
Association News

Shklar Appoints Mansbridge 1990 Program Chair

APSA President-elect Judith N. Shklar, Harvard University, has appointed Jane Mansbridge, Northwestern University, 1990 program chair. The 1990 meetings will be held in San Francisco, at the San Francisco Hilton from August 30 to September 2. The annual meeting last met in San Francisco in 1975 when almost 2,500 attended a program organized by APSA President Austin Ranney and Program Chair William J. Keefe.

Anticipating over 3,500 attendees for the 86th Annual Meeting, Shklar and Mansbridge have taken major steps to promote cooperation and coordination in the 1990 program between Program Committee Sections and the APSA Organized Sections. Mansbridge raises important questions surrounding the evolving relationship between Program Committee Sections and APSA Organized Sections, and the organization and allocation of panels at the annual meeting in an article in this section of *PS*.

The theme of the 1990 program is "Democratization." A plenary session is planned on democratization in Western and Eastern Europe, and Asia. Other special interest panels may be organized around the theme. The program will also feature special program panels on History in Political Science, and Intersections of Theory and Practice.

Editor's Note. Organized Sections are one of the fastest growing and most vital elements of the APSA. Their rapid rise has profoundly

affected the organization of the annual meeting in the last few years. Jane Mansbridge, Program Chair for the 1990 Annual Meeting, has prepared the following essay reviewing the relationship between Program Committee Sections and Organized Sections since the inception of Organized Sections in 1982.

The Mansbridge article raises important issues that will be discussed by APSA members over the next few years.

On the Relation between Program Committee Sections and Organized Sections

Jane Mansbridge
Northwestern University

Until fairly recently, the two separate issues of the organization of the panels at the annual meeting of the Association and the allocation of those panels among fields in the discipline had a traditional solution. Panels were organized by Section Chairs appointed by the overall Program Chair, who in turn was appointed by the President of the Association. These appointments were reviewed and approved by the Council of the Association. Panels were allocated among fields in approximately the same proportions as they had been the year before, and requests for supplementary panels were usually granted.

In recent years, the number of panels at annual meetings has proliferated, driven by growing membership, the vitality of the Association, and by the requirement in many departments of Political Science that a faculty member present a paper at a panel at the annual meeting in order to qualify for travel funds to attend that meeting. That proliferation resulted eventually in so many panels being presented that they could no longer fit in a single hotel, and the audiences for each panel becoming smaller and smaller. At its September 1987 meeting, on the recommendation of a committee appointed to study the problem, the APSA Council decided that the total number of panels should be limited to the number of rooms in the host hotel. This decision to limit, implemented for the first time in the 1988 meeting, made the number of panels allocated to each section an important political issue.

At the same time, the number of Organized Sections and Unaffiliated Groups was growing. In 1982, the Association had begun to encourage disciplinary fields to organize as Organized Sections, instituting newsletters and presenting panels organized by their own elected or appointed committees. By 1983 there were six such sections, by 1986 sixteen, and by 1988 twenty-two. The number of Unaffiliated Groups, presenting panels in conjunction with the annual meeting, grew from 3 groups presenting ten panels in 1968, to 38 groups presenting 83 panels in 1977, and to 61 groups presenting 212 panels in 1983. The number then declined to 34 groups presenting 164 panels in 1987 and 39 groups presenting 101 panels in 1988. Because both Organized Sections and Unaffiliated Groups existed in part in order to present panels at the annual meeting of the APSA, their large and sometimes increasing numbers helped swell the demand for panel space

I. Organization of Panels, the Role of Program Committee Sections, Organized Sections, and Unaffiliated Groups

At the same time as it recommended a reduction of the overall number of panels

to those that could be held in one hotel, an APSA committee composed of members of the Council, the Organized Sections and the Unaffiliated Groups also proposed a formula distributing the responsibility for organizing the panels in a given year in the ratio of 50 percent to the Program Committee, 30 percent to the Organized Sections, and 20 percent to the Unaffiliated Groups. This formula, applied at the 1988 meeting in conjunction with the mandated reduction of panels to the number the hotel could accommodate, seems to have met, on the whole, with either approbation or acquiescence.

