, and socially in keeping with their ultimate beliefs. Their values, mores, and actions, whether in the polling booth, on the job, or at home, are an outgrowth of the god or gods they hold at the center of their being" (Swierenga 1990). In Oklahoma's case, that evangelical heritage has fostered a political populism whose impact on economic development has been to establish a subtle anti-

intellectualism rooted as deeply in the state's red earth as was the buffalo grass that once covered the prairie's vast expanse; and, it has been just as tenacious. As the buffalo grass has given way to vast interstate highways and modern skyscrapers, so, too, can the anti-intellectual spirit give way to a new, modernized Sooner Spirit necessary to lead Oklahoma into prosperity in the state's second century.

Overcoming the old spirit and nurturing the new represents one of the great challenges for Oklahoma's system of common and higher education. There are a number of promising markers that may reflect the state's emergence from the frontier-problem-solving anti-intellectual mindset that has seemed to stymie sustainable economic growth in the state. One of the more promising is the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology. OCAST is a public-private partnership designed to bring together the most promising elements from higher education research, business, and the state in order to advance and market technology. According to their web site:

OCAST is a small, high-impact agency funded by state appropriations and governed by a board of directors with members from both the private and public sector. OCAST works in partnership with the private sector, higher education, CareerTech and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. OCAST-funded research projects are first reviewed by out-of-state science and business experts and ranked according to scientific merit and commercial potential. In this way, OCAST ensures state funds are wisely invested where they will have the most impact. OCAST is the state's only agency whose sole focus is technology – its development, transfer and commercialization.

Additionally, the technology-based economic development agency works closely with its strategic partners – the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, the Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center and the Inventors Assistance Service – to improve conditions for Oklahoma's technology businesses.

As it labels itself, OCAST is "Oklahoma's technology-based economic development agency." Since its inception in 1987, OCAST has invested \$151 million with a return to the state of over \$2 Billion (OCAST 2008). It is precisely this style of forward-thinking, long-term

problem solving solution that fuses intellectual endeavor and research into economic development that will be necessary to forge a new, economically prosperous, Sooner Spirit. At the same time, Oklahoma's overall investment in common and higher education continues to rank among the lowest in the United States. Oklahoma's first 100 years have come and gone; the challenges to reach certain, sustainable prosperity in our second 100 years remain dauntingly in front of us.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> VentureStar, or the X-33, was a proof of concept vehicle, where the overall program was designed to develop a replacement craft for the aging space shuttle fleet. It was to be a single stage, self-contained launch-to-orbit, reusable vehicle - in other words, a true "space plane." In part to compete with fourteen other states for the proposed Lockheed launch facility for VentureStar, Senate Bill 720 created the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority in May of 1999. Residents and legislators from Burns Flats, in southwestern Oklahoma, hoped to promote the former Clinton-Sherman Air force Base, with its 15,000 ft. runway, as a viable launch facility for the X-33. But, following years of delays in vehicle development and test flights, combined with significant cost overruns, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) killed the X-33 project in March, 2001; VentureStar is no more, yet, Oklahomans dedicated to the project remain optimistic about aerospace technology as the vehicle for Oklahoma's future prosperity. Oklahoma's future is still in its future. See, *inter alia*, Jackson (1995); *Daily Oklahoman* (2/28/99); Greiner (1999); Minty (2001).

<sup>2</sup> For an intriguing argument that abundant natural resources may be more of a curse than a blessing to stable economic development, see the discussion of Karl (1997); Sachs & Warner (1995); Shafer (1994); and Ross (1999).

<sup>3</sup> Classics in this vein include Smith (1937) and Hayek (1960). For a more contemporary view, see Fukuyama (1992).

<sup>4</sup> For classic criticism of Weber's thesis, see *inter alia* Tawney (1926); Viner (1978); and, Dickson and McLachlan (1989).

<sup>5</sup> On Oklahoma's progressive and populist roots; see, Miller (1987); Goble (1980); Scales and Goble (1982); and, Brown (1994).

<sup>6</sup> In exploring why Protestant missions to the Osages were not (at least initially) as successful as they were among other plains tribes, Morris Wardell (1924) notes that it, “was the policy of the French to intermarry with the Indians....This influence of the French Catholics may account for the partial failure of the Protestant missions among the Osages.”

