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Employment

Associate Professor, University of Colorado-Boulder, 2007-present

Assistant Professor, University of Colorado-Boulder, 2000-2007

Education

Doctor of Philosophy, (Political Science) University of Houston, 2000

Bachelor of Arts with University Honors (German Area Studies): University of Houston, 1993

Research

BOOKS

Baird, Vanessa A. 2007. *Answering the Call of the Court: How Justices and Litigants Set the Supreme Court Agenda*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. 2013. "Institutional Persuasion to Support Minority Rights in Russia" *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 21, 1: 33-58.

Liu, Amy and Vanessa A. Baird. 2012. "Linguistic Recognition as a Source of Confidence in the Judicial System." *Comparative Political Studies*, 20 (10): 1-27.

Javeline, Debra and Vanessa A. Baird. 2011. "The Surprisingly Nonviolent Aftermath of the Beslan School Hostage Taking." *Problems of Post-Communism*, 58(4-5): 3-22.

Fitzgerald, Jennifer, and Vanessa A. Baird. 2011. "Taking a Step Back: Teaching Critical Thinking by Distinguishing Appropriate Types of Evidence". *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44(3) 619-624.

- Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. 2010. "The Effects of National and Local Funding on Judicial Performance: Perceptions of Russia's Lawyers." *Law and Society Review* 44(2): 331-64.
- Baird, Vanessa A. and Tonja Jacobi. 2009. How the Dissent Becomes the Majority: Using Federalism to Transform Coalitions in the U.S. Supreme Court, *Duke Law Review* 59 (November; 2): 183-238.
- Baird, Vanessa A. and Tonja Jacobi. 2009. Judicial Agenda Setting through Signaling and Strategic Litigant Responses." *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy* 29: 215-239.
- Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. 2007. "The Persuasive Power of Russian Courts," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 60 (3): 429-42.
- Javeline, Debra and Vanessa A. Baird. 2007. "Who Sues Government? Evidence from the Moscow Theater Hostage Case," *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (July): 858-85.
- McLaren, Lauren, and Vanessa A Baird. 2006. "Of Time and Causality: A Simple Test of the Requirement of Social Capital in Making Democracy Work in Italy," *Political Studies* 54 (December): 889-897.
- Baird, Vanessa A. and Amy Gangl. 2006. "Shattering the Myth of Legality: The Impact of the Media's Framing of Supreme Court Procedures on Perceptions of Fairness," *Political Psychology* 27 (August): 597-614.
- Baird, Vanessa A. 2004. "The Effect of Politically Salient Decisions on the U.S. Supreme Court's Agenda," *Journal of Politics* 66 (August): 755-72.
- Baird, Vanessa A. 2001. "Building Institutional Legitimacy: The Role of Procedural Justice," *Political Research Quarterly*, 54 (June): 333-54.
- Gibson, James L., Gregory A. Caldeira and Vanessa A. Baird. 1998. "On the Legitimacy of National High Courts," *American Political Science Review*, 92 (June): 343-358.
- Baird, Vanessa, and Alan Stone. 1998. "Why Privatization: The Case of German Telecommunications," *Social Science Quarterly*, 79 (March): 193 - 211.

CURRENT PROJECTS

CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 RULE OF LAW
 POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY
 LAW AND ECONOMICS
 POLITICAL THEORY
 STATE AND LOCAL POLITICS
 COMPARATIVE POLITICAL VIOLENCE
 PEDAGOGY

Criminal Justice

Baird, Vanessa A. and Hank David Graham. The Impact of Policing Policy on Support for the Police. Status: data collection.

The amount of public support for the police varies across the United States. Prior research has implied that people who have positive experiences with legal authorities such as police are more likely to follow the law. Interestingly, however, the impact of sociotropic perceptions tends to be more important than personal experiences. If this is true, then local policing policy – happening at the level of the locality – could lead to lower crime rates overall. This research explores whether progressive policing tactics raise the level of public support for police. My idea is that the implementation of an anti-punitive drug policy (called the Angel Initiative or PAARI) in which some police departments treat drug addiction as a health care issue instead of a criminal issue might increase public support for the police. These policies allow drug addicts to come to the police department with all their drugs and drug paraphernalia and the police find them help instead of arresting them. If adopting these policies are related to community support for the police and lower crime rates, then the most effective (and, more efficient, economically) way to enforce the law is by helping people, not punishing them.

Kernn-Jespersen, Asbjørn and Vanessa A. Baird. The Impact of Mayoral Political Cycles on Police Hiring in Major Cities. Status: draft completed, revision to include interaction effects of local and state corruption data.