In 1988, the incoming Program Chair, Nelson W. Polsby, instituted as an experiment a new system whereby the Organized Sections would for the first time organize all the panels in their field at the annual meeting. After some adjustment for the several fields that either did not have an Organized Section in their area or did not feel represented by that Organized Section, and further adjustment regarding the number of panels to which each field was entitled, the 1989 Program took place under a mixed system whereby the Organized Sections structured the program in those fields that had Organized Sections and appointed Program Committee chairs on the traditional model structured the program in those fields that did not have Organized Sections. While some of the Organized Sections were extremely pleased with this plan, there was great dissatisfaction in other quarters. After withstanding barrages of complaints, Nelson W. Polsby genially concluded that the results of his idea had been, in his words, "Only so-so."

For the 1990 meetings, many on the APSA Council expressed a strong preference for returning to the "status quo ante," in which panels were allocated to the Program Committee, Organized Sections and Unaffiliated Groups on a 50-30-20 basis, and the Program Committee Chair appointed chairs to structure the Program Committee sections in the different fields in the discipline. Accordingly, as the 1990 Program Chair, I was given the mandate to return to status quo ante and select a Program Committee along the traditional lines

However, as I began to talk to the members of different subfields in the course of selecting a Program Committee, it became clear that returning to the status quo would deeply disappoint members of some of the Organized Sections. Active members of the section on Public Administration were the most perturbed, followed closely by the section on Urban Politics, then the section on Law, Courts and Judicial Process, and finally Political Parties and Organizations. Many active members of these four groups strongly felt that the Organized Section should be responsible for all the panels in their field. When I consulted members of the Organized Sections in other fields, as a rule they seemed to favor instead some sort of balance between Program Committee sections and Organized Sections.

As I listened to the reasons that members of these four Organized Sections gave for resisting a return to the status quo, I concluded that the strong similarities of perception in more than one group suggested structural problems that transcended the histories or personalities idiosyncratic to any particular group.

Because this question is potentially divisive, I hope that it can be discussed throughout the membership, and guidance relayed to the Council for decision in future meetings. In the section that follows I will try to express as clearly as I can the arguments people have made to me both for the Organized Sections structuring the program and for the Program Committee doing so.

Organized Sections

The arguments for giving control to the Organized Sections fall under the three headings of reducing arbitrariness, promoting democracy, and promoting member involvement.

1) Reducing arbitrariness. Several Organized Sections, particularly Public Administration and Urban Politics, but also including Law, Courts, and the Judicial Process, organized as sections largely in response to a history of having had appointed to chair the annual program in their respective fields section chair after section chair who

did not, in their view, share their interests.

In one class of cases, the person appointed as Program Committee Chair simply did not give these fields as careful attention as others, perhaps because the chair did not consider the fields as central to the discipline as others, or perhaps because the chair did not know many people in these fields. In these cases the result was that often the Program Chair did not consult scholars in the field, and ended up appointing only a person whom the chair happened to know.

In another class of cases, the Program Chair either had particular interests him or herself or appointed someone to chair the section who had particular interests, e.g. in rational choice, that many members of the field did not share. In one year, for instance, some active members in Public Administration felt that papers with approaches other than rational choice had less of a chance to be chosen. Some felt that people were being appointed as chairs of the Public Administration section who were not sympathetic to the field, and that the members of the field were feeling increasingly, in the words of one member, "shut off from the Association." As one member told me, "We have for years had [section chairs] who had a narrow definition of Public Administration," defining it either in terms of formal modeling or bureaucratic politics (agencies trying to enhance their budgets). In another arena, the Gaus committee one year "came close to awarding [the award] to someone who had very few ties to the Public Administration field." As a result of this history, some members left the APSA for organizations like the Academy of Management that appealed more directly to their interests.

Similarly, Urban Politics has had a history of section chairs in the field traditionally entitled "State, Local and Intergovernmental" connecting "with urban politics scholars only on a hit-or-miss basis, mostly miss." The section chairs typically reflected "the personal networks of a succession of program chairs," and often reflected "intergovernmental" interests rather than urban ones. As one member put it, "We've seldom had a person who headed the section who knew urban politics."

Finally, the Law, Courts and Judicial Process group reported a somewhat similar, though not so extreme, history. In that field, there are four relatively distinct sub-fields, one that focuses on judicial process, one usually called "Law and Society," one identified with constitutional law, or "doctrinal analysis," and one concerned with jurisprudence and political theory. Some active members of that section feel they have had appointed over them too many section chairs in the "constitutional law," or even in the "Law and Society" camp. One member told me, "People in Judicial are sensitive. We get assigned people [for section chairs] that no one in Judicial knows."