<sup>7</sup> The battle between the man of action and the man of thought that Dale alludes to has a long, often eloquent and emotional history in the United States, see for example, Hofstadter (1963); Curti, (1955); and, Kazin (1998). On the South and Southern Heritage, see Cash, (1941); and, Ferris, (1994). On Southern religion and religious issues and their relationship to the South and Southern culture, see Harvey (1997).

<sup>8</sup> The story went as follows: Numerous Oklahoma state legislators had received complaints from their constituents about how challenging the New Math was and how hard a time their children were having in mastering it. Of particular difficulty were problems in geometry. “My kid gits in all kinds of trouble tryin’ to find the areas of circles and such ‘cause he cain’t ‘member what ‘Pi’ is. Cain’t you do somethin’ to help? [pronounced, by the story teller, as ‘hep’],” pleaded one trouble parent. Always wanting to serve their constituents, the state legislators agreed. They thought and thought, debating throughout the night how they might resolve this thorny problem. By morning they had arrived at the solution. Wanting to ease the burden on all their constituents, they introduced a bill designed to help students and mathematicians alike. Believing that the irrational digits of Pi were just too difficult to remember (3.141592653...) the bill would, forever more, change the value of Pi to “3.”

<sup>9</sup> There is even a “southern” chat group on the Internet called Bubba-L. David Hutto (2000) relates that a “test of southern identity from Bubba-L...declar[es] that you can’t be a good southerner unless you (1) know the value and meaning of a ‘yankee dime’, (2) have barbequed a goat, (3) have had your head checked for ticks, (4) have at least three different pecan pie recipes.”

<sup>10</sup> National surveys such of the General Social Survey and the variety of surveys of religious attitudes and congregations generally do not have sufficient variables to build an effective measure of anti-intellectualism.

<sup>11</sup> The states, in addition to Oklahoma, are: Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, and, Texas.



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## **BOOK REVIEW SECTION**





Fred Harris. *Does People Do It? A Memoir*. (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), pp. 226. \$18.21  
ISBN 978-0-8061-3913-5

**The folksy title** comes from Harris's favorite uncle, Ralph, who would ask the question, "Does People Do It?" whenever he faced a challenge. "If people does it, I can do it," he would say. Harris adopted that quotation as a guiding philosophy for his extremely rich, and ever-changing life. Richard Lowitt's biography of Harris painted a portrait of a man who never fully lived up to his potential; in contrast, Harris writes a narrative of triumph, arguing that he has been able to succeed in several major careers including as a practicing attorney, an elected politician, a political activist, the leader of a major policial party, an academician, and most recently a writer. As he says, one career "has led to the other. They've sometimes overlapped. And I've enjoyed them all" (p. 214).

Fred Harris is a national treasure. I've been fascinated by the life of the former U.S. Senator from Oklahoma ever since hearing him present at one of the early OPSA conferences. Five years ago, I wrote a book review of Richard Lowitt's biography, *Fred Harris: His Journey from Liberalism to Populism*. Overall, I enjoyed that book very much and learned a great deal about the man. My only significant criticism was that Lowitt very deliberately avoided speaking or corresponding

with Harris directly. Lowitt's strategy was to not be biased by the man himself. I likened that notion to "Walter Isaacson writing his biography of Benjamin Franklin and turning down the chance to travel back in time to interview Ben in person" (2003, p. 111). Lowitt thought that he could more fairly represent the story of Harris's life by just taking advantage of available written records. My colleagues in our history department assure me that Lowitt followed an accepted professional convention. I remain skeptical. The good news is that Fred Harris's memoir greatly complements Lowitt's treatment. Furthermore, *Does People Do it?* is actually a pleasure to read. Harris is a gifted writer and is noted for his works of fiction. His first novel *Coyote Revenge* even won the prestigious Nero Wolfe Award.

Harris's biography draws upon some of his previously published works, which creates an interesting dynamic. I noticed it most closely when he talks with the freshness of a recent memory about his first wife, Ladonna, and their adventures on the campaign trails. It wasn't until the final chapters, that I even realized that not only had Harris ended his thirty-three-year marriage with LaDonna but that he had been married for over twenty-five years to his "new" wife, Margaret Ellison. The book is filled with similarly revealing insights from an eyewitness to history coupled with the wisdom and perspective of a mature political scholar.

