

## **Milton R. Stark II**

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science  
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC  
(Expected Date of Graduation, May 2010)

**American Politics:** State and local governments, political institutions, elite behavior, public policy and opinion, political parties

**Public Administration:** Policy implementation studies, organizational theory, federalism

**Research Methods Training:** Linear regression, maximum likelihood estimation, longitudinal data analysis

Milton Stark is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of South Carolina. His major field is American Politics with a concentration in state and local governments and his minor field is Public Administration. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Middle Tennessee State University in August of 2003. He initially began training for a Master's of Public Administration at Appalachian State University but upon being accepted to the University of South Carolina decided instead to obtain his Ph. D. His most recent research is to be published in the near future in Political Research Quarterly. The article, "Governors Turn Pro" was coauthored with Ann Bowman of Texas A&M University and Neal Woods of the University of South Carolina.

His dissertation, "The Governor, the State of the State, and the Media as Framers of Speech" stems in large part from the vast literature regarding the role of the President's State of the Union Speech. Research suggests the President uses this opportunity to set the Congressional agenda for the upcoming year yet there is a lack of corresponding literature regarding his executive counterpart, the governor. Specifically, Milton's dissertation attempts to illustrate that while the messages are meant to be similar they operate in wholly different arenas. For example, the President's address receives national media attention and is covered by all the major television and news networks. The governors' address, however, may only run on public access television and receives much less newspaper coverage. Common sense may say the governor's address is therefore less important yet Milton's research suggests that the smaller audience, local newspaper coverage, and the perceptions of the speech by state politicians may magnify the speech's importance to state policy and the legislative agenda.

Milton's other research has covered a broad array of topics. While attending Appalachian State University he initiated a study into North Carolina's use of highway funding. Additionally, he has studied national political figures, namely the voting behavior and patterns of members of Congress. More specifically his research dealt with subgroups within Congress, namely the Congressional Black Caucus and the much more informal Women's Caucus. Both groups were made primarily of Democrats yet at times they acted much more differently than their colleagues in terms of their voting behavior. Milton's research showed that both of those groups, along with countless others, were often willing to forego actualized benefits such as chairmanships of committees in order to pursue their political agendas. Additionally, both groups were willing to offer counter proposals to those made by members of their own party, again to further a specific political agenda.

Currently Milton is highly focused on his dissertation but continues to work on various other projects. Those projects include expanding his previous research on the Congressional Black Caucus while simultaneously trying to take that research into the state level of government.

**Contact information**

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