

CREATING MORE VOTERS AND BETTER CITIZENS



THE STRAUSS REPORT

A PUBLICATION OF THE
ANNETTE STRAUSS INSTITUTE
FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

2005-2006 EDITION

INSIDE:

AMERICAN TRUSTEES LAUNCHES PILOT

NEW POLITICS FORUM HEADS TO DALLAS

**FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED
TO STRAUSS INSTITUTE**

**PROFILE: SPEAK UP! SPEAK OUT!
TEACHER MARTHA CASON**

2005-2006

INSTITUTE DIRECTOR:
Dr. Roderick P. Hart

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR;
RESEARCH:
Dr. Sharon E. Jarvis

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR;
ADMINISTRATION:
Dr. Mary C. Dixon

AMERICAN TRUSTEES
PROJECT MANAGER:
Ms. Deborah Wise

NEW POLITICS FORUM
PROJECT MANAGER:
Ms. Emily Balanoff

CENTER FOR DELIBERATIVE
OPINION RESEARCH
DIRECTOR:
Dr. Robert Luskin

PROJECT MANAGER:
Ms. Cynthia Posey

OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH
DIRECTOR:
Ms. Veronica Inchauste

MANAGER:
Mr. O'Neil Provost

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE:
Ms. Holly Hunt

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE
& PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPORT:
Ms. Melissa Huebsch

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS:
Ms. Laura Barberena
Ms. Lauren Quinlan
Ms. Natasha Kovalyova
Mr. John Thompson
Intern:
Caleb Pifer

strauss@communication.utexas.edu

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

<http://www.annettestrauss.org>

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Annette Strauss Institute
3001 Lake Austin Boulevard,
Suite 2.316
Austin, Texas 78703
Phone (512) 471-1959
Fax (512) 471-1927

Contents

3 From the Director

4 American Trustees Completes Pilot

6 New Politics Forum Focuses On Careers

7 New Politics Forum Heads To Dallas Profile: NPF Student Phil Fountain

8 Speak Up! Speak Out! Has Record Year

8 SUSO Teacher Martha Cason

10 Strauss Notes: Federal Appropriation Archives Advisory Council Meets Building Bridges Associate Director Wins Friar's Award

12 Research Report: Office of Survey Research Center for Deliberative Opinion Research Publications

14 Continuing the Legacy: Internships

15 Supporting the Institute

From the Director



Roderick P. Hart

The Institute entered its sixth year in 2005 and the time has truly flown! A fledgling operation that began in April of 2000 now has a staff of fifteen, facilities well suited to its various projects and programs, and a mission—creating more voters and better citizens—that has never been more important. Our original hope of combining cutting-edge research with useful outreach activities is being realized. Thousands of young Texans are the beneficiaries.

One of our most successful projects has been the New Politics Forum, a campaign school taught by working professionals that teaches college students the ins and outs of political life. We are pleased that the Hatton Sumners Foundation has again lent us its support, allowing us to take the Forum on the road—Dallas in 2006 and Houston in 2007. Over three hundred young Texans have benefitted from the Forum, many of whom now work on statewide and national political staffs.

The Institute continues to develop Web-based materials for the nation's schools. We have completed six videos for the American Trustees Project, an imaginative program that lets us deliver short narratives directly to the nation's schoolrooms, thereby enlivening civics curricula. We are pleased to be working with the LBJ Library Foundation on this project and also appreciate the financial support of Humanities Texas and its fine staff.

Research-wise, faculty members at the Institute produced two books and worked with graduate students to author more than a dozen articles and papers. Discussions are now being held with three foundations and several agencies in Washington, D.C. about advancing the Institute's studies of voting patterns and civic engagement. A recent grant from the U. S. Department of Education will support our work on social studies education in the nation's secondary schools.

The Institute's public opinion research is now blossoming. Our assumption here is that a nation must know what its citizens feel to make enlightened public policy and to generate the widespread support a democracy needs. Our Office of Survey Research is working with researchers in the area of injury prevention and telemedicine to discover public attitudes about health issues, and our Center for Deliberative Opinion Research is discussing ways of helping state and local leaders better understand popular attitudes about transportation and water use matters.

The past year also saw the formation of the Institute's Advisory Council, composed of some of the State's most generous corporate, civic, and philanthropic leaders. We are gratified they have thrown in their lot with us—helping us formulate our plans, offering suggestions for expanding our programs, and assisting us with our development efforts. No doubt they have joined with us because they are inspired by the life and work of Annette Strauss herself.