Along the way, Harris comes into contact with a host of characters—many of whom are historically significant. My favorite chapters are the ones that cover his relationships with Lyndon B. Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and Robert Kennedy. Reading these sections, you begin to understand the political tightrope that Harris had to walk having befriended these powerful political rivals. Harris reminds us that *Time* magazine once reported that he "was the only person in Washington who could have breakfast with President Lyndon Johnson, lunch with Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and dinner with Senator Robert Kennedy" (p. 96). At one point Harris and his wife "were weekend guests of Robert and Ethel Kennedy at their Hyannis Port home" when President Johnson called simply to ask, "How're you doing, Fred?" After some small talk they hang up. As Harris relates, "Johnson clearly wanted nothing in particular except to let me know that he knew where I was." His description of the "Johnson Treatment" confirms the legend in classic fashion. After seeing the president engage Oklahoma's senior U.S.

Senator at the time, Mike Monroney, with a “rough and overbearing” manner, Harris thought to himself, “I would never let anybody talk to me like that, not even the president of the United States.” Harris later learned “that the Johnson Treatment involved varying approaches for different people.” Johnson “seemed to have an intuitive feel for human nature and for what would work with whom. He was like an effective basketball coach, say, who knows which players he can motivate only by yelling at them and chewing them out publicly and which ones he needs to throw an arm around and talk to gently, mixing a little quiet criticism with a lot of warm encouragement” (p. 89).

The most fascinating part of the book is Harris speculating on President Nixon actually authorizing the Watergate burglary. That part was never proven, and Nixon was driven out of office more for the lies and cover-up. What I had never heard before was that Harris experienced three different incidents which foreshadowed the actual break-in of the Watergate Hotel. The first was during his first presidential campaign when his press secretary “found her desk drawers had been rifled and left open” with files and papers scattered around (p. 176). Two years later when he had left the Senate and was working a brief stint as an attorney, he found his locked file cabinet opened and the only thing taken was the records that documented his 1972 federal income tax return. The third such incident occurred around the same time. He had returned to his office in the newly formed “New Populist Action” organization. Someone had opened the office safe and spread papers “out on the floor in front of it like a fan, as if someone had arranged them to be photographed” (p. 176). Harris came to believe that “the Nixon crowd” was “responsible for these odd break-ins” and it was as if they wanted Harris to know that they had information on him or could get it. The former senator also took credit for advising Howard Dean’s attorney to tell his client to tell the truth which Dean ultimately did.

Senator Harris has done a great service in writing his personal history which also coincides with a significant time in American history. As he says, “making history and writing it do not have to be mutually exclusive” (p. 209). I highly recommend this book for those interested in Oklahoma state politics and especially those interested in following the life of an Oklahoman on the national stage. Fred Harris ran for the presidency twice, and he might have succeeded in his second attempt if

his rivals had not so quickly adopted his increasingly popular ideas as their own. He has led the life of a renaissance man. He is a good role model for everyone including this state's political scientists.

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David G. Carnevale. *Organizational Development in the Public Sector*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), pp. 150. \$27.00  
ISBN 0-8133-9839-8

*Organizational Development in the Public Sector* is not just a great introduction for students to the practice of organizational development (OD), but also a wonderful addition to the public administrator's professional library. It's really a primer with depth—there's not a wasted word in the book. That's saying something for OD, a professional discipline which is often ridiculed for its triumph of jargon over substance. One of the habits that I developed in graduate school was to highlight important passages while reading. The temptation here is to highlight everything because it all seems so essential.

The business world gave birth to OD and developed most of its methodologies. Carnevale places OD firmly within the organizational behavior literature relevant to public administration and politics. He backs up the theory and the techniques with memorable stories of his own consulting work in a variety of public service settings. That alone makes it a worthwhile read. The book begins with an overview of management thinking as it began to evolve at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Carnevale discusses the contributions of Weber and Frederick Taylor, whose mechanistic perspectives of business organization became ingrained in the DNA of public administration theory and practice. The human relations and systems models offered important counterpoints to the overly rational bureaucratic and scientific management paradigms.

