

THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST

Newsletter of the Section on Political Economy, American Political Science Association

Co-Editors:

Michael Hiscox, Harvard University & Brian Burgoon, University of Amsterdam

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What is Political Economy?

Elisabeth R. Gerber

If only I had a journal publication for every time I was asked that question during my term as chair of the APSA's Organized Section on Political Economy. And if only I had an easy, sound, well-articulated, and uncontroversial answer to that question. Unfortunately, I don't. So when Mike and Brian asked me to write this essay for the PE Newsletter, I agreed not because I thought I necessarily had figured out "the answer," but rather because I hoped that by offering insights that so many thoughtful people shared with me during the last several years, I might help promote a productive conversation within the section. That said, I consider these ideas my own and do not purport to speak for the section or any individuals.

Let's first consider the question of why defining our subfield matters. From a very practical perspective, we as a section are constantly making decisions that have important implications for who we are. We nominate and elect section officers, organize conference panels, select papers and books for our section awards, choose content for our newsletter, etc. Outside of the organized section, we select editors for subfield journals, recommend for or against publication of articles in those journals, develop curriculum for graduate field exams, etc. All of these decisions have important implications for how we define the subfield of Political Economy. To some extent, considering these practical issues before gaining clarity on the more philosophical issue of who we are is like putting the cart before the horse. But the cart needs to get to market, so to speak, and so those decisions are made.

But here we have the luxury of a more thoughtful evaluation, so let's step back and work on a definition. There are many approaches one could take to defining

our section (and indirectly, our subfield). One is what I will call the "big tent" approach (no partisan connotation intended): define our subfield as broadly as possible, actively encourage affiliation by the widest possible range of interests, and welcome all who come. Many folks think of political economy as the study of the relationship between the political and the economic. In the broadest sense, this could include, for example, studies of government regulation of the domestic economy; trade policy; fiscal policy; nationalization and privatization of industry; budget processes; lobbying, campaign finance, and business involvement in the political process; international economic cooperation; contracting municipal services, etc.

There are undoubtedly some advantages to this big tent approach. Broad membership within the section may increase resources such as membership dues, panel allocations, and good papers to choose from. It may increase the range of scholars who consider themselves political economists, and with it the visibility of our community and the range of smart people and interesting approaches to learn from. These benefits come at some cost, however. In the language of classification theory, the big tent approach fails to produce a "category" or section with low levels of within-category variation and high levels of variation on one or more analytically useful dimensions between us and other sections. The result is a lack of identity and confusion (both internally and externally) about who we are.

During my term as section chair, I essentially adopted this big tent approach. For lack of a clearly superior strategy, I tried to encourage the broadest representation possible without regard

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American Political Science Association

Political Economy Section Officers, 2003

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A Letter From the *Editors*

Dear Readers:

We hope you enjoy this first electronic edition of *The Political Economist*. The feature essay is a reflection on the future of the Political Economy section by Liz Gerber, our much admired and respected former chair. Liz takes stock of the section and the challenges it faces in the future. She argues that focusing more attention on the shared methodological preferences of the membership will help transform the section into a more vital entity, and one that can serve a more active role in promoting research and training students. We regard this as a very important message to the section membership, and one that we hope will provoke debate and perhaps some new proposals for reform. We welcome your comments.

Beginning with this edition, all future issues of the newsletter will be emailed in electronic format and published (after

a short delay) on the new section web page <www.apsanet.org/~polecon>. We are especially grateful to Amanda Harris for her excellent editorial work, and for adding some style to the new electronic version of *The Political Economist*. As always, we encourage contributions to the newsletter in any of a variety of forms (including notices of events and awards, letters to the editors, reviews, and feature essays). As Chuck Shipan mentioned in his remarks, beginning with the next edition, we would like to make space available for authors to advertise the publication of their new books. Please feel free to email us with a list of any new publications you would like to bring to the attention of fellow members of the section.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Hiscox

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Brian Burgoon

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A Letter From the *Chair*

Welcome to the first electronic version of *The Political Economist*!

Liz Gerber raises a number of excellent points in her article in this issue. My view of the Political Economy section has always tended toward what Liz calls the “big tent” approach – it’s an organization that brings together scholars who often have very distinct interests, but who also share a number of common interests as well. As she points out, however, this diversity carries both strengths and weaknesses. Liz outlines her current thoughts on how these strengths and weaknesses play out, and comes to the conclusion that a big tent approach might not be best for the section. Instead, she argues, the section would be best served by having more of a common methodological approach. I’d be interested to hear what others in the section think about this position. If any of you would like to write a brief response to her article, you can send it to me at charles-shipan@uiowa.edu, and depending on the length of the response

and the number of responses we get, we’d be happy to print some of these in a forum in the next newsletter.

