

# **EXAMPLE**

**1**



## The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought

### **Abstract:**

In *The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought* I will analyze the work of four theorists—Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Michèle Le Dœuff, and Jacques Rancière—to demonstrate that the examination, critique, and rethinking of education and educational institutions plays a central role in their political philosophies. My work will be distinguished from others in the field by paying particular attention to the history and structure of the institutions within which these philosophers were educated and taught, with the aim of providing the necessary context within which to better understand their philosophies of education, and then their political writings. As I am at the beginning of this project, a Fordham Faculty Fellowship will enable me to write two articles on specific topics within this broad area, which I intend to submit for review at *Political Theory* and *Continental Philosophy Review*, as well as undertake the basic research needed to write a subsequent book to be launched from the platform of these preliminary publications. If awarded, my projected timeline for a Fall 2011 Faculty Fellowship is:

- Sept. – Oct., 2011: Study of institutional history, and research and writing of paper on Derrida, Foucault, and the role of sovereignty in philosophical education (to submit to *Political Theory*).
- Nov. – Dec., 2011: Further study of institutional history, and research and writing of paper on Derrida, Le Dœuff, and *Le Groupe de Recherches sur l'Enseignement Philosophique* [Research Group on Philosophy Teaching] (to submit to *Continental Philosophy Review*).

In addition to seeking the support of a Fordham Faculty Fellowship, I have also submitted an application for an NEH fellowship, and intend to submit applications in the coming weeks to the European Institute of Advance Study and the Camargo Foundation. If awarded such prestigious external support I will request to extend my leave to a full academic year in accord with the following timeline:

Jan. – Feb., 2012:        Research and writing of paper on Foucault, Rancière, and education reform as political resistance (to submit to *Critical Inquiry*).

Mar. – May, 2012:       Preliminary consolidation of aforementioned articles and expanded research into book form.

Following this timeline will thus enable me to disseminate the first results of my research through publication in top-tier peer-reviewed journals, paving the way for a completed book manuscript for submission to publishers by Fall 2013. Potential publishers for this project are Columbia University Press, Indiana University Press, and Edinburgh University Press, as each has a series for which my work would be appropriate.

**Background:**

I developed the initial idea for *The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought* while conducting the research for my first book, *Derrida's Inheritance of Democracy*, which is currently under review at Cambridge University Press. In the course of this work it became clear that the topic of education is an especially rich one for thinking through issues of inheritance—how ideas and theories are transferred to and transformed by subsequent generations—particularly as it applies to the inheritance of Derrida's own work. However, not wanting to restrict my work to Derrida alone, or even to French philosophy, I started preliminary research on contemporary philosophers who discuss education at length. I was surprised by the large number of prominent French philosophers who have done so, compared to the relative scarcity of well-known philosophers in the Anglophone tradition considering similar issues. My hypothesis for why this is the case is the unique nature and history of the French education system. Initially centralized and homogenous, this system required virtually all philosophers to pass through the same institutions and

sit for the same exams. After May 1968, the system underwent a radical transformation, but this was followed by counter-reforms in the 1970s that attempted to scale back these changes. Therefore, the unique nature and history of the French education system created (i) a relatively uniform educational and teaching experience prior to 1968; (ii) a capacity for conceiving alternative ideas of how to educate following 1968; and (iii) a common enemy of resistance—the initial system to which the forces of counter-reform wished to return in the 1970s. It is this particular history that I hypothesize acted as a catalyst for French philosophers' focus on education, and shaped their subsequent theories. It is also a history in which education and education reform are inherently political, given the central role played by the State in its unfolding. The aim of my Faculty Fellowship project is to test this hypothesis through a close study of this history, and then on the basis of this research to articulate the resulting relationship between theories of education and politics in the writings of Foucault, Derrida, Le Dœuff, and Rancière.

Although still at a nascent stage, in Spring 2011 I will teach an upper-level undergraduate course focused on the theme of this research, which, in addition to a study of the philosophers in question, will draw on Pierre Bourdieu's several sociological studies on French education (Bourdieu, 1964, 1970, 1984), and Alan Schrift's more recent work: an illuminating article analyzing the role that the *agrégation* (the exam one had to pass to qualify to teach philosophy in high schools in France) played in shaping the content of philosophical research in France across the twentieth century (Schrift, 2008), and a book on twentieth century French philosophers understood through the institutional contexts on their thought (Schrift, 2006). Both complementing and extending Schrift, my monograph will consider not only the French education system's influence on the philosophers it produced, but those same philosophers' theorization of education in the light of this influence, and the subsequent connection to their theories of politics. As inheritance lies at the very heart of this issue—it is a question of how education is transferred to and transformed by subsequent generations—I thus return to the initial relationship, the discovery of which gave this project its impetus: *The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought* is born out of the research for my first book, *Derrida's Inheritance of Democracy*.

