

## APT Conference 2006 Participant Comments

Participants in the APT Conference 2006 at Indiana University, 2-5 November 2006, were sent e-mail invitations to complete a Survey Monkey questionnaire concerning their impressions of the conference. The materials below were downloaded from the Survey Monkey response summary and then edited and reformatted for posting on the APT Gateway website.<sup>1</sup>

### A. Which sessions did you attend?

Session Number and Name	Attended*
P.1. PLENARY WORKSHOP: Writing Book Reviews	17.5%
P.2. BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLE: Pedagogy of Political Theory	24.6%
I.A. Democratic Decision-Making Procedures	8.8%
I.B. Being UnAmerican: "Conservative" Dissenters in Hartz's Liberal America	10.5%
I.C. Arendt, Aesthetics, and Judgment	17.5%
I.D. Space, Place and Form	10.5%
I.E. Familial Politics	17.5%
II.A. Culture, Sentiment, and Normativity in Rawls	8.8%
II.B. Time	29.8%
II.C. Religion and Politics	7.0%
II.D. Accountability and Justice in the Market and Beyond	24.6%
III.A. Reassessing John Locke	24.6%
III.B. New Readings of Kant	19.3%
III.C. Art, Literature and Political Theory	22.8%
III.D. Re-Thinking Republicanism	**7.0%
IV.A. Border Crossings and Feminism	17.5%
IV.B. Political Foundings across Time and Space	14.0%
IV.C. Affect and Political Life	36.8%
IV.D. State Sovereignty and Exception during Wartime	5.3%
V.A. Negotiating Global Democracy	22.8%
V.B. Keeping the Polis Together	14.0%
V.C. Political Inquiry and Professional Ethics	5.3%
V.D. Neglected Terms of Political Theory	21.1%
VI.A. Violence, Terror, and the Limits of Community	28.1%
VI.B. Deliberative versus Agonistic Democracy	14.0%
VI.C. Three Vices and a Virtue	10.5%
VI.D. Neglected Sources in American Political Thought	15.8%
P.3. PLENARY SESSION: Book Publishing in Political Theory	33.3%

\* The figures given indicate the percentage of respondents attending a particular session out of a total number of 57 responses.

\*\*Figures for the Re-Thinking Republicanism panel are rough estimates. The panel was accidentally omitted from the survey. The estimate is based on the average number of responses for sessions II and IV, minus the total number for the other session III panels. It is quite possible that this estimate is incorrect. Apologies to all who attended that panel!

***B. What is your general impression of the quality of the presentations and of the discussion at the sessions you attended?***

1. High quality. A large number of people presented their work in an informal way (rather than reading from a script), and most managed to summarize their work in the allotted time. Q & A was vibrant as usual.
2. The presentations were excellent and it was wonderful to see so many audience members engaged with the presentations.
3. The presentations and discussions were of generally high quality. My impression is that the conference benefits a great deal from the norms of early paper submission that have developed. Papers are not last-minute jobs, and discussants have the time to prepare good comments that spur discussion.
4. Discussants did good to excellent jobs; audiences were participatory. Presentations varied: content in at least a few cases was weak (superficiality seemed a problem) and too many presentations ran on too long (10–12 minutes should be max for traditional panels).
5. The general impression is positive. But some papers failed to advance clear theses and arguments.
6. For the most part I thought presentations were good. I appreciate the mixture of senior, junior, and grad students. The Republicanism panel's discussant got a bit carried away with his own agenda that it distracted from the panelists ... which is not to say his comments weren't interesting. Thank you for the book publishing session, depressing though it was.
7. Overall, the quality was quite good.
8. Overall, I thought the presentations were of very high quality. The weak link tended to be the grad students on the panels; a few recited their lit reviews or didn't manage their time very well. However, that's one of the trade-offs in trying to be inclusive. The discussions were great -- both in terms of the quality of the discussants' contributions and the questions and comments from the audience.
9. Searching, cumulative, excellent.
10. Excellent!
11. Discussion was very good. Papers were uneven.
12. I thought the quality of the discussion depended a lot on the quality of the presentations and their accessibility to the audience. Where presentations were clear, accessible, provocative, and about important issues, discussion was good.
13. Nice. Glad the sessions are 1.5 hrs [*sic; panels are two hours, in fact. - ed*]. Gives enough time for Q & A.
14. The discussion was uniformly excellent. The presentations were mostly excellent

but a few (maybe one in four or five) were lacking -- due not, it seems, to a lack of oral presentation skills but to the quality of the underlying papers.

15. Everything was of high quality and impressive. I thought that the balance between graduate students and faculty was good and that the panels were well put together. I especially appreciated the pedagogy discussion, and I hope that is included in future conferences.

16. I was very satisfied with the quality of the conference. The discussions were quite good and most of the participants seemed involved.

17. Very good.

18. Excellent.

19. I thought, in general, that the papers were not of great quality, however I thought the long discussion time in each session made the panels a great experience for attendees. Even though the papers were [*not? -ed.*] very strong, it was wonderful to talk them all through as an audience.

20. It was generally good, with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

21. Quality was generally good. Discussions were also fairly good, although I was frustrated that in 3 out of 5 panels I attended, not enough time was left for discussion (30-40 minutes, rather than the full hour). Both paper givers and discussants took too much time to present.

