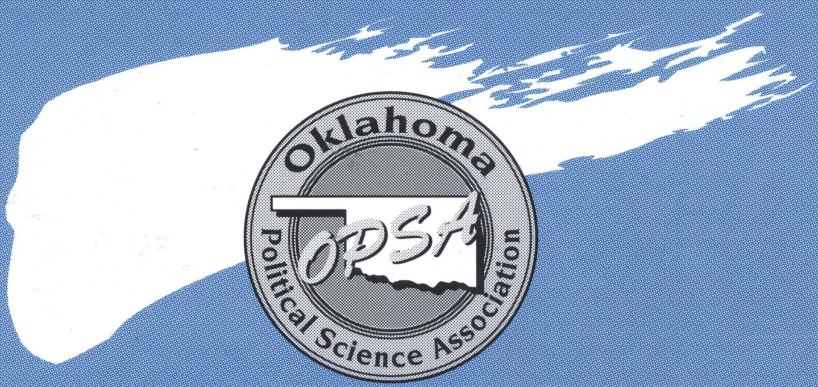
Oklahoma Politics



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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF OKLAHOMA

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The Oklahoma political culture is set for a new era. Several political and demographic factors explain why the change is occurring, such as term limits, growing suburbanization, and increased newcomers in some rural legislative districts. As term limits decreases the importance of seniority, the power structure in the legislature may be determined by the sheer number of representatives each area brings to the capitol. The effect of term limits and population shifts will cause the energies of the legislature to be focused more on the issues of concern for urban and suburban Oklahomans, often at the expense of their rural counterparts. These factors will affect primarily rural legislators, which, from statehood to the present, have disproportionately influenced Oklahoma politics.

Rural roots in Oklahoma's political culture run deep. Agrarian ideals are reflected in the state's constitution, as economic regulations were initiated with the intent to preserve the family farm (Morgan and Morgan 1977). Such rural-centered beliefs created a prairie populism that prefers "decentralization and dispersion rather than concentration" (Holloway and Meyers 1992, p. 27). This political culture has been a device that the state's rural legislators have helped create and have

used to their benefit. However, Oklahoma's political culture is changing because the political culture represented in the state legislature is changing. This paper describes how and why this change is occurring and what impact such change will mean to the Sooner state.

Definitions of politics often refer to a division of goods and services or a determination of what is important for a society. Harold Lasswell's "who gets what, when and how" and David Easton's "the authoritative allocation of values" are two definitions of politics that fit such descriptions. Politics, however, works within the larger context of a society's culture that makes decision-making possible. The term "political culture" has been referred to as "a set of orientations toward a special set of social objects and process"(Almond and Verba 1989, p. 12). Countries will have their own political cultures, while regions and state governments within countries may also have cultural differences in their politics. This is the belief of one of the well-known scholars on variances in American political cultures, Daniel Elazar. For the state of Oklahoma, Elazar views the political culture as both traditionalistic and individualistic. According to Elazar, the traditionalistic aspects of Oklahoma political culture would make the state paternalistic and elitist with a minimal importance on parties. Elazar considers individualistic states to view politics as "just another means by which individuals may improve themselves socially and economically" (1972, p. 94). Elazar's third type of political culture, moralistic, which finds politics to be the basis of mankind's search for the good society, was found to be a relatively obscure concept in Oklahoma. Elazar made his description on the political culture of Oklahoma thirty years ago when the state was dominated by one party, the Democratic party, and the state was heavily influenced by the rural areas. Increasingly, Oklahoma is a competitive state for both parties in all but local races and there is more influence from the urban/suburban communities. While the political culture may remain as Elazar described—what has been transforming is the institution that guides the political culture, the Oklahoma legislature.

Throughout Oklahoma's history, despite the demographics that belie such influence, the rural areas have been most influential in the direction of the state's political culture. In rural Oklahoma, as this paper will argue, legislators have been able to campaign with a style that focuses primarily on personality and little on policy. This component of the political

culture is starting to wane in the Sooner state. The result will be an influence on the political culture that will become more urban based and policy centered rather than rural based and personality centered. A greater emphasis on policy could create a moralistic political culture, which may cause the political parties to submit policy alternatives to the voters. Now that the state has been politically and demographically altered in new ways from its history, interest group activists, media figures, and local politicians coming from the urban and suburban areas will be the prominent figures that shape the political culture of Oklahoma. This power shift is actually several decades behind the population shift of the state.

One of the most interesting phenomena of Oklahoma demographics is the location of its population. About 70 percent of the population lives in a diagonal corridor generally thirty miles wide extending from Miami in the northeast to Lawton in the southwest (Morgan, England, and Humphreys 1991). Roughly 10 percent of the state's population can be found northwest of this corridor, and the remaining twenty percent can be found in the southeast section. Oklahoma is a state with wide-open space, but a rather concentrated population. Increasingly more of the residents of the Sooner state make their homes in the two major urban areas, Oklahoma City and Tulsa, or in the suburbs of these two cities.

The demographic alterations are just part of the changes occurring in Oklahoma that will affect the political culture of this state. In fact, the state has had a majority of its population reside in non-rural areas since the 1970s (Kirkpatrick, Morgan, and Kielhorn 1977). The state's legislature, however, has continued to be inordinately controlled by rural legislators. In addition to demographics, evidence will be provided that other factors are now in place that will cause a significant transformation for the legislature and for the individuals who become legislators. These factors are new residents to the state moving in lake homes, primarily in the northeast and southeast regions, term limits, and the greater use of media in legislative campaigns.

Simultaneously, the legislators and the legislature itself are changing. Legislators from traditional rural areas cannot campaign in the style that they are used to. Once term limits is in place, the urban legislators will gain in their influence over the institution. These changes impact the type of individuals who decide to run for office and also affect the

issues of importance in the legislature. In greater fashion, political matters of Oklahoma will pit rural areas of the state against the suburban and urban areas. These issues, such as the continued legalization of cockfighting, will feature a conflict of the old customs (rural) against the modern (urban). Such conflicts will, in many ways, transcend the representation of parties and ideology. A study on the shifts of a state's political culture tells us not only why these shifts are taking place but also how it will shape future political battles. The structural alterations taking place in Oklahoma's political leadership will be significant compared to the historical patterns found throughout the state's existence. These changes will mark the third shift in the political structure. The political structure first was Democratic and rural dominated from statehood to 1960s and the second was two-party and rural/urban shared power from 1960s to present. In the years to come, the political culture will most likely be Republican majority and urban/suburban dominant.

OKLAHOMA POLITICAL STRUCTURE (STATEHOOD TO 1963)

State organizations of political parties in the United States respond to the localized needs of their public. This can cause state organizations of the same party to vary due to the differences in history and culture. As a result of its own unique history, Oklahoma has a political party structure that developed primarily on its own. The term "culture" implies a shared experience. Because no other state has the shared experience like Oklahoma's, this state could be in a category by itself in regards to the study of state politics. The political parties of Oklahoma developed independently of the national parties. Oklahoma historians James Scales and Danney Goble wrote of the isolation of both political parties that was evident during the pre-statehood days:

> Eastern Democrats, whose number was probably greater than that of the Republicans were systematically excluded from the patronage troughs. As a result, their party long lacked purpose, not to mention organization. On the other side, the territory's Republican party existed largely as a distribution center for federal appointments, its activities geared for winning not the voter's

> approval but the president's favor. For those reasons, both were isolated from the mainstream of the national party battle (1982, p. 6).

This description also fits in nicely with Elazar's portrayal of the traditional political culture.

As the parties developed with the statehood of Oklahoma, one party, the Democratic Party, was poised to dominate. The Oklahoma delegation for the constitutional convention included one hundred Democrats and only twelve Republicans. Added to the lopsided partisan design of the constitution, most Republican officials did not participate in the convention because of the "carpetbagger" image that plagued them from the patronage rule of the federal government in Oklahoma territory. The constitution that was created put the Democrats in a position of power for many years, as they garnered most political offices at the county level. The Democrats made sure that county governments formed during statehood would be the power base for the party for years to come (Morgan and Morgan 1977).

While the Democrats may have been the dominant party, they were not a united party. As the Democrats had an overwhelming advantage in Oklahoma politics from the 1930s to the 1960s, the party found plenty to argue about within its own ranks. Scales and Goble made this observation of the Democrats: "having obliterated their Republican opposition, the state party fell victim to the fragmentation of personality cults, even as its national counterpart was evolving into a disciplined, if diverse, body" (1982, p. 187). One of the greatest areas of division for the Democrats was Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policy. In fact the division over this policy was so deep that it led to a coalition of anti-New Deal Democrats and Republicans, which helped elect Republican Ed Moore to the U.S. Senate (Scales and Goble 1982).

Despite occasional success, Oklahoma Republicans, throughout the first sixty years of the state's history, found themselves on the losing end for almost all elections. Unlike the states from the old Confederacy, states where one-party Democratic rule was also the norm, the groundwork was always in place for two-party competition in Oklahoma. Unfortunately for the Republicans, their success was always stymied by events that were in large part beyond their control. The first was the statehood convention that gave Democrats control over most county

governments and the state legislature for many years. Next came the Great Depression and conversely the political success of Franklin Roosevelt during the 1930s. The political career of Robert S. Kerr, lasting from the forties to the early sixties, continued Democratic success. As governor and senator, Kerr did not spend his time fighting for the Democratic Party. Instead he was known as "a tireless booster of Oklahoma products and industry" (Darcy 2000, p. 21). The best description of Kerr would not be a Democratic senator from Oklahoma but rather an Oklahoma senator who happened to be a Democrat. This left Republicans with a conundrum: "Republicans found it difficult to campaign against an incumbent, issue avoiding, Oklahoma booster, in Washington" (Darcy 2000, p. 21). While this may have been difficult for the Republicans to position themselves against Kerr, it was also detrimental for Democrats on the issue of party building. From the legacy of Kerr, Democratic officials in Oklahoma have been more concerned with holding office than with the policies that could be shaped as a result of having the office. Since Kerr's leadership, other Democratic leaders, such as David Boren and George Nigh, have campaigned on their own personal popularity, not their party ideals. Noting such strategy, current Democratic state chairman Jay Parmely observed, "even in our glory days the party was not strong" (Myers 2002, p. A-13). Such inability to build a strong party reflects Elazar's description of the independent political culture. This lack of clarity from Democrats and independence from the national party made the state Democrats unique. This behavior helped the state Democrats survive as the majority party in the state legislature. The weakness in this attitude for state Democrats has been evident in its growing failure to field candidates and its lack of a political "bench" for statewide and federal offices.

THE MODERN PHASE OF OKLAHOMA POLITICS (1963 TO 2002)

Democratic control of Oklahoma Government began to noticeably erode in the 1960s. Scales and Goble observed how the death of Robert S. Kerr on New Year's Day of 1963 coincided with the accelerated decline of power for the Democrats in Oklahoma (1982). At about the same time of Kerr's death, the first Republican governor of Oklahoma,

Henry Bellmon, was to be inaugurated. Bellmon had taken advantage of another split within Democratic ranks; this time the split was between urban and rural factions. This division had grown out of the reform movement instigated by the urban-oriented governor from Tulsa, J. Howard Edmondson. By 1962, the year of Bellmon's victory, the Democrats had sharp divisions along clear urban/rural lines.Candidate W. P. Bill Atkinson represented the urban faction and former governor Raymond Gary represented the predominately rural old guard against reform. This fractious behavior of Democrats finally caught up with them as Bellmon, a tireless organizer for Republicans, not only became "the father of modern Sooner Republicanism" but also ushered the beginning of two-party politics in Oklahoma (Scales and Goble 1982, p. 329).

With Bellmon's election, a new structure in the political parties began. The two parties shared power but did not compete much against each other. The parties found their domains within the state. Republicans increasingly succeeded in federal elections. Oklahoma Democrats continued to hold an advantage in party registration, but their members had abandoned their national party even before Bellmon's election and now appeared to abandon their state party. In presidential politics, the only Democratic presidential candidates to carry this state since the days of Franklin Roosevelt have been Truman in 1948 and Lyndon Johnson in 1964. Even with his landslide in 1964, Johnson won by less margin in Oklahoma than in other states. In 1968 Republican Richard Nixon replaced Roosevelt's victory with the greatest margin of victory in Oklahoma, by defeating George McGovern in all seventy-seven counties and garnering an amazing seventy-three percent of the vote. The gains made by Republicans that have progressed considerably since the 1960s shows the dichotomy of Oklahoma politics in this stage: success for Republicans federally and continued success for Democrats in the legislature.

Despite their victories federally, Republicans have yet to take over the legislature, although their recent election gains suggest a takeover in the next two election cycles. Why such lack of success at the legislative level? One way to explain this strange political configuration is the difference in rural and urban politics. Oklahoma had different dynamics in its rural and urban politics, compared to most states. This has made the two parties of Oklahoma not fit the typical patterns found nationally

for Democrats and Republicans. Sarah McCally Morehouse described the typical groups of support for the two major parties nationally (1981). In most states, Democrats receive strong support from the poor, African-Americans, union members, Catholics, and central-city dwellers, with marginal support from middle-class suburban voters. Republicans, in contrast, receive their support from a combination of non-poor, White, nonunion families, Protestants, and residents outside of the central cities (Morehouse 1981). Except for the poverty element, Oklahoma has the combination that should benefit the Republicans. This combination may explain why Republicans have been dominant at the congressional level. The elements mentioned by Morehouse that lead to Republican success are found in most southern states that have also witnessed a tremendous growth for the Republicans in the last two decades. There is one major exception, however, and that is the large percentage of African-Americans that reside in southern states. It is the African-American vote that has kept many southern Democrats in congress (Morehouse 1981). Without concentrations of Oklahoma African-Americans, Republicans were frequently able to take all the state's congressional seats. Democrats have been able to hold on to the legislature in Oklahoma because of the distinction of Democrats in the rural areas from the national Democratic Party.

In most states Democrats get their support from the cities and Republicans from small towns and farms (Jewell 1955). This has not been the situation in Oklahoma. The two major cities, Tulsa and Oklahoma City, have been the main areas of support for the Republicans, whereas the rural areas of northeastern, southeastern, and southwestern Oklahoma have been supportive of the Democrats. The demise of Democratic victories in Oklahoma federal and presidential elections was forecasted by its inability to win in the two major cities. In presidential elections, for example, Lyndon Johnson in 1964 was the last Democrat to carry Oklahoma City, while Franklin Roosevelt in 1936 was the last to carry Tulsa. In gubernatorial politics, Republican Frank Keating carried both counties by large numbers in 1994 and 1998. For the 2002 state house races, twenty-seven districts have no Democratic candidates. Of those twenty-seven districts, eighteen are found in the cities or suburbs (*The State Filings* 2002, A18).

Why are the two major cities in Oklahoma so heavily Republican? Oklahoma City and Tulsa fit the descriptions by Morehouse on

Republican strongholds. Both cities have small minority populations and both have a small percentage of union members in their total workforces. It can also be said that both cities have newspapers that tend to favor Republicans and that the Protestant faiths that dominate are fundamentalist or evangelical, which both tend to support the Grand Old Party (GOP) in overwhelming numbers. These are all reasons why the cities of Oklahoma do not fit the normal pattern of Democratic support that is found in many cities throughout the United States. It is also an indication that as rural Democratic legislators will have a weakened grip on the state, as this paper suggests, the Republicans will gain control as the cities and suburbs increase their clout in Oklahoma.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT

Oklahoma may be considered a rural state symbolically, even though demographically it is not. Since statehood, Democrats have received, certainly in legislative races, a great deal of support in rural areas. Democratic legislative candidates may win in rural sections of Oklahoma because they are more conservative than their national party. The Democratic legislature never voted to allow liquor by the drink or gambling on horses. Both practices were approved by votes of the people. In addition, the Oklahoma legislature has required schools to provide only sexually transmitted disease (STD) and/or HIV/AIDS education but has not required sexuality education as have many states (Donovan 1998). On gay rights, Oklahoma is one of sixteen states that still have sodomy laws that prohibit consensual sex between same-sex partners. Oklahoma does not have a law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation, nor does its hate crimes law include sexual orientation (*State-by-State Sodomy Law Update* 2000). On the issue of guns, in sharp contrast to national politics, many Democratic legislators in Oklahoma are supported by the National Rifle Association (NRA) in their reelection bids. The NRA might be giving to Democrats because they are in the legislature's majority. The Democrats have passed legislation that is supported by the NRA. The legislature passed a concealed handgun law that allows citizens with a license to carry a concealed handgun in public. On social or morality issues, Democratic legislators find themselves to the right of their national party. The legislature also may

have remained in Democratic control for such a great length of time because of the phenomenon of dual partisan identification. This phenomenon suggests that voters have a psychological attachment to their local party and would rather have a dual partisan identification rather than change party registration (Hadley 1985). Of course, one of the reasons voters may have a strong attachment to their local party is that it behaves in a similar fashion as the party they vote for nationally. In other words the local Democratic officials are more like national Republicans than national Democrats.