**Contribution:**

At present political philosophy and political issues are major areas of study in my field of Contemporary Continental Philosophy. However, no attention has yet been paid to the topic I will investigate: the role played by philosophies of education in theories of politics. The contributions of *The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought* will thus be to first expand the present understanding of political philosophy in the Continental tradition, and second to address the present lack of scholarship on philosophies of education in that field, encouraging others to embark on the subject's serious scholarship.

It is to encourage the dissemination of my ideas that I have chosen to focus on the work of Foucault, Derrida, Le Dœuff, and Rancière, for each of these thinkers has enjoyed a different reception in the Anglophone world. Foucault and Derrida remain at the very top of citation lists in the Humanities, and Rancière has received increasing attention in a number of disciplines in recent years. Only Le Dœuff remains relatively unknown (save within certain circles of feminist theory), which is unfortunate given the high quality of her thinking. This particular mix suggests that there is a ready audience for my work, with enough familiarity to ensure its accessibility, and enough room for new insights to be discovered and new connections to be made.

**Conclusion:**

Having recently completed my first book manuscript, embarking on *The Importance of Education in Recent French Thought* represents the next major step in my career as a scholar. In pursuing this project, I will expand my expertise to cover three new philosophers, and deepen my understanding of the relations between politics and the transmission of knowledge. I also aim to produce a unique and original analysis of a topic under-theorized in my field of Contemporary Continental Philosophy, cementing my place as a fully active and contributing member of this intellectual community, and further enhancing Fordham's reputation as a leading center for the study of Continental thought.

The teaching relief that Fordham's Faculty Fellowship provides will prove invaluable to the timely completion of this project. While I am only at the beginning of my career, I have been able to



# **EXAMPLE**

**2**

## **Maternity and Maternal Identities in Medieval Muslim Discourse and Practice**

### **Abstract**

The book-length manuscript that will be the focus of my proposed faculty fellowship will be an examination of how a woman's reproductive potential served as a locus for medieval Muslim debates about maternal piety, power, and prestige. This era was crucial for the development of a normative Muslim discourse surrounding women's familial, social and religious identities. To date, no study exists that considers how Muslim scholars mapped the female reproductive body according to broader, cosmological schemes to generate a woman's role as "mother." Therefore, a systematic examination of the rhetoric and practices surrounding maternity will fill a significant scholarly void concerning the historical development of Muslim women's identities.

To meet this goal, this project has three objectives: One, it will make available extensive translations of medieval Muslim exegesis, medical works, legal treatises, histories, zoological texts, and folklore that establish the framework for the subsequent construction of motherhood and maternity. These translations, which I have already completed, will serve as valuable resources to scholars interested in the medieval Islamic period. Second, the project will offer a foundational survey of the seminal discourse concerned with women as procreative agents. This survey will illustrate how Muslim scholars assimilated the biological realities of reproduction to their religious ideals, which served to reify maternal responsibilities and experiences. Third, the project will analyze the analytical and practical means Muslim women created to navigate the reproductive ideals imposed on them, which allowed them to embrace the theological ideals underscored in Islam's foundational texts, or to modify or resist those ideals to express alternate forms of piety.

In sum, this monograph will offer a comprehensive survey and analysis of how women were fashioned as Muslim mothers through discourse and practice, and how Muslim women absorbed, transformed, or resisted this projected paradigm. Award of a Faculty Fellowship in the spring of 2011 will afford me the time necessary to complete *Maternity and Maternal Identities* before my tenure review in January 2012.

## **Background**

While many studies written by both Muslims and non-Muslims focus on women and gender in Islam, including most recently *Women, Family, and Gender in Islamic Law* and *Gender and Self in Islam*, few have dealt specifically with the phenomenon of maternity and motherhood. As I have already demonstrated in my published articles “The Birth of Cain: Reproduction, Maternal Responsibility, and Moral Character in Early Islamic Exegesis,” and “The Cure of Perfection: Women’s Obstetrics in Early and Medieval Islam,” maternity forms an essential component of a Muslim woman’s identity and offers an excellent segue into wider questions concerning a women’s familial, social and religious status within the community. Because of the very liminal nature of conception, gestation, and birth, maternity exaggerates the porous nature of women, whose boundaries are penetrated by others from within and without, in the form of sperm, God and child. As a result of these incursions, a woman’s identity is not fixed, but severed and fluid. The perplexing process of reproduction, therefore, offers up a unique moment through which to examine how Muslim scholars imagined, constructed, and then abstracted a mother’s identity through the rhetoric of theology, medicine, law, myth, and ritual.

