

MELISSA MOSCHELLA

University of Notre Dame
McGrath Institute for Church Life
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CURRENT ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Professor of the Practice, Philosophy, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame (Jul 2024-present)

- Courses: Business and the Common Good; Old Money, New Money (freshman seminar exploring classical and contemporary perspectives on the nature of human flourishing in relation to business/wealth); Moreau first-year seminar

McDonald Distinguished Fellow in the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Emory University School of Law (2019-present)

Adjunct Professor of Medical Ethics, Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, Dept. of Medicine (January 2019-present)

PREVIOUS ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Associate Professor, School of Philosophy, The Catholic University of America (Aug 2020-2024)
 - Undergraduate Courses: Biomedical Ethics, Contemporary Moral Issues, Philosophy of Natural Right and Natural Law, Junior Seminar (Plato's *Republic*), The Classical Mind, The Modern Mind, Human Action and Government
 - Graduate Courses: The Beginning and End of Human Life: Ethical and Metaphysical Controversies, Contemporary Natural Law Theory
- Assistant Professor, School of Philosophy, The Catholic University of America (2013-2020)
- Assistant Professor of Medical Ethics (Dept. of Medicine), Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (2017-2018; co-taught a medical ethics elective and founded/directed the Center for Biomedical Ethics in the Dept. of Medicine)
- Visiting Assistant Professor, Princeton University, Dept. of Politics (Spring 2018)
- Myser Fellow, Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture (2014-2015)
- Thomas W. Smith Post-Doctoral Research Associate, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University (2012-2013)
- Lecturer, Manhattanville College, Dept. of Philosophy (Fall 2012)

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Ph.D. in Politics, June 2012

- Fields: Political Theory, Public Law, Early Modern Political Philosophy
- Dissertation: *Parental Rights in Education*

Università della Santa Croce, Rome, Italy; Licentiate *summa cum laude* in Philosophy, 2007

- Thesis: "Personal Identity, Embodiment and Social Structures: Towards a Revised Aristotelian Approach"

Harvard University, A.B. *magna cum laude* in Social Studies, 2002

- Honors Thesis: “Rousseau and the Despotism of Unbridled Freedom”

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Moral, political and legal philosophy, especially applied ethics (including biomedical ethics) and natural law theory

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Philosophy of the human person, history of philosophy

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Ethics, Politics and Natural Law: Principles for Human Flourishing (University of Notre Dame Press, 2025)

To Whom Do Children Belong? Parental Rights, Civic Education and Children’s Autonomy (Cambridge University Press, 2016)

Educação Domiciliar como um Direito Natural Negativo (with Carlos Xavier as first author) (Classical Press: Brazil, 2021).

Catholic Social Teaching: From Economics and the Environment to Life and Marriage (co-edited with Paul Dudzinski); forthcoming from Catholic University of America Press

EDITED JOURNAL ISSUES

“Pierce v. Society of Sisters: 100 Years Later,” Symposium Issue of *Notre Dame Law Review* (forthcoming, 2025)

“Brain Death and Human Organismal Integration: A Symposium on the Definition of Death,” special issue of *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 41, 3 (June 2016)

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

“We Should Refine the Organismal Definition of Death, Not Abandon It,” *American Journal of Bioethics*, Aug. 18, 2025, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15265161.2025.2529937>

“‘He Who Spends Too Much is a Robber’: Natural Law’s Stringent Norms Regarding Ownership and Use of Property,” *The New Ressourcement* (forthcoming).

“Do Parental Rights Extend Beyond the Schoolhouse Door? Correcting Misinterpretations of *Pierce* in Light of History and Tradition,” *Notre Dame Law Review* (forthcoming, 2025).

“Carson v. Makin, Free Exercise, and the Selective Funding of State-Run Schools,” *Journal of Religion, Culture and Democracy* (Spring 2025), <https://doi.org/10.54669/001c.129427>

“Strict Scrutiny as the Appropriate Standard of Review in Parental Rights Cases: A Historical Argument,” *Texas Review of Law and Politics* 28 (2024): 771-785.

