

Newsletter of the African Politics Conference Group

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Chair's Report

Dear colleagues and friends,

Nearly two years ago, I was honored and humbled to be elected as chair of the African Politics Conference Group. This is the last time I will address you as such through our Newsletter, as I will step down at the ASA annual meeting in November. Allow me to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve an organization I strongly believe in.

In my candidacy statement, I highlighted the reasons why I believe the African Politics Conference Group to be a formidable collective endeavor, in particular the networking opportunities it creates, the platform it offers for the promotion of scholarly news and events, and the unique chance it gives to young as well as senior colleagues to participate in panels, to receive recognition for their publications, and to be provided with information about research on African issues.

I have also promised to deepen the institutionalization of our presence at the main ASA, APSA, ISA conferences, to continue to expand our organization to include more colleagues and to propose some new ideas. At ASA's meeting this year, the steering committee (including our Treasurer Adrienne, who will also step down in November) will

Symposium:

Challenges to Studying
African Politics in the era of
DA-RT

Featuring contributions
from: Fatai Aremu & Lauren
MacLean, Fodei Batty, Rachel
Ellet & Mark F. Massoud,
Adrienne Lebas, and Aili Mari
Tripp

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Symposium: Challenges to Studying African Politics in the era of DA-RT

In 2014, the editors of dozens of political science journals issued the “Journal Editors’ Transparency Statement” (JETS), promising greater data accesses and research transparency in order to “make as accessible as possible the empirical foundation and logic of inquiry of evidence-based research.” Building on years of discussion within APSA, the signatories committed to implementing new procedures prior to January 15, 2016 requiring authors to make available analyses used to draw empirical conclusions from a manuscript at the time of publication (or submission) and to provide access to data and “relevant analytic materials” utilized in a manuscript. Data Access and Research Transparency, or DA-RT, is the resulting policy and has since been broadly adopted by political science journals and as a core tenant of APSA’s ethics guidelines.

The comparative politics community has spoken vocally about DA-RT. Most acknowledge that the debate surrounding is beneficial for the field and many support its principles. However, there remain serious concerns regarding DA-RT procedures and/or the manner in which they were adopted. What follows is the first of a two-part symposium on DA-RT’s impact on the study of African politics. The five pieces in this symposium offer their own take on how DA-RT will shape African politics research and three common themes emerge across the contributions.

First, much of the dialogue surrounding DA-RT has focused on its benefits in improving the quality and legitimacy of political science research. Considerably less attention has been dedicated to potential costs of the policies and who will bear those costs. The authors in the symposium shed light on this topic. While some have argued DA-RT is not a one-size-fits-all approach towards research transparency, pieces in the symposium highlight how the costs of meeting DA-RT requirements are heterogeneous.

They argue the effort required to adhere to DA-RT policies is disproportionately greater for scholars engaged in qualitative research and that it erects barriers that will make publishing research on African politics more difficult, especially for junior scholars in the US. It also may seriously restrict the ability of scholars outside of the United States to publish, especially those based in sub-Saharan Africa. Contributors applaud the significant strides APSA has made in building relationships with faculty in African universities through initiatives like the APSA Africa Workshops. Yet, authors point to how DA-RT can unravel the progress brought about through such programs.

Second, the authors raise concerns about ethical obligations to respondents to protect their safety and confidentiality and ways in which Institutional Board Review procedures may conflict with research transparency requirements under DA-RT. Though some describe this concern as a “myth” about DA-RT ([Golder and Golder, 2016](#)), scholars in this symposium challenge that view. The submissions highlight two related concerns: (1) IRB obligations that conflict with DA-RT and (2) if relying on an IRB-based exemption to DA-RT, whether editors could—even unknowingly—bias rejections against authors doing certain kinds of research common in African politics.

DA-RT professes to allow authors to request IRB-based exemption from making data public but the way in which that would be exercised is unclear. While IRB protocols hold researchers responsible for protecting respondents based on their local knowledge of risks to study participants, DA-RT places the decision over whether such an exemption is “legitimate” in the hands of an editor who may have never even stepped foot on the African continent. Further, the risks of IRB violations related to DA-RT are far greater than its supporters acknowledge. Consider, for example, if in lieu of full replication data protected by an IRB, an editor instead requests a list of interviewees delinked from interview data or records of interview notes with seemingly innocuous details like the location of an interview, dates of birth, region of origin, or the political party of an interviewee. Under an IRB’s classification of “identifiers,” each of these pieces of information may violate IRB-related anonymity protections. The symposium highlights how this puts the researcher between obligations to IRB protocols and perverse professional incentives to buck them.





Symposium: Challenges to Studying African Politics in the era of DA-RT

^{KC}The symposium also raises a concern regarding how journal editors will view submissions that request exemption from providing replication data. Will those requesting exemption from DA-RT be viewed the same as “compliers,” given these very editors implemented DA-RT to address perceived deficiencies in previous data accessibility standards? Without commensurate transparency from editorial boards—making publicly accessible and transparent the relevant analytic materials used to decide to reject submissions over research ethics/IRB-driven requests for DA-RT exemptions—the policy endangers the credibility of the peer- and editorial review process upon which our profession relies. As the symposium relates, many proponents and critics of DA-RT are also split along lines of methodology and this risks reifying the “qualitative/quantitative” divide which has fed animosity in our field over the last several decades.

Lastly, the symposium reflects on whether data accessibility and research transparency as a way to build replicable, scientific progress is the correct goal at all. How can authors adequately meet DA-RT submission guidelines for qualitative interviews when interview notes cannot capture the role that context, tone, conversational pauses, facial expressions, and code-switching plays in adding rich meaning to such interviews? Given the significant upfront costs of working in many African countries, what research guidelines must one provide such that someone can actually replicate his/her work—language acquisition, years of in-depth field exposure and research network building, etc.? Do we want to collect the kind of data we could obtain from informants who know their interviews will not be anonymous? How does one create a replicable database of legal decisions when informal norms pervade? The pieces of the symposium support the principles of DA-RT but also are skeptical towards whether DA-RT is a solution looking for the wrong problem for research in Africa.

We hope the symposium will stimulate discussion and debate at the meetings of APSA and ASA this fall. We encourage you to engage in these discussions and push this dialogue forward towards Spring 2017, in which we will discuss solutions for studying African politics in the era of DA-RT.

--Keith Weghorst, Newsletter Editor



Fieldwork conducted by Kevin Fridy in Sekoti, Ghana



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The Challenges of Collaboration among Africanist Scholars Conducting Field Research: Unintended Consequences of the DA-RT Initiative for the Study of African Politics

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Several scholars have already highlighted how the Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT) initiative might pose significant barriers in particular for researchers who are more junior, working in conflict zones or on politically sensitive topics in less democratic contexts, or conducting qualitative and/or interpretive fieldwork.¹ Most of the debate thus far has focused on how these new disciplinary standards advanced through the US-based American Political Science Association (APSA) and enforced by leading American journals would affect researchers based in the US. We would like to advance the dialogue here by considering how these changes might shape scholars outside of the U.S., specifically collaborations between Africanists based in African institutions and Africanists in the US (and Europe). Since 2008, APSA, with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, has promoted the development of new networks of training and research collaboration through a series of eight of APSA Africa Workshops on a variety of substantive themes in every region of the continent.² These workshops have stimulated the production of numerous coauthored articles, special journal issues, edited book volumes, grant proposals, blog posts, newsletters, and workshops, not to mention, enduring

friendships.³

And, yet, the trans-regional collaboration between these scholars, which has been so strongly supported by APSA, may be threatened unintentionally by the DA-RT initiative coming from another corner of the APSA organization. While the overarching principle of data access could provide a valuable reminder to scholars that genuine collaboration is not a neocolonial partnership for data extraction and knowledge production, the proposed implementation may pose several problems. We argue that Africa-based scholars may be exposed to greater political risks and meanwhile receive fewer benefits than their US collaborators from new journal requirements for transparency that may be inappropriate for their particular African context. Furthermore, the autonomy and equality of the Africa-based scholars within the partnership may be diminished by the implementation of a standard set of practices emerging from dominant epistemological assumptions held by many American political scientists.

