



John C. Danforth Center on  
RELIGION AND POLITICS

2021 | 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS



John C. Danforth Center on  
**RELIGION AND POLITICS**

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## **OUR MISSION**

**The Center serves as an open venue for fostering rigorous scholarship and informing broad academic and public communities about the intersections of religion and U.S. politics.**

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# Letter from the Chancellor



As we report on another year of progress at the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics, I'm grateful for the opportunity to commend this center of excellence at Washington University. While much of mainstream culture shies away from confronting the complexities that lie at the intersection of religion and politics, the Center actively seeks to engage students and community members in scholarship, research, and dialogue that address these complexities head on. We are committed to the belief that the work of the Center advances nuanced and effective approaches to political and social change that center peace and dignity for all.

While I'm grateful for the technology that allowed us to continue these pursuits during the pandemic, nothing can replace the experience of learning alongside others in the classroom or coming together in person for a thought-provoking lecture on campus, and we've been happy to return to that experience this year. There is so much promise in seeing our community – and especially our students – engage with some of the world's toughest topics with thoughtfulness, respect, and a

sincere desire for deeper understanding across differences.

Thank you for your engagement with the exceptional work of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics. If you haven't had a chance to visit in a while, I encourage you to do so soon. I think you too will feel a sense of hope and pride to be a part of the momentum that we're building.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew D. Martin'.

**ANDREW D. MARTIN**  
*Chancellor*

# Letter from the Center Director



Greetings to you from all of us at the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that all our lives are irrevocably connected and that flourishing as individuals requires caring about the communities in which we live. We have been inspired to see the countless ways that our students, faculty and staff colleagues, and friends have cared for the vulnerable in our midst.

The 2021-2022 academic year was in many ways much like the years prior to 2020. Most classes were held in person, campus libraries welcomed patrons around the clock again, and our Center hallways began to fill once more with the happy chatter of students during an ordinary semester. The return from spring break in March marked a new openness on campus to “mask optional” settings in the classroom and throughout the university, and we were very pleased to start in-person public events once more. While we have remained appropriately cautious, it has been a joy to see full faces in person once again.

Even as Washington University as an institution has engaged deeply in strategic

planning this year, Center faculty have taken a close reading of ourselves, inquiring both about where we’ve been and about where we can go next. The global forces of war and repression are not lost on us, and the horrors occurring in places like Afghanistan and Ukraine weigh heavily. Mindful of the suffering in the world and the impact on our nation and its people, we remain committed to the contributions we can make to public understanding of both national and global events at the intersections of religion and politics. Stay tuned as we develop major programming for the coming academic year.

Thank you, as ever, for all the ways you support our efforts. With this report, we present the work we’ve done this year, and we welcome your feedback and suggestions for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Marie Griffith".

**R. MARIE GRIFFITH**

*Center Director*

# *Research and Teaching*

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Advancing exceptional research and scholarship is central to the academic mission of the Center. So too is the promotion of outstanding teaching in the classroom. The objective in both areas is to provide critical context and careful reflection on the intersections of religion and politics in the U.S., past and present. We attend closely to the conflicts produced by religion and politics as well as the actions they inspire in our citizenry, and we hope our readers and students gain a deeper comprehension of these perennial influences in American life.





*Tazeen Ali prompts discussion in her "Islam in America" course.*

# Research and Teaching Undergraduate Courses

*Coursework in the Center provides a foundation and structure for students to engage in critical reflection, research and scholarship, and analytic writing.*



Courses cover a wide spectrum of topics related to the intersections of American religion and politics, ranging from economics and politics in the British colonies to enduring and contemporary issues such as nationalism and globalization, gender, race, and religious freedom. The collective focus of the curriculum is the cultivation of research and interpretive skills necessary for analyzing and responding to important issues that shape society and culture in the United States.

*Sarah Tenner takes notes  
on the class conversation.*



## FALL 2021

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### The Good Life Between Religion and Politics

*Fannie Bialek*

What constitutes a life well lived? How do we imagine answers to that question? Who gets to answer that question for us? Do we ask it as an “us” or as an individual? This course considers the way religious and political thought has shaped considerations of the classical ethical question of how we should live and the way that ethics has often served to connect religion and politics in thought and practice.

### Scriptures and Cultural Traditions: Texts & Traditions

*Laurie Maffly-Kipp  
and Mark Valeri*

Certain books, “sacred scriptures,” shape U.S. society and culture in powerful and complex ways. Many religious communities believe that Scriptures are ancient texts that are ever-flowing sources of timeless truths. Often the truths advanced by one faith conflict with those to which another subscribes, and one of the great challenges that the human community faces involves reconciling these conflicting messages and learning to respect the faiths of others.

### African-American Religions

*Christina Davidson*

This course is an introduction to African-American religions. It attends to change wrought in indigenous African religions by enslavement, the adoption of Christianity (and severe critiques of it) by slaves themselves, the building of African-American denominations, the rise of new Black religious movements, and the role of religion in contemporary African-American life.

“ My Fall 2021 Religion and Politics course touched on core philosophical issues that challenged me to think critically about the kind of community I want to create. Its discussion-based format encouraged debate and dialogue in a manner that challenged underlying assumptions while still respecting the deeply held beliefs of those in the class.

**Elijah Wiesman**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2024  
Global Studies Major/Religion and Politics Minor

## FALL 2021

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### American Religion, Gender, and Sexuality

*Marie Griffith*

Religious beliefs about gender and sexuality have long played a vital role in American politics, vividly evident in debates over such issues as birth control, pornography, funding for AIDS research, abstinence-only sex education, sexual harassment, same-sex marriage, abortion, and more. This course explores the centrality of sex to religion and politics in the U.S., emphasizing Christianity (both Protestant and Catholic forms) and its weighty social and political role regulating the behavior of women and men, children and teens, as well as its uses in legal and judicial decisions.