“Protecting the Dignity of the Child: Understanding the Rationale for the Inseparability Norm in the Context of the Embryo Adoption Debate,” in *Human Embryo Adoption*, Second Edition, National Catholic Bioethics Center (2025).

June 16, 2025

“‘New’ Natural Law Theory,” in *Natural Law: Five Views*, ed. Andrew Walker and Ryan Anderson (Zondervan Academic, Spring 2025)

“True Humility: An Antidote to Polarization,” forthcoming from Georgetown University Press, in a collected volume on virtues from Christian, Jewish and Muslim perspectives

[“Contextualizing, Clarifying and Defending the Doctrine of Double Effect,”](#) *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy* (Fall 2023).

[“Natural Law, Parental Rights, and the Defense of “Liberal” Limits on Government:](#) An Analysis of the Mortara Case and its Contemporary Parallels,” *Notre Dame Law Review* 98, 3 (Spring 2023): 1559-1594.

[“Defending the Fundamental Rights of Parents: A Response to Recent Attacks,”](#) *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy* 37, 2 (Spring 2023): 397-443.

“Sexual Ethics, Practical Reason and the Magisterium: A Reply to Irene Alexander,” *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 22, 1 (Spring 2022): 99-127.

“Trapped in the Wrong Body: Transgender Identity Claims, Body-Self Dualism and the False Promise of Gender Reassignment Therapy,” *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 46 (2021): 782-804.

“Dignitas Personae, HEK 293, and the COVID Vaccines,” *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 21 (2021): 107-121.

“A Natural Law Account of Biomedical Ethics,” in *Explorations in Ethics*, ed. David Kaspar (Ebook, Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), pgs. 269-286.

"Ordering Parental Rights, Children's Autonomy and Civic Education: A Philosophical Foundation for Public Policy," Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society (PRRUCS), University of Pennsylvania, Vol. 1 (Spring 2020): 9-15.

“The Human Organism is Not a Conductorless Orchestra: A Defense of Brain Death as True Biological Death,” *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 40, 5 (Oct 2019) 437-453

“Sexual Ethics, Human Nature and the ‘New’ and ‘Old’ Natural Law Theories,” *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 19, 2 (Summer 2019) 251-278

“Sexual Identity, Gender and Human Fulfillment: Analyzing the ‘Middle Way’ between Liberal and Traditionalist Approaches,” *Christian Bioethics* 25, 2 (Aug 2019) 192-215

[“Brain Death and Organ Donation: A Crisis of Public Trust,”](#) *Christian Bioethics* 24, 2 (June 2018) 133–150

[“Gestation Does Not Necessarily Imply Parenthood: Implications for the Morality of Embryo Adoption and Embryo Rescue,”](#) *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 92, 1 (Winter 2018) 21-48

[“Complexity of Defining Death: Death is Not the Absence of All Biological Life,”](#) *Journal of Medical Ethics* 43, 11 (Nov 2017) 754-755

[“Beyond Equal Liberty: Religion as a Distinct Human Good and the Implications for Religious Freedom,”](#) *Journal of Law and Religion* 32, 1 (March 2017) 123-146

"Human Nature and Human Dignity: Voegelin and Contemporary Natural Law in Dialogue," *Concepts of Nature: Ancient and Modern*, ed. R.J. Snell and Steven F. McGuire (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2016), p.63-70

["The Wrongness of Third-Party Assisted Reproduction: A Natural Law Account,"](#) *Christian Bioethics* 22, 2 (2016) 104-121

["Integrated But Not Whole: Applying an Ontological Account of Human Organismal Unity to the Brain Death Debate,"](#) *Bioethics* 30, 8 (Oct. 2016) 550-556

["Deconstructing the Brain Disconnection-Brain Destruction Analogy and Clarifying the Rationale for the Neurological Criterion of Death,"](#) *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 41, 3 (June 2016) 279-299

