

Rebecca U. Thorpe

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
101 GOWEN HALL
BOX 353530
SEATTLE, WA 98195
PHONE: (206) 543-6493
bthorpe@u.washington.edu
<http://academics.polytropos.net>

Employment

Assistant Professor, University of Washington, 2010 -

Education

Ph.D, Government & Politics, University of Maryland, 2010
Fields: American Politics, Public Law

DISSERTATION: *The Welfare-Warfare State: Perpetuating the U.S. Military Economy*

B.A. Government, Law and Society, Skidmore College, 2004.
Magna Cum Laude, Departmental Honors, Phi Beta Kappa

THESIS: *A Constitutional Safeguard for Individual Rights: Synthesizing Rehnquist Court Federalism with the Letter & Spirit of the Fourteenth Amendment*

Fellowships, Grants & Honors

Congressional Fellowship, American Political Science Association, 2009-2010

Research Fellowship in Governance Studies, The Brookings Institution, 2008-2009
(Dissertation Fellowship)

National Science Foundation Behavioral & Cognitive Sciences Research Grant (with PI Wayne McIntosh), 2006-2008

National Science Foundation Law & Sciences Grant (with PI Wayne McIntosh), 2005-2007

Training Grants, Government & Politics, University of Maryland, 2006, 2007 (\$1500/year for methodology workshops)

Junior Fellow, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 2004

Phi Beta Kappa, Elected 2004

Publications

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

“The Wellsprings of Candidate Emergence: The Distinctive Origins of Statewide Candidates” (with Jim Gimpel & Frances Lee). *Political Geography*. Forthcoming 2011.

“The Role of Economic Reliance in Defense Procurement Contracting,” *American Politics Research*, July 2010.

BOOK CHAPTER

“*Amicus Curiae* Participation and Impact on U.S. Supreme Court Fifth Amendment Takings Decisions: 1953-2007,” (with W. McIntosh, M. Evans and S. Simon). In *Property Rights and Neo-Liberalism: Cultural Demands and Legal Actions*, eds. W. McIntosh & L. Hatcher. 2010.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

“Alexis de Tocqueville and the U.S. Supreme Court.” In *Encyclopedia of the Supreme Court of the United States*, ed., David S. Tanenhaus (Macmillon References USA, Thomson/Gale) 2008.

Baker, Nancy V. *General Asbcroft: Attorney General At War*. In *Law & Politics Book Review*, Vol. 16, No. 9 (September 2006), 754-756.

Under Review & Work In-Progress

The Warfare State: Perpetuating the U.S. Military Economy (Book Manuscript, Under Review)

This manuscript examines why a country founded on a grave distrust of standing armies and centralized power developed and maintained the most powerful military in history. The central argument is that the rise of a permanent military industry during and after World War II changed the economic landscape of the defense industry and created a new incentive structure that the constitution’s framers did not anticipate. Unlike earlier periods of development, where lost productivity, military service requirements and higher taxes made it difficult for elected representatives to authorize military resources in peacetime, increased reliance on deficit spending, an All-Volunteer Army and private military contractors have systematically reduced the traditional costs of military spending and warfare. At the same time, the rise of a permanent defense industry created widespread economic dependencies on defense funds in more rural areas without diverse manufacturing economies. Analysis of an original database demonstrates that members of Congress representing more economically homogenous, rural constituencies with a concentrated defense sector presence experience powerful incentives to fund weapons programs that are divorced from national security concerns. As a result, individual legislators are rewarded for expanding the pool of military resources, which presidents seek to draw upon at their discretion. New legislative strategies contribute to a baseline of defense spending while promoting increased executive independence in military affairs. Evidence suggests that political power concentrates when separate institutions find shared incentives to cooperate, despite institutional mechanisms designed to disperse power. Coinciding interests in defense sector expansion consolidate resources and authority in the executive branch, weakening the system of checks and balances.

“Defining National Defense Needs: Rural Reliance, Partisanship & Congressional Weapons Spending, 1993 - 2011 (working paper)

“Mass Imprisonment as a Rural Subsidy” (working paper)

“The Distributive Politics of the Federal Stimulus: The Geography of the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009” (working paper with Jim Gimpel & Frances Lee)

Original Data Collections

Nation-wide locations of major U.S. defense industries, coded by congressional district, 1993-2007, coded by FIPS place and county codes, 1940 – 2006

Digital database classifying amicus curiae participants and judicial documents associated with U.S. Supreme Court cases, 1953-2008 (NSF-funded project with Wayne McIntosh, Michael Evans, et al.)