A possibly underappreciated aspect of this book is that it is truly a jumping point to gain access to OD's vast literature. In one instance the author lists "Various Intervention Tools for Facilitating Change" and borrowing from the work of French and Bell, he links these to the various target groups such as individuals, teams, groups, and organizations as a whole. So, imagine for example that you are an OD consultant hired to facilitate intergroup relations in a public organization, you can see here that several techniques are available including organizational mirroring, partnering, process consultation, third party mediation, and survey feedback. While Carnevale does not cover any of these extensively, you now know where to look and what words to use in your search.

The main theme of this book is the importance of the human dimension. Carnevale does not use the language specifically, but his concerns about public management echo the "administrative evil" described by Adams and Balfour. According to their work focusing on such public administration failures as facilitating the Holocaust or ignoring warnings against launching Space Shuttle Challenger, bureaucrats can do great harm—even unintentionally—when they focus so intently on following procedures and adhering to rules that they forget that they are making decisions that affect real people (2004).

A case in point is Carnevale's description of an event in an unnamed southwestern city. A group of over 600 citizens gathered at a local church to voice their concerns about an unsafe road. They felt that the city was not taking their concerns seriously. During the course of the meeting, they documented hundreds of accidents along the roadway. Then a city engineer rose to respond. "Armed with eighty slides," he "started by saying that the state does not count individual deaths in a wreck but only the number of cars where someone died. The engineer was interrupted by a woman who said, 'I lost my daughter and grandson in a fiery crash on that road. They are not statistics, they were humans.' Mercifully, a more senior engineer took the podium from the first engineer, who was complaining that he had ten slides left to show" (p. 88). This story also illustrates the challenge for an OD consultant to intervene and establish communication among "the multiple interests that swirl around government" (p. 88). In fact, a key point of the book is that the complexity of politics makes the public sector fundamentally different for OD intervention than the private sector. Carnevale observes that it's not uncommon in the public sector to begin negotiations with a press

conference. In business, the parties usually resort to public disclosure only when they reach an impasse. Along with stories from his own consulting experience, Carnevale is not above using examples from popular culture such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Hunt for Red October*, and *Apollo 13*. The familiarity with these popular movies should help students better access the intimidating style of most OD literature.

This book addresses the intersection of power, politics and organizational dynamics. “The public environment is a stew of politics, low trust, short-term thinking, competing values, conflicting objectives, and a terrain that does not support transformational leadership” (p. 26). Carnevale prescribes tapping into that elusive expertise that only the frontline managers actually possess. “The practical problem is how to release the power of experiential learning that is latent in the human resources of organizations” (p. 63). However, the book does not advocate “hijacking what people know” (p. 64) in great contrast to the premises of scientific management itself. It’s about empowerment—a loaded term often used and abused by people in power who pay it lip service while never really fostering a participatory workplace. Carnevale himself makes fun of what he refers to as “management drivel” and “boilerplate rhetoric” (p. 50). Carnevale cites literature which suggests that in spite of the lack of OD intervention in the public sector, and the inherent challenges faced by consultants, “Public OD is as successful, and perhaps realizes slightly more positive outcomes, than private experiences” (p. 37).

Many fortunate students have had the privilege of being schooled by this eminent and distinguished professor from the University of Oklahoma. From my own personal experience, I can tell you that he was a master teacher. While I read this book, I could not help but hear the authoritative and ever enthusiastic voice of Dr. Carnevale as if I were once again participating in one of his evening graduate sessions. I’m thinking now about building a new course around this book. I can also see its broad applicability to a variety of courses from the introductory public administration classes to the more advanced. Certainly, this book would be a wonderful contribution to any organizational behavior class. *Organizational Development in the Public Sector* would be extremely advantageous to our public administration students who tend to be a bit more pragmatically oriented than regular political science majors. Through Carnevale’s numerous anecdotes, they can easily see the

practical applications. Meanwhile, Carnevale is sneaking in an incredible amount of theory which should help them better grasp the entirety of OD and its ultimate purposes. From there, they can take advantage of the overwhelming variety of social technologies that OD offers.

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Shirley A. Wiegand and Wayne A. Wiegand. *Books on Trial: The Red Scare in the Heartland*. (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), pp. 286. \$24.95. ISBN 978-0-8061-3868-8

**The tension between civil liberties and national security** is never so apparent as during wartime. This truism is underscored by the meticulously researched and footnoted *Books on Trial* by Wiegand and Wiegand.