"Brain Death and Human Organismal Integration: A Symposium on the Definition of Death," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* (2016) 41 (3) 229-236 (Introduction to special issue)

"Symposium on the Definition of Death: Summary Statement," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* (2016) 41 (3) 351-361 (co-authored with Maureen Condic)

["Rethinking the Moral Permissibility of Gamete Donation,"](#) *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 35, 6 (2014) 421-440

["Natural Law, Parental Rights and Education Policy,"](#) *American Journal of Jurisprudence*, 59, 2 (Dec 2014) 197-227

["Natural Law"](#) (co-authored with Robert George), *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Second Edition, 2015

["Social Contract Theory and Moral Agency: Understanding the Roots of an Uncaring Society,"](#) in *Caring Professions and Globalization: Philosophical and Practical Perspectives*, ed. Ana Marta Gonzalez and Craig Iffland, Palgrave MacMillan, 2014, p. 87-116

["Personal Identity and Gender: A Revised Aristotelian Approach,"](#) in *Gender Identities in a Globalized World*, ed. Ana Marta Gonzalez and Victor Seidler, Humanity Books, 2008, p. 75-108

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of Daniel Groll, *Conceiving People; The Review of Metaphysics* 76, 1 (Sept. 2022): 141-143.

Review of Kate Greasley and Christopher Kaczor, *Abortion Rights: For and Against; Journal of Moral Philosophy*

Review of Samuel Condic and Maureen Condic, *Human Embryos, Human Beings: A Scientific and Philosophical Approach; The Review of Metaphysics* 73, 2 (2019) 361-362

Review of Rivka Weinberg, *The Risk of a Lifetime: How, When and Why Procreation May Be Permissible; The Public Discourse*, July 29, 2016

Review of Natalia Petrzela, *Classroom Wars* (Oxford University Press, 2015); *American Political Thought* (Summer 2016) 534-537

Review of Tom Koch, *Thieves of Virtue: When Bioethics Stole Medicine* (MIT Press, 2012); *Review of Politics* 75 (2013)

SELECTED NON-ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

["Nonreligious Parents Have Rights Too,"](#) *The Wall Street Journal*, Apr. 22, 2025

"Human Flourishing, Morality and God," *Church Life Journal*, Mar. 20, 2025,
<https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/human-flourishing-morality-and-god/>

"Natural Law and Liberalism," *The Public Discourse*, Mar. 19, 2025,
<https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2025/03/97424/>

Amicus Brief in support of petitioners in *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, filed Mar. 10, 2025,
https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/24/24-297/351616/20250310144137151_24-297%20Amicus%20Brief.pdf

Amicus Brief supporting appellant in *Ibanez v. Albemarle County School Board*, filed Oct. 27, 2022,
<https://adfflegal.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/Ibanez-v-Albemarle-County-School-Board-2022-10-27-Moschella-Amicus-Brief.pdf>

["What is Human Dignity,"](#) Expert Guide for *Teaching Human Dignity* series, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, August 2022.

["Natural Law, the Common Good, and Limited Government: Friends, Not Foes,"](#) *The Public Discourse*, Aug. 10, 2022

["The Ethics of Abortion: Clarifying Misconceptions,"](#) *The Public Discourse*, July 4, 2022.

["What a Pandemic Reveals about the Rule of Law,"](#) *Renovatio* 6, 1 (Spring 2022).