22. About half the presentations were exceptionally good; the other half, mostly adequate. The audience discussions that connected panel papers were usually terrific; the ones dominated by comments or questions on one paper at a time often became tedious. What surprised is that the character of each commentary seldom seemed to push discussions into one mode or the other.

23. Pretty good, variable.

24. Excellent. The papers and presentations were comparable to at APSA, but the discussions were superior

25. Honestly, I found most of the papers mediocre. The discussions were good -- the long-discussion-time format continues to work well -- but the papers were just not very good.

26. Mixed, but in a useful way: both good and bad papers. A little too much in the mold of APSA for presentations -- 20 minutes per paper is too long.

27. The "standard" conference model was a disappointment. Presenters and discussants were rushed, and usually said more than they needed in any case. I also attended (participated in) the panel on Republicanism, which apparently does not exist on the list you have, above.

28. I thought the presentations were good. I was very impressed with the attendance at the presentations. I was a little disappointed with the quality of discussion. Some of the most thoughtful and well-written papers were ignored in favor of ones that were less challenging.

29. Good overall.

30. Excellent.

31. The quality of the papers was uneven, but I liked the fact that the panels were put together by the organizers. This allowed for good discussions.

32. The quality was moderately high -- at least what one could expect at an APSA theory panel.

33. Very varied: some were brilliant, some quite weak. (And this does not track the seniority of the presenter in any way.)

34. Generally quite good.

35. On the whole, quite favorable. I like the format where presenters just summarize their papers, allowing a lot of time for discussion after the presentations.

36. Excellent.

37. Very good, rich and interesting.

38. Very good. Panels were well attended and discussion was lively.

39. APT is by far the best conference I have ever attended. I have recommended it to my colleagues for its size, which allowed attendees to speak to one another and continue conversations after sessions were completed. The conference was well organized. The centralization and inclusion of coffee breaks, lunches and dinners allowed attendees to circulate and speak with a wide-selection of conference goers. Moreover, conference attendees tended to be well prepared for the panels and were lively participants in the question and answer sessions.

40. Generally good, well attended. Allowing the second hour for discussion is great. Other conferences I have been to don't allow enough time either for the audience to ask questions or for the readers to respond/defend.

41. Very good, though I think there should be rules against people making speeches in the form of questions; only half kidding.

42. The quality varied. Some were excellent and some were very poor.

43. On average, higher than in previous years.

44. Presentations and discussants were variable, ranging from excellent to awful. The best had prepared comments, the worst were soporific, meandering musings. Best were those that respected the audience and other panel members by keeping in the allotted times. Worst were those that narcissistically thought their argument was worth imposing well over their allotted time. The discussion of the panels (after the participants stopped droning on) was uniformly excellent.

45. I thought the presentations and discussion were quite good. In the first panel on space, discussion didn't get going, largely because the papers didn't speak to each other very much. The panel on "border crossings and feminism" was very good.

46. Presentations were excellent, but APT should continue to make strong efforts to allow/spark more discussion. Could presenters be given 10-minute limits, and their papers limited to 20 pages?

47. Excellent, although people still seemed to feel constrained by the time limits.

48. Outstanding.

49. In general, the panels with papers responding to political problems, not those responding to problems in the literature, or offering new readings of the literature, were the strongest, the most informative and enjoyable. For the panels where the content centered on political problems, the quality was quite high. For the other panels, I would say the quality was more mixed--but that may reflect my own biases about what makes for good political theory.

50. I thought they were excellent overall. Much better than at APSA.

51. I also attended III.D. Rethinking Republicanism – it's not listed above. With a few exceptions, the presentations were excellent, and the discussion was good at each panel.

52. Discussions were good, as each panel allowed for plenty of time for audience input and participation. Some of the papers were strong; most were not.

***C. What is your evaluation of the conference? Specifically, what do you think about:***

***1) The program -- the panels, plenary sessions, breaks and meals, and book exhibit; and***

***2) The organization and logistics of the conference, including the facilities and accommodations at the IMU?***

1. A) The quality of the panels was excellent though it seemed that it was heavily in favor of the work of Hannah Arendt. The cocktail parties were great. It was great to have communal meals but the food was not particularly good. B) The organization of the conference was outstanding and the accommodations at IMU were adequate though a bit confusing.

2. A) Program was terrific. Breaks allowed participants to grab a cup of coffee, while meals together allowed for a continuation of conversation. B) Bloomington is isolated and boring, but I think that is a good thing: isolation forces people to actually attend the conference. Accommodations were very nice and affordable.

3. I thought it was a good conference. IMU was a terrific venue -- convenient in its layout and good food. The drawback is the drive from the airport. This year, I felt as if some sessions included numerous panels I wanted to attend, while other sessions were more ho-hum, but I think that's an unavoidable pattern over time. It's just going to happen to everyone in different years.

4. A) the program—excellent; B) student union was great; too bad reaching campus from [the] airport is such a pain.

5. Facilities were excellent, equal to those at Calvin College, without the ban on drinking. Hotel room was nice, had wireless access. Organization and logistics were good. Some complained about the food, but I thought it was perfectly acceptable. About the program: I thought some of the sessions and topics were less interesting and provocative, but, to be fair, what is interesting to one person may not be so to another. I am a philosopher, and I wish there was more of the stuff that political philosophers and political theorists shared.

