

Hahn-Sigelman Prizes 2020-2024

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Each year, *American Politics Research* selects one article published during the corresponding calendar year to receive the Hahn-Sigelman Prize for Best Article. The best-article prize is named in honor of two, now-deceased former editors of the journal. Harlan Hahn (1939-2008) was the founding editor of *American Politics Quarterly* (which shifted from a quarterly to a bi-monthly journal in 2001). He served as editor from 1973 until 1981. His research spanned many areas, including urban studies, health politics, and criminal justice. A survivor of childhood polio, he was also a strong advocate of disability rights and a pioneer in the academic field of disability studies. He contributed to the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Lee Sigelman (1945-2009) edited *American Politics Research* from 1984 to 1988, from the University of Kentucky, the NSF, and the University of Arizona. He later served as editor of the *American Political Science Review*, from George Washington University. Over a long and very productive career, he authored hundreds of articles and multiple books, won many prizes for his diverse work on political behavior and was widely admired for his keen insight, personal warmth, and great humor.

Due to a lapse beginning during the global pandemic, no winners have been selected in recent years, but we are pleased to resuscitate the award to recognize recipients for these years as well as 2024.

Below you will find selections which have been awarded the Hahn-Sigelman Prizes for 2020-2024. Citations highlighting the substantive merits of the selections along with the respective members of the committees responsible for making each selection also follow. In each case, the selections represent outstanding scholarship published in the journal. I extend my congratulations to all recipients. I am also indebted to members of the prize selection committees whose diligence and professionalism were exemplary. Thank you for your service to the journal and for your excellent choices.

2020

Committee: Julia Hellwege (Chair; University of South Dakota); Christine Slaughter, (Boston University); Jennifer Chudy (Wellesley College)

Recipient: Bryan, A. C. (2020). Vol. 48, Issue 3: “Public Opinion and Setting the Agenda on the U.S. Supreme Court.”

In this inventive and methodologically rigorous article, Dr Bryan provides one of the first case-level analyses of how justices decide whether to hear cases based on their alignment with public opinion. By exploring the conditions under which the Court engages with or avoids politically salient cases, she bridges institutional and behavioral literature to offer fresh insights into judicial decision-making. The selection committee recognized her work for its accessibility, theoretical richness, and far-reaching implications, highlighting its contribution to our understanding of how the Supreme Court navigates its unique position as an unelected institution responsive to public sentiment. Her research challenges conventional wisdom by demonstrating that while the Court is not directly constrained by public opinion, it strategically considers its public standing when determining which cases to take. This article represents a significant advancement in the study of judicial behavior and the intersection of law and public opinion.

2021

Committee: Lisa Bryant (Chair, California State University Fresno); Robin Kolodny (Temple University); Connor Dowling (University of Buffalo).

Recipient: Cottrell, D., Herron, M. C., & Smith, D. A. (2021). Vol. 49, Issue 6. “Vote-by-mail Ballot Rejection and Experience with Mail-in Voting.”

This article makes a significant contribution that enhances our understanding of who has ballots rejected. The major contribution here is that it is applied research with an actionable problem that can be addressed. Election officials can learn from this that targeted voter education can help reduce rejection rates. This is important at a time when no-excuse VBM is a political talking point, with some people advocating for more widespread use and others seeking to restrict its use.

2022

Committee: Jennifer Victor (Chair, George Mason University); Nadine Gibson (University of North Carolina at Wilmington); Joseph Uscinski (University of Miami).

Recipient: Inguanzo, I., Mateos, A., and G. de Zúñiga, H. (2022). Vol. 50, Issue 3. “Why Do People Engage in

Unlawful Political Protest? Examining the Role of Authoritarianism in Illegal Protest Behavior.”

The authors of this article address an important question in U.S. politics: What makes people engage in illegal protest? As protest activity in the U.S. and elsewhere ticks upwards, the authors of this paper discriminate illegal protest activity from legal protest and show its nuanced relationship with authoritarian values. The committee was impressed with this article because of how it engages with current literature on protest and authoritarianism to derive expectations about a non-linear relationship. The authors use a panel survey fielded in Austria with impressive response rates. Their statistical approach is both sophisticated and appropriate for their data. The study finds that individuals with extremely low levels of authoritarianism or extremely high levels of authoritarianism engaged less frequently in illegal protest than individuals who have average levels of authoritarianism. They also find that those most likely to engage in illegal protest are not ideological extremists. The article is an important advancement of our understanding of illegal protest at a time of heightened authoritarianism in the U.S. and elsewhere.

2023

Committee: Kyle Endres (Chair, University of Northern Iowa); Semra Sevi (University of Toronto); Brian Hamel (University of North Texas).

Recipient: Markarian, G.A., (2023). Vol. 51, Issue 3. “The Impact of Police Killings on Proximal Voter Turnout.”

Markarian’s article addresses a timely topic and employs modern methods to establish causality using observational data. By combining geolocated voter files with geocoded data mapping police killings in the six months before and after the 2016 presidential election, the study demonstrates how proximity to police violence can adversely affect voter turnout, especially among Black registered voters. These

findings highlight the role of both race and spatial factors on political engagement. By providing evidence of these neighborhood-level demobilizing effects, the study underscores the wider implications of police violence on democratic participation.

2024

Committee: Alexander Theodoridis (Chair, University of Massachusetts Amherst); Adam Enders (University of Louisville); Andrew Gooch (Rowan University).

Recipient: Snyder, R., (2024). Vol. 52, Issue 6. “The Partisan Vote: Shared Partisanship and Constituent Service in the U.S. Congress.”

In this article, Snyder addresses an important, oft-asked question about constituent services and developing a personal vote. The article presents results from a nicely designed and apt application of a conjoint experiment, embedded in a large-sample survey, that tests which factors determine how likely people are to call on their member of Congress for constituent services. Snyder shows that partisanship is the biggest factor, with people less likely to contact out-party MCs. She also shows seniority in Congress matters using a non-partisan vignette. This study is well-identified, theoretically justified, and substantively consequential, especially given the current, and likely future, climate of uncertainty surrounding the federal government.

Once again, I congratulate all of the worthy recipients and thank the members of the prize selection committees for their service.

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