["Critical Race Theory, Public Schools and Parental Rights,"](#) *The Public Discourse*, March 22, 2022

["School Choice: Protecting Parental Rights, Resolving Curriculum Wars, and Reducing Inequality,"](#) *The Public Discourse*, Mar. 23, 2022

["The Science and Ethics of Vaccines"](#) (with Daniel Kuebler), Expert Guide for *Teaching Human Dignity* series, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, 2021

"Moral Repugnance, Abortion and COVID Vaccines: A Dialogue" (with Richard Stith), *The Public Discourse*, Mar. 29, 2021, <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2021/03/75030/>

"The COVID Vaccines are Not 'Morally Compromised,'" *The Public Discourse*, Jan. 4, 2021.
<https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2021/01/73511/>

"Parental Rights: A Foundational Account," The Heritage Foundation, Dec. 9, 2020,
<https://www.heritage.org/education/report/parental-rights-foundational-account>

"The COVID Vaccine and the Pro-Life Movement," *First Things*, Dec. 7, 2020.
<https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2020/12/the-covid-vaccine-and-the-pro-life-movement>

"Reproductive Technologies and Human Dignity," *The Public Discourse*, Nov. 17, 2019,
<https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2019/11/57961/>

"Old Natural Law Theory, Marriage and Sexual Ethics," *The Public Discourse*, Sept. 24, 2019,
<https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2019/09/55970/>

"Sexual Ethics, Human Nature and New Natural Law Theory," *The Public Discourse*, Sept. 23, 2019,
<https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2019/09/55959/>

“Embryology and Science Denial” (with Patrick Lee), *The Public Discourse*, Nov. 8, 2017, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2017/11/20449/>

“Charlie Gard Case Threatens All Parents,” *USA Today*, July 16, 2017, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2017/07/16/charlie-gard-parents-right-decide-melissa-moschella-column/478860001/> (Print version published on July 17, 2017.)

“Parental and Governmental Authority in Medical Decisions: The Tragic Case of Charlie Gard,” *The Public Discourse*, July 10, 2017, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2017/07/19726/>

“A Bipartisan Case for School Choice,” *The Public Discourse*, May 1, 2017, <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2017/05/19144/>

“The Rights of Children: Biology Matters,” *The Public Discourse*, February 20, 2014, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/02/11620/>

“To Whom do Children Belong?” *The Public Discourse*, April 16, 2013, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2013/04/9880/>

“The HHS Mandate and Judicial Theocracy,” *The Public Discourse*, January 3, 2013, <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2013/01/7403/>

“Religious Freedom’s Legal and Moral Basis,” *The Public Discourse*, July 24, 2012, <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2012/07/5899/>

“Taking (Conscience) Rights Seriously,” *The Public Discourse*, June 11, 2012, <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2012/06/5603>

“Does Sex Ed Undermine Parental Rights?” (co-authored with Robert George), *The New York Times*, October 19, 2011; <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/19/opinion/does-sex-ed-undermine-parental-rights.html>

SELECTED LECTURES/CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION/PRESENTATIONS

“Human Dignity,” invited presentation for Teaching Human Dignity workshop, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, July 2024.

“Human Dignity at the End of Life,” invited presentation for Teaching Human Dignity workshop, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, July 2024.

“Gender Identity Theory: A Philosophical Examination,” invited presentation for Teaching Human Dignity workshop, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, July 2024.

[The Child is Not the Mere Creature of the State: Pierce v. Society of Sisters at 100](#), invited panel speaker, American Enterprise Institute, June 4, 2025.

[The State of Parental Rights, 100 Years after Pierce v. Society of Sisters](#), The Cato Institute, May 29, 2025.

Ethics, Politics, and Natural Law: Principles for Human Flourishing, Book launch event, Blackfriars Oxford and the Canterbury Institute, Oxford University, May 20, 2025.

"Parental Rights from the Common Law Tradition to *Skirmetti* and *Mahmoud*: Foundations and Applications," invited panel speaker, Law and Education Conference, The Ashbrook Center, Ashland University, April 5, 2025.

["The Female Body and the Culture of Life,"](#) invited plenary presentation for *True Genius: The Mission of Women in Church and Culture*, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre, Mar. 27, 2025.