Rural Democratic legislators can succeed where their state party may not because the voters have different expectations for them. If state legislators continue to provide services and stay in contact with the "folks back home," they can get reelected despite their national party. This means that the "home style" of legislators, the way in which incumbents present themselves and build a trust with their constituencies, determines their success at the polls, not ideology or partisanship (Fenno 1978). What helps Democrats in rural areas of Oklahoma is that they are individuals who have been in the area for quite some time. Such lengthy residency allows them to be trusted by the voters, and their voting records are not an important factor. In traditional districts, those with little change in the population, namely rural areas, a politician can continue to stress personality or service as a reason for reelection because the politician is essentially talking to the same group of voters every reelection year. One former rural legislator said that people don't care about the issues, they want to know if they can call you if they have a problem, and will you help them find a job if they ask.

As a district is shaped by new additions of citizens or as a district is redesigned from a rural district to a more suburban one, politicians will need to rely on other practices in order to get votes. Candidates who must continue to reintroduce themselves to voters will need to stress ideology and policy positions. Richard Fenno has described this phenomenon as rural members of Congress must transform their political strategies by adopting less "person-intensive connections" and by adopting more "policy-intensive connections" as their districts change (2000). Many rural Democratic legislators in the Oklahoma state house are witnessing such changes to their districts. This will cause a different type of candidate to run in the future and will also decrease the power

of rural Democrats, ushering in a new phase to Oklahoma's political culture.

While demographic dynamics affect all parts of the state, the changes that have occurred in Oklahoma's population have had the greatest impact on the rural legislators. Rural Democrats never developed with the national party. This was to the advantage of the rural Democratic legislator as there would be a loyal group of voters who would support them and no consequences for them to pay if their national party alienated that same group of voters. For years, rural Democrats would not need their national party because Republicans in Oklahoma, in most parts of the state at least, were not competitive. As the state has changed and has become more urban and suburban, the rural Democrats have a smaller and unknown group of voters to attract.

As noted previously, the urbanization of Oklahoma is not an entirely recent event. In fact, by the 1970s, more than two-thirds of the state's population was found in urban areas (Kirkpatrick, Morgan, and Kielhorn 1977). These ongoing population shifts in Oklahoma are important to the future of rural legislators because there is also a reshaping of rural legislative districts. Populations in Oklahoma are shifting not only to counties that surround the two major cities, but also to counties that have lakeside communities.

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the shifting of population in Oklahoma. Counties with the largest population growth are primarily counties that border the two major cities or are counties with lakes. Canadian and Cleveland counties have a border with Oklahoma county, where Oklahoma City is located. Wagoner and Rogers counties have a border with Tulsa county. The counties of Cherokee, Delaware, Marshall,McIntosh, and Wagoner counties in Table 1 are described as "lake" counties. The counties and their corresponding lakes are as follows: Cherokee county has Lake Tenkiller, Delaware county has Grand Lake, Marshall county has Lake Texhoma, McIntosh county has Lake Eufala, and Wagoner county has Lake Fort Gibson. There is some indication that these counties have used their lakes as development for homes, which mainly serve retirees. One such indication is that most of these lake counties, with the exception of Wagoner county, a growing suburban area for Tulsa, could have a high percentage of their population over

TABLE 1

Top ten counties with largest population growth (1990-1997)

County	Growth Rate %	Description	%+55
Delaware	20.7	Lake	32.8
Rogers	19.0	Suburb	27.6
Canadian	13.8	Suburb	15.9
McClain	13.3	Rural	21.8
Wagoner	13.2	Lake/Suburb	18.0
Cleveland	13.1	Suburb	13.4
Cherokee	12.5	Lake	23.4
McIntosh	12.0	Lake	35.4
Marshall	11.2	Lake	34.2
Mayes	11.1	Rural	26.4

SOURCE: 1999 county and city extra: annual metro, city, and county data book 8th edition.

fifty-five and also be a high growth area. While most retirees may have similar policy demands, which may help Democratic candidates for the legislature, many newcomers to the state may have a different partisan makeup than the locals. In fact, Steve Edwards, a former Republican Party state chair, cited that on the recruiting process for his party "we look to where Republicans are moving in, which is the lake areas in northeastern Oklahoma."

As for the counties with the greatest population decreases, the message is quite clear. It is the rural areas, predominately in Western Oklahoma, that are losing population. Certainly the rough times for the oil/gas industry and the need for less labor in agriculture have led to the decrease.

Many factors in population tilt against the rural Democratic legislator in Oklahoma. The most populated areas in the state, the suburbs and

urban centers, have increasingly become solid Republican supporters, which explains the success of the GOP in federal elections. Meanwhile, many of the traditional Democratic rural areas are losing population or their Democratic characterization through the advent of suburbanization or newcomers moving in. This demographic structure bodes not only for a greater Republican presence in Oklahoma politics but also for a political culture that focuses increasingly on the needs of urban and suburban dwellers.

Despite the greater numbers in cities and suburbs for Oklahoma, the rural legislator still has the upper hand at the state house. For an illustration of this power, Table 3 lists the committee chairs for the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

TABLE 2

Top ten counties with largest population deficits (1990-1997)

County	Growth Rate %	Description	%+55
Tillman	-16.2	Rural	28.9
Roger Mills	-13.1	Rural	27.6
Harper	10.9	Rural	32.9
Woods	-9.4	Rural	32.7
Dewey	-9.2	Rural	31.7
Harmon	-8.4	Rural	32.8
Blaine	-7.7	Rural	29.2
Cimarron	-6.6	Rural	27.9
Ellis	-6.1	Rural	31.7
Alfalfa	-5.6	Rural	33.7

SOURCE: 1999 county and city extra: annual metro, city, and county data book 8th edition.

TABLE 3

Committee Chairs in Oklahoma State House

Committee	Chair	District
Administrative Rule	Charlie Gray	Urban
Agriculture	James Covey	Rural
Appropriations	Mike Mass	Rural
Banking	Debbie Blackburn	Urban
Career & Technology	Barbara Staggs	Rural
Commerce	Lloyd Fields	Rural
Common Education	Larry Roberts	Rural
Congressional Redistricting	Lloyd Benson	Rural
Corrections	Ron Kirby	Rural
County & Municipal Governance	Gary Taylor	Rural
Criminal Justice	David Braddock	Rural
Economic Development	Dale Turner	Rural
Environment & Natural Resources	M.C. Leist	Rural
Government Operations	Mary Easley	Urban
Higher Education	Bill Nations	Suburban
Homeland Security	Bill Paulk	Urban
Human Services	Darrell Gilbert	Urban
Insurance	Kevin Cox	Urban
Judiciary	Opio Toure	Urban
Mental Health	Al Lindley	Urban
Public Health	Fred Stanley	Rural
Public Safety	Ray McCarter	Rural
Redistricting	Bill Paulk	Urban
Retirement	J. T. Stites	Rural
Revenue & Taxation	Clay Pope	Rural
Rules	Russ Roach	Urban
Science & Technology	Abe Deutchendorf	Rural
Small Business	Bob Plunk	Rural
Tourism	Kenneth Corn	Rural
Transportation	Mike Tyler	Suburban
Veterans	Dale Wells	Rural
Wildlife	Dale Smith	Rural

SOURCE: The Oklahoma House of Representatives

THE FUTURE DIRECTORS OF THE OKLAHOMA POLITICAL CULTURE

Of the thirty-two standing committee chairs, twenty come from predominately rural districts, ten come from predominately urban districts, and only two come from the suburbs. Committee chairmen have considerable influence on the direction and design of legislation. Thus, the lawmaking process in Oklahoma still has a rural flavor, even though the population in Oklahoma is no longer heavily rural. The state house in the very near future may no longer be able to sustain its rural roots. Three factors all dealing with demographics have so far been espoused as reasons for the changes in Oklahoma political culture: the increased population in urban centers, more growth in suburbs, and outsiders moving into lakeside communities. Two remaining factors need to be explored, each of which has an impact on the type of individuals who will choose to be legislators: term limits and the growth of media in legislative races.

Term limits is certain to change the political landscape of states that have adopted it. This certainty is based on the fact that many of the political leaders who dominate state politics will simply no longer be able to hold their offices. In the next two election cycles for Oklahoma, fifty-seven of the one hundred and one state representatives will be term limited. Rural districts across the state will have thirty-four members term-limited out as opposed to twenty-five from urban or suburban districts (Ford 2001). Certainly, term limits reduces the experience advantage some legislators give their districts when muscling for the agenda in the legislature. Political scientist Linda Fowler believed term limits would decrease the incentive to run for office because candidates would not see a return on their investment by building a political career (1994). However, term limits may enhance representation by giving other groups more opportunities to serve. New members will have power as a result of term limits. Some studies have concluded that there may be some benefit to women and nonwhites as well as to the minority political party of a state (Farmer 1998). If changes such as these occur, then a legislative body may become truly "representative." Nevertheless, for regions of a state that need political expertise to balance their declining numbers, such as many rural areas of Oklahoma, term limits may bring more harm than good.

The perception among many rural legislators is one of concern over what will happen to their districts once term limits takes effect. House Speaker Larry Adair stated,

> You are probably going to see the demise of rural Oklahoma. Most rural lawmakers stay [in office] a long time. In metropolitan areas lawmakers leave earlier. Rural lawmakers stay in touch with their constituents more than metropolitan lawmakers do. Term limits will cause a shift of power from rural to urban that will create a consolidation of county government and rural schools and a more centralized form of government.

With the consolidation of rural governments and schools, efficiency in education and government may be achieved, but at the expense of access for rural citizens. Such emphasis on access has been a cornerstone for Oklahoma's political culture (Holloway and Meyer 1992). Rural legislator Rick Littlefield also expressed his view on the impact of term limits: "Seniority is the key to the Oklahoma legislature. It matters for committee assignments and the contact a legislator has with agency directors. Bureaucrats and lobbyists will run the government of Oklahoma once term limits kicks in." The legislators' comments on office tenure are correct, to a degree. Currently eleven representatives from rural districts have served over twelve years, but only five representatives from urban or suburban districts have served over twelve years. The average tenure difference, however, between rural and urban/suburban representatives is very similar. Rural representatives have an average tenure of eight years, and urban/suburban representatives have seven years.

Adair and Littlefield suggest that some areas of a state might need more experience than other areas in the state legislature. If term limits shifts the power from rural to urban areas in the state, the legislature may not seem as attractive to candidates in rural Oklahoma in the future. In comparison, urban and suburban areas may be able to unite their delegations and out-vote rural legislators, tilting the laws and policies of the state to their favor. Not all experts on term limits believe that decreasing seniority will create a bloc voting mentality for lawmakers. Instead, term limits may cause candidates to campaign on how they would serve the district, not on how they would seek consensus in the capitol. Legislators may become increasingly parochial due to term limits and focus more on casework than on legislation (Kazee 1994). This

practice, if it does occur, may give short-term benefits to constituents, but could harm the state as it may damage comity in lawmaking.

The way power will be allotted in a term limited legislature is a major concern for rural lawmakers. Oklahoma City and Tulsa have the upper hand if determination of authority in the legislature increasingly becomes a numbers game. This result will lead to more committee chairs in the hands of urban/suburban legislators, especially if the Republicans become the majority party in the state house. The priorities of Oklahoma's political institutions will increasingly be the priorities of urban and suburban voters.

Not only will the composition of the legislature change, causing the urban and suburban legislators to have more influence than their rural counterparts, the type of politicians who run in rural districts will change in the future. This is a result in the change of political strategies found in rural Oklahoma. Rural districts in Oklahoma have been areas where candidates focused on a "person-intensive" campaign. Congressional scholar Richard Fenno has referred to this as a campaign that does not focus on policy or party, but instead focuses on personal contact and service (2000). This strategy has worked especially well in rural areas where there has been little population influx and the candidates themselves have been from the areas for quite some time. With the change of districts, such as the alteration of a rural district to a more suburban one, candidates must then run a more "policy-intensive" campaign. Such campaigns, as the term suggests, stress policy and also party affiliation (Fenno 2000). Districts with fluctuating populations, such as suburban districts or the lake resort districts in Oklahoma, have voters that rely on policy or partisan cues when making their voting decisions. More voters will not respond to the traditional "you know me and my family" person-intensive campaign.

Currently and more so in the future, candidates for the legislature in rural areas, as with the rest of the state, will need to emphasize a media campaign. A combination of term limits, new voters, and suburbanized districts will cause candidates to use the airwaves to introduce themselves to unfamiliar constituencies. Thus, legislative campaigns will become costlier. One recent candidate's success, which might be a signal for future campaigns, was the election of Jim Wilson in rural eastern Oklahoma District 4. Wilson, a political novice, spent over ninety thousand dollars in his election. Much of his money was

spent on television advertising. He believed that such spending was necessary in order to boost his name recognition and to drive off potential opponents. The candidates of the future in rural parts of Oklahoma should be more oriented towards policy and partisan issues, and will also need to be skilled in fundraising.

By 2004, when term limits begins its firm grip on the Oklahoma legislature, the politics of the Sooner state will be dictated by the urban and suburban regions as never before. This is not a mournful claim but merely a realistic one. In addition, barring some unforeseen political rift or scandal on the part of the GOP, the state will have a Republican majority in the state houses. With a combination of greater urban influence and Republican control, it should be no surprise that priorities will change in ways that will alter the political culture of the state.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

Throughout this paper, the evidence of change in Oklahoma's political culture is more suggestive than empirical. The demographic patterns are strikingly evident, but the impact that term limits and fundraising will have on this state's politics is anecdotal and subjective. Not too surprisingly, career-minded legislators do not like term limits. Despite the uncertainty of predicting the future, here is what we can surmise of Oklahoma's politics thus far. It has gone through two phases in its politics: first a traditional one-party system with power emanating from rural areas; second an emerging two-party system and a greater voice for non-rural areas. As the state went to its second phase, there were alterations to the political culture. Some changes that occurred in the early 1960s, the beginning of this new phase, were the repeal of prohibition, central purchasing for state agencies, and a merit system for state employees (Scales and Goble 1982). Possible changes in Oklahoma's political culture in the near future deal with gamecocks, agribusiness, taxes, education, and party competition.

Oklahoma is one of three states, along with New Mexico and Louisiana, to have legalized cockfighting. In this sport, bantam roosters are fixed with razor sharp devices to their spurs. The fighting continues until one bird can no longer go on. Opponents charge that this is an inhumane entertainment and should be stopped. Supporters cite the

tradition of the event and ask to be left alone. According to a recent poll, sixty-five percent of Oklahomans wanted the sport to be banned. Over sixty percent of respondents charged that the sport gives the state a backward image (Martindale 2002). While the differences on this subject were not great between rural and non-rural areas, fifty-five percent of residents in rural Oklahoma wanted the sport banned, these poll numbers may reflect the changes that are occurring in rural Oklahoma. As more outsiders move to rural areas and as rural areas become suburbanized, more people may place greater importance in the issue of state "image." Such concern for state image is evident in Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating's remark on this fowl sport, "it is simply embarrassing to Oklahoma to be seen as one of only a tiny handful of locations outside the Third World where this activity is legal" (Ervin 2002, p. A-11).

Cockfighting is not the only poultry issue that illustrates change in Oklahoma. Chicken houses that are owned by some of the major meat producers in the United States, such as Simmons and Tyson, are found in the state of Oklahoma. The attitude towards this business is a mixed response. The City of Tulsa's water supply is currently threatened by the chicken farms located in eastern Oklahoma, specifically Lake Eucha in Delaware county, since the runoff from these farms pollutes the area's watershed (Ervin 2000). This suggests that chicken farm regulation would be an issue that unites Oklahomans from rural and non-rural areas. Nevertheless, while no one wants to live near a chicken house or have his or her drinking water polluted, chicken is still a popular product, and these farms do produce jobs. It may mean that chicken farms in the future will move farther away from the water supplies of metropolitan areas, to avoid complaints of water pollution and nuisances. This will increasingly transfer the poultry problem to the rural areas. By moving the farms to more remote areas of rural Oklahoma, the chicken producers will find a less than united front against their business in the state. In this past year, a farming operation was proposed to build ninety chicken houses on five hundred acres in extreme northeast Oklahoma in Ottawa County, away from the suburbs and Tulsa's water supply (Warford-Perry 2002). While this particular enterprise was stopped, a smaller chicken farm operation is in the planning stage at a nearby location (Sturgeon 2002). Agri-business proposals such as this may indicate the future burdens that will be placed on rural areas as these operations try

to balance demand for their product while avoiding protests from cities and suburbs.