Those of us who work at the Institute are inspired by that same legacy. Our mission—to use the latest communication techniques to foster greater civic participation—is an interdisciplinary mission and so too are our campus supporters: the Provost of the University and the deans of Liberal Arts, Communication, and the LBJ School of Public Affairs. We are also indebted to you, our readers, for your past support and hope you will support us again this year. In the words of scholar Jean Elsthain, the Institute's job is to “quicken the democratic pulse.” With your help, we will continue to do so.

Our Purpose

The Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Participation was established at The University of Texas at Austin in 2000 to respond to growing political cynicism and disaffection in the United States. The goals of the Institute are (1) to conduct cutting-edge research on how civic participation, community understanding, and communication are undermined or sustained, and (2) to develop new programs for increasing democratic understanding among citizens. The Institute's mission is strictly non-partisan. It works within communities to engage people in the political process, teach them about the nation's democratic heritage, and encourage them to take leadership roles.

Strauss Institute Announces Completion of First Six Videos

The Annette Strauss Institute is pleased to announce the completion of its first six American Trustees videos and accompanying curriculum. In partnership with the LBJ Library and Museum Foundation and with additional support from Humanities Texas, the American Trustees project is an ambitious endeavor that creates exciting adjunct materials to accompany civics curriculum for high school classrooms.

Using short, inspirational documentaries as a cornerstone, American Trustees enlivens existing civics curricula and provides young minds with a blueprint for civic action. Sharing the stories of citizens who have made significant contributions to their communities, the project capitalizes on the inherent appeal of narrative to engage young people while increasing participation and civic knowledge.

“One of the most exciting things about these films is that they are just the beginning of classroom exploration,” Project Manager Deborah Wise notes. Barney Flores’ video, for example, is accompanied by activities that coach students to identify and solve community problems, evaluate the importance of voluntary individual participation in a democratic society, and design marketing materials for an organization.

Available to teachers via the internet at no cost, the materials include 5-7 minute documentaries, a standards-based, fully-aligned lesson plan bank, and a website full of rich content for classroom use. “We really want to energize civic education and make it relevant to young people,” explains Wise. “Kids live and learn in a mediated world, and we hope to harness the internet to bring content that is both educational and inspiring.”

Produced in collaboration with Emmy-nominated, Producer/Director Nancy Schiesari, the films feature people from all walks of life including a diversity of geographic, demographic, racial and ideological backgrounds. “The films show young people that all kinds of people can be involved in improving their communities,” Wise explains

The content has been aligned to state standards and popular American government textbooks for easy use. Ultimately, this project will be expanded into a national archive of civic stories with learning opportunities in history, economics, literature, government, and science.

You can visit the American Trustees project at www.americantrusteesproject.org.

“We want to energize civic education and make it relevant to young people.”
project manager Deborah Wise



Meet the First Six Trustees

Cathy Bonner

A long-time women’s rights advocate from Dallas, Texas, Cathy Bonner noticed that there were 8,000 museums in the world, but not one dedicated to providing a comprehensive women’s history. Cathy worked with community leaders, politicians, business people, and philanthropists to make the dream of a women’s history museum a reality.



Barbara Brown

Growing up on a farm, eighteen year-old Barbara Brown had seen farmers dump used motor oil on the ground as an insecticide and herbicide. Concerned about the environmental impact, Barbara and three of her friends created Don’t Be Crude, a motor oil recycling project.



Charles Clymer

At a time when most young people seem less and less engaged, eighteen year-old high school student, Charles Clymer, decided to go beyond voting. He became the youngest candidate for city council in the history of Round Rock, Texas.



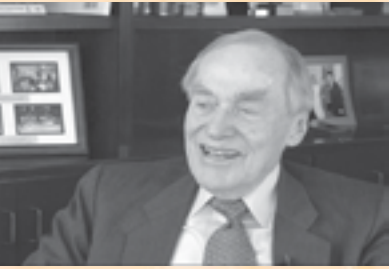
Barney Flores

As a young migrant farm worker from McKinney, Texas, Barney Flores lived a life of violence, gangs, and drugs. Changed by personal tragedy, Barney turned his life around. Today, in a boxing gym built for him with city money, Barney works with young people everyday trying to keep them off the streets and out of gangs.



Bernard Rapoport

As a successful businessman, Bernard Rapoport was able to turn a \$25,000 loan into a billion dollar business. Now he works to ensure equal opportunity for others through education. His loving work at the Rapoport Academy is a sight to behold.



