



# Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science

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- Publication date: August 2011

Laboratory experiments, survey experiments and field experiments occupy a central and growing place in the discipline of political science. The Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science is the first text to provide a comprehensive overview of how experimental research is transforming the field. Some chapters explain and define core concepts in experimental design and analysis. Other chapters provide an intellectual history of the experimental movement. Throughout the book, leading scholars review groundbreaking research and explain, in personal terms, the growing influence of experimental political science. The Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science provides a collection of insights that can be found nowhere else. Its topics are of interest not just to researchers who are conducting experiments today, but also to researchers who think that experiments can help them make new and important discoveries in political science and beyond.

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## Acknowledgements

This volume has its origins in the *American Political Science Review's* special 2006 centennial issue celebrating the evolution of the study of politics. For that issue, we proposed a paper that traced the history of experiments within political science. The journal's editor, Lee Sigelman, responded to our proposal for the issue with a mix of skepticism – for example, asking about the prominence of experiments in the discipline – and encouragement. We moved forward and eventually published a paper in the special issue, and there is no doubt it was much better than it would have been absent Lee's constant constructive guidance. Indeed, Lee, who himself conducted some remarkably innovative experiments, pushed us to think about what makes political science experiments unique relative to the other psychological and social sciences. It was this type of prodding that led us to conceive of this *Handbook*. Sadly, Lee did not live to see the completion of the *Handbook*, but we hope it approaches the high standards he always set. We know we are not alone in saying that Lee is greatly missed.

Our first task in developing the *Handbook* was to generate a list of topics and possible authors; we were overwhelmed by the positive responses to our invitations to contribute. While we leave it to the reader to assess the value of the book, we can say the experience of assembling this volume could not have been more enjoyable and instructive, thanks to authors.

Nearly all of the authors attended a conference held at Northwestern University (in Evanston, IL, USA) on May 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2009. We were extremely fortunate to have an exceptionally able group of discussants take the lead in presenting and commenting on the chapters; we deeply appreciate the time and insights they provided. The discussants included: Kevin Arceneaux, Ted Brader, Ray Duch, Kevin Esterling, Diana Mutz, Mike Neblo, Eric Oliver, Randy Stevenson, Nick Valentino, and Lynn Vavreck. Don Kinder played a special role at the conference offering his overall assessment at the end of the proceedings. A version of these thoughts appears as the volume's Afterword.

We also owe thanks to the more than thirty graduate students who attended the conference, met with faculty, and offered their perspectives. These students (many of whom became Professors before the publication of the volume) included Lene Aarøe, Emily Alvarez, Christy Aroopala, Bernd Beber, Toby Bolsen, Kim Dionne, Katie Donovan, Ryan Enos, Brian Falb, Mark Fredrickson, Fernando Garcia, Ben Gaskins, Seth Goldman, Daniel Hidalgo, Samara Klar, Yanna Krupnikov, Thomas Leeper, Adam Levine, Peter Loewen, Kristin Michelitch, Daniel Myers, Jennifer Ogg Anderson, Spencer Piston, Josh Robison, Jon Rogowski, Mark Schneider, Geoff Sheagley, Alex Theodoridis, Catarina Thomson, Dustin Tingley, Brad Verhulst, and Abby Wood.

We thank a number of others who attended the conference and offered important comments, including, but not limited to David Austen-Smith, Traci Burch, Fay Cook, Jeremy Freese, Jerry Goldman, Peter Miller, Eugenia Mitchelstein, Ben Page, Jenn Richeson, Anne Sartori, Victor Shih, and Salvador Vazquez del Mercado.

The conference would not have been possible without the exceptional contributions of a number of individuals. Of particular note are the many staff members of Northwestern's Institute for

Policy Research. We thank the Institute's director, Fay Cook, for supporting the conference, and we are indebted to Patricia Reese for overseeing countless logistics. We also thank Eric Betzold, Arlene Dattels, Sarah Levy, Michael Weis, and Bev Zack. A number of Northwestern's political science Ph.D. students also donated their time to ensure a successful event – including Emily Alvarez, Toby Bolsen, Brian Falb, Samara Klar, Thomas Leeper, and Josh Robison. We also thank Nicole, Jake, and Sam Druckman for their patience and help in ensuring everything at the conference was in place.

Of course the conference and the production of the volume could not have been possible without generous financial support and we gratefully acknowledge National Science Foundation (SES-0851285), Northwestern University's Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, and the Institute for Policy Research.

Following the conference, authors engaged in substantial revisions and, along the way, a number of others provided instructive comments – including Cengiz Erisen, Jeff Guse, David Llanos, and the anonymous press reviewers. We also thank the participants in Druckman's graduate experimental class who read a draft of the volume and commented on each chapter; these impressive students included: Emily Alvarez, Toby Bolsen, Brian Falb, Samara Klar, Thomas Leeper, Rachel Moskowitz, Taryn Nelson, Christoph Nguyen, Josh Robison, and Xin Sun. We have no doubt that countless others offered advice (of which we, as the editors, are not directly aware), and we thank them for their contributions. A special acknowledgement is due to Samara Klar and Thomas Leeper who probably have read the chapters more than anyone else, and without fail, have offered helpful advice and skillful coordination. Finally, it was a pleasure working with Eric Crahan and Jason Przybylski at Cambridge University Press.

We view this *Handbook* as a testament to the work of many scholars (a number of whom are authors in this volume) who set the stage for experimental approaches in political science. While we cannot be sure what many of them will think of the volume, we do hope it successfully addresses a question raised by an editor's (Druckman's) son who was 7 when he asked “why is political ‘science’ a ‘science’ since it doesn't do things that science does, like run experiments?”

--James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia