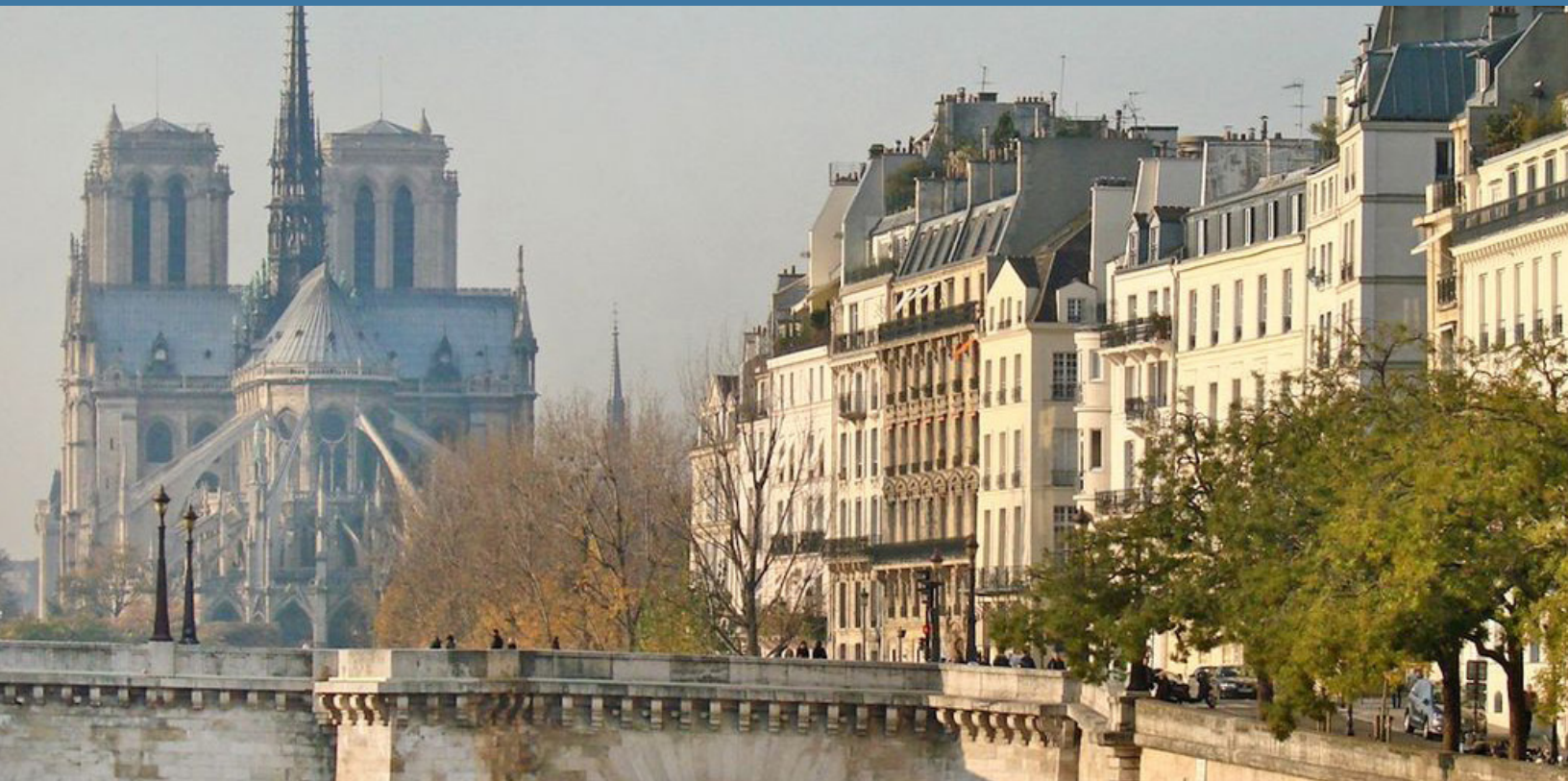


THE POLITICAL SCIENCE POST

WINTER 2019

Newsletter of the BYU Political Science Department



GOVERNANCE, REASON AND GLOBAL DEMOCRACY: THE LEGACY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

During the spring and summer of 1789, the world learned of the successful culmination of the American Revolution—the implementation of the American Constitution when George Washington was inaugurated as the Republic’s first president on April 30, 1789, in New York City. Half a world away, in the heart of Europe,

another rebellion erupted on July 14, 1789 when a mob stormed a Paris prison called the Bastille, a symbol of royal power.

