Ohio State PhD in Political Science Wins National Dissertation Award

Columbus, Ohio – Joshua Kertzer, who earned his doctorate in political science from Ohio State in 2013, has been awarded a Distinguished Dissertation Award from the Council of Graduate Schools and ProQuest.

This is the nation’s most prestigious honor for doctoral dissertations. Kertzer was presented the award on Dec. 4 during the CGS annual meeting in Washington, DC., and his dissertation was selected from 71 nominees representing 25 disciplines in the social sciences.

The Graduate School at Ohio State is a member of CGS and nominated Kertzer for the award.

Kertzer’s dissertation, “Resolve in International Politics,” examines the concept of resolve, which is a commonly used, but insufficiently understood, independent variable in international relations. He describes resolve as “an interaction between situational stakes and dispositional traits,” and he uses a range of different methods to explain why certain types of actors are more sensitive to the costs of fighting, while others are more sensitive to the costs of backing down.”
“I’m delighted that one of Ohio State’s doctoral students is being recognized by this award,” said Patrick S. Osmer, vice provost for graduate studies and dean of the Graduate School. Josh’s research exemplifies what I see as the three hallmarks of doctoral education. It’s creative, it solves a problem, and it makes new knowledge. In this case, this new knowledge can be used to address age-old problems in international politics.”

Kertzer is currently assistant professor in the Department of Government at Harvard University.

Given annually since 1982, the Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards recognize recent doctoral recipients who have already made unusually significant and original contributions to their fields. ProQuest, an international leader in dissertation archiving, discovery and access, sponsors the awards and an independent committee from the Council of Graduate Schools selects the winners. Two awards are given each year, rotating among four general areas of scholarship. The winners receive a certificate, a $2,000 honorarium, and funds for travel to the awards ceremony.

“Once again, the Distinguished Dissertation Awards demonstrate how young scholars are having a dramatic impact on their fields,” said CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega. “It’s a testament to the vitality of graduate education when new knowledge contributed by recently minted PhDs can raise the level of understanding in their fields of study.”

More information about the CGS / ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award is available at www.proquest.com/go/scholars or at www.cgsnet.org.

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The Council of Graduate Schools is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 91% of the doctoral degrees and 81% of the master’s degrees.* The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices. www.cgsnet.org

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