6. I wish to emphasize how much I appreciate the plenary sessions. I couldn't make the book review one, but the others were quite instructive. I hope you continue with them.

7. Both A and B were excellent.

8. Organization was fantastic -- if you were laid back about things. Nothing was too rushed, nothing was too chaotic. It was home-baked, and you just have to accept the quirks that come with that.

9. A) fantastic; b) very well done; no complaints or misgivings.

10. A) Amazing; B) The distance from the airport was a down side.

11. A. The program was quite good. I did not attend any of the plenary sessions, so I can't say anything about those. My reasons for not attending had to do with timing (wanting to go over my comments before my panel) or overload (just not feeling that I could stand one more session at the end) rather than a lack of interest in the topics. As is always the case, some of the panels ended up somewhat fragmented, but I don't think there is anything that can be done about that. With regard to breaks and meals, we were spoiled in St. Louis. Everything was quite good this time--much better than most conferences--but I found WUStl quite spectacular. The book exhibit didn't work for me this time because of how crowded the break room was. B. Organization was very good. Facilities were fine. I like nice old classrooms (rather than conference rooms) for discussions, but that is pretty picky. In general, IU was a good place to have the conference, and everything seemed well planned and orchestrated.

12. It was my first professional conference in which I participated and I was wholly impressed. My one request would be to try to include more senior faculty, but I am already working at that task here at my institution.

13. I LOVED the plenary on pedagogy. Would be delighted to see this become a regular feature. I have no doubt there's enough to talk about. Plenary on book publishing was also useful. Panels were OK. Papers did fit together well, though sometimes the titles of the panels were not as accurate as they might have been (I realize this is difficult to do with only abstracts, and when people sometimes change their papers). Accommodations were fine, though breakfast (and information about breakfast) was an issue. Breaks and meals were very nice, and continue to be one of the best parts of the conference.

14. A) very good; B) excellent.

15. The program was good, although sometimes uneven in its quality. The book exhibit

was quite good for a small conference. I liked the breaks and meals' organization. The facilities were excellent, although a bit too remote (far from the airport).

16. The facilities and accommodations were first rate, the meals very good, and the program extremely diverse and rich.

17. Program was OK; some papers and panels seemed a bit old hat, perhaps uninteresting or in need of more pointed or better honed arguments. Discussants were generally very good. Logistics went well.

18. All excellent.

19. I loved APT! It was the most rewarding, congenial, and enjoyable conference I can remember. I think this is because of a few things: 1) only a few panels per session, so there is strong attendance (and also that it is not in a touristy location, so there are no diversions; 2) long discussion times; 3) eating together! This is key for establishing discussions and relationships beyond the conference room – especially the receptions. IMU was great, although it was a pain in the ass to travel to. But the organization and logistics of the conference were great.

20. I like the intimate feel of the place and the conference.

21. Organization was excellent, panels very good. It was especially helpful to meet other people during the meals.

22. The organization and logistics were good. The program was erratic, especially in "matching" papers into panels -- or in commentaries melding papers into coherent conversations. I'd think it hard, however, to do much better on the program aspects.

23. I continue to like the format of the conf[erence] -- the meals together, the pace, the all-under-one-roof, etc. That all works very well. Everything seemed very well organized.

24. The program was excellent. The panels were well organized, the plenary sessions were informative, the breaks and meals were surprisingly high quality (Starbucks!), and the book exhibit displayed a small but concentrated selection. Jeff Isaac and the IU crew should be commended for organizing a smooth – and fun! – event.

25. The conference seemed to work well, although I couldn't figure out why one session took place in Woodburn Hall, since the rest were in the IMU.

26. This conference was run very well--I do not expect lavish treatment, but I thought that the venue and the provisions were very good, and I liked the idea of an external destination for R/R after the last plenary. Do we need a book exhibit? It seems to be there almost as an obligation rather than out of a real need or desire for one ("this is just what you have at academic conferences"). The plenaries were great.

27. Logistics/facilities -- great! Organization -- great! Plenary on publishing -- good topic but at a bad time (people seemed worn out). Breakfast roundtable -- good but needed better space. Meals -- food wasn't very good (except for the bagels), but company was.

28. The IMU—once you got used to the layout—turned out to be a fine venue, for both the meals and the panels. As a publisher, I regretted that the book exhibit was so far removed from where the panels were held, but I was glad that some coffee breaks were

scheduled to draw people to the exhibit at least and make them aware of its presence. The scheduling overall was fine. I enjoyed the extra, unofficial entertainment provided by Jeff Isaac's jazz group at the end, too!

29. The panels were excellent. The hotel was fine. The meals were awful! I would rather pay more in conference fees for better food.

30. I like the long discussion time in the panels. I wish the panels that most interest me were not concurrent! IU was great.

31. The organization was excellent: lodging, food and entertainment. I especially liked that the panels started at 9 a.m., thus eliminating the dreaded deserted 8 a.m. panel. The book exhibit was quite bad, but I suppose that's the best we can do considering the size of the conference.

32. Excellent.

33. The book exhibition was too hidden; it needs to be in a busy intersection where people will see it. The lack of technical equipment was a problem (but it might be my problem; I failed to order any).

34. A) program was excellent. The subjects of the panels were well chosen. The papers and the comments by discussants in the panels I attended were first rate. Breaks and meals were great. I thought the book exhibit was sparse. B) Facilities and accommodations at IMU were excellent.