Amy Wong Mok

Amy Wong Mok was born without the vote in her native colonial Hong Kong. Now she uses the democratic process and her own talent for organizing to create a better community through the Asian American Cultural Center.



New Politics Forum Receives Two-Year \$150,000 Grant Seminars Focus on Careers in 2005



Above: Student Zaid Hydari chats with presenter Mustafa Tameez

Below Left to Right:

Students take notes during an NPF session on the Media

Keynote speaker Grant Reeher offers words of advice on finding jobs

Student Matt Glazer talks with an NPF instructor after a session

With the gubernatorial race just around the corner, New Politics Forum (NPF) is busier than ever helping young people get involved in politics. With two-upcoming seminars and a volunteer fair scheduled, project manager Emily Balanoff notes, "This is the perfect time for young people to get out and work with a campaign." Thanks to a two-year grant from the Hatton W. Sumners Foundation, the NPF can continue to help students do just that. "We are honored that the Sumners Foundation has chosen to continue their support of this important program," noted Director Roderick Hart.

This summer, students from across Texas gathered in Austin to learn the ins-and-outs of working in politics. The "Careers in Politics" seminar offered an introduction to the opportunities available in professional politics. Classes provided information on a variety of career paths such as campaigning, lobbying, political journalism, fund raising, and working at the state legislature, at a government agency, or on the Hill.

Participants met with professionals in each field and attended detailed panels devoted to developing skills such as resume-writing, interviewing, and working with the media. Dr. Grant Reeher, editor of *The Insider's Guide to Political Internships*, delivered the keynote speech. Participants were also able to learn about new trends in campaign staffing from Chris Jones, President of PolitTemps in Washington, DC., discuss campaign strategy with Matthew Dowd, Chief Strategist of the Bush/Cheney re-election campaign, and hear about what it's like to work for state and federal government from staff members from the offices of Texas Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, US Representative Lloyd Doggett, and US Senator John Cornyn.

The two-day seminar brought together some of the most career-minded NPF students yet. The "Careers in Politics" curriculum not only encouraged young adults, but also inspired veteran political operatives. As fund-raising professional Holly Mace Massingill remarked, "It is so great to know that there are young people out there who are interested in politics."

This fall, NPF offers the Campaign 2006 Preview on November 5, 2005 to take advantage of the upcoming state election cycle. With the primary season already heating up for the office of governor and other statewide positions, this intensive seminar will provide a comprehensive overview of election techniques and issues from leading campaign strategists and the press. The intention is to help interested students find immediate work on state campaigns. For more information about the New Politics Forum, please visit www.newpoliticsforum.org.



Heading to the Big D: New Politics Forum offers its first traveling session

The New Politics Forum is pleased to announce that its first "traveling forum" will be held on February 17 & 18, 2006, at Dallas' Belo Mansion. The event will feature "Politics & Media in the New Millennium" as its theme. Few institutions have as much influence over the political process as the modern media, which have increasingly focused their political coverage on issues such as character through the practice of investigative journalism.

The relationship between press and politics raises important questions that defy easy explanations. Among these questions are: "Is there a partisan bias in the press?" "How has the relationship between the press and the president changed?" and "Has the rise of new technology and phenomena like the *Daily Show* changed politics?" NPF will provide a forum inviting students, prominent journalists, well-respected politicians and academics to explore these questions.

The event will feature a Friday night VIP reception for donors and Advisory Council members followed by a keynote dinner and a full day of programs for students on Saturday. For more information please visit www.newpoliticsforum.org.

NPF Profile: Phil Fountain

Ever since I can remember, I have been intrigued with our political system. As a youth, I was moderately involved in politics, but in no way connected to the system. After serving four years in the US Air Force, I came to the Austin area without political ties. The New Politics Forum was an eye-opening experience that helped de-mystify the political scene and provided immediate access to the inner-workings of the system.

I was immediately impressed with the quality of individuals who mentored us and the amount of time they dedicated. I visited with Dan Rogers of Rogers Consulting Group for well over twenty minutes following one session. He provided great insight into the public relations field and dealing with the press. My second bit of advice was, perhaps, the best I received during the New Politics Forum. Talking with Ted Delisi of Delisi Communications about the best way to get involved, he recommended volunteering with a campaign, and expounded on the reasons why.

