

# Political Science and International Relations



## Welcome Back, and welcome to our new students.

This is a much harder welcome back note to write than usual. Since our last newsletter in May, the COVID pandemic has receded in New York, but surged in much of the rest of the country, rendering your “return” to campus much less celebratory, if it is happening at all. In addition, the country has been rocked by the sequential murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, which then inspired rightful outrage at the recurring level of state sanctioned violence committed against Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets to demand equal treatment under the law for all peoples, and to demand fundamental reforms to policing and our criminal justice system. All of this, in the midst of what is one of the most divisive and consequential presidential election seasons in American history. On one level, I want to go on the record, like our national organization, the American Political Science Association (APSA), to state that we collectively condemn, in the strongest terms, the systemic racism that contributed to these deaths. But I also concur with those who suggest we need to do more to act like #blacklivesmatter, both here at school and out there in the real world. Fewer statements of solidarity and more action is what we really need.

The APSA statement, signed by APSA President Paula D. McClain, the second ever woman of color to hold that position in its 117 year existence, notes that political scientists have “long examined the link between race, power, governance, social injustice and oppression.” But it also makes clear that we have a responsibility as a discipline, and at New Paltz, as a Department of scholar-teachers, to (re) examine how our scholarship, programs, curriculum and teaching practices may be upholding rather than helping to eradicate these systems and structures of oppression. Professor Pampinella reflects more about how race informs US foreign policy, and its consequences, in our regular “The Professor Is In” column.

As Chair, I am committed to ensuring that our department take on that necessary work, beginning with a departmental assessment of our curriculum, and our syllabi, and a year-long conversation about the ways we can enhance our teaching about the racist origins of many political institutions in the United States and around the world. As an under-funded public university, our financial resources make it impossible to hire new faculty and limit our ability to build new programs. Nevertheless, I have the full support of my departmental colleagues in making the study of racial, economic, and environmental justice a teaching priority for the department this year and in years to come. And I would like to invite students to participate in this process by forming an advisory group that would meet with me, monthly to discuss concerns and aspirations going forward. I’d like include some of our alumni of color to engage as well. Students interested in participating in such an advisory group can email me, with a statement of interest. If there is overwhelming interest, perhaps an election process. I am open to suggestions.

While much of the semester will be socially distanced and remote, I remain certain much good work can and will be done, in this and other areas, and I do look forward to starting my own class in person, recognizing I may have to eventually pivot to online. I hope to see some of you at our fall events, even if only virtually. For a start, I recommend our departmental Constitution Day event (details inside) which asks if our founding institutions are “up to the task” of defending democracy – real democracy – going forward. Please feel free to contact me, virtually, at [dowlevk@newpaltz.edu](mailto:dowlevk@newpaltz.edu) or at (845) 257-3558.

**Kathleen Dowley, Chair, PSIR Department**

## **IMPORTANT FALL DATES:**

**August 24<sup>th</sup>: First Day of Classes**

**August 24-30<sup>th</sup>: Add/Drop Courses**

**August 31st-September 6<sup>th</sup>:  
Late Registration/Course Drop**

**September 7<sup>th</sup>: Labor Day-Classes in session**

**September 7<sup>th</sup>-October 30<sup>th</sup>:  
Course Withdrawal Period**

**October 9<sup>th</sup>: Mid-Point of Fall Semester  
AND Last Day to Register to Vote!**

**October 12<sup>th</sup>: Columbus Day-Classes in session**

**October 23: Internal Deadline for Albany Semester/Internship Applications**

**Oct 27<sup>th</sup>: Last Date to Request Mail in Ballot in NYState (must be received by)**

**October 30<sup>th</sup>: Last Day for Course Withdrawal**

**November 2<sup>nd</sup>: Black Solidarity Day-Classes in session**

**November 3<sup>rd</sup>: ELECTION DAY**

**November 6<sup>th</sup>: Last day to S/U**

**December 8<sup>th</sup>: End of Fall Semester**

**DON'T FORGET TO WEAR YOUR MASK IN CAMPUS BUILDINGS AND CLASSROOMS!**

## **SAVE THE DATE:**

**Professor Nancy Kassop to Deliver the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Dennis O'Keefe Memorial Lecture on Thursday, September 24 at 7 pm!**



### **“Looking Forward, Looking Back,”**

Times of national upheaval are often followed by efforts at wide-scale institutional and political reform. The nation is at one of those moments that call for a fundamental assessment of how our governmental and political systems operate. Proposals are already starting to percolate. History suggests that we approach such efforts with both hope and caution. What can we expect, as we look ahead?

The Dennis O'Keefe Lecture is sponsored by the Friends of the Sojourner Truth Library. Since 2007, the Friends have honored library staff member Dennis O'Keefe with an annual fall lecture, always open to the public, that celebrates Dennis's intellectual curiosity, range of interests, and public spirit. Questions and requests for accommodations can be directed to Thomas Olsen, chair of the Friends of the Library Steering Committee, at [olsent@newpaltz.edu](mailto:olsent@newpaltz.edu)

Webex Meeting link:

<https://newpaltz.webex.com/newpaltz/j.php?MTID=m51df2ceef999f3e72b64b89b6ef32144>

## The Professor Is In: Reflections on Race and US Foreign Policy by Assistant Professor Stephen Pampinella



Racial hierarchy is an ever present feature of US politics and the contemporary world. For many, this is puzzling due to the egalitarian principles that inform the founding of US governing institutions. Others might assume that the racial legacy of slavery was resolved by the passage of the Civil and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965. However, the repeated murder of Black Americans by police reminds us that white supremacy remains deeply entrenched in US society.