The creation of such maternal identities ultimately aims to seal up a woman’s porosity and to stabilize her mutability. As such, maternal identities protect society from the perceived instability and dangers associated with the marginality of the female reproductive

body, especially when that body is faulted for producing less than desirable birth outcomes. In these ways Muslim scholars generate the boundaries that regulate a woman's participation within her familial, social, and religious communities. Although several anthropologists have undertaken modern, ethnographic studies on the subject of maternity and patriarchy, such as *The Seed and the Soil: gender and cosmology in Turkish village society*, and *Infertility and Patriarchy: The Cultural Politics of Gender and Family Life in Egypt*, none have focused on the medieval period, and none consider extensively the profound impact of Muslim theological vision on maternal identity.

### **Contribution**

Building on my prior work, *Maternity and Maternal Identities* will offer a more comprehensive description and analysis of reproductive discourse in medieval Islamic texts. These descriptive and analytical elements will draw from sacred, legal, exegetical, medical, and folkloric works (many translated for the first time) to illustrate how normative and idealized visions of the "mother" were fashioned rhetorically, and embodied by women through practice. Of particular interest will be the discursive and practical strategies Muslim scholars created to assimilate the cold, hard biological realities of the reproductive body with their idealized visions of the procreative mother.

This analytical approach, which combines anthropological, historical, and literary methods to show how perceived theological problems were negotiated through language and practice, was initially developed in my first book, *The Rhetoric of Sobriety: Wine in early Islam*. However, rather than reconstructing the "meta" discourse articulated within the Islamic tradition, *Maternity and Maternal Identities* delves into the particular ways the reproductive body challenged theological ideals, and how those challenges were parleyed through discourse and practice. With its utilization of a broad range of literary genres and

methods, this project builds on *The Rhetoric of Sobriety* and other interdisciplinary works such as *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society*, that consider Islam not only as a discrete historical phenomenon, but also in terms of the wealth of material it offers to the study of religion.

Drawing further from the understanding of “agency” put forth in Saba Mahmood’s groundbreaking *The Politics of Piety*, this study looks at Muslim women’s practical responses to the reproductive ideals provided for them. Mahmood has demonstrated that Muslim women willfully embody patriarchal norms through practice. Likewise, this work will also demonstrate how believing women strived, through pre- and post-natal rituals and practices, to become ideal mothers. For example, women embraced the ceremony of the *tahnik*, during which the father chews a few dates, and then places the masticated juices in an infant’s mouth to be consumed as the child’s first food rather than its mother’s milk. Although contrary to what is natural, this tradition symbolizes the father’s willingness to accept his child as his own, the child’s subordination to the father, and the infant’s initiation into the Muslim community through the paternal, rather than the maternal, line.

However, evidence also exists that women transformed such traditional, patriarchal norms when their bodies barred them from realizing theological ideals. Here, my discussions of heretofore ignored magical and folk remedies, through which women controlled their own fertility, determined their child’s sex, or ensured a safe pregnancy and delivery, reveal how women questioned the paradigm of the ideal mother while often forging new visions of God. *Maternity and Maternal Identities* therefore builds on the work of Mahmood and others through a fuller consideration of religious belief in the wider discussion of female agency and embodied practice.

In sum, this interdisciplinary study will be of value to Islamic scholars interested in a survey and analysis of the creative impetuses underlying the formation of a normative,

medieval Islamic “tradition.” It will be of particular importance in addressing the larger question of how theology becomes the driving force for establishing familial, social, and religious identities relative to women. The book will also benefit Gender Studies scholars who often neglect the profound impact contemporaneous biological theories of female reproduction, translated through a theological lens, have on the formation of gender roles. Finally, this study will contribute greatly to historians of religion and science through its analysis of how the physiological process of reproduction becomes inextricably bound up with theological views about God to circumscribe what it means to be a mother.

### **Conclusion**

Often the exclusive preserve of historians and political scientists, Islam has seldom been analyzed from a history of religions perspective. The publication of my second book, *Maternity and Maternal Identities*, will help fill that void. Completion of the monograph will further solidify my status both nationally and within the context of Fordham as a senior scholar dedicated to advancing Islamic Studies in the broader fields of Theology and Religious Studies. Given that my tenure review will commence in January 2012, a Spring 2011 Faculty Fellowship will afford me the time essential to complete the manuscript. Having had the experience of publishing a book and numerous academic articles, I am well positioned to complete this project in a timely fashion.