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1 See Tripp and LeBas in this symposium. See also Kramer (2015); Parkinson and Wood (2015); Shih (2015) and Isaac (2015).

2 For more detail on the locations, themes, and participants of the APSA Africa Workshops, see <http://www.apsanet.org/africaworkshops>.

3 See the APSA Africa Workshop newsletters for updates: <http://community.apsanet.org/africa/project-news1/new-item>.





Challenges of Collaboration, continued from page 4

While we begin with a concern about the burgeoning US-African collaborations, these three consequences might also be experienced disproportionately by African scholars who are not engaged in such partnerships but wish to publish in US-based journals, increasingly an expectation required for achieving tenure and promotion at higher education institutions in Africa in an era of state retrenchment.

The first potential problem is that African scholars may incur a heavier and more direct share of the risk involved in adhering to the demands for increased transparency. Where American researchers can go “home” and may worry about the prospect of not being granted a visa to return sometime in the future, African scholars often live in closer proximity to the fieldsite and have fewer opportunities for exit. The community of scholars may be relatively small, and their identities be known by the ruling political regime with the possibility of more immediate and possibly grave consequences. Likewise, it may be nearly impossible to deidentify completely survey or qualitative interview transcripts, and the African scholar may be pressured to confirm the identities by political opponents or held accountable more directly by anxious or angry study participants. Many of the potential risks to human subjects may only appear in the medium- to long-term, and again, the African scholars are more likely to be in country if and when the risk becomes real, than the US scholar who has returned or even moved onto a different project or even field site. In addition to potentially facing greater risks, Africa-based scholars may be less able to access the benefits of data access since many of the template data management plans are predicated on the “First world” assumption of reliable electricity and high-speed internet to retrieve cloud-based storage of data.

The second potential problem is that the proposal to have journal editors serve as gatekeepers in the precise implementation of these new norms essentially reduces the autonomy of the Africa-based scholars even more than their US counterparts. The decisions about how to best protect the interests of human participants in the study is delegated to editors who often have very limited knowledge about African politics. Africa-based scholars will be required to follow policies and practices but will have had fewer opportunities to participate in deliberating or implementing them. African scholars often face multiple barriers to becoming a member of APSA; are less likely to be chosen to serve on these editorial boards; and, their

professional networks likely will not link them to these editors personally.

The third potential problem is that the loss of autonomy may lead to a subsequent loss of equality in the collaboration. Already, US and Africa-based scholars struggle to navigate a fair partnership where scholars from each region contribute to the shared theoretical and intellectual project. When US-based professional associations and journals trump the norms and institutions of Africa-based scholars’ associations, journals, and educational institutions, this equality is threatened.

In sum, we argue that the proposed standards for journals adhering to the DA-RT initiative may unintentionally weaken collaborations between US and Africa-based scholars, and thus hinder future research in the field on African politics. While the general principles of data access and research transparency seem to be broadly accepted and supported by many in the APCG, the specific mechanisms of implementation may inadvertently inhibit the quality of data collection and analysis in the field and weaken the quality of US-African working relationships. We contend that the specific mechanisms of implementation by journal editors are not necessary. Instead of advocating specific guidelines to be enforced through journals, we should agree on abstract principles and allow the diversity of scholarly communities and collaborations, with their heterogeneous epistemologies, methodological practices, and in-depth knowledge of field site contexts, to guide a more nuanced and customized adaptation of appropriate research practices.

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Editor’s Note: References appear on page 16. Whether symposium pieces are hyper-linked or include a bibliography was left to the author(s)’s preference.



Darting around DA-RT: Why Debates about Research Transparency will ultimately help the study of Africa

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I was ambivalent towards Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT) upon first reading about proposals to implement the measures in Political Science a few years ago. Like [other people](#), I was curious about whether and how emphasizing DA-RT could improve upon existing procedures and expectations for research within the discipline. Even if they would be useful in some way, I still had doubts about whether, and how, the measures would be implemented thoughtfully with regard and sensitivity towards diverse research traditions. I was also skeptical about the feasibility of some of the specific proposals laid out under [JETS](#) and unaware of the discipline-wide extent to which similar measures were already being implemented in some fashion by journal editors and gatekeepers in Political Science, until I read [Ellen Key's study](#) published in PS.

Today, I am not any more convinced than before about some of the practical aspects of implementing DA-RT. However, as I argue below, I have realized that the debates over “research transparency” will impact how scholars think about studying “Africa.” Going forward, it will also help advance understandings of African politics as evident in recent discussions across several forums.

Although scholars are quick to concede that Africa is a diverse, varied, and complex continent, there is still a persistent tendency to advertise the findings of research conducted in some distinctive location in “Africa” as typical without precautionary statements about external validity or expectations to substantiate the mechanisms for replication so that subsequent studies could reach similar conclusions, as proposed under DA-RT. Advocates of the new measures point such tendencies out as justifying their call for replicable data and findings.

On the other hand, those who are skeptical of DA-RT, including many scholars who conduct qualitative research in African countries, have countered with explicit concerns about confidentiality and the security of some of their research subjects and informants, due to the sensitive nature of some of the issues (sexualities, corruption, voting behavior, etc.) they study. It is a tough call to report attributable statements that make for replicable data when

such reports are likely to reveal the identities of specific informants. To mention one conundrum, how do proponents of DA-RT expect those who study corruption in an African government to reveal the potential source of their information as an informant who offered such insight under deep cover and whose disclosure is likely to be met with ostracism or vicious retaliation?

I too have been in situations in the field in Sierra Leone, for example, where I have been offered sensitive information on an issue off the record. I then had to carefully consider how to use and report such information as the rather bland “personal interview” reference in my notes so that I do not jeopardize the wellbeing of my informant(s). Although this hardly meets the current demands for research transparency, it ensures that I am trusted by informants next time I return to the field.

This is one of the reasons why it is so hard to take a definitive position on DA-RT! Like many colleagues, I am sensitive to the frequent generalizations about Africa in the scholarship. I will quickly admit that I am also guilty of making such generalizations in my work. Sometimes I unthinkingly speak and write loosely about a “specific area of Africa” as if it is representative of “Africa.” In numerous analyses by other scholars of Africa, concepts developed from studies conducted in one African country or one area of the continent are routinely stretched beyond their explanatory limitations and the findings from such studies are extrapolated to other contexts and areas of the continent without much qualification. Take, for instance, the case of “ethnic entrepreneurs,” a concept widely deployed in analyses of identity politics in Africa as societies negotiate processes of public goods distribution. Ethnic entrepreneurs are supposed intermediaries who play some role in negotiating the space between their ethnic communities and the political center. Many local communities across Africa, including the ones from which I hail in Sierra Leone, will give you some variation about the roles and expectations of their elites as they advocate their share of public goods. Yet, influential works on African politics have typecast ethnic entrepreneurs as if they maintain the same roles and perform the same functions

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Darting Around DA-RT, continued from page 6

Might the demands for research transparency under DA-RT help others and me clean up our “analytical acts” and think much more carefully about the broad strokes in our discussions of Africa? Although I am hopeful that the “new measures” can help address some of the challenges in African studies I have highlighted above, I also wonder how well they might do so when DA-RT adopts a one-size-fits-all approach that speaks narrowly to quantitative methodologies.