When these patterns hold, it is important not only how the section chairs act, but how people in the field think the chairs are going to act. People in the field take the appointment of a person with a perspective different from their own as a signal that their work will not be wanted or is devalued. Several people from Organized Sections therefore suggested that at the very least the program committee chair should consult with people in the field to ensure that individuals known to be hostile to certain approaches in the field are not named to chair the program committee section in that field.

2) Promoting democracy. The Organized Sections are not necessarily more democratic in a formal or procedural sense than the Council of the APSA itself. The APSA requires that Organized Sections have a constitution providing for regular elections (though the Association does not require rotation in office). These elections, like the elections to the APSA itself, often consist of members who have expressed willingness to serve running unopposed. The President of the Organized Section often appoints the Organized Section program chairs, just as the President of the APSA appoints the Program Committee Chair of the APSA in any given year. While the presidencies of the Organized Sections usually rotate, sometimes the lower but important offices, like secretary and treasurer, remain the same person for administrative convenience for several years. Because there is not usually a great supply of people willing to do the

work of organizing a section, the circulation of elites may sometimes occur within a rather small group. In short, while the Organized Sections are indisputably democratic procedurally, they are not uniformly more democratic on this dimension than the APSA Council itself.

The Organized Sections are, however, more democratic in the sense of being more accessible. As one member of the Organized Section on Political Parties and Organizations put it, "The sections are accountable. . . . If people are upset, they can come to meetings and raise hell about it." Because they are decentralized, the Organized Sections also *feel*, at least to many members, more democratic and less elitist than the APSA. (The reader should know at this point that the views I express here are the views of active members of these organizations, and a very small sample thereof. I advance them here not as representative of the membership, but as putting forward an argument that I believe we should take seriously.)

3) The Organized Sections are also under pressure to be accountable through the fear of exit. In the worst case, a section with fewer than 100 dues-paying members cannot legally, under APSA rules, continue to exist. In less extreme cases, not having sufficient numbers of active members to publish a newsletter or carry on other functions of a section undermines the sections viability. In contrast to the program committee section chairs, who are appointed for one year and may feel no institutional responsibility except, perhaps, to the discipline as a whole, organized section program chairs know that the viability of their section depends on its responding to the preferences of its members and potential members.

Decentralizing authority to the Organized Section lets the sections take control of their destinies and gives their membership a shot in the arm. As one person in Public Administration put it, the Organized Sections' desire to put the program together "should be interpreted as a sign of health and vigor," and encouraged, not resisted. Here are some people eager to throw themselves into these tasks; that energy should be tapped, fostered and

appreciated

Beyond these three considerations of reducing arbitrariness, promoting democracy and promoting member involvement, people in the Organized Sections also argued the practical point that a division of responsibility between Program Committee Sections and Organized Sections would be extremely cumbersome, the consultation required causing a much larger total of work.

Moreover, in response to potential charges of narrowness, several Organized Sections pointed to convincing evidence of breadth, from their own choice of Program Chairs to the range of panels that they brought together for the 1989 annual meeting. One member of the Public Administration Organized Section suggested that the Organized Sections continue to arrange the panels for the APSA annual meeting, with the understanding that if complaints about narrowness arose, the responsibility could be divided at that point

Program Committee Sections

The arguments giving to the Organized Sections the total arrangement of panels at the annual meeting can be summed up as the political and intellectual dangers of feudalism.

1) Political dangers. Many members of the Association with whom I have spoken, along with many members of the Council, have expressed fears that the Organized Sections could come to represent only the "joiners" in the Association or those who felt most strongly the responsibility for organizing the subfield, and that self-selection might lead to a relatively homogeneous group doing the organizing. That homogeneity might take shape around a spot on the left-right political spectrum, or around some concept of what the field is supposed to be. While "raising hell" in the Organized Sections, or organizing a separate section to represent another perspective is always a possibility, in conflictual situations many Association members seem to prefer exit over voice. Those members, accordingly, prefer to be represented by having panels organized by

scholars appointed by a Program Committee Chair, even granting the possibilities of random variation that this procedure entails, rather than by scholars appointed by an Organized Section. (Again, I should point out that the people with whom I have talked are by no means a representative sample of the membership. It is completely unclear how many members in sections like Public Administration and Urban Politics—the two sections where active members' feelings run strongest in favor of Organized Section control—favor or are comfortable with a program shared with the Program Committee.)

Observers of associations in other disciplines that have radically decentralized, like the American Educational Research Association, report that in these associations the sections can tend to become self-perpetuating oligopolies.

