



Department of Politics

## **Government, Parties and Elections Research Cluster Online Seminar Series 2021/22**

**Semester 1: Thursday 3:30-5:00 pm, Zoom**

7 Oct	<b>Raul Gomez</b> University of Liverpool	Post-industrialization and Support for Conservative and Christian Democratic Parties in Western Europe
21 Oct	<b>Will Jennings</b> University of Southampton	The Politics of Trust
4 Nov	<b>Tim Bale</b> Queen Mary University of London	The Tories and Labour at the 2019 General Election: Contrasting Results; Contrasting Campaigns
18 Nov	<b>Eva Anduiza</b> Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Sexism, Gender Backlash and Far-Right Vote Choice
16 Dec	<b>Elvin Ong</b> National University of Singapore	Opposing Power: Building Opposition Alliances in Electoral Autocracies

For further information or for receiving the Zoom meeting details please contact Dr Luca Bernardi ([Luca.Bernardi@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:Luca.Bernardi@liverpool.ac.uk)).

**Raul Gomez (University of Liverpool): 7 Oct**

*Title:* Post-industrialization and Support for Conservative and Christian Democratic Parties in Western Europe (with Chris D. Raymond, Queen's University Belfast)

*Abstract:* Conservative and Christian Democratic parties continue to receive relatively little attention in the scholarly literature compared to other party families. This is particularly striking given the fact that, although national trends diverge, average support for Conservative and Christian Democratic parties has been subject to a steady decline across much of Western Europe since at least the 1980s. In this presentation, I will focus on the impact that structural social changes associated with modernization and the development of post-industrial economies may have had on Conservative and Christian Democratic parties. The empirical analysis, based on 41 parties in 17 West European democracies since the 1960s, reveals that social changes have brought about both challenges and opportunities for the conservative mainstream right, the overall balance of which depends on parties' strategic choices. All in all, I will argue that post-industrial societies make it more difficult for parties to obtain long-term electoral returns from a strategy that mixes social conservatism and economic liberalism.

*Bio:* Raul Gomez is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics of the University of Liverpool and a Leverhulme Research Fellow from 2020-2022. His research interests lie at the intersection between political sociology and comparative politics. His current projects focus on the changing conservative voter, support for radical left parties, and the impact of job insecurity on political behaviour and attitudes.

## **Will Jennings (University of Southampton): 21 Oct**

*Title:* The Politics of Trust

*Abstract:* Is there a crisis in political trust? How does trust work when citizens and government face a crisis on the scale of COVID-19? Is the real trust crisis that citizens struggle to decide who is trustworthy? In this presentation Will Jennings presents findings from the ESRC-funded 'TrustGov' project, drawing on evidence from cross-national surveys conducted in 25 countries and 60 focus groups conducted in 8 countries (covering a range of global regions and regime types). He considers the evidence for whether trust is in decline, how trust was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how it influenced the effectiveness of government responses, and how citizens go about their reasoning processes in making trust judgements.

*Bio:* Will Jennings is Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Southampton and Principal Investigator of the ESRC-funded 'TrustGov' project exploring trust and trustworthiness of national and global governance. He is also Elections Analyst for Sky News. His research explores questions relating to public policy and political behaviour, specifically in relation to public opinion, political trust, elections, political geography, agenda-setting, and public administration. He is coauthor of *Policy Agendas in British Politics* (Palgrave, 2013), *The Politics of Competence* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), *The Good Politician* (Cambridge University Press, 2018) and *The British General Election of 2019* (Palgrave, 2021).

**Tim Bale (Queen Mary University of London): 4 Nov**

*Title:* The Tories and Labour at the 2019 General Election: Contrasting Results; Contrasting Campaigns

*Abstract:* The Conservative Party won the 2019 general election by such a convincing margin that it is tempting to portray its victory as somehow inevitable. But we should resist that temptation. Clearly there were some underlying factors running in the Tories' favour. But they amplified their advantage by planning and executing a brilliant campaign - especially in comparison to the Labour Party, whose campaign was both misconceived and poorly organised. This paper takes a deep dive into both campaigns, taking in both the 'air war' and the 'ground war', in order to analyse the key differences between them.