Oklahoma may be able to escape the image of a backwater place with a ban on cockfighting, as the opponents of such sport proclaim, but one reality the Sooner state cannot escape is its attachment to Texas. Oklahoma will always be North of Texas, thus sharing a border with one of the most powerful and influential states in the country. While difficult to accept for proud Oklahomans, some state leaders find aspects of Texas state government worth adopting. As cities and their suburbs start to dominate Oklahoma politics, a greater charge will be made to eliminate the state's income tax and various sales taxes and move towards a tax system comparable to Texas's. This transformation will shift more burdens on rural areas and the small towns that serve their needs. An elimination of income taxes will most likely increase property taxes, which will increase the tax rates for landowners in rural Oklahoma. A reduction in sales taxes, or in some cases outright elimination of such taxes, may seem beneficial to many residents since this is a regressive tax; it does not consider the revenue base for services in small towns across Oklahoma. Without sales taxes many small towns could not provide adequate fire or police protection for their citizens. The debate surrounding taxes in Oklahoma has primarily focused on the benefits it would provide for job production in the metropolitan areas, an indication of the shifting political power in the state.

With the growing power of Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and their environs, Oklahoma becomes a more centralized place. One policy area where this will become increasingly evident in the future will be education. The struggle over Governor Keating's curriculum requirements brings centralization of education to the forefront. The governor's plan would require four units of English and three units of Math, Science, and Social Studies (Ervin 2000). While lauded by many lawmakers and citizens, a criticism of the plan was the loss of control from local schools (Ervin 2000). Another concern has been that greater curriculum requirements weaken the possibilities for students who want to pursue vocational training rather than a college-track education. Tied into centralization of education is the issue of school consolidation. Schools that cannot provide necessary curriculums for their students could be absorbed into other schools. Rural schools would most likely

be the ones to be absorbed since they would not have the tax base to support the demands for such curriculum.

Politically, Oklahoma's future will have two-party competition with Republicans having considerable advantages. The GOP will never dominate as the Democrats did back in the 1930s, when the legislature at times had few if any Republicans to counteract the majority party. Nonetheless, the Republicans in the future will most often be the majority party in the legislature and will be the favorites in gubernatorial and most congressional races. The district lines for legislative seats do not indicate the true strength of Oklahoma's metropolitan areas. A non-rural agenda will shape the legislature after term limits begins its reign in 2004. Democrats may see few advantages on the horizon in Oklahoma. The future should make Democrats adopt a unified party strategy for the first time in the state's history. Instead of individualized and personality-based campaigns, Oklahoma Democratic politicians will have to articulate to voters what the Democratic Party in Oklahoma stands for. That will be a new experience for a party that has never needed to be united or to concern itself with the issues of its national counterpart. It may appear that Oklahoma Democrats would lose even more by connecting themselves to their national party, but currently as the party does not control the Executive Branch or the United States House of Representatives, the opportunity is ripe for Democrats to focus on local concerns in ways that distinguishes them from Republicans. Democrats have had success in the South recently by "finding candidates that fit their districts and can build a message from the ground up" (Chaddock 2001, p. 2). In order to have success in Oklahoma, the national Democrats will need to provide support of candidates in the state and trust the instincts of the candidates as they hone their own message. Oklahoma Democratic candidates will also need to walk the tightrope of being independent of the national party, yet at the same time supporting the party so as not to alienate partisan supporters in their districts. The Republicans, through years of losses, have strengthened their party unity and message. Democrats are now in a position that will require them to become an effective counterpart to the Republicans for the good of the state and their own existence.

Two-party competition will be a benefit to the citizens of Oklahoma. It will give voters choices and ways to reward and punish policy

alternatives from the two parties. In fact, all the future issues described in this essay can be beneficial to the state of Oklahoma. Nevertheless, as in physics and also with politics, for every action there is a reaction. The changes described will assist more people in this state, and they also may steer the state in directions that more people in non-rural areas want to go.

These reforms also indicate something new for Oklahoma, an increasingly moralistic political culture. As the name suggests, the moralistic political culture is most concerned with developing a good society. Elazar characterizes this venture as "a struggle for power. . .but also an effort to exercise power for the betterment of the commonwealth" (1972, p. 96). Indeed reforms in animal rights, agriculture, taxes, and education may create a better society in Oklahoma. Nevertheless, reforms do alter lifestyles and this can only happen, as Elazar alludes, through an exercise of power. One's level of enthusiasm for reform can be based on whose lifestyle is being altered. The reforms listed above disproportionately affect rural Oklahoma more than other parts of the state.

For rural Oklahomans and their political leaders, the future will encompass a reality that they have already experienced in part. In the last decades rural areas have lost population comparable to the gains made in urban and suburban areas. In the future, rural areas will also lose political clout commensurate to those population losses.

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EDUCATION FOR ECONOMY AND SOCIETY: A FOCUS ON AND A VISION FOR OKLAHOMA

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Ever since at least the 1770s education has been considered public responsibility. Arguments in favor of and against public education oscillate between social and economic considerations. With a focus on education policy in Oklahoma, I address four of the main economic arguments (which latter dominated in the 20th century) against public education, provide counter arguments, and conclude that a solid public policy in education must be grounded in a balance between social and economic arguments and must benefit from true bipartisan input. Only this will assure that the State of Oklahoma will become the kinder and gentler society that provides good opportunities and a decent standard of living for all.

WHERE WERE WE, WHERE ARE WE, AND WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Few will contest the observation that education is vital to society. American government has embraced responsibility in this area since independence. In 1996, public education absorbed around 425.5 billion dollars (20.2 percent) of general expenditure which makes it the largest item on the budget. With respect to public expenditure on education per level of government, local governments spend more than 292 billion

dollars (68.7 percent) on education and state governments some 25 percent. Finally, local government expenditure on education in the U.S. averages around 36.9 percent of all expenditure, while in Oklahoma this is more than 45 percent (data derived from SA, 1999: Tables 504 and 525). What is subject to differences of opinion is the scope and nature of public education. Throughout American history, taxpayers, politicians, and members of the business community have been reluctant to support public education, basically because the societal effects of good education are very difficult to measure. Each of these groups often focus on the short-term effects of education with measurable outcomes (such as, GPA's, graduation rates, ACT scores, job placement, and so forth). The short-term motive for a strong education system is basically economic and has been advanced by the business community advocating the need for a skilled and educated workforce. Taxpayers, too, generally embrace an economic perspective in the demand for an education that provides young people with a good start in a career. Finally, politicians are almost forced to focus on a short-term perspective, for in their efforts to arrive at an ". . .authoritative allocation of values. . ." they need to justify expenditures for public education versus those for transportation, human services, and so forth. As a consequence, a long-term perspective on public education has been given short shrift, but should not be ignored. In fact, for a variety of reasons a long-term perspective on education policy is more vital to society than many realize.

In this article, I present a long-term and comprehensive vision for education policy in the State of Oklahoma. Emphasizing a long-term perspective is important for reasons that will be outlined in Section Two concerning the background of the development of public education policy in the United States and in Oklahoma. This vision must be comprehensive, which means that education policy should be regarded as an integral element in a wider spectrum of policies (especially including economic and social policy). In Section Three, I will specifically discuss the relation between education and the economy, presenting the arguments of critics of publicly funded education and advancing counter arguments. In Section Four I will present data that testify to the negative image of public education in general, some of the not-so-good rankings of Oklahoma and how these can be interpreted, as well as other facts about Oklahoma that may be cause for concern. These facts will be contrasted to information that provides a more positive picture of

Oklahoma. Americans often compare rankings among states and Oklahoma does not do so well. While these rankings provide an indication of where we are nationally, we should focus more on Oklahoma itself. When we allow national rankings to blind us, we may enter into a race that does not help our state. We should not look only for the weaknesses as they show up in comparison to other states, but should consider our strengths and how we can build upon them. Hence the title of my article: a focus on and vision for Oklahoma. Americans have also frequently looked for "lessons" elsewhere and so I will provide some comparative remarks concerning the importance of public education in other Western countries in Section Five. Again, that more impressionistic comparison is not made to put Oklahoma down, but to provide it with a mirror and help it to recognize its own merits. Finally, in Section Six, a comprehensive and long-term vision for Oklahoma education policy is outlined and advocated.

2. PHASES IN AND MOTIVES FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION 1779 - PRESENT

> It was in making education not only common to all, but in some sense compulsory on all, that the destiny of the free republics of America was practically settled. (James Russell Lowell, 1819-1891, in his *Literary Essays, vol.II, 1870-1890: New England Two Centuries Ago*; as quoted in Bartlett 1992)

In this section I first discuss the development of public education in the United States at large then provide an overview of its development in the State of Oklahoma.

In the early beginnings of the American Republic, education was one of those issues that the Founding Fathers regarded as fundamental for both society and government. In his *Bill 79 for More General Diffusion of Knowledge* (1779), Thomas Jefferson regarded public education as an important bulwark against despots (Conant 1962; McKinney and Howard 1998), a motive befitting the revolutionary times. More generally, yet still important, is the notion that public education was regarded as an instrument of assimilation and the means to the formation of an American identity (Schlesinger 1992:17). The American

public school system was ". . .designed to foster learning and to facilitate temporal social justice and pass the culture from generation to generation" (Frederickson 1997:151).

When the lands north of the Ohio River (i.e. the Northwest Territory) were to be surveyed, Jefferson suggested that Congress pass an ordinance in 1785 to apply a system of rectangular survey that established townships of six square miles each. This system still exists and was important to public education because, back then, each 36 square mile area was divided into sections of square miles, hence 64 sections, the 16th and 36th of which were designated for public schools so that no child would have to walk more than three miles to get to school (Magruder 1947). The desire to have schools within walking distance prompted the establishment of many school districts. In 1914 Oklahoma had 5,889 school districts. Given the post-World War II depopulation of the rural areas that number was reduced to 3,300 districts through annexation or consolidation in the 1947-1965 period. Further reforms in the 1990s resulted in 544 school districts in 2000 (Oklahoma Almanac 2001).

Jefferson's main objective, to provide free elementary education for all citizens, would not be achieved during his lifetime. For much of the nineteenth century, in fact, the American taxpayer was only willing to provide elementary education for the very poor (Conant 1962). The Morrill Act of 1862 established a system of higher education where each state could apply for and receive federal funds for the development of so-called land-grant agricultural and mechanical colleges (Conant 1953 and 1962). Finally, the combined effect of population growth and rapid industrialization resulted in a push for educational reform, starting in New England, that, for example, resulted in the State of New York in a free elementary school system for all children (1871) (Conant 1962).

Jefferson also desired to establish free education of a more advanced nature for a select group of lower-income students through the establishment of a series of residential grammar schools. University education would be provided at public expense for those who would benefit from this and were willing and ready to serve in a public career because of such education. It was not until the 1950s that these principles were embraced (Conant 1962). In the course of the twentieth century, the traditional long-term objectives of forging an identity, achieving a sense of social justice, and transmitting culture from one generation to the next, were joined by two relatively new motives, both with a more

short-term focus: public education for a professional public service and for boosting the economy.

From the 1880s on, the public sector embarked on an era of reform that has still not ended. The main object during the Reform Period (1880s-1920s) was to create a less corrupt and more efficient government through a variety of measures. In the field of personnel management this resulted in the Pendleton Act of 1883 which provided the foundations for a merit-based, instead of patronage, civil service. In the field of local government the reform movement prompted the establishment of a council-manager form of government from the early twentieth century on. Several research bureaus were created at local and state levels and were aimed at providing state and local governments with data upon which policy could be developed. At the federal level a variety of reforms was aimed at strengthening the executive branch. All of these reforms in the practice of government called for the establishment of public administration and political science programs in higher education. From the Great Depression on, government at large assumed ever increasing responsibilities for the well-being and welfare of the nation. In the words of a former Harvard University president the ". . .practice of government is so important and so complex, [that] the country badly needs able, well-trained public officials"(Bok 1990). This was true in the 1930s and it is even more true today. In a landmark study, originally published more than three decades ago, Mosher observed:

> As in our culture in the past and in a good many other civilizations, the nature and quality of the public service depends principally upon the system of education. Almost all of our future administrators will be college graduates, and within two or three decades a majority of them will probably have graduate degrees. Rising proportions of public administrators are returning to graduate schools for refresher courses, mid-career training, and higher degrees (1982).

From the 1960s onward universities expanded or created schools of public administration and public policy (Bok 1990). In addition to full-time curricula, these institutions have increasingly also developed programs for mid-career professionals in the civil and military services. The College of Continuing Education at the University of Oklahoma is nationally prominent in the provision of Advanced Programs for these

categories of students. Obviously, a highly trained professional public service is an objective with long-term ramifications, but the immediate emphasis is on a public service that is responsive to public demand, which is a more short-term motive by nature. Not everyone, however, is convinced of the need for a highly educated public workforce as is illustrated by the following observation:

> A vision of higher education that promotes the forging of views of students in the foundries of the state, the crafting of a cadre of highly trained workers to execute the designs of government agents, and the fusing of minds to missions of national purpose is precisely the ethic many Americans have fought against and died to prevent when governments, fascist and socialist alike, have imposed it on their own people (Sommer 1995).

The motives of old, identity, social justice, and culture, were integrated into the liberal perspective on educational reform that dominated the debate in the 1930s and the 1960s-1970s and that

> . . .argued for [a] well-rounded and more balanced reform of education rather than a narrow emphasis on the basics. Liberal reformers[. . .]did not promote a narrow technical or vocational education programs [sic] but stressed the importance of literacy and computation skills and sought to socialize youth more effectively... (Martin 1991:351).

From the beginning of statehood, Oklahoma politicians tried to make education (especially higher education) accessible to all "sons and daughters of ordinary people" (Morgan et al. 1991:12). However, in the words of Paul Sharp, former president of the University of Oklahoma (OU), "The commitment to academic life is basically not part of our culture" (Morgan et al. 1991:13). Although Oklahomans in general regard public education as important, student performance in elementary, high school and college institutions persistently ranks low compared to the national figures (see also Section Four). Oklahoma has focused more on developing and funding a vo-tech system, which is among the best in the nation (Morgan et al. 1991).

Of the various reforms in Oklahoma public education I would like to mention three. Upon his vision for economic modernization the oilman

and governor Robert S. Kerr (1943-1947) in 1944 obtained popular approval for a constitutional amendment creating a board of regents for OU and for A&M colleges (nowadays, OSU) (Morgan 1991). Shortly thereafter, desegregation of public schools entered the public arena. The Jim Crow Code, introduced in Senate Bill 1 in 1907, had provided for segregation of blacks and whites in education, as well as in public transport and public facilities. The atmosphere of the day is perhaps best captured in H.L. Mencken's observation that:

> . . .the Negro, no matter how much he is educated, must remain, as a race, in a condition of subservience; that he must remain the inferior of the stronger and more intelligent white man so long as he retains racial differentiation. Therefore, the effort to educate him has awakened in his mind ambitions and aspirations which, in the very nature of things, must go unrealized, and so, while gaining nothing whatever materially, he has lost all his old contentment, peace of mind and happiness. Indeed, it is a commonplace of observation in the United States that the educated and refined Negro is invariably a hopeless, melancholy, embittered and despairing man (Wills 1999:274-275).

Indeed, the times have changed significantly! Two United States Supreme Court decisions (*Sipuel v. University of Oklahoma* 1948; and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* 1950) forced desegregation of higher education in the state. In its landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court declared "separate but equal" common schools unconstitutional. Quickly Governor Raymond Gary (1954-1958), who acted upon his strong belief that all were created equal, actively supported statewide desegregation threatening to withhold public funding for those who did not comply (Morgan 1991). Finally, the reforms initiated by Governor Henry Bellmon (1987-1991) helped establish a new foundation for public education through House Bill 1017 (1990). This bill promoted a significant decrease of class size, increase in teacher pay, and further consolidation of school districts to be funded in part by a tax increase of more than $300 million. These three examples essentially illustrate that public education reform in Oklahoma was driven, at least in part, by liberal motives. Both in the United States and in Oklahoma, however, the economic motive did not take a backseat in the twentieth century.