2) Intellectual dangers. Supporters of the Program Committee Sections also argue that the traditional process has built into it several features that promote intellectual diversity and intellectual excitement.

First, the very variation in the backgrounds of Program Committee Chairs that causes anxiety in some sections does produce different "takes" on the fields in different years. This divergence from the way the mainstream may conceive of a field can be seen as good rather than bad. It may even be a loss to the profession to avoid appointing anyone as program chair who is hostile to one or more approaches in the field. While we should urge inclusiveness and plurality upon our chairs, we should also recognize that occasional chairs with a vision they want to pursue, even a vision that disadvantages other perspectives, can be a vitalizing intellectual force.

Second, a Program Committee Chair can, by using personal networks, sometimes convince people to give panels who would otherwise not do so. While this is also true of Organized Section program chairs, the networks are often different, and the resulting diversity is a net gain for the profession.

Third, the very "elitism" of the Program Committee process can produce outcomes by which the profession can gain by. In my own case, for example, I certainly did not know which people were doing

exciting and intellectually stimulating work in all the fields of the discipline. So I got on the telephone, phoned people culled both from my personal friends in the different fields and from a general knowledge of the prominent people in those fields, and asked, "Who's good?" The process was the essence of the old boy network. But asking "Who's good?" does usually produce a list of people who are generally thought to be the very best in the field, and those who are thought to be the best often do have good ideas for panels. They often do have a nose for originality and excitement. They often do know what really good work is being done before it has been published, so they can bring together this and that idea that others did not know was being worked on, or this and that scholar whom others did not realize had something in common.

The process, which works in part through a network of the most established scholars, produces a list of section chairs that often overrepresents the most prestigious universities. This overrepresentation, however, is somewhat limited by the implicit rules the Program Committee Chair tries to follow (but due to lack of information I did not always succeed in following): 1) not appointing anyone who has chaired the section before, 2) not appointing anyone not tenured, 3) not appointing anyone in one's own university, 4) consciously considering diversity in approach and in academic background.

Conclusion on Organization

I conclude that there are good arguments on both sides, and that we need both kinds of things. I also conclude that feelings run so high in some fields, like Public Administration, that it would do a lot of damage to return, without more consultation than I have been able to do informally, to the 50-30-20 formula.

I therefore proposed in April to the APSA Council, and the Council accepted my recommendation, that for the 1990 meetings we use, on an experimental basis, a formula providing that when there are Organized Sections in a field, the Program Committee and Organized Sections would

have the *de jure* right to split the panels allocated to the field 50-50. In practice, however, I propose that the Program Committee Section chairs and Organized Section program chairs within a field work closely with one another, allocating the panels between them, in consultation with the Program Committee Chair, as they think best meets the needs of the field.

I propose that the Association set up a committee to review this question, consult with people in the different fields, and consult with the members of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Annual Meeting—Joseph Cooper, Stephen Elkins, Charles Jones (chair), Manus Midlarsky and Barbara Sinclair—to suggest what arrangements might be best for the future. While stability of decision is certainly an asset, I am convinced that there has not been enough discussion of this issue in the profession. Reactions to first drafts of this article have tended to favor a simple return to the status quo ante, but no one can say at the moment what the general reaction might be after deliberation.

Unaffiliated Groups

So far, I have not discussed the role of unaffiliated groups. One member of an Organized Section has suggested to me that their role be reduced to less than 20 percent. Others have strongly defended the present allocation to Unaffiliated Groups. The major argument for reserving at least 20 percent of the program for Unaffiliated Groups is that these groups provide the most obvious and easily accessible outlet for new ideas that at any time might challenge the existing structure. While opportunities for getting a hearing for a new approach might be stymied by the vagaries and the elitism of the Program Committee process or by the field definitions of the Organized Section process, almost any group can ask for the opportunity to present a few panels as an Unaffiliated Group. If those panels are well attended, these groups will have a good chance asking for more the next year. Eventually, their ideas might become incorporated into one or the other of the official processes, but as

an organization they might want to continue on an unaffiliated basis, free from the restrictions that the Association imposes on Organized Sections, or open primarily to ideas compatible with their own perspectives. Unaffiliated groups tap a form of intellectual energy that neither the Program Committee process nor the Organized Section process is always able to tap.

