

## Robin Elizabeth Best

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### ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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*Assistant Professor of Comparative Politics and Research Methodology*, Department of Political Science, Leiden University (Netherlands), 2007-present.

*Instructor of Political Science*, Syracuse University, 2006-2007

### EDUCATION

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**Ph.D.** Political Science, Binghamton University, August 2007  
*Fields of Study:* Comparative Politics, Research Methodology, American Politics.  
*Dissertation:* Political Parties, Voters, and Institutions: An Examination of Party System Fragmentation in Advanced Democracies, 1950-2005.

**M.A.** Political Science, Binghamton University, SUNY, May 2005

**M.A.** Social Sciences, University of Chicago, August 2002

**B.A.** Political Science, SUNY Albany, May 2001 *Summa Cum Laude*  
Phi Beta Kappa  
Honors Program in Political Science

### PUBLICATIONS

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Best, Robin E. "The Declining Electoral Relevance of Traditional Cleavage Groups." Forthcoming in the *European Political Science Review*.

McDonald, Michael D., Aida Paskeviciute, Robin E. Best, and Rachel Cremona. "In Search of Limits to Democratic Representation with Divergent Parties." Conditionally accepted for publication at the *British Journal of Political Science*.

Best, Robin E. and Michael D. McDonald. "The Role of Party Policy Positions in the Operation of Democracy." In Christopher J. Anderson and Russell J. Dalton (eds.) *Citizens, Context, and Choice: How Institutional Structures Shape Citizen Behavior*. Forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Best, Robin E., and Steve B. Lem. "Electoral Volatility, Competition, and Third Party Candidacies in US Gubernatorial Elections." Forthcoming in *Party Politics*.

Best, Robin E. 2010. "Increasing Irrationality? The Equilibrium Relationship between Electoral and Legislative Party System Size, 1950–2005." *Electoral Studies*, 29(1): 105-116.

McDonald, Michael D., and Robin Best. 2006. "Equilibria and Restoring Forces in Models of Vote Dynamics" *Political Analysis*, 14(4): 369-392.

## **WORKS IN PROGRESS**

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“Electoral Laws and the Dynamics of Party System Size in Western Democracies, 1950-2005”

“Electoral Majoritarianism and Collective Representation: Who is Authorized to Be Represented?” With Michael D. McDonald and Ian Budge.

“Votes, Seats, and Policy: An Examination of Electoral System Responsiveness and Its Policy Consequences.” With Steve B. Lem.

“Do Voters Have a Choice? Established Party Policy Positions and Support for Non-Establishment Parties in 15 Western Democracies”

“Representation as a Median Mandate versus Bilateralism: Taking a Cross-National Perspective” With Michael D. McDonald and Ian Budge.

*Party System Fragmentation in Advanced Industrial Democracies, 1950-2005*. Preparation of book manuscript.

## **RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

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### **Research Interests**

Politics of Advanced Industrial Democracies, Electoral Politics, Political Representation, Quantitative Methodologies, Political Parties and Party Systems, Party Competition, European Politics, Electoral Systems, Political Institutions, Women’s Representation.

### **Teaching Interests**

Politics of Advanced Industrial Democracies, Comparative Politics, Comparative Democracies, Research Methodology and Statistics, Political Parties (Comparative and American), Political Institutions, Elections and Voting Behavior (Comparative and American), European Politics, Rational Choice Theory, Women and Politics.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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### **Leiden University**

Comparative Government and Politics (*MA level*)  
State of the Art – Coordinator and Lecturer (*MA level*)  
Research Proposal Lab (*Research MA level*)  
Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis – Co-lecturer (*Research MA level*)  
Rational Choice Theory (*BA level*)  
Comparative Political Parties (*BA level*)  
Political Science Honors Class on Agenda Setting – Co-coordinator (*BA/MA level*)

### **Syracuse University**

Comparative Government and Politics  
Politics of Western Europe  
Comparative Political Parties  
Gender and Politics

### **Binghamton University (SUNY)**

American Political Parties  
Comparative Political Parties  
Women and Politics

## **Teaching Experience in Quantitative Research and Statistics**

*Error-Correction Models*, Instructor at the 2008 Oxford Spring School in Quantitative Methods for Social Research on Time-Series, Oxford University.

*Time-Series Analysis using Stata*, Leiden University

- Two-hour course for faculty and graduate students.

*Interpreting your results using Clarify*, Leiden University

- Two-hour course for faculty and graduate students.

*Maximum Likelihood Estimation*, Binghamton University

- Guest Lecturer for Maximum Likelihood graduate seminar on models for nominal and ordered dependent variables.

