

## LAURA K. FIELD, PH.D.

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**DISSERTATION:** “Writing in Blood: Compassion, Character, and Popular Rhetoric in Rousseau and Nietzsche.” Defended December 2011.

Committee: Thomas Pangle (chair), Devin Stauffer, Lorraine Pangle, Jonathan Marks, and Gary Jacobsohn.

*Dissertation Abstract: My dissertation explores the normative role of emotional rhetoric and the social passions (with an emphasis on compassion) in politics through a consideration of the divergent perspectives of Rousseau and Nietzsche. These two invite comparison not only because of the wide range of ideas they represent, but also because each employed rare rhetorical skill to effect extensive cultural change. To analyze this dynamic relationship between theory and practice, I focus on how each philosopher sought to transform the sentimental basis of social and political life. I argue that Rousseau, through his intentional use of sentimental rhetoric, inspired cultural romanticism and the equity of the political left, and that Nietzsche, through his extreme attack on ordinary compassion, and his invocation of tragic pity and the “pathos of distance,” hoped to prevent nihilism from taking root in the modern spirit by bringing about an age of renewed cultural depth and robust individualism. The study is unique in its investigation of the autobiographical rhetoric of the two philosophers. I argue that both Rousseau and Nietzsche wrote autobiographies that exemplify their respective philosophical teachings on the sentiments, which is to say that in the autobiographical works they employ personal rhetoric aimed at illuminating and reinforcing these teachings. In both cases, I suggest, a fundamental consistency exists between their theoretical teachings and their self-presentations, such that their autobiographical works should be understood as integrated parts of their greater philosophic projects.*

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Rhodes College Department of Political Science, August 2011 – Present.  
Jack Miller - Veritas Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow  
Teaching in political science and the interdisciplinary humanities (“Search”) program.

### EDUCATION

University of Texas at Austin. Department of Government, 2005 – 2011  
Ph.D. in Political Theory  
Second Field: Public Law (Constitutional Theory and Comparative Public Law)

University of Alberta. Department of Political Science, 2003-2005  
M.A. in Political Theory, Supervisor: Leon Craig  
Thesis: “A Commentary on Plato’s *Greater Hippias* (or “On the Beautiful”)

University of Alberta. Department of Political Science, 1999-2003  
B.A. (Honors), Major in Political Science

Université de Montréal. Faculty of Arts, 2001-2002. Formal Exchange

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Rousseau and Nietzsche, rhetoric, philosophic autobiography, political psychology and agency, the philosophic foundations (ancient and modern) of the social sciences, the politics of nature and the environment, the jurisprudence of cultural protections, the politics of expertise.

## PUBLICATIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

“The Philosopher Doth Protest Too Much: Rousseauian Enlightenment and the Rhetoric of Despair,” forthcoming at *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 75, Issue 3, Spring 2013.

“Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*: Educating our Political Hopes,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 74, Issue 3, July 2012.

## MANUSCRIPTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2012 “Why Nietzsche Loves his Destiny,” presentation at the Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2011 “Rhetoric of the Faith,” presentation at the Northeastern Political Science Association conference.
- 2011 “Nietzsche’s Rhetorical Self,” presentation at the Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2010 “Rousseau's Autobiographical Mask,” presentation at the Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2009 “Nietzsche’s Complex Critique of Pity,” poster presentation, American Political Science Association conference.
- 2009 "Judging Modernity's Cultural Icons: Nietzsche on Rousseau," presentation, Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2009 "On the Uses and Abuses of Compassion in Rousseau," presentation, Southern Political Science Association conference.
- 2008 “Xenophon as Novelist: The Limitations of Cyrus and New Possibilities for Political Philosophy,” presentation, Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2007 "Hobbes' Rhetorical Legacy: 'Scientism' and Political Philosophy," presentation, Midwest Political Science Association conference.
- 2005 MA Thesis: “A Commentary on Plato’s *Greater Hippias* (or “On the Beautiful”), Department of Political Science, University of Alberta.