To show that increasing the number of police reduces crime, Levitt (1998) used mayoral electoral cycles as an instrumental variable to reduce the likely simultaneity of crime rates on police hiring. Our paper seeks to investigate whether the impact of mayoral elections on police hiring is exacerbated by corrupt local environments, and moreover, whether mayors can use public budgetary expenditures to help themselves in reelection. We believe it may be possible that mayors alter municipal budgets in favor of hiring new police officers as a method of temporarily decreasing crime or signaling an anticrime stance, similar to the way executives in many countries have been shown to manipulate domestic budgets to temporarily ameliorate economic conditions to be reelected. We update Levitt's (1998, 2002) findings, and show that indeed, the number of sworn police officers increase the year before a mayoral election, controlling for a whole host of political, economic, and social factors.

Rule of Law

Barwick, Corey, Vanessa A. Baird, and Stephanie Wise. Support for the Rule of Law: An Exploratory Study into the Difference between Abstract Law and Concrete Laws. Status: submitted to *Law and Society Review*.

This paper is a first attempt to explain the abstract rule of law and compare it with support for violating specific laws, half of which liberals would support and the other half of which conservatives might support. Our main argument is that the factors that matter for both the abstract and concrete rule of law seem largely divorced from rational material explanations. (Tyler et al. (1997) argue that what upholds support for democratic procedures is that people put up with sour outcomes if they perceive that their self-worth is maintained by their place in

that system, yet they also warn that when people do not identify with the dominant group in society, this could unravel. We argue further that when those who identify with the dominant group see that position threatened, the rule of law, particularly in the sense of supporting concrete laws, could unravel. What is interesting is that the factors seem largely divorced from material explanations.

Barwick, Corey, Vanessa A. Baird, and Stephanie Wise. *Believing in the Law is Who I Am*. Status: submitted to *American Political Science Review*.

Using data from the 2016 CCES, this paper investigates the sources of support for the rule of law. Weaving together previous work on identity and procedural justice, threat and political tolerance, the locus of control and moral disengagement, we argue that support for the rule of law can be explained by some of the ways people see themselves vis-à-vis society. In particular, we find that when people's sense of themselves is insecure or threatened, support for the law unravels. Yet, we also find that certain identity insecurities, such as a sensitivity to social norms, make the idea of the law more appealing. The analysis corroborates decades of research showing that support for the law is connected to other democratic norms, and that education can strengthen the connection between the abstract rule of law and some concrete applications. In the end, the findings offer some speculative insights into some of the puzzles in other areas of legal culture.

Barwick, Corey, Vanessa A. Baird and Stephanie Wise. *Support Understanding Support for Protest Rights*.

The perennial will of Americans to suppress the speech of others presents a timely concern in this new era of protest, particularly one in which violent protest is visible and common. Even in eras of extreme countercultural suppression, the U.S. has never lacked public and private defenders and detractors of the freedoms of speech and assembly, from the Sedition Act's crafters to the recent authors of the Communications Decency Act; and these government restrictions on first amendment protections frequently mirror the preferences of the citizenry. Concerns about "the line between free speech and hate speech" are covered by major media outlets nearly daily, perhaps symptoms of an acknowledged tradeoff of the government's competing objectives of upholding both the "rule of law" and "law and order." Understanding what causes the support for other persons' right to protest can clarify how Americans currently view this tradeoff and the shape of their political tolerance.

Political Psychology

Baird, Vanessa A. *Understanding the Nature of Political Grievance*. Status: revisions.

This paper is a first attempt to explain why people blame the U.S. government for causing the main problems in their personal life. The most obvious explanation for feeling aggrieved is objective suffering: economic insecurity, fear of crime, or a sense of rights and liberties violations. Or perhaps a sense of grievance is related to trust in incumbents, or dissatisfaction with specific policies.

Another theory is that there are psychological or social traits that make one more likely to perceive grievances, such as psychological insecurity, sensitivity to social norms, a sense of control of one's personal life, political understanding, or self-esteem. The main finding is that though objective circumstances and trust in the system is related to the belief that the political system has caused their personal problems, psychological factors that cannot be tied to personal life circumstances are more important. When specific policies have tended to matter, what mattered was not suffering caused by these policies but the sense that not enough harm was coming to political enemies. Moreover, counterintuitively, there is little evidence that a sense that the political system causes people's problems is related to anything caused by the political system, including approval of political incumbents. On the other hand, there is some evidence that these grievances are related to reductions of a sense of attachment to the legal or constitutional system in general.

Law and Economics

Baird, Vanessa A. Why the Supreme Court Cannot Make Liberal Economic Policy: The Effect of Profit Minded Litigants' Strategies on the Supreme Court's Agenda.