At noon, August 17, 1940, Oklahoma City police stormed the Progressive Bookstore and arrested everyone inside, including all employees and eight customers. Simultaneously, the homes of known members of the Community Party in Oklahoma City were raided and several more people arrested. All told, 16 men and women were arrested that day for violating Oklahoma's criminal syndicalism law. The law in question was passed in 1919 during a period in American history when many states sought to protect themselves from overthrow by violent Socialist or foreign elements. This law is still on our books today, as is the ban on being a member of the Communist Party, which is an anachronistic leftover from the Red Scare. Perhaps one day Americans will look back on such laws as the USA PATRIOT Act and remember the fervency of the US's present War on Terror.

The trial scenes in the book are laughable. The prosecutors mangled criminal procedure in their kangaroo court. The cobbled-together defense team was chronically out of money and at every turn was thwarted by the unfair rulings of the judge. No, they may not know the charges against them. No, they may not have a list of the books and materials

that supposedly violate the syndicalism law. All of the books and pamphlets seized from the Progressive Bookstore and the defendants' homes were locked up in a cell at the Oklahoma County Jail. This last fact is the source of much amusement by supporters of the defendants, especially because such books as *The Grapes of Wrath* and Carl Sandburg's biography of Abraham Lincoln were held under such secure circumstances as evidence of a violent plot against America. Perhaps they believed the books might escape and infect all of America?

Concurrently with the criminal trial, the Oklahoma Senate began to hold hearings about the presence of Communists on the campus of OU. Defendants Eli Jaffe and Bob Wood were subpoenaed and sparred for hours with the Senators. The raucous public hearings were abruptly called into executive session, probably, as the *Oklahoman* reported, because it was unclear as to whether the "committee" or the "reds" were getting the better of it."

Although they were convicted at trial, the Oklahoma Supreme Court struck down the convictions in 1943, stating that the defendants' books and pamphlets did not constitute a clear and present danger, and that the prosecution refused even attempt to prove that the defendants had read them. The political context had changed during the intervening three years and now the US was fighting shoulder to shoulder with the evil Soviet Communists in order to defeat Hitler's Germany. Also, Robert S. Kerr, who "abstained" from the Red Scare, became Governor, replacing Gov. Leon Phillips

Nationally, the incident earned Oklahoma a reputation for its "hometown fascists," and civil libertarians across the country sent in money to help pay defense costs. *Publishers Weekly*, a magazine librarians depend on, routinely published the most indignant editorials rousing more support for the defendants. In an attempt to squelch Communism, Oklahoma inadvertently created a network of sympathizers. *Books on Trial* will undoubtedly reawaken the civil libertarian inside each of its readers, especially because the book is written in such an engaging tone. Most satisfying, perhaps, are the final pages which show what happened to each major actor in the famous Oklahoma raids of 1940.

*Christine Pappas*  
*East Central University*

Thomas Frank. *The Wrecking Crew: How Conservatives Rule*. (Henry Holt and Company, 2008), pp. 384. \$25.00. ISBN-13: 978-0805079883

**Wall Street Journal** columnist **Thomas Frank's** *What's the Matter with Kansas?* was one of 2004's more commented-upon political commentaries. Frank drew considerable praise from liberals and considerable disdain from conservatives for his argument that the voters of Kansas' embrace of cultural conservatism worked directly to their economic detriment. Frank's second book, *The Wrecking Crew: How Conservatives Rule*, attacks conservatives from a different direction but with the same lively polemical style, and will likely provoke a similar response from partisans of both ends of the ideological spectrum.

Where Frank's first book looks at the consequences of Republican's "favor-the-rich" governing style in his home state, his second takes the reader into the nation's capital for a look at how Republicans govern at the national level. Frank contends that the transformation of Washington D.C. from a predominantly middle-class community initially populated by New Deal-era bureaucrats to one of opulent homes peopled by wealthy lobbyists serves as a telling metaphor of the aspirations of contemporary conservatives.