Traditionally, the study of Africa has suffered from a dearth of adequate, replicable and quantifiable data. Debates about DA-RT will also underscore this problem and, perhaps, motivate scholars and funding agencies to find solutions. Given the well-publicized diversity of African societies, we need representative data on all known ethnic groups within each country on the continent in order to be able to speak authoritatively about the phenomena, such as ethnic entrepreneurs/

Yet, under the laws of social science, this is data that we do not have but is required to reflect replicable findings about representative opinions across diverse ethnic communities. To wit, there is no exhaustive database of public opinion surveys of ALL ethnic groups within each specific country in Africa. Even the [Afrobarometer](#) surveys, perhaps the most comprehensive surveys on the continent at the moment with n-sizes ranging from 1,200 to 2,400 falls short in this regard.

In preparation for this contribution, I took a cursory look at articles published in three top journals in African studies (the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, *African Affairs*, and *African Studies Review*) over the past three years and found that a majority of the articles were qualitative in research design with no replication data. If most studies of Africa employ qualitative approaches that do not produce easily replicable data, then is our time well spent thinking about how to make imperfect samples and surveys replicable? Should we instead shift the emphasis to the research transparency aspect of how such studies are carried out? This would be more beneficial, in my view, in helping address the tendency to generalize that currently afflict studies of Africa. If we cannot replicate well, focusing on replication is like sweeping the challenges of replication under the “research rug.” Transparency, on the other hand, is a way for us to embrace the diversity of approaches and

contexts that makes the relationship between scholarship on African politics and DA-RT guidelines unique.

There are, of course, additional questions that need to be addressed such as whether cost concerns or the complexity of Africa is to be blamed for insufficient or deficient data. I have debated colleagues about some of these questions in various forums. I can attest that I do already see a change in the tenor of debates about research transparency. At the 2015 African Studies Association meeting in San Diego, for example, a passionate discussion about data ensued following one presentation last November.

Although I am still ambivalent toward DA-RT, I appreciate the fact that it has engendered the kinds of debates about research transparency that should ultimately move discussions about the study of African politics forward in the years to come.

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Fieldwork Photo: Stephanie Schwartz



Not All Law is Public: Reflections on Data Transparency for Law and Courts Research in Africa

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This essay¹ uncovers some of the latent challenges of data access and research transparency (DA-RT) guidelines in political science as they relate specifically to the growing study of law and courts in Africa. Although law is typically studied as publicly promulgated rules and judicial decisions, hidden and informal forms of politics and justice systems exist in many African contexts alongside or in place of formal institutions. That is, the release of even redacted notes or transcripts may jeopardize the safety of law and courts researchers and their subjects in Africa; may make interviewees reluctant to speak with researchers; and may hamper human subjects approvals, particularly in the context of informal institutions and transitional, authoritarian, or conflict-affected states in Africa (Massoud 2016; see also Blatmann 2015, Isaac 2015).

In this essay we describe the methods being adopted to study law and courts in Africa and we evaluate the challenges that DA-RT-related policies hold. In so doing, we reveal what is distinctive to the study of law and courts and what is broad enough to be helpful to social scientists who study other forms of political and social life across Africa. We also provide some possible ways forward for scholars to balance commitments to data gathering and research transparency.

The State of the Study of Law and Courts in Africa

The past decade has seen a resurgence of scholarly interest in African law and courts and, as with the broader field of African politics, this research has overwhelmingly turned to theory-building qualitative methods, including archival research, in-person interviews, and ethnographic observations (see, e.g., Bauer and Dawuni 2016, Ellett 2013, Englund 2006, Massoud 2013, Moustafa 2007, 1 Parts of this essay appear in or build on material found in Mark Fathi Massoud, "Field Research on Law in Conflict Zones and Authoritarian States," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, Vol. 12 (2016, forthcoming). This essay would not be possible without the kindness of respondents and interlocutors where the authors have conducted fieldwork, including Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia/Somaliland, Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, Botswana, Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Uganda, and Tanzania.

Oloka-Onyango 2015, VonDoepp 2009). Taken together, these diverse studies reveal how judicial power emerges in challenging political contexts, how colonial politics impact contemporary legal institutions, how lawyers and judges build up or destroy liberal democracy, how legal concepts travel, and how meanings and boundaries are created or reinscribed through lawmaking or judicial decision-making.

Law-and-courts researchers' use of qualitative, interpretive, or historical evidence is precisely what allows them to add value across multiple disciplines using previously untested cases (Moustafa 2014). But while these methods have generated new theory on the politics of law in Africa, they also paradoxically may be marginalizing law and courts research in political science – particularly given the increasing prominence of large-N datasets, survey research, and experimental methods.

DA-RT policies impose new requirements related to data gathering and dissemination. But in collapsing different forms of qualitative evidence – documentary and interview-based – into a single discourse, the debate confounds challenges with opportunities, generating new barriers to fieldwork and publication for law and courts research.

Challenges of Gathering and Disseminating Public Documents

DA-RT policies, as currently conceived, may not help resolve the pluralistic transparency problem facing scholars of African law and courts: how to produce and make documentary resources available to all, particularly within Africa, by creating a sustainable solution for ongoing public access to laws, cases, and government activities across Africa. That is, archives, documents, and other written materials on law and courts are not often made public or easily accessible. Like others who study states and political institutions in Africa, we have struggled to obtain government records, court decisions, and even newspaper articles



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– sometimes involving weeks or months of requests (see Massoud 2013:231-237). Many courts, if they do publish written decisions, do so in foreign languages, which may require a researcher to translate and transcribe them into English before posting to a private data repository. These issues are even more acute in fragile states, where documents may have been lost, destroyed, or taken and not returned by visiting researchers (Massoud 2016).

Activating citations and linking them to unpublished documents retrieved by an author would certainly enhance transparency and serve as a resource for future researchers. But because the process is time- and labor-intensive, it may have a disproportionate impact on pre-tenure scholars and

Activating citations and linking them to unpublished documents retrieved by an author would certainly enhance transparency and serve as a resource for future researchers. But because the process is time- and labor-intensive, it may have a disproportionate impact on pre-tenure scholars and scholars in Africa who also may feel compelled to make this evidence readily available in a format – e.g., in clear English, on a protected web database – that other scholars can easily access (for an example of activated citations, see Ellett 2015). Already our disciplines are witnessing a drop in the acceptance rate for papers written by African scholars, just as research by women is less likely to be cited than men (Briggs and Weathers 2016).

Challenges of Confidentiality and the Dissemination of Interview Data

Evaluating interview data occurs on three levels – sampling, validity and reliability (Bleich and Pekkanen 2013). While validity is established through evidence triangulation, the reliability of an interviewee may be difficult to ascertain without compromising anonymity. With regard to sampling, there is scope for increasing transparency without compromising confidentiality, including in the creation of an interview appendix (Id.). But even the most faithful transcriptions cannot capture the depth of silences, confusion, laughter, or hostility during an interview. Here, carefully prepared and redacted field notes placed in a methodological appendix may capture the ways that context matters. (Due to length constraints, such appendices would differ for article- and book-length projects.) That is, as with other areas of African politics, collecting interview metadata to produce a study of African law and courts may prove equally as important as collecting interviewees' reflections.

In addition, the obvious challenge of confidentiality operates acutely in societies with a small professional class, concentrated over one or two metropolitan areas. In these settings, even choosing not to remain anonymous reduces the pool of people to which anonymous individuals belong. A researcher's commitment to confidentiality, even when a respondent prefers to speak publicly, enables scholars to protect those who want – or need – to remain anonymous.

