

Eric M. Stephen

he/him/his

estephen@wustl.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2024-Present **Assistant Professor of American Politics**, *University of South Florida*

- School of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies
- Courtesy Appointment, Department of Religious Studies

2023-2024 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, *Washington University in St. Louis*

- John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics

EDUCATION

2023 **PhD in the Study of Religion**, *Harvard University*

- Advisors: David Holland, Amy Hollywood, Tisa Wenger
- Dissertation: “Conceiving an American ‘Secularism’: A Contested Category and the Remaking of US Law, Religion, and Civic Life, 1851-1914”

2023 **Juris Doctor**, *Yale Law School*

2016 **Master of Theological Studies**, *Harvard Divinity School*

2014 **Master of Arts**, *Wesleyan University*

- Advisors: Justine Quijada, Lisa Dierker
- Thesis: “Shamanic Rituals as Sites of Religio-Cultural Revival: A Statistical Analysis of the Demographic and Cultural Differences at Shamanic Ceremonies in Buryatia, Russia”

2013 **Bachelor of Arts**, *Wesleyan University*

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

- The social construction of the religion-secular binary in US law and politics
- Gilded Age and Progressive Era freethought movements
- The theory and jurisprudence of the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses
- The influence of religious activism on modern US law and sexual politics

PUBLICATIONS

Current Project: E. Stephen, “‘To Excite Agreeable Sensations’: The Knowlton Affair, the Comstock Campaign, and the Transnational Role of Law in Shaping a ‘Secular’ Sexual Ethics during the Late Victorian Era.”

In Press: E. Stephen, “Nineteenth Century American Freethinkers,” in *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. John Barton (Forthcoming).

- Under Review:** E. Stephen, “The Legal History of Secularism in Modern America,” in *The Palace of Thundering Gods* (Joseph Locke & Ben Wright, eds.).
- C. Musselman, F. Klose, E. Bain-Selbo, & E. Stephen, “Sports and Religion in the Supreme Court: *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*,” *International Journal of Sport and Religion* 1, no. 1 (2023): 49-65. Available at <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/16/article/892485/pdf>.
- E. Stephen, “Bringing Reflexive Religious Studies into Historical Scholarship on American Religion,” *American Religion Journal*, “American Religion, Inside Out” (2021). Available at <https://www.american-religion.org/inside-out/stephen>.
- D.L. Moore & E. Stephen, “From *Smith* to *Hobby Lobby*: The Transformation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act,” in *Law, Religion, and Health in the United States*, eds. Holly Lynch, et al. Cambridge University Press (2017): 34-46.
- A.S. Selya, E. Engel-Rebitzer, L. Dierker, E. Stephen, J. Rose, D.L. Coffman, & M. Otis, “The Causal Effect of Student Mobility on Standardized Test Performance: A Case Study with Possible Implications for Accountability Mandates within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 7 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01096>.
- J.B. Quijada & E. Stephen. “Performing ‘Culture’: Diverse Audiences at the International Shaman’s Conference and *Tailgan* on Ol’Khon Island.” *Études Mongoles et Sibériennes, Centrasiatiques et Tibétaines* 46 (2015): 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.4000/emscat.2589>.
- J.B. Quijada, K.E. Graber, & E. Stephen, “Finding ‘Their Own’: Revitalizing Buryat Culture Through Shamanic Practices in Ulan-Ude,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 5 (2015): 258-272. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10758216.2015.1057040>.
- E. Stephen, J. Rose, L. Kenney, F. Rosselli, & R. Striegel. “Prevalence and Correlates of Unhealthy Weight Control Behaviors: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health,” *Journal of Eating Disorders* 2, no. 16 (2014). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4060847/>.
- E. Stephen, J. Rose, L. Kenney, F. Rosselli, & R. Striegel. “Risk Factors for Purging in Young Women: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.” *Journal of Eating Disorders* 2, no. 1 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1186/2050-2974-2-1>. **Highly Accessed.**

PRESENTATIONS

- Forthcoming:** E. Stephen, “‘You’re Either a Missionary or a Mission Field’: A Critical Examination of Contrasting American and European Approaches to Regulating Proselytism and Related Religious Speech.” *The American Academy of Religion*, 25 November 2024.
- E. Stephen, *Invited Speaker*. “Neo-Gelasian Free Exercise and the Problem of *Sherbert* for the Roberts Court.” *The Origins and Afterlives of the American Founding: A Conference in Honor of Jack Rakove*, Stanford University, 25 February 2023.