In the spring on 2004, I offered my services to Congressman John Carter's re-election campaign. Eventually I was offered the position of campaign manager. Fortunately, I kept all of my New Politics Forum materials, and I think the New Politics Forum experience gave me the confidence and credibility to step into that position. Serving on the campaign was an invaluable experience.

Mr. Delisi's advice put me on my path. I now have the privilege of serving Senator John Cornyn in his Central Texas Regional Office. I have admired Senator Cornyn since he was the Attorney General of Texas, and I could not have gotten this opportunity without my experience in the New Politics Forum.

Thank you to the Hatton Sumners Foundation and to everyone else who donated their time or treasure to make the New Politics Forum possible.



Dallas' Belo Mansion will be the site of the February 2006 NPF Program



NPF Alumnus Phil Fountain

SUSO Celebrates Third Anniversary with Record Participants



Above Top to Bottom:
Students pose for group photo
before their presentations

Students display their second-
place win

Garza high school explores the
local environment in its display

Right: SUSO students gather
for a group photo

Speak Up! Speak Out! concluded its third year with a record number of high school students participating. Over 150 students attended the Civics Fair competition held on UT's campus. Eleven teams competed for top honors in speaking and solution station competitions. "We are very excited by the increased levels of participation," Mary Dixon, associate director noted.

Speak Up! Speak Out! challenges high school classes to work as a team to choose a community problem, research the issues, and devise an original solution. Teams present their ideas at an annual Civics Fair to community judges. This year's judges included business people, academics, and non-profit leaders.

Teen issues such as pregnancy and education topped the list of topics for 2005. "Many students were looking at large-scale issues like school finance and the environment, but trying to find a local solution," explains project manager Austin Gilliland. Students are encouraged to select issues that relate to their lives and to examine creative solutions that can include the efforts of the entire community.

In addition to providing opportunities for high school students to make their voices heard, Speak Up! Speak Out! continues to provide a unique way for UT students to make a difference by participating as mentors. "One hour a week is a small amount of time to make a difference in a student's life," UT senior Linda Minsloff explains. "High school students are at an age when they should get involved with the problems in their community ... forming their own opinions on the issues that government should pay attention to."

The Institute is looking at ways of expanding Speak Up! Speak Out! by partnering with other UT System schools and out-of-state institutions. "We really think this format has the potential to be adopted throughout the country as a way of getting students excited about civic participation," Dixon explains. Speak Up! Speak Out! is funded by a grant from the Dorot Foundation of Providence, Rhode Island.

For more information, please visit www.speakupspokeout.org



Teacher Profile: Martha Cason

Twenty-one years of teaching might leave many people burned out in a job that is infamous for long-hours, aggravation, and small paychecks. It's even more amazing, then, that not only does Martha Cason still love her job, but she's always looking for new ways of inspiring her students. So when she heard about Speak Up! Speak Out! she thought she'd give it a try. "I really love the kids," Cason explains. "I love the chance to make a difference in the world. It's an opportunity to touch the future."

Cason is a teacher at Garza Independence High School, a school that provides a self-paced environment designed to remove barriers to succeeding in high school. The school is designed to provide alternatives to traditional education for students who perform best in a different environment, and Speak Up! Speak Out! was a natural fit. "Speak Up! Speak Out! helps build self-esteem," Cason notes. "It's a forum through which students can air their concerns and then positively begin to effect a change. They have to do more than gripe. They have to think creatively."

Cason is most grateful for the mentoring component of the program. "The leadership that the mentors show and the fact that they provide a positive roll model for students is so important. Young people need to understand that they can make a difference."

Cason believes that having SUSO in the classroom gives students a problem-based, real-life application for civic theory by taking education outside the textbook. "It made students think analytically and synthesize the information they gather into a truly unique product."

One particular student comes to Cason's mind when thinking about the benefits of the project. "I believe that this project was a turning point for Ashley. She is a very creative young woman, but she didn't have a sense of power to make a change in the world around her. She had incredible ideas and a sense of what was right and wrong and what was fair and unfair. Speak Up! Speak Out! gave her an opportunity to express her thoughts and ideas and to become convinced in the fact that she was capable of making a difference."

We are grateful to Martha Cason and all of our Speak Up! Speak Out! teachers for their dedication to education and civic life! To find out how you can bring Speak Up! Speak Out! to your community, visit us online at www.speakupspokeout.org



Speak Up! Speak Out! helps build self esteem ... students can air their concerns and positively effect change.