To the contrary, economic motives against public education dominated during the 1920s, the 1940s and 50s, and the 1980s and 90s.

3. SCHOLARS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND ECONOMY

> . . .perhaps, the richer the nation, the more apparent is this inability of its average inhabitant to survive unaided and alone (Heilbroner 1962:8).

A more visible short-term motive is the argument that education serves a healthy economy under the general assumption that the development of human capital through education lowers the cost (for on-the-job training) and enhances the quality of labor. At first glance this statement appears unproblematic, but there is serious disagreement about the focus of education (training for skills versus liberal education) and on the question of whether education should be privately or publicly funded and organized. I first examine four economic arguments against public funding of (higher) education and provide arguments in support of public funding for each.

Initially, economic arguments in favor of publicly funded education, especially higher education, rested upon the assumption that it would benefit society and democracy at large, for instance in the belief that public education would reduce crime (West 1994). Economists also believed that economic development proceeded in direct proportion to the level of educational achievement (Gabbard 2000). Economic arguments against public funding can be categorized into four different but related groups.

ARGUMENT GROUP ONE: EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY ARE NOT LINKED

This first group challenges the basic argument that education and the economy are directly linked. This was a strong belief, however, as illustrated by the following:

> In the first part of this century, we [i.e. The United States; CH) adopted the principle of mass-producing low-quality education to create a low-skilled workforce for mass-production industry. Building on this principle, our education and business systems became very tightly linked, evolving into a single system that brilliantly capitalized our advantages and enabled us to create the most powerful economy... (Marshall and Tucker 1992).

Together with the Second World War, this powerful link also is paraded as the major cause for the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s. Critics, though, point to the fact that many in the postwar workforce had never graduated from high school yet they created the economic prosperity of the 1950s. That this was made possible by a lack of serious global competition is not considered. Critics also denounce the claim that education provides greater opportunities for U.S. citizens and point out that many U.S. based corporations have relocated jobs to lesser developed countries with lower wages. Also, they argue, government heavily subsidized the development of high-tech and labor-saving technology, so that public funding creates rather than cures economic insecurity for people (Gabbard 2000).

I suggest, however, that business and industry need a different kind of labor force; one that is not only educated with particular job skills, but also with the attitudinal and behavioral skills that foster life-long learning and flexibility. Education is needed to provide *everyone* with the skills with which they can compete in the market place. I emphasize "everyone" because government has a moral obligation to support equality of opportunity (see also Argument Four).

ARGUMENT GROUP TWO: AMERICA'S COMPETITIVENESS JEOPARDIZED BY PUBLIC EDUCATION

America's economic productivity and dominant position in the global market has been threatened, so this second group of arguments runs, by declining educational test scores, standards, and discipline. Conservative critics of the educational reforms of the 1960s and 70s point out that these reforms resulted in the deterioration of American competitiveness in the global market. In the early 1980s conservatives cried for a better

fit between training in school and the needs of business and industry (Martin 1991). Many leaders in corporate America criticized the declining vocational utility of formal degrees, and urged higher education to be more applied and relevant to their needs (Lindenstein 1995). Indeed, it has been suggested that, in comparison to other countries such as Germany, Japan, Singapore, and Sweden ". . .the vast majority of American employers do not want more than eighth-grade level skills in the people they hire for their front-line work force" (Marshall and Tucker 1992:xviii). This last observation suggests, however, that the labor force has not changed as much since WWII as some have argued.

The real issue with this type of argument, though, is not the quality of those who enter the labor market, but the division of labor between public education and employers. In many European countries and in Japan, the function of education, and certainly university education, is believed to be one of screening, selection, and general preparation of talented people, while real training and job skills are considered the responsibility of the employer (Lindenstein 1995). In the U.S., however, the private sector believes that job training is the responsibility of (public) education. This viewpoint has been advanced, for instance, in a 1985 report (*Investment in Our Children*) published by the Committee for Economic Development: education should improve, among other things, behavioral attitudes to work, and business should be active in schools, but should not be responsible for financing them (Martin 1991). Thus, one could easily reason that American business and industry has, since the early twentieth century, been highly successful in off-loading to (public) education the responsibility and thus the cost for relevant job-training. Somehow it does not seem quite right that business should complain about quality. After all, (public) education must serve a larger set of objectives and should combine liberal arts learning and leadership skills with education for workplace and professional practice (Lindenstein 1995). Obviously, the critique that education hardly prepares students for a job is leveled against the general nature of a one-size-fits all elementary, middle school, and high school education as well as to the majority of the social studies and humanities in higher education. Apparently only professional education, as offered in, for instance, vo-techs, but also by law schools, medical schools, engineering programs, and so forth, meets what private business wants. Once again, as I said above, industry-supplied training programs in formal education would

only address specialized areas, and would disregard the interdisciplinary education that allows students to develop the critical thinking skills and flexibility needed in the market place of the future.

ARGUMENT GROUP THREE: PUBLIC EDUCATION IS DOMINATED BY SECTIONAL RATHER THAN GENERAL INTERESTS

A third group of economic arguments contends that the public sector fails to provide adequate education because educational policy is dominated by sectional interests, because education is monopolized by the public sector, and because public education leads to bureaucratization.

This argument, first, attacks the assumption of some externality advocates (i.e. that *public* education has beneficial external effects) that in a democracy the preferences of an undifferentiated electorate are respected. However, the critics say, the electorate is not undifferentiated. Rather it is segmented into a variety of special interest groups. These can be called the "supply interests" and they, rather than the general public, dominate education policy. These interest groups include members of the organized teaching profession, of the education bureaucracies, elected public officeholders, and politically articulate student groups. This asymmetry between the political power of the general public and the special interests is illustrated by the fact that the latter have successfully persuaded government to avoid vouchers (West 1994 and 1995). Indeed, the education lobby in Oklahoma is consistently perceived as very strong and influential (Morgan et al. 1991). Interest group pressure, however, is only one of the reasons why the public sector allegedly fails in the eyes of its critics.

These critics also argue that the increase of federal funding since the 1970s gave public education a virtual monopoly in (higher) education. Private schools cannot compete because of higher tuition and fewer subsidies available to students. Hence, public schools crowd out the private schools. An additional problem is that public funding is directly linked to enrollments, and so university administrators divert resources away from instruction and toward enrollments. The results: larger classes, lower admission standards, and less class room preparation by instructors (West 1995). While critics may point to a lack of empirical data supporting

the link between education and decrease of crime, or the link between education and the economy, I would like to point out that there is no evidence of larger classes, lower admission standards, and less classroom preparation. Obviously, I can only speak for Oklahoma, but from elementary up to higher education the trend since the early 1990s has been to decrease classroom size, to increase (for higher education) admission standards (as, for instance, OU has done in the past several years), and to rigorously evaluate class-room performance. As for the disadvantaged private schools, I can only say that these are generally much better endowed than public universities. To suggest that they cannot compete with public universities is a gross distortion of the truth. Their large endowments not only serve to pay higher salaries to faculty, but are also used to support promising, including economically disadvantaged, students.

A final reason why public universities are presumed to fail is because, like any other bureaucracy, they are most interested in expanding their own budgets and enhancing the welfare of administrators and others on the supply side (West 1995). This argument is reminiscent of the theories about self-aggrandizing bureaucracies and budget maximization advanced by Anthony Downs (1967) and William Niskanen (1971 and 1973). That, thus far, scholars have been unable to support this theory with empirical evidence is apparently lost on the critics of public education. Furthermore, do I really have to point out that public education cannot grow upon special supply side demands as long as it depends on the general supply of funds extracted from the taxed citizen?

ARGUMENT GROUP FOUR: PUBLIC COST OF EDUCATION IS NOT MATCHED BY DEMONSTRATED BENEFIT

Another problem that critics discuss, the fourth group of arguments, is that public funding has resulted in the attraction of less qualified students (Sommer 1995). Given the strength of the idea that responsibility for social equity rests with government, so it is argued, public funding fosters a dumbing-down of education because its institutions attract less qualified people. Why? Because in its zeal to provide equal opportunity for all, and especially for lower income groups, public education pursues emancipatory rather than instructional objectives. The entry of under-

qualified students results in "dead weight" and thus leads to tax loss (West 1995). In other words, the cost of public education is not matched by its social and individual benefit. Furthermore, public education fails, because of ". . .the fact that most higher education students are middle class and would receive higher education anyway, even in the absence of government intervention" while poorer families get the worst K-12 education anyway (West 1995:164-165).

Obviously there is some truth to this group of arguments. Public education policy has long tried to increase the accessibility of education for lower income groups and, indeed, young students from disadvantaged and/or poorer families have some catching up to do, for instance, in the command of language which is the major vehicle for the transmission of knowledge. Government has been helpful, but should the fact that it does not "pay off" in the shorter term be a reason for government to abandon public education? Who else would take the responsibility for educating all? I agree with Martin who argued that, while conservatives hammer upon the anvil of excellence, they really talk about a new managerial and technocratic elite whose existence will further reinforce inequalities (Martin 1991). It is sad but true that K-12 education throughout the U.S.A. is not as well provided for in poorer and more rural communities. Oklahoma is no different, and the gap between finances available per student in the richer versus the poorer districts is large (Morgan 1991). Whether it is too large, can only be decided in a democracy by politics and not by rational and "objective" cost-benefit analysis (Neiman 2000). Arguments supporting public education concern the U.S.A. as well as the world at large. In his 1995 chapter, West merely presented the same argument as 30 years before in his book-length study (here the third edition of 1994 is referenced), and confidently ignored empirical studies, published in response to his study, that have shown how in both developed and lesser developed countries the social and private benefits of formal education at all levels are positive. Formal education is a source of economic growth and individual improvement (Blaug 1970). Some scholars have even changed their minds. In the early 1970s Spring advocated that public schools ought to be abolished because only then the freedom of thought, required for the exercise of democratic power, could be developed (Spring 1972). Recently, though, he distanced himself from that conviction and argued that the abolishment of public education would leave a large part of the world (including

parts of the U.S.A.) in a state of abject poverty and open to exploitation by private corporations. Furthermore, he now strongly believes that education should include programs in human rights and in the exercise of democratic power, and that an education focused too much on the job market reduces citizens to consumers at best and to a mere commodity at worst (Spring 1998).

This last observation leads me to the conclusion of this section. In the above I have outlined four groups of economic arguments against public education. While presenting different emphases and viewpoints, they ultimately are founded on the assumption that labor is a measurable commodity and thus, by extension, ". . .education is only valuable to the extent that it services an economic imperative" (Gabbard 2000:xi). In the economized world view embraced by Gabbard "people have value only to the extent that they are useful and necessary to the market and the future goals of its directors. Those without such value are simply expendable" (2000:xxiii). I will not dispute the validity of the economic argument against public education for solid public policy can only be made when conflicting viewpoints are taken into consideration. I do, however, strongly object to grounding public education policy on economic arguments only. The issue that public education not only serves the market but also civilization will be further addressed in Section Six.

4. OKLAHOMA: BETWEEN IMAGE AND FACT INTO THE FUTURE

Ever since the 1930s Oklahoma has suffered the image of being a poor state that people want to leave. The vivid image of a Dust Bowl presented by John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath* has stuck. Since then, much has changed, and for the better. However, there is still much work to do. In this section I present some facts about Oklahoma's economy, education, government, and society. Some of these are cause for concern, others imply that there is hope for the future.

Traditionally, Oklahoma's economy depended on agriculture and oil. In the past two decades the economy has become more diversified. However, the attraction of new business and efforts to keep business from relocating remain a challenge. What bodes well for Oklahoma's future as a state attractive to business is its comparatively low state and

local tax levels and its low cost of living. Also, unemployment is relatively low. Economic indicators for Oklahoma are good. The cost of living is at 91.3 percent of the national average. Unemployment in December 2000 was at 2.7 percent, while the national average was 4 percent. Per capita personal income increased in the 1994-1999 period with more than $4,000 to on average of $22,953 although the gap with the national average has widened.

With respect to education, Oklahoma does not compare well to many other states. In a recent survey by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Oklahoma's report card leaves much to be desired. In terms of preparation, the state scores very well in reading and writing, but very low in 8th grade enrollments in algebra. Also, a small number of high school students take upper-level math and science classes, and 11th and 12th graders do not score well on Advanced Placement testing. The overall grade for preparation was a D+. The state scores only slightly better for participation (of high school students going to college, and of young adults and working-age adults in college) (C), completion (the number of full-time college students that earn a BA in five years) (C-), and benefits (low number of college graduates, low numbers in high-level literacy) (C-). The state scores much better on affordability (share of family income required to attend the two- and four-year colleges) (B-) (National Center 2001). Another concern is the fact that teacher's salaries are low in comparison within the region. The challenge is to train good teachers, which Oklahoma does, and then retain them. On the plus side, test scores in the state have substantially increased in the past decade, per capita funding for education at large has increased (Governing 2001) and successful efforts have been made at making salaries more competitive. I should also mention current efforts to improve the availability of computer networks in elementary and secondary schools made possible with grants from the Pew Charitable Trust and the Bill and Linda Gates Foundation, matched with state funding.

The performance of Oklahoma's government is also rated as below the national average. In a large-scale study conducted by *Governing* magazine and The Maxwell School at Syracuse University, Oklahoma received a C on its report card for 1999 and 2001. The state's performance in terms of financial management, though, dropped between 1999-2001 from B- to C+ basically for lack of long-term planning. On the other hand, the grade for information technology improved from C-

to B- because of the installation of a network system that connects Oklahoma's state agencies to one another (GPP 1999 and 2001).

As a society Oklahoma's culture is defined by its strong ties to the land, to religion and a strong appreciation for individualism. Also, the state is clearly divided between sparsely populated rural areas and the high-density population in the urban corridor stretching from Tulsa to Oklahoma City, Norman, and Lawton. All this is reflected in its political culture that is characterized by support for limited government intervention, a toleration of political corruption, and ambivalence about the role of public sector bureaucracies (Morgan et al. 1991). Oklahoma government faces two major challenges. The first is to help decrease Oklahoma's high teenage pregnancy rates (37 out of 1,000 females in Oklahoma, while 32 is the national average). Also, Oklahoma spends large amounts of money on its prison system. Incarceration rates in the state during the 1978-1998 period have increased more sharply than in the U.S. at large. Oklahoma ranks third among the states, and first for the number of imprisoned women. The U.S.A., in fact, leads the world in locking up people. Given the needs for better health care, education and infrastructure, Oklahoma could and should become a leader among the states in transferring financial resources away from incarceration. This requires that its citizenry and its political representatives emphasize prevention and rehabilitation over retribution and punishment, especially for relatively minor and first-time offenses (e.g., drug abuse, stealing) for which people are now put in prison. A policy of rehabilitation creates hope instead of bitterness; we should not alienate those people from society who stand a good chance of again becoming productive neighbors and citizens.

5. SOME COMPARATIVE NOTES: THE QUALITY OF CIVILIZATION THROUGH BIPARTISANSHIP

> Consensus democracies demonstrate [. . .] kinder and gentler qualities in the following ways: they are more likely to be welfare states; they have a better record with regard to the protection of the environment; they put fewer people in prison and are less likely to use the death penalty. . . (Lijphart 1999:275).

Americans are rightfully proud of their system of government that provides the checks and balances preventing any one public body or individual from dominating public policy. A system initially designed as a bulwark against despots, American democracy became majoritarian which means that the political party (and its representatives) winning the election control the legislature, the executive, and (through appointments) the judiciary. A mistaken belief about majoritarian governments is that they is better at governing for they do not have to negotiate continuously between parties, as is the case in the so-called consensus democracies of continental Europe. In a recent study by the internationally renowned political scientist Arend Lijphart (UC, San Diego) the claim that majoritarian governments are better at governing was proven wrong. In his empirical study, backed by many statistically analyzed data, he finds that consensus democracies are better in terms of political equality, better with regard to female representation, enjoy higher levels of voting during elections, and manage to establish a better fit between the electorate's preferences and government policy (Lijphart 1999).