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### Conscience and Religion in American Politics

*Amy Gais*

By considering what conscience means and what vision of politics it implies, we will reflect on what it means to be American—how religion should relate to politics, how individuals should engage with democratic laws and norms, and how religious and political dissenters might oppose American politics.

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### Law, Religion, and Politics

*John Inazu*

What is the role of religious argument in politics and law? What kinds of arguments are advanced, and how do they differ from one another? Are some of these arguments more acceptable than others in a liberal democracy? This course will explore these questions through the work of legal scholars, theologians, and political theorists.

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### Spiritual But Not Religious: The Politics of American Spirituality

*Leigh Eric Schmidt*

This seminar focuses on a series of debates that have arisen over the “new spirituality” in American culture: the religious blessing of consumer culture, the rise of therapeutic models of meditation and mindfulness, the politics of Euro-American appropriations of Native American and Buddhist religious practices, the negotiation of religious pluralism, and the relationship between spiritual seeking and social justice.



*Malcolm Douglass and Jared Adelman attend a Religion and Politics seminar in the Center's conference room.*

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The Religion and Politics program has allowed me to work with accomplished professors with different expertise and connect with peers who come from a wide array of majors, all while learning how intertwined religion and politics are in our everyday lives. The faculty have always made me feel supported both as a student and as an individual and have pushed me to reflect on my biases and formulate my own opinions based on what I have learned in class.

**Kyra Bukowski**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2022  
Psychological & Brain Sciences Major/Religion and Politics Minor



*Jalen Walker considers  
Professor Ali's question to the class.*

## SPRING 2022

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### Religion and Politics in American History

*Leigh Eric Schmidt*

The United States has been imagined, by turns, as a deeply Christian nation and a thoroughly secular republic. These competing visions of the nation have created conflict throughout American history and have made the relationship between religion and politics quite contentious. Through sustained discussion of speeches, monuments, rites, and declarations that have hallowed the nation, this class explores what ideals Americans have held sacred.

### Puritans and Revolutionaries: Religion and the Making of America

*Mark Valeri*

This course introduces students to the history of religion and politics in America from the English settlements of Virginia and Massachusetts Bay during the early 17th century through the constitutional debates of the 1780s. The course facilitates a series of observations of how different positions on the role of religion in early America made sense in their respective historical contexts.



## *Undergraduate Minor in Religion and Politics*

The Religion and Politics minor provides an opportunity for sustained exploration of the ways in which religion and politics have intersected in American culture, in both historical and contemporary terms. As part of the minor program, students may examine any number of issues, including church-state relations, religion's role in shaping gender and sexuality debates, religion and electoral politics, public conflicts over the nexus of religion and science, and religion's entwining with reform movements of diverse kinds. The Center's minor attracts students from many disciplines, including natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities; whether pre-med, pre-law, or pursuing futures in education, business, or the arts, they report their studies are enriched by our curriculum.

The minor requires fifteen units (i.e., five courses), including enrollment in one of the Center's introductory gateway courses and at least three courses at the 300 level or higher. Our minors have gone on to a variety of successful careers including in law, medicine, academia, business, and non-profit organizations.

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### **Islam in America**

*Tazeen Ali*

This course examines the notion of a religiously plural America and analyzes Muslims' place within it. It considers the ways that American Muslims both shape and are shaped by U.S. society as both religious actors with autonomy and as a marginalized outgroup.

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### **Solidarity and Silence: Religious Strategies in the Political Sphere**

*Fannie Bialek*

Although political action is often considered a problem of making oneself heard, religious practices of silence, self-effacement, and withdrawal from certain worldly struggles have guided many significant political and social movements, particularly forms of non-violent resistance. This course considers the role of religious thought and practice in such movements in the twentieth century.

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### **Religion, Race, and Migration: Borders of Difference?**

*Candace Lukasik*

This seminar is an experiment in studying the intersections of religion, race, and migration through the idea of difference. Specifically, this course explores how difference of community, body, and place produces conditions of possibility.

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I was challenged to think critically, read linguistically and emotionally difficult material, and engage with my peers in new ways. Professor McCrary, a former postdoc at the Center, embodies the kind of amazing faculty the Center brings and then often pushes forward through the scholarly world. I owe my senior honors thesis topic to the Center and Professor McCrary, as well as my three-year-long commitment to the minor.

**Emma Rich**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2022  
History Major/Religion and Politics Minor

*Cayla Bernstein gives  
her perspective on Islam  
and the Founding Fathers.*



# Research and Teaching Colloquium

*The John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics sponsors an ongoing colloquium to foster discussion of new scholarship in the broad domains of American religion, politics, and culture.*



It is a research-oriented workshop that aims to build a multidisciplinary community among students, fellows, and faculty, all drawn to the intellectual questions that animate the Center's work. Presenters include members of the Center's faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and colleagues from other departments at Washington University as well as scholars from other institutions.