How Does Natural Law Relate to Human Nature? A Debate Between Robert Koons and Melissa Moschella, Pusey House, Oxford University, Jan. 29, 2025,
<https://www.puseyhouse.org.uk/lectures/'how-does-natural-law-relate-to-human-nature%3F'-a-debate-between-robert-koons-and-melissa-moschella.->

"The New Natural Law Theory and the Moral Philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre: A Rapprochement," Invited paper presentation for conference on The Natural Law Theory and Analytic Thomism: Sources and Future Directions, co-sponsored by the James Madison Program at Princeton University, and the Programme for the Foundations of Law and Constitutional Government at Oxford University, Princeton, Nov. 15-16, 2024.

"Religious Liberty, Parental Rights, and the Transgender Movement," Federalist Society National Lawyer's Convention, Invited Panelist, Nov. 14, 2024,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DrAvxJeA8Q>

Herbert W. Vaughan Memorial Lecture: "How Broad and Strong are Parental Rights Under Pierce?" Harvard Law School, Nov. 13, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9OI0Dh5z4L4>

"Natural Law and the Derivation of Moral Norms Regarding the Ownership and Use of Property," Invited paper presentation for Natural Law and Moral Norms Conference, Mundelein Seminary, Nov. 7-9, 2024.

Religious Liberty in a Culture of Self-Invention, USSCB Committee for Religious Liberty Symposium, Invited Panelist, Sept. 9, 2024.

"Strict Scrutiny as the Appropriate Standard of Review in Parental Rights Cases: A Historical Argument," invited presentation for *Texas Review of Law and Politics* symposium, University of Texas at Austin, Mar. 1, 2024.

"A Philosophical Defense of the Equal Dignity of the Unborn," invited presentation for Cardinal O'Connor Conference, Georgetown University, January 20, 2024.

"The Pre-Political Foundations of Parental Rights," invited presentation for symposium on "Parental Rights and Family Relations in a Post-Modern Age," John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Sept. 22-23, 2023.

"Human Dignity," invited presentation for Teaching Human Dignity workshop, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, June 26, 2023.

"Vaccines and Cell Lines of Questionable Origin," invited presentation for Society of Catholic Scientists conference, Los Alamos, TX, April 29, 2023

"The Rule of Law and Why it Matters," invited panelist for panel on the Purpose of Law, CUA Law School, April 13, 2023

"Conscience and Religious Freedom in Healthcare," invited lecture, Converging Roads medical ethics conference, St. John Paul II Foundation, Charlotte, NC., Mar. 25, 2023

June 16, 2025

"The Social Dimension of Human Flourishing," invited speaker for Romanell Center Bioethics Workshop, University of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, Mar. 4, 2023.

"Los Derechos del Ser Humano en su Desarrollo Temprano" ("The Rights of Human Beings in the Early Stages of Life"), invited on-line presentation for III Seminario Internacional de Bioética, organized by Academia de Líderes Católicos, Feb. 18, 2023 (presentation given in Spanish to an international audience of over 300 participants).

"Defending the Fundamental Rights of Parents: A Response to Recent Attacks," invited presentation for *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy* Symposium; Feb. 10, 2023.

"Natural Law, Parental Rights, and the Defense of "Liberal" Limits on Government: An Analysis of the *Mortara Case* and its Contemporary Parallels," invited presentation for *Notre Dame Law Review* Symposium on Liberalism, Christianity and Constitutionalism, Nov. 11, 2022.

"The New Natural Law Account of Ethics and Politics: Clarifying Misconceptions," invited presentation for Political Theory Colloquium, University of Notre Dame, Nov. 10, 2022.

Invited panelist for Deliberative Citizenship Initiative forum on: "Parents and Schools: Whose Responsibility Is It to Teach Our Children about Race, Gender, and Sexuality?" Davidson College, Sept. 29, 2022.

"La Dignidad Humana y el Bien Común" (Human Dignity and the Common Good), invited presentation for VII Diplomado Internacional de Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, Academia de Líderes Católicos (held at The Catholic University of America), July 23, 2022 (presentation given in Spanish).

"Human Dignity," invited presentation for Teaching Human Dignity workshop, McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame, June 20, 2022.

"To Whom Do Children Belong?" invited presentation for Blackstone Legal Fellowship, June 6, 2022.

