

RAY MIKELL

NEW ORLEANS LA
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Summary

Urban research and policy specialist with broad professional training and experience in political and social science research, as well as public administration and policy, with a background in print media. Communicates with clarity and concision about urban and public affairs. Accustomed to writing for different audiences, working with individuals from a broad cross-section of the public and the public policy environment, and working with teams. Trained in public budgetary practices, organization theory, network analysis, and public management.

Recent Work

Adjunct Instructor at Tulane University, Department of Political Science, August-December 2009.

- Led upper-division undergraduate classes in the US Presidency, and Public Policy (with a special, but not exclusive, focus on state, local and federal activity in tobacco policy). Oversaw student research on topics including public education and education reform.
- Placed a special focus on federal rule-making and regulatory processes and alternatives.

Reworking of article for (unnamed public affairs journal) "New Orleans Recovery Case Study" Available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/10594745/New-Orleans-Recovery-Case-Study>

Enumerator for Orleans Parish LA, U.S. Census Bureau; Spring 2009 and February-March 2009 & 2010

Extra/background work for HBO's "Treme" and the "Green Lantern" film, among several other productions; Spring 2010-Present

Volunteer (gallery and communications/PR work), New Orleans Photo Alliance (and associated PhotoNOLA and New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival events), 2009-2010

Development of websites for photography showcases and sales, as well as an athletic event-oriented fundraising effort for the American Cancer Society. See: raymikell.com and cosmic-rays.com

Volunteer (canvassing), Mitch Landrieu mayoral campaign, 2010

Research and Academic Experience

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

University of New Orleans, Department of Political Science; 2006-2008

- Led graduate student seminars on urban political systems. Presented a broad overview of the literature on urban politics and policy, covering areas such as American local government structure and municipal charters, analysis of voting and elections, race relations, public education, poverty, education, environmental sustainability, and housing policy. A special emphasis was placed on an examination of issues and problems in post-Katrina New Orleans.
- Regularly sent and took students to city government and post-Katrina planning and recovery meetings in the Crescent City.
- Conducted a social network research study in 2007-2008, based on a survey of New Orleans neighborhood organization officers, as part of a larger study of civic engagement in the city's post-Katrina planning process. Presented findings at a conference on social networks held at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge MA in June 2008.
- Learned to work with special, spreadsheet-based and graphical-oriented social networking software or the civic engagement research project.
- Led graduate and undergraduate classes in American public policy, with a special emphasis on federal, state and local tobacco policy. Guided students in analyses of legislation, as well as policymaking and policy implementation case studies.

VISITING INSTRUCTOR

Augusta State University (Augusta GA), Department of Political Science; 2004-2006

- Led sections in methodology for political science, which entailed teaching students about the uses and purposes of social science research, as well as statistical analysis.
- Led students in crafting empirical research papers with data taken from a class-produced survey, in so doing introducing them to more precise and formal means of scholarly expression.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT, FIELD RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR), University of Alabama; 2003-2004

- Administered, from May to August 2003, surveys given to lower-income children in the Mobile AL metropolitan area, with nearly 350 questions on topics ranging from familial relations and social trust to school violence. Research was funded through the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA).
- Contributed weekly, two-page field research reports to ISSR leaders over the course of the summer, summarizing experiences and describing neighborhoods visited.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

University of Alabama, Department of Political Science; 1999-2003

- Taught classes including introductions to American government, public policy, and state and local government.
- Assisted students in the writing of qualitative policy reports and in essay and research paper writing and organization.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Mississippi State University

- Assisted in the coding and entry of data in a regional study of state action in welfare reform, as well as research in the area of general public law.

Research Interests

Dissertation : *The Nexus of Social Capital and Government: Community Development in Trinity Gardens.*

- Featured in *The Journal of American History's* list of Recent Scholarship, March 2007.
- Designed and coordinated some 40 qualitative interviews featuring elected officials, government administrators and employees from the federal, state and local levels, and the heads of local civic and social service organizations in the Mobile AL metropolitan area.
- Developed a structured qualitative research design for the dissertation, a work that incorporated elements of social network analysis and theory from across the social sciences.