*Fannie Bialek responds to a question about her colloquium paper.*



## 2021-2022 SCHEDULE

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**September 9, 2021**

*Paige McGinley (Department of Performing Arts)*

“Acting ‘As If You Were Free to Act.’ James Lawson,  
Spirit Technique, and Training for Direct Action”

**September 30, 2021**

*Fannie Bialek (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“Value and Uncertainty in Christian Agape”

**October 14, 2021**

*Mark Valeri (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“Power, Ceremony, and Roman Catholicism in Bernard and Picart’s  
*Ceremonies and Religious Customs of All the Peoples of the World*”

**October 28, 2021**

*Andrew Walker-Cornetta (Department of Religious  
Studies, Georgia State University)*

“Writing the Eternal Child: Flannery O’Connor’s *The Violent  
Bear It Away* and the Moral Challenge of Cognitive Disability”

**November 18, 2021**

*Abram Van Engen (Department of English)*

“Della’s Rage: Race and Religion in Marilynne Robinson’s *Jack*”

**December 2, 2021**

*Tazeen Ali (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“Beyond TV Terrorists: Politics, Sex, and American Islam  
in Hulu’s *Ramy*”

**January 27, 2022**

*Christina Davidson (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“On the Dominican Crossroads: Two Approaches, Two Journeys,  
and More Than Two Schemes”

**February 10, 2022**

*Laurie Maffly-Kipp (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“A Marvelous Work: Reading Mormonism in West Africa”

**February 24, 2022**

*Alexia Williams (Department of Religion,  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)*

“The Difficult Miracle of African American Sainthood”

**March 10, 2022**

*Miriam Levin (Department of History,  
Case Western University)*

“Promoting American Progress Abroad: Protestant Women  
in Foreign Mission”

**March 24, 2022**

*Candace Lukasik (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“Martyrs and Migrants”

**April 7, 2022**

*Elena Kravchenko (Department of Religious Studies)*

“Liturgies of Love, Joyful Sorrow, and Nothingness:  
Orthodox Sounds and Racial Identities”

**April 21, 2022**

*Marie Griffith (Center on Religion and Politics)*

“Women and the Clergy Sex Abuse Catastrophe in the  
U.S. Catholic Church”

**November 18, 2021**

*Stephanie Li (Department of English)*

“Self(ish)-Care in Otessa Moshfegh’s *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*”

# *Public Engagement*

Engaging a wide range of citizens beyond the university has been one of the Center's manifest aims since its founding in 2010. Even as we continue developing excellent scholarship and educating the students of Washington University, we have worked to reach broader audiences with important ideas, tools, and strategies for living in a religiously and politically pluralistic democracy. Communicating scholarly ideas through more popular writing is one of the ways we've sought to have a public impact. Public events have offered another important way to meet our commitment to disseminate the work of scholars and thinkers, at the Center and beyond, that explores the intersections of religion and politics and fosters civil debate and robust discussion among persons holding diverse and even divergent viewpoints.



*Audience members have a chance to question the speaker after public lectures.*



# Public Engagement Conspiracy! Evangelicals, Fear, and Nationalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**APRIL 6, 2022**

*A public lecture by Anthea Butler*

American Evangelicals are undergoing a profound shift in how they conceive their political, social, and civic action in America. Professor Anthea Butler's talk explores evangelicals' changing beliefs, the embrace among many of conspiracy theories and nationalism, and the implications for the upcoming elections of 2022 and 2024.

Anthea Butler is the Geraldine R. Segal Professor in American Social Thought and Chair of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. A historian of African American and American religion, Professor Butler's research and writing spans African American religion and history, race, politics, Evangelicalism, gender and sexuality, media, and popular culture. Her recent book is *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America*.

*Anthea Butler delivers a lecture, signs her recent book, and takes questions from the audience.*







*Anthea Butler poses for a picture with an audience member while signing her recent book.*





*Anthropologist Kevin O'Neill  
shares his recent research.*

# Public Engagement An Island Retreat: Sin, Secrecy, and the Offshoring of Sexually Abusive Priests

**APRIL 14, 2022**

*A public lecture by Kevin Lewis O'Neill*

Between 1952 and 1968, a Roman Catholic religious order known as the Servants of the Paraclete sought, bought, and finally sold several small islands in the Caribbean for priests unable to stop “sin[ning] repeatedly with little children.” This talk details the Servants of the Paraclete’s mid-twentieth-century efforts at offshoring sexually abusive priests. It is an historical account that encourages scholars and activists alike to rethink the geography of clerical sexual abuse: though there is a generally agreed upon history that bishops throughout the United States transferred priests between parishes to evade suspicion and at times prosecution, this provides a previously untold account of how the U.S. Church leveraged developments in moral theology, pastoral psychology, and free market capitalism to secure transnational lines of flight for some of its most incorrigible abusers.

Kevin Lewis O'Neill is the Director of the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and Professor in the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto. A cultural anthropologist, his work focuses on the moral dimensions of contemporary political practice in Latin America.

*Kevin O'Neill answers questions about his lecture during formal Q&A and at the reception following his presentation.*







# Public Engagement Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting and the Soul of a Neighborhood

**APRIL 19, 2022**

*A public lecture by Mark Oppenheimer*



Mark Oppenheimer's recent book *Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting and the Soul of a Neighborhood* offers a piercing portrait of the struggles and triumphs of one of America's renowned Jewish neighborhoods in the wake of unspeakable tragedy that highlights the hopes, fears, and tensions all Americans must confront on the road to healing.



Mark Oppenheimer is the author of five books. He was the religion columnist for *The New York Times* from 2010 to 2016 and has written for many publications. The host of *Tablet* magazine's podcast *Unorthodox*, Oppenheimer has taught at Stanford, Wellesley, and Yale, where since 2006 he has directed the Yale Journalism Initiative.

*Audience members interact with Mark Oppenheimer during and after his lecture.*



Squirrel Hill

of Life

Shooting

Soul of a

School

*Mark Oppenheimer gives a moving account of his experience with the residents of Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh, while working on his book.*



# Public Engagement Co-Sponsored Events

Texas and the Future  
of Abortion Law and  
Reproductive Justice

SEPTEMBER 24, 2021

*A panel discussion with Washington University faculty members Susan Appleton, Marie Griffith, and Zakiya Luna, moderated by Rebecca Wanzo*

Co-sponsored with the Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the Law, Identity, and Culture Initiative in the Washington University School of Law

Fear of the Muslim Planet:  
Global Islamophobia in  
the New World Order

OCTOBER 5, 2021

*A public lecture by Arsalan Iftikhar*

Co-sponsored with the Washington University School of Law Public Interest Law & Policy Speaker Series; Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute; Weidenbaum Center for Economy, Government & Public Policy

“ The Center focuses on some of the most intriguing topics within the social sciences. Whether it is in a six-person seminar discussing religion and nonviolence or at a speaking event on the Tree of Life shooting, I have found my engagements with the Danforth Center to spark my intellectual curiosity and ask questions about the role of religion in politics and society at large.

**Jared Adelman**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2024  
Political Science Major/Religion and Politics Minor

## Youth Agenda for American Democracy Summit

**NOVEMBER 12, 2021**

Co-sponsored with the American Academy  
of Arts & Sciences

## “My Fugitive” Film Screening & Discussion

**NOVEMBER 13, 2021**

Co-sponsored with the 30th Annual Whitaker  
St. Louis International Film Festival



# Public Engagement Online Journal

*Religion & Politics is an online journal dedicated to the public dissemination of information about religion and politics in the U.S. Founded in 2012 and carrying the tagline “fit for polite company,” it is an important project of the Center and a core component of the Center’s public educational mission.*

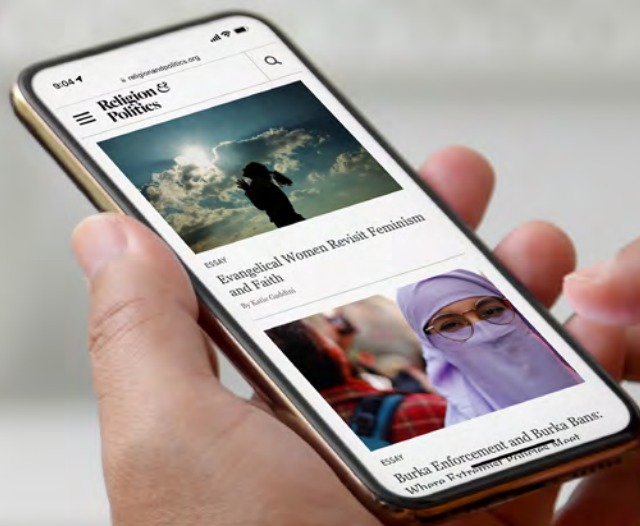
## Religion & Politics Fit For Polite Company

The journal features articles from scholars and journalists who proceed from the premise that for better and for worse, religion and politics converge, clash, and shape public life. These intersections happen everywhere, from our homes to our courts, from the

statehouse to the schoolhouse, in the lab, and on the battlefield. We strive to publish a range of views, rather than promote a specific political perspective. The journal takes the long view, providing historical context, critical analysis, and thorough research with compelling writing. In all of these ways, it embodies the vision and values that animate all of the Center’s varied undertakings.



*Readers most often access the journal's articles on mobile devices.*



## SAMPLE ARTICLES FROM 2021-2022

*Irreconcilable Similarities:  
Why Jews in Israel and the  
United States Are Drifting Apart*  
by Eli Gottlieb

July 7, 2021

*Why Is Critical Race Theory  
Being Banned in Public Schools?*  
by Charles McCrary

July 27, 2021

*The Religious Activism  
Behind U.S. Refugee Policy*  
by Lauren Turek

August 3, 2021

*The 20-Year Media Spectacle  
of Saving Afghan Women*  
by Tazeen Ali

September 14, 2021

*Abortion Through the Lens of  
Germany's (Catholic) Compromise*  
by Mark Roche

September 28, 2021

*Is Religion Good for Democracy?  
An Interview with Robert Wuthnow*  
by Kenneth E. Frantz

October 5, 2021

*Covid-19 Vaccines: Why Some  
Christians Decry Them as the  
"Mark of the Beast"*  
by Tiffany Firebaugh

October 11, 2021

*Why the LDS Church Welfare  
System Cannot Replace  
Government Assistance*  
by Allison M. Kelley

January 11, 2022

*States of Disbelief: Non-Believers  
Wrestle with Life After Religion*  
by Elijah Hurwitz

February 2, 2022

*Zelensky Is a Jewish Hero. Some  
Jews Worry the Acclaim Won't Last.*  
by Jane Eisner

March 22, 2022

*The Constitutional Roots of Ketanji  
Brown Jackson's Public Faith*  
by Justin Collings and Hal Boyd

March 29, 2022

*Liberal Protestants and the  
Polarization of the U.S.*  
by Gene Zubovich

April 19, 2022

# People

A group of outstanding scholars and teachers, academic associates, trusted advisors, and talented staff guides the Center's work toward its goals. Our faculty represent some of the foremost scholars in their fields, and our postdoctoral fellowship program supports exceptionally promising early career scholars who teach and pursue major research projects while in residence. The Center is enriched by fostering intellectual and collaborative opportunities among Center faculty and fellows, as well as across the wider university and beyond.



*Professor Mark Valeri makes a point during a faculty discussion.*

# People

## Tazeen M. Ali



### *Assistant Professor of Religion and Politics*

Professor Ali's research and teaching focus on Islam in America, women's religious authority, and Islam, gender, and race. Her forthcoming book, *The Women's Mosque of America: Authority & Community in US Islam*, will be published by NYU Press in November 2022. It analyzes how American Muslim women negotiate the Islamic tradition to cultivate religious authority and build gender-equitable worship communities.

Ali earned her Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Boston University in 2019. She was a visiting postgraduate student in Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh from 2017 to 2018.

Prior to that she earned a graduate certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Boston University, as well as a master's degree in Islamic Studies from Washington University in St. Louis. She earned her bachelor's degree with honors in both religion and biology from Lehigh University. Competitive fellowships and grants from The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, the Boston University Center for the Humanities, and the Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations at Boston University have supported her writing and research.



# People

## Fannie Bialek



### *Assistant Professor of Religion and Politics*

Professor Bialek's research and teaching focus on contemporary religious ethics and political theory with an emphasis on feminist thought, Christian ethics, and modern forms of power critique. Her first book project, "Love in Time," argues for a consideration of love as a relationship to uncertainty, instructive for the vulnerabilities of interpersonal relationships and political life.

Bialek earned the Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Brown University in 2016. She earned a bachelor's degree in religion, summa cum laude, from Princeton University. Competitive fellowships from the American Association of University Women, the Cogut Center for the

Humanities at Brown, and the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women at Brown have offered support for her research. Her appointment with the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics follows her position as lecturer with the Religious Studies program at Washington University in St. Louis for the 2016-2017 academic year. She was visiting assistant professor in Religious Studies at Brown in 2015-2016.

Bialek is co-editor of the website [feministreligion.com](http://feministreligion.com) and currently serves as the Center's Director of Fellows.

# People

## R. Marie Griffith



### *John C. Danforth Distinguished Professor in the Humanities*

Professor Griffith is currently the director of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics and the editor of the Center's journal, *Religion & Politics*. Her research focuses on American Christianity, including the changing profile of American evangelicals and ongoing conflicts over gender, sexuality, and marriage.

Griffith obtained her undergraduate degree at the University of Virginia in Political and Social Thought and her Ph.D. in the study of religion from Harvard University. Before moving to Washington University in 2011, she served as professor of religion and director of the women and gender studies program at Princeton University, where she was awarded the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching; and later as the John A. Bartlett Professor of New England Church History at Harvard. In 2015 she was appointed a Distinguished Lecturer for the Organization of American Historians.

Griffith is the author or editor of seven books. Her first, *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission* (University of California Press, 1997), examines the practices and perceptions of contemporary evangelical women. Her next book, *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity* (University of California Press, 2004),

explores the history of Christian-influenced attitudes and practices related to embodiment in modern America; while *Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics* (Basic Books, 2017) traces conflicts over sexual morality, feminism, and gender in American religion and politics. Her latest book, *Making the World Over: Confronting Racism, Misogyny, and Xenophobia in U.S. History* (UVA Press, 2021), urges a re-reading of the nation's history that opens up greater complexity than our stock narratives. These books, along with her three edited volumes—*Women and Religion in the African Diaspora: Knowledge, Power, and Performance* (co-edited with Barbara Dianne Savage, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), *Religion and Politics in the Contemporary United States* (co-edited with Melani McAlister, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), and *American Religions: A Documentary History* (Oxford University Press, 2007)—exhibit Griffith's varied research interests.

In addition to her books, Professor Griffith has published numerous scholarly articles, book chapters, and essays, and is a frequent media commentator and public speaker on current issues pertaining to religion and politics.

# People

## John Inazu



*Sally D. Danforth Distinguished Professor of Law & Religion  
and Professor of Political Science (by courtesy)*

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Professor Inazu holds a joint appointment in the Washington University Law School and the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics.

Inazu's scholarship focuses on the First Amendment freedoms of speech, assembly, and religion, and related questions of legal and political theory. His first book, *Liberty's Refuge: The Forgotten Freedom of Assembly* (Yale University Press, 2012), seeks to recover the role of assembly in American political and constitutional thought. His second book, *Confident Pluralism: Surviving and Thriving Through Deep Difference* (University of Chicago Press, 2016), looks at legal and civic practices in a pluralistic society. His most recent book, *Uncommon Ground: Living Faithfully in a World of Difference* (Nelson Books, 2020; with Tim Keller), seeks to help Christians engage with those around them in a way that both respects different beliefs and maintains their gospel confidence. Inazu is special editor of a volume on law and theology published in *Law and*

*Contemporary Problems*, and his articles have appeared in a number of law reviews and specialty journals. He has written broadly for mainstream audiences in publications including *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Washington Post*.

Inazu earned his Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and his J.D. and B.S.E. at Duke University. He clerked for Judge Roger L. Wollman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit and served for four years as an associate general counsel with the Department of the Air Force at the Pentagon. From 2014-2015, he was a senior fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia. He is currently a Senior Fellow with Interfaith America.

# People

## Laurie Maffly-Kipp



### *Archer Alexander Distinguished Professor*

Professor Maffly-Kipp's research and teaching focus on African American religions, Mormonism, religion on the Pacific borderlands of the Americas, and issues of intercultural contact. Her publications are many and include: *Religion and Society in Frontier California* (Yale University Press, 1994), where she explored the nature of Protestant spiritual practices in Gold Rush California; articles on Mormon-Protestant conflicts in the Pacific Islands, African-Americans in Haiti and Africa, and Protestant outreach to Chinese immigrants in California; a recent volume of essays entitled *Practicing Protestants: Histories of Christian Life in America, 1630-1965* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) with Leigh Schmidt and Mark Valeri; a co-edited collection of essays about Mormonism in the Pacific World, *Proclamation to the People: Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier*, (University of Utah press, 2008); *Setting Down the Sacred Past: African-American Race Histories* (Harvard University Press, 2010); *American Scriptures*, a Penguin Classics anthology of sacred texts (Penguin, 2010); and *Women's Work*, a co-edited collection of writings by African-

American women historians (Oxford University Press, 2010). Currently she is working on a global history of Mormonism that will be published by Basic Books.

Prior to joining the Center, Maffly-Kipp taught at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in Religious Studies and American Studies. She earned her B.A. from Amherst College in English and Religion, summa cum laude, and completed the Ph.D. in American History at Yale University with distinction (1990). She is the recipient of numerous fellowships and grants, including a grant for a collaborative project on the History of Christian Practice from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., fellowships at the National Humanities Center, and an NEH Fellowship for University Professors. Her work in African American religion was honored with the James W.C. Pennington Award from the University of Heidelberg in 2014.

Maffly-Kipp is a past president of both the American Society of Church History and the Mormon History Association.



# People

## Lerone Martin



### *Associate Professor in Religion and Politics*

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Professor Martin was with the Center through December 2021. He is the author of the award-winning *Preaching on Wax: The Phonograph and the Making of Modern African American Religion* (New York University Press, 2014), which tracks the role of the phonograph in the making of African American religion, culture, and politics during the first half of the twentieth century. The book was the 2015 recipient of the prestigious Frank S. and Elizabeth D. Brewer Prize for outstanding scholarship in religious history by a first-time author from the American Society of Church History.

In support of his research, Martin has received a number of nationally recognized fellowships, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, The American Council of Learned Societies, The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, and the Louisville Institute for the Study of American Religion.

Martin has also been recognized for his teaching, receiving grants and fellowships from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. In 2019, the students in the College of Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis awarded him the ArtSci Excellence in Teaching Award in Humanities.

Martin earned his B.A. from Anderson University and his Master of Divinity Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary before completing his Ph.D. at Emory University in 2011.

# People

## Leigh Eric Schmidt



### *Edward C. Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor*

From 2009 to 2011, Professor Schmidt was the Charles Warren Professor of the History of Religion in America at Harvard University; from 1995 to 2009, he taught at Princeton University where he was the Agate Brown and George L. Collord Professor of Religion and served as chair of the Department of Religion; and, from 1989 to 1995, he taught in the Theological and Graduate Schools of Drew University. He has held research fellowships at Stanford, Princeton, and the University of Michigan, and also through the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, and the Guggenheim Foundation.

Schmidt is the author of *Hearing Things: Religion, Illusion, and the American Enlightenment* (Harvard, 2000), which won the American Academy of Religion Award for Excellence in Historical Studies and the John Hope Franklin Prize of the American Studies Association; *Heaven's Bride: The Unprintable Life of Ida C. Craddock, American Mystic, Scholar, Sexologist, Martyr, and Madwoman* (Basic, 2010); *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality* (HarperOne, 2005), which appeared in an updated

edition from the University of California Press in 2012; *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton, 1995); and *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period* (Princeton, 1989), which received the Brewer Prize from the American Society of Church History. In addition, Schmidt was co-editor with Sally Prome of *American Religious Liberalism* (Indiana University Press, 2012), co-editor with Laurie Maffly-Kipp and Mark Valeri of *Practicing Protestants: Histories of the Christian Life in America* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), and co-author with Edwin Scott Gaustad of *The Religious History of America* (HarperOne, 2002). His two most recent books have examined how atheists, freethinkers, and humanists have fared in American public life: *Village Atheists: How America's Unbelievers Made Their Way in a Godly Nation* (Princeton University Press, 2016) and *The Church of Saint Thomas Paine: A Religious History of American Secularism* (Princeton University Press, 2021).

Schmidt earned his undergraduate degree in history and religious studies from the University of California, Riverside, in 1983 and his Ph.D. in religion from Princeton in 1987.

# People

## Mark Valeri



### *Reverend Priscilla Wood Neaves Distinguished Professor of Religion and Politics*

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Professor Valeri's areas of specialization include religion and social thought, especially economics, in America; Puritanism; and eighteenth-century religion. He currently is working on a book concerning Protestantism, the religions of the world, and missions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to be published by Oxford University Press.

Valeri came to Washington University from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, where he served as the Ernest Trice Thompson Professor of Church History beginning in 1996. His prior appointment was in the Religious Studies department at Lewis and Clark College.

His book entitled *Heavenly Merchandize: How Religion Shaped Commerce in Puritan America* (Princeton University Press, 2010), received the 2011 Philip Schaff Prize from the American Society of Church History. It was also shortlisted for the 2011 American Academy of Religion Award for Excellence in the Historical Study of Religion and selected as one of *Choice Magazine's* Outstanding Academic Titles for 2010. Previous publications include *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England: The Origins of the New Divinity in Revolutionary*

*America* (Oxford University Press, 1994), which won the Mackemie Prize from the Presbyterian Historical Society; *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. 17: Sermons and Discourses, 1730-1733* (Yale University Press, 1999); *Practicing Protestants: Histories of Christian Life in America, 1630-1965* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), co-edited with Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp and Leigh E. Schmidt; and the co-edited *Global Neighbors: Christian Faith and Moral Obligation in Today's Economy* (Eerdmans, 2008). His publication list includes many book chapters, journal articles, and essays.

Valeri has received several fellowships, including an Andrew W. Mellon fellowship, a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship, an American Council of Learned Societies grant, a Lilly Endowment faculty fellowship, as well as the 2017-2018 *Los Angeles Times* Distinguished Fellowship in the History and Culture of the Americas at The Huntington Library in Pasadena, California.

Valeri earned the Ph.D. from Princeton University, his M.Div. from Yale Divinity School, and his B.A. from Whitworth College.

# People Courtesy Appointments



**Cassie Adcock**  
*Associate Professor,  
Department of History;  
Associate Professor of Religion  
and Politics (by courtesy)*

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**Abram Van Engen**  
*Associate Professor,  
Department of English;  
Associate Professor of Religion  
and Politics (by courtesy)*

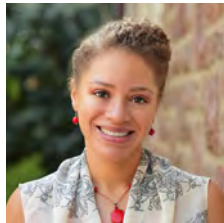
“ To say the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics simply impacted my WashU experience would be an understatement. The professors, faculty, and administrators at the Center elevated my college experience by fostering a safe and welcoming space for students to grow intellectually, spiritually, and professionally. There is an ethos of kindness in the Center, and each individual deeply cares for the wellbeing and success of all WashU students.

**Gracie Hoagland**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2022  
International Affairs Major/Religion and Politics Minor



# People Postdoctoral Fellows



**Christina Davidson**  
*Postdoctoral Research Associate*

Dr. Davidson is an interdisciplinary historian with specializations in Latin American and Caribbean history, African American Studies, and religious history. Her book manuscript, “Converting Hispaniola: Religious Race-Making in the Dominican Americas,” explores diplomatic and cultural relations between the Dominican Republic and the United States in the late nineteenth century. Davidson comes to the Center following a postdoctoral fellowship at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University and she will join the Department of History at the University of Southern California in 2022. She earned her Ph.D. and master’s degree in History from Duke University and a B.A. from Yale University in Latin American Studies and International Studies.



**Candace Lukasik**  
*Postdoctoral Research Associate*

Dr. Lukasik is an anthropologist of religion, race, and migration, with a focus on Middle Eastern Christianity, U.S. geopolitics, and Muslim-Christian relations. Her book manuscript, “Economy of Blood: Coptic Christianity and the Persecution Politics of U.S. Empire,” examines how American politicization of Middle Eastern Christians has impacted inter-communal solidarities and religious alliances. Based on twenty months of fieldwork between Egypt and the United States, the project investigates the transformative effects of U.S. empire on a Middle Eastern Christian community in migration and in diaspora. Lukasik will join the Philosophy and Religion Department at Mississippi State University in fall 2022. She earned her Ph.D. in Sociocultural Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley.

# People Staff



## Daniel José Camacho

*Temporary Managing Editor, Religion & Politics (April – August 2022)*

Camacho has previously been a Contributing Opinion Writer at *The Guardian* and an Associate Editor at *Sojourners*. Daniel holds a B.A. in philosophy from Calvin University and a Master of Divinity from Duke University.

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## Molly Harris

*Administrative Assistant*

Harris joined the Center in March 2022 with primary responsibility for meeting and event coordination. Most recently she has been the managing editor of *River Styx Literary Magazine* and an online writing lab tutor with Jefferson College. She earned her B.A. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and her M.F.A. in fiction from the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

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## Sandy Jones

*Event Coordinator*

Jones was with the Center through December 2021. Previously she was Community Relations and Events Coordinator at a local nonprofit organization. She earned her B.A. in Communications and Theatre Arts from California Lutheran University.

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## Debra B. Kennard

*Assistant Director*

Kennard has responsibility for multiple Center operations including communications and publicity, events, donor relationship support, and staff management. She earned her B.A. in journalism from Indiana University and her M.A. in nonprofit management from Washington University in St. Louis.



### Sheri Peña

#### *Administrative Coordinator*

Peña manages the Center's financial operations, office administration, course coordination, and a variety of other support functions. She earned her A.A. at Washington University in St. Louis and is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree.

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### Tiffany Stanley

#### *Managing Editor, Religion & Politics*

Stanley brings a strong background in the journalism and publishing world, as well as in religion and politics. Prior to coming the Center, she worked for *The New Republic*, *Harvard Magazine*, and *Religion News Service*. Her articles on religion and politics have appeared in, among other publications, *USA Today*, *The Daily Beast*, *The Christian Century*, and *The Salt Lake Tribune*. She holds a B.A. in journalism and a B.A. in English from the University of Georgia, in addition to a Master of Divinity from Harvard University.

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### Student Assistants 2021 – 2022

Kyra Bukowski, Francesca Frkonja, Gracie Hoagland, Ava Kennard, Princess Offei-Dua, Emma Ryckman, Sophie Schiff, Helen Webley-Brown, and Elijah Wiesman (*Religion & Politics* journal intern).

*Student assistants like Sophie Schiff and Emma Ryckman are hired and welcomed into the life of the Center by helping in the office as well as at public events.*



# People

## National Advisory Board

*Since the Center's founding, we have benefited from an advisory board of nationally prominent leaders from the fields of American religion, politics, education, law, journalism, and business. The board meets every few years and is also available for consultation between meetings. It is not a governing board but one that offers many fine ideas about our courses and programming, a number of which we have adopted over the years. The national reach of this board helps the Center have a wider impact on current discussions relating to religion's long role in U.S. politics.*

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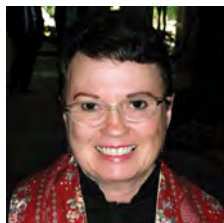
## The Danforth Foundation

The John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics owes its existence to the tremendous generosity of the Danforth Foundation, founded in 1927 by Mr. and Mrs. William H. Danforth. The Foundation's commitment to funding St. Louis-based initiatives is well known, and in 2009 it announced a major gift of \$30 million to Washington University to establish the Center. John C. Danforth, former Senator from Missouri and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, was particularly engaged in the Center's founding and remains a member of its national advisory board. This gift reflects Sen. Danforth's specific interest in religion and politics, as well as his dedication to his city, state, and nation. Center Director Marie Griffith holds the John C. Danforth Distinguished University Professorship that was established as a part of this generous founding gift.



### Sen. John C. Danforth and Mrs. Sally D. Danforth

Sen. Danforth established in 2016 a distinguished professorship to honor his wife, Sally Dobson Danforth, and the important role she has played in his life and the lives of their children. Sen. Danforth is a retired politician and Episcopal priest, a partner with Dowd Bennett LLP in St. Louis, and an active member of the Center's national advisory board. John Inazu was installed in September 2016 as the inaugural holder of this professorship, which is a joint appointment between the Washington University Law School and the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics.



### Dr. William B. Neaves and the Rev. Priscilla Wood Neaves

In the fall of 2012, William B. Neaves, an emeritus trustee at Washington University in St. Louis, established a professorship in the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics in honor of his wife, the late Priscilla Wood Neaves. The Rev. Mrs. Neaves was a former Methodist minister with a personal interest in the role of gender in religion and politics. In addition to this generous gift to the Danforth Center, the couple donated Wood Neaves's library containing books on gender and religion to Washington University's Olin Library.

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# Looking Forward

## FALL 2022 COURSES

Religion, Health, and Wellness in Modern America

*Cody Musselman*

Islam, Gender, Sexuality

*Tazeen Ali*

Islamophobia & U.S. Politics

*Tazeen Ali*

The Abuse Crisis in Modern Christianity

*Marie Griffith*

American Holidays: Civic and Religious Celebrations in American Culture

*Leigh Eric Schmidt*

Sabbath Politics: Rest and Refusal in Religion and Politics

*Fannie Bialek*

Religious Freedom in America

*John Inazu and Mark Valeri*

## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



**Susanna De Stradis** is currently a Ph.D. candidate in History at the University of Notre Dame. She specializes in twentieth-century American Catholicism and its cultural and institutional relationship with Rome.



**Cody Musselman** is a Ph.D. candidate in Religious Studies at Yale University. She is an ethnographer of contemporary American religion, focusing on the intersections of religion, capitalism, materiality, the body, and health.



**Aram Sarkisian** is a historian of religion, immigration, and labor in the twentieth-century United States. He is currently a History Department Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at Northwestern University, where he earned his Ph.D. in history.



**Esra Tunc** is a Ph.D. Candidate in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research, which uses historical and ethnographic methodologies, aims to contribute to the study of religion and capital in light of feminist, critical race, and environmental studies.



“

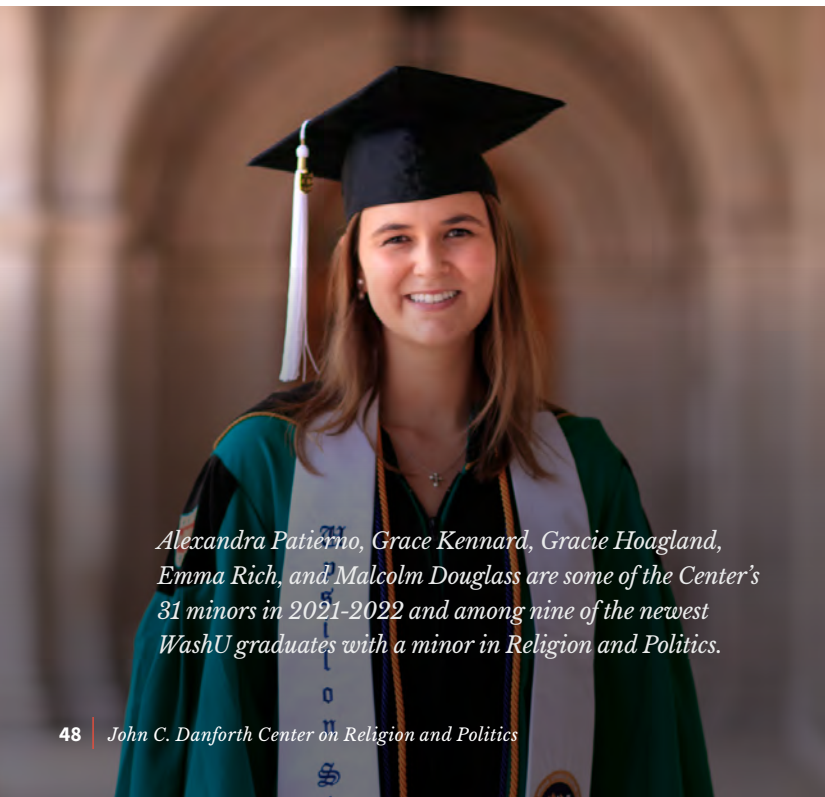
After attending Catholic schools my entire life, I came to WashU excited to pursue a more critical and rigorous examination of religion’s impact on American life. I found that through the Center. Professor Griffith’s classes, in particular, reshaped the way I think about American history – I now see that the story of our country is a story of religion and the constant debate over how much influence it should have on our lives. The many engaging and dynamic discussions I’ve been a part of in my Center classes have been a highlight of my college studies, and I’ll forever be grateful to have chosen this minor.

**Alex Brown**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2022  
Political Science Major/Religion and Politics Minor



*The faculty of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics attends an April 2022 public event.*



*Alexandra Patierno, Grace Kennard, Gracie Hoagland, Emma Rich, and Malcolm Douglass are some of the Center's 31 minors in 2021-2022 and among nine of the newest WashU graduates with a minor in Religion and Politics.*



“ My coursework in the Center has been the intellectual pinnacle of my college experience. I love being in small seminars where all of the students are eager not only to learn the material, but to learn it together – to encounter new ideas in a supportive environment. The authors and concepts I’ve been exposed to in my R&P classes have also changed me as a critical thinker, as a student, and as a person. Whether by learning about moral panics with Professor Griffith or wading through philosophical minutiae with Professor Bialek, I’ve become a more conscious ethical actor and citizen.

**Micah Sandman**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2023

Religious Studies Major/Religion and Politics Minor & Spanish Minor

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Whenever I am asked for a major or minor recommendation, a favorite professor, or the most meaningful course I have taken at WashU, my answer is always related to the Center. The classes I have taken through the Religion and Politics minor have shaped my worldview more than any other academic experience I have had at WashU. I am so grateful for the close-knit community of students and professors who make the minor an invaluable experience that has been so central to my time in college.

**Danielle Hazan**

Washington University in St. Louis, Class of 2023

Olin Business School Marketing Major/Religion and Politics Minor



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