

Nathaniel Mull

Columbia University
Department of Political Science
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EDUCATION

Columbia University

Ph.D, Political Science (Political Theory) (expected June 2017)
Dissertation: “Natural Law and the Idea of the Secular State in Early Modern Europe”
Committee: Jean Cohen (chair), Nadia Urbinati, David Johnston

M.A, M.Phil, Political Science, February 2015
Major examination field: Political Theory
Minor examination field: International Relations

Boston College

B.A., International Studies, 2009

DISSERTATION

In my dissertation, I argue that natural law philosophy played a central role in arguments for the secularization of political authority in early modern Europe. During the 150-year period from the start of the Reformation to the English Restoration, natural law was deployed in two distinct but interrelated debates. The first was the centuries-old debate over the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical powers. The second debate regarded the rights of secular powers to determine the religious practices of their citizens. The use of natural law in these debates facilitated the gradual emergence of a fully secular concept of political authority: its legitimacy was autonomous from theological controversy and its powers extended only to the natural, not supernatural, ends of its citizens.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Natural law theories from Aquinas to Locke
- Secular-ecclesiastical relations in medieval and early modern Europe
- History of religious toleration in Western Europe
- Political theories of conscience

ARTICLES IN PROGRESS

“Toleration in Context: Understanding Locke’s Secular Project” (revise and resubmit – *The Review of Politics*)

“Natural Right and Popular Sovereignty: Early Jesuit Arguments for Constitutional Democracy” (in preparation)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Popes, Pagans, and Apostates: Natural and Supernatural Foundations of Political Authority in Vitoria’s Thought.” Cambridge Graduate Conference in Political Thought and Intellectual History.” Cambridge, UK. May 13, 2016.

“Natural Law and the Foundations of Political Secularism.” Sciences Po Political Theory Graduate Conference. Paris, France. June 11-12, 2015.

“Toleration in Context: Understanding Locke’s Secular Project.” Princeton Graduate Conference in Political Theory. Princeton, NJ. April 11, 2014.

TEACHING

New York University (School of Professional Studies)

- Adjunct Instructor, “Modern Political Thought,” Fall 2016 (*cancelled due to low enrollment*)

Columbia University

- Instructor, “Church and State in Medieval and Modern Thought,” Fall 2015
- Teaching Assistant, “Introduction to American Politics,” Prof. Judith Russell, Spring 2014
- Teaching Assistant, “Introduction to Human Rights,” Prof. Jack Snyder, Fall 2013

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Columbia University Political Theory Workshop

- Workshop Coordinator, September 2015 – May 2016
- Discussant, Bryan Garsten, “From Popular Sovereignty to Civil Society in Post-Revolutionary France,” November 11, 2015
- Discussant, Axel Honneth, “The Idea of Social Freedom: On the Intellectual Roots of Socialism,” October 8, 2014
- Discussant, Brandon Terry, “Critical Race Theory and the Tasks of Political Philosophy,” December 4, 2013

Research Assistant for Prof. Ira Katznelson, Fall 2014 – Spring 2015

- Religious toleration and immigration in early modern Britain
- English parliamentary debates on religion and immigration, 1708-1753
- 18th century Jewish immigration to British America

Columbia University International Politics Seminar

- Discussant, Nicolas Guilhot, “The First Modern Realist: Felix Gilbert’s Machiavelli and the Making of the Realist Tradition in International Relations,” April 3, 2014

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Teaching Scholar, Columbia University, Fall 2015

Research Fellow, Columbia University, Fall 2014 – Spring 2015

Teaching Fellow, Columbia University, Fall 2013 – Spring 2014

Dean’s Fellow, Columbia University, Fall 2012 – Spring 2015, Spring 2016 – Spring 2017

LANGUAGES

French: reading proficiency

German: elementary reading proficiency

Latin: elementary reading proficiency