In our research, we have met lawyers, judges, and activists who later were jailed or forced into exile. Even settings with relative political stability may later collapse into political disorder and conflict, and those in power may suddenly find themselves outside the state's protection. Though generating accurate transcriptions is costly and time-consuming, they offer an additional layer of protection to recordings.

Looking Forward: Balancing Data Gathering with Research Transparency

Given the potential burdens to researchers and the potential risks to research participants, it is important to balance the needs of data gathering with the purposes of research transparency. That is, if DA-RT policies are to increase the seriousness with which qualitative research is received within political science and strengthen the discipline's public reputation, at what cost would this occur, particularly for those who work in Africa?

We respond to this question by highlighting three ways to balance the commitments involved in studying law and courts in Africa –

1. *For document-based research, consider the wide-ranging concerns about public access to legal and political information in Africa.* Pivoting the debate away from individual scholars generating mini-private data libraries toward more pluralistic concerns about publicly available documents may aid in the expansion of African scholarship by Africans. Multiple audiences – academic and non-academic, African and non-African – require access to information about law and courts. Where possible, engaging with local universities, local bar associations, and AfricaLii may facilitate more reliable public access to government documents (AfricaLii 2016). Doing so serves two goals: enabling critical evaluation of theoretical and empirical claims and, perhaps more importantly, aiding in the dissemination of legal materials for all.

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2. *For interview-based research, clarify ethical concerns around interviewee anonymity, particularly in fragile political settings.* The assumption that interview data needs to be shared may not be viable in volatile settings with small professional classes, particularly where seemingly innocuous data may become political weapons down the road (Lynch 2016). Furthermore, good data transparency does not necessarily produce good data analysis, which involves the careful documentation of interview context – metadata – and the construction of interview appendices. In short, thinking creatively about how to conduct and disseminate interview-based research is critical to strengthening the inferential value of qualitative data.

3. *Continue to address inequities in scholarship by providing increased opportunities for scholars from the global South to contribute to global learning on African law and courts, and on qualitative methods.* Holding conferences and events in the global South, and earmarking additional funding for scholars from Africa, would allow researchers from these regions to interact with, learn from, and teach scholars from North America and Europe. Further collaborations may provide greater opportunity for scholars in Africa to shape not only the substantive questions but also the methodological debates in political science and African studies.

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Research transparency, DA-RT, and the Challenges of Fieldwork in Africa

Adrienne LeBas
American University

The new data transparency guidelines adopted by several journal editors – now known as DA-RT – have been exhaustively debated within political science, but what do these standards mean for Africanist political scientists? All of us support rigorous and transparent research. For some kinds of work, a full release of data and procedures to allow for replication should be seen as the gold standard. For other kinds of research, requiring full data transparency presents special challenges that were not adequately considered by DA-RT proponents and by the editors of the 27 political science journals that have signed on to [DA-RT standards](#).

Critiques of the adoption of DA-RT standards by these journals have already emerged, notably in an [open letter](#) signed by 20 past presidents of the American Political Science Association and in an [open petition requesting delay](#), which was signed by over 1,100 political scientists. These criticisms will likely inform continuing conversations about DA-RT, including those at several APSA panels devoted to the topic as well as the upcoming APSA Council meeting in Philadelphia. In this short note, I lay out three issues that I feel merit further discussion and are, I believe, of special interest to the community of scholars associated with APCG.

Practical challenges. First, the DA-RT standards likely impose a differential labor burden on comparativists who work in the developing world, especially those who conduct focus groups, semi- or unstructured interviews, participant-observation, and ethnographic research. DA-RT requires scholars to make cited data available through an online digital repository. It remains unclear what this would mean for qualitative scholars, especially those who conduct long-form interviews and ethnographic research. Much of the discussion about the need for DA-RT has focused on concerns about scholars “cherry-picking” data or selectively reporting evidence that confirms their own arguments. Some view full transcriptions of interviews and field notes to be the only means of guarding against this cherry-picking, and they would expect qualitative researchers to produce and deposit full transcriptions of interviews, field notes, archival evidence, and other materials.

If full transcription is required, could qualitative scholars afford to comply? Transcription of audio recordings is incredibly costly and time-consuming. Africanists may

face additional burdens in this arena: some of us work in languages that are spoken by few outside our field sites, and our informants often have distinct accents even when speaking English, French, or Portuguese, making transcription more time-consuming and costly. For those of us who work in authoritarian or otherwise insecure field sites, the need to protect our subjects renders transcription of any recorded materials in-country impossible. Similar labor burden concerns apply to African archival materials. Some political scientists working in archives in the United States and Western Europe have expressed enthusiasm for “active citation,” which involves active links to primary documents within journal articles. This practice has influenced the discussion of DART and qualitative methods, but it does not take into account different archival practices and accessibility in the developing world. In many national and private archives in Africa, researchers cannot use digital cameras, and photocopying is limited; in some, computers are not allowed, and researchers must instead take notes by hand. Journal requirements for active citation or deposit of primary documents would impose significant costs on researchers who work in archives with access restrictions and limited or non-existent digitization of holdings.

Ethics and effects on the discipline. There are also several ethical concerns related to data transparency, only some of which would be immediately apparent to quantitative or non-fieldwork-based researchers. The most significant ethical concern would be the interface between DA-RT requirements and Institutional Review Board (IRB) provisions for the protection of human subjects, minimization of harm, and privacy of informants. The editors signing onto the DA-RT standards have made assurances that researchers can apply for exemptions if the public release of data would endanger informants or violate confidentiality agreements. The implication is that editors would review exemption requests and determine whether exemption was merited. Will DA-RT exemptions only be granted where there is risk of harm to the informant, or does the informant have the right to restrict the use of data she provides to an individual researcher? Who determines whether an interview can or cannot be safely anonymized?



Research Transparency, DA-RT, ..., continued from page 11

This ambiguity about DA-RT exemption standards will make it difficult for researchers to develop appropriate IRB protocols and consent scripts. Even if the exemption standards and guidelines for informant protection are improved, we have not yet begun to think through the effect of DA-RT-compliant consent protocols on the quality of the data being collected. Much of my early work was conducted in a setting where my informants faced significant risks of state-sponsored repression, risks that were heightened by talking to me. I cannot imagine even asking my informants for consent to full data transparency and public sharing. Instead, I allowed my informants to specify embargo periods, how they would be identified, who would have access to data (typically, only me and my family members), etc, etc. This is what allowed me to develop the trust that yielded good interview data and the relationships that made subsequent connections and research possible. I worry that young scholars – anxious to comply with DA-RT – would not feel that they had the freedom to give informants control over how data would be used and stored in future.

Beyond issues of data quality, we should likely think through potential downstream effects on the character and scope of Africanist political science. As currently drafted, the DA-RT standards likely increase incentives for less-than-strict observation of IRB rules and the constraints often placed by informants on use of interview and focus group materials (e.g., individualized access, anonymization, use only for scholarly purposes). Secondly, as currently written, the DA-RT standards likely further disincentive the extended and partly unstructured fieldwork that many of us see as essential to the training of area specialists. Junior scholars face a highly competitive job market. In order to maximize the chances of placing their research in the discipline's top journals, they may be drawn to questions and research methods that are more amenable to full data transparency and public release. Any further narrowing of methodological diversity or research scope would be bad for the discipline. Experimental and quantitative research is enriched by in-depth fieldwork; furthermore, qualitative methods may be the best means of examining many of the thorniest questions facing us as political scientists, such as those concerning the organization of violence or the internal functioning of authoritarian regimes.

