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The Genesis of the *Journal of Politics*

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The first issue of the *Journal of Politics* was published in January 1939. Launching a regional quarterly journal in the waning years of the 1930s depression took single-minded determination and a belief that political science and government in the South should have a major voice on the national scene. Some would have said, and many did, that it would be a foolhardy and pointless venture.

At the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in November 1937 at Chapel Hill-Durham, a Committee on Publication was appointed to explore the feasibility of an SPSA journal. The Chairman of that Committee was Roscoe C. Martin from the University of Alabama.

Before leaving that meeting in November 1937, the Chairman had spoken at length with each Committee member and sounded each out on various aspects of the tasks confronting them. Although there was much work to be done, those men desiring a publication would keep noting in communications that a target date for the first issue ought to be no later than January 1939 if there was to be a journal at all. That meant a daunting series of impossible deadlines had to be met—one of Chairman Martin's most exasperating but fruitful methods of work. The final report recommending the establishment of the *Journal of Politics* to the then president of the Southern Political Science Association, Dr. A. B. Butts, Chancellor of the University of Mississippi, was written and sent by Martin on July 23, 1938, just nine months after the Committee had been appointed.

The Committee Process

Within days of returning to Tuscaloosa, letters of consultation, letters seeking financial support, letters requesting suggestions and information began flowing from the desk of the Chairman to the other members of the Committee: Manning J. Dauer from the University of Florida, W. V. Holloway from Tulane University, Charles S. Hyneman from Louisiana State University, and Robert S. Rankin from Duke University.

Not only did the Committee members hear from Martin, but every and all "persons interested in Political Science and Government in the South" known to him and to the Committee members were approached in person or by letter for their advice, their knowledge and their possible interest in the project the Committee had undertaken. Each Committee member not only discussed the possible journal with the political scientists in his region, but well over 200 letters and 300 separate pieces of mail left Martin's office during the period of November 10, 1937, to July 23, 1938, with quite a number of these being typed by the Chairman himself.

Martin tackled the chairmanship of the Committee on Publication in the manner that he approached every professional commitment made during his lifetime. He bent all his considerable intellectual, administrative and personal skills to the task and was determined that his vision of political science in the South carry the day. Chairing the Committee was the first of a series of steps that Martin would take to energize political science in the South by pioneering regional cooperation and bringing educational institutions and governmental units into closer cooperation. He not only negotiated a quarterly political science journal "with a small group of other political scientists" but also "launched the Southern Regional Training Program, a cooperative effort of the Universities of Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee to provide training leading to a Master's degree in public administration" (Harris, Jr. and Cooper, 1972).

Financial Backing

Martin wrote each Committee member and several other regional political scientists asking them to explore the possibility of their institutions providing financial support for the proposed journal. He wrote persuasively to all whom he approached. To Keener Frazer, political science professor at the University of North Carolina and secretary of the Southern Council of International Relations, he wrote in November 1937, "In our quest for possible financial backing, it seems to me that no stone should be left unturned."

Manning J. Dauer of the University of Florida, a key Committee member, received a more specific persuasion couched half in jest but yet a half serious suggestion as to how they might proceed.

Dear Professor Dauer:

Pursuant to the promise made you at Chapel Hill, Professor Hyneman and I had a long talk concerning a possible publication for the Southern Political Science Association. In view of this conversation and others, it appears to me that the way to begin our work as a Committee is to look into the possibilities of financing a journal in case subsequent and detailed studies should indicate a field for one.

I am, therefore, writing to ask whether the University of Florida would care to undertake the publication of, say, a quarterly periodical costing in the neighborhood of \$1,000.00 per year. I understood you to say that your institution might be interested in assisting in the publication of the annual proceedings at a cost of perhaps \$100.00. Certainly a university which is interested in such a publication and willing to put some money into it ought to have an opportunity to consider the proposition which I am laying tentatively before you now.

Fortunately, the Chairman's letter arrived on the morning of the afternoon that the University of Florida's Publications Committee was scheduled to meet. Professor Dauer already had requested an appearance before that committee and was able to report to Martin on November 13 that "I presented your letter to the group. Funds are available for the subsidization of the journal of the Southern Political Science Association. The Commit-

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tee passed a resolution unanimously approving the policy of subsidization of a journal costing as much as one thousand dollars." This was the only university solicited that offered or was able to offer any financial backing to a possible political science and government journal. Some of this may be ascribed to some footdragging, as there were a number of political scientists in the South, even on the Committee, who did not feel that the journal was a useful undertaking. But the University of Florida's immediate support has to be interpreted as a vote of confidence for Manning J. Dauer and the Chairman.