"Contextualizing, Clarifying and Defending the Doctrine of Double Effect," invited keynote presentation, Romanell Center Bioethics Workshop, University of Buffalo, April 30, 2022.

"Freedom to Serve our Families," invited lecture for Freedom to Serve, interfaith symposium on religious freedom co-sponsored by the diocese of Des Moines and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Drake University, April 19, 2022.

"Conscience and Doctors' Professional Obligations: Integrated, not Opposed," invited presentation, Center for Clinical Medical Ethics, Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (Zoom), April 18, 2022.

"Gender Dysphoria and Transgender Identity: A Philosophical Perspective," invited presentation, Georgetown University Sexuality and Medicine Workshop, Apr. 9, 2022.

"Solidarity and Subsidiarity in Medical Ethics," invited lecture, Converging Roads conference, St. John Paul II Foundation, St. Mary's University of Minnesota, Apr. 2, 2022.

"Sexual Expressionism, Reproductive Technologies and the Objectification of Women and Children," University of Notre Dame, DeNicola Center for Ethics and Culture Fall Conference, Nov. 12, 2022.

"The Ethics of Abortion: Misconceptions and Challenges," Webinar presentation, University of Notre Dame, McGrath Institute of Church Life, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Oct. 19. 2021.

“What Does it Mean to be Human?” webinar panelist, University of Notre Dame, McGrath Institute for Church Life, Sept. 29, 2021.

An Unsafe Space: A Symposium on Contemporary Feminism, Episode II: Abortion and Bodily Integrity, invited panelist, Jul. 24, 2021.

“To Whom Do Children Belong?” Invited presentation for Blackstone Legal Fellowship, June 7, 2021.

“True Humility: An Antidote to Polarization” Invited presentation at: “What Happened to Virtue, the Common Good, and Pluralism? Teachings from Judaism, Christianity and Islam,” University of Chicago, May 19-21, 2021, Sponsored by the Religious Freedom Institute and Martin Mary Center for the Public Understanding of Religion at the University of Chicago Divinity School

“The COVID Vaccine: Good Science and Science for the Human Good,” Mar. 13, 2021, Invited Panelist, University of Notre Dame, McGrath Institute for Church Life,
<https://mcgrath.nd.edu/conferences/academic-pastoral/science-and-religion-institute-days/upcoming-events/the-covid-vaccine-good-science-and-science-for-the-human-good/>

“Protecting Parental Rights and Children’s Well-Being,” May 17, 2021, Panel presentation for United Nations International Day of Families, organized by C-Fam and Family Watch International (online).

“The COVID Vaccine: Science, Life and the Common Good,” Invited Panelist, Institute for Human Ecology, Jan. 14, 2021

“To Whom Do Children Belong?” Invited presentation for Blackstone Legal Fellowship, June 8 2020

“The Common Good,” Invited presentation for New Natural Law Consultation, Princeton University, Jan. 5-7, 2020

McDonald Distinguished Fellows Law and Religion Workshop, Invited Participant, Emory University Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Oct. 18-19, 2019

“Revisiting Roe v. Wade: A Debate in Honor of Constitution Day,” Invited speaker (debating Kathryn Kolbert, lawyer who argued *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*), Colgate University, Sept. 19, 2019

“[Trapped in the Wrong Body? Transgender Identity Claims, Body-Self Dualism, and the False Promise of Gender Reassignment Therapy](#),” Invited Lecture, St. Vincent College, Center for Political and Economic Thought, April 6, 2016

“Is Brain Death Really Death?” Invited lecture, The Catholic University of America, School of Philosophy Fall Lecture Series, November 16, 2018

“To Whom do Children Belong? Parental Rights, Religious Community, Civic Education and Child Autonomy,” Invited lecture followed by panel discussion, University of Pennsylvania, Program for Research on Religion & Urban Civil Society, October 25, 2018