Master's Thesis: *Cure for the Delta Blues? A Case Study of the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone, Including an Overview of Regional History and the Evolution of Federal Development Programs.*

- Designed and coordinated some 20 qualitative interviews with elected state and local officials and members of the controlling board of the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone, an economic and community development project facilitated by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and involving more than a dozen federal agencies.
- Gathered statistical data on regional economics and population characteristics from the U.S. Census and state and federal agencies, as well as benchmarking, budgetary and performance data from the USDA.

Education

DOCTORATE

University of Alabama, Political Science; 2005

- Instructed in advanced social science research methods, and the use of statistical spreadsheet-oriented software including SPSS.
- Received extensive training in federal, state, and local government budgeting. Focused on the histories and theories of budgeting, as well as the technical details of various types of budgeting (such as zero-based budgeting and performance-based budgeting).
- Trained in myriad other aspects of public administration, including public personnel management, public policy analysis, intergovernmental and inter-agency relations, and organization theory.
- Administered and analyzed a 2000 presidential election survey given to a representative sample of residents of Tuscaloosa County AL.
- Developed an index to measure civic engagement in five American states, using data available to the public and information requested from national civic and non profit organizations.

MASTER OF ARTS

Mississippi State University, Political Science

- Conducted an empirical study of attitudes toward affirmative action, with data taken from a survey of some 800 Mississippi residents of voting age.
- Received instruction and collaborated with students and professors in learning about American government at the federal, state and local levels, and about research methods, political theory, and international relations.
- Conducted economic and community development-oriented, as well as demographic, studies of the cities of Houston TX and Portland OR.

BACHELOR OF ARTS

University of Mississippi, Journalism

- Specialized in print journalism. Trained in the classroom as well work with the student-produced *Daily Mississippian* newspaper in writing, editing, design, and photojournalism.

Additional Training

Harvard Networks in Political Science Pre-Conference Workshops; Cambridge MA, 2008
Summer Institute in Political Psychology; The Ohio State University; Columbus OH, 2001

Presentations, Selected

A new grass roots order? Civic networks in post Katrina New Orleans. Harvard Networks in Political Science Conference. Cambridge MA; June 13, 2008.

A unified New Orleans? Neighborhood organizations and the post-Katrina planning process in the Crescent City. Urban Affairs Association 37th Annual Meeting. Seattle WA: April 28, 2007.

Highlights: Government and social capital in Trinity Gardens (dissertation). Presented at the Third Annual Hawaii International Conference on the Social Sciences; Honolulu HI; June 17, 2004.

Cure for the Delta blues? An examination of the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone (updated). Presented at the annual conference of the Southwestern Social Science Association; New Orleans LA; March 30, 2002.

Smoke rings: State tobacco lawsuits and cooperative national policymaking in an era of devolution. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Alabama Political Science Association; Talladega AL; April 6, 2001.

Presentation on the roots of the study of public administration and civic engagement. International Institute of Municipal Clerks; New Orleans LA; May 25, 2007.
Journalism and other information/communications experience

FREELANCE WRITER

- Wrote articles related to public affairs for alternative and business weekly newspapers, including *City Magazine* of Tuscaloosa AL and the *Mississippi Business Journal* of Jackson MS. Wrote articles focused on regional business news and entertainment, as well as regularly-published columns on local and state public affairs.
- Conducted research for and wrote a manuscript that covered the history of the Muscle Shoals AL., music industry; a work with a revisions request from an academic publisher.

GENERAL NEWS REPORTER

- Worked for newspapers including the *Delta Democrat Times* of Greenville MS, a regional daily paper, and *The Star-Herald* of Kosciusko MS, a weekly with circulation in five counties.
- Edited weekly business and entertainment pages for the *Delta Democrat Times*.
- Regularly interviewed persons from a variety of backgrounds, from private citizens to business and economic development officials, to public officials at local, state and federal levels.
- Regularly covered city government-related meetings in Greenville.
- Worked regularly with government social and economic indicators for daily articles and longer features, particularly when editing and writing most of a weekly business page.

Computer/Internet

Operating Systems: Windows, Ubuntu Linux

Office, Word Processing: Microsoft Word, Power Point and Excel, WordPerfect

Statistical Packages: SPSS, the R Project, UCINET (social network analysis)

Internet/Design: Photoshop, Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Academic: Blackboard, Moodle

References

Available upon request