# **EXAMPLE**

**3**

## *Curiositas* Unveiled:

### The Development of a Peculiar Notion in Latin Literature and Roman Law

#### Abstract

If awarded a Faculty Fellowship for the Academic Year 2011-12, I will devote it to advancing my book-length study of the notion of curiosity (*curiositas*) in Latin literature and Roman law. In Latin as in English, such a notion is central to discussions about the human desire for knowledge as well as the imposition of appropriate boundaries on that desire; but unlike its English counterpart, which has come to designate an unequivocally positive quality, the word *curiositas* has almost always a negative connotation in Latin literature and can be characterized as an excessive interest in vain, superfluous, useless, and even dangerous knowledge.

The monograph that will be the outcome of this project will explore the central role that the notion of *curiositas* plays in Latin literature, Roman historiography, Roman law, and Christian literature. In particular, my research will focus on the seminal authors and works in each genre, such as the works of Apuleius, Tertullian, and Augustine, to cite only a few authors who in turn had a profound influence on Western literature and intellectual history. My study will be articulated into four discrete but related sections preceded by an introductory chapter and followed by a general conclusion. The first section will be devoted to *curiositas* in the ancient novel with a particular focus on the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, where *curiositas* functions both as the catalyst for the action and as the defining trait of the protagonist of the novel. The second section will analyze the issue of *curiositas* in historiography and the special role that *curiositas* plays in

biography as opposed to the writing of history. The third section will examine the substantial body of legislation aimed at curbing *curiositas* vis-à-vis magic and divination. The fourth section will be devoted to the two Christian authors, namely Tertullian and Augustine, who have made the most lasting and influential contribution to the discussion on *curiositas*. In the conclusion I will synthesize my findings and show how these different authors, genres, and legal norms not only illustrate different facets of the notion of *curiositas*, but also enrich our understanding of it as a potentially subversive idea that threatens order (whether literary, cultural, or political) both real and imagined.

At present, I have completed two forthcoming articles, “Lucius’s Triad of Passions: Curiosity, Pleasure, and the Quest of Fame Through Story-Telling”<sup>1</sup> and “*curiositas nihil recusat*: ‘High’ and ‘Low’ in History and Biography”<sup>2</sup> that will be the core of section one and two illustrated above. Particularly if able to be combined with a Humboldt Fellowship, for which I am also applying, a Faculty Fellowship for the Academic Year 2011-12 would afford me the time necessary to complete a first draft of *Curiositas Unveiled* by August 2012. I am targeting to publish *Curiositas Unveiled* either with the University of Michigan Press, which published my first monograph,<sup>3</sup> or Cambridge University Press, which has recently published a volume I co-edited with Scott McGill and Edward Watts<sup>4</sup> and will publish an Intermediate Latin reader I am co-writing with Jennifer Ebbeler.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Forthcoming in D. Brakke, D. Deliyannis, E. Watts, eds. *Shifting Cultural Frontiers in Late Antiquity*. Ashgate.

<sup>2</sup> Forthcoming in B. Duncan MacQueen, D. Konstan, M. Futre-Pinheiro, eds. *Acts of the Fourth International Conference on the Ancient Novel*. Ancient Narratives Supplementum.

<sup>3</sup> *Q. Aurelius Symmachus: A Political Biography*. University of Michigan Press, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> S. McGill, C. Sogno, E. Watts, eds. *From the Tetrarchs to the Theodosians: Later Roman History and Culture, 284-450 CE*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> J. Ebbeler, C. Sogno, *Pagans and Christians in the Later Roman Empire: An Intermediate Latin Prose Reader* (under contract with Cambridge University Press).

## **Background**

Although there are articles that illustrate the peculiar history of the word *curiositas* and its development in Latin literature, such as the still fundamental work by André Labhardt and Hans-Joachim Mette, no comprehensive monograph has been devoted to the topic. In fact, despite recent scholarship rightly pointing out the importance of discussing *curiositas* within its wider literary and cultural framework, the focus of previous articles on this subject has been limited to the consideration of individual authors. Counter to this trend has been the work of Patrick G. Walsh (1988) and Joseph G. DeFilippo (1990), which not only emphasized the centrality of the theme of *curiositas* in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, but also demonstrated how that theme is firmly rooted in the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition. Picking up the thread of this scholarship left lying for two decades, I argue in my aforementioned forthcoming article that Apuleius and Augustine's sharing the same philosophical tradition trumps any direct influence one may have had on the other. This not only renders the controversial question of Apuleius's influence over Augustine somewhat irrelevant, but, more importantly, it opens up the exciting possibility of enriching our reading and understanding of Apuleius with the help of Augustine. It is from this platform of soon to be published scholarship that I intend to launch my monograph: *Curiositas Unveiled*.