## **INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS**

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“Equal Access for All? Electoral Laws and the Dynamics of Party System Size in Western Democracies, 1950-2005.” 2008. Essex University, Department of Government, and Binghamton University, Political Science Department.

“Error Correction Models.” Invited instructor for the 2008 Oxford Spring School in Quantitative Methods for Social Research on Time-Series, Oxford University.

“Disloyalty or Diminishing Numbers? Party System Fragmentation and the Decline of Traditional Social Cleavages.” 2007. Nuffield Political Science Seminars, Nuffield College, Oxford University.

## **ADDITIONAL EDUCATION**

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Political Parties Summer School, Rijs, the Netherlands, 2005. “Democracy in Europe: European Politics and Multi-level Governance”

ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods, University of Michigan, 2004.  
*Courses:* Matrix Algebra, Advanced Maximum Likelihood Estimation.

## **METHODS TRAINING**

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Research Methods and Statistics (I & II), Matrix Algebra (ICPSR, 2004) Maximum Likelihood Estimation, Advanced Maximum Likelihood Estimation (ICPSR, 2004), Event History Analysis, Game Theory.

## **RECENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS: 2006 - PRESENT**

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“Representation as a Median Mandate versus Bilateralism: Taking a Cross-National Perspective” With Michael D. McDonald and Ian Budge. Paper presented at the workshop *Political Parties and Comparative Policy Agendas: an ESF Workshop on Political Parties and their Positions, and Policy Agendas*, Manchester, UK, May 2010.

“Do Voters have a Choice? Longstanding Party Divergence and Support for New Parties in 15 Western Democracies.” Paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Joint Sessions of Workshops, Münster, Germany, March 2010.

“Do Voters Have a Choice? Established Party Policy Positions and Support for Non-Establishment Parties in 15 Western Democracies.” Paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association National Conference, Chicago, Illinois, April 2010.

- “Votes, Seats, and Policy: An Examination of Electoral System Responsiveness and Its Policy Consequences.” With Steve B. Lem. Paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association National Conference, Chicago, Illinois, April 2010, and at the Southern Political Science Association Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, January 2006.
- “Can Party Divergence Prevent Fragmentation? Major Party Positioning and the Two-Party Vote Share, 1950-2003.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Toronto, Canada, September 2009.
- “Electoral Uncertainty and Minor Party Participation in SMD-P Electoral Systems.” With Conor M. Dowling and Steve B. Lem. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, April 2009.
- “Embracing Change: Parties, Preferences, and Union Density.” with Steve B. Lem. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Boston, MA, August 2008.
- “Disloyalty or Diminishing Numbers? Party System Fragmentation and Social Cleavages in Western Europe, 1971-1999.” Paper presented at the Politics of Change Workshop, Amsterdam, June 2008. Earlier versions were presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, April 2006 and the Political Parties Summer School in Rijs, the Netherlands, September 2005.
- “Equal Access for All? Electoral Institutions and the Dynamics of Party System Size in Western Democracies, 1950-2005.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, April 2008.
- “Contestation without Reward? Representation as an Equilibrium Force on Party System Size, 1950-2005.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, April 2007.
- “Electoral Institutions and Party System Fragmentation in Western Democracies; 1950-2005.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in New Orleans, LA, January 2007.
- “Party Policy Positions and Party System Fragmentation in the Post-WWII Era: What Has Changed?” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, April 2006.

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

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Assistant Editor for the *Political Handbook of the World*, CQ Press, 2008, 2009, 2010

Discussant      Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, 2007, 2009, 2010  
                       Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 2008, 2009.  
                       Workshop on European Parties and Representation, Syracuse University, 2009.  
                       PoliticoGenetmaal (meeting of the Dutch/Flemish Political Science Association), 2008, 2009  
                       ECPR Joint Sessions, 2010

Chair of Admissions for the MA program in political science (Leiden University), 2009-2010.

Co-Organizer of the 2009 Honors Class on Agenda Setting for Political Science and Public

Administration Students, Leiden University.

First Reader (Supervisor) and Second Reader for MA theses (Leiden University), 2007-2010.

Mentor for first and second year BA students (Leiden University), 2007-2010.

Binghamton University Women in Political Science Group, 2004-2006

Vice President of the BU Political Science Graduate Student Organization, 2003-2004

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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American Political Science Association

- Elections and Electoral Behavior
- Political Methodology
- Political Organizations and Parties
- Women and Politics
- Legislative Studies

Midwest Political Science Association

Southern Political Science Association

## **REFERENCES**

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Professor of Political Science  
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