While it can be hard to define political economy, it’s easier to define the political economy *section*. First, with 691 members, it is one of the larger sections in APSA. To be more precise, it has the 7th largest membership of the 35 organized sections. Second, its membership has considerable overlap with the membership of other sections. Nearly a third of the members of the Political Economy Section are also members of the Comparative Politics section. The next biggest overlap comes with Political Methodology; and following that, with Comparative Democratization, Public Policy, and European Politics and Society. A further sign of our overlap with other areas comes from our APSA panels, a number of which are co-sponsored with other divisions.

Speaking of APSA, I’d once again like to encourage you to attend the section’s panels. As I mentioned in a

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Calendar of Events

January 8-10, 2004

Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association New Orleans, LA. Paper proposals can be addressed to the section chairs listed on the SPSA Web site <www2.gasou.edu/spsaconference.htm>

March 11-13, 2004

Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association, Portland, OR. For more information, refer to Western Political Science Association <www.csus.edu/ORG/WPSA/>

March 17-20, 2004

Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. For more information, refer to International Studies Association <www.isanet.org/>

March 17-20, 2004

Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association, Corpus Christi, TX. Information about this meeting, including the Call for Papers, is available online at <www.sssaonline.org/meeting.htm>. For more information visit <www.swpsa.org> or contact Program Chair Marvin Overby at overby@missouri.edu

March 2004

Two-day conference on "Political Parties in the US Senate" will be held at Oxford University's Rothermere American Institute. Proposals for papers on aspects of this topic are invited and to be submitted by December 31, 2002. The travel costs (APEX air fares from the US, etc) and accommodation costs of participants will be covered.

Contact Nelson Polsby, Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, or Alan Ware, Worcester College, Oxford, OX1 2HB, England.

April 15-18, 2004

Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL. Visit the MPSA website for further details <www.indiana.edu/~mpsaconferences/conferences.html>

Feature Essay...continued from page 1

to whether the heterogeneity in membership that strategy naturally produced was, on balance, beneficial. In retrospect, I'm convinced that was not the optimal strategy. Many section members expressed a desire for a more clearly articulated definition of political economy, and the consequences of a fuzzy definition became apparent—a lack of identity and engagement resulting in low panel and business meeting attendance (but steady membership numbers). Implicit in this desire for a more limiting definition was, I believe, not a preference for exclusivity per se, but rather a recognition that there may be important benefits from a more homogenous and coherent scholarly community (indeed, this is the primary motivation behind the organized sections in the first place).

The question, then, is on which dimension or dimensions we should further narrow the definition. Two alternatives come to mind, and over the last several years, I admit that I have vacillated between the two. One possibility is along a substantive dimension: domestic vs. international, government as an independent vs. dependent variable, policy vs. process, etc. A second possibility is along a methodological dimension: qualitative vs. quantitative, cross-sectional vs. over time, theoretical vs. empirical, etc.

I now lean towards believing that our defining dimension should be methodological. Using a common set of tools provides a shared language so that even scholars thinking about problems with little substantive overlap—domestic budget processes and international cooperation, for example—can communicate efficiently and productively. It means that we begin with common first principles, and proceed with our research in a way that is commonly understood. We can evaluate each other's work and share theoretical insights, even if we know little about the topic.

So here's how I have come to define Political Economy: It is the study of political phenomena using the tools of economic analysis. By tools of economic analysis, I mean methodological approaches that build upon an assumption of utility maximization. Even a cursory review of a basic economics curriculum reveals the breadth of this toolbox, including methods for studying individual level (theoretical and empirical models of individual choice), organizational level (institutional analysis) and macro level (systems analysis) phenomena.

What differentiates political economy from economics more generally is the focus on political phenomena. By political phenomena, I mean situations or events over which there is basic conflict, where straight market solutions are inadequate, and where there is at least

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From the Chair...continued from page 2

recent email, Jamie Druckman has put together a terrific set of panels for the meeting, including a pair of roundtables on engaging topics. Elsewhere in this issue we present detailed descriptions of these panels and roundtables, including paper titles, presenters, and other participants.

Finally, I'd like to thank Michael Hiscox, Brian Burgoon, and Amanda Harris for their work on this issue and for overseeing the move to an electronic version. We're always glad to hear suggestions for the newsletter, so please email any of us with your ideas. And in that spirit, I'll close this column with one such idea. In future issues, we'd like to present a list of recently published books that deal with political economy (however you define it!). If you've published such a book, and would like a chance to publicize it to the rest of the section, please send us an email with the relevant information about the book and we'll include it in the next issue.

