

RONALD J. PESTRITTO

Graduate Dean and Shipley Professor of the American Constitution
Department of Politics
Hillsdale College
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., political science, Claremont Graduate University (School of Politics & Economics), January, 1996.

Dissertation: *Criminal Punishment and American Republicanism*

Academic Awards and Honors:

Graduate Fellowship, Claremont Graduate University
Earhart Foundation Fellowship, Bradley Foundation Fellowship, Salvatori Fellowship
President, Delta Epsilon chapter (Claremont) of Pi Sigma Alpha

M.A., politics, Claremont Graduate University (School of Politics & Economics), May, 1992

M.A. Thesis: *Majoritarianism and the American Political Tradition*

B.A., government, Claremont McKenna College, May, 1990, *magna cum laude*.

Honors Thesis: *Woodrow Wilson and The Federalist*

Academic Awards and Honors:

Departmental Honors in Government
Roland Prize for the best thesis in public administration
Fellow, Henry Salvatori Center for the Study of Individual Freedom
Scholarship recipient: Italian American Civic Order, Middletown, Connecticut

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Hillsdale College (Hillsdale, MI), appointed Fall, 2006:

Graduate Dean, 2010 -
Professor, 2012 -
Associate Professor, with tenure, 2006 – 2012
Charles & Lucia Shipley Chair in the American Constitution
Senior Fellow, Allan P. Kirby, Jr. Center for Constitutional Studies and Citizenship

Courses Taught:

Administrative Law
American Conservatism
American Political Thought
American Progressivism and Liberalism
The Federalist
German Political Philosophy
Modern Political Philosophy I
Modern Political Philosophy II
Punishment and the Western Tradition

U.S. Constitution

Ashland University (Ashland, OH), Adjunct Graduate Faculty, Master of American History and Government summer program, 2006 – 2014

University of Dallas (Irving, TX):

Associate Professor, with tenure, 2002 – 2006

Assistant Professor, 1999-2002

Visiting Assistant Professor, 1995-1997

Regularly supervised dissertations and master's theses, sat on doctoral and master's examining committees.

University's Pre-Law Advisor

The King's College (New York, NY), Distinguished Visiting Professor, 2004

University of North Texas (Denton, TX), Adjunct Assistant Professor, 2000

Saint Vincent College (Latrobe, PA), Assistant Professor, 1997-1999

Fellow in Politics & Policy, Center for Economic & Policy Education

Director, George Washington Fellowship Program

Director, Government and Political Education Program

Woodbury University (Burbank, CA), Adjunct Faculty, 1993-1994

Azusa Pacific University (Azusa, CA), Adjunct Faculty, 1993-1995

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Political Science Association, 1993-present

Association for Core Texts and Courses, 2011-present

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, GRANTS

Visiting Scholar, *Social Philosophy and Policy*, Center for the Philosophy of Freedom, University of Arizona. 2014.

Academic Fellow, Foundation for Defense of Democracies. 2011.

Earhart Foundation Fellowship Research Grant, Summer, 2009.

Earhart Foundation Fellowship Research Grant, Summer, 2007.

Visiting Scholar, Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University. Summer, 2005.

Michael A. Haggard Fellow, University of Dallas. One of the two top honors for faculty at the University, the award recognizes teaching, scholarship, and service, and includes a monetary prize. 2005.

Earhart Foundation Fellowship Research Grant: to support the editing of a one-volume collection of Woodrow Wilson's political essays, and the writing of an introduction. Summer, 2004.

Research Fellowship, The Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy. Fully funded a summer of work to finish *Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism*. Summer 2003.

John M. Olin Faculty Fellowship for Junior Professors, 2001-2002 academic year. Fully funded an academic-year sabbatical to write a book on the political thought of Woodrow Wilson. Grant paid entire academic-year salary, including full benefits, plus a summer stipend worth two-ninths of salary.

Philip M. McKenna Foundation. A grant to fund fully a series of three conferences and books on American political thought. I direct the conferences and serve as co-editor of each of the books. 2001-present.

Earhart Foundation Fellowship Research Grant: Supported writing a book chapter on the political thought of Woodrow Wilson, Summer 2000.