"Poisoning the well." Many APCG members are qualitative researchers who publish in African Studies journals and in other journals that have not signed onto the DA-RT standards. For these researchers, why does the debate over DA-RT matter? I would suggest that the DA-RT standards as currently written run a small but

non-negligible "poisoning the well" risk. If adopted widely and without significant provisions made for protection of informant confidentiality and anonymity, it is possible that DA-RT could have downstream effects on qualitative scholars who explicitly "opt out" of the standards. We could, for instance, imagine scenarios in which the public release of interview and other field data results in harm to informants or other negative repercussions. Episodes of this kind could conceivably limit other researchers' access to informants or even their ability to conduct research in some field sites. During a different era, this fear of "poisoning the well" led the African Studies Association and most of the Title IV African Studies Centers to adopt a blanket ban on the receipt of military and intelligence funds for African studies research, a policy that endured until the attacks of 9/11. Are these downstream effects as likely as the disciplinary ones I signal above? No, but they are not impossible. And this risk should provide a compelling reason for all APCG members to be engaged in drafting data access and transparency guidelines that take into account the challenges discussed here and in the other contributions to this newsletter.

Adrienne LeBas (Ph.D., Columbia University) is Associate Professor of Government at American University and is completing a term as a residential fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. She is the author of the award-winning *From Protest to Parties: Party-Building and Democratization in Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2011), as well as several articles on party organization, violence, and the rule of law. Her current book project examines the causes of persistent electoral violence in some African countries. She works mainly - but not exclusively - in Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Nigeria.



DA-RT and Publishing Research from Authoritarian and Conflict Settings

Aili Mari Tripp
University of Wisconsin, Madison

The adoption of the DA-RT guidelines just made research even harder for political scientists working in non-democratic and war-torn settings as well as similar settings elsewhere in the world. As it is, there are many countries in Africa where few foreign scholars conduct extensive field research, in part, because of the authoritarian nature of the regime (e.g., Angola, Chad, Eritrea, Sudan) or because of ongoing conflict (e.g., Somalia, parts of northern Nigeria). For local researchers, the challenges may be even greater for political reasons.

Scholars at US institutions are already saddled with onerous human subjects requirements. We have to learn numerous languages; obtain research funding and then seek writeup funding; get research clearance and dozens of other complicated permissions (*carte de séjour*, etc.), establish contacts; line up research assistants; and navigate the logistics of leaving one's own institution, home, and country as well as the logistics of moving to a new country and institutional setting. And as if this were not enough, we must now deal with new challenges of getting our work published, especially in leading journals.

The DA-RT guidelines create new disincentives for qualitative comparative work, especially in non-democratic contexts and will scare junior scholars from embarking on precisely the type of research that is needed most to understand the countries we know the least about. And while it is important to do quantitative research, it is insufficient for understanding complex processes and dynamics on the ground.

I do not disagree with the overall aims of the DA-RT guidelines. It is important to show how one's conclusions are backed up by strong evidence. I think that is the essence of doing rigorous research, along with being able to demonstrate the importance of the subject, how it advances knowledge, and its theoretical significance. But I am concerned with how the DA-RT guidelines will be implemented in practice.

I recently conducted research in Morocco and Western Sahara (known to Moroccans as "the southern provinces"). During the time I was in Western Sahara, eight foreign

journalists were expelled from the area. I was acutely aware of the political sensitivities of carrying out research in this region even though I was not studying the conflict itself. But it was also one of the most fascinating places where I have done interviews in my three decades of conducting field research throughout Africa, in part, because women hold an unusually high social status in this matrilineal society. I was only able to gain access because of a serendipitous encounter with a Moroccan who had worked in these provinces for six years with UNHCR and who had exceptional access and excellent contacts. The notion that my exact project could be replicated in the same way a quantitative project could be verified is absurd. There are only a handful of political scientists who have worked on Western Sahara and most have looked at the issues from a more macro-perspective or with access primarily to the Algerian camps where the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro, better known as the POLISARIO, is based, but not in the Western Sahara itself. However, looking at the DA-RT guidelines, one wonders how a qualitative study of the kind I conducted could be published. Moreover, the kinds of questions I am asking cannot be addressed through a quantitative study and the secondary literature is almost non-existent.

There seem to be protections for people who work in authoritarian contexts in the guidelines, but when editors actually see the kinds of restrictions the Human Subjects committees place on us, I wonder how much flexibility there will be in practice. I worry about how aware those implementing the guidelines will be of the ethical considerations in and challenges of doing research in non-democratic and conflicted contexts.

Even interviews that are not particularly sensitive can be barred from being revealed publicly and must be destroyed after a certain amount of time to meet IRB requirements, especially if one is working in a non-democratic context. The people who serve on the IRB committees also don't always fully understand the research context and place restrictions based on their own limited knowledge of a country. The DA-RT guidelines refer to such situations as being an exception, but as IRB restrictions



DA-RT and Publishing Research, continued from page 13

But even if there are no onerous IRB restrictions, do people who are interviewed really want their interviews made public? Will they have a say in any of this? If they know the interviews are going to be made public, how will this affect interviewees' willingness to be fully open and honest even if the interviews aren't associated with a name or affiliation? Often the content of the interview will reveal who the person is to those who know the context, especially for those of us who do elite interviews. Won't that erode trust and confidentiality in the interviewer? I study women and politics and women's movements in Africa and I can't imagine people would want some of the things they say publicly attributed to them or their organization or even to the women's movement and its opponents. They don't want their strategies, jealousies, frustrations or weaknesses revealed to their competitors, opponents, or people they are lobbying. The same is true for those who oppose the women's organizations. If you have ever been interviewed by someone else you will know exactly what I mean, even if you have nothing in particular to hide.

I have interviewed people in contexts of war, where people do nasty things to each other. In the course of interviewing, people have confided in me about other politicians who tried to kill them or succeeded in killing their loved ones, admissions of stealing, of being raped, of having affairs with key leaders, of sabotaging industrial production to increase prices, and so on. Most of these specific comments should never be made public in any form, in part, because they are potentially libelous. But one might want to write generally about a certain related phenomenon based on such comments. How would one provide evidence without providing actual texts of interviews that people who made the statements never dreamed would be made public?

I am concerned that the benefits of these new requirements do not outweigh the transaction costs of meeting them, especially in authoritarian and conflicted environments and for comparativists. They run the risk of creating serious ethical dilemmas and force researchers to violate IRB requirements if they comply. APSA and the journals need to give more consideration to how the DA-RT initiative will affect the whole field and find other ways to ensure greater rigor without making publication impossible for those of us working in challenging environments.

Science and Gender at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Evjue Bascom Professor in Gender and Women's Studies there. She has conducted research in Tanzania, Uganda, Angola, Liberia, Kenya and Morocco.



Fieldwork Photo: Ryan Briggs with former Ghanaian President J.J. Rawlings



Dataset Review: Social Conflict in Analysis Data

Christopher Linebarger
University of Texas, El Paso

Armed conflict and war in post-Cold War Africa have resulted in the deaths of millions of people, displaced millions more, and interrupted economic and political progress. Yet, for all that scholars have discovered about the causal factors associated with armed conflict in Africa, relatively little is known about conflicts at a lower order of magnitude. Indeed, the commonly employed datasets in this area typically define armed conflict as an interaction between organized actors, such as states and rebel movements, resulting in an annual battle-death count above a particular threshold. However, armed conflicts like insurgencies and civil wars require that rebels invest significant time and resources, while a large variety of conflict types occur outside the bounds of traditional definitions and require fewer “start up” costs. Notable examples include coups, riots, labor strikes, communal violence, state repression, and protests. Moreover, conflict and violence should not be seen as interchangeable concepts: many episodes of civil unrest and non-violent protests have had as great an impact on African politics as their more deadly counterparts.