One aspect of US governance rarely analyzed in terms of race is foreign policy. Much like the field of international relations, US foreign policy scholars tend to ignore race altogether. Instead, they study how the United States establishes international institutions, promotes free trade and interdependence, or uses US military primacy to prevent wars through deterrence. Yet race sits uncomfortably in the background of the entirety of US foreign policy history. For example, most scholars argue that US foreign policy is inspired by an exceptionalist national identity, or the belief that the United States is different from other countries because of its liberal values. However, Reginald Horsman in *Race and Manifest Destiny* reminds us that early US intellectuals viewed its liberal exceptionalism in racial terms. In their eyes, the United States was unique because it was composed of Anglo-Saxons who were biologically predisposed toward living in freedom and expanding “civilized” government to the West. According to Matthew Karp in *This Vast Southern Empire*, southern politicians used this narrative to formulate a policy of land conquest that dispossessed indigenous peoples while enabling new land to be cultivated by enslaved Blacks.

Race also informs how the United States sought to remake the world in its own image. The United States became a regional hegemon in the Western Hemisphere after the Spanish-American war ended in 1898. When it annexed or occupied island polities across the Pacific and Caribbean, it adopted a US version of the “white man’s burden” by attempting to train supposedly “inferior peoples” into adopting the tenets of liberalism. US governance over these polities involved limited forms of self-rule, but US military or civilian governors held the most substantial authority and wielded it without local checks on their power. In this way, the early US-led liberal international order was shot through with imperial forms of hierarchy and was legitimated by a combination of liberal and white supremacist ideas. And herein lies the paradox of US foreign policy: white Americans want to spread liberalism around the world, but they often do so through illiberal means and on the basis of illiberal ideas.

The role of racism in sustaining military dominance abroad is most obvious when we consider the US occupations of Haiti (1915-1934) and the Dominican Republic (1916-1924). The United States assumed control of both countries intending to restore order after their governments collapsed and to ensure they could pay their international debts. When resistance to these occupations emerged, the United States withdrew from the Dominican Republic while Haiti languished under foreign rule for another 10 years. Why did the United States enact varying occupation policies? The existing literature cannot convincingly answer this question. However, an analysis of the social construction of racial identities provides the best account.

The occupation of the Dominican Republic was shorter than that of Haiti because white US policymakers viewed Dominicans as more capable of learning civilized conduct due to their European heritage. As for Black Haitians, policymakers viewed them as too primitive to realize self-determination. The white supremacist ideas which made possible variation in occupation policy can be identified in the public writings of US officials as well as official communications. One US Marine officer ranked Haitians lower than Dominicans because of the Haitian Revolution and their loss of an apparent opportunity to learn civilization from the French. Colonel George C. Thorpe wrote the following in 1920: “The outstanding result of the greater success of native arms against the foreigner in Haiti... is that Haiti, now known as the *Black Republic*, is far less civilized than Santo Domingo, known as the *Mulatto Republic*.” Hence, “the Dominican is far more amendable to educating processes than is the Haitian *caco*.”

His colleague in the Navy, Vice Admiral Harry Knapp, justified continuing the occupation of Haiti by comparing Haitians to formerly enslaved Black Americans in the US South. In a cable to the Secretary of the Navy written in 1921, Knapp described Haiti as a nation “composed of the slaves freed at the end of the civil war.” Since 1865, their progressive development “has been made in the constant presence of white people” while “[t]he people of Haiti have had no immediate contact with a superior civilization and intelligence...” These statements, among others that can be uncovered through historical research, indicate how white supremacist ideas about race shape US occupation policy in these two countries. The belief that the world was vertically stratified by race, suggested that Haitians could never develop a capacity for sovereign self-determination without the guiding hand of white Americans. In this way, US foreign policy reproduced racism at the international level the moment it became a world power and attempted to order the world on the basis of liberalism.

If we want the United States to engage the world on the basis of liberty and equality, then excising racism from our understanding of the US role in the world is essential. Only then can the United States decolonize its foreign policy and avoid reproducing imperial hierarchies, even when disguised in the language of liberalism.

## Is the Constitution up to the Task?

A Constitution Day Conversation With Students  
about the Future of American Democracy

September 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm via WebEx

Look out for login details

Led by:

Professor Nancy Kassop

Professor Dan Lipson

Professor Scott Minkoff



Sponsored by the Department of Political Science  
and International Relations

## Immigration & Asylum Law Internship Opportunity This Fall

**Position Type:** Internship

**Employer** Catholic Charities Community Services of New York

**Title** Immigration & Asylum Law Internship

**Description** Catholic Charities Community Services is seeking 1-2 bilingual (English/Spanish) interns for the Fall 2020. Given the pandemic, the intern would be permitted to work remotely.