35. This was my second APT conference, and each time I was impressed with the logistics and local arrangements.

36. Accommodations at IMU were fine, though it would be nice to have the conference in bigger cities.

37. The program was good -- an embarrassment of riches, in fact. On the whole, I was very positively surprised (even though I had heard good things). The breaks were nice. The food wasn't particularly good, but it was OK: it was very convenient to have it there, anyway. The logistics, as far as I'm concerned, were very good. The IMU was a great space.

38. The conference was again exceptionally well organized. The panels were well put together; the size of the conference was just right; and I appreciated having so many opportunities to talk over coffee/food. IMU was a great location -- wonderful hotel and facilities.

39. Well organized. Breaks and meals were convenient and allowed time to meet others and actually get to know them a little. Having everything together in the same building was really nice.

40. A) Excellent; B) Very good logistics. Helpful to be in one place.

41. A) I was very happy with the panels and with the breakfast roundtable on pedagogy. I got some very interesting, useful ideas there. The space for the book exhibit was trying to do too many things, and the layout for coffee and snacks was awkward. The food (lunches and dinners) was sub par. I felt sorry for the vegetarians, who were stuck with lots of cheese. B) The IMU Union building was fascinating. It was handy having everything in one spot, although I would have liked the opportunity to venture off

campus for a meal. Perhaps having one meal where people are on their own would be a good thing? When I left the conference I had the feeling of emerging from a sealed bubble.

42. The facilities were very nice overall, though confusing to navigate (not APT's fault!). The organization and flow were very well planned, leaving plenty of time for both panels and lots of informal interaction. With respect, the food could have been a bit less bland and a bit less heavily sauced: perhaps this was a limit of the local catering, but many participants noted the "goopy white sauce" character of the fare, not in a good way. Few mind simple meat-and-potatoes (or, if cost intervenes, chicken-and-potatoes) food if that's what's available, and perhaps APT should stick to that next time rather than choosing dishes that attempt to be fancy in the wrong way. And more simple vegetables and fruit would have been nice.

43. The food was pretty bad. The gathering room was too small for everyone (especially with the book exhibit in it).

44. Washington University set a sort of high standard for IU to live up to, and it really didn't compare. But IU was more than acceptable.

45. A) Panels good, hours great, number of participants and panels ideal. Well fed. I'd have liked to see more books at the exhibit, but I assume that it up to publishers. B) Superb. Well hosted, well organized.

46. Well-organized, without competing panels of the same type overlapping. Facilities were great; clean and affordable. A bit difficult finding places at first, but once familiar with the layout it was fine. Book exhibit was hard to find.

47. I very much enjoy the meals and breaks: it provides a regular and informal way to meet other conferees. I always find something at the book exhibit, and it's refreshing to be looking only at books in theory. Incidentally, I should add that having the conference registration fee covers some meals is a nice bonus, and I suspect it helps some people afford the trip.

49. The program was a pretty good one. I've seen steady improvement through the years.

***D. The Business Meeting identified four areas that need continuing encouragement and support: ancient and medieval political thought, feminist theory, comparative theory, and racial/ethnic political thought.***

***1) What do you think? Should we attempt to encourage more representation of these areas or topics at the conference? If so, do you have suggestions as to how to do that?***

***B) Are there any other topics in or areas of political thought that you would be interested in seeing represented (more) at future conferences?***

1. More on religion or political theology would also be welcome.

2. I think, yes, the conference could be strengthened in these areas, particularly feminist theory and racial/ethnic thought.
3. I agree that it would be good to have more of all of the above. Perhaps contacts could be made with various sections associated with APSA, WPSA, etc. For instance, there is an annual feminist theory workshop held a day before the Western. I expect organizers (currently Jill Locke and Holloway Sparks) would be willing to send out an email to participants of this workshop inviting submissions for next year's APT. I would also be interested in environmental political theory (also a workshop associated with the Western).
4. B) more work on issues of economic justice (domestic and international) would be good.
5. I thought there was significantly greater presence of comparative theory than in the past. I love that stuff so would like to see more. I went to a panel with a strong feminist theory presence.
6. A – may be, but not necessarily. B – I'm fine with what we've had so far.
7. Yes, we should absolutely encourage more diversity in thinking especially in comparative political thought and racial political thought. Ancient and feminist theory seemed to be fairly represented. B) Post-colonial political theory.
8. Global/international.
9. A) I don't think prioritizing these makes sense, though I certainly agree that the program committee should try to promote diversity including representation of these areas of interest / research. B) Not particularly.
10. A) Yes, but not by having panels dedicated to those areas; instead better-integrated papers. Perhaps encouraging grad students working in those areas to attend, or encouraging a "big name" in each to show up. If you invited, say, Peter Euben as some kind of plenary speaker, you'd increase the ancient turnout, just because people would like to meet him.
11. Perhaps finding leaders in those fields who can recruit graduate students and junior faculty would be a good beginning point; however, this might be too similar to the APSA section division.
12. I'm less concerned with coverage than with quality. All things being equal, having a wider range of topics would be nice. But I would not think it useful to have a panel on, say, medieval political thought unless the selection committee had a very positive view of all the papers on the panel.
13. I agree in the case of comparative theory. I don't know if it's such a good idea to encourage submissions according to subsections of the literature (except in the case perhaps of a panel on pedagogy), and judging from last year's and this year's conferences, I don't know that race/ethnicity/gender are badly underrepresented in the papers--though I would be open to correction.
14. A) Not really. The program should be driven by the submissions, and not vice versa. B) See A.