Saint Vincent College Faculty Research Grant: Support the writing of a paper for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Summer, 1998.

Earhart Foundation Fellowship Research Grant: Supported revisions to book manuscript, Summer, 1997.

Fellow in Politics and Policy, Saint Vincent College Center for Economic and Policy Education, 1997-1999.

University of Dallas Presidential Award: 1996.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE

President, Philadelphia Society, 2022-2023.

Academic Fellow, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, 2011-2012. Fellowship includes a 10-day course, in Israel, on terrorism and its threat to democratic societies.

Senior Fellow, The Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy, 1998-present.

I participate in programs sponsored by a variety of organizations which provide continuing education opportunities to high school and middle school teachers. I have lectured and conducted seminars in such programs for the University of Alaska Anchorage, the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, the John M. Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs, the Bill of Rights Institute, and the Center for School Improvement and Policy Studies at Boise State University.

Consultant, Assembly Office of Research, California State Assembly. Responsible for organizing a staff of researchers and for writing and publishing an analysis of California's "Three-Strikes" law. Summer 1995.

Intelligence Research Specialist, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), U.S. Department of the Treasury. Position held in Liaison Branch. Responsible for legislative liaison between FinCEN and Congress. 1990.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

Books

America Transformed: The Rise and Legacy of American Progressivism. New York, NY: Encounter Books, 2021.

For reviews of this book, see:

<https://www.encounterbooks.com/books/america-transformed/>

American Progressivism. Edited and introduced by RJP and William J. Atto. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.

For reviews of this book, see:

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739123041/American-Progressivism-A-Reader>

Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield (series in American Intellectual Culture), 2005.

This book was the topic of a panel at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, D.C.

For reviews of this book, see:

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781442201088/Woodrow-Wilson-and-the-Roots-of-Modern-Liberalism>

Woodrow Wilson: The Essential Political Writings. Edited and introduced by RJP. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005. (A one-volume collection of Wilson's essential political writings for classroom use).

For reviews of this book, see:

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739109458/Woodrow-Wilson-The-Essential-Political-Writings>

Modern America and the Legacy of the Founding. Edited, with Thomas G. West. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007.

Challenges to the American Founding: Slavery, Historicism, and Progressivism in the Nineteenth Century. Edited, with Thomas G. West. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005.

The American Founding and the Social Compact. Edited, with Thomas G. West. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003.

For reviews of this book, see:

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739106648/The-American-Founding-and-the-Social-Compact>

Founding the Criminal Law: Punishment and Political Thought in the Origins of America. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000.

This book was the topic for a panel at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Atlanta.

Reviewed in the *American Political Science Review* 95 (June 2001): 483-4.

Articles/Chapters/Reviews

“Progressivism, Conservatism, and the Work of Charles R. Kesler,” in *Leisure with Dignity: Essays in Celebration of Charles R. Kesler*, ed. Michael Anton & Glenn Ellmers (New York: Encounter Books, 2024): 184-203.

“Constitutional and Legal Challenges in the Administrative State,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 38:1 (Summer 2021): 6-24.

“Making the State into a God: American Progressivism and the Social Gospel,” in *Progressive Challenges to the American Constitution*, ed. Bradley C.S. Watson (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 144-59.

“The Fate of Subsidiarity in the American Administrative State,” in *Besinnung auf das Subsidiaritätsprinzip*, ed. Anton Rauscher (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2015), 179-198.

“Lincoln and the Progressives,” with Jason R. Jividen, chapter in *Lincoln and Liberty: Wisdom for the Ages* (University Press of Kentucky, 2014).

“Woodrow Wilson and the Meaning of the Lincoln Legacy,” chapter in *Constitutional Principles and American Politics: Essays in Honor of Herman Belz*, edited by Paul Moreno and Johnathan O’Neill (Southern Illinois University Press, 2013): 183-201.

Review of *Ellen and Edith: Woodrow Wilson’s First Ladies, Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42:3 (September 2012): 672-74.

“Roosevelt, Wilson, and the Democratic Theory of National Progressivism,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 29:2 (Summer 2012): 318-334.

“Founding Liberalism, Progressive Liberalism, and the Rights of Property,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 28:2 (Summer 2011): 56-73.

“Theodore Roosevelt Was No Conservative,” *Wall Street Journal*, December 27, 2008, p. A11.

“The Progressive Origins of the Administrative State: Wilson, Goodnow, and Landis,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 24:1 (Winter 2007): 16-54.

“Progressismo e rule of law negli Stati Uniti,” in *Libertá e liberali in Europa e in America*, ed. Filippo Sabetti. Milan: Guerini e Associati, 2007.

“Politics and History” (review essay), *Review of Politics* 67:3 (Summer 2005): 580-82.

“What America Owes to Woodrow Wilson,” *Society* (November/December 2005): 57-66.

“Woodrow Wilson, American History, and the Advent of Progressivism,” in *Challenges to the American Founding: Slavery, Historicism, and Progressivism in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ronald J. Pestritto and Thomas G. West. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005.

“Woodrow Wilson, the Organic State, and American Republicanism,” chapter in Bryan-Paul Frost and Jeffrey Sikkenga, eds., *The History of American Political Thought*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003.

“Brandeis and the Progressive Constitution: *Erie*, the Judicial Power, and the Politics of the Federal Courts in Twentieth-Century America” (review essay), *Labor History* 42 (February 2001).

“The Supreme Court and American Constitutionalism” (review essay), *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy* 27 (Fall 1999).

Professional Conference Papers

“The Peculiar Development of Wilson’s Internationalism,” co-authored with William Atto, delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September, 2015. San Francisco, CA.

“Ancient and Modern Modes of Founding in *The Federalist*,” delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for Core Texts and Courses, April, 2013, Ottawa.

“Woodrow Wilson and the Legacy of Abraham Lincoln,” delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 3, 2009, Toronto.

“Woodrow Wilson’s American History,” delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2, 2007, Chicago.

“Progressivism and the Rule of Law,” a paper for the symposium “The Decline of Classical Liberalism in America and Europe,” sponsored by Compagnia di San Paolo and Liberty Fund, Turin, Italy, April 2006.

“Woodrow Wilson, American History, and the Advent of Progressivism,” delivered at the conference “Challenges to the American Founding: History, Science, and Nature in the 19th Century,” University of Dallas, March 2003.

“Historicism, Organic Politics, and the Final Stage of Democracy: The Roots of Wilson’s Progressive Internationalism,” delivered at the Woodrow Wilson National Symposium, Wilson Birthplace in Staunton, Virginia, October 2002. Paper proposal accepted after national competition for fifteen places on the conference program.

“The Philosophy of Punishment in Melville’s *Billy Budd*,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, September 1998.

“The Progressive Vision of the Constitution: Woodrow Wilson, Article II, and Presidential Power,” delivered at the Henry Salvatori Center Conference on Presidential

Power and the Constitution, April 1998. Will also be the chapter of a book based upon this conference.

“The Polarized Approach to Punishment in Modern Political Thought,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, September 1997.

“Congress or the Presidency as America’s Parliament? The Institutionalization of ‘Open Counsel’ in Woodrow Wilson’s Progressive Science of Politics,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, September 1996.

“Term Limits, the Ballot Initiative, and the Recall: The Politics of the California Assembly,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association, Houston, March 1996.

“Punishment and America’s Founding Principles,” delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 1995.

Scholarly Lectures:

Lecture, “Progressivism, Political Philosophy, and the American Political Tradition,” Wyoming Catholic College. October, 2017.

Lecture, “Progressivism and the Making of a New Constitutional Order,” Intercollegiate Studies Institute Regional Conference, Fort Worth, Texas. November, 2015.

Lecture, “Rule By Law or By Executive Fiat? How Agencies Govern Without Consent,” University of Dallas. March, 2015.

Lecture, “Rule By Law or By Executive Fiat? How Agencies Govern Without Consent,” Salve Regina University. February, 2015.

Lecture, “Government by Consent or by Regulation: How Today’s Bureaucracy Threatens Our Constitution and Our Liberty,” Ave Maria University. November, 2014.

Lecture, “The Fate of Subsidiarity in the American Administrative State,” German-American Colloquium, Wildbad Kreuth, Germany. June, 2014.