## **Contribution**

*Curiositas Unveiled* will fill an important gap in the current literature by providing the first comprehensive study of the notion of *curiositas* to encompass not only different authors, but also different genres and Roman law. My approach is distinctive because it

combines philological, literary, and historical methods applied to a variety of sources in order to provide a full-length study of the issue. Philology will provide the basic tools for gathering the materials necessary to the investigation. As the already mentioned studies of Labhardt and Mette have demonstrated, the word *curiositas* makes one lonely appearance in the Latin literature of the Republic and Early Empire (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC-1<sup>st</sup> century AD), but is well attested in a variety of texts, genres, and legal sources of the later Empire (2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD). Even though the issue of the appropriate boundaries of human knowledge, which is fundamental to the notion of *curiositas*, clearly preexisted the invention of the term, the proliferation and diffusion of the word *curiositas* in later Latin cannot be accidental and, in fact, seem to coincide with the profound changes that characterize the history, literature, and culture of the later Roman world. By exploring how the word *curiositas* operates in the different contexts in which it appears (literary, historiographical, legal, and Christian), the book will not only trace the development of the notion of *curiositas*, but also address the question of the historical, literary, and cultural change that is central to the period considered.

The diversity of its sources and methods will make the monograph of interest not only to literary scholars, but also to intellectual and legal historians. Furthermore, although its concern with the ancient world addresses a primary audience of Classicists, *Curiositas Unveiled* will also appeal to Medieval scholars, who have had a long-standing interest in the reception of Augustine's ideas about *curiositas* in Medieval thought and culture, as demonstrated by the work of Edward Peters and Richard Newhauser. Capitalizing on this broad interest and anticipated appeal, in addition to a Fordham Faculty Fellowship I plan to apply for a Humboldt Fellowship to support conducting my

research for *Curiositas Unveiled* at the Institut für Griechische und Lateinische Philologie (Freie Universität of Berlin). Directed by Dr. Therese Führer—a specialist in Hellenistic, Roman, and Christian thought and Latin literature—the Institut will offer me access to its impressive collection of both primary and secondary sources and provide an intellectually stimulating environment in which my research will flourish.

### **Conclusion**

An issue of central importance in Latin literature and Roman Law, *curiositas* has long sparked the interest of Classical scholars without ever receiving the wide-ranging treatment that a topic of such relevance deserves. My second monograph will fill this void by addressing the issue of *curiositas* in the ancient novel, historiography, the law, and Christian literature. Building on the 2006 publication of my book *Q. Aurelius Symmachus: A Political Biography* (University of Michigan Press) and forthcoming scholarly articles on the notion of *curiositas*, I am well positioned to bring *Curiositas Unveiled* to fruition. I look forward to the essential time a Faculty Fellowship for the Academic Year 2011-12 will provide to complete this manuscript's first draft, as well as the opportunity it will afford me to cite Fordham's support for *Curiositas Unveiled* as I seek external support for my continued scholarship.

# **EXAMPLE**

**4**

# *Deleuze's Political Vision*

## Abstract

If awarded, a Fordham Faculty Fellowship would enable me to expedite completion of my book manuscript, *Deleuze's Political Vision*. Morton Schoolman of the University at Albany has invited me to submit the manuscript for his series on *Modernity and Political Thought*, published by Rowman & Littlefield. I plan to use spring semester 2012 to complete the manuscript so that it is ready to send to outside reviewers before the start of the 2012-2013 academic year.

This book will substantiate Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) as one of the most important political thinkers of our time by providing a close reading of *A Thousand Plateaus*—widely considered to be Deleuze's masterpiece—through the disciplinary matrix of political theory. The book begins with a methodological chapter explaining how to enter Deleuze's intense and idiosyncratic conceptual universe. Then, I describe Deleuze's critique of the Western political philosophical tradition for privileging fixity and authority over flux and experimentation. I subsequently show how Deleuze redescribes the political universe to capture the element of chaos in many supposedly stable identities, including political ideologies, political territories, political bodies, and political practices. I then flesh out Deleuze's political ethos that seeks to strike a productive balance between audacity and caution, or, as he puts it in *A Thousand Plateaus*, to chisel at the borders that compose our political identities. I conclude the book by showing how Deleuzian political theory

contributes to illuminating a problem that has confounded State-centric Western political theory: how to combat the Al-Qaeda war machine.