Among the most significant efforts to resolve these lacunae is the Social Conflict Analysis Data (SCAD), an events dataset that collects information on these kinds of conflicts for the period 1990—present (Salehyan, et al 2012). Originally designed to collect evidence on conflict in Africa, it has since expanded its spatial domain to include Central America, the Caribbean states, and Mexico. Prominent examples of deadly conflicts recorded by SCAD are the 2007 electoral violence in Kenya, the 1994 Fowl War in Ghana, recent pastoral conflicts in East Africa, and ethnic and religious rioting in Nigeria. Each of these cases claimed thousands of lives, but none are included in the traditional conflict data and each produced more fatalities than many civil wars. SCAD also captures episodes of dissent, such as the 2011 Arab Spring protests in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, and the early 1990s democratization movements in Zambia, South Africa, and many others. It should be noted, however, that SCAD explicitly contains no threshold on the size of its observed events, nor does it include a death threshold. Thus, less prominent incidents with only a handful of participants are found in the data. Although SCAD excludes civil wars and the battles fought within

them, it is designed to be combined with the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Data (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). Analysts can therefore study social conflict and war together.

SCAD is hand-coded by a team of researchers based upon keyword searches of Associated Press (AP) and Agence France Presse (AFP) newswire archives, as contained in the Lexis-Nexis database. The researchers then separate relevant articles from the irrelevant “misses.” Each relevant event is then entered into SCAD and classified according to a number of variables, including its degree of organization, and whether the event is repressed by state authorities. The identity of actor(s) and target(s), number of participants, number of deaths, and location of event are also coded. Each event is also classed with respect to the issue under contention, and each includes a short description to facilitate narrative research. Finally, each event is geo-coded for spatial analysis.

SCAD has several advantageous features in comparison to others of a similar type. In the last decade, a significant scholarly movement has called for the disaggregated study of civil wars and armed conflicts, and as such a variety of datasets have emerged that collect information on the types and locations of individual battles and incidents of political violence. Most of these collection efforts have occurred within the African context. But, as systematic and useful as those data are, many are limited to incidents occurring within armed conflicts of the traditional definition. By contrast, SCAD collects information on all social conflict, with criminal activity being the notable exclusion. Furthermore, disaggregated datasets sometimes contain an inflated number of records because events that occur in multiple locations and over multiple days are separated into multiple events. Nation-wide protests, such as those that occurred during the Arab Spring in Egypt, would therefore be represented by many hundreds of records --- one for each locality and day containing a protest. SCAD, by contrast, considers occurrences such as these to represent a single event, so long as the actors and contentious issues are the same.



Dataset Review, continued from page 15

Although it is possible to build a database of social conflict based upon local news reporting, AP and AFP are used because they offer online archiving over a long period of time and are consistent in their reporting standards throughout the period. Local news sources do not offer the same level of consistency, especially over time. Thus, while SCAD has advantages and disadvantages like any dataset, it remains one of the only efforts to collect a comprehensive dataset on civil unrest across the entire African continent, and to do so in a way that affords its users flexibility.

SCAD has recently enabled scholars to explore a whole host of phenomena related to African social conflict that were previously difficult to research. The data have been widely employed, and exhaustive coverage is beyond the scope of this review. A few notable examples include recently published work on electoral violence (Daxecker 2014; Salehyan and Linebarger 2015), the nexus of climate change and conflict (Hendrix and Salehyan 2012), collective action (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013), targets of dissident action (Salehyan and Stewart 2016), media reporting bias (Hendrix and Salehyan 2015), and repression (Hendrix and Salehyan 2016; Ritter and Conrad 2016). Future applications of the data are also extremely numerous, with some possibilities including the effect of foreign aid and structural adjustment on social conflict, the relationship between patronage politics and the geographic patterns of ethnic conflict, and the spread of terrorism and low-level insurgency.

SCAD was initially funded as a Department of Defense Minerva Grant in a collaboration between the University of Texas at Austin and the University of North Texas. The bulk of the coding took place at UNT. SCAD is available both as an interactive online database and as a downloadable CSV file at: <https://www.strausscenter.org/scad.html>

Christopher Linebarger is Visiting Assistant Professor at the National Security Studies Institute at the University of Texas at El Paso.

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ACPG Member Lisa Mueller in the field.

Join the APCG Discussion Forum!

<http://groups.google.com/group/discussionAPCG>

A public/open forum for APCG members. APCG members who sign up can communicate with each other in an open format. Want to discuss this issue's symposium, advertise a new book, talk about an Africa-related issue, find a conference roommate, or get info on a research location? You can do that here!



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Chair’s Report... (continued from page 1)

provide a detailed assessment of what we have done these past two years. But let me assure you that the APCG is in good shape:

- We have organized panels in all our major conferences (ASA, APSA, ISA)
- We currently have 261 APSA members (I remind you that APSA requires that we maintain 250 members in order to be an affiliated section)
- Our committees (Awards, Conference, Nominations) have been set up and the APSA committee is already preparing the APSA 2017 conference, including a call for proposals in this issue
- Finally, our Nominations committee has identified the candidates for chair (Leo Arriola and Aili Tripp) and for Treasurer (Claire Adida and Steve Burgess). Their bios and statements are included in this issue and our secretary, Cara Jones, is working on the electoral process. I thank the four candidates on behalf of the APCG and urge all of you to vote.

However, we still need to be concerned about our APSA status and ensure we meet APSA’s membership threshold of 250 members each year. In addition to the regular membership process, we need to devise other strategies. One is through a sponsorship program. Andrew Stinson and I have talked about an APSA initiative regarding this, but I think in parallel, we can do our part individually for example by

encouraging our PhD students and foreign colleagues and friends to join APCG and APSA. I hope we will have enough time to discuss this idea or other ones at APSA. Our business meeting will take place on Thursday September 1, 6:30 pm, Loews Hotel, Commonwealth A1.

Let me finally remind you to apply for the APSA 2017 conference and to attend our individual members’ presentations at the 2016 meeting.

I look forward to seeing you soon at APSA!

All the best,
Mamoudou Gazibo



From Stephanie Schwartz's Fieldwork

African Data Sources Sought

We are in the process of compiling a list of data sources for our group.

For the current list, go to:

<http://africanpoliticsgroup.org/index.php/scholars/africa-data-sources/>

To contribute a data source, send an email to **Keith Weghorst**, keith.r.weghorst@vanderbilt.edu

From the Editor

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to serve as the newest editor of the APCG newsletter and am grateful for the opportunity to do so. Many thanks to outgoing editors Cara Jones and Steve Marr for their efforts over the last couple of years as well as their assistance in getting this newsletter out, making for a fairly painless transition. This will be the last newsletter released under the current leadership regime of APCG and I would like to congratulate them on their success in further institutionalizing our relationship with APSA as an official section.

In my first issue of the newsletter, you will see that I have largely kept the newsletter "as is" with regards to content, with minor adjustments around the edges. As in the past, it includes member announcements, a data set review, publications, a letter from our chair, as well as information regarding the business meeting that will take place at APSA. I wish to draw attention to two facets of the newsletter.

First, the newsletter symposium departs a bit from past newsletters, which commonly featured a self-contained set of essays speaking to an important substantive topic in political science which is studied in sub-Saharan Africa. Thanks to a suggestion from Aili Mari Tripp, the symposium features five entries from APCG members on the topic of Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT) and challenges

it presents for the study of African politics. This is the first of a two-part symposium, where the Spring newsletter will present perspectives of overcoming challenges presented by DA-RT. I hope that this symposium will stimulate discussion about DA-RT for the Fall meetings of APSA and ASA and those discussions will be continued by our Spring issue.

Second, I have slightly expanded the breadth of the review for publications in African politics. This includes emergent journals in political science—such as the *Journal of Experimental Political Science*—as well as journals which focus on the relationship between gender and politics, notably *Politics & Gender*. Please advise me if there are any such resources you would like to be included in future reviews. I also have included *all* Africa related entries on the *Monkey Cage*, reflective of its increasing importance as a public forum to share our research expertise.