The French Revolution would last much longer than the American Revolution, in part because it was not an uprising of a few million colonials on the periphery of civilization, but a cataclysm at the heart of civilization, and some say it ended only with the Third French Republic in 1870, 81 years after the storming of the Bastille. The principal radical phase of the French Revolution, from 1789 until

1794, was a period of far-reaching social and political upheaval the impact of which still reverberates around the world today.

The culmination of the radical phase was a revolutionary idea of “human rights” as written in the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen,” drafted by General Marquis de Lafayette, on casual talk with Thomas Jefferson, Abbé Sieyès and Honore Mirabeau, and adopted by the French Assembly on August 26, 1789. The political principals espoused by the Declaration include basic human

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BYU | POLITICAL
SCIENCE

The BYU Department of Political Science, consistent with the aims of a BYU education, intends to foster “Lifelong Learning and Service.”

We hope to provide our alumni with intelligent, thoughtful and sophisticated analysis of important issues, and to act as a catalyst for service in our communities, neighborhoods, nations and the world.

Connect with us on social media



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BYU POLI SCI STORIES

EVENTS & PROGRAMS



LECTURE SERIES ON NOVEMBER 8, 2018

Elizabeth Fitzsimmons, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State at the US State Department Bureau of African Affairs, spoke to students by Zoom from her home in the DC area, about her career in Foreign Service. Thank you, Elizabeth for an amazing presentation!

LECTURE BY SENATOR DEIDRE HENDERSON ON OCTOBER 24, 2018

On October 24, 2018, Utah State Senator Deidre Henderson presented a brief lecture in the JFSB B106, at 6:30 PM. The BYU College Republicans presented the lecture and Q&A. Politics, Root Beer Floats and great discussions, all in one place.

VARSITY THEATER ON OCTOBER 25, 2018

Evan McMullin, David Jolly and Patrick Murphy spoke in the Varsity Theater on October 25, 2018, about “Why Gridlock Rules Washington: An Unexpected Pre-Election Conversation.”

WELCH’S AND CHEESE EVENT WITH DR. DAVID MAGLEBY

The Welch’s and Cheese event with Dr. David Magleby was at his house in Provo, on the evening of Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 7 PM. The topic was the dynamics of the 2018 midterm election. He displayed and discussed 4 different tables and charts relating to mid-term elections, gender, and party control. Thank you for a fascinating discussion in a comfortable home environment, Dr. Magleby!

OKTOBERFEST

On the evening of Thursday, October 25, 2019, students and faculty from Political Science gathered at the BYU Timp Lodge at Sundance Mountain Resort for an evening of food and comradery. Of particular interest to all, the Faculty Band performed a version of the classic song: “Johnny B. Goode”



BYU PAS FIRESIDE WITH DR. GEORGE HANDLEY

Sunday,
September 23, 2018.
Salt Lake City BYU
PAS Chapter.



BYUPAS*

JOIN US FOR A FIRESIDE
WITH DR. GEORGE
HANDLEY, BYU PROFESSOR
OF INTERDISCIPLINARY
HUMANITIES, AUTHOR, AND
PROVO CITY COUNCILMAN.

1356 S 1000 E
SLC, UT 84103

09.23. 18
7PM

*POLITICAL AFFAIRS
SOCIETY



Dr. George Handley, former associate dean of the College of Humanities, and new associate director of the BYU Faculty Center, and professor of Classics and Comparative Literature of the BYU College of Humanities, spoke to a large crowd at a beautiful home in Salt Lake City about Latter-day Saint Environmentalism and “Reflections on our Stewardship” of the planet earth. He began by telling that when he was a professor in Arizona, shortly after his doctoral program at Berkeley in the early 90’s, he was asked by one of his University colleagues, what Mormons believe about the environment.

He responded by relaying several basic tenets of our faith: First, we believe that the world was created spiritually before physically; Second, that plants and animals are living souls and that there is a substrata of commonality among all creatures and humans. All life has spiritual intelligence. Third, that the earth is the site of the celestial kingdom, and that we should live in a way to deserve the right to stay here. Dr. Handley suggested that some traditional Christian denominations believe in the denial of the importance of the earth in favor of heaven, and denying the body in favor of the spirit. Mormonism never believed this, but that both the earth and the body are spiritual and intricately connected. Fourth, Mormons believe in the word of wisdom, that we should eat meat sparingly, and eat mostly the fruits and vegetables. D&C 89 mentions the whole web of life, feeding the

whole chain of being. This is important Mormon doctrine suggesting the ethical treatment of animals and land. Fifth, Dr. Handley mentioned the Law of Consecration, in D&C 49, 59 and 104, that it is a sin to waste flesh, and that we should not use more than we need, and that all people should be treated equally. After casually mentioning these beliefs to his non-Mormon colleague in Arizona she was surprised and delighted by our doctrine and found it quite revolutionary and visionary. She applauded the church for its beliefs and wondered if all members of the Church know the implications of these beliefs.

Dr. Handley concluded that the LDS tradition on the environment has some of the most exceptional and valuable doctrines in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and that we should be energized by our values; and that our religious values tell us to get involved in our communities and apply our religious beliefs to nature conservancy. Dr. Handley also referenced the speech by Elder Marcus B. Nash on “Religious Dominion and Compassion for the Earth,” delivered at the 18th Annual Stegner Center Symposium on Friday, April 12, 2013. Handley also referenced the “Encyclical Letter” of Pope Francis “On Care for Our Common Home.” His presentation offered powerful lessons about how the earth is in need of our active participation in its preservation. Thank you, Dr. Handley.



ACUNS 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rome, Italy July 12-14th 2018



From July 12 to July 14th, 2018, the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), convened its annual meeting, this year in Rome, Italy, wherein Professor Kendall Stiles, from BYU Political Science, presented an academic paper entitled “Reimagining World Affairs: Homesteads on the Prairie,” and acted in his capacity of Co-Editor-In-Chief of the ACUNS-sponsored academic Journal entitled *Global Governance*. The *Global Governance* Journal is published quarterly by Brill, out of the Netherlands, in association with ACUNS, and receives manuscripts from all over the world, mostly from academics, professionals and doctors of Political Science. The Journal is currently hosted by Brigham Young University for a five-year term (2018-2023). Matthew Clarke, also from BYU Political Science, attended the annual meeting in his capacity as Managing Editor of the Journal.



The Journal *Global Governance* is an interdisciplinary journal with a global focus. The ACUNS council, and therefore its academic journal *Global Governance*, has a Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council, and affiliate status with the UN Department of Public Information. It is possible for ACUNS council members to attend meetings organized by UN specialized agencies, the UN Secretariat and other UN bodies. The intent of the Journal is to raise important questions, promulgate current research, and influence global public policy. Please find *Global Governance* online, and subscribe to it on Twitter and Facebook.

SPEAKERS



Tocqueville Society Lecture: Dr. Stephen Sawyer

Stephen Sawyer Spoke at the Political Science Department on Monday, November 19, 2018. He spoke about his recent book: *“Democracy Past and Future: Looking to the Past to Understand the Future of our Democracies”*. Stephen Sawyer will be spending his fellowship year working on the second volume of his history of democracy and the state in the nineteenth century. The first volume, entitled *Demos Assembled: Democracy and the International Origins of the Modern State, 1840-1880* (University of Chicago Press, 2018) argued that a sustained interest in the democratic following the 1848 revolutions brought forward a series of problems in which the power of the political community over itself received its first lasting institutional responses. At CASBS, Sawyer will continue his project by revisiting the previous period in a manuscript with the working title: *The Democratic Revolution, 1820-1850*. This project explores the

vibrant moment of public engagement that stretched from the 1820s to the military reaction that swept across Europe in the early 1850s. In it, he explores how these revolutions may be better understood as one dilated revolutionary moment in which a modern definition of democracy began to take form.

Sawyer is a professor of history at the American University of Paris. His work dialogues with the fields of legal history, political theory, political sociology and political science. He earned his PhD in history from the University of Chicago.

Thursday, October 25, 2018, as part of the “Religion and Civic Engagement” conference on campus, and from 10:45 AM to noon that day, professor David Campbell from Notre Dame Political Science, spoke at the Hinckley Center on an interesting subject: “Can Religious and Secular Americans Find Common Ground.”



Civic Engagement Conference Lecture: Dr. David Campbell

Dr. David Campbell, Professor of Political Science, University of Notre Dame, spoke on Civic Engagement in a Secular Age: Can Religious and Secular Americans Find Common Ground? He spoke at the 2018 Civic Engagement Fall Research Conference on “Religion and Civic Engagement” on Thursday, Oct 25th, 2018 at the Hinckley Center.

David Campbell is the Packey J. Dee Professor of American Democracy at the University of Notre Dame and the chairperson of the political science department. His most recent book is *Seeking the Promised Land: Mormons and American Politics* (with John Green and Quin Monson). He is also the co-author (with Robert Putnam) of *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*, which has been described by the New York Times as intellectually powerful, by America as an instant classic and by the San Francisco Chronicle as the most successfully argued sociological study of American religion in more than half a

century. *American Grace* has also received both the 2011 Woodrow Wilson Award from the American Political Science Association for the best book on government, politics, or international affairs and the Wilbur Award from the Religious Communicators Council for the best non-fiction book of 2010.

Prof. Campbell is also the author of *Why We Vote: How Schools and Communities Shape Our Civic Life*, the editor of *A Matter of Faith: Religion in the 2004 Presidential Election*, and a co-editor of *Making Civics Count: Citizenship Education for a New Generation*. As an expert on religion, politics, and civic engagement, he has often been featured in the national media, including the New York Times, Economist, USA Today, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, NBC News, CNN, NPR, Fox News, and C-SPAN. Dr. Campbell holds a Ph.D., Political Science, Harvard University.

SPEAKERS



Public Affairs Lecture Series: Ralf Gruenke

On Thursday, October 4, 2018, Ralf Gruenke, from LDS Public Affairs in Europe/Frankfurt, spoke at the BYU Public Affairs Lecture Series. He spoke about when his childhood dream of becoming a circus ringmaster didn't pan out, he couldn't decide between a career in academia or in communications. He holds degrees, including a Ph.D. (magna cum laude), in political science, and worked as a researcher in Washington, DC. But he also interned with the U.S. Library of Congress Public Affairs Office and earned a living as a communications coach for a major marketing agency.

Some personal highlights of his 13 years with the Europe Area Public Affairs Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, include explaining faith matters to two of Germany's toughest TV hosts the night of the 2012 U.S. elections, gathering signatures on Bratislava's main square by using a few memorized Slovak one-liners for a petition to grant the Church legal recognition, and speaking at a UNESCO-sponsored conference on interfaith dialogue in Macedonia (the former Yugoslav republic).

Ralf spoke about six different characteristics of his job in Church communications: write, lecture, coach, chat, research and organize. He spoke about getting good advice from all kinds of people, then ignoring it to follow his instincts. He said that we should become a blend of a specialist and a generalist: know one skill well, but many other skills to supplement it. He also suggested that we cultivate our passions, not necessarily follow our passions. He also said that quantitative skills and presentation skills are helpful. He thought that studying political science was a good preparation for a career in communications.





Foundational Political Philosopher

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury was an English philosopher who is considered one of the founders of modern political philosophy. Hobbes is best known for his 1651 book *Leviathan*, which established the social contract theory that has served as the foundation for most later Western political philosophy. In addition to political philosophy, Hobbes also contributed to a diverse array of other fields, including history, jurisprudence, geometry, the physics of gases, theology, ethics, and general philosophy.

Though on rational grounds a champion of absolutism for the sovereign, Hobbes also developed some of the fundamentals of European liberal thought: the right of the individual; the natural equality of all men; the artificial character of the political order (which led to the later distinction between civil society and the state); the view that all legitimate political power must be “representative” and based on the consent of the people; and a liberal interpretation of law that leaves people free to do whatever the law does not explicitly forbid. His understanding of humans as being matter and motion, obeying the same physical laws as other matter and motion, remains influential; and his account of human nature as self-interested cooperation, and of political communities as being based upon a “social contract” remains one of the major topics of political philosophy.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



MARGARET WOOLLEY BUSSE

Margaret Woolley Busse, Political Candidate in Action, Massachusetts, Studied Political Science at BYU, received a Master's in Public Policy at BYU and an MBA from Harvard.



SUZANNE GARDNER STOTT

Director of "Families for Children," in Utah, which assists children waiting to be adopted, has been heavily involved in refugee settlement since 1981 and currently her days are filled with assisting African refugees. Suzanne studied Political Science at BYU and dislikes what is happening in our country regarding, specifically, refugees and immigrants. She can only see gloom ahead for the USA if

we don't start be more welcoming and nice! Families for Children helps make the home study process for adopted children quick and painless while still being incredibly thorough.

REYNOLDS ENDOWMENT

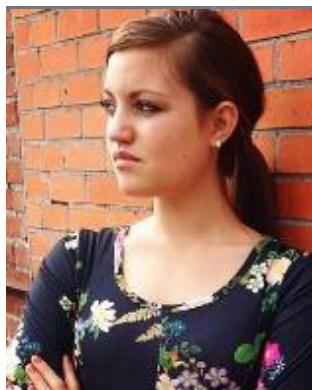
Since Noel and Sydney first met as BYU freshmen during a political science class in 1960, their lives have been linked through friendship, marriage, and a shared love of service. Throughout their marriage, they dedicated their time and resources to BYU,



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the larger community. As they reach their 75th year milestone, the Department of Political Science wishes to honor them by establishing in perpetuity an endowment to support the study and appreciation of the Constitution for both BYU students and faculty. We invite all whose lives have been touched by Noel

and Sydney to join us in honoring them. Please consider this opportunity to support the Noel and Sydney Reynolds Endowment for student mentored learning experiences and scholarships, and for bringing prestigious visitors to campus.

STUDENTS/ GRADUATES



ELIZA RILEY

Eliza Riley, our Valedictorian for August 2018 Graduation, is working as a Research Associate in the Political Methodology Lab at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



CONNOR KREUTZ

Connor Kreutz is from Seattle, Washington and is a fourth-year student at BYU studying Political Science and Business Strategy. He spent the summer of 2017 as an intern at the U.S. Consulate in Leipzig, Germany where he worked in the Political and Economic sections. A highlight from his time with the U.S. State Department was visiting schools and speaking with students about U.S.-German relations, current political issues, and the importance of dialog

and tolerance. Last summer, Connor worked on the Client Management team at BlackRock, the world's largest investment management firm where he and his team was responsible for strengthening relationships with some of the firm's largest clients. Connor is passionate about promoting sustainable business practices and human rights and has volunteered with political campaigns and LGBTQ rights organizations. He recently accepted an role at management consultancy McKinsey & Company in the firm's Seattle office. He hopes to spend his time at McKinsey learning how to solve complex problems in the social and public sectors. You can usually find Connor in the basement of the Kennedy Center nerding out about data analytics or at Chipotle eating a burrito bowl.

FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENT



ADAM BROWN JOSH GUBLER

Congratulations to Adam Brown and Josh Gubler, who both received continuing faculty status and were promoted to Associate Professor, September 1, 2018.



PROFESSOR RALPH HANCOCK

.....
B.A. in Political Science at
Brigham Young University
M.A. PHD, Harvard in
Political Science

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Hancock holds a BA from BYU and an MA and PhD from Harvard University, all in political science. Before joining BYU's faculty Hancock was on the faculty at Hillsdale College and then at the University of Idaho. He has also been a visiting professor at the University of Rennes.

Ralph Hancock was born in Lovell, Wyoming, and his family then moved to Portland and Seattle where he graduated from High School at Merced. He became interested in politics during his youth in the tumultuous 60's where in Seattle, militants were protesting Vietnam and the meaning of America. Ralph began to wonder about the role of the United States in the world at that time. He went to Utah State on a football scholarship, and as a wide receiver and defensive back, he got a concussion during his freshman year and decided to accept the full academic scholarship rather than get another concussion. He served a mission in Paris, France and the exposure to French culture and the life of the mind left a lasting impression on him. He met his future wife to be, Julie, on his mission while she was on a study abroad. They met at church in Paris, and she told him later that she knew immediately after meeting him that she would marry him. It took them two and a half years after returning to BYU to tie the knot. Before they were married, Ralph spent a year in France as a private tutor to a 14 year old between the 9th and 10th grades, near Biarritz south of Bordeaux. At BYU, Ralph wrote a paper on *Being and Nothingness* and *Jean Paul Sartre*, and then a paper on Kant and Rawls as his Honors Thesis. Upon graduation from BYU, he went to Harvard for his Masters and PhD in Political Philosophy. Tocqueville has been a lifelong study and passion. At the bicentennial of the French Revolution, in 1989, Ralph met two influential friends, Pierre Mannent and Philip Beleton, both French Political thinkers. In Paris, his favorite neighborhood is around San Sulpice, and the bookstore "La Procure" is one of the best bookstores in the world. He was a branch president in Normandy, in the city of Caen. He and Julie love French street food, crepes and baguettes. Together they have five children and 15 grandchildren.

Hancock has been a J. Reuben Clark fellow at BYU. He has taught classes related to American and French political history and even more broadly related to the history of political thought. Hancock edited *America, the West and Liberal Education* (Rowman and Littlefield, 1999) with essays by himself and such people as Allan Bloom and Stanley Rosen. He also edited *The Legacy of the French Revolution* with Gary Lambert and wrote *Calvin and the Foundations of Modern Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1989). He has also written articles for Square Two, Political Science Reviewer, FARMS Review and First Things among other publications. Hancock has also been connected with the John Adams Center for the Study of Faith, Philosophy and Public Affairs.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

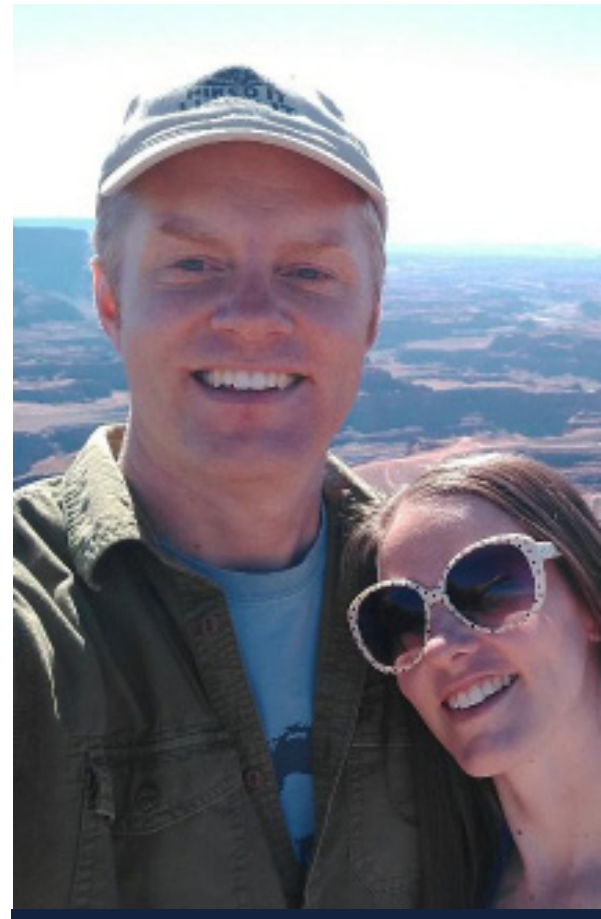
Adam Brown was born and raised in Santa Rosa, California, where he learned to love the Sonoma Coast and the towering redwoods. From his father, the environmental safety manager at the local Hewlett Packard plant, he learned to love nature and the outdoors; from his mother, an elementary school teacher, he learned to love teaching and learning.

He arrived at BYU in 1998, leaving after a year to serve a Russian-speaking mission in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Living at the intersection of central and eastern Europe, visiting old war monuments, and witnessing ethnic tensions cultivated his interest in people, nations, and governments. Returning to BYU, he took coursework in international relations and prepared for a career as a diplomat with the State Department. He also studied Spanish, German, Russian, and Arabic.

Only as a senior at BYU did he finally get around to taking POLI 110, Introduction to American Politics, which he now teaches. He had already applied successfully for doctoral study at UC San Diego with an intended focus on international relations and comparative politics, but POLI 110 lit a flame. Going into his second year of graduate school, he shifted his focus to the 50 American states. He wrote his dissertation at UC San Diego on gubernatorial elections, finishing in 2008 and joining BYU's faculty the next year. Last August he published a book on Utah politics, and in November he submitted a book manuscript about state constitutions for peer review. He has taught courses on state politics, national parks, Congress, and elections, but he has a special place in his heart for the Utah Legislature internship, which he leads each winter.

People like to ask if he's related to Hugh B. Brown, but Adam's Brown ancestors come from rougher stock. His grandfather's grandfather Samuel Brown fought for the Confederacy, something he grew ashamed of after his baptism in the 1870s. His new religion attracted KKK persecution, so the family came to Utah by rail in the 1880s, making him the last of Adam's ancestors to join the church and come west.

He met his wife, Janelle, while both were undergraduates living in the immersive Foreign Language Student Residence at BYU. They have three boys who love to camp, hike, sled, read, and generally run amok. Scattered around his home are his piano, five guitars, two basses, banjo, and other instruments.

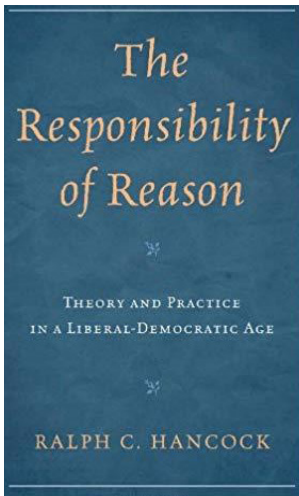


PROFESSOR ADAM BROWN

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B.A. in Political Science at
Brigham Young University
M.A. Ph.D, in Political
Science from UC San Diego

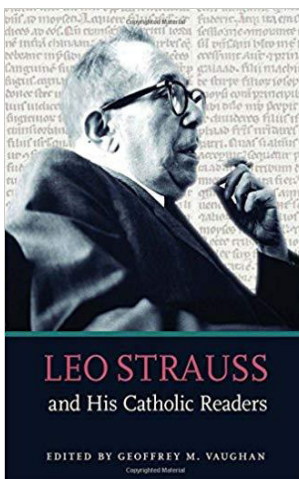
FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



The Responsibility of Reason **BY RALPH C. HANCOCK**

Can we run our lives and govern our societies by reason? The question provoked Socrates to redirect philosophic inquiry in a political direction, and it has remained fundamental to Western thought. Martin Heidegger explored this problem in his profound critique of the Western metaphysical tradition, and Leo Strauss responded to Heidegger with an attempt to recover the classical idea of the rule of reason.

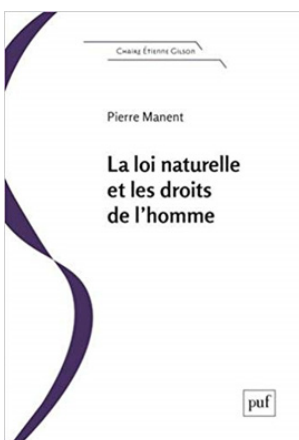
In *The Responsibility of Reason*, Ralph C. Hancock undertakes no less than to answer the Heideggerian challenge. Offering trenchant and original interpretations of Aristotle, Heidegger, Strauss, and Alexis de Tocqueville, he argues that Tocqueville saw the essential more clearly than apparently deeper philosophers. Hancock addresses political theorists on the question of the grounding of liberalism, and, at the same time, philosophers on the most basic questions of the meaning and limits of reason. Moreover, he shows how these questions are for us inseparable.



Leo Strauss and His Catholic Readers **A CHAPTER BY RALPH C. HANCOCK**

His latest is a chapter in the book *Leo Strauss: His Catholic Readers*. Dr. Hancock was the only non-Catholic included, and he was invited to provide the concluding chapter. Here is the conclusion to his conclusion:

“This is Leo Strauss’s advice to Christians: the only brakes on the secular appropriation of Christian humility and universalism are Jewish Law and pagan honor. A very sober and pious Christian Straussian would hold on to the promise of a salvation beyond worldly limits while acknowledging the inescapability in this world of both pagan pride and coercive law. “Il faut avoir l’esprit dur et le Coeur doux.” (Jacques Maritain). How to welcome the grace of a soft and open heart without sacrificing the natural virtue of a clear and firm mind—how to be lucidly in the world (a world that I believe Leo Strauss has understood as clearly as any human being) yet not finally of the world—this is a problem without a without a definite, conceptual solution, and we have to believe that dealing with this problem, both in theory and in practice, is not only a mortal necessity but somehow an apprenticeship in our eternal freedom.”



Natural Law and Human Rights **BY PIERRE MANENT**

Dr. Hancock has just finished a translation, to be published by Notre Dame University Press, of this new book by French political philosopher Pierre Manent, *Natural Law and Human Rights*.

NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY PRESS

FACULTY IN THE NEWS



Impeding Corruption by Texting Voters

PROFESSOR DANIEL NIELSON

A new study shows texting information about political corruption can improve democratic election outcomes.

BYU political science professor Daniel Nielson teamed up with three other professors to look at elections in Uganda, which suffers a range of challenges due to economic, political and social corruption. This study was done as part of a broader project, Metaketa I, which funded six studies in five countries to investigate how disseminating information about corruption impacted voting patterns. "I am always looking for ways to understand how corruption might be addressed," said Nielson, whose study was recently published in top-ranked journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. "Helping voters to hold politicians more accountable seems a promising part of the answer to that puzzle."



BYU Prof Explores Political Eulogies in Washington Post

PROFESSOR LUCY WILLIAMS

On September 4, 2018, Political Science professor Lucy Williams wrote an analysis in the Washington Post about the eulogies given at John McCain's funeral. Political funeral orations, she explains, have become a tradition in United States' politics. But communicating political messages through official funeral speeches is not a "new trend." A new study shows texting information about political corruption can improve democratic election outcomes.

Julie Rose's Top of Mind

MAY 30, 2018

Professor Eric Hyer was on Top of Mind May 30, 2018 with analysis of the North Korean Summit. Here's the link to the interview:

<https://goo.gl/6g2C48>

AUGUST 22, 2018

Quinn Mecham was on Top of Mind August 22, 2018 with some really great analysis of: the currency crises in Turkey and Iran; protests in Nicaragua as a contrast to the mass exodus of people from Venezuela; Israel's controversial constitutional amendments. Here's the link to the podcast:

<https://goo.gl/r2rfCa>

SEPTEMBER 6, 2018

Prof. Chris Karpowitz was on Top of Mind September 6, 2018: Here's the link. Feel free to share it as you like:

