

Department of Government

Celebrating Political Science at The University of Texas at Austin

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MONTHLY ARCHIVES: DECEMBER 2012

ARCHIVES

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Weyland Article Compares 1848 and Arab Spring

Posted on **21 December 2012**

Kurt Weyland's article, "The Arab Spring: Why the Surprising Similarities with the Revolutionary Wave of 1848?" has been published in the December issue of *Perspectives on Politics*.

Abstract:

Prominent scholars have highlighted important similarities between the Arab Spring of 2011 and the "revolutions" of 1848: Both waves of contention swept with dramatic speed across whole regions, but ended up yielding rather limited advances toward political liberalism and democracy. I seek to uncover the causal mechanisms that help account for these striking parallels. Drawing on my recent analysis of 1848, I argue that contention spread so quickly because many people in a wide range of countries drew rash inferences from the downfall of Tunisia's dictator. Applying cognitive heuristics that psychologists have documented, they overrated the significance of the Tunisian success, overestimated the similarities with the political situation in their own country, and jumped to the conclusion that they could successfully challenge their own autocrats. This precipitation prompted protests in many settings that actually were much less propitious; therefore problems abounded. Cognitive shortcuts held such sway because Arab societies were weakly organized and repressed and thus lacked leaders from whom common people could take authoritative cues. The decision whether to engage in emulative contention fell to ordinary citizens, who—due to limited information access and scarce experience—were especially susceptible to the simple inferences suggested by cognitive heuristics.

Posted in **Faculty Publications**

New Yorker Puts Wlezien on Top 10 List

Posted on **21 December 2012**

Chris Wlezien's (incoming Hogg Professor) recent book, "[The Timeline of Presidential Elections](#)," made *The New Yorker's* list of **2012's top 10 best political books**.

Posted in **Faculty News**

Madrid Wins GSO Award

Posted on **21 December 2012**

Raúl Madrid received the inaugural Graduate Student Outstanding Faculty Award. The Graduate Student Organization presented Madrid with the award earlier this month at the department's holiday party.



Posted in **Faculty News**

Aaron Herold Receives Richmond Postdoc

Posted on **21 December 2012**

Aaron Herold has accepted a position as a John Marshall Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Richmond Jepson School of Leadership Studies.

Posted in **PhD Alumni News**

Kristin Wylie to James Madison University

Posted on **7 December 2012**

Kristin Wylie has accepted a tenure track assistant professorship at James Madison University. Congratulations, Kristin!

Posted in **Graduate News**

Matt Buehler to Tennessee-Knoxville

Posted on **7 December 2012**

Matt Buehler has accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship at The University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Congratulations, Matt!

Posted in **Graduate News**

Givens Embarks on European Lecture Tour

Posted on **7 December 2012**

Terri Givens is giving a series of talks in London and Berlin next week on anti-discrimination politics in Europe.

The first will be at the London School of Economics: Legislating Equality: The Politics of Anti-discrimination Policy in Europe

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/government/research/resgroups/MSU/events.aspx>

The second is at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue: "Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism: Where should priorities lie?"

<http://www.strategicdialogue.org/events/items/expertsession-far-right-dec2012>

In Berlin, Givens will give a talk at the Freie-Universitaet Berlin at an international conference on the Transformative Power of Europe 2.0: "The Origins of Antidiscrimination Policy in the EU"

Posted in **Faculty News**

More Press for Trey Thomas Article

Posted on **6 December 2012**

Trey Thomas' non-APSA, APSA paper, written with Tim LaPira (James Madison University), is back in the news, courtesy of The Monkey Cage.

[Read the latest.](#)

Posted in **Graduate News**