*Deleuze's Political Vision*, in sum, argues that Deleuze satisfies Sheldon Wolin's criterion of an epic political theorist, namely, that he fashions a political cosmos out of political chaos (Wolin 2004). The book presents the first book-length political theory reading of *A Thousand Plateaus* and shows how Deleuze's conceptual lenses help us perceive political forces that have heretofore eluded Western political science and theory.

## **Background**

I became interested in Deleuze while researching Kant's legacy in contemporary political theory for my first book manuscript (Tampio, In progress). Part of my current research agenda considers how a Deleuzian framework of decentered pluralism helps build coalitions between Anglo-American political liberals and Muslim political theorists such as Tariq Ramadan (Tampio, Revise and resubmit a and b). I have also written an article on Deleuze's concept of assemblages (Tampio 2009) as well as an encyclopedia entry (Tampio 2010 a) and a book review (Tampio 2010 b) that engage Deleuze's political theory. Though many humanities professors have done excellent work on Deleuze (e.g. Protevi 2001), and many political theorists have recently shown an interest in his work (e.g. Widder 2008), I am distinctly well placed to consider how Deleuze contributes to Western political philosophy/theory.

*Deleuze's Political Vision* argues that Deleuze is most profitably read as an immanent critic of the liberal-democratic tradition. Numerous Marxists have accused Deleuze of being an otherworldly political thinker (Hallward 2006, Badiou 2000) or an uncritical thinker who celebrates the deterritorializing effects of capitalism (Zizek 2004, Hardt and Negri 2000). There is also a growing literature on Deleuze's fascination with the occult and hermetic tradition (Delpech-Ramey 2011, Kerslake 2007). I align myself, however, with authors who see Deleuze as expanding the conceptual boundaries of liberal-democratic theory (Patton 2010, Connolly 2010, Lefebvre 2008). I contribute to this latter movement by expounding Deleuze's conceptual scheme in *A Thousand Plateaus* and bringing Deleuze into conversation with major figures in the history of political philosophy and contemporary political theory such as Hannah Arendt, William Connolly, John Stuart Mill, John Rawls, Leo Strauss, Charles Taylor, and Alexis de Tocqueville.

### **Contributions**

*Deleuze's Political Vision* makes three critical contributions to the literature.

First, the book presents a case that *A Thousand Plateaus* deserves to enter the canon of contemporary political theory. Michel Foucault once remarked that one day this century will be known as Deleuzian. In a late interview, Deleuze stated that *A Thousand Plateaus* was the book of which he was most proud. There are several books dedicated to Deleuze's earlier major work of political theory, *Anti-Oedipus* (Buchanan 2008, Holland 1999). There are also valuable studies devoted to understanding and/or applying an aspect of A

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*Thousand Plateaus* (Buchanan 2006, Fuglsang 2006, Genosko 2001). However, *Deleuze's Political Vision* will offer the first systematic political theory interpretation of *A Thousand Plateaus*.

Second, my book will translate Deleuze's terminology into the language of mainstream political theory. Paul Patton (2000) states that Deleuze eschews key concepts of Western political theory (e.g., liberty, freedom, or equality) for his own idiosyncratic vocabulary of abstract machines, concrete assemblages, bodies without organs, and other terms of art. My book opens by considering how to enter Deleuze's political theory by assembling clues from Deleuze's methodological reflections. In a word, I argue that researching the etymology of Deleuze's concepts reveals images that help us visualize Deleuze's arguments. By reading *A Thousand Plateaus* as a screenplay, so to speak, we can enter Deleuze's political vision—a thesis that I flesh out in the heart of the manuscript.

Third, the book argues that a Deleuzian paradigm helps us make sense of political phenomena that elude traditional terms of political science. Western epistemology, Deleuze contends (1987), privileges solids to liquids, constants to flows. Yet we live in a world in which countless things—ideas, images, viruses, terrorists, immigrants, religions, products, oil, weapons, and so forth—circulate around the globe faster than ever before. Deleuze provides a conceptual framework to understand and navigate this world of porous and fluctuating boundaries. To put this thesis to the test, I consider how a Deleuzian political theory can shed light on leaderless terrorist networks (Sageman 2008) as well as complicate theories that reduce suicide terrorism to rational strategies (Pape 2010) or religious beliefs (Juergensmeyer 2003). Deleuze's focus on the micropolitical—or the virtual,

imperceptible forces that shape actual, perceptible events—enables us to perceive the imminent formation of war machines as well as strategies to contain their destructive energies. Deleuzian insights also provide clues on how to reign in our own war machines, such as military contractors, as well as how to forge protean alliances with Muslim political reformers such as Tariq Ramadan and Abdullahi An-Na'im.

