BRIAN BOYLE

🏠 brianpaulboyle.com   ✉ brian.boyle@ncl.ac.uk

I am currently a Research Associate at Newcastle University, having completed my PhD in Politics at the University of Strathclyde. My primary research interests are comparative politics and political communication, focusing on the use of quantitative methods and computational social science approaches. I am currently looking for a full-time academic position to apply my substantive knowledge and methodological skills to produce impactful, high-quality research in a field that I am deeply passionate about.

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

PhD. Politics   **University of Strathclyde**, Glasgow
                                                          Oct 2016 – June 2021

Dissertation: 'Engineering Democracy: Electoral Rules and Political Engagement'
- Examines the relationship between electoral institutions and social inequalities across different forms of political engagement. With a focus on compulsory voting, proportional representation, voter registration, and national referendums.
- The project also explores the constituent parts of the concept of political engagement, examining the link between electoral institutions and voting, political attitudes, and non-electoral participation, as well as the relationship between these internal aspects of political support.
- Methodology uses large-N cross-national survey data and multi-level modelling in R.

MSc. Political Research   **University of Strathclyde**, Glasgow
Pass with Distinction   **Oct 2015 – Sept 2016**

B.A. (Hons) Politics   **University of Strathclyde**, Glasgow
1st Class Honours   **Sept 2010 – May 2014**

Employment

Research Associate   **Newcastle University**, UK
                                                          Sept 2021 – Present

Postdoctoral researcher as part of the 'Pro-Con EU' project, examining supporters and opponents of the EU. Our work package focuses on Twitter campaigning during the 2019 European Parliament Elections, and involves:
- Collecting and cleaning over 16 million tweets from political candidates and the public.
- Managing a team of 18 research assistants, setting up appropriate coding schemes and survey software to facilitate coding of over 100,000 texts across 11 languages for use in supervised machine learning classification.
- Collaborating both within our work packages, and across the wider team of researchers from 3 other partner universities to produce original data output, and a joint book proposal.
- Presenting our research findings at international conferences, and producing academic journal articles for peer review.

PUBLICATIONS & CONFERENCES

Journal Articles

- Boyle, B. P. (2022). Engineering Democracy: Electoral Rules and Turnout Inequality. Political Studies. https://doi.org/10.1177/00323217221096563

Academic Blogs

- Brandenburg, H. and Boyle, B. (2021), 'Was BBC Question Time Balanced or Biased on Brexit?', UK in a Changing Europe,
  Available at: https://ukandeu.ac.uk/was-bbc-question-time-balanced-or-biased-on-brexit

Conference Papers & Presentations

- Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (2022, 2021, 2019)
- European Political Science Association (2022)
- European Union Studies Association (2022)
- Midwest Political Science Association (2022)
- North East Research Discussion Seminar (2022)
- Political Studies Association Early Career Researcher Conference (2022, 2021)
- Montreal-Leuven Winter School (2019)

Working Papers

- Mulvey, G., Skleparis, D., and Boyle, B. P. (2022). Territorial Variance in the UK's Refugee Politics and its Consequences: Young Syrian Refugees in England and Scotland
  - *Currently revise and resubmit at Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*
- Boyle, B. P., Popa, S. A., and Fazekas, Z., When Office is not an Option: Building Online Policy Profiles in the UK's Final European Election Campaign
- Boyle, B. P., Popa, S. A., and Fazekas, Z., The Evolving Nature of EU Integration: Issue Embedding in the 2019 European Election Campaign
- Brandenburg, H. and Boyle, B. P. BBC Question Time: Bias or Balance on Brexit?