The intern(s) will help to provide critical legal services to immigrant families and children living in the Lower Hudson Valley. The intern will work on a number of immigration cases, including Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, Asylum, Cancellation of Removal, and special visas for victims of crimes. The intern will be responsible for: meeting with clients/potential clients; Drafting applications to be submitted to immigration court and/or USCIS; and translating documents as needed. All tasks will be conducted under attorney supervision.

This internship is ideal for students interested in attending law school after graduation, as well as for students interested in immigration advocacy. No prior legal or immigration experience is required. Hours are flexible.

Applicants should e-mail the following to Sophia Genovese at [sophia.genovese@archny.org](mailto:sophia.genovese@archny.org):  
(1) cover letter, (2) resume, and (3) a writing sample.

## SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY RESEARCH and National Suffrage Centennial

SUNY Press has just published the book *Suffrage and Its Limits: The New York Story*, co-edited by SUNY New Paltz Professors **Kathleen Dowley** (Political Science), **Meg Devlin O'Sullivan** (History) and **Susan Ingalls Lewis** (Emeritus, History). The collection of essays was commissioned to reflect on the legacy and limits of suffrage for the women of New York State. It commemorates the state suffrage centennial of 2017, yet arrives in time to contribute to celebrations around the national centennial of 2020. This was a collaboration born of the 1917 Benjamin Center sponsored multidisciplinary conference hosted at New Paltz, which brought together scholars with a wide variety of research specialties to investigate the past, interrogate the present and imagine a better future.



The first three chapters explore the state suffrage movement, the 1917 victory, and what New York women did with the vote.

The next three chapters focus on the status of women and politics in New York today.

The final three chapters take a prospective and critical look at the limits of liberal feminism and its unfinished agenda for women's equality in New York.

Selections from the book will be used in our Women and Politics course this term, as it is being taught by Benjamin Center Director (and author of Chapter 5), KT Tobin.

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## UN Young Professional Program Opportunity:

2020 YPP APPLICATION GUIDANCE (Posted: 12 August 2020) [Read More](#) here for specific application guidelines

What is the UN Young Professionals Programme?

The Young Professionals Programme (YPP) is a recruitment initiative for talented, highly qualified professionals to start a career as an international civil servant with the United Nations Secretariat. It consists of an entrance examination and professional development programmes once successful candidates start their career with the UN.

Who can apply?

The YPP examination is held once a year and is open to nationals of countries participating in the annual recruitment exercise. The list of participating countries is published annually and varies from year to year (the US is eligible).

Basic application criteria:

- You must have the nationality of a participating country.
- You must hold at least a first-level university degree relevant for the exam subject you are applying for.
- You must be 32 or younger in the year of the examination.
- You must be fluent in either English or French
- <https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=nce>

# ALBANY STATE POLITICS SEMESTER PROGRAM: INTERN WITH THE NYSTATE ASSEMBLY OR SENATE

You must apply internally, via the department liaison to the programs,  
Professor Joel Lefkowitz, [lefkowij@newpaltz.edu](mailto:lefkowij@newpaltz.edu)

Internal deadline for completed applications is **October 23**.  
Stay tuned for more information (virtual information sessions TBA)

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- **Graduate students** or applicants who recently completed a graduate degree program.

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**CARL E. HEASTIE**  
SPEAKER



The Honorable  
**Deborah J. Glick**  
Intern Committee Chair

A [message](#) to all interested students from Deborah J. Glick, Chair

**National CCRS**  
(National College Credit Recommendation Service)  
Revalidation

One of last year's interns, NP Political Science student **Ariel Schwartz** had this to say about his experience in Spring 2020: "I had the honor and privilege of living in Albany and interning for the New York State Assembly... in the office of 27th District Assembly member Dan Rosenthal (D-Queens). Rosenthal, like many Assembly members, has no full-time staff in Albany, and the intern is expected to run the office alone. I was tasked with introducing and sponsoring Assembly bills on Rosenthal's behalf, taking meetings with lobbyists and advocates, often at a moment's notice, while also doing my own research, on issues relevant to the district and topics that I personally cared about....In early March, the doors to the Capitol were closed, as COVID-19 spread throughout New York. The internship effectively ended early, and for the next two months I focused on my second job as a disabled home care worker, and completed the internship's academic portion online. But from January to March, I truly believe that I got the most I possibly could out of the experience. My primary reasons for applying for the internship were to get a better understanding of the legislative process, and to figure out where I am headed after graduation. I am happy to report that I was able to do both. I am now certain that legislative work, policy development, and public advocacy will be important elements of my future career. Although it was too short, the internship satisfied my passion for public service, and taught me valuable lessons about government, politics, and myself. I can honestly say that it was a life-changing experience that I would recommend to any New Paltz student interested in hands-on legislative work."

## Fall 2020 Political Science Faculty Contact Information

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS WILL BE HELD REMOTELY FOR THE FALL 2020 SEMESTER  
PLEASE REACH OUT TO FACULTY VIA EMAIL IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT THEM:

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