Top to Bottom:
Martha Cason and a student
prepare for the Civics Fair

Garza studies traffic problems in
Spring 2004

Garza's winning display for the Fall
2003 Civics Fair

Annette Strauss Institute Receives Federal Appropriation



Congressman Lamar Smith and Director Rod Hart announce the appropriation award to the press

The Annette Strauss Institute is the recipient of a federal appropriation to support civic research and educational outreach projects. The bill, sponsored by Congressman Lamar Smith, provides funds through the Department of Education. The award was announced at a press conference held at the University in November of 2004.

Congressman Smith met with representatives of the Strauss Institute to announce the award to the press. The Institute was one of only three University of Texas research centers to receive federal appropriations funds. "We are grateful to Congressman Smith for his support of our mission," noted Institute director Roderick Hart. "We believe the Institute's educational outreach programs are well-suited to President Bush's goal to improve civic literacy in our nation's schools."

The Institute's educational outreach programs are well-suited to President Bush's goal to improve civic literacy in our nation's schools.

Institute Director Rod Hart

Associate Director Receives Friar's Club Award

Dr. Sharon Jarvis, associate director for research, has been awarded the University of Texas Friar's Club Award. Dr. Jarvis holds the distinction of becoming only the second assistant professor to receive this prestigious honor. After being surprised with the award, Jarvis noted, "I am just truly honored and overwhelmed."



Dr. Jarvis poses with her check after being surprised with the Friar's Award.

The Friar's club award recognizes excellence in undergraduate teaching. What does she plan to do with her big check? "Well, I will definitely make a contribution to the Strauss Institute," she notes with a smile.

Strauss Institute Celebrates Five Year Anniversary, Expands Archives

The Strauss Institute celebrated its fifth anniversary April 19th, 2005 with a party at its Lake Austin Centre facility. Guests included alumni, advisory council members, donors, scholars, and university administrators.

Visitors toured the institute's political campaign poster display and its expanded Annette Strauss archive collection including new pieces from her years as Mayor of Dallas. Guests also previewed the first American Trustees project video and website.

Director Roderick Hart noted, "One of our most important goals has always been to do justice to the legacy of Annette Strauss. Looking back at the last five years, I believe we have more than accomplished that goal."

Advisory Council Meets, Hears Student Presentations

The Annette Strauss Institute Advisory Council met on October 14, 2005 at the Headliners Club in Austin, Texas. Council Co-Chair Cappy McGarr and Senior Council Member Ted Strauss welcomed the group. Associate Director Mary Dixon provided a summary of research and programs at the Institute followed by a financial overview by Director Roderick Hart.

Student presentations included internship reports from the 2005 Theodore H. Strauss and Patricia Witherspoon Internship Award Winners Kelli Benham, Kathryn Edwards, and Angela Howard (see story, page 14). Also presenting was NPF Alumnus Phil Fountain who provided spoke about how New Politics Forum had helped him start his career in politics (see story, page 8). Plaques were awarded to both Mr. Strauss and Dr. Witherspoon to honor their contributions to civic life. Mr. Strauss noted, "When you hear these students, it really becomes clear what we're doing here."

The council also welcomed new member Dr. Steven Ungerleider. Dr. Ungerleider, an author of four books, completed his undergraduate studies in psychology at the University of Texas, Austin, where he also competed as a collegiate gymnast. He holds masters and doctorate degrees from the University of Oregon and is a licensed psychologist at Integrated Research Services, Incorporated in Eugene, Oregon.



Advisory Council members Ted Strauss and Nancy Halbreich visit with Dr. Steven Ungerleider



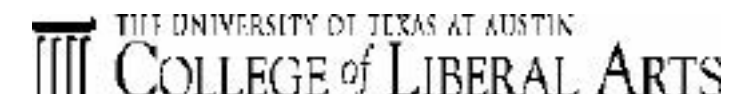
Advisory Council member Brian Shivers shares Shivers campaign memorabilia with Institute Staff

Strauss Institute Builds Bridges

A common question asked of the Strauss Staff is "What part of UT are you?" The Institute is fortunate to be a joint initiative of the College of Communication, the College of Liberal Arts, the Lyndon Baines Johnson School, and the Provost's office. "As a part of the University of Texas at Austin, the Institute has always had a mission of encouraging research and outreach projects that unite academics from various backgrounds," notes Director Roderick Hart, "Increasing civic participation requires knowledge from multiple disciplines."

Recent research proposals have included scholars from sociology, psychology, education, government, public policy, and communication, just to name a few. One example is the American Trustees project, an endeavor that uses the combined talents of film-makers, educational experts, and communications scholars. "It really makes our work unique," comments Trustees project director Deborah Wise. "We have intellectual cross-pollination that gives our projects a real edge."

The Institute is also a training ground for new scholars from many disciplines. Graduate students come for the LBJ School and the College of Communication, with research interns coming from the College of Liberal Arts as well. "Student research benefits from the diverse environment, and we are happy to provide a welcoming space for unique projects," Hart notes.



OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH



OSR provides jobs for UT students each year

The Office of Survey Research expanded its services in 2005 to include focus group research. “We have found that researchers are looking for multiple ways of approaching public opinion research,” project manager Veronica Inchauste noted. “They like being able to come to one organization and find help in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.”

OSR’s location at the Lake Austin Centre building near downtown provides the perfect setting for interactive research with facilities that include 2 observation rooms, a shuttle bus for students, and plenty of visitor parking. “An easy to find location and parking are critical to ensuring a successful focus group experience,” Inchauste notes. “At the same time, we still provide the quality research services for which the University is known.”

OSR provides phone, mail, and internet surveys in addition to focus groups. As a result, OSR employs hundreds of University of Texas students each year. “We believe that offering students a chance to work in the survey industry is an important way of educating them about quantitative research and public opinion polls,” Inchauste explains.

OSR is currently working on surveys for injury prevention, environmental risk factors and stress, and a Texas marriage project. “Public opinion is at the heart of government and policy,” explains associate director Mary Dixon, “so we are happy to be able to offer our expertise to researchers throughout Texas.”

CENTER FOR DELIBERATIVE OPINION RESEARCH

How well has the Euro been accepted in Europe? Will it be possible to keep a plentiful supply of water for the next 50 years? How should public schools be financed? These questions and many more are being addressed by Deliberative Polling®, a research method offered by The Center for Deliberative Opinion Research (CDOR), the newest program at the Annette Strauss Institute.

Deliberative Polling is a service that differs from conventional polling and focus groups in several key ways. Traditional surveys offer a snapshot of opinions obtained through random sampling, but tend to be based on a limited knowledge of the issues and with little depth. Most people form their opinions from headlines and sound bites that are often misleading and even inaccurate. Deliberative participants are provided with information and the ability to form and change opinions through discussion. This allows discovery of public opinion after people have been educated on both sides of an issue.

“The future of CDOR looks very bright,” says Cynthia Posey, Program Manager. “We are making connections in a wide array of areas. From U.S. Transportation to European social issues, to local education financing, CDOR is ready to add to our understanding of public opinion formation.”



Institute scholar studies **party labels**, and chronicles their **persuasive power** in contemporary politics

How did “liberal” become a dirty word in American politics? How did “compassionate conservative” become a viable campaign theme? When, exactly, did the phrase “independent voter” become the most sought-after prize in modern campaigns? And why have “third-party candidates” not enjoyed similar acclaim?

Dr. Sharon Jarvis, Associate Director for Research, answers these questions in her new book, *The Talk of the Party: Political Labels, Symbolic Capital, & American Life* (Rowman & Littlefield). The work draws from the Campaign Mapping Project (CMP), a one-of-a-kind archive at the Strauss Institute that houses six sets of presidential campaign discourse from 1948-2004.

In her research, Jarvis reports data from an extensive content analysis keying on six party labels (Democrat, Republican, Independent, Party, Liberal and Conservative) as they appeared in campaign discourse (presidential speeches and news coverage of these speeches) and in discussions of governance (debates in the U.S. House of Representatives on race relations and depictions in civics textbooks) over a 56 year period.

Key findings from her analysis detail:

- impressive levels of stability for the terms party, Democrat, and Republican (labels that are largely protected by government elites),
- symbolic gains of the term Independent (despite uncertain levels of political capital),

- the demise of the term Liberal (despite public support for traditionally liberal policies), and
- the steadiness of the term conservative (a word that has not been attacked by the left as liberal has been by the right).

The findings also outline how both parties have generally been constituted as elites, a construction that revives their political capital but puts them “out of touch” with the voter in an information age.

A unique element of her analysis is that Jarvis has examined these labels attending to shifts in the information environment as America has moved into an “information age.” As she explains, “the average American is exposed to more than 5,000 advertising messages a day, a figure that has increased from roughly 1,500 in the 1980s, and 3,600 in 1998.