## **Conclusion**

*Deleuze's Political Vision* brings the tools of political theory to interpret and defend Deleuze's political metaphysics in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The book targets Deleuze scholars as well as political theorists and political scientists curious about new ways to grasp the contemporary political condition. I am honored and excited by the invitation to submit my manuscript to the *Modernity and Political Thought* series published by Rowman & Littlefield, which has a history of presenting influential works by prominent political theorists, including George Kateb (1995) of Princeton University, Thomas L. Dumm (2002) of Amherst College, and Seyla Benhabib (2003) of Yale University. If awarded, a Spring 2012 Faculty Fellowship would come at a critical moment in my career, enabling me to send the final book manuscript to *Modernity and Political Thought* editor Mort Schoolman the ensuing summer.

# **EXAMPLE**

**5**



### Abstract

I am applying for an Academic Year 2011-12 Faculty Fellowship to support the preparation of my book manuscript, *English Vows: Marriage and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture*. Exploring literary responses to the role marriage legislation played in shaping nineteenth-century Englishness, *English Vows* demonstrates how the legal regulation and literary conceptualizations of marriage helped constitute the English nation in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Specifically, *English Vows* queries the myth (both nationalistic and scholarly) that Protestant preference for marriage over celibacy and a uniquely English celebration of romantic wedlock, or “companionate marriage,” set England apart from other nations and gave English women special freedoms. Indeed, my analyses of several canonical texts written in the post-Waterloo period, and of the legal and cultural debates on most important reforms of the marriage law, show that both the literary canon and legal history problematize, and often fail to uphold, that myth. The literary texts in particular reconfigure the married woman’s position within the nation in ways that complicate any sense of a uniquely English marriage tradition and foreground the fluidity of Englishness itself. *English Vows* thus also sheds new light on complex forms of nineteenth-century English nationalism—and cosmopolitanism—as revealed in both literary renditions of and cultural debates on marriage.

*English Vows* will consist of five chapters and a coda. Each of the parts (with the exception of the first, theoretical chapter) deals with debates (public and parliamentary) on a specific marriage legislation and specific foundations of English national life (the protection of landed property, the parliamentary monarchy, Protestant faith, and the civilizing mission) as explored by Jane Austen, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot. Three of these chapters are

currently in draft form. One of them has been published in its preliminary version as an article in the *Journal of British Studies*, and an essay based on a second is under consideration. The remaining two chapters, for which extensive research has been done, are partially drafted. The research for the coda still remains to be conducted.

Therefore, my goals for the Faculty Fellowship period are to

- complete *English Vows* for submission to the following potential publishers: Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, and Cornell University Press.
- prepare for publication an article that will serve as a bridge from *English Vows* to my next book project: a study of the role that the institution of marriage played in the formation of British *imperial* identity—a part of the cosmopolitanism puzzle that is not foregrounded in the current project.<sup>1</sup>

With the support of a Faculty Fellowship, both manuscripts will be submitted by the end of the Fellowship year.

### **Background**

*English Vows* is a revision and expansion of my dissertation. I have not only published or prepared for publication portions of this manuscript but have also presented papers on nineteenth-century literature, marriage law, and English national identity at numerous conferences. I have additionally explored these scholarly interests through my teaching: namely, in my graduate courses “Victorian Cosmopolitanisms” and “Marriage and Nation in Nineteenth-Century British Literature”.

In the field of nineteenth-century British studies, critical works that bring together literary renditions of marriage and nation are limited mostly to the national tale, a genre popular in the 1810s and ‘20s and in the Celtic peripheries, whose cross-regional marital pairings symbolize the political

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<sup>1</sup> This “bridge” essay will deal with the British national dis/union as explored in Wilkie Collins’s novelistic commentary on the conflicts between English, Scottish, and Irish marriage laws (i.e., within the internal empire) and would be expanded into the initial chapter of my second book, a “sequel” to *English Vows*.

union within Britain (Ferris, Trumpener). The remainder of that century—which saw an unprecedented number of marriage law reforms—has been largely neglected, as has any examination of the nature of marriage in England, where the institution was regulated by laws different from the laws in other parts of the empire. Particularly surprising about these critical studies is their failure to analyze the legal record; after all, marriage as a national institution is primarily defined by national laws. On the other hand, studies that focus on literary engagements with the legal reforms of marriage do not view those reforms as symptomatic of changes in national identity and often focus on a single piece of legislation (or even a single author), thus limiting our understanding of larger cultural trends (Ablow, Corbett, Hager, Marcus, Walker—to name only the critics whose books on nineteenth-century marriage have been published in the last five years). Other, older and ahistorical works explore marriage in terms of the novelistic form or desire (Boone, Miller). When literary theorists do reflect, however briefly, on marriage as a site of national self-definition in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they tend to second the arguments of the historians with whom the myth of the uniquely English companionate marriage originated (Stone, Trumbach).