See you at APSA,
Chuck Shipan

Feature Essay...continued from page 3

some government or public sector role. Given this definition, all political phenomena have some relation to the political process and embody some degree of conflict or strategic behavior. They may or may not deal with formal political institutions or processes, official government actors, laws or constitutions.

Notice that with this methodological definition, a substantive focus on problems that deal directly with interactions between political processes and economic processes is neither necessary nor sufficient. There are many extremely valuable studies of political phenomena that have little to do with the economy *per se*, but that provide important insights by applying the logic of economics. Formal studies of legislatures come immediately to mind. In these studies, important and counter-intuitive insights have been uncovered by modeling legislators as strategic utility maximizers and working through the wide-ranging implications of this assumption. These insights (and the steps used to derive them) are transparent to the reader and have proven valuable to scholars studying a broad range of political phenomena.

Nor is a substantive focus on political-economic interactions sufficient. There are many studies of political phenomena that deal with economic issues that use non-economic analytical tools (indeed, political scientists have developed or borrowed an impressive toolbox of methods, some based in economics and many not). I once heard this approach referred to as PEWE (pronounced pee-wee) – political economy without economics. There are also many studies that use economics to study some aspect of politics but that fail to capture the inherently political features of the problem (we might call this PEWP – political economy without politics). Let me be clear that despite my less-than-flattering acronyms, I recognize that a range of methodological approaches *across subfields* is extremely

valuable. My point is simply to encourage scholars *within the subfield* of political economy to leverage the best of both worlds – to explicitly recognize the inherent political nature of many political phenomena, and to utilize the tools of economics to provide rigorous insights.

The trade-off between substantive diversity (which is maximized under the methodological definition I propose here) and methodological diversity (which may be maximized under a substantive definition) is not unambiguous. For any given problem, we learn much from a body of research that approaches the problem from many different angles. Perhaps most importantly, methodological diversity can make us more sensitive to the limitations of a given approach. Yet from the perspective of enhancing the coherence, identity, and functionality of the organized section and hence the subfield, the benefits of shared language and first principles would seem to outweigh those of a methodologically diverse community. An analogy from a children's book comes to mind: ten scientists trying to describe an elephant. In one version (the one that represents the substantive definition of the subfield), all ten are trying to describe a subset of the elephant (say her trunk), each speaking in a different language. In the other version (the one that represents the methodological definition), all speak the same language but each describes a different body part. Until a translator comes along, the first group of scientists learn little from one another, and even when they find a way to communicate, there is still much about the elephant they do not understand. The second group has to rely on the observations and reporting of each parts specialist, but at the end of the day, they do piece together a pretty good description of the beast.

One might ask whether the focus on methodology is redundant, that is, whether existing sections (especially formal theory and political methodology) already cover most of the intellectual ground this definition implies. I would

suggest that while quite a bit of overlap exists, two important distinctions can be made. First, the existing sections place far more emphasis on developing new methods, while the approach I advocate here leans more towards application. Ideally, both development and application take place in both arenas; the distinction is a matter of emphasis. Second, the existing sections each deal with methods besides those based on an assumption of utility maximization. The methodological range I advocate here would therefore be somewhat more narrow.

So how do we get there from here? Obviously, any shift in emphasis would need to be gradual. The first step, it seems, is to actively recruit new members, especially graduate students, into the section. The political methodology section has been exceptionally effective in this regard, particularly through the active involvement of graduate students at the summer methods meetings. We as a section might think about similar sorts of activities, such as co-sponsoring (with one or more universities) mini-conferences or training workshops. There also already exist many opportunities for faculty to participate in the section as well, especially through award committees and section offices; new faces in these positions could help to shift our emphasis in a more methodological direction. Finally, other ways to encourage new membership include expanding our existing activities to focus more clearly on applications of economic tools, such as organizing special panels at the annual meetings, creating an on-line archive for working papers and teaching resources, and further developing this newsletter into a focal publication for the section. Over time, I believe that encouraging a more coherent, methodologically-defined membership base and engaging in activities more narrowly tailored to that membership will create a livelier and more vital section and subfield. ■

THE POLITICAL ECONOMIST

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION 2003

Political Economy Business Meeting, Thursday, 6:15 PM to 7:00 PM

Detailed Listing of Political Economy Panels

6-1 ROUNDTABLE 2: FIVE DECADES OF FORMAL MODELING

Date: Saturday, 2:15 PM to 4:00 PM/Co-sponsored by 4-12
Chair: Professor John Ferejohn, Stanford University
Part: Robert Powell, University of California-Berkeley
Howard Rosenthal, Princeton University
Norman Schofield, Washington University

6-2 ROUNDTABLE ON THE RATIONALITY DEBATE CONTINUES: THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ECONOMICS AND PSYCHOLOGY

Date: Thursday, 10:00 AM to 11:45 AM
Chair: James N. Druckman, University of Minnesota
Part: Kathleen McGraw, Ohio State University
John H. Aldrich, Duke University
Kathleen Bawn, University of California, Los Angeles
James H. Kuklinski, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

6-3 DO INSTITUTIONS DETERMINE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OUTCOMES?