This project shows that brand consistency has yielded a symbolic gain for the Republican party at the dawn of the 21st century because Americans are more likely to come to know parties through language than partisan activities, and because one party has been more organized in its label use than has its opponent. Listening to the

talk of the party teaches valuable lessons about public understandings of these organizations, in 2004 and beyond.



“The average American is exposed to more than 5,000 advertising messages a day.”

Dr. Sharon Jarvis

Theodore H. Strauss **Civic Internship** Winners
Benefit from **Hands-On Experiences**



As winners of the 2005 Theodore H. Strauss Civic Internship award, Kelli Benham and Kathryn Howard had the opportunity to get hands-on experience in government and public service. Benham, who interned for U.S. Senators John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison, notes the importance of making yourself valuable on a large staff. “I was able to attend committee hearings on very important issues, like immigration and border control, national security, and advances in medical science.” She says the experiences were priceless. “Ultimately, the internships I participated in this summer provided me with unparalleled experiences and memories I will cherish for years to come.”



Howard, on the other hand, learned the value of being a hard worker on a smaller staff at her position as an intern at the Commercial Attaché in the Ecuadorian Embassy. “Responsibility fell to me for projects that required a command of the English language or understanding of American domestic policies. My tasks varied from scheduling meetings with Congressmen to writing a fifteen-minute speech for the Ambassador.”

Howard says the internship allowed her to learn more about issues outside of U.S. politics. “The Ecuadorians taught me about the struggles of a developing country. What was truly remarkable, however, was the commitment each person had to cause and country. All of them felt the pull of an ingrained civic obligation to serve and do their part. It was an example that I know is worth following.”

The awards are made possible by an endowment created by Jeremy and Nancy Halbreich, with further funding from the Dorot Foundation of Rhode Island.

Witherspoon **Research Internship** Winners
Study **Leadership** and **Community Involvement**

Winning the Patricia Witherspoon Research Internship Awards provided a unique opportunity to UT graduate students Angela Howard and Matt Koschmann. The award helps fund original research in the area of civic participation.

Howard, a recent graduate of the LBJ School for Public affairs and a Ph.D. student in Sociology, examined how community involvement can be harnessed to stop domestic violence in her project “Bringing Social Change Back In: Examining the Successes and Challenges in Organizing to End Domestic Violence.”

“Organizers face important challenges as they begin to incorporate community organizing in the domestic violence field, including lack of funding and time, difficulty establishing relationships, and lack of blueprints for their work,” Howard notes. “But, by empowering communities to address the roots of domestic violence, these organizers hold the key to a future that could support more peaceful, healthy families in our communities.”

Koschmann is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in organizational communication. His project “Organizational Communication: Focus on Nonprofit Organizations and Leadership Communication,” examined the impact of leadership and volunteerism in faith-based organizations. “Someone once said, ‘If you think you’re a leader, take a look behind you. If no one is following you’re just taking a walk,’ Koschmann explains. “This analysis allowed me to better understand leadership from a follower’s perspective. Awareness of leadership issues and development of leadership skills is vital to the longevity of faith-based organizations.”



Why Your Support Matters

The Institute is funded in three ways. We receive modest University support for basic operations, grant funding to support specific projects, and donations from people like you. **Your contributions help the Institute pilot new projects, ensure the health of on-going educational endeavors, and fund innovative research programs.**

- \$1,000 - will support undergraduate voting efforts
- \$5,000 - will sponsor a keynote speaker for the New Politics Forum
- \$10,000 - will support the Speak Up! Speak Out! program for a year
- \$25,000 - will fund the creation of one American Trustees video and lesson plan
- \$50,000 - will fund a research project on youth participation

Our Supporters

We hope you will add your name to the list of supporters below. Our gift levels reflect our belief that a society needs all of its members to work for the common good. Our highest level, The Citizen’s Level, is inspired by Harry Truman’s statement upon leaving the White House: “I’m not leaving the highest office in the land, I’m assuming the highest office—that of citizen.”