15. Yes, definitely.

16. My sense is that APT usually enjoys a variety of panels (i.e., panel topics/areas), though there has been a heavier representation of contemporary theory topics (perhaps that's my perception). I'd like to keep the variety. I don't mind trying to broaden our coverage (for example, making certain we have a comparative theory panel, etc.). I'm not sure how to do that. We could have an annual conference "theme" like the larger political science conferences; but I worry that announcing a "theme" will in itself skew the type of proposals we get. Perhaps the best thing we can do is to encourage more people to propose papers/panels. That, of course, might conflict with our desire/need to remain relatively small.

17. I support the presence of all of these topics at the APT conference.

18. I don't think we should specifically encourage more representation of any topics – I think the themes should be drawn from the panel participants and their own work, not from any pre-established areas.

19. Encouragement is fine, but I think you are likely to be stuck with the proposals you get.

20. I'm not much of a believer in coverage for the sake of accommodating abstracted categories or periods of political theory. Of the four kinds noted, feminist theory intrigues me by far the most. I think attention to literature, film, and theater has been serving the APT well; and I'd like to see it augmented by some attention to political theory of TV and the Internet too.

21. I agree with all but the first (which I'm not that interested in).

22. Let the submissions determine the panels.

23. I don't think APT should encourage specific areas, because I would be worried about diluting the quality of the papers presented. Anything beyond simply mentioning these areas in the call for papers could lead to lower quality overall.

24. I agree that these four areas were not well represented at the conference. There were two papers that qualified as comparative political theory (on the Global Democracy and Family panels) that could have been grouped together but were well placed on their respective panels. I think Michelle Brower's decision to reserve a table for those interested in comparative political theory was a good opportunity for those working in this area to meet. Hopefully these individuals (I include myself among them) will be better able to organize such panels after our meeting.

25. I don't know what 'encourage' means -- you can't force people to write about things they're not interested in. And the main problem, to me, is the quality of submissions, so I would \*not\* want you to accept lower-quality work just to 'cover' various subfields. That seems counter-productive.

26. I agree that all of these are worth encouraging more, and I should think it would be possible to do by inviting prominent people in these subfields to organize panels and chair them. Certainly, Cary Nederman could do one for ancient and medieval, and any number of people (including Mary Hawkesworth) could do it for feminist theory. In the racial/ethnic category, you might consider having a panel focused on Latin American political thought.

27. I do think it would be good to increase representation in those areas. Perhaps there are newsletters or websites for inter-disciplinary associations where announcements could be posted. Also, perhaps if the call for papers indicates that we have an interest in these areas people will be more likely to submit.

28. Mention these areas in the call for papers. Perhaps tap scholars within APT working in these areas to encourage submission of papers or partial panels. More sharing of ideas about courses taught in political theory (beyond the basic course) -- how we are placing ourselves thematically in political science departments.

29. I don't think you should make an extra effort to bring more papers. The self-selection may be a good thing. Feminist, comparative, and ethnic theory are over-represented in the Western PSA meeting. One of the best things about this conference is that the focus of contemporary political theory gives a good ground for general discussions.

30. I agree that those 4 areas need support, but saw panels listed in all areas.

31. I'd like to see panels on aesthetics and politics.

32. A) I do ancient political thought and I appreciate all the encouragement I can get. Suggestion: Maybe a workshop by leading scholars for us beginners and lesser lights on current methods, issues, resources, grant opportunities. B) Can't think of any.

33. I strongly agree that more feminist theory is needed. I wonder if you could use current attendees to encourage others? Maybe request each attendee to specifically invite another theorist, as well as to encourage grad students to see this as a friendly conference for them.

34. More ancient thought would be nice. Feminist theory seemed quite well represented. In general, it's common for theorists to aspire to "more comparative theory" and "more ethnic and racial thought," but as there are few hiring lines in these areas and people pursuing them are relatively rare, I don't think APT should be too surprised, or should feel guilty, to find that panels on these subjects are also rare. If anything seemed underrepresented, it was liberal and democratic theory of a "mainstream" variety, by which I mean not only Rawls but [also] Anglo-American type thought generally. I don't think that this type of inquiry should crowd out other approaches, but many friends who avoid APT have mentioned in doing so what seems to be its vaguely Wolinian / feminist / postmodernist antiliberal emphasis--which might then build on itself, with those who like APT and attend it wanting more of the same, thus further alienating those who don't come. Again, I have nothing against nonliberal approaches, but the current roster seems unrepresentative of the field.

35. A) Yes -- feminist theory, comparative, race in particular. How, I don't know -- my sense is that there are a lot of people working in these areas, so it shouldn't be hard to get people. B) Possible, though nothing at the top of my head, and I prefer focus to size.

36. A) Given the nature of the APT I would urge the program planners to let the proposals guide the panel creations, with perhaps preference given to underserved communities from the previous years. So next year, if there [were] a medieval or feminist panel, I would go with that over another one on deliberative democracy. Let the market and proposed submissions define what gets done. B) Analytical political thought.