Date: Saturday, 4:15 PM to 6:00 PM
Chair: Robert J. Franzese, Jr., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Papers: Institutional Design, Economic Development Policy, and the
Responsiveness of Representative Government
Elisabeth Gerber, Ford School of Public Policy, University of
Michigan
Justin Phillips, University of California, San Diego
The Impact of Political Institutions on Economic Performance
Under Dictatorship
Jennifer Gandhi, New York University
Systemic Corruption, Political Predation and Economic Growth
in Italian Regions
Miriam A. Golden, University of California, Los Angeles
Douglas A. Hibbs, Jr., Goteborg University
Do Coalition Governments Spend More? A Theoretical and
Empirical Investigation
Frances M. Rosenbluth, Yale University
Disc: Robert J. Franzese, Jr., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Thomas H. Hammond, Michigan State University

6-4 DO POLITICS AFFECT ECONOMICS? DO ECONOMICS AFFECT POLITICS?

Date: Saturday, 10:00 AM to 11:45 AM
Chair: Kenneth F. Scheve, Yale University
Papers: The Idea of Political-Economic Equilibrium
Patrick T. Brandt, University of North Texas
Timothy Hellwig, University of Minnesota
John R. Freeman, University of Minnesota
Aggressive Anti-Inflation Policy in Open Economies
Jim Granato, National Science Foundation
The Political Economy of Property Rights in the Transition
Economies—The Role of New Entrants
Karla Hoff, World Bank
Joseph E. Stiglitz, Columbia University
A Systems-Based, Production-Centered Theory of Political
Economy
Jonathan M. Rynn, Baruch College
Disc: Kenneth F. Scheve, Yale University
Ronald L. Rogowski, University of California, Los Angeles

6-5 PATTERNS OF MINISTERIAL TURNOVER

Date: Thursday, 2:15 PM to 4:00 PM
Chair: Kenneth A. Shepsle, Harvard University
Papers: Cabinet Turnover in Parliamentary Democracies
John D. Huber, Columbia University
Cecilia Martinez-Gallardo, Columbia University
The Timing of British Cabinet Shuffles, 1964-1997: An Event
History Approach
Christopher J. Kam, University of South Carolina
Indridi Haukur Indridason, University of Montreal
Why Do Ministers Resign? An Analysis of Ministerial
Resignations in the UK in the Post-War Period
Keith Dowding, London School of Economics
Torun Dewan, London School of Economics
Ministerial Career Paths in Canada
Matthew Kerby, Trinity College Dublin
Ministerial Resignations in a Comparative Perspective
Patrick Dumont, Université Catholique de Louvain
Régis Dandoy, Université Catholique de Louvain
Disc: Kenneth A. Shepsle, Harvard University
David P. Myatt, University of Oxford

6-6 DOES GLOBALIZATION MATTER?

Date: Thursday, 8:00 AM to 9:45 AM
Chair: Yi Feng, Claremont Graduate University
Papers: Globalization and Human Capital: The Missing Factor?
Ben William Ansell, Harvard University
Constraint vs. Convergence: Do Political Ideas Still Matter in
the Face of Globalization? A Theoretical and Empirical
Investigation
Elizabeth Addonizio, Yale University
Globalization, Inequality, and Redistribution: Modeling the
Domestic Political Consequences of Openness
Lloyd Gruber, University of Chicago
Public Goods and Institutions in the Era of Globalization
Raymond F. Hopkins, Swarthmore College
Stephen Golub, Swarthmore College
Disc: Laura Stephenson, Duke University
David A. Lake, University of California, San Diego

6-7 CAN FORMAL THEORY EXPLAIN DELIBERATION?

