

## **Miller Center Announces Stellar New Crop of Fellows**

A better understanding of such current and pressing questions as the nature of authoritarian regimes, the historical roots of the modern housing crisis, and the political evolution of interest groups like the Tea Party is in the works thanks to the newest Miller Center fellows. The University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs has selected nine promising young scholars for its 2011-2012 Fellowships in American Politics, Foreign Policy, and Global Politics. The program awards each fellow a one-year \$20,000 grant to complete their dissertation and connects these young scholars with their dream mentor – a leading national scholar in the fellow's field. Brian Balogh, who founded the fellowship program and currently directs it notes that "the fellows all analyze politics through the lens of history, spanning the disciplines of political science, sociology and history. Besides sponsoring this cutting edge scholarship, the Miller Center trains its fellows to distill their findings for non-specialists – to better inform citizens and improve the quality of public discourse."

This year, over 130 applications arrived from the nation's top graduate programs in Political Science, History, Sociology, and International Relations. In its twelve years of funding graduate research, the Miller Center has helped launch the careers of over one hundred academicians and public affairs experts. Fellows now teach at such prestigious universities as Yale or Northwestern Universities, while others work in public service, for institutions ranging from the U.S. Air Force to the Department of State.

The fellowship's emphasis on reaching a broader audience through op-ed, media, and blogging workshops has also deepened its fellows' commitments to translating their work for a broader public by engaging with current political and policy debates. You can regularly find fellows' articles and opinions in the pages of the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, in digital media like *Politico* or *Slate*, or over the airwaves of NPR or PBS.

### **2011-2012 MILLER CENTER FELLOWS**

**Michael Beckley** – Columbia University (Political Science)

Titled "The Unipolar Era," Michael Beckley's dissertation sets out to debunk the notion that the United States is being eclipsed by China as the dominant power. In particular, he aims to demonstrate that GNP alone does not determine the strength of a nation's military. Instead, he argues the level and comprehensive integration of a state's economic development matters most. Beckley has published in and won the article of the year award (2010) from the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, and, in 2009, he received the International Studies Association's Carl Beck award for best paper by a graduate student.

**Emily Charnock** – University of Virginia (Political Science)

In her dissertation, "From Ghosts to Shadows: The National Party Organizations and Interest Groups," Emily Charnock explores the institutional impact of the relationship between key interest groups and the parties with which they have traditionally been allied. Her project promises to inform our current debate about the way interest groups like the Tea Party or labor can drive the political debate and party's

agendas. Charnock has published a co-authored piece in *Political Science Quarterly* and has been a frequent contributor to the *Washington Times*.

**Sheena Chestnut** – Harvard University (Government / IR & Security Studies)

Sheena Chestnut explores a particularly timely question: why are some authoritarian regimes at times more or less violent than others? By exploring a variety of regimes, Chesnut's work has the potential to shed light not just on the nature of these states, but on the kinds of foreign policies best suited to dealing with authoritarian governments. Her dissertation is titled "Intelligent Autocrats: Secret Police & State Violence Under Authoritarianism." Chesnut has published in *International Security*.

**Jack Epstein** – Ohio University (History)

Jack Epstein's dissertation promises to recast the history of the New Deal state and its policy and political legacies, by exploring the emergence of federal racketeering laws. Conservatives up to the 1970s, he contends, used these mechanisms to undermine the New Deal state by fostering competition and resisting federal intervention in labor markets. Titled "Behind the Menacing Racket: Organized Labor, Federal Anti-Racketeering Policy, and the Law and Order Origins of the Modern American State, 1927-1970," Epstein's project challenges traditional assumptions about the development of political ideologies. Epstein is the McWilliams Fellow.

**Robert Henderson** – University of Maryland (History)

Robert Henderson's dissertation sheds light on the historical roots of a most vexing current political and economic dilemma – the deregulation of America's housing markets. While many scholars have explored the political ideology of suburbanization, Henderson pushes the field in new directions by investigating the financial and regulatory mechanisms underpinning the markets themselves. His dissertation is titled "Dream Deregulated: The Transformation of Housing Finance, 1968-1985."

**Andrew Kelly** – Northwestern University (Political Science)

Andrew Kelly's project, "Entering the New Frontier: The Origins and Development of Scientific Capacity in the United States and Great Britain," explores the role of exchanges of scientific expertise and the effect on expanding state capacity in the United States and Great Britain. His fellowship will be supported by the Monell Foundation and is a perfect example of how the Miller Center along with Monell are contributing to a fast-growing new field that seeks to shed light on the co-evolution of technology and democracy.

**Aila Matanock** – Stanford University (Political Science)

Aila Matanock's work explores vital questions for global security studies and International Relations: why do some violent opposition groups lay down their arms and join the political process while others do not? Titled "International Insurance: Explaining Why Militant Groups Participate in Elections as Part of a Peace Agreement," Matanock's dissertation is a comparative study with immediate implications for global policymaking. Matanock has contributed to the Center for Global Development's Working Paper Series.

**Rachel Moran** – Penn State University (History and Women’s Studies)

In her dissertation, “Body Politic: Federal Policy-Making on American Physique, 1890-1965,” Rachel Moran explores how the United States government developed policies over time meant to quite literally ‘shape’ American citizens. In exploring federal nutrition and exercise policy, Moran opens up a new field of inquiry into the overlap of citizenship, federal policy, health, and body image. Moran has already won numerous awards for her work, and an article presenting some of her findings was the cover story for the March 2011 issue of the *Journal of American History*.

**Victor Nemchecnok** – University of Virginia (History)

Victor Nemchenok’s dissertation opens up a new avenue for international development studies by looking at the other side of the story: how experts and NGOs from the global “south,” the third world, interpreted and contested leading nation’s efforts at modernization over the 1970s and 1980s. His dissertation is titled “A Dialogue of Power: Development, Global Civil Society, and the Third World Challenge to the International Order, 1970-1988.” Nemchenok has published in *Cold War History*, *The Middle East Journal*, and *Diplomacy and Statecraft*.