II. Allocation of Panels among Disciplinary Fields

Part of the intensity of feeling about the annual meeting, among both members of Organized Sections and members of fields without Organized Sections, has derived from the concern that if a field did not have an Organized Section to protect its interests against the inroads of other fields, its allocation of panels would be steadily eaten away by those who were better organized. In an era of expanding numbers of panels, it seemed reasonable that any group with the energy to organize could have panels without depriving any other group. Now that we have a restricted number of panels, the enterprise becomes a zero-sum game. In an analogy with spectators standing to see at a football game, one can at least imagine an APSA in which members all have to spend a great deal of energy organizing against one another to protect their rights to their panels, but no one is better off than before they all organized.

The resulting politicization of the process might, of course, bring to the agenda important questions about, for example, which fields make a greater contribution to the discipline. The conflicts that ensued might also generate greater interest and participation in the Association than before. A democratic theorist and a political scientist ought to think twice before suggesting that any issue be "depoliticized." Nevertheless, the political energies of the members of the Association might also be used in ways that met their real interests better than protecting the number of panels in their fields against one another. If this is so, it might be useful to depoliticize the issue by

finding a way of allocating panels among fields that most people thought was relatively reasonable, but that was also open to some negotiation.

Conclusion on Allocating Panels among Fields

The 1987 Ad Hoc Committee suggested that panels be distributed among the different fields on the basis of (1) past number of panels allocated to a particular field of interest, and (2) relative attendance at panels in previous years. The second factor allows for gradual shifts over time, as fields whose panels generate more interest get a few more panels the next year and those that generate less interest a few less.

To these two factors I might suggest instituting a third, advisory only, based on a poll of the members of the Association, in which each member gets 6 votes, to be cast for any subfield in proportion to intensity. A member could cast all 6 votes for one field, or distribute the votes among fields. The results of the poll would have no formal or legal status, but would have the advantage of providing information about interest in the subfields throughout the profession. It would be useful to have such a measure because (1) total attendance at a field's panels in any given meeting is partly a function of how many panels are offered in comparison with other fields rather than a pure measure of interest, and (2) the measure of field interest in the *APSA Biographical Directory* is not specific enough to use for this purpose.

The overall goal would be to come up with a way of distributing panels among fields that most members would consider relatively fair.

Plea for Deliberation and Response

It has become clear to me, as I've phoned around to different members of the profession, that each field and subfield in political science has its own history, sore points in which are often activated by the allocation of panels at the annual meeting. A committee of working size, no matter how carefully constituted, cannot under-

stand the particular history, needs and vulnerabilities of each subfield: Accordingly, I hope that members of the Association reading this account will talk about the issues with others in and outside of their own fields, debate the merits of various allocations between Program Committee

Sections and Organized Sections, and write or in other ways contact members of the APSA Council or Cathy Rudder, APSA Executive Director, filling them in on issues that the committee should take into account and suggesting solutions for their field and the discipline as a whole

Editor's Note: The following list pairs Program Committee Sections with corresponding APSA Organized Sections. As you will see, the matches can only be approximate given our freedom to define and redefine the basic units of the discipline

APSA Sections 1990

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V. Computer Users

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Call For Papers: 1990 Annual Meeting

Policies and Deadlines

Paper proposals and offers to appear as discussants or panel chairpersons must be submitted as early as possible. The deadline for receipt of submissions is December 1, 1989. Proposals for whole panels are welcome, but persons with suggestions for panels should get their requests in early.

Please write directly to the appropriate section Program Committee and/or Organized Section chairperson(s) listed below. More general inquiries of suggestions may be addressed to:

Jane Mansbridge, Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, 2040 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60201; (312) 491-8726 (Program Chair).

Ann Peyser or Ioanna Iliopoulos, APSA, 1527 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 483-2512.

Prospective participants should be aware of two APSA Council policies:

(1) Acceptance of a proposal by the

Program Committee obligates you to preregister (with appropriate fee) prior to June 1, 1990. If you fail to preregister, you will not be listed in the full program

(2) Participants may appear on two (but no more than two) panels in any capacity—chairing a panel, acting as discussant or presenting a paper. This rule applies to APSA Program Committee panels, APSA Organized Section Panels, and Unaffiliated Group panels.

Coordination of Program Committee and Organized Section Panels

You are encouraged to submit paper proposals to Program Committee Sections and the corresponding Organized Section. If you apply to several Program Committee Sections, or apply to Program Committee Sections and Organized Section Panels, please inform each section chairperson that yours is a multiple application. Also, in that case, please notify the other section chairpersons as soon as you have accepted an invitation for participation in another section

1990 Program Committee Sections

Section leaders of the 1990 Program Committee will announce their proposed programs below: