

Matthew Scherer

George Mason University
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

George Mason University

Assistant Professor of Government and Politics
Schar School of Policy and Government, 2013—

Georgetown University

Research Fellow
Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs, 2012—13

Union College

Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science, 2009—2013

Johns Hopkins University

Patrick Henry Fellow in the Study of Early American Political Thought
Departments of Political Science and History, 2008—2009

University of California, Berkeley

Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities, 2006—2008
Department of Rhetoric

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University, Ph.D. 2007

Exam Fields: Political Theory, Constitutional Law
Advisors: William Connolly, Richard Flathman
Dissertation Title: *The Politics of Persuasion: Habit, Creativity, Conversion*

Williams College, B.A. 2000

Major in Political Science, with honors
Major in Physics, Class of 1960's Scholar
Phi Beta Kappa, Magna cum Laude

PUBLICATIONS

Book:

1. *Beyond Church and State: Democracy, Secularism and Conversion*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Reviews to date: *Perspectives on Politics*; *Politics and Religion*; *Choice* (Recommended); *Augustinian Studies*; *Political Theology*.

Articles and Book Chapters:

1. "Marilynne Robinson and the Fiction of American 'Religion'" in *A Political Companion to Marilynne Robinson*, Mariotti and Lane, eds. (University Press of Kentucky, Forthcoming, Fall 2016).
2. "Nietzsche's Smile: Modern Conversion and the Secularity Craze" *The Hedgehog Review*, vol. 17 no. 3 (Fall 2015).
3. "The New Religious Freedom: Secular Fictions and Church Autonomy" *Politics and Religion* (Fall 2015).
4. "Secularism" *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, eds. Michael Gibbons, Diana Coole, Lisa Ellis (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).
5. "Landmarks in the Critical Study of Secularism." *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 26 no. 4 (November 2011).

Also printed with the Social Science Research Council, *The Immanent Frame*, Nov. 2010.

<http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2010/11/12/landmarks-secularism>

6. "Saint John: The Miracle of Secular Reason" Chapter in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, eds., Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 341-62.

Review Essays, Critical Responses, and Book Reviews:

1. "A More Anxious Freedom" SSRC, *The Immanent Frame*, April 2016.
<http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2016/04/19/a-more-anxious-freedom/>.
2. "Neoliberalism, Consumerism, and Religion" *Politics and Religion*, vol. 7 no. 4 (December 2014), 841-7.
3. "The Rhetoric of Persuasion: On the Varieties of Political Oratory" *Political Theory*, vol. 35 no. 4 (August 2007), 522-8.
4. "Review of Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literature" *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 20 no. 5 (December 2005), 1239-44.

Work in Progress and Under Review:

1. "Political Theology, Democracy, and the Exception in the Egyptian Revolution" (Revise and Resubmit, *Political Theology*).
2. "Everyday Exceptions" *Religious Inspirations and Legal Responses* a special issue of *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society* (Invited contribution. Peer review. In progress.)
3. *Modern Exceptions: Political Theology, Secularity, and Democracy* (Book length manuscript, in progress, four of five chapters drafted).

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

1. **Patrick Henry Fellowship.** One-year research and lecture appointment in the Departments of Political Science and History at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 2008—9.
2. **Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in the Humanities.** Two-year research and lecture appointment at the University of California, Berkeley in the Department of Rhetoric, 2006—8.
3. **Townsend/Mellon Strategic Working Group on Religion, Secularism, and Modernity.** Selected to advise development of new graduate program in religious studies. University of California, Berkeley, 2007.
4. **Dean's Teaching Fellowship.** Awarded on a university wide, competitive basis to design and teach an original undergraduate course. Office of the Dean, Johns Hopkins, 2006.
5. **Joel Ish Fellowship.** Awarded to an advanced graduate student in recognition of outstanding work. Department of Political Science, Johns Hopkins, 2005.
6. **William R. Kenan, Jr. Fund Grant.** Grant to construct multimedia website to deliver streaming media clips and enable online discussion between students and instructor. 2004.
7. **Paul A. McCoy Award.** For the most distinguished essay written for a graduate seminar. Department of Political Science, Johns Hopkins, 2002–2003.
8. **George Owen Fellowship** Three-year fellowship for one incoming student in Political Science. Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins, 2001–2004.

INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

1. **Georgetown University.** Department of Government.
“Modern Excpetions” Political Theory Workshop. December 2016.
2. **Indiana University Bloomington / Luce Initiative on Religion in International Affairs.**
“Exceptions in American Theology.” Invited workshop presentation. October 2016.
3. **Northwestern University / Luce Initiative on Religion in International Affairs.**
“Comments on ‘The Politics of Religion at Home and Abroad.’” Invited workshop presentation. June 2016.
4. **The Graduate Center, CUNY.** Committee for the Study of Religion.
“Democracy’s Everyday Failures: tragedy, acknowledgment, and traces of theology in the late political thought of Stanley Cavell.” April 2016.
5. **American Academy of Religion Annual Conference.** Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion Special Session.
“Religious Liberty, the Supreme Court, RFRA and RLUIPA.” November 2015.
6. **University of Virginia.** Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture.

- Seminar on my book *Beyond Church and State*. October 2015.
7. **Yale University.** Yale Seminar in Religious Studies.
Comments on Winnifred Fallers Sullivan’s “The Church’s Two Bodies.” October 2015.
 8. **George Washington University.** Honors Program Faculty Series.
“Revolution, Conversion, and the Muslim Brotherhood.” March 2015.
 9. **University of Copenhagen.** Department of Political Science.
“Nietzsche’s Genealogy of Secularism.” August 2014.
 10. **University of Copenhagen.** “Religious Citizens” Interdisciplinary Workshop.
“Beyond Church and State: Religious Citizens and the New Secularism.” August 2014.
 11. **European University Viadrina.** Frankfurt Oder, Germany. “God and Caesar in Motion” Workshop.
“On the Conceptualization of Borders Between Religion and Politics.” July 2014.
 12. **Georgetown University.** Berkley Center for Religion, Politics & World Affairs.
“Beyond Church and State.” Spring 2013.
 13. **George Mason University.** “Theories of the State” Panel.
“Perspectives on the State Form: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern.” Spring 2013.
 14. **Columbia University.** Department of Political Science.
“Conversion and the Politics of Modern Secularism.” 2009.
 15. **University of Maryland Law School.** Conference on “Religion and Constitutionalism.”
“Concepts of ‘Religion’ in Constitutional Discourse.” 2009.
 16. **University of Maryland.** Department of Government.
“The Politics of Modern Secularism.” 2008.
 17. **University of California, Berkeley.** Department of Rhetoric.
“Varieties of Modern Secularism: Charles Taylor, Talal Asad, William James.” 2008.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Divine Violence” The Egyptian Revolution and the Muslim Brotherhood

American Political Science Association. Philadelphia. 2016.

The New Religious Freedom, Corporate Religion, and Sovereignty: A View from Hosanna-Tabor and Hobby Lobby

Law and Society Association. New Orleans, LA. 2016.

Political Theology and Egyptian Democracy: Revolution, Conversion, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Association for Political Theory. Boulder, CO. 2015.

The New Religious Freedom: Secular Fictions and Church Autonomy

American Political Science Association. San Francisco, CA. 2015.

The New Religious Freedom: Secular Fictions and Church Autonomy

Freedom of (and from) Religion: Debates Over the Accommodation of Religion in the Public Sphere. An Interdisciplinary Conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara. 2015.

Islamism, Secularism, and Democracy in Egypt

George Mason University. Workshop for Research in Political Science. February 2015.

The New Religious Freedom: Secular Fictions and Church Autonomy

Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and the Humanities. Washington, DC 2015.

Friedrich Nietzsche's Genealogy of Secularism

American Political Science Association. Washington, DC 2014.

Tolerating Difference? "Islamism," Secularism, and Democracy in Egypt

Difference and Toleration: A South South Conversation. Kings College, London, 2014.

"How Much Blood and Cruelty": Friedrich Nietzsche's Genealogy of Secularism

Western Political Science Association. Hollywood, CA 2013.

Political Theologies

American Political Science Association. Seattle, WA, 2011.

On the Critical Study of Secularism: William Connolly and Talal Asad

American Political Science Association. Washington, DC, 2010.

The Story of Modern Secularism as a Conversion Narrative

Western Political Science Association. San Francisco, 2010.

The Time of the Political

Western Political Science Association. San Francisco, 2010.

"Latin Christendom" In Charles Taylor's *Secular Age*

American Political Science Association. Toronto, 2009.

Knowing Other Minds and One's Own: Political Judgment in Locke in Cavell

Western Political Science Association. Vancouver, 2009.

Secular Publics and their Religious Audience

American Political Science Association. Boston, 2008.

The Political Discourse of Modern Secularism

Western Political Science Association. San Diego, 2008.

The Impossibility of Secular Law?

Association for the Study of Law, Culture and the Humanities. Berkeley, 2008.

Persuasion or Conversion? Secularism and Religion in Contemporary Politics

American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Chicago, IL. 2007.

Seminar in Experimental Critical Theory: Cartographies of the Theological-Political

University of California Humanities Research Institute. Seminar participant, 2007.

The Global Return of Religion?

Western Political Science Association Annual Conference. Las Vegas, NV. 2007.

“Turning of a Cheek, of a Mood”: From Religious to Secular Conversion

American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Philadelphia, PA. 2006.

Constructing Moral and Religious Legitimacy for Public Action (co-Author with E Anker)

American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Philadelphia, PA. 2006.

The Experience of Modern Rationality

Western Political Science Association Annual Conference. Oakland, CA. 2005.

Paradox and Rhetoric in the Work of John Rawls

“Political Theologies: Globalization and Post-Secular Reason” a conference convened by Harvard University’s Center for the Study of World Religions and the University of Amsterdam’s School of Cultural Analysis. Amsterdam, Netherlands. 2004.