Lijphart hypothesized that the "kinder and gentler qualities" of consensus democracies become manifest in more generous policies for, for instance, social welfare and criminal justice. I will briefly discuss each of these two and will add a third, tax policy. To what degree do welfare policies, with regard to unemployment, disability, illness, and old age, permit people to maintain a decent living standard independent of pure market forces? In reference to an earlier landmark study, Lijphart showed that the United States scores the lowest on welfare policies among eighteen OECD countries and social expenditure was second to lowest (after Japan) with 15 percent of the gross domestic product (Esping-Andersen 1990; Lijphart 1999). Consensus democracies are also less punitive than their majoritarian counterparts. It should shock Americans that its figure of 560 prisoners per 100,000 people is almost four times higher than that of the next most punitive country (New Zealand with 131 prisoners per 100,000) (Lijphart 1999). It is no less then tragic that America stands out in this respect, especially when it is relatively simple to correct this.

A third area of concern, and one that is not discussed by Lijphart, is taxation policy as an indicator of the quality of democracy. While in general state and local taxes in Oklahoma are fairly low in comparison

to many other states, we should examine who carries the greatest burden. Morgan mentions how economists have ". . .long recognized that the principal sources of state revenue—sales and excise taxes particularly—are regressive in their impact" (Morgan 1991:158). In Oklahoma both these indirect taxes in 1987 took six times as much from poor families as from the rich. Poor families spend 7.6 percent of their income on taxes (sixth highest in the nation) and taxes on food products took some 20 times more as a percentage from the poor than from the rich. It has been suggested that some or even all of these food taxes should be abolished and the lost revenue made up for by taxes upon luxury products. Throughout the 1980s (Morgan 1991) and the 1990s Oklahoma legislators and citizens have supported tax increases that reflect longer-term concerns. This is a good sign. We must remain alert, though, especially in a time that the executive in federal government pursues across-the-board cuts in income taxes. By tradition, these are more despised than indirect taxes yet they are also less regressive in their impact upon lower income families. In his concern for the tax cut proposed by president Bush, and since successfully implemented, Morgan wrote:

> This is not the American dream, where the affluent become ever more wealthy and the average working stiff struggles to make ends meet. Growing disparities between rich and poor erode the social fabric of democratic societies (Morgan 2001).

The keywords in this observation are "the American dream" and the "social fabric." In reference to the idealism that motivated the Founding Fathers and that attracted millions of immigrants to the United States, the American dream must be one for all citizens. Indeed, the social fabric of society erodes when we allow a distinction between first- and second-class citizens, when we allow further growth of the gap between the rich and the poor. It is not government's business to abolish economic inequalities, which is the communist ideal (and, as we know, never achieved). Instead, the objective that government policies should pursue is to guarantee a minimum standard-of-living for those who cannot or can no longer care for themselves, including the physically and mentally handicapped, the elderly, the orphans, teenage mothers and single-parent families, and the unemployed to the extent that the latter can not help becoming unemployed and clearly show a willingness

to work. The objective of government in a democratic society is to enhance civility and the quality of civilization.

I do believe in the American system of government. The structure designed by the Founding Fathers has served well and has so far proved flexible enough to address challenges as they emerged. However, would it be possible to improve government performance in such areas as outlined above without overhauling the structure of government? I believe it is possible, and all it requires is a bipartisan commitment. In their efforts to arrive at an ". . .authoritative allocation of values. . ." politicians should not only decide along party lines and on the basis of their electoral support but also be guided by what society at large needs and desires. There is, in principle, nothing wrong with the winner-takes-all system, but if it results in one-sided policy making and the disenfranchisement of the (usually large) minority, government risks losing its legitimacy. Government should not only govern for the winning majority, but for the general public. To secure that, elected officials not only have the responsibility to be true to their election campaign promises but should, once in office, also consider sensible viewpoints from the opposition.

6. A COMPREHENSIVE VISION FOR OKLAHOMA'S EDUCATION AND ECONOMY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

> When I pay taxes, I buy civilization (Chief Justice Holmes, as quoted in Gaus, 1947:19).

The remark by Chief Justice Holmes is one that, unfortunately, is more timely today than in his own time. Too often, citizens, industrialists, and politicians focus on the shorter-term benefit of taxation for themselves rather than the longer-term investment in society. A civilization needs constant nurturing and to be civilized requires that, from time to time, we are able to transcend our—however understandable and justified —self-interest and contribute with our time and money to the well-being of the collective. Education lies at the heart of our civilization, and is indeed an important foundation for its future. In addition to family and church, it is the most important institution for the socialization of young people into society. Education serves at least two different constituencies.

First, education prepares young people for life, in terms of general education, behavioral skills and attitudes, and also provides specific and useful knowledge. When it can be guaranteed that educational institutions offer a broad curriculum, it does not really matter whether they are organized in a public or private sector context. This guarantee is met as far as higher education is concerned. In terms of research and teaching, private universities are no better or no worse than public universities. This guarantee is also met in elementary education and high school education, since public and private schools alike have to offer a basic curriculum, and beyond that can choose what to offer. The guarantee is not necessarily met in vo-tech institutions. Those organized on a private basis may tailor their curriculum more to employer needs and thus limit the general development of its matriculants. In light of remarks made in Section Three, I believe we should develop a clear division of labor between education and employers. It is the task of education to prepare youth for life's challenges through interdisciplinary education; it is the task of employers to provide real training and job skills. Industry should not deny that responsibility and saddle the taxpayer with public funding for specific private sector job skills.

Second, education should provide opportunities for members of the workforce to further educate themselves. Indeed, second-chance education has become an enormously important and popular endeavor. However, we need to keep in mind that,

> Here more than anywhere else, those who do not have and are not on their way to getting a baccalaureate degree—more than 70 percent of the population—are held in low regard, have little claim on the nation's goods and services, and are in no position to make the contribution at work of which they are capable (Marshall and Tucker 1992).

A society can only have so many college graduates. It is vital to counter the trend that the lesser educated become second-class citizens, both in the eyes of the educated as well as in their own eyes. As Americans we must remember that we are all equal before the law. Obviously, we are not equal in terms of capabilities, and government policy is not meant to eradicate inequalities between people. However, we should strive for a society where all are appreciated for the

contribution they can make, and where all have the chance to advance their intellectual and manual skills.

In my view, education plays an important role in the development and maintenance of a civilized society. Critics of public education implicitly or explicitly argue that it is just another example of "big government" crowding out private effort. We should, however, consider those who are most affected by this anti-government sentiment so characteristic of Americans:

> The real victims are the millions of poor or shelterless or medically indigent who have been told, over the years, that they must lack care or life support in the name of their own freedom. Better for them to starve than to be enslaved by "big government." That is the real cost of our anti-government values (Wills 1999:21).

Given the importance of education for individual and society, I support publicly funded education. A good education is in the interest of all taxpayers. Where critics say that there is no proof that education actually contributes to the solution of social problems, such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, crime, drugs, disintegration of families, teenage pregnancy, and so forth, they fail to provide proof that the education in a private setting will actually contribute more or better to society. Of course, they can always say that thus far private education cannot, because public education holds a virtual monopoly. However, I agree with Bok that there is little that education can do to *directly* solve social problems and related misfortunes (Bok 1990). The importance of education, in a private or a public setting, lies in what it can *indirectly* do for society: help in the development of a strong sense of personal responsibility, a sense of community, and a sense of citizenship. In other words, in developing a loyalty to those people (family, friends, neighbors, colleagues) and institutions (in business, industry, and government; but also in churches, sports clubs, professional associations, etc.) that together compose and create the society in which we live. We can only expect, though, loyalty from the individual citizen if each recognizes that government is loyal to them. This requires a pro-active education policy and takes courage, especially in an age where, to quote another Bellmon lecturer:

> Using the power of government to redistribute income from one class of persons to another in an open manner no longer seems politically feasible in the United States (Meier 2001:21).

In a footnote to this remark, Meier explains that "Redistribution is still possible through subsidies and tax credits; see the 1997 balanced budget legislation. What appears to be unacceptable is redistributing income from haves to have nots" (Meier 2001:35). In addition, I would like to remark that elected and appointed officeholders have a responsibility to serve the general public, even if some of its measures are less popular in the eyes of parts of the electorate.

Education policy will fail to meet these objectives (developing personal responsibility, sense of community and citizenship, and so forth) if not matched with policies aimed at, for instance, reducing teenage pregnancies and jail time, and increasing Oklahoma's attraction to and accessibility for business and industry (through, for instance, tax breaks and infrastructural investments). Perhaps it is an abstract vision, but for Oklahoma to become a better and more caring society, we need to pursue policies in a variety of areas. If isolated, any policy is doomed to failure. This article is not the right place to present a detailed plan for Oklahoma's future, although some of its elements have been suggested throughout the text. The most important message is that, if anything, a plan for Oklahoma's future must be comprehensive and developed in a bipartisan setting. Perhaps a special commission to develop such a plan would be the best investment into our own future, and education is a foundational element for any such plan.

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POLITICAL SCIENCE AND TEACHING SECTION

NINE MYTHS OF ON-LINE TEACHING

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> Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition
> Jacques Barzun (1955).

Have you noticed there is a push for on-line courses at Oklahoma colleges and universities? Many of us have been urged to transform our courses into web-enhanced or totally on-line courses. Like anything else, some people are doing it badly while others have learned a great deal, and we can benefit from their knowledge.

WHY SUCH AN EMPHASIS ON ON-LINE TEACHING?

Since numerous studies have shown no significant difference between the effectiveness of on-line teaching and traditional teaching, (Gay, Schuchert and Stokes 2000; Orr 2002) college and university administrators around the world realize that they can reach and teach students practically anywhere. They are no longer competing for students in their immediate geographic area but can offer students around the world their courses. This means every school is no longer limited by

space and time as previously, but anyone eligible to attend college and has access to the Internet, is a potential on-line student.

In 1999, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education committed to *Brain Gain 2010*, an effort to increase the number of college graduates in the state to the national average or above, by the year 2010. In order to accomplish this, the Regents adopted the Learning Site Policy April 1999, which designated twenty-five state colleges and universities, two higher education centers, and an additional pilot site in Ponca City as "Learning Sites." In both FY 1999 and FY 2000, $2.6 million was allocated as an incentive to build the infrastructure necessary to import courses at the learning sites. More than 1,100 courses were imported under the learning site initiative in the two academic years. Every institution in the state system now offers courses and/or programs using electronic media including on-line and instructional television courses and telecourses. The comprehensive universities accounted for 11 percent of the total offerings, regional universities 47 percent, and community colleges 42 percent. The growth in distance learning offerings has increased dramatically. From 1997-98 to 1999-2000, there has been more than 185 percent increase in the number of courses offered using electronic media (Oklahoma State Regents 1998). Currently there is a wide variety of courses taught using electronic media, everything from Agriculture to Vocational Trade and beyond. For a complete listing of Oklahoma institutions, courses, delivery method, and cost, see http://www.okcollegeonline.org/ (On-line College 2002).

On-line courses especially appeal to Oklahoma college students. It is worth noting that "on-line" currently refers to courses taught over the Internet including web-enhanced courses, a combination of Internet teaching and face-to-face classes. Student enrollment in on-line courses increased 57 percent from 1999-2000 at Oklahoma state funded colleges and universities (Oklahoma State Regents 1998). Oklahoma City Community College had 833 students enrolled for on-line courses for the 1999-2000 school year but this number has exploded to 4,580 in only two years—a 449 percent increase (K. Wullstein, Coordinator of Instructional Technology/On-line Learning, Oklahoma City Community College, email to author July 3, 2002). Tulsa Community College lists a 243 percent increase from 1998-2001 for all distance education enrollment including telecourses, instructional television and on-line courses (R. Dominguez, Dean of Distance Learning, Tulsa Community

College, email to author June 6, 2002). Rogers State University reports a 110 percent increase from 358 to 754 in on-line enrollments from 1999-2001 (P. Williams, Distance Learning, Rogers State Distance Learning, email to author June 6, 2002). On-line courses have also impacted private colleges in the state. Southern Nazarene University, unlike its counterparts, is showing an enrollment increase that it attributes to on-line classes and efforts to appeal to nontraditional students (Hinton 2002). In light of this statewide technology push, how are college professors being affected? Many of us have been approached to teach our courses on-line. For some, the prospect of technology teaching may be overwhelming while others may see it as a quick method of teaching. In reality, it is neither quick nor inherently overwhelming. One way to gain an advantage for your on-line course design is to be acquainted with the following myths:

MYTH #1 IN THE FUTURE, ALL COLLEGE TEACHING WILL BE DONE ON-LINE

One size does not fit all for learning. Numerous learning styles and learning strategies among students have been well documented. According to these variations, some students perform better with face-to-face classes, some with on-line, and others prefer a combination (Conti 2000; Shindler 2002). To assert that only one teaching method will work for the entire population is ludicrous.

MYTH #2 SO, YOU'RE TEACHING ON-LINE. YOU JUST STICK YOUR LECTURE NOTES ON THE WEB, RIGHT?

Teachers who have attempted to "stick their lecture notes on-line" have found it tantamount to expecting students to learn the material by simply reading the textbook. Since telling is not teaching, this practice is not recommended. However, this misconception is quite common. Richard Hall, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Missouri at Rolla, says that many on-line courses are not much more than lecture notes on a web site (Carnevale 2000b).

MYTH #3 HE'S GOT ALL OF HIS COURSE MATERIALS ON-LINE, SO HE'S DONE

Similar to the traditional class lecture, little learning takes place when students do not interact with the instructor in an on-line course. A teacher who imparts the "closeness" of an intense face-to-face interaction in their on-line course greatly improves the richness of their course (Bourne, McMaster, Rieger, and Campbell 1997). Of course this increases the amount of time a teacher devotes to each student, often more than what they would spend interacting in a traditional course. When students rate on-line courses, they look for some of the same elements found in traditional courses such as a knowledgeable professor who interacts with the students, and features which create a sense of community in the course. The Alley study also shows that some aspects of distance-education instruction, which were considered novelties a few years ago, are now thought of as essentials for a good course. These include regular interaction between instructors and students, a student-centered approach, and built-in opportunities for students to learn on their own (Carnevale 2000c). Another professor, who has seen both sides of such courses by taking them as a student as well as teaching on-line, also concluded that a sense of presence or awareness for others in the course is vital to its success. While not physically present, all participants should be committed to ongoing and high level interactivity. Course information and subject content must be carefully organized and all students need to contribute. This has to be established first in an on-line course if students are will fully benefit from the resources made available. Also essential is that the present moment in asynchronous environments always has to be felt even though stakeholders are accessing information or participating in activity at different times. Collectively, learners and professors have to help sustain a sense of presence by way of their participation in on-line activities (Dringus 2001).

MYTH #4 YOU CAN TEACH MORE STUDENTS ON-LINE THAN YOU CAN TEACH IN A TRADITIONAL COURSE

As described above, a key element of successful on-line teaching is teacher interaction with students. Oklahoma State Regents surveyed

students to determine their assessment of on-line courses. Students suggested improvement in student-faculty interaction, and timely assessment and return of student work (Oklahoma State Regents 1998). In order to meet these student needs, teachers must increase their time with each student. This takes time. This issue of on-line class size was addressed in a documentary by a panel of veteran professors from the fields of on-line teaching and education technology from Oklahoma State University. The participants included OSU Professors of Education Lynna Ausburn, Ph.D., Bruce Petty, Ph.D., and Kay Bull, Ph.D. Below is an excerpt from that documentary:

Ausburn: Well I can tell you right now in my distance ed class, I have 25 and I'm busy. . .I'm real busy. There's a very common myth "Oh, you've got all your stuff stuck on-line, and you can have 500 students . . . ."

Petty: That's an administrator talking. . .that's a department head and a dean. . . .

Ausburn: Teaching at a distance. . .the operational word here is teaching. It's not just stickin' stuff on-line and saying I've 500 students and they're out there on their own doing whatever it is they do.

Petty: That's a real danger.

Ausburn: It is very much a danger. . . .

Petty: Administrators, and I've been one of those. . .administrators in today's environment feel the need to do things like that. We'll put you on-line, you've got 50-60 students, I can count all of those, I get student credit hour production, it's only costing me your salary again. . .I invest a little money in some hardware and software and I'm in business. . . and from their perspective that's exactly right.

Bull: Well. . .if you don't want interaction with the students. . .I can set up a class for ten thousand. . .(group laughs) it's either broadcast . . .or it's paper or it's paper on-line. . .we make it a correspondence course, and they do all of the responding on machine scorable sheets and I never come into contact with the student and you could run as many students as you want. . . . I would not take that course.

Moderator: That sounds like independent study.

Bull: It is.

