

# Abstracts

*Matthias Lemke*

## **The dispositive of the state of emergency in democratic government. A long-term analysis of the history of the United States**

Justifications for a legitimate government practice in representative democracies can frequently and explicitly be found in times of crisis, when a government and its institutional structure are threatened with erosion. Given these precarious situations, the article analyzes the example of crisis government in the United States in a historic perspective: What arguments can be found, that are repeatedly used by a representative-democratic government to legitimately implement a state of emergency – that is a significant, crisis-induced expansion of its executive competences? With regard to selected cases of implementation of states of emergency in the history of the United States, it becomes clear that specific patterns of justification recur over time. They can – with Foucault – be considered as a dispositive of democratic government. This finding could be problematic for modern democracies insofar as the dispositive of justifications for states of emergency, when it tends to an increasingly frequent occurrence, could indicate a corruption of established democratic processes.

*Thomas Däubler*

## **How are election manifestos developed?**

An analysis in the context of the German state level election in Baden-Württemberg 2006

Election manifestos play an important role both in political practice and in political science research. Nevertheless there are only few studies which examine how parties develop election manifestos. I present an exploratory study of the preparation of the election manifestos for the German state level election in Baden-Württemberg in 2006. The empirical analysis consists firstly of interviews with key actors in the preparation process and secondly of a comparison between the manifesto proposals the party leaderships presented to the party conferences and the final versions. Based on the interview findings I introduce a stylized model of manifesto preparation.

The results show that the process was comparatively similar across parties, but there were differences especially with regard to the involvement of party members prior to the party conference stage. This involvement was lower in the two large parties CDU and SPD. All examined party conferences extended the leadership's manifesto proposal considerably. The Greens and the WASG, the two parties with the supposedly most strongly policy-oriented members, changed the original versions more strongly than the others.

*Martin Schultze*

### **Effects of the Wahl-O-Mat on political knowledge about party positions**

The Wahl-O-Mat offers an efficient and reliable way of gathering information prior to elections. Because of the tool's format that confront the users with a large number of issues that do not belong to the individual issue public of a citizen and a comparison with the parties' positions on these issues it is assumed that using this tool leads to a learning effect about party positions. In this paper I examine whether there is such an effect on the knowledge in the context of the 2009 German Federal Election and on the basis of an online survey which is representative for the German online community. The empirical results show that the knowledge about party positions is very heterogeneous and the amount of misinformation is high. Using a multivariate path model for categorical data the empirical analyses reveal that the usage of the Wahl-O-Mat has a positive effect on the political knowledge about party positions.