"Detailed Studies"

While financial support was being solicited, Martin began to develop a questionnaire to be submitted after Committee approval to the membership of the Southern Political Science Association, to other southern political scientists "who do not appear from the records to be members of the Association," to supplementary lists of southern persons interested in political science submitted by Dr. Harold W. Stokes of the Tennessee Valley Authority and Committee member Charles S. Hyneman of Louisiana State University. The questionnaire covered several important areas: books and monographs, articles and book reviews written, published and in what journals they were published; what research or writing was in progress; would the respondents' best writing be submitted to a regional journal published by the SPSA; and would the respondents accept a raise of dues from \$2.50 annually to \$3.00 to support such a journal as part of the membership benefits? The 12 questions were sent to "approximately 140 persons" in 14 states.

Of the 137 questionnaires sent, 80 respondents completed questionnaires and nine respondents sent letters explaining their refusal to respond. Eighty percent of the respondents were willing and ready to contribute scholarly articles to a sectional quarterly journal. Those that responded gave considerable information regarding material southern political scientists had published in the previous five years.

Seventy-eight books and monographs had been published along with 179 articles and 87 book reviews. Additionally, there were approximately 45 unpublished books and 35 articles completed and available to the journal should they be acceptable. Lastly, research was under way that would be ready shortly and would contain considerable publishable material. Many of the respondents took the time to write long answers supporting their views, either positive or negative, to the idea of a journal or to aspects of a potential journal's operations that the questionnaire raised. All of this material was coded, analyzed and excerpted by the Chairman in a 51-page report to each Committee member. The positive responses supported the Chairman's commitment as well as those Committee members most favorably disposed to field a regional journal.

"Shaping the Editorial Course"

Though the development of the questionnaire, approving it, sending it out, chasing tardy respondents and analyzing it took three months, much of that work could be accomplished by the Chairman alone. Setting the editorial course of the journal would demand a most delicate consensus and would prove to be time consuming. However, it was during the course of these negotiations that the formal address each Committee member used for the other members changed from proper title to more genial appellations.

Lengthy letters flowed back and forth debating "form and content, editorial set-up" including specifying the roles and "responsibilities of the editor, a managing editor, the section editors—constitutions and constitutional law, government and the economic and social order, legislatures and legislation, local government, parties and politics, public administration, news and notes, and an advisory board; and lastly, the financial set-up." The process became so drawn out that an all-day meeting was held in Mobile on June 5, 1938, to iron out the specifics of the Committee's recommendations and the language that would be acceptable in which to couch those recommendations. All but Robert S.

Rankin and the president of the SPSA were able to be at that Sunday meeting. The letters sent during the second week of June hammered out the final procedural and linguistic problems.

Throughout the course of their immediate tasks determining the future journal's "form and content," the Chairman and some of the Committee members discussed whom they would approve or could find to fill the appropriate editorial and managerial slots. As they were determined to meet the January 1939 deadline, it was important to them that the men they had chosen to be the various editors, who would also accept the positions, be strongly supported by the president of the SPSA, Dr. A. B. Butts. Robert J. Harris, Jr. of Louisiana State University was felt to be the best candidate in the region for editor. Manning J. Dauer had agreed to be the managing editor with the University of Florida retaining managerial overview. Roscoe C. Martin became the book editor. If a journal were to be launched, it should show the region to advantage and be a well-managed publication with substantial regional coverage but with emphasis upon national political science issues. These men and the others who had agreed to serve in editorial and managerial capacities certainly had a vested interest in the enterprise.

The Chairman and the Committee felt strongly enough about their recommendations for editors to send a personal and confidential memorandum to President Butts. "The Committee on Publication, feeling that the question who is going to direct the Journal is inseparable from the question whether there should be a Journal, desires to make these personal and confidential recommendations."

