Statement of Research Interests
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My research focuses on modern political philosophy with an emphasis on the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I also have an interest in American political thought and engage in research that makes a meaningful connection between theoretical and quantitative analyses of political phenomena. Finally, I engage in research concerning the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Within political philosophy, I am interested in investigating the relationship between, perfectibility, modern science, and happiness. I have published on these topics through two book chapters that examine the thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. My chapter in *Making Sense of Diseases and Disasters* (editor Lee Trepanier and publisher Rutledge) argues that Rousseau's natural goodness of man thesis applies to his understanding of disasters and diseases. I show that once a liberal society denatures a human that society must embrace modern science to produce the best situation possible. While this will not produce happiness, it will prevent further societal corruption while preserving life. These societies, however, cannot use reason to embrace modern science, as moderns like Locke argue. Instead, Rousseau proposes that moral arguments, which satisfy our whims through our *amour-propre*, are a surer route for a liberal society to embrace the findings of modern science. Recent work in psychology finds statistical evidence that supports this. I also examined Rousseau's ideas of perfectibility and human nature in *Beyond the Grave: Zombies and the Romero Legacy* (McFarland Books). In this chapter, I demonstrate how Rousseau and George Romero criticize liberalism's understanding of human nature. While both are critical, Rousseau's arguments rest on an understanding of human nature that is lacking in Romero's movies.

My pipeline continues this research agenda. "Emile's Three Tutors: Unraveling a Complex Character," argues the main character of *Emile* is the tutor instead of Emile. This interpretation is important because it reorients readers to the purpose of the *Emile*. Furthermore, this interpretation provides a meaningful understanding of the existence of *Emile et Sophie*. Additional works in my pipeline bring together my research agenda with American political thought. In "The Case for Limiting Free Speech, But Not in America," I examine Rousseau's argument against free speech, its incoherency as applied to U.S. national government, and how this limit can exist within local government. In "Aristotle, Locke, and Rousseau: Virtue and Civic Education," my co-authors and I argue a major reason that Americans have disagreements about civic education is because we have distinct ideas of civic education tracing back to separate political philosophers. I argue the civic education that accepts premises of modernity (e.g., rights before duties) but also wants citizens to accept and praise them for living a good life is an incoherent application of Rousseau's ideal of citizenship. In addition, I have new projects within American political thought that come from my Constitution Day lecture and a co-authored article on Paley.

I am also interested in making meaningful connections between theoretical and quantitative analyses of political phenomena. In a co-authored article under review, I develop hypotheses regarding authoritarian state repression from Machiavelli's thought. Almost all mentions of Machiavelli in the international human rights literature is limited. I return to his thought to show that variations in the source of power for an authoritarian regime influences the forms of repression that the regime can use. When the few provide the legitimacy to the government, it will repress in a different method than when the many are the source of legitimacy. My co-authors and I find quantitative support for 11 of 12 hypotheses. I am looking forward to continuing this type of research, as it demonstrates the importance of political theory to the discipline (Lee Trepanier 2019).

Finally, I am developing a research agenda concerning active learning within political science. My publication in the *Journal of Political Science Education* demonstrates how to teach agenda-setting through a simulation. This publication offers a meaningful way to engage in an abstract concept. Furthermore, I argue it increases news media literacy, which is necessary for a competent citizenry. Having published one simulation, I am now producing a pipeline in this research area. I have developed a simulation that brings to life John Zaller's (1992) R-A-S model of accessing political ideology. With IRB approval, I have collected quantitative data to examine if this simulation achieves its learning objectives. Furthermore, due to COVID-19, I have created numerous online active learning activities. I am exploring ways to turn these efforts into publications.