The book is divided into two sections. Part One is devoted to detailing the insurgent attitude that has emerged as the dominant organizing tendency among today's conservatives. Frank catalogues in considerable detail the steady rightward drift of conservative ideology toward an increasingly radical utopian vision that involved elimination or emasculation of the federal regulatory state, and a return to a more

purely *laissez faire* state. In order to justify this anti-government advocacy, Frank argues that modern-day conservatives have embraced a cynical anti-government rhetoric that puts Republicans in the ironic position of seeking election to government in order to undermine government, a kind of “We had to destroy the village in order to save it” rationale that Frank believes is absurd when stripped of its ideological trappings. Frank is at his satirical height in describing the rise of conservatives like Jack Abramoff, Grover Norquist, and Lee Atwater through the ranks of the College Republicans to positions of unique power and authority within the Republican ideological hierarchy, and their role in several fairly bizarre episodes in the 1980’s, including the attempted divination of Angola’s ruthless Jonas Savimbi and the right’s passionate and (perhaps) money-driven embrace of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

Part Two focuses on how Republicans have tended to govern as the majority party over the past 30 years. At the heart of Frank’s indictment of conservatism is not conservatism per se, but rather that modern conservatism has been largely driven by a corporate ideology. Frank cites a 1929 article by defense contractor Homer Ferguson, whose “A Plea for Inefficiency in Government” reached the paradoxical conclusion that the “The best public servant is the worst one... If public officials are and remain inefficient, the public will sicken of incompetence and rely exclusively upon corporate enterprise” (p. 129). People who have internalized such a view of government see nothing wrong with Defense Department procurement executives handing out huge contracts to defense contractors and then leaving public service to take a job with that same corporation, or in hiring former lobbyists from the coal industry to run the regulatory office at the Department of the Interior.

Lobbyists do not fare well in Frank’s critical narrative of the conservative governing style. In a chapter entitled “City of Bought Men,” Frank writes with zealous derision of the lobbying community that has proliferated in Washington since the 2000 election:

With a little practice, the pressure boys are easy to distinguish from lesser drones: they are the ones who look like caricatures of prosperous men, dressed in a way that is no doubt meant to suggest “affluent businessman” but in which no proper businessman in Chicago or Kansas City would ever, in fact,

dress himself. In most of the United States, male office-wear tends toward the drab; the lobbyist, by contrast, fancies himself Beau Brummell. He appears to choose each element of his ensemble for its conspicuous priciness, and you can spot him in the field by his perfectly fitted thousand-dollar suits, usually blue; his strangely dainty shoes; his shirts, which often come in pink or blue with white collars and cuts, the latter of which display cufflinks of the large and shiny variety; his vivid, shimmering ties, these days preferably in orange or lavender; his perfect haircut; his perfect tan; the tiny flag attesting to his perfect patriotism on his perfect lapel (p. 176).

Frank highlights the innately corrupting role that lobbying has played in American politics, citing a 1874 Supreme Court case in which one justice declared that the public would instinctively find both lobbyists and their employers as “steeped in corruption and the employment as infamous” (p. 179). Frank tellingly describes the centrality of lobbying within the Republican hierarchy as an exemplification of the party’s subordination to business imperatives. As Frank tellingly describes it, lobbying “is how money casts its vote” (p. 175), and reading the *Washington Post*’s investigative series on the rise of the lobbying industry made him “want to curl up with a bottle of scotch, set the Sex Pistols on infinite repeat, and forget this city of bought men” (p. 182).

The ultimate target of Frank’s ire is less conservative venality and incompetence than the sins of an untrammelled marketplace. In Frank’s view, the horrors visited upon immigrant labors on the American territories of the Marianas were predictable because it “was simply the market doing what the market will always do, should it somehow get loose from the political cage.” “The animal is predictable,” Frank continues, “It will bid wages down and push profits up by any means it is permitted to use” (pp. 219-220). In the end, Frank argues that the conservative “marketization” of politics has left our government with all of the sins of capitalism and none of its virtues.

Some might want to dismiss Thomas Frank as nothing more than the left’s answer to conservative polemicists like Ann Coulter, Sean Hannity, or Bill O’Reilly. Such criticisms do a disservice to Frank, whose satirical talent exists at a higher level than contemporary conservative

polemicists. P.J. O'Rourke would seem to offer a more appropriate comparison. Likewise, Frank's research appears much more solid and substantial than the sketchy referencing efforts of less talented conservative hacks. Polemical though he may be, Frank is a very talented writer, and consequently should be taken seriously by critics and advocates alike. The current economic troubles may, in fact, provide Frank's second book with an even larger audience than his first. Given Oklahoma's growing embrace of the Republican Party, and in light of the Oklahoma's scandal-prone political environment, Oklahomans of all political persuasions will find valuable lessons in Frank's cautionary tale.