- E. Stephen, Panelist. "Roundtable: Leigh Schmidt's *The Church of Saint Thomas Paine: A Religious History of American Secularism*." *The American Society of Church History*, 7 January 2023.
- E. Stephen. "Claiming 'Religion' in the Age of COVID-19: An Examination into how Conservative Legal and Religious Groups Translate Political Objections to COVID-19 Policies into Free Exercise Arguments." *The American Academy of Religion*, 19 November 2022.
- E. Stephen, Panelist. "Secular Ambivalence and Secular Misfits: A Roundtable on Joseph Blankholm's *The Secular Paradox* (2022)." *The American Academy of Religion*, 20 November 2022.
- E. Stephen. "Judicializing Secularism in the American Gilded Age: How the Cincinnati Bible War Reshaped the Concept of 'Secularism' into a Contested Legal Principle." *The American Society for Legal History*, 5 November 2021.
- E. Stephen. "'To Excite Agreeable Sensations': The Knowlton Affair, the Victorian-Era Secularist Movement, and the Shaping of Sexual Subjectivities Within Modern Secularity." *The American Academy of Religion*, 30 November 2020.
- E. Stephen. "The Neoliberal Turn in American Religious Liberty Jurisprudence: Intellectual Foundations and their Social, Political, and Legal Implications, 1990-Present." *The American Academy of Religion*, 23 November 2019.
- E. Stephen. "Secularist Women, Agency, and the Fight for Gender Equality: Examining Katie Kehm Smith's Campaign for Women's Rights in the Late Nineteenth Century American Secularist Movement." *The American Academy of Religion*, 18 November 2018.
- E. Stephen. "Unpacking the Theological Underpinnings of *Hobby Lobby*: An Intellectual History of the Idea of 'Complicity' in American Religion and Law." *The American Academy of Religion*, 21 November 2017.
- E. Stephen. "'Secularism is the Religion of Humanity': Uncovering the Rise and Fall of the U.S.-American Secularist Movement and its Effect on Contemporary Understandings of Western 'Secularism.'" *The Problematizing Religious Diversity in a Secular Age Conference*, McGill University, 16 September 2017.
- E. Stephen. "Proselytism and the Paradox of Tolerance: A Comparative Analysis of State Approaches to Proselytism and Related Religious Speech." *The Stendahl Symposium*, Harvard University, 18 April 2016.
- E. Stephen. "Shamanic Rituals as Sites of Religio-Cultural Revival: A Statistical Analysis of the Demographic and Cultural Differences at Shamanic Ceremonies in Buryatia, Russia." *The Association for the Study of Nationalities World Convention*, 25 April 2014.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of South Florida

Assistant Professor

POS4624: Constitutional Law II: Civil Liberties	Spring 2025
POT 4936: Religious Pluralism and the State	Spring 2025
POS3931/REL3936: Religion, Law, and Sexuality	Fall 2024
POS4614: Constitutional Law I	Fall 2024

Washington University in St. Louis

Postdoctoral Fellow

POL312: Religion, Law, and Sexual Politics in Contemporary America	Spring 2024
--	-------------

Yale Law School

Teaching Fellow

REL781: Readings in US Law and Religion	Spring 2023
PLSC257: Bioethics and the Law	Spring 2022
LAW50100-07: Outside the Law: Legal Questions through a Humanities Lens	Spring 2022
LAW21310-01: Employment Discrimination Law	Spring 2021