Thank You to Our Supporters

Citizen’s Level - \$50,000 and up

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| Mrs. Mary McDermott Cook &
The Eugene McDermott Foundation
The Dorot Foundation | Mr. &Mrs. Greg Levenson
Mr. and Mrs. Jeremy Halbreich | Mr. Theodore Strauss
The Hatton Sumners Foundation |
|---|--|---|

Presidential Level - \$10,000 to \$49,999

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Mr. James Elkins
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Estrada
Dr. and Mrs. Roderick P. Hart | I.B.M.. Corporation
Mr. Mike A. Myers*
The Perot Foundation | Dr. Stefanie Sanford
Mr. and Mrs. James Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Strauss |
|--|---|---|

Senatorial Level - \$5,000 to \$9,999

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| The Hon.. and Mrs. Tom Dunning
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. John Hammack
Mr. and Mrs. Roger Horchow | Mrs. & Mrs. Cappy McGarr
Mr. and Mrs. Edward W. Rose III
Mrs. Vincent Prothro | Dr. Steven Ungerleider
Mrs. Barbara Van Pelt |
|--|---|---|

Gubernatorial Level - \$1,000 to \$4,999

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| The Hon.. George Bayoud*
Mr. and Mrs. Norman E. Brinker
Dr. Kathryn Hammer*
Mr. Mark Harkrider
Admiral and Mrs. B.R. Inman*
Mr. and Mrs. Mendell Kaliff
Mr. Rusty Kelley
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Mankoff | Mr. Red McCombs
Mr. Wales Madden Jr.*
Mr. & Mrs. Lowry Mays*
Drs.. Willis & Ann Maddrey*
Mr. and Mrs. Erle Nye
Mrs. Mildred Oppenheimer
Mr. and Mrs. Sam Perry
Mr. and Mrs. John Rauscher | Mr. and Mrs. Robert Schlegel
Mr. Pete Schenkel
Dr. Lee Sigelman
Mr. Allan Shivers Jr.*
Mr. Brian Shivers*
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wyly |
|---|--|--|

Mayoral Level - \$250 to \$999

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Mr. Bradley Bryan
Mr. Neal Coates
Mr. William Cooper
Ms. Lee Cullum
Mr. Ted Delisi/Delisi Communications*
Dr. and Mrs. Peter Delisle
Ms. Linda Evans
Mrs. Gail Ewing | Mr. Alan Feld
Mr. Robert Folsom
Mr. Richard Graw*
Ms. Kathryn Hopper
Mrs. Caroline Hunt
The Hon.. Ron Kirk*
Mr. Robert Looney
Mr. Norman Miller | Mr. Donald McNeeley*
Mr. and Mrs. David McVey
Dr. Robert Mosbacher, Jr.*
Dr. Bartholomew Sparrow
Mr. Ronald Steinhart*
Dr. Charls Walker* |
|---|--|--|

Council Level - Up to \$250

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dr. Kenneth Anderson
Ms. Janie Avilia
Mr. Paul M. Bass
Mr. Tony Bernal
Mrs. George Christian*
Dr. and Mr. Robert Dixson
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Giles
Ms. Mareem Horn | Mr. Patrick Horn
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Krasawski
Dean Richard Lariviere*
Mr. Lewis Lazarus
Mr. George Littell
Dr. William Liivngston*
Ms. Holly Mace
Mr. and Mrs. John Mullaly | Mr. N. Edd Miller
Prof. Elspeth Rostow*
Drs. Laurie Lewis and Craig Scott
Mrs. Margaret Seay
Senator Florence Shapiro
Mr. William Spragens
The Hon... Anne Wynne* |
|---|---|---|

* indicates new donor

Strauss Institute Receives Gates Foundation Grant for Civic Education Study

The Annette Strauss Institute is the recipient of a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to research the impact of civic education on the lives of students. Coming to a common understanding of what citizenship is provides a challenge to researchers and educators alike. Most agree that the key to creating productive citizens lies in a combination of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Yet researchers, educators, and administrators do not always agree on what is essential and whether what is being taught actually prepares students for lives as functioning citizens. To fill this gap the Annette Strauss Institute will conduct a three-part study to assess the attitudes, skills, and knowledge required for citizenship.

Director Roderick Hart notes, "The study is a crucial first step in understanding the interplay of civic education and life skills. Many have made an assumption that civic education matters; it is our goal to get a more precise understanding of how schools turn students into citizens. Civic education does more than serve the community; it serves students themselves. An understanding of government and citizenship are crucial to participation in daily life." The eighteen-month project will use a combination of focus groups, surveys, and interviews to achieve a better understanding of how civic education prepares young people for college, work, and citizenship.

The Annette Strauss Institute
for Civic Participation
The University of Texas at Austin
Lake Austin Center
3001 Lake Austin Boulevard, Suite 2.316
Austin, Texas 78703

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
PERMIT NO. 391
Austin, Texas

ANNETTE STRAUSS INSTITUTE
FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The University of Texas at Austin

CREATING MORE VOTERS AND BETTER CITIZENS