This paper offers an explanation for why the Supreme Court's economic agenda has been primarily conservative historically. It hands down liberal economic cases from time to time but has few eras where legal change builds case by case, such as we have seen in free speech or civil rights. This paper builds on findings from Baird (2004, 2007) that show that the Supreme Court's agenda varies with Justices' policy priorities from four to six years before, with the argument that future cases took that long to reach the Court. Yet incentives vary across different kinds of litigants, complicating the story; when the Court is perceived to be liberal, corporate interests are far more likely to be risk averse than other interests and may be more likely to settle or even fail to answer a suit by simply being more likely to accept the other party's terms. Thus, important economic cases that might alter public law in a liberal direction are not among the cases from which Justice choose to decide. This means that the Supreme Court is institutionally incapacitated to protect consumers, workers, or the environment. Even a liberal Court will be hindered in its ability to reverse course from previous economic conservative decisions because it will lack a sufficient number of cases to promote such legal change.

Political Theory

Baird, Vanessa A. Ditching Justice: Testing Hobbes' Theories in Contemporary Political, Social, and Legal Psychology.

Hobbes tells us to give up on justice because it leads to 'competition for honor and dignity,' which leads to 'envy and hatred, and finally war.' The evidence that people's "honor and dignity" are more supported by fair procedures than fair outcomes (Tyler, et al. 2007) would probably surprise Hobbes, as would the evidence of the high support for even unjust laws and unfair legal institutions. On the other hand, when people do not identify with the dominant group in society, their dignity is not supported by fair procedures, and they are less likely to accept disagreeable outcomes. Extrapolating from this, I argue that Hobbes' advice about

ditching justice in our political deliberations is even more important. Appealing to justice or the truth in our political deliberations (“I am right - you are wrong;” “You are racist - I am not,”) likely undermine a person’s honor and dignity could force them to seek alternative separationist identities, based on ethnic, racial or party lines where their self-esteem can be bolstered. This, in turn, could lead to lower support for disagreeable democratic procedures and laws that are perceived as unjust.

State and Local Politics

Gibson, James L., Corey Barwick, Vanessa A. Baird, and Christopher Clausen. *The Legal Culture of the Fifty States*. Status: Rejected, *Journal of Politics*. Being revised with new data collection.

In this paper, we use multilevel regression with poststratification to produce a measure of the institutional legitimacy of the U.S. Supreme Court within each of the American states. The measure is validated with non-survey measures of social capital, a measure of “looseness and tightness,” (punitiveness versus permissiveness) and the win rate of the state at the U.S. Supreme Court when it is a party to the litigation. Importantly, we also find that state level diffuse support predicts court-curbing behavior in Congress, even controlling for those other factors. With this new state-level measure of U.S. Supreme Court legitimacy, important questions of judicial federalism can now be investigated.

Comparative Political Violence

Javeline, Debra and Vanessa A. Baird. *Political Responses to Violence: Citizen Participation after Beslan*, book manuscript. Status: near completion.

Why do some victims of violence support retaliatory violence while others respond with peaceful participation in politics? Using survey data from 1,098 victims of the Beslan school hostage taking in the Russian region of North Ossetia, or 82 percent of victims identified, we test hypotheses about anger, alienation, and other variables. We find that victims who are angry, politically alienated, and politically efficacious are most likely to respond to violence with peaceful political activism, whereas victims who are not politically alienated but are socially alienated, self-efficacious, and pessimistic are most likely to support retaliatory violence. The expression of the supposedly undesirable sentiments of anger and political alienation may actually be a useful mechanism for halting the cycle of violence and channeling victims toward peaceful politics.

Pedagogy

Baird, Vanessa A. *Improving Textbooks for Teaching Critical Thinking*. Status: Revise and Resubmit, National Teaching and Learning Forum. Wiley.

Textbooks that present information as a set of facts to be learned, independent from the epistemology of scholarly inquiry, might undermine critical thinking. Instead, textbooks ought to begin by introducing disciplinary methodological standards of how research is criticized. Then, knowledge of specific subject matter in following chapters should be presented in the format of a sequence of discovery: how what we know now depends on the critiques of

previous research. Students can then apply the principles of critical thinking and disciplinary standards, in a way that is akin to “training wheels.” More creative textbook formats might enable faculty to be more effective at teaching and assessing critical thinking, given resource limitations in large undergraduate lecture courses.