<https://goo.gl/3RViqn>

SEPTEMBER 28, 2018

Quinn spoke on Top of Mind, September 28, 2018, on Trump's UN speech, China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Maldives Election on Wednesday. Here's the link to the podcast:

<https://goo.gl/iYz1GN>



GOVERNANCE, REASON AND GLOBAL DEMOCRACY: THE LEGACY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

rights and the institution and reform of constitutional government, legal guarantees of civil rights, property rights, a secular and national educational system, a national army, liberty of worship, a two-chamber legislation, and the establishment of a national church. The Revolution overthrew the monarchy, established a republic, catalyzed violent periods of political turmoil, and finally culminated, unfortunately, in a dictatorship under Napoleon. Inspired by liberal and radical ideas, the Revolution profoundly altered the course of modern history, triggering the global decline of absolute monarchies while replacing them with republics and liberal democracies. Historians widely regard the French and American Revolutions as two of the most important events in human history.

Dr. Ralph Hancock, professor of political science at Brigham Young University and president of the John Adams Center for the Study of Faith, Philosophy and Public Affairs, has written about the implications of the terrorizing events that led up to the French “Declaration of the Rights of Man.” Especially, he notes that the Declaration was preceded by a revolutionary fervor that resulted in what has come to be known as the “Terror,” wherein the guillotine became the central image. In France, revolution meant radical destruction of the past—the Monarchy—to ensure a free and equal people. Support of the mob became the foundation of power with the new French Republic and, the complete renewal of government, and the regeneration of humanity, required unspeakable violence.

Professor Hancock argues that modern rationalism, a philosophy that regards reason as the chief source and test of knowledge—that physical evidence is unnecessary to determine truth—isn’t that rational after all. And he uses

the French Revolution as an example. Both the American and French constitutions were products of what historians have called “The Enlightenment”—or the “Age of Reason”—with foundations in the modern rationalism of Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume and Spinoza. Especially, Hancock mentions the 1793 Jacobian Reign of Terror preceding the French Revolution as an illustration of the deep tendencies of revolutionary behavior that have their source in rationalist thought. Where the American Declaration of Independence was preoccupied by the legal forms and limitations on government, the French wanted, in the rationalist tradition, and in their Declaration on the Rights of Man, to address with full clarity the question of the essence of law. According to the French, the Nation, a collective entity, must be regarded as absolutely superior to the individual, for the rights of individuals are in fact determined by law. The French are committed, Hancock argues, to the effectual truth of the sovereignty of the people, which rests in legislative power: absolute legislative authority. Ultimately, Hancock contends that modern rationalism succeeds only when it is sustained and nourished by pre-modern and traditional religious belief. Some human rights are divinely endowed, he argues, and those need to be distinguished from rights asserted and defined by human beings. If there is no Truth above the People, then the People must create their own Truth—in other words, some revolutionary elite must create it in the name of the People. Hancock is, therefore, a rational critic of modern rationalism.

For more on this discussion, visit: Ralph C. Hancock, “Robespierre and the Rights of Man,” Policy Review, Summer 1989, at 38.



ENGAGED LIVING

Serving our communities and country can bring fulfillment and can easily be part of a well-rounded life. Take advantage of the local and national opportunities to serve. Local BYU Political Science Alumni Chapters, such as those in New York City, Washington, DC, and in the Bay Area can help assist in the desire to serve.

BYU | POLITICAL
SCIENCE

FACULTY QUOTE

Being part of a community or society requires respect for others and a willingness to restrain one's own desires to support broader community goals and aspirations. Unwillingness to make this sacrifice results in a corrosion of shared values. I believe that accountable citizenship requires concern for community life, for the commons, as well as concern for individual goals—it requires us to give “obedience to the unenforceable.” It may even go beyond that. It may require voluntary community activities. It may require significant individual and collective efforts to create or protect community values and standards, thus following the Lord's admonition to “be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and [to] do many things of [our] own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness” (D&C 58:27). We must work as hard as we can in all levels of politics—as individuals and as groups—to establish and enforce general moral and ethical standards.

-Dr. Stan Taylor

Dr. Taylor is a BYU Political Science Professor Emeritus who taught at BYU from September 1968 to December 2005, 37 years and 4 months! Also a visiting professor of American Studies at the University of Wales at Sansea, and currently a research associate at the BYU Kennedy Center for International Studies, Dr. Taylor received his education at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Stan Taylor is an expert in national security, with an impressive portfolio of publications on the subject. He is also the founding director of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies at BYU and infamous creator of the Political Science 200 course. Over his long and successful career, Dr. Taylor has blessed many lives, and through the Stan A. Taylor Endowed Fund in Political Science and International Relations that trend continues.