“Aristotelian Metaphysics and Brain Death: Can Ancient Metaphysics Justify Modern Medical Practice?” Panel Organizer and Speaker, American Society for Bioethics and Humanities Annual Meeting, Oct. 20, 2018

“Reproductive Technologies and Human Dignity,” Yale University, Invited speaker for Vita et Veritas Conference, Sept. 29, 2018

June 16, 2025

“Why Religion Deserves Special Legal Protection,” Invited seminar leader, Religion and Public Life Seminar sponsored by the Baylor in Washington Program, July 12, 2018

“Reproductive Technologies and Human Dignity,” Harvard Law School, Invited presentation for international seminar on “New Challenges for Law: Human Dignity, Transhumanism and New Technologies,” sponsored by Real Colegio Complutense at Harvard University, June 22, 2018

“To Whom Do Children Belong? A Defense of Parental Rights,” United Nations, Invited speaker for conference on “The Impact of Good Parenting on Children and Society: The Many Benefits of Nurturing Children’s Integrity in the Home,” sponsored by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN and the Universal Peace Federation International, June 1, 2018.

“Making Men Moral: Public Morality, Liberty and Law,” Invited Panelist, Princeton University, James Madison Program Annual Conference, May 19, 2018.

“Are Humans Merely Sophisticated Algorithms?” Columbia University, Invited panelist for event sponsored by the *Columbia Science Review*, April 3, 2018

“Will Science Remain Human?” Invited discussant for Social Trends Institute Meeting, Campus Biomedico, Rome, Italy, March 4-6, 2018.

“Natural Law and Basic Human Goods,” Invited presentation for panel on the new *Cambridge Companion to Natural Law Jurisprudence*, James Madison Program for American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University, Dec. 8, 2017

“Third Party Assisted Reproduction: Does Donor Conception Violate Children’s Rights?” Columbia University Medical Center, Invited speaker for Program in Women and Children’s Bioethics Seminar Series, sponsored by the Departments of Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dec. 7, 2017.

“The Human Organism is Not a Conductorless Orchestra: A Defense of Brain Death as True Biological Death,” Invited presentation at conference on “Brain Death: New Questions for Philosophy and Theology,” hosted by Pellegrino Center for Clinical Bioethics, Georgetown University Medical Center, Dec. 1, 2017

“Is Brain Death Really Death?” Invited lecture, Baylor University Honors College, Nov. 10, 2017

“Brain Death, Organ Donation, and the Dead Donor Rule: Contemporary Controversies,” Invited lecture, Trent Center for Bioethics, Duke University and School of Medicine, Nov. 7, 2017

“Brain Death, Organ Donation, and the Dead Donor Rule,” invited lecture, NYU, Bellevue General Internal Medicine Conference, Oct. 12, 2017

“Parental Rights and the Well-Being of Women and Children,” Invited Presentation at United Nations, Side-event for Commission on the Status of Women, Mar. 21, 2016.

“Living as a Christian Family in a Culture of Unbelief: The Importance of Parental Rights,” Invited Lecture, Archbishop’s Lecture Series, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia, Feb. 11, 2016.

“Donor Conception and the Right of Children to be Loved by their Biological Parents,” Invited Speaker, St. John’s University, Speculative Ethics Forum, Dec. 5, 2015.

"Human Ecology and the Family: The Conditions for Authentic Human Development," Invited Speaker, *Laudato Si'* and the Protection of Our Common Home: Faith and Science in Dialogue, Conference co-sponsored by the USCCB and The Catholic University of America, Oct. 26, 2015.

"Is Mandatory Autonomy Education in the Best Interests of Children?" American Catholic Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, Oct. 10, 2015.

"Marriage and the Law," Invited Speaker, Franciscan University, Sept. 18, 2015.

"What's Wrong with Reproductive Technologies?" Invited Plenary Speaker, University Faculty for Life Conference, June 2015.

["What's Wrong with Reproductive Technologies?"](#) Invited Lecture, Brigham Young University, March 20, 2015.

