

# Erik C. Owens

Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life  
Boston College  
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## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. The University of Chicago, 2007  
*Religious Ethics*  
*Dissertation: "Civic Education for Religious Freedom: Liberal Republicanism and the Common Good in American Public Schools"*  
*Committee: Jean Bethke Elshtain (Advisor); Franklin I. Gamwell; W. Clark Gilpin*
- M.T.S. Harvard University Divinity School, 1996  
*Religion and Society*  
*Advisor: Rev. J. Bryan Hehir*
- B.A. Duke University, 1994, *magna cum laude*  
*Public Policy Studies, Religion*  
*Honors Thesis: "Religion and the Presidency: Comparing Carter and Reagan"*

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Boston College**, Chestnut Hill, MA

Associate Director, Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, July 2009 – Present  
Assistant Director, Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, July 2006 – June 2009  
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Theology and International Studies, July 2006 – Present

### **The University of Virginia**, Charlottesville, VA

Visiting Fellow, Center on Religion and Democracy, September 2005 – June 2006

### **The University of Chicago**, Chicago, IL

Teaching Intern, Social Sciences Collegiate Division, January – June 2003 (2 academic quarters)

### **The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life**, Chicago, IL

Research Associate, September 2001 – February 2003  
Interim Administrative Director, June – September 2001

### **DePaul University**, Chicago, IL

Instructor, Religious Studies, January – August 2000; March – June 2002 (3 academic quarters)

### **City of Chicago Board of Ethics**, Chicago, IL

Research Analyst, June 2000 – June 2001

### **Doris Kearns Goodwin**, Concord, MA

Research Assistant, *Team of Rivals: Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, April 1996 – July 1998

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books and Edited Volumes

*Gambling: Mapping the American Moral Landscape*. (Edited, with Alan Wolfe.) Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009. Honorable Mention, 2010 Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Ray & Pat Browne Award for Best Edited Collection.

*Religion and the Death Penalty: A Call for Reckoning*. (Edited, with John Carlson and Eric Elshstain.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004.

*The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics*. (Edited, with John Carlson.) Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003. Selected as a “must read” book on religion and international relations by *Foreign Affairs* (2009).

### Peer Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

“A United States Perspective on the European REDCo Project,” *Religion and Education* 37:3 (Fall 2010): 203-7.

“Civic Values and ‘Education Lotteries’: The Irony of Funding Public Education with Lottery Revenues.” In *Gambling: Mapping the American Moral Landscape*, 2009.

“Disestablishment as Legal Paideia: Assessing Michael McConnell’s Educational and Religious Pluralism.” In *Philosophy of Education Yearbook 2008* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

“Religion and Capital Punishment: An Introduction” (with Eric Elshstain). In *Religion and the Death Penalty*, 2004.

“Sovereignty after September 11: What Has Changed?” In *The Sacred and the Sovereign*, 2003.

“Reconsidering Westphalia’s Legacy for Religion and International Politics” (with John Carlson). In *The Sacred and the Sovereign*, 2003.

“Taking the ‘Public’ Out of Our Schools: The Political, Constitutional and Civic Implications of Private School Vouchers.” *Journal of Church and State* 44:4 (Autumn 2002): 717-747.

### Other Articles and Book Chapters

“Electoral and Religious Conflict in Africa,” Huffington Post, December 1, 2010.

“Separation of Church and State,” vol. 4 of the Boisi Center Papers on Religion in the United States, 2007.

“Religion and Civic Education in American Public Schools,” chapter in Karin Johnston, ed. *Religion, Politics and Policy in the United States and Germany*, vol. 5 (Washington: American Institute for Comparative German Studies, 2007).

“The Death Penalty: Legal Aspects.” In *Religion Past and Present: The Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion* [English adaptation of *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4<sup>e</sup>], H.D. Betz, D. Browning, B. Janowski and E. Jüngel, eds. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

“Religious Displays on Public Property.” In *The Encyclopedia of Religious Freedom*, C. Cookson, ed. New York: Berkshire/Routledge, 2003.

“Mitchell v. Helms,” “Religious Freedom (Istook) Amendment,” “Boy Scouts of America v. Dale,” and “Religion in the 1994 Elections.” In *The Encyclopedia of American Religion and Politics*, Paul A. Djupe and Laura R. Olson, eds. New York: Facts on File, 2003.

“Transitions and Traditions: Use of Force in International Politics.” *Criterion*, Spring 2001.

“Rethinking Religion and Sovereignty.” *Sightings*, September 14, 2000.

### Book Reviews

*Does God Belong in Public Schools?* by Kent Greenawalt. *Journal of Religion* 86:3 (July 2006): 486-87.

*The Ways of Judgment*, by Oliver O'Donovan. *Anglican Theological Review* 88:3 (Summer 2006): 468-70.

