

## **The Hayward R. Alker Best Student Paper Award 2022**

The Interpretive Methodologies and Methods Conference Group of the American Political Science Association invites nominations for the Hayward R. Alker Award, which it gives annually to recognize the student conference paper that best employs or analyzes interpretive methodologies and methods for the study of politics.

This award is named to honor the memory of Hayward R. Alker, former President of the International Studies Association and John A. McCone Chair in International Security at the School of International Relations, University of Southern California. Alker passed away on August 24, 2007. From his humanistic critique of mainstream political science, to the role he played in the development and promotion of interdisciplinary, historically grounded, linguistically and hermeneutically-informed approaches to political science, Hayward Alker was a tireless champion of interpretive methodologies. His commitment to nurturing and encouraging graduate students and young scholars makes this award a doubly appropriate way to honor his contributions.

### **Selection Criteria**

Papers must come from PhD students in political science, and must have been presented at a political science association conference (e.g. American Political Science Association, Western Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association, other regional or state meetings, as well as other associations such as European Consortium for Political Research, International Political Science Association, or International Studies Association and its regional meetings) in the academic year preceding the award. Authors must be enrolled as PhD students at the time of the paper's conference presentation.

The award is given to papers presented during the academic year preceding the year of the submission deadline. The 2022 Alker Award will be given to conference papers presented between September 15, 2020, and September 14, 2021. Nominated papers should be identical to the version presented at the conference; subsequent revisions are not eligible.

Reflecting Hayward Alker's eclectic approach to political studies, the award will be given to a paper studying any aspect of political life that either (1) engages interpretive methodological issues or (2) reports the results of empirical research conducted using interpretive research methods.

Interpretive social science is a rubric that can refer to a variety of different epistemological, methodological, and political commitments. Despite these differences, there are at least three characteristics that unite interpretivists. First, interpretivists treat knowledge, including scientific knowledge, as historically situated and enmeshed in relationships of power. Interpretivists thus might be interested in thinking through the commitments and practices that produce our assumptions about science rather than in generating law-governing rules about human behavior. Second, interpretivist work understands the world as socially made, so that the categories, presuppositions, and classifications that refer to particular phenomena are understood to be manufactured rather than natural. Third and relatedly, interpretivists tend to eschew the individualist orientation that characterizes rational choice literatures. Although some interpretivists stress the importance of agentive individuals, they do not assume a maximizing, cost-benefit calculator who is unproblematically divorced from actual historical

processes. Ideas, beliefs, values, and preferences are always embedded in a social world, which is constituted through humans' linguistic, affective, institutional, and practical relations with others.

**Submission Process: Deadline April 15, 2022**

To be considered for APSA 2022 award, nominated papers must be received no later than April 15, 2022. Please review the selection criteria carefully to confirm eligibility prior to submission.

Authors may self-nominate. We also encourage dissertation advisors, chairs of panels as well as discussants to nominate outstanding papers from their conference sessions.

One electronic copy of the nominated paper should be emailed as a pdf or Word file to the chair of the award committee, along with a short statement (no longer than one paragraph) detailing how the nominated paper speaks to interpretive methodologies and/or methods. Please include the date and name of the conference where the paper was presented, and confirm your status as a PhD student at the time of the paper presentation.

Members of the award committee for 2022 are: Osman Balkan (Chair), Yuna Blajer de la Garza, and Jessica Soedirgo.

Please send nominated papers to Osman Balkan at [obalkan1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:obalkan1@swarthmore.edu).

The award will be announced and presented at the 2022 American Political Science Association conference during the business meeting or reception of the Interpretive Methodologies and Methods Related Group. The award committee is under no obligation to make an award for a year in which submissions do not merit such recognition.

**Previous Award Winners include** (for full list, see the Hayward Alker Award Page):  
<https://connect.apsanet.org/interpretationandmethod/the-hayward-r-alker-best-student-paper-award/>

**2021:** Rahardhika Utama (Northwestern University) for “Politics of Memory, Underdevelopment, and Remnants of Political Violence in the Sumatra Rubber Belt” presented at the Southeast Asia Research Group Mini Conference II, August 2020. [Citation.](#)

**2020:** Devon Cantwell (University of Utah) for “Decision 2030: An Empirical Analysis of City Climate Action Planning and Decision-Making,” presented at the 2019 meeting of the Western Political Science Association in San Diego. [Citation.](#)

**2019:** Zainab Alam (Rutgers University) for “Do-it-Yourself Activism in Pakistan: The Fatal Celebrity of Qandeel Baloch,” presented at the International Feminist Journal of Politics (IFJP) Conference in April 2018 and at the North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies (NAAIMS) Conference in September 2018. [Citation.](#)

**2018:** Martha Balaguera (University of Toronto) for “Intersecting transit(ions): Confinement, migration and gender at the limits of sovereignty.” The paper was presented November 2016 at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association in Denver, Colorado. [Citation.](#)

**2017:** Michelle Weitzel (New School for Social Research) for “An Acoustemology of Conflict in Israel-Palestine: Toward a Theory of Sound-Power,” presented at the 2016 annual meeting of the Western Political Science Association in San Diego. [Citation.](#)

**2016:** Kevin Funk (University of the District of Columbia), for “Capitalists of the World, Unite?” and Tanya Schwarz (UC Irvine), for “Inter-Religious Peace-building: Engaging Religious Diversity in Faith Based Organizations.” Both papers were presented at the 2015 meeting of the American Political Science Association in San Francisco. [Citation.](#)

**2015:** David L. Jones (SUNY, Albany) for his paper “Culture in the Court: Explaining Bowers vs. Hardwick through Frame Analysis,” presented at the 2014 Law and Society Conference; self-nominated. [Citation.](#)

**2014:** Nicholas Rush Smith (Chicago University) for his paper “Contradictions of Vigilance: Contesting Citizenship in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” [Citation.](#)

**2013:** Devorah Manekin (UCLA) for “Collecting Sensitive Data: On the Challenges of Studying Violence in Conflict” presented at APSA 2011. [Citation.](#)

**2012:** No award given.

**2011:** Konstantin Kilibarda (York University) for “Clearing Space – An Anatomy of Urban Renewal, Social Cleansing and Everyday Life in a Belgrade Mahala,” presented at the International Studies Association Annual Meeting, February 17-20, 2010 (New Orleans). [Citation.](#)