*Bio:* Tim Bale teaches politics at Queen Mary University of London, where he specialises in the study of political parties in the UK and elsewhere. His latest books include *The British General Election of 2019*, co-authored with Rob Ford, Will Jennings and Paula Surridge, *The Modern British Party System*, co-authored with Paul Webb, and *Riding the Populist Wave: Europe's Mainstream Right in Crisis*, co-edited with Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, all of which were published this year.

**Eva Anduiza (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona): 18 Nov**

*Title:* Sexism, Gender Backlash and Far-Right Vote Choice

*Abstract:* While gender equality issues play an important role in far-right discourses, attitudes toward gender equality have received remarkably limited consideration in empirical analyses of why people vote for a far-right party. We argue that attitudes such as modern sexism are profoundly connected to far-right parties' discourses, and consequently, are expected to affect the probability of voting for the far right, both as a predisposition and as an activated motivation. We distinguish backlash activation, in which sexism becomes electorally consequential as a reaction to feminist mobilization, and normalization activation, associated to the visibility of far-right sexist discourses. Using panel data from Spain we show that modern sexism is indeed an important factor in the rise of the far-right party Vox. We further show that the activation of sexism was more related to feminist mobilization than to the normalization of sexist discourses that came with the enhanced visibility of the far right.

*Bio:* I am professor of political science at the [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona](#) where I am also [ICREA Academia](#) research fellow. I direct the research group on [Democracy, Elections and Citizenship](#) and I have until recently directed also the [Master in Political Science](#).

My main areas of research deal with different aspects of citizens' involvement in politics in advanced democracies. This includes an interest in the causes and consequences of electoral turnout, political protest, digital media and political attitudes. I am also interested in attitudes towards corruption and in survey and experimental methodology. Recently my research has focused on the attitudinal consequences of the economic crisis, with a special focus on populist attitudes. In my current project I explore how individuals' attitudes towards gender equality and feminism change along time.

**Elvin Ong (National University of Singapore): 16 Dec**

*Title:* Opposing Power: Building Opposition Alliances in Electoral Autocracies

*Abstract:* Forming pre-electoral alliances significantly enhances the chances of opposition victory against dominant incumbent autocrats. But opposition parties frequently cannot make the costly compromises necessary for inter-party cooperation. So when do opposition parties build pre-electoral alliances? My forthcoming book argues that opposition elites' perceptions of incumbent regime vulnerability and their perceptions of mutual dependency shape their incentives and efforts to build alliances. Specifically, heightened perceptions of incumbent regime vulnerability and clear recognition of mutual dependency among opposition leaders strongly motivate alliance building. I illustrate my arguments through a controlled comparison of 1980s autocratic Philippines and South Korea, triangulating empirical evidence from the secondary literature, newspaper reports, autobiographies and diaries of opposition leaders, and American declassified foreign policy documents from the CIA, Department of State, and the National Security Council in the Reagan era. A brief comparative historical analysis of opposition alliance (non-)formation in Malaysia and Singapore from 1965-2020 lends additional support.

*Bio:* Elvin Ong is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the National University of Singapore. He was previously a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Southeast Asia Research, Institute of Asian Research, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, University of British Columbia. His primary research interests are in political parties, opposition coalition formation, and public opinion in electoral authoritarian regimes, particularly in Malaysia and Singapore. His research has been published in disciplinary journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Party Politics*, *Government and Opposition*, *Electoral Studies*, *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, as well as more regionally-focused journals such as the *Journal of East Asian Studies*, *Asian Survey*, and *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. He received his PhD in Political Science from Emory University in 2018. He was named a 2019 Dan David Prize Scholar in Defending Democracy, and a 2018 Young Southeast Asia Fellow.