AWARDS & FUNDING

- **PhD Graduate Teaching Scholarship**
  - Fully paid PhD studentship, which covered tuition fees, and an annual stipend of £14,000 for three years.
- **Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Awards 2019 Nomination – 'Best student who tutors'**
  - First PhD student to be nominated for a Teaching Excellence award in the department.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Researcher/Research Assistant   **University of Strathclyde, University of Edinburgh**
2016 - Jan 2022

Research Projects:

- 'State of the Union Survey', Prof Ailsa Henderson and Prof Richard Wyn Jones
- 'Who and What Gets Represented on BBC Question Time?', Dr Heinz Brandenburg
- 'Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships', Dr Jun Koga-Suddith

- Project collecting survey data from each of the UK home nations on national identity, constitutional change, and EU attitudes. The role involved analysing data and writing up reports on previous survey waves, and constructing the 2021 survey questionnaire which was fielded in November last year.
- Co-investigator in a project examining media representation in UK political public broadcasting. This included the creation of an original dataset on media appearances between 1979-2019, using a combination of web-scraping in R and expert coding. Initial results have been presented at national conferences and published in an academic blog post. This is to be followed by at least two peer-reviewed journal articles.
- I worked as part of a small team on two projects that focused on both civilian and military dictatorships, using news and media reports to construct an original dataset on political purges by authoritarian leaders between 1980-2015.

Data Analyst   **Glasgow City Council - Education Services**
Nov 2019-Present

- I personally conducted a methodology review for an internal comparison tool used by Glasgow schools to help tackle the socio-economic attainment gap, and expanded the system to include seven other local authorities.
- Responsible for automating the comparison process and producing a reliable and reproducible methodology that can accommodate future data collection.
- Other duties involved:
  - Working as part of a team to calculate school roll projections for the next 10 years.
  - Compiling and conducting a time series analysis using panel data on pupil performance and socio-economic background.
  - Presenting my findings to representatives from Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.

Teaching Assistant   **University of Strathclyde, Glasgow**
2016-2021

- Tutor for a wide range of undergraduate politics courses, including:
  - Research Methods, Quantitative Methods, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Introduction to Politics.
- Duties involved teaching tutorial sessions, lesson preparation, creating teaching materials, assignment grading, and providing meaningful feedback to students.
- I also conducted additional essay writing workshops, and quantitative methods workshops for Honours year students, providing additional guidance on applying the skills learned in class.

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Substantive Knowledge

- My studies have provided me with an extremely well-rounded understanding of the wider political science literature, as well as specialist knowledge on social inequality, political engagement, and electoral institutions. My employment has also developed wide-ranging expertise in political communication and EU politics, with a particular focus on social media campaigning.
- My PhD research has produced one paper which has been published in Political Studies. Three co-authored working papers are also due to be submitted for peer review as part of the Pro-Con EU project. One academic blog post has been already published as part of my co-authored project on media representation, which is to be followed by two papers for submission to peer-reviewed academic journals.

Quantitative and Computational Social Science Methods

- My studies have been firmly rooted in research design and methodology, specialising in the use of quantitative methods. My post-doc position and attending several methods courses has allowed me to gain expertise in computational social science approaches including supervised and unsupervised machine learning, NLP classification and topic modelling, as well as collecting and analysing social media data.
- Experienced working with R, LaTeX, Excel, and SPSS, with some Python experience. I have spent considerable time using web-scraping and text analysis tools in my research projects on BBC Question Time and MEP online campaigning.

Organisation and Project Management

- My post-doc position involved managing 18 research assistants, requiring excellent organization and communication skills to ensure work was completed within strict deadlines, and met wider project goals. I was responsible for designing and implementing our coding procedure for a large-scale data collection program, as well as collaborating to produce research outputs both within our work package, and with teams from external partner universities.
- Completing my PhD while simultaneously working in both academia and local government highlights my ability to work under pressure and manage competing deadlines within an independent research project.

Communication Skills

- I have presented my work at international conferences, faculty colloquiums, and to educators and policymakers from both the Scottish government, and local authorities across Scotland, highlighting my ability to effectively communicate my findings to a broad range of audiences.
- Working collaboratively, and building upon our shared skills and expertise to reach project goals was essential when working as part of academic and governmental research teams.
- Close collaboration on my academic research projects has entailed working together to meet our deadlines for funding applications and conference submissions, as well as co-authoring academic blog posts and journal articles for peer-review.
- In my teaching roles, coordinating with other tutors and lecturers was essential in ensuring that students received a consistent level of feedback and standard of teaching across different classes.