

STEVEN BILAKOVICS

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Yale University
Department of Political Science
115 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Current Affiliation

Postdoctoral Fellow in Political Theory, Yale University 2009 - present

Education

Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin, Department of Government 2008

Dissertation: “Constituting Political Freedom and the Democratic Way of Life”
Committee: Jeffrey Tulis (chair), Thomas Pangle, Russell Muirhead, Benjamin Gregg, Sanford Levinson
Fields: Political Theory, Public Law, American Politics

M.A. University of Chicago, Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences 1998

Thesis: “Modern Dilemmas of Moral and Political Reason: Authenticity and Neutrality in an Age of Reasonable Pluralism”
Advisor: Charles Larmore

B.A. University of California at San Diego, Department of Political Science 1997

Honors Thesis: “Political and Economic Virtue in the American Constitution”
High Honors
Advisors: Tracy Strong, Alan Houston, Harry Hirsch

Research Interests: democratic social and political theory, Tocqueville, political cynicism and participation, political rhetoric and persuasion, American political thought, the American Founding and American political development, constitutional theory and law, liberalism and social contract theory, deliberative democracy, theories of representation, political revolution, the history of political thought, continental political thought, modern and contemporary political thought

Teaching Experience: the history of political thought, liberal and democratic political theory, American political thought, religion and politics, capitalism and politics, constitutional law, public law, introduction to political theory, theories of justice, bioethics, American politics

Publications and Works in Progress

Democracy without Politics

Harvard University Press, January 2012

<http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?recid=31276>

"Lefort, Tocqueville, and the Possibility of Democratic Despotism"

forthcoming in *Claude Lefort: Critical Explorations In Contemporary Thought*,
ed. Martin Plot

"Cynicism"

3,000 word peer reviewed entry in the *Encyclopedia of Political Thought*,
Wiley-Blackwell

"Is Crisis Good for Democracy?"

under review at *Political Theory*

"Democratic by Any Standard?: Evaluating the American Constitution"

to be presented at Three Revolutions? Remaking Political Society in Britain &
America, 1640-1865, Yale University, 2012

"In Defense of Double Standards: Hypocrisy, Authenticity, and Political Cynicism"

"The Ignoble Lie: Market Society and the American Dream"

Book Summary: In *Democracy without Politics* I uncover and explore the democratic sources of political cynicism. Against prevailing opinion, I argue that the contemporary contempt of politics follows primarily from neither the discontents of our liberal political system, nor from life in "market society." Rather, extending and critiquing Tocqueville's work on democracy, I argue that the anti-political prejudice so apparent today is inscribed in democracy itself - that is, in the principle of *democratic openness*, the freedom that becomes imaginable only with the collapse of hierarchy and the rise of equality.

Democratic society's defining openness—its promise of transcendent freedom and unfettered power—renders the everyday politics of argument and persuasion absurd by comparison. Persuasion is devalued relative to the norms of free-market competition and patriotic community, assertions of self-interest and self-expression take the place of arguing together, and political life is diminished by the absence of mediating talk. This phenomenon manifests across the political landscape—in the clashing authenticities of the "culture war," the contempt of institutional politics and the perennial pursuit of the virtuous outsider to set things right again, the call for a postpartisan politics, rising demands on government alongside falling expectations of what government can do, and in a political rhetoric that is at once petty and hyperbolic. To reform democratic politics and ameliorate its pathologies, we must overcome our cynicism and our idealism and rethink democracy as the citizen's practice of persuading and being persuaded in turn.

Teaching

- Postdoctoral Fellow*, Yale University 2009-2011
Reconsidering the Constitution: American Founding Debates
Exploring the American Dream
The Separation of Church and State and Its Critics
The Spirit of Capitalism and Its Critics
- Lecturer*, University of Pittsburgh 2008-2009
History of Political Thought: Nature, Society, Politics
Democratic Theory: The Politics and Culture of Democracy
- Teaching Fellow*, Harvard University 2007-2008
Moral Reasoning: Justice
 under Michael Sandel
Ethics, Biotechnology, and the Future of Human Nature
 under Michael Sandel
- Seminar Instructor*, Harvard University 2006-2007
Sophomore Tutorial: Constitutional Democracy in America
 with Harvey Mansfield
Sophomore Tutorial: Concepts in International Relations and Comparative
 Politics, with Stanley Hoffmann
- Teaching Assistant*, University of Texas at Austin 2000-2005
Foundations of American Democracy: Tocqueville and the Federalist Papers
Theories in Social Science: The Problem of the Subject (Honors Seminar)
Constitutional Thinking (Honors Course)
Constitutional Law (two semesters)
Constitutional Interpretation
Civil Liberties
Introduction to American Government (four semesters)
Poverty and Politics

Presentations

- "Does Crisis Enable Democracy?: The Executive Model of Democratic Action and Association," presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2010
- "More Than Kings Yet Less Than Men: Tocqueville on the New Extremes of Democratic Society," presented at the Yale Political Theory Workshop, January 2010
- "Tocqueville and the Democratic Sources of Political Cynicism," presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2009

“Tocqueville on Politics and Freedom in Democratic Society,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Political Science Association, April 2008

“Democracy Denatured: Claude Lefort and the Democratic Way of Life,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Political Science Association, April 2007

"Reconceptualizing Representation after the Deliberative Turn," presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 2002

"Madisonian Representation and Deliberative Democracy," presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Political Science Association, April 2002

“Identity, Difference and Representation in Deliberative Democracy,” presented at the Annual Conference on American Cultures, The University of Texas at Austin, September 2001

Awards, Honors and Fellowships

Co-winner, Jack Miller Center Dissertation Prize for best doctoral thesis in American political thought completed 2008-2010	2011
Nominated for the Leo Strauss Award for best doctoral dissertation in political philosophy, American Political Science Association	2010
Nominated for the American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellowship	2009
Nominated for the Outstanding Dissertation Award University of Texas at Austin	2008
Chancellor’s Undergraduate Teaching Fellowship University of Pittsburgh	2008
Derek Bok Certificate of Distinction for Excellence in Teaching Harvard University	2007, 2008
Graduate Fellow of the American Academy of Political and Social Science	2006
University Continuing Fellowship University of Texas at Austin	2005-2006
Nominated for the George H. Mitchell Award for Excellence in Graduate Research, University of Texas at Austin	2005
Patterson Research Fellowship Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin	2002

Professional Experience, Skills and Memberships

Post-Doctoral Associate, Yale Center for the Study of Representative Institutions, involved in planning conferences, the speaker series, and other program functions	2010-present
Organized and led graduate student Political Theory Workshop University of Texas at Austin, Department of Government	2002-2003
Supplemental Instructor, advanced teacher training University of Texas at Austin	2001
Research Assistant to David Braybrooke on <i>Natural Law Modernized</i> University of Texas at Austin, Department of Government	1999
Member of the American Political Science Association Foundations of Political Theory Section (APSA)	1997-present

French language reading proficiency

References

Prof. Jeffrey Tulis
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Prof. Thomas Pangle
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Prof. Russell Muirhead
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