

Toby Bolsen

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University (expected June, 2010)

Major Field: American Politics
Minor Field: Political Methodology.

Dissertation title: *Private Behaviors for the Public Good: Citizens' Actions and U.S. Energy Consumption*

Dissertation Committee: James N. Druckman (Advisor), Dennis Chong, Fay Lomax Cook

Dissertation Abstract:

Why and when do individuals take political actions? Why do some, but not all, citizens make sacrifices for the sake of the public good? Outside of work on participation, political scientists have paid little attention to these questions. I seek to fill this gap by exploring the factors that drive political behaviors. I focus specifically on an important class of behaviors: actions regarding the consumption of energy. I begin by developing a theory that brings together the potentially interactive effects of individual and environmental factors that shape individuals' decisions to take action. I test predictions generated by my theory in three empirical chapters: a media content analysis, laboratory experiment, and field experiment. The content analysis allows me to assess frames in a communication toward energy consumption, which I examine later in terms of effects. I use the theory and experiments to evaluate the impact of competing forces on attitudes toward energy conservation, willingness to pay for energy saving devices, and actual behavior (e.g., a purchasing decision and financial contribution). My results suggest a primacy of norms, which is fascinating because the impact of norms is understudied relative to research evaluating the impact of political communications.

M.A. Department of Political Science, Northwestern University, 2006

M.A. Department of Political Science, Southern Illinois University, 2004

B. A. Social Science, Eastern Illinois University, 1998 (summa cum laude)

PUBLICATIONS

"Framing, Motivated Reasoning, and Emergent Technologies." Forthcoming 2010. *Journal of Communication*. Co-authored with James N. Druckman.

"Framing Effects and Political Behavior." 2009. In *From the Mind to the Feet: Assessing the Intent-to-Action Dynamic*. Larry Kuznar (Ed). Office of the Secretary of Defense, Directorate of Defense Research and Engineering, and The U.S. Global Innovation and Strategy Center, Washington, D.C.

"Public Opinion on Energy Policy, 1974-2006." 2008. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 72 (2): 364-388. Co-authored with Fay Cook.

"Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment." 2006. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50 (2): 266-282. Co-authored with Jennifer Jerit and Jason Barabas.

RESEARCH GRANTS

National Science Foundation (NSF) Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, 2009 – 2010.

Graduate Research Grant, Northwestern University, Spring 2008

Experimental Research Grant, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University, Spring 2008

PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

“The Construction of News: Energy Crises, Advocacy Messages, and Frames toward Conservation.”
Revise and resubmit at the *Journal of Press/Politics*.

“A Light Bulb Goes On: Values, Attitudes, Social Norms, and Personal Energy Consumption.”

WORKING PAPERS

“Motivating Sources of Political Awareness: Do Personal Stakes Matter?” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology, July 2007.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2006-2010, Graduate Fellow, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

2007-2008, Editorial Assistant, *Public Opinion Quarterly*

Spring 2007, Research Assistant, Professor Fay Lomax Cook, Director of the Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

2005 - 2007, Research Assistant, Professor James N. Druckman, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University

2002-2003, Research Assistant, Professor Jason Barabas, Department of Political Science, Southern Illinois University

2002-2003, Research Assistant, Professor Jennifer Jerit, Department of Political Science, Southern Illinois University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Public Attitudes toward Energy and the Environment, Summer 2010, Northwestern

Teaching Assistant, Global History 1914 – Present, Professor Georgi Derlugian, Spring 2009

Lecturer, American Government and Politics, Professor Jerry Goldman, Fall 2008 & 2009

Teaching Assistant, Public Opinion and Voting Behavior, Professor Dennis Chong, Spring 2008

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Law in the Political Arena, Professor Wes Skogan, Winter 2008

Sullivan High School, Sullivan, Illinois, 1998-2001

CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

Conference Presentations

“The Construction of News: Energy Crises, Advocacy Messages, and Frames toward Conservation.” Prepared for delivery at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 68th Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL, April 22-25, 2010.

“Framing, Motivated Reasoning, and Emergent Technologies.” Prepared for delivery at the American Political Science Association’s 105th Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada, September 3-6, 2009.

“A Light Bulb Goes On: Values, Attitudes, Social Norms, and Personal Energy Consumption.” Prepared for delivery at the American Political Science Association’s 105th Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada, September 3-6, 2009.

“Framing, Motivated Reasoning, and Emergent Technologies.” Prepared for delivery at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 67th Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 2009.

“Motivating Sources of Political Awareness: Do Personal Stakes Matter?” Prepared for delivery at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 66th Annual Meeting in, Chicago, IL, April 3-6, 2008.

“Media Discourse on Energy Consumption, 1973-2007.” Prepared for delivery at the International Society of Political Psychology’s 31st Annual Scientific Meeting in Paris, France, July 9-12, 2008

“Public Opinion on Energy Policy, 1974-2006.” Prepared for delivery at the American Political Science Association’s 103rd Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL, August 30 – September 2, 2007.

“Motivating Sources of Political Awareness: Do Personal Stakes Matter?” Prepared for delivery at the International Society of Political Psychology’s 30th Annual Scientific Meeting in Portland, OR, July 4-7, 2007.

“Motivating Sources of Political Awareness: Do Personal Stakes Matter?” Prepared for delivery at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 65th Annual Meeting in, Chicago, IL, April 12-15, 2007.

“Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment”. Prepared for delivery at the American Political Science Association’s 100th Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, September 2-5, 2004.

Conference Discussant.

Discussant on “Political Communication Experiments” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 68th Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. April 22-25, 2010.

Discussant on “Entertainment Television and Political Communication” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 67th Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 2009.

Discussant on “Trust and Cynicism” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 66th Annual Meeting in, Chicago, IL, April 3-6, 2008.

Discussant on “Political Identity in Action” panel at the International Society of Political Psychology’s 30th Annual Scientific Meeting in Portland, OR, July 4-7, 2007.

Discussant on “Heuristics: How “Good” Are They” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 65th Annual Meeting in, Chicago, IL, April 12-15, 2007.

Conference Panel Chair.

Chair on “The Psychology of Political Mobilization” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 67th Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 2009.

Chair on “Trust and Cynicism” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association’s 66th Annual Meeting in, Chicago, IL, April 3-6, 2008.

Chair on “Political Identity in Action” panel at the International Society of Political Psychology’s 30th Annual Scientific Meeting in Portland, OR, July 4-7, 2007.

JOURNAL REFEREE

I have served as an anonymous peer reviewer for:

The Journal of Politics

Public Opinion Quarterly

Political Behavior

American Review of Politics

Political Communication

CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

2007-2008, Energy Legislation Consultant, Coskata Inc. (cellulosic ethanol producer, Warrenville, IL)

REFERENCES

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