37. A) I was surprised that there wasn't more feminist theory and racial / ethnic theory. This crowd often feels at home at the Western. Perhaps advertising / recruiting there would be a good thing. APSA's Women's Caucus might also be a place to advertise. In general, the conference seemed to be heavily "white male" dominated. This made me wonder if fewer women and racial / ethnic minorities had submitted proposals, been accepted, or dropped out at the last minute. We're probably seeing the results of larger trends, such as the overrepresentation of women at teaching-intensive colleges or in adjunct positions. I don't know what to do about that exactly; it's an observation. B) Not that I can think of....

38. All worthwhile goals; the conference does seem a little heavy on contemporary theory and a little light on history of political thought.

39. Agree with A. Send Call for Papers to more listservs

40. No. The conference should represent what people in the field are working on, not attempt to shape what they're working on. Most attendees at the conference are junior faculty, or faculty at lesser-name institutions. It is ESSENTIAL for these people to know the trends within the discipline, so that they can write on things that their peers will take interest in. Book publishers are also looking for books that are topical -- how are we all to know what's "topical" unless we see in an unadulterated way what others in the field are working on. All of the areas of focus mentioned are worthy, indeed -- but APT will lose the interest of its participants if it becomes a "niche" conference, or attempts to prop up dying sub-disciplines merely because they were ONCE trendy.

41. I was struck again by the near-absence of black participants. I think if we recruited more among philosophers and more among people who do American political thought (Adolph Reed and others) we would get more inclusion of black theorists. In political science, political theory seems to be defined in such a way as to exclude DuBois and others. We need to change how we think about our subject so that we can be more inclusive of black and race-oriented political thought.

42. I concur with the business meeting.

***E. Are there any other suggestions that you would like to make for improving future conferences?***

1. I liked the plenary workshop and pedagogy roundtable on Thursday evening/Friday morning. They were informative; moreover, I think they succeeded in encouraging more people to arrive early, making for better Friday morning panels.

2. Perhaps a place that is easier to get to? And if it is possible to get some better quality papers in the sessions.

3. Make receipts available on site.

4. Continued movement toward brief presentations of papers that people have pondered in advance is good. Maybe the APT could take a next step by requiring authors to preface their papers with a one-page (single-spaced) synopsis of the argument and

analysis. Then we'd be guaranteed a meaty summary to consider prior to the panel, if we lacked time to read the whole paper.

5. It would be nice to have the location of the conference closer to a major airport.

6. You've struck upon a winning formula. Perhaps tinker around the edges, but don't alter it substantially.

7. Yes. I think many speakers talked much too long and boringly. I think the conference would be better if we strived for more provocative presentations that encouraged thought and discussion. I think if the number of speakers at a session is reduced slightly, if the length of the presentation is reduced to say ten minutes or less (remember you get more chance to talk in the discussion; you don't have to say everything!!) and if we encourage people to be provocative or even outrageous, we would get better discussions.

8. Not at this time.

9. I would like to see continued emphasis on creating the circumstances for high quality discussions, which is one of the key features distinguishing this conference from all the rest. Preserving a full hour for discussion is the first part of that. A number of people I spoke with this year (including Chairs) seemed either unaware of the need to limit presentations or resistant to do so if it meant they only got 12 minutes. So, two ideas: 1) Limit panels to 3 papers, rather than 4. That would mean more competing panels, but it may be the only way to really ensure an hour for discussion. I also think 4 papers pushes the limit on attention spans and ability to make connections. 2) Announce the expectation to keep presentations limited right from the start, along with the requirement to pre-circulate papers. Another element involves continued "education" for Chairs, who take on a more active role when there is more discussion. Encourage them to be firm with panelists who go over their time limits. Encourage them to ask people in the audience to identify themselves before speaking. Encourage them to call on questioners who will continue and deepen a thread of discussion, rather than simply going "in order," which often results in bouncing all over the place with unrelated questions. (And when there is enough time for discussion, people can be more patient about waiting to bring up a different topic...) As the conference gets more popular, it will be a challenge to maintain this difference from the norm, but I think it's well worth it. On a separate note, inspired by the pedagogy panel: I think it would be wonderful to have an ongoing section of the APT website dedicated to pedagogy. People could post syllabi, writing assignments, in-class exercises, etc.

10. Since I am a graduate student with limited funding to attend conferences, I have to indicate that I would attend only if I were on the program. If this were not the case, I would attend if I [were] on the program or not.

11. The jazz bar was a great way to end the conference.

12. The original plan for APT was to follow a different model; fewer papers, available in advance. But things have gotten pretty big, and more conventional in character. Perhaps it is time to rethink conventions again. Here are a few ideas: emphasize earlier availability of papers, encourage brevity (20 pages?) to sharpen the focus of arguments, and -- this is radical -- require the preparation of a 500 word précis / abstract, which also constitutes the presenters' remarks. That would mean 5 minutes from each presenter, 15-20 from the discussant (whose job would also be greatly facilitated by the preparation of abstracts), and everyone then could have the opportunity to elaborate on positions should the occasion arise during the open discussion.