In its examination of the intersection of nineteenth-century English nationalism and cosmopolitanism, *English Vows* aligns its readings with those of present-day scholars who see cosmopolitanism not as opposed to nationalism but as capable of occupying multiple, even antagonistic positions (Appiah, Anderson, Chea and Robbins, Walkowitz). With its emphasis on married women, the book particularly contributes to the growing interest in nineteenth-century gendered cosmopolitanisms (Craciun, Mellor). It also joins the increasing number of critical works that examine England's (or Britain's) attitudes toward other Western nations—attitudes that, until recently, were largely obscured (Buzard, Goodlad).

### Contribution

*English Vows* will contribute to literary studies and historical scholarship by being the first in-depth examination of the mutually constitutive relationship between English identity and English marriage as explored by literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century—the period traditionally seen as an age of nationalism, and one in which the English passed or attempted to pass more reforms of the marriage law than ever before. By also being the first study to engage these reforms as a whole—from the passage of England’s first marriage statute in 1753 to the legalization of marriage with a deceased wife’s sister in 1907—*English Vows* reveals that, as their nation grew into the largest global power, the English reevaluated their status in the world and within Britain itself, questioning just how Protestant, progressive, or liberal their marriage laws really were—expressing a skepticism that has gone unnoticed. Most importantly, the book demonstrates that these legal crises of national self-definition revolved around the married woman’s position.

It is through this focus on women—specifically wives—that *English Vows* will also make significant contributions in the fields of gender studies and nationalism and cosmopolitanism studies. Gender theorists have successfully argued that nationalisms rest on a gender divide, with women simultaneously marking a nation’s borders and serving as its reproductive core (Lynch, McClintock, Yuval-Davis). Scholars of nationalism have been engaged in the perennial debate as to whether England has ever experienced nationalism (Newman, Kumar, Young). *English Vows* furthers these debates by highlighting that the gendering of England took place in marriage: entitled to almost the same rights as the man outside marriage, the woman became a woman—that is, different from the man—only in marriage, where her legal disappearance (through the absorption of her legal identity by her husband) established the gender divide. Conservative lawmakers’ opposition to the reforms of the marriage law—and, consequently, their insistence on maintaining the gender divide it established—corresponded to their desire to establish a uniquely English marriage tradition, which was, indeed, a form of nationalism: an attempt to create a nation symbolically where, perhaps, there

was none. Yet, *English Vows* argues, any imposition of a “fixed” or “centered” Englishness by means of the marriage law amounted to privileging of what was perceived as a genuinely English component of the legal system in order to marginalize the non-English (e.g., Catholic) elements present within that same eclectically developed system.

*English Vows* reveals that the canonical works it examines respond to the marriage law debates by embracing the fluidity of Englishness that these non-English elements provided. This embrace further challenges the common perception that the works’ authors held favorable attitudes toward the nation. Their heroines’ choice of suitors whom marriage laws mark as non-English dismantles the gender divide, suggesting the possibility (however flawed) of a more cosmopolitan union within marriage and within an England reimagined through the wife’s altered status. *English Vows* thus offers not only a revision of critical assumptions about English marital tradition and identity but also new, surprising readings of major nineteenth-century authors.

### **Conclusion**

*English Vows* makes a major contribution to the current debates about literary constructions of English national identity and woman’s place in the nation. The relevance of my work has been recognized both within Fordham’s research community and within a wider community of scholars. At Fordham, my discussions—both formal (at the 2008 Women Studies’ roundtable) and informal—of this widely interdisciplinary project has led to invitations that I join the University’s Literary Studies and Women Studies programs. The work I have presented at conferences and in print has drawn attention from the editors of *Victorian Studies*, the leading journal in the field, who have asked me to review two monographs on marriage. An Academic Year 2011-12 Faculty Fellowship will enable me to capitalize on this enthusiasm by facilitating the timely completion and publication of *English Vows*—to the benefit of my scholarly growth and Fordham’s profile as a pre-eminent research institution in the Humanities.