President Butts consulted with the Executive Committee to review the concerns that the Committee on Publication had raised. No further letters are in the file and the next item is the final report sent on July 23, 1938, which on matters of personnel differed not at all from the confidential memorandum.

That July 23rd report to President Butts on the subject of "A periodical publication for the Southern Political Science Association" covered every possible area of con-

cern. The charge to the Committee was noted. The Procedure of the Committee filled the next two pages. The Recommendations of the Committee covered the "Form and Content of the Journal, the Editorial Set-Up, the Financial Set-Up, Definition of Responsibilities, Temporary and Transitional Arrangements, editorial personnel, board and section assignments, editorial staff members and procedural recommendations for the communication of the President to the membership raising the question of publication and the raising of dues from \$2.50 a year to \$3.00 a year to pay for the publication." Little or nothing had been left to chance. "No stone had been left unturned."

On October 1, 1938 a memorandum from the Committee signed by Roscoe Martin was addressed to "All persons interested in Political Science and Government in the South. In order that the members and friends of the Association may familiarize themselves with the general tenor of the Committee's findings and recommendations, a summary of the report is being mailed today to approximately 140 persons."

The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the SPSA, meeting in Tuscaloosa November 4 and 5, 1938, approved the work of the Committee on Publication and the *Journal of Politics* became a reality.

Charles S. Hyneman wrote Martin on July 7, 1938, when the members were in the last stages of completing their work:

I guess it is proper to say here that I think you have proved as good a chairman as I ever saw in action. I think your communications have been models of clarity and explicitness. There is no spoofing when I say that, if I had been chairman of this committee, I would not have given it the thought and care that you have given it. And I venture to say that, if any, excepting a very few persons, had been chairman of this committee, nothing would have come of this venture. Now there is no soap in this paragraph.

What Martin and the Committee on Publication had accomplished and how it was done presaged a career that spanned five decades and three universities. Charming and determined, driving and ambitious, unending in his use of every

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available tool and all possible energy to accomplish specific goals, Martin would be seen as brilliant strategist or skillful, determined and, at times, ruthless antagonist or charming raconteur of Texas anecdotes. How one viewed him and his accomplishments frequently depended on the positions in which colleagues, competitors or old friends found themselves when dealing with this formidable Texan now transplanted to the South.

Certainly one of Roscoe Martin's most important legacies to political science and government is the *Journal of Politics* that has more than fulfilled its original promise and premises.

Note

All materials cited in this article, except one, were taken from the Syracuse University Archives in the George Arents Research Library, Roscoe C. Martin Papers, Box 1, Folder: Committee on Publication, 1937-1938.

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Reflections on Doing Dissertation Work Abroad

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Graduate students in comparative politics or policy bring certain problems on themselves: not only are they expected to know the language(s) and political situation of their chosen area, but they also need to go abroad and do research for their theses. From a distance, one can imagine the pleasant nature of some foreign research—a fellow student of my acquaintance was reputed to be drafting a re-

search proposal to examine the effects of outdoor cafe life on French intellectual life, the research for which would involve endless cups of cafe au lait and more Croques Monsieur than anyone would want to eat—but there are also frustrating aspects of trying to do research in foreign environments.

*"Research" is a power word
which no one outside of
a university really
understands.*

There is little to go by when one heads out into the field. Previous comparativists sank or swam, and so, presumably, shall future comparativists. The uniqueness of any given research project inevitably means that everyone goes through their own little travails, but the school of experience is a harsh mistress. Anyone can encounter difficulties in obtaining access to archives, permission to interview or decent data (the privilege is not reserved to comparativists), but encountering such problems in foreign environments exacerbates the situation. It seems appropriate that at least a few experiences from the field be passed on to others about to head out beyond our familiar shores.

Anthropologists have a distinct advantage over other social sciences, since in the last 15 years they have made something of a virtue out of fieldwork accounts.¹ Some tales are enough to make comparative politics research experiences seem painless and pleasant. Sir Edmund Leach, for example, lost all his field notes during the Second World War due to enemy action but nevertheless managed to write *The Political Systems of Highland Burma*; some have claimed this resulted in a better book. An analogous tale exists about Ferdinand Braudel's wartime experiences. Anthropologists are also sometimes disturbingly frank about how personally intolerable research can be, as in Colin Turnbull's *The Mountain People*.

So other disciplines at least discuss the