Lastly, as we prepare for elections for the new APSA leadership council, please review the candidate information that appears in this newsletter.

I look forward to your thoughts and feedback and wish you all a delightful Fall semester.

Keith Weghorst, Vanderbilt University



Now Hiring

University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Political Theory, Assistant Professor

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Department of Political Science and Public Administration invites applications for a tenure track Assistant Professor position in Political Theory. Required qualifications include: Ph.D. in Political Science or a related field, with a primary focus on questions of race or gender; demonstrated excellence or strong potential in research; and a commitment to teaching in a diverse environment. Candidates with the ability to empirically evaluate political theory regarding race or gender will also be considered. The nine-month tenure track position begins Fall 2017.

The Department of Political Science and Public Administration offers an M.P.A., B.A., and a minor. It has 24 full-time faculty members. Many participate in one or more interdisciplinary programs, including the Public Policy Ph.D. program, Latin American Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, and Africana Studies.

Review of applications will begin September 22, 2016 and will continue until the position is filled. Applications must be submitted electronically to <https://jobs.uncc.edu>. Please attach the following documents with your electronic application: (1) letter of application outlining your scholarly interests and agenda, including teaching experience, related to the qualifications outlined above; (2) curriculum vitae; (3) a copy of graduate transcript; (4) one sample of professional writing; and (5) evidence of teaching effectiveness. In addition, three letters of recommendation should be sent either electronically in PDF format or by regular mail. All letters must be addressed to John Szmer, Political Theory Search Committee Chair, UNC Charlotte, 9201 University City Blvd, Fretwell 435F, Charlotte, NC 28223 or jjszmer@uncc.edu. Any ques-

tions should be directed to Dr. Szmer.

Finalists will be asked during their screening interview to discuss how the topics of diversity and inclusion are incorporated into their teaching and research.

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte is a doctoral, research-intensive university located in one of the country's fastest growing metropolitan areas on an expanding, modern campus. One of sixteen campuses in one of the oldest public university systems in the United States, UNC Charlotte offers over 28,000 culturally diverse students a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences houses twenty departments in the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, physical sciences, and military sciences, as well as eight research centers and institutes and thirteen interdisciplinary programs.

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte is an AA/EOE and an ADVANCE Institution that strives to create an academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. It values diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. Applicants will be subject to a criminal background check.

Submit Online!

Submissions to the newsletter can be made via our website:

<http://africanpoliticsgroup.org/index.php/submit-news/>



Announcements

Afrobarometer Funding in Peril, Laura Seay

As you may have seen in several recent articles and social media posts, funding for the Afrobarometer is under threat. As the Afrobarometer is a key resource for many APCG members, this is obviously of great concern for the organization. We'll be discussing potential responses, including panel discussions at the ASA, a group lobbying effort during the ASA meetings in Washington, and other ways we can support the Afrobarometer team at our APSA business meeting at 6:30pm on Thursday, September 1.

Editor's Note: Also see Nic Cheeseman's piece ["Save the Afrobarometer: Why African opinion polls are so important"](#) which appeared in *Democracy in Africa* on August 21, 2016.

European Conferences of African Studies (ECAS), CRG

Having followed the APCG with interest, political scientists and IR researchers formed a sister group in Europe to pursue similar aims. Our Collaborative Research Group (CRG) for African Politics and International Relations is part of the European Network of African Studies (AEGIS) which has linked together Centres of African Studies in Europe since 1991.

The CRGs meet two goals – first to bring together those with cognate research interests, but also to enable academics in Europe and beyond to participate fully in AEGIS even if they don't belong to one of our member institutions. You're all very welcome to join too!

The CRG currently has three co-ordinators, based in Bayreuth (Germany),

Groningen (the Netherlands), and Edinburgh (Scotland). There is more information about the group on our [website](#); we also have a presence on [Twitter](#) and a [Facebook](#) group. If you would like to join you can contact us at crgafricapoliticsir@gmail.com

European Conferences of African Studies (ECAS) occur biennially, with the next one in Basel (Switzerland), taking place from 29 June – 1 July 2017. Calls for papers will be out soon for [ECAS 7](#), which has the theme: **Urban Africa - Urban Africans: New encounters of the rural and the urban.** There will be many Politics & IR panels, and we are also planning a CRG-sponsored roundtable, with the provisional title: What's 'urban' and what's 'political' about 'Urban Politics' in Africa?

We look forward to fruitful collaboration and conferencing,

With all best wishes,

Sara Rich Dorman, Edinburgh
Jana Hönke, Groningen
Alexander Stroh, Bayreuth
CRG African Politics and IR Co-ordinators



ACPG's Rachel Beatty Riedl and team this summer.

Member News

Aili Mari Tripp (University of Wisconsin-Madison) is coordinating a research project on Women and Peacebuilding in Africa, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Foreign Ministry of Norway (\$961,600), involving research in northern Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Algeria, and Somalia. The researchers are from Nigeria, Uganda, Sudan, Algeria, Norway and the United States. She was recently awarded the Evjue Bascom Professorship in Gender and Women's Studies. She will be on leave in the Fall of 2016 with a Feminist Scholars Award from the Center for Research on Gender and Women at UW-Madison and will be on leave in the Spring of 2017 with a residential fellowship from the American Academy in Berlin. Her research involves a comparative study of women and legal reform in North Africa and will be in Algeria for the fall semester conducting research.

Amanda Robinson with their research



Candidate Statements

Editor's Note: Candidates are presented by position and in alphabetical order.

APCG Chair

Leonardo R. Arriola

It is an honor to be asked to stand for election as chair of APCG for 2017-2019. I welcome the opportunity to serve an organization that has been an integral part of my own professional development as a political scientist and Africanist scholar. I have been a member of APCG since attending my very first annual meetings of APSA and ASA as a graduate student. Since then, I have served APCG as a vice chair, a member of prize committees, and a member of conference panel selection committees. I now look forward to contributing to APCG's capacity to meet the evolving research and pedagogical demands of a growing and increasingly diverse membership.

As APCG chair, I would focus my efforts in three areas aimed at enhancing our membership's ability to produce substantively important and socially relevant research. First, I would seek to facilitate an inclusive process through which our members can contribute meaningfully to ongoing discussions on research transparency. Questions remain about how we can best promote the integrity of different modes of inquiry, while preserving a rich tradition of intellectual pluralism. APCG should ensure that the views of our members inform deliberations occurring across multiple venues within the profession. Second, I am interested in finding novel, low-cost ways outside the annual meeting framework to provide members, especially junior scholars and Africa-based scholars, with opportunities to get timely feedback on their research.

APCG could provide a platform modeled after the Conflict Consortium's Virtual Workshop in which online sessions are organized to provide constructive criticism on working papers. Third, I am interested in using the coordinating capacity of APCG to enhance the teaching of African politics across institutions. APCG could leverage the expertise distributed throughout our membership to support decentralized teaching initiatives, such as distributed open collaborative courses (DOCCs), on various topics related to African politics.

My research, administrative, and teaching experience have prepared me to contribute to APCG. I am currently an associate professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley, where I am also the newly appointed director of the Center for African Studies. Studying questions related to democratization and political violence, I have conducted field research in countries like Ethiopia, Kenya, and Zambia. My work has been published in journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and *World Politics*. My book, *Multietnic Coalitions in Africa: Business Financing of Opposition Election Campaigns* (Cambridge University Press), received a best book award from APCG in 2013 and an honorable mention for the Gregory Luebbert Prize for best book from APSA's Comparative Politics section in 2014. At Berkeley, my student advising has been recognized with a Distinguished Graduate Student Mentoring Award, and I have recently been awarded a Presidential Chair Fellows Curriculum Enrichment Grant to build up African studies on campus. I currently serve on the editorial boards of *African Affairs*, *Comparative Politics*, and *Comparative Political Studies*. I previously served as co-chair of the APSA Committee on the Status of Latinos and

Latinas in the Profession and co-chair of the Comparative Politics of Developing Countries Division at the 2013 APSA meeting.