*Kenneth S. Hicks*  
*Rogers State University*

David Boren. *A Letter to America*. (Norman, OK; University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), pp. 112. \$14.95 ISBN 978-0-8061-3944-9

**“Dear American, This letter is to you.** The country we love is in trouble. In truth, we are in grave danger of declining as a nation”, is how former U.S. Senator David Boren, a Rhodes Scholar, the longest-serving chair of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, a former governor of Oklahoma and now President of the University of Oklahoma for the past fourteen years opens his new book, *A Letter to America*. With only 6 percent of the world’s population, how long will the United States remain a global superpower? The answer to Boren’s opening question is that he believes the outcome is largely in our own hands. The author explains with bold, simple clarity, and sense of alarm as Bob Herbert noted in the *New York Times*, why the country is at a perilous moment and why changes are urgently needed.

*A Letter to America* offers an outline of a plan that touches on four major areas: economic concerns such as the disappearing middle class, the loss of community in America, our dangerously partisan political system, and outdated foreign policy priorities. For political scientists, and students of political science, I will summarize his political and foreign policy recommendations.

Boren’s extensive experience gives him the credibility and authority to regretfully come to the conclusion that our political system is broken. It’s time to replace, in his view, pandering partisans with real statesmen, even if it means electing independents to Congress and a nonpartisan,

independent president of the U.S. Of utmost concern is breaking the vicious cycle of our increasing political partisanship. One of the major reasons grassroots democracy is being destroyed is the flood of special-interest money pouring into politics. He advocates campaign spending limits, a ban on contributions from out-of-state interests, no more special interest gifts and an outright prohibition on political action committee donations. He notes that partisanship clearly becomes destructive when partisan advantage is elevated above the national interest.

His political plan includes campaign finance reform, creating institutions that encourage bipartisanship such as the creation of standing bipartisan working groups or “mini-cabinets” both domestic and foreign, a bipartisan program for major public works and infrastructure investment, a bipartisan caucus in the Congress and the election of an independent president without forming a new third party.

Boren’s sense of urgency extends to foreign policy. “No single relationship will be more important to the peace and stability of the world in this century than the relationships between the U.S. and China,” he notes. “If freedom is to be expanded, democracy must be joined with many other elements, including an independent judiciary and specific rights for racial and religious minorities. It is wrong for us to think that the establishment of democracy by itself will lead to stable and free societies.” Boren believes if we allow ourselves to become adversaries, we could face a situation far more dangerous than we faced in the Cold War with the Soviet Union. He writes, “We should act now as if a multipolar world had already evolved and not wait to change our policies until that change has actually taken place. For example, we should work hard to develop joint projects with the Chinese in areas where we have agreement.”

His global plan calls for a better understanding the rest of the world, the establishment of an International Peace Corps, making sure our intelligence system provides the best possible information, the creation of an independent government think tank outside CIA like organizations. Additionally, he supports environmental policies with other nations and the creation of a standing military force composed of the world’s leading nations under the existing framework of the United Nations.

Boren personalizes many of the issues in the book by using examples of his own experiences and sharing what he has learned from his college students at the University of Oklahoma. As a result, he urges that



every college in America require that students earn college credits in American history and American government on their transcripts as a condition for receiving degrees. A nation that does not know how it became great will not remain great, he notes.

Extremely relevant in the current political climate, *A Letter To America* puts all the pieces together to provide a series of recommendations that are challenging, constructive, and critical for students and instructors to examine. The book draws upon the works of Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, and V.O. Key, among many others. It would be an excellent text for any political science course and would provide the basis for a much needed debate and discussion of the future of our country.

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*Rogers State University*



Stuart A. Wright. *Patriots, Politics and the Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 237. \$22.99. ISBN 978-0-521-69419-3

**At a time when much of our policy** concerns are centered on the threats posed by porous borders, *Patriots, Politics and the Oklahoma City Bombing* offers a sobering analysis of the terrorist threats posed by native militants. Wright contends that too little attention has been paid to right-wing movements among social movement scholars who over the past forty-years have focused almost exclusively on progressive and left wing movements. How can we explain the motives and actions of far right groups? What helps explain the rise in right wing militancy throughout the Cold War era? Why has rural America become a reservoir for such movements? How is this study relevant for the post-9/11 era? Wright suggests that answers lie in uncovering factors that propelled the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995.