Ausburn: Exactly. . .and when you look at the interaction that you have with your students. . .when you get a cry for help. . .they need

help now not in three days or two weeks. . .they need help now. I am busier with 25 at a distance than I am with twice that many (face-to-face).

Petty: Absolutely.

(Jones 2000)

MYTH #5 I ANSWERED THE STUDENT'S QUESTION THROUGH EMAIL. THAT'S ALL SHE NEEDS, RIGHT?

It depends. Some professors are unintentionally blunt with their emails. This can be perceived as uncaring disinterest. As with all teaching, care should be taken to not only impart knowledge, but encourage the student. Email communication can be quite ambiguous. On-line text communication requires a strong ability to be extremely articulate in written form. Students often ask questions that are vague, and an instructor responds in a way that he or she thinks is helpful. Often, if a student does not receive a satisfactory answer to his question, he will give up rather than ask again (Carnevale 2000a).

MYTH #6 COMMUNICATION IS SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD WITH ON-LINE TEACHING

Actually, a strong case can be made for a combination of on-line and face-to-face teaching, known as "web-enhanced." For those who have never taught on-line, this could be viewed as a half-step between face-to-face teaching and on-line teaching. This method allows teachers to ease into on-line teaching by continuing to maintain the traditional classroom yet have an on-line element such as quizzes, threaded discussion or website readings. The biggest advantage to this method is that since much of human communication is inherently ambiguous, people can often adequately resolve key ambiguities when they are face-to-face. When the primary communication medium is written text, resolving ambiguities may be more difficult for many people (Hara & Kling 2000). In one case-study at Indiana University, researchers found that the students' frustrations about receiving "prompt unambiguous feedback" continued throughout their course, and that such communication is much

more difficult in text-based asynchronous courses than in face-to-face conditions. Part of the complexity comes from trying to anticipate the level of detail and phrasing that will be sufficiently helpful to others. Students were often unsure what meta-communication would be appropriate in their on-line conversations. A teacher, to confirm understanding, may value email which represents the nodded head of a face-to-face group, or it may instead be dreaded by him as yet more of an email glut (Hara & Kling 2000).

MYTH #7 IF I TEACH ON-LINE, I HAVE TO INCLUDE NUMEROUS MULTIMEDIA COMPONENTS

Not necessarily. Most on-line courses are text-only because of the large bandwidth required by the student end-user to download complex interactive animation, photographs or video. Depending on the subject and amount of movement in a video, bandwidth between 500-650 kilobytes per second is needed for good visual quality (Rule 1999). Most students taking courses on-line use home computers. Currently, the vast majority of home computers in the U.S., 76 percent, are connected to small bandwidth modems 28-56kbps (PC World.Com 2001). For these reasons, most on-line teachers save themselves and their students a lot of frustration by simply teaching text-only courses with simple graphics.

MYTH #8 SO AN ON-LINE COURSE SHOULD BE TEXT-ONLY

On the contrary, simple graphics, simple animation and color can be quite effective in on-line courses. Numerous studies indicate a large portion of the population are visual learners. In fact, some research indicates that on-line students prefer visual information (Ouellette 2001). Robert P. Ouellette, director of technology-management programs at the University of Maryland-University College, has conducted studies about student experiences in on-line education courses. From these studies he has concluded:

> One of the things that is very clear to me is that the distance-education students tend to be very visual. The phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" is very true. They prefer pictures much more than verbal communication. They understand graphics and pictures better than text. So when you're on-line, which is so very largely a textual format where people just put notes and words, it's very important to have a lot of graphics (Ouellette 2001).

According to a University of Michigan study, 69 percent of students are visual learners though most college professors predominately attempt to teach by lecturing. The study continues by noting that the use of multimedia engages students actively in their learning, and exposes students to the subject matter in exciting ways that traditional learning methods cannot. Using multimedia allows students to take an active role in the educational process, in that it frees them from being passive recipients of information (Montgomery 1995). But always consider the download time for the graphics by the student on a 28-56 kbps modem.

MYTH #9 THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH MATERIAL IN AN ON-LINE COURSE

Actually, text in an on-line course can be overwhelming according to one study from Vanderbilt University. Researchers concluded that some courses studied contained too much material. Having encyclopedic knowledge at their fingertips did not impress students. They simply wanted to know the information for which they would be held responsible (Bourne, *et al* 1997).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ON-LINE COURSE PRODUCTION

Lee R. Alley, Manager of instructional-technology projects at Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland has just completed a survey of thousands of colleges and universities across the country, and interviewed faculty members who have used innovative techniques to make their on-line courses better. Alley has concluded that distance

courses should not follow the lecture approach of a traditional course, or simply offer students on-line content to read. He says knowledge is constructed and not something that is "handed to someone over a high-bandwidth cable" (Carnevale 2000c). Some effective on-line teaching may include:

· Threaded discussion (an on-line discussion conducted *asynchronously* by the teacher at one time, and answered by the students at various times, as opposed to "chat" which is done *synchronously*—at the same time).

· Assigned reading of on-line documents in addition to websites, texts, and novels.

· Timely response to student emails, usually within 24 hours.

· Timelines and deadlines on the syllabus

· Timely response from technical support team (Ausburn 2000; Bull 2000).

William Winn, Director of Human Interface Technology Lab Learning Center, University of Washington, also warns that simply posting course notes on-line is not instruction. He advises taking deliberate steps to support knowledge construction, provide a context for learning, and provide a learning community within the course. Without these, Winn believes such courses fail (Winn 1998). Effective on-line courses I have taken and those I have taught have also included:

· Problem-based learning.

· Practical examples of how the new knowledge is valuable and fits with a student's existing knowledge.

· Encouraging student-to-student communication to reduce feelings of isolation.

· Optional student information pages.

CONCLUSION

Just as most American technology is continually changing, on-line teaching is in a constant state of flux. This is one of the fascinating elements of teaching today. Experimenting with new components and methods of communicating knowledge to our students can be quite rewarding. When a teacher takes the necessary time needed to create, produce, and tend an on-line course, it can be mutually beneficial to the teacher and the student. However, we must protect our students by not allowing an on-line course to be overloaded with students, or the quality of the course deteriorates. We must also take care and time to be encouraging to students, especially through email. If possible, we need to take advantage of face-to-face meetings because these can eliminate many misunderstandings which are created on-line. However, this may be impossible for some long-distance students such as those from other states. In these cases, other arrangements such as phone calls or videoconferences may be viable alternatives (K. Bull, personal interview, April 17, 2002). Even with all the "bells and whistles" at our disposal today, good teaching is still simply a competent and caring teacher communicating beneficial knowledge to students, regardless of the medium.

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MY EXPERIENCES WITH E-LEARNING: MANAGING THE TECHNOLOGICAL JUGGERNAUT

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Technological advancements have created a variety of opportunities in terms of course delivery. Technology can be added to, or even replace, the traditional classroom. The rapid expansion of courses and programs offered through the Internet, to me, resembles a juggernaut. In a pilot project, the graduate level Public Financial Management course was recently offered completely on-line in the Masters of Public Administration program at the University of Oklahoma. This article describes the course and my experiences in attempting to manage the technological juggernaut. It also presents outcomes and students' reactions as well as offering suggestions for on-line course delivery and comments about future directions.

Technological advancements in the last decade have turned us into an e-society: email, e-business and now e-learning. Advocates urge us to put technology to work in the classroom; really, the virtual classroom. This idea has received a mixed response from educators ranging from complete dismissal of the potential of computer-mediated learning to academic degree programs that are offered entirely on-line. For example, the University of Nebraska at Omaha Masters of Public Administration program. Educators at schools like UNO argue that technology based

instruction makes it possible to meet their mission of state-wide education where students live up to eight hours away from Omaha.

On-line delivery of courses grew rapidly in the late 1990's. The American Federation of Teachers reports that in just three years—from 1995 to 1998—the use of Internet-based courses grew from 22 percent of institutions to 60 percent (2000). Commonly cited advantages of e-learning are: resource access, user flexibility, individualized pace of learning, availability to wide geographic area, and higher and more equitable interaction (Stowers1999). In two case studies, Mingus (1999) and Ebdon (1999) concur that important challenges in Internet-based instruction revolve around the importance of interaction, the student's individual work ethic, the personal characteristics of the participants, the ability to craft thoughtful responses, and the instructor's role. Rahm, Reed and Rydl characterize the issues of on-line learning as falling into three broad categories: faculty, student and administrative issues (1999). Included among these are intellectual property rights, learning approaches, student expectations, and technical and support responsibilities. Despite these concerns, they note that the learning environment can foster the advanced skills development typical of graduate programs through carefully devised content interaction. Weigel is more cautious (2000). He argues that e-learning merely furthers the accommodization of instruction and worries that we are not using technology appropriately. Instead of fostering discovery and discernment, we are merely designing on-line courses that foster content exposure and recall.

This article describes my experiences with the first on-line class in the University of Oklahoma's Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program. After giving some background information and descriptive detail about the course, the article presents student responses, challenges and strategies associated with this course delivery. It presents both strategic and tactical concerns and reviews the lessons learned. Finally, observations are made about the need to balance pragmatic considerations with a concern for pedagogy.

BACKGROUND

The OU MPA program is currently offered at nine locations across the United States, and in a variety of formats included compressed

delivery. The bulk of the MPA student population (roughly 80 percent) do not take their classes at the Norman campus in the 16-week semester format. In addition, a large percentage of our students are military students who are subject to temporary deployment as well as permanent relocation. For this reason, these students desired virtual courses that allowed them to continue work towards degree completion no matter where in the world they were located.

In the Spring of 2002, the MPA program at OU began a pilot test of on-line course delivery. Internet-mediated courses were being considered at this time based on a convergence of factors. First, the university was encouraging the exploration of multi-method course delivery and was also providing technical and training support for web-based delivery. Second, offering on-line classes was thought to be a means to address emerging student needs. The last, and perhaps least compelling, reason for experimenting with on-line classes was to provide an innovative solution to on-campus space constraints arising from rapid increases in student enrollments.

For the pilot, the Public Administration faculty purposively selected courses thought to have content amenable to a web-based classroom setting. These classes were Public Financial Management (Spring 2002), Introduction to Public Administration (Fall 2002), and Research, Writing and Analysis for Public Administrators (Spring 2003). In each of these classes, it was thought that the content lent itself to self-directed learning based on hard concepts and the approximation of a right answer for the assignments. For example, in Public Financial Management certain standard ratios are calculated when analyzing a financial statement. So, the instructor could determine whether students were using the right numbers for the calculations. Further, there are specific criteria and rule of thumb guidelines that are generally accepted in interpreting the ratios. Although interpretation is more subjective, it was thought possible to convey details about the analysis in an in-direct format.

CLASS PREPARATION AND DELIVERY

When designing Internet-based courses, choices must be made about how and to what extent to apply technology. Stowers characterizes Internet-mediated learning as a continuum of activities in terms of

integrating technology resources into the course and enhancing the interactivity built into the course (1999). Using this model, my course had the highest degree of integration, as well as high interactivity. I treated the class as a port-the-classroom model (Weigel 2000). It was not envisioned as a new pedagogical approach, simply a way to use technology to present the class on the Internet rather than in a 16-week face-to-face learning environment.

The objectives of the Public Financial Management class are to introduce students to public financial management concepts, procedures, skills, and issues. At the end of the class, the student should have an understanding of the value of public financial management and have skills useful in managing public financial resources. The course considers: 1) Budget Development and Analysis, 2) Capital and Debt Management, 3) Financial Reporting, 4) Accounting and Auditing, and 5) Revenue Sources and Administration. Students in many of the OU graduate programs (PhD as well as Master's of Arts, International Relations, Human Relations, Economics, Social Work and Communication) could enroll in this class. However, in the Spring 2002 course the bulk of the students were MPA students. The class had 37 students enrolled. There were four different sections: Norman campus, continental United States, Pacific Rim, and Europe.

Around the equivalent of one-day's time was spent in setting up the class on Blackboard, the web based software program. This time is less than commonly experienced since I had previously attended college-sponsored summer training sessions. In addition, I had reviewed the Blackboard instructor's guide and tutorial CD and had attended a hands-on work session with the College Information Technology staff. In addition, prep time was minimized since I already had Powerpoint slides for each chapter of the book and had computer files with my lecture notes from the last time I had taught the course. The lecture notes were made available to the students with very little revision or editing. While I anticipated that students would have difficulty understanding my lecture shorthand which is more of an outline format with key points noted rather than a paragraph and sentence style narrative, I did not have any students ask for interpretation or clarification.

The class syllabus describing the weekly readings, assignments and activities was provided under the Course Materials tab. In addition, I marked due dates on the Class Calendar accessible in Blackboard to

each student. Additional details about the assignments and activities were also posted in the Assignments section of the course. Then, within one week of the assignments' due dates, I posted an announcement that would appear every time the student logged into Blackboard—whether to work on this or other courses.

Based on e-learning literature, when designing the course I paid particular attention to the issue of communicating with students. To foster learning, I decided to communicate frequently in a variety of forums. Included in these were:

1. Frequently posting information to the Course Announcements so that students had the sense that I was providing guidance on a nearly continuous basis

2. Utilizating of a discussion board for the entire class.

3. Requiring students to introduce themselves to all students on the class discussion board the first week of the course.

4. Creating separate discussion boards for each of five student discussion groups. Membership was designated by the instructor based on geographic proximity.

5. Hosting a real-time weekly chat session on the assigned readings. The text of the discussion was available to all students at any time by using the archives.

6. Sending email messages directly to each student to transmit additional details on assignments and to give individual grades and a detailed critique on assignments that were submitted.

7. Using email messages and the Announcements to make students aware of new material available on the class web-site.

8. Posting grades for the group discussion questions and individual assignments on the electronic grade book within three days of an assignment being completed.

9. Offering three optional face-to-face meetings in a classroom at the Norman campus the week before the individual assignments were due.

Blackboard allows the instructor to track student access and participation levels by area of the course, day, and time. Overall, the course had more than 49,500 hits. Forty-five percent of these were in the Group area. Access to the main content (including course and faculty information, course documents and assignments), communication (discussion boards and chat rooms), and student areas (check grades, send email, etc) were 35, 17 and 7 percent, respectively. The instructor was responsible for nearly 4,200 hits which mostly parallel the percentages listed above. The student hits ranged from a low of 293 to a high of 3,933 with an average of 1,354 hits per student enrolled to course completion. More than 20 percent of all hits were on Mondays which was the day group and individual assignments were due. Sunday and Wednesday each accounted for over 16 percent of hits. Tuesday and Friday were the days with the least frequent levels of access at around 10 percent. Surprisingly, these patterns do not hold at the individual student level. It appears that day of the week usage is determined more by the method that the groups used to prepare their discussion questions. The discussion questions were made available to the students on Wednesdays. Some groups got started that day, so Wednesday was their highest usage day. Other groups did not start working on the discussion question until Saturday, etc. For fun, I checked correlations between the number of accesses and the course grade. The correlation was .241 with $p = .177$ (2-tailed).

From my perspective; the weekly chat sessions, email messages to each student, and the optional face-to-face meetings were the most valuable communication tools in the course. The student's also highly valued the face-to-face meetings, as described next.

GAUGING THE STUDENTS' REACTIONS

At the final optional face-to-face meeting, students were asked to fill out the standard OU course evaluation form. Comments from the 20

students that completed the evaluation suggest that there were a variety of strong and weak points of the course.

Strong Points	**Weak Points**
Readings and lecture were helpful	Difficult subject matter
Can apply knowledge	Didn't learn as much as in-class
Instructor's involvement	Didn't get same level of attention
Instructor's coordination efforts	Missed in-class interaction
Instructor's knowledge/assistance	Assignment dates were changed
Quick turnaround on grading	Treated as if regular class
Weekly chat sessions	Chat room discussions
Easy access to Blackboard	Internet settings
Optional class meetings	Feeling disconnected with prof/students

As you can see from this list, some were specific to the course being an Internet course. Others addressed the content of this particular class, and would be fairly typical responses for a course offered in the traditional format as well. When asked their overall opinion of the course, one student indicated that s/he would like to take another on-line course, while two specifically stated that they would not repeat the e-learning experience.

Besides the formal evaluation, I got other feedback from the course website, email messages, and students' direct comments. One area where students' raised a concern was the utilization of the discussion groups. In these, five or six students were assigned to work together to jointly answer the group discussion questions. They posted the group's response onto the class discussion board and I assigned a grade for each. For the group work, my role was basically as an eavesdropper, gauge the breadth and depth of the discussion as well as assessing the participation levels of each individual. In some of the discussion groups, I noticed comments to the effect that students felt micro-managed since the course grade was broken down into so many small components. This concern has some validity. In the classroom, I would better be able to gauge student participation and could verbally prompt those students in danger of

becoming free-riders. This was not possible in a virtual classroom. So, the small amount of the grade assigned to each group discussion question was designed as an incentive for participation. It also served to keep students active and engaged throughout the entire 16 weeks of the course.