Lecture, “American Progressives: Their Principles, Their Politics, and Their Enduring Relevance,” California State University, San Bernardino. May, 2013.

Two Lectures, “Political Philosophy and the Origins of American Progressivism,” Salve Regina University. March, 2013.

Lecture, “American Progressivism,” Morehead State University. May, 2012

Lecture, “Progressivism and Religion,” Claremont McKenna College. February, 2012.

Lecture, “Progressivism and Religion,” Azusa Pacific University. February, 2012.

Panel Lecture, 47th National Meeting of the Philadelphia Society, “The Perils of Progressivism.” Dallas. April, 2011.

Lecture, "Making the State into a God: Progressivism and the Social Gospel," conference on Progressive Challenges to the Constitution, Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, Pennsylvania. April, 2011.

Lecture for the American Founding Initiative, Boise State University. February, 2011.

Lecture, "Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism," Furman University. October, 2010.

Lecture, "Progressivism and the Fate of the Constitution," Forum for Citizenship and Enterprise, Northwood University. September, 2010.

Lecturer, Teaching American History program, Boise State University. June, 2010.

Lecturer, summer program on the History of Liberty, Foundation for Economic Education, Atlanta. June, 2010.

Lecturer, "The Debate Over America's First Principles," program organized by the Claremont Institute and the Heritage Foundation. Miami. April, 2010.

Koch Foundation Lecturer, University of Dallas. March, 2010.

Lecturer, Teaching American History Program, Wood County, Ohio. March, 2010.

Lecturer, University of Virginia, Jefferson Literary and Debating Society. November, 2009. Charlottesville, VA.

Constitution Day Lecturer, University of Dallas. September, 2009. Irving, TX.

Lecturer, Teaching American History program, James Madison Program for American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University. July, 2009.

"American Progressivism and the Founders' Constitution," annual Spring Distinguished Lecture, New Mexico State University, April, 2009, Las Cruces, NM.

"The Challenge of the Administrative State," lecture to a colloquium for Capitol Hill staff: "Rediscovering First Principles," sponsored by the Heritage Foundation, Federalist Society, and Kirby Center, December 2008, Washington, DC.

Keynote lecture, "Woodrow Wilson and the Constitution," Bill of Rights Institute Conference, October 2008, Washington, DC.

"The Constitution and American Progressivism," 4th Annual Constitution Day Polaris Lecture, University of Alaska Anchorage, September 17, 2008.

"Woodrow Wilson: Father of Modern America?" public lecture delivered at College of the Holy Cross, February 25, 2008. Sponsored by Holy Cross Department of Political Science.

Keynote lecture, "Franklin Roosevelt and the Constitution," Bill of Rights Institute Conference, February 2008, Rhinebeck, NY.

“Where Big Government Came From,” public lecture delivered at the Heritage Foundation, June 14, 2007. Subsequently published in Heritage’s *First Principles* series as “The Birth of the Administrative State: Where it Came From and What it Means for Limited Government.”

Participation in Other Professional/Scholarly Conferences

Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “The Nature of Education in a Free Society,” Chair. San Juan, PR. January, 2025.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “The New and Old Dangers of the Intel and the Administrative States—or, How the Intel and Administrative States Became One.” Philadelphia, PA. September, 2024.

Intercollegiate Studies Institute American Politics and Government Summit, Panel: “Is Locke’s Liberalism the Cause of our Decline?” Chair. Ft. Lauderdale, FL. February, 2023.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Executive and Administrative Power in American Constitutionalism,” Chair and Discussant. Virtual Meeting. September, 2020.

Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Political Theory,” Chair. San Juan, PR. January, 2020.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Punishment and Liberalism: Can Liberals Still Not Punish,” Discussant. Washington, DC. August, 2019.

Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “American Political Development,” Chair. Austin, TX. January, 2019.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Liberty and Constitutionalism in Early American Political Thought,” Discussant. Boston, MA. August, 2018.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Regulatory Reform and the Administrative State,” Roundtable Participant and Chair. San Francisco, CA. September, 2017.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Do Administrative Agencies Get Too Much Deference? 30 Years of *Chevron*,” Chair. Philadelphia, PA. September, 2016.

Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “American Constitutional Issues,” Chair and Discussant. San Juan, Puerto Rico. January, 2016.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “Should Conservatives Really Care About the Progressive Era?” Roundtable Participant. Washington, DC. September, 2014.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Two Panels. Panel 1: “Where Does Today’s Liberalism Come From?” Chair. Panel 2: “Strategy and Ambition in *The Federalist* and in the Convention Debates,” Discussant. Chicago, IL. September, 2013.

Student Colloquium on The New Deal, Baltimore. Intercollegiate Studies Institute and Liberty Fund (co-discussion leader). October, 2012.

Conference on the Burke-Paine Debate, Indianapolis. Liberty Fund. September, 2012.

Conference on “Liberty and Progress,” Tucson. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). March, 2012.

Student Colloquium on Progressivism and the Administrative State, Dallas. Intercollegiate Studies Institute and Liberty Fund (co-discussion leader). March, 2012.

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Panel: “The Return of Founding Principles: Should Natural Rights be Part of the Conservative Resurgence,” Chair. Seattle, WA. September, 2011.

Conference on Natural Rights Individualism and Progressivism in American Political and Legal Philosophy, Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University. (participant and paper presenter). May, 2011.

Association for Core Texts and Courses, Annual Meeting, New Haven, Connecticut. (participant). April, 2011, 2012, 2013.

Student Colloquium on The New Deal, Baltimore. Intercollegiate Studies Institute and Liberty Fund (co-discussion leader). March, 2011.

Colloquium on “Reforming the Administrative State.” B. Kenneth Simon Center for American Studies, The Heritage Foundation. Washington, DC. (invited/paid participant).

Conference on Progressivism and the Federal Reserve System, Tucson. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). October, 2010.

Conference on Liberalism and Capitalism, Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University. (participant and paper presenter). May, 2010.

Conference on the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, Montreal, Canada. Liberty Fund (invited/paid participant). May, 2010.

Colloquium on “Foundational Principles in Criminal Law and Justice,” The Heritage Foundation. Participated in roundtable session to discuss my paper, “The Approaches to Criminal Punishment: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives from the Western and American Traditions.” March, 2010.

Student Colloquium on Progressivism and the Administrative State, Baltimore. Intercollegiate Studies Institute and Liberty Fund (co-discussion leader). February, 2010.

Conference on Herbert Croly, Indianapolis. Liberty Fund (discussion leader). October, 2009.

Conference on Walter Lippmann, Indianapolis. Liberty Fund (invited/paid participant). August, 2009.

Colloquium on “The Path Back to Limited Constitutional Government.” B. Kenneth Simon Center for American Studies, The Heritage Foundation. Boston. (invited/paid participant). March, 2009.

Conference on Social Gospel, Tucson. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). February, 2009.

Conference on Bureaucracy and Centralization, Cleveland. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). October, 2008.

Conference on the political thought of John Hollowell, Indianapolis. Liberty Fund (invited/paid participant). June, 2008.

Conference on Progressivism and Education, Tampa, Florida. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). April, 2008.

Socratic Seminar, Indianapolis. Liberty Fund (invited/paid participant). October, 2007.

Faculty Member, Publius Fellows Program, Claremont Institute. Annual summer program on American political thought for graduate students and aspiring journalists. 1999 (approximate) – present.

Faculty Member, Lincoln Fellows Program, Claremont Institute. Bi-annual summer program on American political thought for public servants. 2005 (approximate) – present.

Conference on Progressivism and the Administrative State, Clearwater, Florida. Liberty Fund (conference organizer/director). February, 2007.

Conference on Parliamentary Government, Aix-en-Provence, France. Liberty Fund (invited/paid participant). September, 2006.

American Political Science Association (APSA) annual meeting. I have participated in each of these since beginning full-time teaching. Since 2006, I have served as the panel organizer for the Claremont Institute panels at APSA, which sponsors a program of scholarly panels each year as an official related group of APSA. This means that each year I have been responsible for organizing a minimum of 9 panels (some years as many as 15), with a minimum of 50 scholars on the program each year – I select the topics and participants for each panel and handle all of the interaction with the APSA. The Claremont panels have for years been the best attended of all related groups.