Baird, Vanessa A. Why We Should Teach Critical Thinking (and Writing) Without Assigning Essays: A Preliminary Guide

The purpose of this essay is to reflect on some problems in our current way of teaching undergraduates and to present some preliminary tools to get them from where I perceive that they are to where I want them to be. I am hoping these tools will help make undergraduate education more equitable, more effective at assessing and evaluating information, and better at teaching writing skills. I am also hoping these assessment tools, as they are developed and shared, will also be easier on untenured professors who are dedicated teachers and researchers and on those who teach larger introductory courses.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Gibson, James L., and Vanessa A. Baird. 1997. “Legitimacy of the United States Supreme Court: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis.” In *Perspectives on American and Texas Politics: A Collection of Essays*. Edited by Donald S. Lutz, Kent L. Tedin, and Edward P. Fuchs. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1997. Pp. 89-113.

BOOK REVIEWS

Designing Democracy: What Constitutions Do, Cass Sunstein. Law and Politics Book Review, 12 (May 2002): 246-249.

The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model, Revisited, Jeffrey Segal and Harold Spaeth. Journal of Politics, forthcoming.

SERVICE PUBLICATIONS

Baird, Vanessa A. 2009. Advice to New Faculty and Young Faculty for Prospering in the Field of Judicial Politics. Law and Courts: Newsletter of the Law and Courts Section of the American Political Science Association, 19 (2: spring): 7-8.

Baird, Vanessa A. 2008. Research Spotlight: Merging Phase I and Phase II of the United States Supreme Court Judicial Database. Law and Courts: Newsletter of the Law and Courts Section of the American Political Science Association, 19 (1: Winter): 17-18.

GRANTS*

Research - External

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. After Violence: Participation over Retaliation in Beslan, proposal submitted to The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, February 2008; status: funded (\$67,000).

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. Political Responses to Tragedy: Citizen Participation after Beslan, proposal submitted to Kellogg, June 2006; status: funded (\$10,000).

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. University of Notre Dame's Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, Pilot Fund for Social Sciences, "Political Responses to Tragedy: Citizen Participation After Beslan," matched by University of Notre Dame's Office of Research, 2006 (\$30,000).

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. University of Notre Dame's Nanovic Institute, Collaborative Research Grant, survey research workshop to develop and refine questionnaire for "Political Responses to Tragedy: Citizen Participation After Beslan," 2006 (\$4,000).

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. United States Agency for International Development, three-year study of attitudes of Russian public, judicial professionals, and NGO leaders toward the Russian judicial system, 2002-04 (\$389,527).

Baird, Vanessa A. and Debra Javeline. National Science Foundation Small Grants for Exploratory Research, "Judicial Pioneers: Litigants in the Moscow Theater Hostage Case," grant SES-0317122, 2003 (\$40,824).

Research – Internal

Baird, Vanessa A. Judicial Decisions and Compliance: The Electoral Connection. Vertically Integrated Research and Teaching Team (VIRTT) Grant. Funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts through the American Political Science Association, Council of Graduate Schools and the American Association of Universities and Colleges, through the Center for the Advancement of Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences (CARTSS), University of Colorado at Boulder, Spring 2004 (\$2000).

Teaching - External

Baird, Vanessa A. Michael Ferguson and David Mapel. 2005. Ford Foundation Initiative. Difficult Dialogues: Promoting Pluralism and Academic Freedom on Campus. (\$10,000).

Teaching - Internal

Baird, Vanessa A. Michael Ferguson and David Mapel. 2005. Institute of Civic and Ethic Engagement. (\$10,000).

*Grant authorship is listed alphabetically.

AWARDS

Nominee, Boulder Campus Faculty Assembly Excellence in Teaching Award, 2006
Teacher of the Year, Department of Political Science, University of Colorado, 2006

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

January 2016, University of Colorado Law

November 2015, Social Science Forum
November 2012, Northwestern Law School
April 2009, Northwestern Law School
November 2008, Brooklyn Law School
November 2008, University of Houston Law School
June 2007, CSPAN BookTV
May 2006, University of Colorado Law School
January 2006, University of Washington
August 2005, University of Colorado Law School
October 2003, University of Houston
June, 2002, Oxford University
May, 2001, University of Notre Dame
July, 1999, Texas A&M University
November, 1998, University of New Mexico

Teaching

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

The American Political System (Honors)

The American Political System

JUDICIAL POLITICS

Graduate: Behavioral Approaches to Public Law

Introduction to the Legal System

Judicial Behavior and Process

Law and Society

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Constitutional Law

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR

Introduction to Political Dialogue

STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY

Graduate: Introduction to Political Science Data Analysis

Undergraduate: Introduction to Political Science Data Analysis

Undergraduate: Designing Social Inquiry

POLITICAL THEORY

Modern Political Thought (University of Houston)

Ancient and Medieval Political Thought (University of Houston)

Introduction to Political Theory (University of Houston)

Democratic Theory (University of Houston)