

## **BEST ARTICLE AWARD**

The committee consisted of Pam Paxton, Greta Krippner, Umut Bespinar Ekici, and Robert Mackin. The award went to **Nathan Martin** and **David Brady** for “**Workers of the Less Developed World Unite? A Multi-Level Analysis of Unionization in Less Developed Countries**” (*American Sociological Review* 2007). In this impressive piece of research, Martin and Brady examine determinants of unionization in less developed countries (LDCs). While there is an extensive cross-national literature on unionization, to date it has focused on affluent democracies rather than the experience of developing countries. In examining individual- and country-level factors associated with union formation in 39 less developed countries, Martin and Brady significantly extend knowledge of this phenomenon outside of the developed world. Their findings offer evidence that the legacy of state socialism is an important predictor of unionization, that the debt crisis negatively impacted union levels, and that social class is a major organizing principle for union formation in the less developed world. Martin and Brady also find that industrialization and democratization—two processes associated with unionization in developed economies—are not salient in less developed country contexts. Factors associated with globalization present more of a mixed picture, with some indicators of globalization (signing an IMF agreement) negatively affecting unionization while others (trade, FDI) show no effect. This article represents model work in political sociology, raising a key problem for analysis and then examining that problem with both methodological rigor and conceptual clarity. Future generations of unionization researchers will be elaborating on, extending, and further explaining Martin and Brady’s findings for some time to come.

Honorable Mention was given to **Rory McVeigh** and **Juliana M. Sobolewski** for, “**Red Counties, Blue Counties and Occupational Segregation by Sex and Race**” (*American Journal of Sociology* 2007). In this innovative paper, McVeigh and Sobolewski challenge the conventional wisdom that culture has trumped class interests in matters of voting. McVeigh and Sobolewski explore the possibility that occupational segregation by sex and race rather than income inequality per se shape Presidential voting in "red" and "blue" counties. McVeigh and Sobolewski present convincing evidence that occupational segregation was associated with support for Republican George W. Bush in the 2004 Presidential contest, further suggesting that this effect was most pronounced where segregation was vulnerable to challenge by non-dominant groups. Committee members were especially impressed with the creativity of the thinking behind this paper, which marshals a number of complex arguments in order to explore a problem of considerable contemporary relevance.