## **AWARDS AND GRANTS**

- 2010 University Continuing Fellowship. Awarded by the University of Texas at Austin Office of Graduate Studies.
- 2010 Jack Miller Center Summer Fellow. Jack Miller Center for Teaching America's Founding Principles and History, and the Program on Constitutionalism and Democracy at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, June 2010.
- 2009 Thomas Jefferson Fellowship. Awarded by the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Study of Core Texts and Ideas, University of Texas at Austin.
- 2009 Malcolm Macdonald Dissertation Fellowship. Awarded by the University of Texas Department of Government.
- 2009 Professional Development Award. Awarded by the University of Texas at Austin Office of Graduate Studies.
- 2008 Donors Trust Foundation award, University of Texas at Austin.
- 2006 David Bruton, Jr. Fellowship. Awarded by the University of Texas at Austin.
- 2006 SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship. Awarded by the Social Sciences Humanities Research Council of Canada. Valid through 2008.
- 2005 Alberta Heritage Scholarship. Awarded by the Alberta Heritage Fund.
- 2003 Walter H. Johns Graduate Fellowship. Awarded by the University of Alberta Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- 2003 Canada Graduate Scholarship - Master's. Awarded by the Social Sciences Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).
- 2003 Duncan Alexander MacGibbon Medal in Political Science. Awarded by the University of Alberta to the graduating student in Honors Political Science with the highest academic standing.
- 2001 Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Endowment Fund for Study in a Second Official Language Award. Awarded by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.
- 2001 Canada Exchange Scholars (CanEx) Award. Awarded by the University of Alberta.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### *Courses*

- 2012 "Humanities 101: The Search for Values in the Light of Western History and Religion." Part of the core humanities sequence at Rhodes College, this seminar involves a survey of Ancient Greek Literature as well as of the Hebrew Bible.
- 2012 "Humanities 102: The Search for Values in the Light of Western History and Religion." Part of the core humanities sequence at Rhodes College, this seminar involves a survey of Roman, Christian, and Islamic thought from Lucretius through Dante. Writing Intensive.
- 2011 "Political Questions." A discussion-based course designed to introduce students to contemporary issues in political science (examples include climate change, free speech, social movements, the Islamic headdress, and campaign finance), as well as to longstanding theoretical questions in politics (What is just? Who should rule? How does political change happen?). Rhodes College, writing intensive.
- 2010 "Ancient Philosophy and Literature." A discussion and lecture-based undergraduate course offered at the University of Texas at Austin, designed to introduce students to the competing literary and philosophic traditions of Greek antiquity. Writing intensive. Texts: *Iliad*, *Oresteia*, *Clouds*, and *Republic*.

### *Teaching Assistantships*

- 2010 Classical Quest for Justice. Taught by Devin Stauffer, UT Austin.
- 2009 Theoretical Foundations of Modern Politics. Taught by Russell Muirhead, UT Austin.
- 2009 American Politics. Taught by David Edwards, UT Austin.
- 2008 American Politics. Taught by David Prindle, UT Austin.
- 2007 Constitutional Structure of Powers. Taught by Gary Jacobsohn, UT Austin.
- 2007 Structure of Individual Liberties. Taught by Gary Jacobsohn, UT Austin.
- 2006 Founding Principles of America. Taught by Dana Stauffer, UT Austin.
- 2006 Founding Principles of America. Taught by Dana Stauffer, UT Austin.
- 2006 Constitutional Development. Taught by Gary Keith, UT Austin.
- 2005 Introduction to Canadian Politics. University of Alberta.
- 2004 Introduction to Political Theory. Taught by Heidi Studer, University of Alberta.

## **LANGUAGES**

- French      Near native reading ability, high fluency. Recent experience in academic translation as a research assistant. French immersion study, one year exchange program undertaken in French at the Université de Montréal
- German      Intermediate reading ability, fluency. Three years study at the University level, one intensive summer course at the Goethe Institute in Buenos Aires.
- Greek      Intermediate reading ability. Completed the intensive summer Greek program at UT Austin, and have continued to partake in small reading groups.
- Spanish      High reading ability, intermediate fluency. Spent several months studying Spanish in Xalapa, Veracruz, and completed Intermediate Spanish at the University of Alberta.

## **VOLUNTEER WORK AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT**

- 2000-2005      Interpretive Centre, Jasper National Park, Alberta (summers only)
- 1999-2000      Peer Advisor and Volunteer, University of Alberta International Centre.
- 1999      Full Time Volunteer Child Care Worker, Sheela Bal Bhavan, Jaipur, India.
- 1996-1998      Various Positions, UNICEF Canada.

## **PERSONAL INTERESTS**

Skiing, hiking, yoga, travel, music

## **REFERENCES**

Available upon request