The instructor solicited comments and suggestions at each of the optional face-to-face meetings. Anecdotal information from these suggests that students thought they learned a lot, but did not feel they had a good grasp of the material or a complete understanding of the concepts. Where they learned the most was in the face-to-face meetings, with many noting that they could not have done the assignments without these direct interactions.

CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING THE COURSE

Teaching an on-line course challenges the instructor's ability to learn and adapt on the fly. The learning curve is fairly steep at the beginning of the course and then levels out. I suspect the trajectory towards mastery continues over multiple course deliveries. Ebdon describes a similar learning curve associated with determining how best to structure time for interaction when there is wide geographic diversity and a constrained level of resources (1999). Many other authors (see Stowers 1999) have noted similar challenges associated with an Internet-mediated course. My experiences with this course confirm what others have discovered. Six of these challenges are:

Minimizing technological difficulties: not all the participants' computers had the same minimum level of hardware and software. I used my home computer, and found that I could not use the whiteboard and Internet-screen function on the top part of virtual chat room. Also, I had to make all course materials available in both Microsoft and Corel software based on the students' computer software; connections to Blackboard required that the student have an Internet Service Provider or a modem to log into the OU computers. For many, the connection speed was low and bandwidths were small creating delays when trying to utilize the chat room function. Some military students who were on temporary assignment reported difficulty getting Internet access at remote foreign sites.

Developing the ability to operate in a virtual environment. Student competencies were a consideration in course delivery. In addition to being able to navigate around Blackboard, the student had to be able to do on-line research. Each of the individual assignments required students to research outside academic and professional sources as part of their analysis. Many students were not familiar with the OU Library's on-line resources. I was able to provide this information fairly easily in the chat room and in the optional face-to-face meetings.

Deciding the proper placement of course materials in Blackboard: I posted analysis tips for each of the individual assignments after the optional face-to-face meetings for those students that could not attend. While I considered this to be a Course Documents item, many students were trying to find this information in the Assignments section. In the end, I decided to also post the information as an Announcement to make sure students could find it.

Facilitating student and instructor communication with far-flung students: This class had students in the Middle East, Europe, and across the United States. This created a problem with discussion group real time meetings since there could be up to an eight hour time difference. The continuous availability of the discussion boards and archived chat room sessions were extremely helpful in overcoming this challenge.

Maintaining momentum and keeping students' interest: This class was offered in the spring semester. After the week off for spring break, I noted a decay in student participation that lasted through the end of the semester. I anticipated this decay and scheduled a group discussion question and individual assignment to be due after spring break. However, it was more difficult to overcome end-of-semester fatigue than what has been experienced in the traditional classroom.

Managing the time commitment: The academic literature has consistently suggested that, relative to a traditional format, instructors for on-line courses can expect large increases in prep time, but scholars also note that prep time will level out with future deliveries. I did spend more time in course development, but it was not excessive. Further, common wisdom also holds that the time devoted to the course, week

by week, will be around three times more than in the traditional format. This was not my experience. Instead, it was more like one to two times the normal workload. During course development, I made strategic choices that were designed to limit the amount of time I would have to spend on the course during the semester. For example, the discussion questions were not addressed by the class as a whole. Instead, I had small discussion groups create their own responses and post them to the class discussion board. I would definitely repeat this tactic.

Assessing mastery of class content: To determine student participation and learning, I employed a variety of evaluation tools including group discussion questions, end of chapter questions, short answer essays, and major analytical assignments. The class grades reflect similar levels of learning with past classes; however, communication with students suggests conceptual confusion and uncertainty about mastery (alleviated by optional face-to-face class meetings and posting of analytical tips before each major assignment). Even when students did turn in the right answers, they were not sure how they got there or expressed surprise that they were right. Another complication was that the groups wanted to be able to work together on individual assignments. While I was glad to see that a supportive environment had developed within the groups, I found it difficult to monitor and control the level of collaboration. Since this same scenario can arise in the traditional class format, I did not take any extraordinary measures to detect and combat this activity.

STRATEGIES FOR ON-LINE COURSE DELIVERY

Having survived the first experience, what will I do differently the next time I offer this course as an Internet-mediated course? First, I will continue utilizing groups for the discussion questions. There were five discussion groups and I was amazed that each group chose a different discussion method, including face-to-face meetings on campus, communicating via email messages, simultaneously posting thoughts to the group discussion board, using the group chat room for real-time conversations, and assigning one student as scribe for each question then having the scribe post a draft response. Other group members then read and commented. The scribe then finalized the group response

and posted it to the class discussion board. In the future, I must address questions regarding the proper level of control. While I think monitoring is important, I also want to foster individual graduate student responsibility.

Second, I want to slightly reconfigure the weekly on-line chat format. During the semester, I would lecture first then ask questions to initiate participant discussion. When there was about 15 minutes left, I would open up the discussion for any questions and free form discussion on any topic. What I learned is that the instructor should be careful not to talk too much and to avoid too much one-on-one dialogue. The other participants quickly lose interest and sign off. Instead, I want to make sure to give other students time to respond and broaden the discussion topic to bring other students back in. Also, I found out it is necessary to be specific in terms of who I was responding to. In future course deliveries, I want to bring in public budget and finance guests who are experts on the week's topic. This will help to go beyond the course readings into practical applications. As noted in the students' comments, and based on my review of the chat session transcripts, discussion of current applications really spurred student discussion and prompted the non-participating chat room watchers to get involved.

Some logistical challenges remain. I found that it is vital to get students' email addresses as early as possible and send them a detailed description of where to find information on the course website and about using Blackboard. Another logistical concern is whether to grade on-screen or to print out each document. Since I was going to print a hard copy, students needed specific details regarding document settings (margins, line spacing, font size, page numbering, etc.) and which software programs I had. By doing this, I could have them compress the document to avoid printing out so many pages. Believe me, with 37 students turning in three 5-page assignments and a 10-12 page final, you need to use every trick in the book to reduce the number of printed pages—or else request a budget increase for more printer toner cartridges!

Another strategy I will employ is to structure my virtual office hours to assure fairly rapid response times to guard against the course becoming all-consuming. Students' time tolerance is dramatically shortened in the on-line class format. What worked well was to acknowledge receipt of emails and attachments as soon as possible and then give the students a timeframe for my response. If they knew it would take two days to reply or to grade an assignment, they were

much more relaxed in terms of hearing back from the instructor. Also, I was sure to notify students if I anticipated any computer down times or if there were times that I simply was not available. Next time, my new strategy will be to designate one day off a week. During this day, I will not check my email or the course web page. I think this will encourage them to take a day off as well, and may overcome the end of semester fatigue issue.

A final issue is the timing of assignments. My strategy was to have them turn things in periodically to keep some momentum. But, when creating the next course calendar, I want to be careful to make sure that I have scheduled time for grading and feedback to the students before the next assignment is submitted.

THE FUTURE OF E-LEARNING

I share the reservations of other faculty members concerning the ability to adapt other courses in the MPA curriculum to the web-based delivery format. The primary reason for skepticism is that the content of the other courses is such that although the student can individually come up with the right answer, they may not fully appreciate the nuances of the topic. The live classroom format and face-to-face interaction between the students and the instructor provides the opportunity to discuss a topic in depth and immediately react to what has been said by others. For topics that are more theory based and have fewer practical applications than the three in the pilot test, the facilitated, in-class discussion really drives home the various dimensions uncovered during mutual intellectual exploration. Consider a topic like the role of administrative ethics in the American democratic, juridical system. For graduate level learners, who are expected to stretch beyond memorization and regurgitation to engage the material, I have deep reservations about the efficacy of e-learning. The quantity of material covered can be replicated in the on-line setting, but the quality of learning seems to me to be missing. Just like when reading a novel or watching a movie with a subtle and complex plot, the deepest level of appreciation comes when you discuss your reactions, perceptions and interpretations with others. Certainly there are ways to foster this discussion in a virtual environment,

but my experience suggests that it is hard to engage all students simultaneously and in more than a superficial way.

Like Stowers, I am still wrestling with questions such as which courses are best suited to this form of delivery, what is the appropriate didactic approach, and how much of a course should be Internet-mediated (1999). Beyond my skepticism regarding the potential of e-learning from a qualitative perspective, I am cautious since the incentive system is not yet there to develop on-line courses using a separate and distinct pedagogical approach that changes the expectations, roles and relationships (Weigel 2000). To date, it appears that the best applications of Internet-mediated learning are experiential and based on practical applications. However, I'm also pragmatic. Neither the traditional classroom setting, nor the e-learning format has to be mutually exclusive. More than ever before, our learners today are comfortable with me-centered technological applications. Now the task is to merge what works in the class room with the best application of technology to enhance the learning experience. Is this a new pedagogy? That remains to be seen. What can be done now is to continue the paradigmatic transition from transmitting information to facilitating knowledge development.

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BOOK REVIEW SECTION

Stanley P. Berard. *Southern Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), pp 272. $24.95 ISBN 0806133058

Politics in the South has rarely been dull, and has been the object of a great deal of sustained scholarly investigation, perhaps best illustrated by V.O. Key's magisterial *Politics and Society in the South* (1949). Generations of political scientists have attempted with varying success to reconcile southern politics and its many frankly undemocratic impulses within the larger context of American politics. Changes in party strategy and voting patterns portend significant changes for the role of the South in national politics, and for the very nature of southern politics. Stanley Berard's book, *Southern Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives*, attempts to explain the changing behavior of southern Democratic representatives to the House of Representatives and the changing nature of the southern constituencies that elect Democrats.

Berard is writing about two distinctive worlds. First, Berard relies extensively on National Election Survey data to track changes in the primary and reelection constituencies of southern Democrats between 1973 and 1997. The second world is the legislative world of Congress, where southern Democrats have occupied a distinctive and influential niche from the earliest days of the Republic. That *Southern Democrats* is a doctoral dissertation helps explain its narrow focus and the heavily empirical methodology. Drawing substantially on the work of David Rohde, James Glaser, Earl and Merle Black, and Nicol Rae among others, Berard focused his study on a few empirically testable hypotheses: first, that legislators share voting dispositions with one another based on a confluence of policy preferences; second, that such

confluences of policy preferences among legislators are correlated with similar constituent preferences; and third, that southern Democrats have begun acting in a manner similar to their northern Democratic counterparts can be explained by a growing similarity between northern and southern constituencies.

The principal causes of change in the behavior of southern Democrats are well known; the themes of urbanization, the mobilization of African-American voters, and the rise of competitive two-party competition have been familiar to scholars of southern politics over the past half-century. However, scholars who predicted that the South would follow the same evolutionary path as the North have largely been mistaken, as Berard competently notes. Part of the value of Berard's book is his attempts to link empirically changes in political attitudes and voting behavior to survey data. For example, while Key hypothesized that urbanization would interact with African-American voter mobilization to produce a more liberalized electorate, Berard correctly notes that Key's hypothesis has been only partially born out: the blend of urbanization and large African-American concentrations has displaced but not eliminated traditional southern conservatism that historically characterized traditional southern politics.

Political analysis of the South must inevitably confront the issue of race. Historically, whichever party too closely aligned themselves strategically with African-American interests has found themselves on the losing end of electoral contests. However, the patterns that have manifested themselves in the past may or may not persist. Today, for example, low levels of education and relatively low rates of electoral participation have persisted in the "black belt." The "black belt" is the region running through the center of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. The black belt is so-named because of the rich soil that facilitated cotton planting and for the high concentrations of African-American population. This persistence in the black belt in combination with redistricting attempts to create majority-minority districts have worked, to some extent, to the favor of African-Americans and Republicans and to the detriment of traditional (that is to say, white) Democratic interests. For those untutored in the intricacies of U.S. electoral politics, "majority-minority" refers to attempts by various state legislatures to draw district boundaries with a majority of African-American populations. While urbanization has produced greater

educational attainment and higher median incomes—and typically more liberal attitudes on certain social issues—southern suburban and urban voters continue to embrace more conservative economic views.

Berard also confirms previous scholarship suggesting that while African-Americans represent the most liberal wing of the Democratic Party on some issues (e.g. economic and civil rights issues), collectively African-Americans reflect conservative attitudes on many social issues (e.g. school prayer, abortion, and civil liberties). Consequently, predicting that the enfranchisement of African-Americans would result in the liberalization of the South confuses the liberalism of African-Americans, and underestimates the degree to which African-Americans are also distinctively "southern" in many of their attitudes.

Berard's analysis of roll-call votes in the House indicates a progressive liberal trend in certain issue areas. Berard aptly notes factors that account for this leftward tilt: redistricting, the realignment of issue-centric partisan activists, the intensification of partisanship in foreign affairs and military policy, an enhancement of the House leadership's ability to offer "cover," and incentives to members on certain votes all figure prominently. At the same time, Berard concludes that predictions of a return to one-party politics—with the Republican Party replacing Democrats—is unlikely. While Republicans will replace conservative Democrats, in all likelihood the South will increasingly reflect the diversity of interests that have always laid dormant in the South, which suggests that neither Republicans nor Democrats can safely rely on the "Solid South" to confer a consistent advantage in electoral politics.

Frankly, Berard does not dare greatly, and this book illustrates some of the troubles associated with converting a dissertation to a book. Berard's use of statistics and national survey data is sound, and he clearly appears to understand the complexities of party politics and the conditional role political parties play within government. That said, the most disappointing aspect of the book is the lack of context that would render the text more accessible to a wider audience. For example, Berard notes that the Democratic leadership has been able to use a number of tactics to persuade southern Democrats to support more liberal policies than their constituencies might have supported; for example, using the amendment process to provide "cover" for members in conservative districts that may look unfavorably on a representative's positive vote.

A few examples of how these sorts of legislative maneuvers are accomplished would have aided a less knowledgeable reader.

In conclusion, the world of southern politics demands an expansive canvas, and the narrow focus of the book seems unduly confining. In particular, the transformation of role of southerners within the Democratic Party deserves more contextual analysis. Attempting to track the vicissitudes of electoral politics with survey data and roll call votes obscures much of what passes for politics in the South. Consequently, while recommending the text for scholars specializing in legislative process and voting behavior, the text seems too narrowly focused and limited for a wider audience that may not be particularly interested in arcane discussions of the nexus between constituencies, representatives, and public policy.

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George Nigh, Carl Reherman, and Bob Burke. *Oklahoma Government Today: How We Got There*. (Nigh Institute of State Government, Edmond, Oklahoma: University of Central Oklahoma), pp 160. ($15.95 ISBN unavailable at time of printing)

Oklahoma Government Today—*How We Got There* is a brand new text which provides a brief overview of Oklahoma history and politics. The authors bring a wealth of political and scholastic experience and "star power" to this project. The heart of the effort is focused on the structure, function, and finance of Oklahoma state and local governments. However these descriptions are supplemented by a brief history of the state and information which puts Oklahoma's experience within a greater context. Inserts throughout the book also contain snippets or additional materials which add texture or detail to the major themes. This text is especially relevant for those with limited or no background on Oklahoma history or politics or for use by students in lower division courses on either state or Oklahoma politics. Somewhat like the older Strain publication which many of us used as our reference to Oklahoma politics in the 1980s, this text provides a wide variety of information whether used as a handy reference on our shelf or used as a supplement when teaching State and Local Politics.

One should not compare this text with *Oklahoma Politics and Policies* by Morgan, England, and Humphreys or other similar texts or articles. Despite the title, *Oklahoma Government Today—How We Got There* is generally informative rather than explanatory. This is not where you will find a deep analysis of the role of women in Oklahoma politics, why Oklahoma has experienced high levels of political corruption

of other worthy research driven topics. Rather, the reader will experience an approachablely written text, a straightforward overview of Oklahoma history and politics, and more than a few interesting anecdotes which inform the reader about some of the characters and idiosyncracies of Oklahoma politics. *Oklahoma Government Today—How We Got There* delivers on all of these levels.