Date: Friday, 10:00 AM to 11:45 AM/Co-sponsored by 4-13
Chair: Charles R. Shipan, University of Iowa
Papers: Information Aggregation in Deliberative Settings without
Common-Values
Adam H. Meirowitz, Princeton University
Do Political Actors Have Beautiful Minds? Games with Self-
Confirming Equilibria and Fading Memory
Arthur Lupia, University of Michigan
Natalia Zharinova, University of Michigan
Non-Bayesian Deliberation
Catherine Hafer, New York University
The Inferiority of Deliberation under Unanimity Rule
David Austen-Smith, Northwestern University
Tim Feddersen, Northwestern University
Disc: Martin Sandbu, Harvard University
John W. Patty, California Institute of Technology

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION 2003

Political Economy Business Meeting, Thursday, 6:15 PM to 7:00 PM

Detailed Listing of Political Economy Panels

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6-8 WHAT DO PEOPLE THINK ABOUT ECONOMICS AND GLOBALIZATION? HOW DOES WHAT THEY THINK AFFECT THEIR BEHAVIOR?

Date: Saturday, 2:15 PM to 4:00 PM/Co-sponsored by 8-2
Chair: Yoshiko M. Herrera, Harvard University
Papers: The Human Face of Economic Globalization: Mexican Migrants and their Policy Preferences
John H. Aldrich, Duke University
Victoria DeFrancesco, Duke University
Kramer Versus Kramer: The Impact of Aggregate Economic Conditions on Individual Votes
Robert Grafstein, University of Georgia
It's Not Whether You Win or Lose, But How You Play the Game: Self-Interest, Social Justice, and Mass Attitudes toward Market Transition
Raymond M Duch, University of Houston
Domestic Attitudes toward Debt Repayment: Public Opinion and Economic Sophistication in Argentina
Michael R. Tomz, Stanford University
Disc: Sara M. Gubala, University of South Carolina
Michael S. Lewis-Beck, University of Iowa

6-9 WOMEN, FAMILY AND THE MARKET: GENDERING THE STUDY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Date: Friday, 2:15 PM to 4:00 PM/Co-sponsored by 14-1
Chair: Jonas Pontusson, Cornell University
Papers: Internal Labor Markets and Occupational Segregation by Gender: A Comparative Study of Japan and Spain
Kenneth A. Dubin, Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Margarita Estevez-Abe, Harvard University
Re-Training, Re-Location, and Gender: Support for Adjustment Assistance vs. Employment Protection Among Male and Female Workers
Brian Burgoon, University of Amsterdam
Michael J. Hiscox, Harvard University
Asset Mobility and Family Bargaining
Torben Iversen, Harvard University
Frances M. Rosenbluth, Yale University
Disc: Jonas Pontusson, Cornell University

6-10 HOW BANKS AFFECT PUBLIC POLICY

Date: Sunday, 8:00 AM to 9:45 AM/Co-sponsored by 25-2
Chair: Barry M. Mitnick, University of Pittsburgh

Papers: The Role of Federal Home Loan Banks in Preserving Local Capital
Susan Hoffmann, Western Michigan University
Mark Cassell, Kent State University
Paper Autonomy, Private Ambition: Central Bankers' Careers and the Economy
Christopher Adolph, Harvard University
Studying Central Bank Independence: The Problem of Missing Data
Irwin L. Morris, University of Maryland
David A. Armstrong, II, University of Maryland
Central Bankers and Central Banks: The Impact of Individuals and Institutions on Inflationary Outcomes
Cameron G. Thies, Louisiana State University
Disc: Virginia A. Haufler, University of Maryland
William T. Bernhard, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

6-11 POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CONGRESS

Date: Friday, 8:00 AM to 9:45 AM/Co-sponsored by 22-19
Chair: Brian R. Sala, University of California-Davis
Papers: Self-Policing in Legislatures
Glenn R. Parker, Florida State University
Death and taxes: The estate tax repeal and American democracy
Prof. Ian Shapiro, Yale University
Preferences, Parties, and Legislative Productivity
Lawrence S. Rothenberg, Northwestern University
Killer Amendments in the Contemporary Congress
Jeffery A. Jenkins, Northwestern University
Disc: Brian R. Sala, University of California-Davis

6-12 THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF POLITICAL CHANGE

Date: Thursday, 4:15 PM to 6:00 PM
Chair: Lance L. P. Gore, Bowdoin College
Papers: Government Change and Redistribution: A Natural Experiment in Japan
Yusaku Horiuchi, National University of Singapore
Political Institutions and Financial Crises: A Duration Analysis
Chiwook Kim, University of Texas, Austin
The Macroeconomic Consequences of Democratic Transition
Mark Gasiorowski, Louisiana State University
An Evolutionary Approach to Revising Modernization Theory
Prateek Goorha, Vanderbilt University
Disc: Lance L. P. Gore, Bowdoin College

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S	A