Comments on “Democracy without Brotherhood: Derrida and the Politics of Kinship”

Humanities Center, Johns Hopkins University. Baltimore, MD. 2004.

TEACHING

Specialization *History of political thought; contemporary political theory; American political thought; religion and politics; secularism; rhetoric and political discourse; globalization and political economy.*

Democracy in Theory and Practice Lecture course tracing key topics in democratic theory and practice in US and global perspectives through contemporary and historical readings including: Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Jefferson, Madison, Marx, Douglass, Whitman, Constant, Mill, Baldwin, Lippmann, Dewey, Berlin, Dahl, Patterson, Morgan, Bailyn, Chatterjee, Appadurai, and Habermas. George Mason, 2013—.

Political Theory Field Seminar Introduction to Political Theory at the graduate level. Readings have included: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Nietzsche, Hayek, Foucault, Deleuze, Agamben, Brown, Connolly. George Mason. 2014—.

Contemporary Political Theory Undergraduate seminars and lecture courses on current topics in political theory. These include: “Politics, Knowledge, and the Self,” UC Berkeley, 2006; “Contemporary Continental Theory,” and “Crisis, Debt, and Violence,” Union College, Spring 2011 and 2012; and “Contemporary Western Political Theory,” George Mason, 2013—.

Classical Political Thought Upper level undergraduate course in Ancient Political Theory. Readings include: Hesiod, Homer, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, Hebrew Bible, New Testament. George Mason 2016—.

Introduction to Political Thought Introduction to political theory at the undergraduate level. Traces a series of concepts such as responsibility, authority, and dissent across the canon of western thought. Readings have included Plato, Sophocles, Hebrew Bible, Shakespeare, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Mill, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Arendt, and Butler. Union College, 2009—11.

Religion and Politics / Modern Secularism Undergraduate course investigates the role of Europe's religious inheritances in shaping its secular aspirations. Readings include Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Tocqueville, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Schmitt, Löwith, Blumenberg, Asad. Union College, 2009, UC Berkeley, 2007.

Theories of Political Economy Undergraduate course explores modern political-economic theories with emphasis on historicizing the global economy and tracing the interrelation of political and economic power. Readings include Smith, Marx, Hayek, Polanyi, Foucault, Habermas, Hacker and Pierson. Union College, 2011.

Damnation, Revolution and the American Experiment: From Colony to Independence Undergraduate course examines major themes in early American political thought including religion and politics, capitalism, legal foundations, the public sphere, print culture, republicanism, and revolution. Readings include Winthrop, Edwards, Franklin, Jefferson and Madison, plus commentary by Weber, Perry Miller, Bernard Bailyn, J.G.A. Pocock, Benedict Anderson, Harry Stout, Gordon Wood. Union College, 2010, Johns Hopkins, 2008.

Slavery, Independence and the Constitution of the United States Undergraduate course examines major themes in American political thought and politics from the ratification of the Constitution through the Civil War including slavery, racism, the separation of church and state, republicanism, theories of government, democratic political cultures, and social criticism. Readings include Jefferson, "Publius," Tocqueville, Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Douglass, Lincoln and Twain. Johns Hopkins, Political Science, Spring 2009.

Political Theology Graduate seminar explores classical articulations of political theology and their impact upon political and legal theories of sovereignty, democracy, and secularism. Readings include: Paul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Spinoza, Hegel, Kant, Derrida, Cavell. UC Berkeley, 2007.

Politics and Persuasion Undergraduate seminar examines the interaction of philosophical truth and rhetorical technique in authors including Plato, Augustine, Locke, Emerson, Whitman, Bergson, Rawls, and Foucault. Offered as a Dean's Teaching Fellow, Johns Hopkins, Spring 2006.

SERVICE AND ADVISING

Service to the Academy

APSA Religion and Politics Division Executive Council (elected). 2016—.

APSA Religion and Politics Division Program Chair. 2015—6.

Dissertation Committee (Outside Member): Joanna Tice, "The Power of the Spirit: The Political Thought of 21st Century Evangelicalism." CUNY Graduate Center. August 2016.

Conference Program Committee. Association for Political Theory. 2011.

Referee

Books: Routledge, Oxford, Fordham, Chicago.

Articles: Political Theory; Journal of Politics; Political Research Quarterly; Politics and Religion; Encyclopedia of Political Thought; Critical Research in Religion; Political Theology; Contemporary Political Theory; Law, Culture, and the Humanities.

Service to the University

Director of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. George Mason University. 2016—.

George Mason University Core Committee. 2015—.

Pi Sigma Alpha Faculty Advisor. George Mason University, 2014—.

Politics Lecture Series, Co-Director. Department of Political Science, Union College. 2011.

Thesis Prize Committee and Assessment Committee. Department of Political Science, Union College. 2009—10.

Johns Hopkins Workshop in Politics. Established and directed a monthly workshop for advanced Ph.D. Students from the Johns Hopkins University and other universities. 2002—5.

MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association

Association for Political Theory

American Academy of Religion

Law and Society Association

Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and the Humanities