

Registration Rises at Annual Meeting

Eloise French

Registration at the 1981 Annual Meeting in New York totaled 2,887, which is the highest registration since the 1972 meeting.

Of the 312 panels in which 1,560 people participated, six drew an audience of more than 100. These six panels covered a wide spectrum of political science and included both APSA-sponsored panels as well as those convened by unaffiliated groups. The accompanying chart lists the most popular panels by sponsor, title, chair, and attendance.

The Most Popular 1981 Annual Meeting Panels

Panel Sponsor	Title	Chair	Attendance
APSA	The Defense of Authority in American Political Thought	Benjamin Barber	152
Presidency Research Group	Roundtable on the White House Staff: An Insider's Perspective	Dom Bonafede	141
APSA	Major Changes in the American Political System: Alternative Research Agendas	Nelson W. Polsby	134
American Society for Legal and Political Philosophy	The Political Dimensions of Marxism	Judith Shklar	127
Conference Group on the Political Economy of Advanced Industrial Societies	Roundtable on the 1980 Election: The End of Liberalism?	Victor Navasky	107
APSA	Roundtable on Polls and Pollsters in 1980	Samuel Popkin	102



Bruce Oppenheimer of Houston, Norman Ornstein of Catholic University, Congresswoman Geraldine A. Ferraro (D-NY), and Charles O. Jones discuss party politics in one of the well-attended panels which combined politicians and scholars.

Photo by Norinne Hessman

Academic Expertise Difficult to Accept

City governments have a limited capacity to accept the advice of academic or other outside experts, according to the panelists at a discussion sponsored by the Policy Studies Organization at the 1981 Annual Meeting.

Personal and organizational factors, as opposed to the academic quality of the work, were seen as the key ingredients of successful consulting relationships at the workshop on "Academic-Practitioner Interaction and Policy-Oriented Research," which was chaired by Steve Redburn and

Martin Abravanel of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The role of broker or interpreter was seen by several people as crucial to the proper interpretation and application of research results. This role reportedly may be played by the chief analyst in a government agency, who speaks directly to a policy-making official, or by a scholar with access to a variety of policy makers as well as the media.

Rather than concentrating on what political scientists and other social scientists can give the policy maker, the discussion focused on the government as a consumer of social research.

Much of the debate was spurred by the ideas advanced by Peter Szanton of Hamilton, Rabinovitz, and Szanton, Inc. in his new book, *Not Well Advised*.



Future political scientist Seth Bensel with Anne Kampelman at the Child Care Center at the Annual Meeting.

A Report on the Plenary Session: Welfare State With Us Always?

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The welfare state may well vary in its generosity but "will not vary in its existence," according to Theodore Lowi, chair of the plenary session on The State of the Welfare State. Lowi argued that the welfare state is a permanent fixture, rooted in a fundamental political response to weakness in the capitalist system, embedded in our moral structure, and defended by a vested interest which is vastly bureaucratized. Consequently, the key question is not whether the welfare state will exist but rather how it will be changed.

Other panel participants, Frances Fox Piven of Boston College, Aaron Wildavsky of the University of California, Berkeley, and Leonard Silk of *The New York Times*, disagreed on how the Reagan Administration's actions in the welfare realm should be interpreted.

Economic vs. Political Rights

Piven saw the Reagan Administration as trying to revive a doctrine out of the American past—the separation of political rights from economic rights. According to this analysis, American history generally has not allowed for the use of political rights to alleviate economic situations; popular participation left people helpless and the promise of democracy was defeated. Despite this *laissez-faire* doctrine, capital always has turned to government, asking for tariffs, subsidies, loans, and other policies; the result was an "alliance of state and capital obscured by constitutionalism."

In Piven's view the welfare programs of the thirties and sixties represented the victory of popular struggle: "Political rights did indeed become the vehicle by which ordinary people sought economic rights against unemployment and destitution." Piven regards the Reagan Administration as committed to restricting the expansion of welfare and constricting popular political conflict. To illustrate the Administration's priorities, Piven stated that the Administration has shown a pre-