Harvard University

Teaching Fellow

RELI S-1510: How & Why Americans Bring their Scripture into Politics	Summer 2020
GEN1062: How & Why Americans Bring their Scripture into Politics (<i>Head TF</i>)	Spring 2020
HDS4515: Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion	Fall 2018; Fall 2019
HDS2045: Confronting Religious Difference in Modern America	Spring 2019
HDS2140: Reconfiguring Paradise: Utopian Dreams and Social Possibility	Spring 2019
HDS2318: The Niebuhr Brothers, Past and Present	Spring 2019

Harvard Extension School

Teaching Assistant

RELI S-1505: Religion, Education, and Democracy	Summer 2015
---	-------------

Harvard Prison Education Program

Education Mentor

Fall 2014-Spring 2015

Wesleyan University

Visiting Lecturer in Psychology

QAC201: Applied Data Analysis	Fall 2013-Spring 2014
-------------------------------	-----------------------

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- **Organizations:** American Historical Association 2022-Present
American Society of Legal History 2021-Present
American Academy of Religion 2016-Present
- **Journals:** Founding Editor, *Yale Journal of Law & Liberation* 2022-2023
Lead Editor, *Yale Journal of Law & Humanities* 2021-2023
- **Committees:** AAR Secularism & Secularity Unit, Committee Member 2019-Present
AAR Secularism & Secularity Unit, Co-Chair 2023-Present

SELECT LEADERSHIP AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- Research Assistant, Yale University** Fall 2021-Spring 2023
- Supervisor: Sally Promey, Professor of American Studies and Religious Studies
 - Served as research assistant on non-establishment case law and offered writing support for *Religion in Plain View* (University of Chicago Press, 2024)
- Dean's Advisor, Yale Law School** Fall 2021-Spring 2022
- Served as mentor and resource for first-year law students. Organized social, academic, and professionalization opportunities to support first-year students.
- Legal History Fellow, Yale Law School** Fall 2021-Spring 2022
- Organized and ran the YLS Legal History Forum, which brings legal historians globally to Yale to present on ongoing research projects related to legal history.
- Research Assistant, Yale Law School** Spring 2021-Spring 2022
- Advisors: Douglas NeJaime and Reva Siegel, Professors of Law
 - Collected and synthesized primary- and secondary-source scholarship relating to religious liberty ahead of highly-anticipated Supreme Court decisions.
- Vice President of Scholarship, YLS American Constitution Society** Spring 2021-Spring 2022
- Organized events relating to progressive scholarship and American constitutional law, including a semester course on humanities-based perspectives in legal studies.
- Director of Research, Religious Literacy Project** Fall 2017-Summer 2019
- Religion and Public Education Mapping Project: Supervised research project to visually mapping and statistically analyzing how religion is taught in public K-12 schools.
 - Religion and U.S. History (RUSH) Initiative: Developed a series of online resources to allow public school educators to augment current U.S. history curricula to be more inclusive of American religious history.
- Research Assistant and Editor, Harvard Divinity School** Fall 2018
- Advisor: K. Healan Gaston, Lecturer on American Religious History
 - Served as manuscript editor for *Imagining Judeo-Christian America: Religion, Secularism, and the Redefinition of Democracy* (Chicago University Press, 2019).

HONORS AND AWARDS

Yale Law School Legal History Fellowship	2021-2022
John L. Loeb Research Fellowship	2021
William R. Hutchison American Religions Fellowship	2016-2018
Stendahl Symposium on Interreligious Dialogue Award	2016
Harvard Divinity School Dean's Scholarship	2014-2016
Phi Beta Kappa	2013
Rhodes Scholarship Finalist, District IV	2013
Holzberg Fellowship for Applied Research in Psychology	2013
William A. Spurrier Ethics Award	2013
Psi Chi Psychology Honors Society	2012

SKILLS AND BACKGROUND

- **Computer:** Extensive use of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, InDesign, PhotoShop, Stata, R-Studio
Some experience with WordPress, GIS, SAS, SPSS
- **Languages:** Spanish (conversational)
German (research proficiency)