13. I wonder if there's a way to leave a bit more space between some sessions for further conversation? One of the things I like best about this conference is the "face time" that we share due to the common meals and the coffee breaks. Yet I still find that the best conversations I have are just after sessions, when we're all charged up about a particular topic. Yet, we're usually rushing to the next session and often don't reconnect in the crush of the coffee breaks or the meals. I'm not sure this counts as a suggestion for improvement because it seems daunting from a logistical point of view; perhaps it's more of a wishful expression.
14. The number of attendees, as well as the length of time, facilitated productive conversations. I would hesitate to augment the scope of the conference.
15. Discussants should be strongly encouraged to provide authors with written copies of their remarks.
16. It would be better for the conference to be someplace more interesting, and to be somewhat larger, like perhaps 50% larger. These two go together -- more people will come if you have the conference someplace more interesting.
17. It would be great if you could attract a "big name" person to give a plenary talk, perhaps at one of the luncheons—someone like Cornel West, say—and also allow time for Q & A afterwards. SPEP has managed to do this successfully, most recently with Alan Badiou giving a talk at a plenary at its meeting in October in Philadelphia.
18. Would prefer the conference was held at a different time of year. The conference is too close to APSA and papers are due at the same time as midterm grades.
19. APT has done better than any other meeting at educating chairs and discussants about practices that are useful, so I would just encourage continuing that practice. Chairs should be encouraged to sit in the middle of the table and to be firm about time deadlines. They could also be given more guidance about facilitating discussions. For example, they could be encouraged to look for people hoping to ask questions throughout the discussion period and to keep a queue (rather than looking up when a panelist finishes an answer and seeing a sea of raised hands). Discussants could be reminded that the purpose of comments is to promote discussion. Editorial comments relevant only to revision can be given to writers individually; substantive reflections on the papers are of general interest. Again, I mention these ideas as suggestions for making something that is already very good even better.
20. It would also be nice to try and open up the conference to non-American scholars if possible (meaning scholars who are not in the U.S. system).
21. APT continues to be the best conference I go to each year. Consistently good discussion and engagement with theorists.
22. Try to hold in bigger cities though I realize that is contingent on finding hosts there.
23. Not "improving" as such, but: keep this thing small and selective, or at least make sure that the proportion of attendees to panels is such that no one is left without an audience. I like having to choose between two or even three panels that really sound great; that's the sign of a well-put-together conference.

**F. Would you be interested in participating in future conferences? (Note: the positive answers come in two forms because this year we had about 15 people who registered simply to attend the conference. We would like to gauge how much interest there is in attending the conference even when one is not on the program.)**

Response	Percentage
Definitely yes – but only if I were on the program.	53.7%
Definitely yes – even if I were not on the program.	22.2%
Probably yes – but only if I were on the program.	9.3%
Probably yes – even if I were not on the program.	11.1%
Possibly – but only if I were on the program.	1.9%
Possibly – even if I were not on the program.	1.9%
Probably not.	0.0%
Definitely not.	0.0%
No opinion.	0.0%

**G. Have you made use of the conference paper archive, or did you try to access it? If so, when did you first access or attempt to access the archive?**

Response	Percentage
Yes – before or during the conference.	64.2%
Yes – after the conference.	7.6%
No – I haven't used the archive, but I intend to use it.	24.5%
No – I haven't used the archive, and I don't intend to.	3.8%

**H. What do you think of the pre-circulation and archiving requirement? Should future conferences require pre-circulation and/or archiving?**

1. I think it is a very good idea. People who are interested in a paper can take the time to read it ahead of time.
2. Pre-circulation is great. And this conference is one of the best in terms of people actually getting their papers to discussants in a timely manner. Keep up the tough work on that!
3. Great idea. I wish I had actually gone to the archive beforehand.
4. Very important. Keep this. The papers are often too much to take in during a 15-

minute presentation. Also, you can catch papers that may be of interest, but were presented at conflicting times.

5. Yes, definitely.

6. It is a good idea, but I don't think people have the time to actually read the papers beforehand.

7. I think it's a good idea. Though I can't say I was able to read many papers carefully before the conference, I was able to skim through quite a few, and that definitely helped me make decisions about which panels to attend as well as aided my comprehension level during the panel.

8. It's perfect, we should continue with it.

9. Overall, I like the archive (even though I haven't used it yet other than to post my essay). For me, at least, it emphasizes the deadline for submissions. But I do intend to access it in the next day or two to download papers that interested me in Bloomington.

10. Definitely.

11. Yes; it is important.

12. Great idea. I read or had copies of all the papers I found interesting. After the conference I was able to get more.

13. See previous comments.

14. Yes.

15. I am not sure that it is necessary, specifically because so many of the papers seem to be early drafts of work-in-progress.

16. Definitely. It was a great thing to be able to read the papers before the conference and I think it improved the quality of the discussions.

17. I think it should be strongly encouraged, but I wouldn't require that papers be submitted.

18. I think it is a good idea, as long as the organizers of the conference and the panel chairs / discussants are understanding about reasonably late papers.

19. Yes.

20. Important distinguishing mark of the conference. Please continue.

21. It is very helpful.

22. I love it; I read lots of the papers -- many even before I get to the conference and some in the evenings. It's been a pleasure to seek out authors whose panels you miss because you can't get to everything then discuss their work. It's also nice to know people from their papers when you happen to sit next to them at a meal or in an audience waiting for a panel to begin.

23. A great idea, keep it.

24. I liked the requirement and think that it should be required in the future. I benefited from reading select papers in advance.