The book begins by offering a profile of the contemporary Patriot movement in the United States through the context of the social movement literature. As a sociologist, Wright's work is informed by process theory and the expanding analytic contributions of contentious politics literature. Next, it proceeds to explain the insurgency of the Patriot movement by chronicling the farm crisis of the 1970s-80s viewed by Wright as the early seeds for solidifying the Patriot movement's foothold in rural America. Wright contends that the Patriot movement originated in the Cold War through meta narratives about the communist

threat and it was further fueled by the civil rights era that extended racial equality. Next, the author offers a detailed analysis of the guns right network, and how this network that contributed to a mutual culture of war that caused both investigative government agencies and far right groups to project mirror images of hostile intent upon one another

At the center of his theoretical argument is the idea that a *culture of warfare* contributed to a mutual threat perceived by both the state and far wing militants. Both parties constructed warfare scripts that defined the other as “enemy”. The rhetoric of warfare served to affirm and fuel each other’s perception of threat giving way to an upward spiral of violence. Through extensive research including face-to-face interviews with Timothy McVeigh, Wright suggests that despite government efforts to spin the lone wolf thesis, significant evidence posits that McVeigh was firmly entrenched in the Patriot movement, a loose coalition of militant right groups, and was part of a network of “warrior cells” that planned and implemented the bombing. The terrorist act resulted from the home-grown rage boiling in the Patriot movement in response to the government’s handling of Waco a few years earlier. “McVeigh believed” argues Wright, “that the siege at Waco was a *military* operation carried out illegally against American citizens” (p.5).

The author then develops a framework for conceptualizing why Patriot groups shared a perception that government was waging a war against its own citizens. He attributes this to the state’s increased efforts to define and frame social control in terms of “warfare” predicated on claims of an increasing threat posed by crime and drugs. His historical reference begins with the downsizing of the federal government under the Reagan years, but where federal crime and drug control programs mushroomed and became increasingly integrated with the military. One important development in the political environment that helped far-right movement actors and organizations mobilize arose with the 1980s “farm crisis” involving the largest displacement of farm families since the Great Depression. The contempt for the federal government that ensued in rural America was seized upon by far-right groups framing the problem as a conspiracy of state elites. Framing disputes with government as “warfare” assumed new levels of resonance throughout the 1990s through the exaggerated fears embodied in the disarmament campaign by the state. By 1995, significant numbers of Patriots believed they were engaged in a war with government.

Wright pays a great deal of attention to the Ruby Ridge and Waco debacles as illustrative case studies of the evolving contentious dynamics that ensued. The final chapter assesses the demobilizing impact the Oklahoma City Bombing had on the Patriot movement. While McVeigh was trying to draw attention to the Patriot movement, the OKC bombing had the adverse effect leading to enormous public outcry and a precipitous decline in far-right organization and activity. The Southern Poverty Law Center reported the number of active Patriot groups between 1996 and 2000 dropped from 858 to 194. It was not until after 9/11 that a resurgence in far-right militancy regained momentum. Looking to reinvent themselves in a shifting political climate, far-right groups have sought the opportunity to manufacture new enemies, fuel public apprehensions and fears and broker new ties to like-minded groups. Under a climate of national security and the accompanying militarization of U.S. foreign policy in Iraq, new conditions have been created for resurgence in far-right militancy.

Perhaps most frightening of this book's revelations is the mention of the increase in large numbers of white supremacists and far-right militants enlisting in the armed forces as a result of the surge in militarism following 9/11. The war in Iraq has given far right militants access to sophisticated weaponry, combat tactics, training and contact with other military personnel. Timothy McVeigh, a decorated veteran of the Gulf War, ostensibly became drawn to a network of Patriot insurgents during his tenure in the armed forces. The mega narrative on patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border through vigilantism may in part be a redirected focus of the far-right movement. *Patriots, Politics and the Oklahoma City Bombing* makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of internal dissent and to socio-historical circumstances which feed it.

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## REVIEWERS

The editors appreciate the careful reading and helpful comments of the following reviewers for this issue of *OKLAHOMA POLITICS*.

Jan Hardt

Tony Litherland

Christine Pappas

Charles Peaden

Brett S. Sharp

Tony E. Wohlers







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