The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions Welcomes New Colleagues

The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions is pleased to announce the addition of four new colleagues.

Larry Bartels is the newest Co-Director of CSDI, joining Josh Clinton, John Geer and David Lewis on the executive committee. Professor Bartels’s scholarly work focuses on American democracy, including public opinion, electoral politics, public policy, and representation. He is currently working on a book on democratic accountability (with Christopher Achen), a study of the political attitudes and behavior of wealthy Americans (with Benjamin Page and Jason Seawright), and a cross-national investigation of political responses to the Great Recession (with Nancy Bermeo and Jonas Pontusson), among other projects. His most recent book, Unequal Democracy, was cited by Barack Obama on the campaign trail and appeared on David Leonhardt’s list of “economics books of the year” in the New York Times; it also won the Gladys M. Kammerer Award for the year’s best book on U.S. national policy. Professor Bartels has served as vice president of the American Political Science Association, president of its Political Methodology section, chair of the Board of Overseers of the American National Election Studies, and founding director of the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

Nicole Asmussen joins CSDI as one of two 2011-2012 Postdoctoral Fellows. She recently received her PhD in Political Science from the University of Rochester. Nicole’s research interests include American politics, Congress, political parties and polarization, religion and politics, interbranch bargaining, and ideal point estimation. Her dissertation argues that increased party polarization can be attributed to changes in the distribution of evangelical members among the two parties’ congressional contingents. She also examines presidential responses to the polarized political environment and, more specifically, how Republican presidents gain leverage in nomination battles with ideologically distant senators by nominating women and minorities. In addition, Nicole has a forthcoming article in Legislative Studies Quarterly and she has been awarded by the Midwest Political
Science Association for the best paper on the scientific study of Congress and the presidency.

Andrew Therriault is also joining CSDI as a 2011-2012 Postdoctoral Fellow. Andrew recently received his PhD in Politics from New York University, and his research focuses on American politics and political methodology. With a particular emphasis on voter behavior, campaign strategy, and public opinion, his work aims to untangle the intricacies of the electoral process by combining original data with advanced quantitative methods. Andrew's dissertation examines how voters evaluate candidates on policy issues and how these evaluations can be influenced by campaigns, and demonstrates that the effects of campaigns are more diverse and substantial than previously believed. This research led the American Association for Public Opinion Research to select Andrew as the winner of the 2011 Seymour Sudman Student Paper Award. Among other projects, he is currently finalizing a dataset which tracks the discussion of issues on the websites of nearly all major-party US Senate candidates between 2002 and 2008, analyzing original survey data from the 2008 and 2010 elections, and conducting experiments to test the effects of social pressures on participation.

Jayne Cornwell is the new Program Director for CSDI. Jayne has been an administrator at Vanderbilt for nearly nine years. From 2003-2007, she worked as a travel and event coordinator in the Department of Cell and Developmental Biology, under the Chairmanship of Susan R. Wente, Ph.D. Jayne coordinated all department events, including student recruiting events; department-wide weekly seminar series with speakers from all over the country, and WIPS, a weekly seminar with internal presenters. Jayne organized all the travel for annual seminar series speakers, as well as all student/fellow travel. She was responsible for organizing the off-site retreat for students, fellows and faculty, and for procuring VISAs for visiting scholars. From 2007 till August 2011, Jayne worked as event coordinator for the Division of Public Affairs, managing all aspects of event production for a wide range of events, including consultation for two political science conferences (2008-2009). Jayne was a contributing writer to The View and VUCommodore.com. Jayne received her Master’s degree from Middle Tennessee State University (2000) and her undergraduate degree from Belmont (1983). A former Tennessean reporter and non-profit advocate, Jayne considers herself a political junkie and sports enthusiast. Jayne has three sons and lives with her husband, Drew, and her youngest son, Hawkins, in the Vanderbilt community where they have resided for 14 years.