25. Yes.

26. Absolutely, on both counts.

27. Current system is good. Best attribute: being able to screen papers ahead of time.

28. Yes, I think it is an excellent idea—as long as this doesn't constitute "publication" in a legal sense!

29. I'm in favor of strong but not punitive encouragement.

30. Certainly doesn't hurt in terms of getting papers on deadline. I do think that people print papers after the conference that interested them upon presentation.

31. The requirement is good, but I think it's totally impossible to expect people to have time to read papers in advance, especially for a conference that is during the teaching year.

32. I had trouble finding the paper archives. I would have looked at them before or during the presentations if I had found them.

33. Yes.

34. Absolutely. The conference is much more productive if the papers are pre-circulated. Discussants' remarks, at least some of them, should also be pre-circulated. Discussants should also have the option of sending some remarks exclusively to authors.

35. Keep it.

36. I'm afraid I never have time to read the papers ahead of time. It's a great idea, in principle.

37. I think this is a good policy and should be continued.

38. I think these are good ideas. I can't say as I've looked up any of the archived papers since the conference, but I probably will do so in the future. I wonder, though, if the pre-circulation requirement is toughest for folks at teaching-intensive colleges. I would be interested to know more about the "melt" at the end. Where did most of the melt come from, and did the pre-circulation requirement have anything to do with this? In other words, is this requirement affecting any particular group disproportionately? I think this would be useful to know.

39. Definitely keep pre-circulation requirement.

40. Pre-circulation was helpful. I would have used the archive if I had not been so busy with teaching, etc.

41. It is a good idea to pre-circulate, but you should not require it.

42. I like these requirements. Pre-circulation can improve discussion even if only a few

people look at papers in advance. Archiving is even more important. There are panels one cannot attend and papers one forgets to ask the author for, and it is in everyone's interest to circulate the papers as much as possible. The only concern I have is that rumor I have heard (unconfirmed) that some journals view certain forms of posting of papers online as publishing -- and will view papers so posted as having already been published if submitted. I think we should look into that and ensure we are not causing people problems down the road.

43. Both.

44. Pre-circulation would be great, if the length of papers was severely limited.

45. Keep the requirement.

46. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. But make sure to keep the password-protected nature, and please pull down papers over 2 years. I certainly don't want people able to pull them up more than a year later.

47. Definitely keep it. Improves the quality of papers / presentations.

48. I think that the pre-circulation requirement is excellent (even though I had to strain to meet it). One might try to make access a bit easier for those not prone to memorize their APT numbers. Maybe people could be allowed to choose their own passwords?

49. Yes, it's a helpful tool.

*1. Please feel free to add any additional comments or suggestions that you may have here.<sup>2</sup>*

1. I could help on one of the committees in the future, if you need help.

2. Thank you!

3. APT continues to be one of the best conferences out there.

4. This was a great conference, and I'm looking forward to next year!

5. I would consider serving on the Chairs and Discussants Committee. It's fine if you post my comments, provided that they're anonymous. Thanks for organizing this! Overall, it was a great experience.

6. I would be happy to serve again on the committee to select chairs/discussants, esp. if needed. [Name deleted.]

7. Please restrict the previous comments to officers. Feel free to use the following, however, as you like: As a grad student at about the halfway-point of my doctoral studies, and having attended at various points and in various capacities most of the major (and some not so major) Political Science conferences held in the U.S., I can say without equivocation that APT 2006 was far and away the most instructive and the most enjoyable conference I have experienced.

8. I'd be happy to participate in the APT in any capacity (at least in principle, modulo time & effort, etc. etc.). [Name deleted.]
9. I, [Name deleted], would be happy to serve as a chair or discussant at future conferences. My areas of expertise include Rawls, Deleuze, Kant, the Enlightenment.
10. [Name deleted]--on either committee, and also as a discussant.
11. I'll be happy to serve again if you have another panel on publishing some day!
12. I liked the session on teaching quite a bit and liked the idea raised there of having a site available for sharing syllabi and teaching challenges/successes.
13. Thanks to everyone for all their hard work. APT is a great conference. I would like to volunteer to serve on the Program Committee or the Chairs and Discussants committee (either one). [Name deleted.]
14. Thank you for keeping this going. The APT is a wonderful thing!
15. I love APT; I love the openness and egalitarianism of the culture. I wish more philosophers were involved.

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1. The entire, unedited responses were shared with the officers of the Association in order to assist them in planning for future meetings. The version of the responses given here has been edited for publication in a number of ways. Misspellings and grammatical errors have generally been corrected. Most abbreviations have been spelled out. References to specific individuals have been largely eliminated – except in some laudatory cases. Questions that asked for frank responses with the promise of anonymity have been removed, particularly the question asking for recommendations for chairs and discussants. Also removed are the responses of individuals who asked that their responses only be shared with the Associations' officers and not be published here. Finally, to better assure anonymity, the order of the responses to each question has been changed (so the first respondent may appear as number one on the first question, but then number 22 on the second question, and so on).

2. Note: This section has been edited to remove the names of those volunteering to serve on one of the program committees. Three respondents requested that their comments be restricted to the Association's officers. Two of those comments were removed entirely. Respondent number seven's comment was retained in this section, as was allowed. All other comments made by these three respondents have been removed from this compilation. Also removed was a comment complaining about a specific participant's paper.