*Getting Over Equality: A Critical Diagnosis of Religious Freedom in America*, by Steven D. Smith. *Journal of Religion* 84:2 (April 2004): 319-320.

### **WORK IN PROGRESS**

Article: “Religion, Revolution and Realism: Seeking an Obama Doctrine in the Wake of the 2011 Arab Uprisings.” Submitted to *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* Jan 2012.

Article: “Do Good Citizens Need the Good Book? Teaching the Bible in American Public Schools.” For submission to the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* mid-2012.

Article: “The Common Good.” Invited essay for *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theology*, for submission in late 2012.

Book reviews of two recent work in religion and political theory for the *Journal of Religion*.

Article: “Moderate Islam and the Civic Educational Imperative: The Aims and Impact of Fethullah Gülen Inspired Schools.” For submission in early 2013, following late 2012 research trip to Turkey.

Manuscript: *Religious Freedom and the Common Good in American Public Schools*.

### **INVITED LECTURES**

“Religion and American Public Schools,” Lynch School of Education Student Senate Lecture Series. Boston College, December 2011.

“Civic Education in Public Schools: Can the State Teach Tolerance?” Conference on “Toleration and Freedom: The American Experience in Context.” Institute for Philosophy and Religion, Boston University, March 2011.

“What Should the State Teach about Religion? Comparing International Approaches.” International Studies Lecture Series. Boston College, November 2010.

“Religion and the 2008 Election.” Residential Life Faculty Speaker Series. Boston College, October 2008.

- “The Future of American Political Theologies.” Response paper at conference on “Political Theologies: Past, Present, and Future.” Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University, October 2008.
- “Universal but Separate: Integration and Ethics in Antebellum American Schools.” Response paper at Faculty Research Seminar. Bentley College, April 2008.
- “Do Good Citizens Need the Good Book? Teaching the Bible in American Public Schools.” Illinois Forum on Religion in America. University of Illinois, April 2006.
- “Religious Freedom and Civic Education in American Public Schools.” Stanford University School of Education, December 2005.
- “Pragmatic Citizenship and the Democratic Virtues in Stout’s *Democracy and Tradition*.” Conference on “Religion and the Democratic Prospect (Part II).” Martin Marty Center, University of Chicago, February 2005.
- “Religious Freedom and Civic Education,” University of Iowa Department of Religious Studies, December 2004.
- “Religious Freedom and Civic Education in American Public Schools: Lessons from the Supreme Court.” Conference on “Religion and the Democratic Prospect (Part I).” Martin Marty Center, University of Chicago, May 2004.

## CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

- “Religion, Revolution and Realism: Seeking an Obama Doctrine in the Wake of the 2011 Arab Uprisings,” Society of Christian Ethics, January 2012.
- “Building a Building a Successful Academic Center: Religion, Politics and Public Engagement.” American Academy of Religion, November 2009.
- “Religion in the 2008 Presidential Campaigns.” American Academy of Religion, November 2008.
- “Beyond Religious Literacy: Religion Education, Religious Freedom and American Public Schools.” American Academy of Religion, November 2008.
- “Disestablishment as Legal *Paideia*?” Philosophy of Education Society, April 2008.
- “Civic Education for Religious Freedom.” Society of Christian Ethics, January 2007.
- “Disestablishment as Legal *Paideia*?” American Academy of Religion, November 2006.
- “Religion, Public Education and the Power of Persuasion: Assessing Michael McConnell’s ‘Educational Disestablishment’ as a Form of Pluralism.” American Political Science Association, September 2006.
- Book discussion session: *Religion and the Death Penalty: A Call for Reckoning*. Society of Christian Ethics, January 2006.
- “Judging Religious Freedom in American Public Schools: The Supreme Court’s New Conception of Citizenship?” Society of Christian Ethics, January 2005.
- “Integrating Civic Virtues and Religious Studies in American Public Schools.” American Academy of Religion, Midwest Region, April 2004.

Book discussion session: *The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics*, Society of Christian Ethics, January 2004.

“Private School Vouchers and Religious Freedom.” Public Theology Working Group, Martin Marty Center, University of Chicago Divinity School, March 2002.

## **HONORS, GRANTS AND AWARDS**

Classroom Visitation Grant. Teachers for a New Era, Boston College (2011-12).

Course development grant for Spring 2012 course “Religions and American Public Schools.” Teachers for a New Era program, Boston College (summer 2011).

Discretionary grant for extended work on Google Earth mapping project for humanities professors. Institute for Liberal Arts, Boston College (summer 2011).

Exploratory Technology Grant for Google Earth mapping project. Academic Technology Advisory Board, Boston College (summer 2010).

Teaching with New Media Award. Instructional Technology and eTeaching Services, Boston College (2009).

Visiting Fellowship, Center on Religion and Democracy, University of Virginia (2005-2006).

Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship for Research Related to Education (2004-2005).

Doolittle-Harrison Travel Fellowship, University of Chicago (2005).

Finalist, Charlotte Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship (2003-2004).

Bradley Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (2001-2004).

Martin Marty Center Dissertation Fellowship, University of Chicago (2002-2003).

University of Chicago Divinity School Scholarship (1998-2001).

Senior honors thesis awarded Special Distinction in Religion (1994); assigned as a required text for the departmental Religion course “Ethical Issues in Twentieth Century America” at Duke University, Fall 1994 and 1995.

## **COURSES**

“Religions and American Public Schools,” Boston College (Theology/Education), Spring 2012.

“Ethics, Religion and International Politics,” Boston College (International Studies/Theology), Spring 2008 and 2009, Fall 2009, 2010 and 2011.

“Ethics and the Economic Crisis,” Boston College (Theology), Spring 2010.

Reading/research course: “History of American Church-State Relations” (Theology), Spring 2009.

“For God and Country? Thinking about Religion and Citizenship,” Boston College (Theology), Spring 2007, Fall 2008.

“Ethical Issues in Business and Economics,” Boston College (Theology), Fall 2007.

“Classics of Social and Political Thought,” University of Chicago (Social Sciences Core), Spring/Winter 2003.

“Business, Ethics and Society,” DePaul University (Management/Religious Studies),  
Spring 2000 and 2002, Summer 2000.

### **TEACHING COMPETENCE**

- Primary: Religion and political thought (historical and contemporary, applied and theoretical), including church-state relations; citizenship and civic education; religion, ethics and international relations.
- Secondary: Religious ethics (theological and philosophical approaches); ethics in business and society; theories of justice; American religious history; religious studies theories and methods

### **THESES DIRECTED**

- Alissa Parra, on the American moral consensus about torture (BC Faith, Peace and Justice, 2011)  
Catherine Smith, on European/American study abroad programs (BC International Studies, 2010)  
Alex Cohen, on just war analysis of the 2008-09 Gaza incursion (BC International Studies, 2010)  
Elizabeth del Real, on service learning as civic education (BC Faith, Peace and Justice, 2010)

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- American Academy of Religion  
Religion and Politics section (co-chair 2011-2013; steering committee 2006-2010)  
Religion in Public Schools: International Perspectives consultation (steering cmte 2011-2013)
- American Political Science Association  
Philosophy of Education Society  
Society of Christian Ethics

### **REFEREEING**

- Manuscripts: Palgrave Macmillan, Baylor University Press
- Articles: Journal of Religion; Journal of the American Academy of Religion; Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics; Journal of Church and State; Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology; Saint Antony's International Review (STAIR), Review of International Studies.

### **UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

- Primary organizer for two major conferences sponsored by Boston College for its sesquicentennial celebration: “Religion and the Liberal Aims of Higher Education” (with Henry Braun), November 2012; and “Religious Diversity and the Common Good, 1863-2013” (with Alan Wolfe), Fall 2013.
- Faculty member and rapporteur, “Ways of Knowing and the Catholic Intellectual Traditions” seminar, Boston College, 2007-2009.

Faculty Performance Review, The University of Chicago Divinity School, Winter 2003.

Conference organizer, “A Call for Reckoning: Religion and the Death Penalty,” The University of Chicago, January 2002.

Conference organizer, “The Sacred and the Sovereign: Human Rights, the Use of Force, and Religious Pluralism at Century’s Dawn,” The University of Chicago, October 2000.

Founding member of two ongoing Graduate Workshops at The University of Chicago:  
Public Theology (started Fall 2000) and Law and Religion (started Fall 2003).

Harvard Divinity School Representative, Harvard Graduate Council, 1995-1996.

## REFERENCES

### Alan Wolfe

Professor of Political Science and Director, Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life  
Boston College, 24 Quincy Rd., Chestnut Hill, MA 02467; wolfe@bc.edu

### David Hollenbach

University Professor of Human Rights and International Justice, and  
Director, Center for Human Rights and International Justice  
Boston College, 24 Quincy Rd., Chestnut Hill, MA 02467; hollenb@bc.edu

### Jean Bethke Elshtain (Dissertation advisor)

Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics  
University of Chicago Divinity School and Department of Political Science  
Swift Hall, 1025 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637; jbelshsta@uchicago.edu

### Rev. J. Bryan Hehir (Former advisor)

Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life  
Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government  
and Secretary for Health and Social Services, Archdiocese of Boston  
75 Kneeland St., Suite 800, Boston, MA 02111; bryan\_hehir@harvard.edu

### Franklin I. Gamwell (Dissertation reader)

Shailer Mathews Distinguished Service Professor of Religious Ethics and Philosophy of Religion  
University of Chicago Divinity School  
Swift Hall, 1025 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637; figamwel@midway.uchicago.edu