

CENTER FOR AMERICAN POLITICAL STUDIES HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center for American Political Studies offers **Dissertation Fellowships (Research OR Completion) on the Study of the American Republic**. Eligible applications must contain dissertation topics with a direct engagement with the history, principles, and politics of the American Republic. These fellowships are inclusive to students inside the field of political science as well as History, English and American Literature, Philosophy, American Civilization, Sociology, Economics, Anthropology, and others - whose presence would enrich the collective discussion of enduring political, historical, and philosophical themes of the American Republic. Relevant themes include (but are not restricted to) the politics, history, and philosophy of the American Founding and the Early Republic, the political philosophy of republicanism (particularly as applied to the United States), the Civil War and its legacies, the politics of slavery and abolition, and political institutions in the United States.

Supported by a new bequest from **Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr.**, beginning with the 2013-14 academic year the Center for American Political Studies is also offering **Dissertation Fellowships (Research OR Completion)** that explore the causes and/or consequences of religious freedom, with particular emphasis on the cultural, economic, political and social causes and implications of religious freedom. Relevant projects will connect the study of religion to other academic disciplines and generate new knowledge about the role of religious freedom, religious liberty, and religious toleration, or their absence, in the development of countries.

PROGRAM ON THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC DISSERTATION FELLOWS, 2013-14

Claire Dunning (History, G-4)

"The Privatization of Progress: How the Nonprofit Sector Did (And Did Not) Reshape American Cities"

Jeremy Levine (Sociology, G-6)

"A Seat at the Table: Power, Politics, and Inner City Redevelopment"

Maxwell Palmer (Government, G-4)

"Time and Political Power"

Vanessa Williamson (Government, G-5)

"The Purse of the People: Support for Taxation in the American States"

THE AMBASSADOR JOHN L. LOEB, JR. INITIATIVE ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DISSERTATION FELLOWS, 2013-14

Nancy Khalil (Anthropology, G-6)

"'American Islam': The Politics of an Emergent Religious Category"

Kip Richardson (Religion, G-5)

"Big Religion: The Cultural Origins of the American Megachurch"

Claire Dunning (History, G-4), Program on the Study of the American Republic Fellow

"The Privatization of Progress: How the Nonprofit Sector Did (And Did Not) Reshape American Cities"

My dissertation examines the evolving position of nonprofit organizations in urban democratic governance between the 1960s and 1990s. I argue that, starting in the 1960s, the American welfare state entered a new era in which the federal government channeled public dollars to private organizations and charged them with responsibilities previously held by public entities. While others have charted the growth of the nonprofit sector at the national level, my research looks at the consequences of such growth at the municipal and neighborhood levels through a historical study of a single city. Boston is the key location for this study, and I draw on archival records from government, nonprofit, and philanthropic collections for this research. Given nonprofit activity in areas as diverse as community development, education, healthcare, job training, social services, and youth programming, analyzing the local dynamics of this sector is crucial to understanding urban change and the privatization of the American welfare state in the closing decades of the twentieth century.

Nancy Khalil (Anthropology, G-6), Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. Initiative on the Implications of Religious Freedom Fellow

"'American Islam': The Politics of an Emergent Religious Category"

Undertaking research on the Muslim minority's struggle for religious freedom in the context of U.S. liberal secular law, my project is an ethnographic study of a Boston-based terrorism trial and three Muslim-American institutions: a higher education institute, a mosque, and a community development organization. I aim to understand why and how an "American Islam" is pursued and produced (and by who) in response to the anti-terror climate. Contributing to the vibrant anthropological debate on the relationship between religion and the law, my research aims to further the conversation by incorporating the transnational lens within the national gaze on a minority faith and the state's interjections. While grounded in a cultural analysis, my project studies a specific political moment with an interesting dialectic – one in which both 'the religious' and 'the state' are (co) constituting the emergence of a new religious category.

Jeremy Levine (Sociology, G-6), Program on the Study of the American Republic Fellow

"A Seat at the Table: Power, Politics, and Inner City Redevelopment"

My dissertation is an ethnography of redevelopment politics in Boston. Since 2010, I have followed the redevelopment of the Fairmount Corridor, a 9-mile stretch of land spanning the neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park. My fieldwork focuses primarily on the work of redevelopment elites--government officials, nonprofit developers, consultants, and powerful foundations--as they make decisions in an increasingly decentralized urban development industry. My research focuses on questions of power and influence over redevelopment plans, but I am also analyzing how culture informs political debates, how elites make complicated geographies legible for intervention, and the political role of nonprofit organizations in urban neighborhoods. My dissertation pulls back the curtain on previously hidden, private conversations between individuals and institutions deciding how

redevelopment unfolds in the inner city. By studying the dynamics of inner city redevelopment on the ground, this research will illuminate the barriers to residents' full inclusion in the policymaking process.

Maxwell Palmer (Government, G-4), Program on the Study of the American Republic Fellow
"Time and Political Power"

My dissertation studies the creation, duration, and use of political power and leadership positions in legislatures and other institutions. I develop a formal model that illustrates how limited plenary time motivates legislators to create leadership positions to manage the legislative calendar. I show how legislators generally prefer organization and leadership in order to ensure that high priority bills are taken up in the legislative session. I use this model to evaluate the initial role of the Speaker of the House in the first sessions of the U.S. Congress, and to consider how elections for leadership positions can polarize a non-partisan legislature and lead to the development of political parties. I also extend this work to leadership and agenda setting on other deliberative bodies, including corporate boards of directors.

Kip Richardson (Religion, G-5), Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. Initiative on the Implications of Religious Freedom Fellow

"Big Religion: The Cultural Origins of the American Megachurch"

My project explores the vibrant American evangelical megachurch subculture in order to examine the often-cited relationship between so-called "free markets of religion" and religious vitality. I focus on these megachurch congregations because they represent a widespread (indeed, globalizing) religious movement that has explicitly sought to update its "product" and appeal to new "consumers." Such "market"-based practices, I argue, have enabled evangelicals to not only maintain, but also expand their demographic strength, cultural influence, and institutional power. In contrast to liberal and mainline Protestants, who gradually abandoned soul-winning in favor of the Social Gospel's directive to social action, American evangelicals in the twentieth century retained – and sharpened – their commitment to the Biblical mandate to "make disciples of all peoples." By focusing on the development of the American evangelical megachurch model and its particular formulae for evangelistic success, my dissertation provides a historical-cultural perspective to the academic debate about the social conditions that have enabled the flourishing of modern evangelicalism in the United States and abroad.

Vanessa Williamson (Government, G-5), Program on the Study of the American Republic Fellow
"The Purse of the People: Support for Taxation in the American States"

My dissertation focuses on when and why Americans are supportive of taxation. I am interested not only in the potential policy implications of this research, but in the paying of taxes as a political act in itself. For most Americans, paying taxes is by far their most regular participation in political life. Moreover, the legitimacy of taxation is bound to the quality of representation; taxation is, after all, the investment of a people in the shared task of governance. Yet we know relatively little about what leads people to see their taxes as an investment worth making. My approach will examine both tax opinion at the individual level, and the larger contexts in which taxes are politically successful.