Some portions of the text have greater utility or significance. Standout chapters include Chapter 3, "The Role of Oklahoma Government in the American System"; Chapter 6 "The Oklahoma Court System"; Chapter 8 "County Government"; and Chapter 10 "Funding of Oklahoma Government". All of these chapters represent materials or subject areas over which students sometimes struggle; the authors' no nonsense approach works well. They articulate the basics about these areas without complicating the material. Specific examples would include the authors' general discussion about federalism and their overview of the Oklahoma court system, which are especially praiseworthy. Other chapters are generally solid, and retain a student-friendly style and a simple presentation of the material which makes this text a good choice for the classroom.

The authors also include a chapter on patriotism and include some important speeches. While these speeches are obviously important, they do seem a bit out of place.

Another of the more helpful aspects of the book is the number of small highlighted materials. These brief asides often give information on important individuals, events, or concepts and help to leaven the subject matter as well as potentially further educate the reader on Oklahoma politics and processes. A number of these references are memorable.

In sum, *Oklahoma Government Today—How We Got There* is a worthy addition to the growing literature on Oklahoma politics and history. It fits well as an introduction to those subjects and as a reference most of us could use on our shelves.

Richard R. Johnson
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Jim Bissett. *Agrarian Socialism in America: Marx, Jefferson, and Jesus in the Oklahoma Countryside*1904-1920. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), pp 191. $39.95 ISBN 0-8061-3148-9 hardcover; $14.95 ISBN 0806134275 paperback

Contemporary Oklahomans are often surprised to discover that their state was once one of the most socialist states in the nation. In 1914, Oklahoma voters gave nearly 21 percent of the gubernatorial vote to Fred W. Holt, a socialist candidate, far exceeding those percentages in a number of counties. Roger Mills and Marshall counties, for example, gave Holt 35 and 41 percent respectively. Arrell Gibson defines those 1914 successes as the "high tide" of socialism in Oklahoma, but state voters gave about 16 percent of their votes to Eugene V. Debs in the next presidential election, and the party's power waned only after its leaders were discredited for "disloyalty" during the First World War. Still, many of the party's issues were carried on under the structures of the Farmer-Labor reconstruction League in subsequent decades.

Such facts do not seem to square with present perceptions and realities of modern Oklahoma politics. Neither do they fit the models used by social, cultural, or Marxist historians to explain socialism and its historic appeals in the nation at large. Most historians interpret that history in an urban-industrial framework that leaves little room for consideration or appreciation of Oklahoma's rural and agrarian socialists. Even more problematic for such models, Oklahoma socialists relied heavily upon biblical themes and images to promote their programs.

Jim Bissett discusses these anomalies and others that differentiated Sooner socialism from national and international norms. He argues that the unique characteristics of the Oklahoma Socialist Party were the

product of a fusion which drew upon the experiences of two prior generations in agrarian and political reform and the insights obtained from a party wide dialog. Those principles and practices permitted the redefinition of the doctrinaire socialism that dominated the party elsewhere. In turn, party leaders were free to draw upon the communitarian themes and calls for justice found in the biblical message so familiar to most of their audience. The end result produced a party that had joined three important political and cultural traditions: "(1) the Jeffersonian emphasis on the common man. . .; (2) the scathing indictment of capitalism set down by Karl Marx. . .; and, (3) the evangelical Protestant tradition. . . ."

Bissett's book is well written and deals with a significant and otherwise neglected topic. While focused on Oklahoma, it also casts light on national concerns and interpretive models. I was, however, disturbed by two omissions. First, the absence of any discussion of competing agrarian-rural models in international socialism narrows the value of the study. The lack of attention to Russian Populism is particularly problematic because it developed in the same era as the Oklahoma model. Even more importantly, any understanding of the unique character of Oklahoma socialism has to account for the fact that much of the land the socialists originally sought was Indian land. Surely that variable had some influence on the evolution and acceptance of their arguments.

Some of these omissions may result from the size of the book, 191 pages of text, which obviously limited the range of topics that could be explored. In any case, the book makes a significant contribution to the understanding of Oklahoma politics, offering a solid foundation for any subsequent study of its subject, including the concerns I have identified.

Alvin O. Turner
East Central University

Suzanne H. Schrems. *Across the Political Spectrum: Oklahoma Women in Politics in the Early Twentieth Century*, 1900-1930. (Lincoln, Nebraska: Writers Club Press, 2001), pp 192. $16.95 ISBN 0-595-21223-9 paperback

Until recently, most books on political women in the United States took a national perspective, suggested women played only a peripheral role in politics until 1920 (when they won the right to vote on a national basis), and traced the progress of women in politics from a liberal—if not a leftist—perspective.

In contrast, Schrem's focus is early Oklahoma women political actors. While her discussions of Kate Barnard and Alice Robertson are briefer than those in Linda William Reese's *Women of Oklahoma*: 1890 -1920, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997, this book provides profiles on many more Oklahoma women political pioneers.

And although the title suggests a start date of 1900, Schrem actually weaves in earlier influences including the Grange and the populist ideology. A superficial review would suggest there was a flurry of women's involvement regarding whether to include woman suffrage in Oklahoma's original Constitution followed by seven years of inactivity. Actually, national groups supporting woman suffrage were organizing in the Oklahoma territories decades before citizens gathered to write the Oklahoma Constitution. Schrem also reveals how experiences in their early years helped shape the views and values of political activists like Barnard, Richardson and others.

But the book's greatest strength is the author's inclusion of perspectives from the right as well as from the left. As Oklahoma was settled, a great number of women's clubs were formed to provide

opportunities for self-improvement. Over time, the mission of these organizations expanded to include studying and advocating political views. In addition to a discussion of political organizing by Socialist and Communist organizers, Schrem presents the political concerns and actions of conservative women's groups in Oklahoma including the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Women's Auxiliary of the American Legion, and even the Women of the Ku Klux Klan. Readers gain a greater understanding of the hopes, fears, values and expectations that motivated both Democrat and Republican, as well as pro- and anti-woman suffrage women activists in Oklahoma.

In *A Room at a Time* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), Jo Freeman identifies three types of women political activists: feminists, reformers and party women. Schrem includes all three types in this book. There are good descriptions of early participation by Oklahoma women in national political party conventions. And it is clear that the public careers of both Barnard and Robertson suffered because they defined themselves exclusively as reformers.

I have just two minor complaints about this book. It ended too soon. I wanted to learn about more early pioneers and I wished Schrem had carried her research into modern times. And, in spite of good endnotes, the book suffers from the lack of an index and bibliography. Still, I'm very pleased to add this book to my library. This fascinating look back at our state's early years offers important insights into the development of Oklahoma's political culture.

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David L. Boren and Edward J. Perkins (Editors). *Democracy, Morality, and the Search for Peace in America's Foreign Policy.* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), pp 256. $19.95
ISBN 0806134011

This relatively short edited volume on foreign policy is the second in the series, the first being Boren & Perkins, *Preparing America's Foreign Policy for the 21st Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1999). Both volumes are collections of articles, speeches and interviews delivered by an impressive variety of practitioners and scholars at two major foreign affairs conferences at Oklahoma University in 1997 and 1999. *Democracy, Morality, and the Search for Peace*. . .was designed to complement and complete the survey of American foreign policy begun in the well-received first volume, and ideally, both books should be perused together. However, readers of *Democracy*. . .will find a useful summary of the main conclusions presented in *Preparing America's Foreign Policy* regarding U.S. relations with Asia, military challenges, U.S. intelligence, trade policy, the environment, and the media as well as the thoughts of Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, JeaneKirkpatrick, David Abshire, George C. McGhee, and Colleen Mcullough (lessons for the U.S. as a super-power from the Roman experience).

The second volume begins by rooting U.S. policy in institutional ideals and practices developed and shared by Britain, and in the legacy of the Cold War. Margaret Thatcher, William Crowe, Jr. (former U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom), and Bush I Administration officials, Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, and National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, provide provocative perspectives in past and future

future U.S. policies regarding Britain, Russia and the Soviet Union, China, the Third World, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and weapons proliferation.

Probably the analytically most interesting, and certainly the most timely, part of the book is Part III, "The Search for Peace: Intrastate War, Violence, and Terrorism." Conference papers delivered by former Assistant Secretary of State Phyllis Oakley, and by former deputy chief of the Counterterrorist Center, Paul Pillar, together with their responses to questions, provide a wealth of information on terrorists and terrorism. Former Senator George Mitchell provides a third contribution which discusses his successful negotiations dealing with the causes of terrorism-in Northern Ireland.

Looking forward, Yale historian Paul Kennedy, (best known for his *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Random House, 1987), identifies population changes, the unsettling effects of the revolution in science and technology, and the strengths and weaknesses of American leadership as the three factors that will influence the foreign policy environment of the 21st century.

In a world made desperate by violence and recrimination, Bishop Desmond Tutu's presentation and following dialogue with David Boren, (Part V), provides hope that even deeply seated conflicts such as those in apartheid South Africa can be reconciled by means of spiritual healing (confession by the oppressor, and forgiveness by the victims) when combined with skilled statecraft and diplomacy.

Former U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, Edward Perkins, and President Boren author a very useful final chapter in which they characterize the requirements of an effective American diplomacy, outline the important debates and issues which have influenced foreign policy, and examine past and likely future international systems. They conclude, along with Kissinger, that what is most likely to emerge is a multipolar, balance of power, and that successful foreign policy in this environment must combine short-term realism in service of longer-term democratic, and other idealist, goals.

This well-conceived and skillfully edited work is highly recommended.

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Bob Burke. *Good Guys Wear White Hats: The Life of George Nigh.* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Oklahoma Heritage Association, 2000), pp 415. $28.95 ISBN 1-885596-17-0.

As a life-long resident of the state of Oklahoma, I recall the refrain: "good guy, good governor" as one of the first political slogans to catch my attention as a new member of the electorate in the state of Oklahoma. The thing is, the political slogan was merely a statement reflecting the true nature of one of our state's most enduring and endearing political figures, George Nigh. Bob Burke's *Good Guys Wear White Hats* is a detailed and thorough rendering of George Nigh's life. This work is rich with detail and fascinating description.

Bob Burke takes us from the early beginnings of George Nigh's life as a school teacher and budding community leader in McAlester, Oklahoma to his early political career as a state representative and his long time occupancy of the office of Lieutenant Governor. The humorous telling of Mr. Nigh's short term as governor (nine days) while replacing J. Howard Edmondson propels the reader to the eventual capturing of the Governor's office and George Nigh becoming a political oddity—a two-term chief executive. Burke leads the reader up to George Nigh's eventual presidency of the University of Central Oklahoma and beyond. All along the way, Burke reminds us of the ever-present support given to him by his family, his friends, and his wife, Donna. Burke gave this reviewer the distinct impression that the source of George Nigh's success was not in his obvious political adroitness; the give and take and "wheeling and dealing" that is necessary as a state's chief executive, but rather in his ability to gain the trust and confidence of those who worked for him and knew him best. It should be highlighted that Governor Nigh's ability to gain the trust of others extended to his political opponents, both in the

Democratic and Republican parties. Governor Nigh was able to persuade through cooperation, negotiation and the ability to present his case for the people of the state of Oklahoma, not for his own political gain.

George Nigh's substantive accomplishments are too numerous to list. George Nigh was present and influenced almost every major political event in our state's history after the 1950s. His leadership in creating an ethics commission, the building of roads and bridges, his stewardship during the expansion of UCO into a major regional university, and his fight to improve the quality of public education is a short list of his accomplishments. For this reviewer, the most significant theme regarding George Nigh's lengthy political career has to be his tireless promotion of the state as a great place to live, work and play.

While there are several policy disputes that might be taken up with Governor Nigh's record, most can be understood in the context of history. Perhaps he could have provided better leadership in budgetary matters. Who could have foreseen the difficulties regarding our oil-based economy? Many might point out that George Nigh was career politician, doing little else in his life. It is true that the bulk of Governor Nigh's professional career was spent in public service. For that, the citizens of Oklahoma should feel fortunate, indeed.

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W. Dale Mason. *Indian Gaming: Tribal Sovereignty and American Politics*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), pp 330. $24.95 ISBN 0-8061-3260-4

When Richard Fenno visited the University of Oklahoma as a Julian J. Rothbaum Distinguished Lecturer, he advised then graduate student W. Dale Mason to "put 'Indians' behind the colon" in the title of his dissertation. Mason took the advice and wondered if it facilitated his winning the William Anderson Award for best dissertation in the field of intergovernmental relations. When he subsequently published his dissertation as a book, Mason reversed the order and placed "Indian" in proper prominence *before* the colon. Mason's experience is indicative of both the neglect of Native Americans within political science and the growing recognition of tribes as significant actors in American policymaking.

Indian Gaming richly describes the relations among American Indian tribes with each other, the U.S. government, and state governments. Mason advances his discussion along historical, cultural, legal, and political fronts. He provides a great synthesis of the relevant literature enriched with numerous interviews of stakeholders and policy makers. A 17-page photo section is even included in the middle of the book which does help the reader get a sense of the wide variety of Indian gaming activities and the surrounding political process. He focuses on Indian gaming as a vehicle to answer the research question, "What is the status of Indian tribes in the American political system?" (p.5). His answer is that Indian tribes are unique among political actors. They possess a residual sovereignty that allows them at times to behave like states. In other situations, they behave like classic American interest

groups. Mason even claims that with the increasing political sophistication of at least one tribal organization, it is beginning to resemble a proto-political party.

The author uses primarily qualitative methodology to compare the experiences of tribes to advance their gaming interests in the states of New Mexico and Oklahoma. Pointing out the limits of a two-state comparative case study would be an easy criticism to make, but Mason effectively places his analysis within the overall context of Indian policy. Several times Mason broadens his scope of inquiry to include other states such as California and Florida. He also traces the roots of contemporary policy back through time to the opposing doctrines first proffered by President Andrew Jackson and Chief Justice John Marshall. In Jackson's view, state governments had almost full authority to govern Indian affairs within their boundaries—for all intents and purposes ignoring the Indian Commerce Clause in the U. S. Constitution. Marshall in contrast, took a paternalistic approach that viewed tribes as "domestic dependent nations" with "diminished sovereignty." According to Mason, "Advocates of a particular policy in a given era often fall back on these early arguments modified in form, if not in tone" (p. 13).

Mason recounts how the Supreme Court's efforts to ensure that states protect the civil rights of American Indians were initially very ineffective. In the Cherokee cases for example, the states basically ignored the Court's rulings. Mason might have added value to his analysis by drawing parallels between Indians and other ethnic groups in the American system. Native Americans were not the only ones to suffer from the impotence of the Supreme Court. African Americans faced similar difficulties even during those rare times when the early Court issued decisions favorable toward civil rights.

One can certainly read a well-placed sympathy toward the tribes in Mason's book. After all, the U.S. Government's relations with indigenous peoples have not represented a high point of American democratic idealism. The question remains: Will gaming help to solve the numerous problems facing American Indians, or will the long-term effects prove to be negative? Gambling is still a controversial issue and opponents voice strong arguments about the potential costs to society that Mason all but ignores. I would have liked to have heard a fuller discussion about *why* some tribes, especially large ones like the Navajo, have resisted gaming.

What lessons does the author draw from the comparison of New Mexico and Oklahoma? In New Mexico, effective inter-tribal organization helped advance and protect gaming interests. Such cooperation was possible due to a long history of interrelationships among the tribes and effective leadership. The political establishment in New Mexico was also less resistant to Indian gaming. New Mexico tribes were able to use a multi-pronged strategy of lobbying, litigation, and campaigning to achieve their goals.

Indian gaming interests met with much less success in Oklahoma. The historic policy of relocating Indians from various parts of the country to Indian Territory meant that Oklahoma tribes had little experience working with each other. Resistance by the Oklahoma political and legal establishment was also more intense than in New Mexico. The book's description of the role played by U.S. attorneys was very revealing. According to Mason, the U.S. attorneys played a critical role in the development of Indian gaming policy. Unlike New Mexico, the three U.S. attorneys in Oklahoma were fairly antagonistic to Indian gaming interests.

I recently taught an *Intergovernmental Relations* course and was disappointed to find that no major, contemporary book on federalism or IGR had more than a brief mention of Indian policy. I assigned *Indian Gaming* knowing its particular relevance for Oklahoma students. The class had both upper-division undergraduate and graduate sections and predictably students received the book with mixed results. The undergraduates appeared to find the broad overview of Indian policy presented in the first two chapters enlightening. However, they struggled over the latter portions of the book which do tend to retain a strong dissertation flavor. The graduate students offered much more positive feedback. If the book is still available when I teach the course in the future, it will likely find its way again on the assigned reading list.

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

Keith Eakins

Louis Furmanski

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ARTICLES