



**NEWS RELEASE  
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**U.Va.'s Governing America in a Global Era (GAGE) Program  
to Fund its 90<sup>th</sup> Fellow, Enters Publishing Agreement  
with Cornell University Press**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA., June 15, 2009—This year, the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia will fund its 90<sup>th</sup> Fellow through the Governing America in a Global Era (GAGE) Program. Founded in 2000, the GAGE Fellowship supports the next generation of cutting-edge scholars, giving financial support to students who are completing their Ph.D. dissertation in fields that use history to shed light on contemporary U.S. domestic and foreign policies and politics. The program also connects each Fellow with a “dream mentor” and trains them to communicate with a broader audience. Eight fellows were chosen for the 2009–10 academic year from a pool of 185 applicants enrolled in leading Ph.D. programs in History, Political Science and Sociology.

People are taking notice of the GAGE Fellows’ path-breaking scholarship – and so are presses. Cornell University Press and the Miller Center have reached a cooperative agreement to publish and promote future GAGE scholarship. “Every press is looking for authors who can make a contribution to the field and add their voices to public debate,” said Michael McGandy, acquisitions editor with Cornell University Press. “The Miller Center is a place where scholarship meets citizenship. We expect that some very important and influential books will be published through our cooperation with the Center and its scholars.”

The Miller Center Fellowship is perhaps best known for its “dream mentor” program. Each year, GAGE director Brian Balogh works closely with his program associates and the Fellows to identify leading scholars who can best serve as faculty advisors to aid Fellows in their research pursuits. Mentors are drawn from leading political science, history and sociology departments around the world, and have included luminaries including University of Pennsylvania

historian Tom Sugrue and Yale political scientist David Mayhew. These “dream mentors” work with their advisees throughout the fellowship year, and mentors and Fellows come together to discuss their work at an annual spring conference held at the Miller Center. The conference provides a forum for both senior scholars and graduate students to engage in discussions about current public policy issues.

The GAGE program’s most distinctive mission is to make new scholarship more accessible to the general public – and for political scientists and historians to become active participants in open public policy debates. Fellows participate in training sessions with senior scholars who have also published hundreds of op-eds, and who appear on radio and television regularly. The GAGE Fellows look for creative avenues to distribute their scholarship to the public. During his fellowship year in 2001–02, former Fellow Joe Crespino, now an Emory University associate professor, completed an op-ed that grew directly from his Ph.D. dissertation at Stanford University; “The Way Republicans Talk About Race” was published in the *New York Times* in 2002. The dissertation, “Strategic Accommodation: Civil Rights Opponents in Mississippi and their Impact on American Racial Politics, 1953–1972,” won the 2003 Dissertation Award from the Jepson School of Leadership at the University of Richmond, and led to his prize-winning book: *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton University Press, 2007). Other fellows have also published their works in popular media outlets, actively participating in the public debate on key political issues of our time.

The 2009–10 Fellowship roster includes Lily Geismer, a History Ph.D. candidate currently working with Professor Matt Lassiter at the University of Michigan. Her dissertation, entitled “Don’t Blame Us: Grassroots Liberalism in Massachusetts, 1960-1990,” recasts the traditional narrative of postwar suburban politics. Historians Matt Lassiter, Kevin Kruse, and Joe Crespino have provided a detailed examination of Republican politicking in the suburban South, but Geismer hopes to focus on a new set of actors that often get left out of the story of Civil Rights era politics. Geismer contends that Massachusetts should be at the center of the “silent majority” narrative, arguing that New England liberals’ reliance on voluntary and individual-based solutions to structural problems severely hindered civil rights reforms in the North in the latter half of the 20th century. Northwestern University History and African-American Studies Professor Nancy Maclean will serve as Geismer’s dream mentor.

Eric Lomazoff, a Ph.D. candidate in Government at Harvard University, working with Freed Professor of Government Dan Carpenter, was also selected this year. His dream mentor is Stephen Skowronek, Pelatiah Perit Professor of Political and

Social Science at Yale University. Lomazoff will complete his dissertation, “The Life and Death of the ‘Hydra-Headed Monster’: Antebellum Bank Regulation and American State Development, 1781–1836.” Lomazoff’s dissertation reveals how better understanding the history of the U.S. Bank in the antebellum period can help Americans understand their often contentious relationship with federal financial institutions. In our current financial crisis, Lomazoff’s work will prove invaluable to policy makers deciding how institutions like the Federal Reserve should weather the most recent economic storm.

Six other fellows will also be funded this year, including Gwendoline Alphonso, a government and U.S. politics Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University; Christy Chapin, a history Ph.D. candidate at the University of Virginia; Brendan Green, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) political science Ph.D. candidate; Zane Kelly, political science Ph.D. candidate at the University of Colorado; Aaron Rapport, political science Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota; and Vanessa Walker, a history Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Too often, historians and political scientists engage in insular historical debates rather than reach out to a broader audience. Historiographical showdowns take the place of open forums for meaningful discussion between scholars, public intellectuals, politicians, and informed citizens. As a result, historians and political scientists have been relegated to the margins of public-policy decision making. The GAGE Fellows represent a new cohort of academics who seek to address critical issues by engaging a larger public in a discussion about patterns in American political development.

More about the Miller Center, the GAGE program, and current and past Fellows and mentors is online at: <http://millercenter.org/academic/gage>.

*Founded in 1975, the Miller Center of Public Affairs is a leading nonpartisan public policy institution that aims to fulfill Jefferson’s public service mission by serving as a national meeting place for engaged citizens, scholars, students, media representatives, and government officials to research, reflect, and report on issues of national importance to the governance of the United States, with special attention to the central role and history of the presidency.*

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