Aili Mari Tripp

Biographical Background

I am a [Professor](#) of Political Science and Evjue Bascom Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where I have taught since 1992. I received my BA and MA in Middle East Studies at University of Chicago and my PhD from Northwestern University. My research has focused on women and politics in Africa, women's movements in Africa, and on the informal economy in Tanzania. More recently I have been working on a comparative study of women's rights and legal reform in North Africa. I am presently coordinating a research project on [Women and Peacebuilding in Africa](#), funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Foreign Ministry of Norway, involving research in northern Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Algeria, and Somalia.

My most recent book is [Women and Power in Post-Conflict Africa](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2015). I have also authored several award winning books, including *Museveni's Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a Hybrid Regime* (2010), *African Women's Movements: Transforming Political Landscapes* (2009) with Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga, and Alice Mungwa, and *Women and Politics in Uganda* (2000). My first book was *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania* (1997).



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I have served as president of the African Studies Association and as vice president of the American Political Science Association. In 2014, I won the ASA Public Service Award for putting the ASA on a stronger financial and institutional footing during my tenure as the association's president. I have also served on the boards of APSA, ASA, the National Council for Research on Women, Tanzania Studies Association, University of Wisconsin Press, and of numerous other journals and book series. I currently co-edit a book series on [Women in Africa and the Diaspora](#) for the University of Wisconsin Press.

I was born in the UK and grew up in Tanzania, where I lived 15 years. I have dual citizenship in the US and Finland. Finnish is my mother tongue but I also speak Swahili, Arabic, French in addition to English.

Candidacy Statement

I am honored to be nominated to serve as chair of the APCG. I have been a member since the APCG's inception and was active in representing its interests while serving as president of the ASA and as Vice President of APSA. I was involved in the early stages of establishing the Africa APSA Workshops and co-directed one of the workshops in Tanzania.

I would bring a number of skills to the APCG leadership. I have *strong administrative skills* as a result of having served as ASA president, director of the UW-Madison Center for Research on Gender and Women (13 years), and associate dean of international studies at my university.

I am plugged into many scholarly networks in Africa as a result of years of conducting research in Tanzania,

Uganda, Kenya, Angola, Liberia, and Morocco. I have further expanded these networks through my years of publishing with African colleagues, working on joint research projects, reviewing for African institutions, and through my involvement on the steering committees of the Social Science Research Council's Next Generation Social Science in Africa Program and the American Council of Learned Societies' African Humanities Program.

I have ties to the *Washington policy community* as a result of years of sharing my expertise with USAID, the State Department, and other agencies. I am also connected to the *donor community*, having worked in various capacities with key UN agencies, the World Bank, and other such multilateral agencies.

And last but not least, I am familiar with the *Africanist political science community* in the US and beyond because of my involvement in APSA, ASA and the Midwest Political Science Association since the mid-1980s. I have served not only on the ASA and APSA boards but on a wide range of committees of these organizations ([See CV](#)).

Were I elected as chair, I would

- continue efforts to expand APCG dues-paying membership in order to maintain our membership status in APSA;
- seek to engage the community of political scientists working on Africa in the debates regarding data access and research transparency (DA-RT) within the broader field of political science in the US. I already helped get the APCG newsletter to take up the matter in an upcoming issue.

- make every effort to help save the Afrobarometer Survey;
- expand the utility of the APCG website;
- increase links between political science scholars in Africa, North America and elsewhere;
- find ways for the political scientists to engage policymakers more effectively regarding Africa.

APCG Treasurer

Claire Adida

I am an associate professor of political science at the University of California San Diego. My research investigates the determinants and implications of ethnic politics and immigrant exclusion in a comparative perspective. Specifically, I have written about immigrant exclusion in West Africa, as well as Muslim immigrant exclusion in Europe. Most recently, I have turned my attention to the study of African immigrant integration/exclusion in the United States. My work has been published by Cambridge University Press, Harvard University Press, Comparative Political Studies, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Public Opinion Quarterly, Economics and Politics, the Journal of Population Economics, and the Journal of Experimental Political Science, among others. My fieldwork in Africa has taken me to Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, Niger, South Africa, and Uganda. I hold a Ph.D. from Stanford University and a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University.



Candidate Statements (continued)

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I am honored to be nominated for Treasurer of the APCG. I have been a member and fan of the APCG for a number of years, and have benefited greatly from the intellectual and social resources it has offered, and more specifically from the diverse network of Africa-scholarship it supports and promotes. I have contributed to APCG in the past by serving as co-chair of the APCG division for APSA 2015 (I will do this again for APSA 2017), and as the committee chair for the best graduate student paper (2012-2013). But I hope to contribute to APCG in a more consistent manner as treasurer, where my goals are two-fold. First, I hope to continue the excellent tradition of clarity, transparency and efficiency established by previous treasurers. The transition to officially becoming an APSA organized section was not simple but previous leadership has done an excellent job of ensuring that this transition occurred seamlessly for APCG members. Second, I aim to continue and increase significant outreach efforts to subsidize the costs of membership and conference participation for Africa-based scholars. Indeed, I think that one of the places where APCG could continue to improve and grow is in its full inclusion of Africa-based scholars. With this objective in mind, I would like to explore new methods of fundraising, and to consider new ways of highlighting and supporting Africa-based scholarship, perhaps via an Africa-based annual APCG conference, an APCG fund for graduate student field research in Africa, or an APCG blog that highlights scholarship on Africa by Africa-based scholars.

Stephen Burgess

I have been a part of APCG since John Harbeson generated the idea of such an organization in 2001. The motivation for APCG was the lack of attention that ASA was giving to political science scholars and that APSA was providing to students of African politics. Since that time, I have seen APCG blossom into a wonderful organization with colleagues giving of themselves and their time and developing academic and personal relationships. Just as important, APCG has made political science a central part of ASA and African politics a significant player in APSA, the Midwest Political Science Association and the International Studies Association. APCG has been instrumental in helping to advance the careers of a considerable number of students of African politics through awards for conference papers and publications.

From 2003 to 2011, I served as chair of the APCG ISA Conference Organizing Committee. During that time, we were able to submit two panels per year, all of which were accepted by ISA. These panels helped to advance International Relations as well as Comparative Politics scholarship in relation to the African continent. Personally, I have been able to present almost a dozen conference papers on APCG ISA panels since 2003, which has aided in my scholarship and publications on African security and international relations topics. In addition, I have gladly performed a number of volunteer duties for APCG.

My vision for APCG is an organization that strives to make its membership and leadership increasingly African, where scholars on the continent become the leaders in the field. The APSA political science workshops in Africa and the research of APCG colleagues on the continent has helped create the relationships that will eventually enable our organization to reach that goal. Additional outreach by APCG and its members will help us advance further along that path.

An important APCG office is that of Treasurer, for which I am a candidate. Due to the generosity of colleagues, APCG has been able to attain one of its goals – that of APSA Organized Section status. If elected, my principal responsibility would be to assist in sustaining that status through aiding with the recruitment of new APCG members and maintaining the contributions of current members. I would like to see an increasing amount of APCG funds go to building bridges with African scholars and political science institutions as well as to advancing the careers of young political scientists in general.

Publications



Jan/February-August

*denotes items submitted by members.
Only includes already published items.

Books

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