Grant Work

NSF Research Grant BSC-0624067, *A Computational Approach to Understanding the Dynamics of the Judicial System*, Fall 2006 – Summer 2008

Co-directed a multi-year, interdisciplinary grant to develop and apply computational linguistics and information retrieval techniques to U.S. Supreme Court texts (with PI Wayne McIntosh).

NSF Law & Sciences Grant SES 0519157, *Intercourt Relations in the American Legal System*, 2005-2007
Developed tools to examine the transmission of precedent in regulatory takings cases within the American court system (assisted Principal Investigator Wayne McIntosh).

Research & Teaching Awards

Michael J. Pelczar Award for Excellence in Graduate Study, The Graduate School, University of Maryland, 2009-2010

Roger H. Davidson Award, for best graduate student paper in American politics, Department of Government & Politics, University of Maryland, 2008

Jean Elizabeth Spencer Award, for an outstanding female graduate student in Government & Politics, University of Maryland, 2007

Conley Dillon Dissertation Award, Dept. of Government & Politics, University of Maryland, 2007

Excellence in Teaching Award, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, University of Maryland, 2005-2006 (sole college-wide graduate recipient)

Erwin L. Levine Prize in Government, for excellence in political theory, Skidmore College, 2004

Conference Papers & Presentations

(Invited talks are indicated by an *)

“The Distributive Politics of the Federal Stimulus: The Geography of the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009” (with James G. Gimpel & Frances E. Lee). Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C. September 2-5, 2010.

“Legal Mobilization and U.S. Supreme Court Decision-Making in Property and Civil Rights Cases, 1978 – 2003” (with Mike Evans, Steve Simon & Wayne McIntosh). Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Law, Property & Society. Georgetown University Law School, Washington, D.C., March 5-6, 2010.

* “Defining National Defense Needs: Economic Motivations for Congressional Defense Spending,” Research-in-Progress Forum, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. December 3, 2008.

“You and Whose Army? How Congressional Defense Spending Shapes Presidential War Powers,” Poster Session, Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. Boston, MA, August 28-31, 2008.

“The Political Geography of Candidate Emergence: The Distinctive Origins of Statewide Candidates” (with Jim Gimpel & Frances Lee). Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. Chicago, IL, April 3-6, 2008.

“The Role of Economic Reliance in Defense Procurement Contracting,” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. Chicago, IL, April 12-15, 2007.

“The Evolution of Law: A Citation Analysis of Regulatory Takings Decisions in the Federal Circuit Courts, 1978-2004,” with Ken Cousins, Mike Evans, Steve Simon, and Wayne McIntosh. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. Philadelphia, PA, August 31-September 3, 2006.

* “Military Industry & Executive War Powers: The National Bank as a Constitutional Precursor” George Washington University Law School, Work-in-Progress Forum Sponsored by the Institute for Constitutional Studies, June 12-23, 2006.

“Beyond the Double Standard: Comparing U.S. Supreme Court Decision-Making in Property and Civil Rights Cases” (with Mike Evans). Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. Chicago, IL, April 20-23, 2006.

*Panelist, Roundtable on Public Law and Interpretive Methods: What Makes Critical Work Critical? (Standing in for Mark Graber). Western Political Science Association. Albuquerque, NM, March 16-19, 2006.

“Economic Due Process, Revisited: How Economic Transformations Shape the Due Process Rights Discourse.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association. Albuquerque, NM, March 16-19, 2006.

*Panelist, “Living the Liberal Arts,” Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY. Alumni Discussion Panel Sponsored by the Mellon Foundation. October 5, 2005.

Teaching Experience

COURSES TAUGHT

Policy Problems (Graduate Seminar, 2011)

Social Science Methodology (2011)

Seminar in American Politics: Institutional Failure (Fall 2010)

The American Presidency (Fall 2010)

The U.S. Military-Industrial Complex (Summer 2008)

Law and Society (Summer 2005)

GUEST LECTURER

Introduction to American Government

Constitutional Law

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

ADDITIONAL TEACHING INTERESTS

Political Representation

Political Ambition

American Political Thought & Development

Professional Service

Manuscript Reviewer, *American Politics Research*, *American Journal of Political Science*

Graduate Studies Committee, 2010-2011

Panel Chair, Midwest Political Science Association, April 2006

Member, American Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association