["Derechos de los Padres-Derechos de los Hijos,"](#) Invited Lecture, Universidad CEU San Pablo (Madrid), Instituto de Estudios de la Familia, September 25, 2014.

"Deconstruction the Brain Disconnection-Brain Destruction Analogy and Clarifying the Rationale for the Neurological Criterion of Death," Symposium on the Definition of Death, The Catholic University of America, June 3, 2014.

"Beyond Equal Liberty: Religion as a Distinct Human Good and the Implications for Religious Freedom," Invited Speaker, Conference on the Scholarship of John Finnis, James Madison Program, Princeton University, March 27, 2014

"Body-Soul Unity and the Ethics of Artificial Reproductive Technologies: Why Children Have a Right to be Loved by their Genetic Parents," Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture Fall Conference, November 2013

"Defending the Conscience Rights of Parents in Moral and Religious Education," Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture Fall Conference, November 2011

"Parents' Rights and Children's Autonomy: Friends or Foes?" James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions Seminar, Princeton University, September 2011

"The Biological Basis of Parental Rights in Education," James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions Seminar, Princeton University, May 2011

Invited Discussant, Social Trends Experts Meeting on "Being Human in a Consumer Society," Barcelona, April 2011 (interdisciplinary meeting of approximately 25 select scholars)

Invited Discussant, Social Trends Experts Meeting on "Care and Professions in a Globalized World," Barcelona, November 2009

"Personal Identity and Gender," Social Trends Institute Experts Meeting on "Gender Identities in a Globalized World," Barcelona, October 2006

HONORS/AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

McDonald Distinguished Fellow in the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Emory University School of Law (2019-present)

Myser Fellowship, University of Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture, 2014-2015

Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University, 2012-2013

University Center for Human Values Graduate Prize Fellowship, Princeton University, 2011-2012

James Madison Program Graduate Fellow, Princeton University, 2011-2012

University Center for Human Values Merit Prize, Princeton University, 2007-2008

Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for *Continental Political Thought*, Derek Bok Center, Harvard University, 2002

Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard University, 2002

ACADEMIC SERVICE

University of Notre Dame

Executive Committee, McGrath Institute for Church Life (2024-present)

The Catholic University of America

Faculty Extended Orientation, Co-leader (2023-2024)

Editorial Board, Catholic University of America Press (2023-2024)

Ecclesiastical Schools Representative to the Faculty Grievance Committee (2023-2024)

Committee on Faculty Workload Apportionment, Faculty Senate (Spring 2023 – 2024)

University Taskforce on Faculty Workload Apportionment (Spring-Summer 2022)

Chair, Senior Comprehensive Examination Committee, School of Philosophy (2020-2024)

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, School of Philosophy (2016-2017; 2021-2022; 2023-2024)

Academic Dishonesty Committee, School of Philosophy (2019-2022)

Committee on Failing Grades, School of Philosophy (2019-2022)

Library Committee, School of Philosophy (2019-2020)

Website Committee, School of Philosophy (2018-2020)

Graduate Comprehensive Exam Committee, School of Philosophy (2015-2017)

Placement Committee, School of Philosophy (2013-2017)

Faculty Advisor for The Anscombe Society (2014-2017)

Frequent collaboration with Office of Public Affairs in responding to media requests

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE

Associate Editor, *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* (Jan 2020-present)

Editorial Advisory Board, *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*

Editorial Advisory Board, *Christian Bioethics*

Editorial Board, *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*

American Catholic Philosophical Association, Executive Committee (Nov 2025-Nov 2028)

Program Committee, American Catholic Philosophical Association 2023 Meeting

University Faculty for Life, Board Member (2016-2017)

The Institute for Human Ecology (fellow)

The James Madison Society

Referee for: *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, *Bioethics*, *Review of Politics*, *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Journal of Law and Religion*, *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*, *Christian Bioethics*, *The Linacre Quarterly*, *The Thomist*, *Contemporary Political Theory*, *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, *The Catholic University of America Press*