

## ROBINSON WOODWARD-BURNS

Department of Political Science  
Douglass Hall 306, Howard University  
2441 Sixth St. NW, Washington, DC 20059

202-806-9390  
robinson.woodward@howard.edu  
woodwardburns.com

### EMPLOYMENT

---

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Howard University, 2017-present

### EDUCATION

---

- Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, Political Science, 2017  
Committee: Rogers Smith (chair), Mark Graber, Anne Norton
- M.A. University of Pennsylvania, Political Science, 2014
- M.A. University of Maryland, Government and Politics, 2012
- B.A. College of William and Mary, *magna cum laude*, 2010  
Visiting Student, University of Oxford, Hertford College, 2009

### PUBLICATIONS

---

#### Books

*Hidden Laws: How State Constitutions Stabilize American Politics*, Yale University Press, 2021

#### Articles

- “The Lost Clause: Reinterpreting the Declaration’s Silence on the Atlantic Slave Trade.” *Polity*, expected 2022-2023
- “Judicial Power and the Shifting Purpose of Article V,” *Studies in American Political Development*, (2022), with David Bateman and Stephan Stohler
- “Federal Experimentation through State Constitutional Initiatives,” *Nebraska Law Review*, 101.1 (2022)
- “Rethinking Self-Reliance: Emerson on Mobbing, War, and Abolition.” *Journal of Politics* 83.1 (2021): 137-149, received 2018 McWilliams Award for Best Faculty Paper in Political Theory, NPSA
- “Counter-Majoritarian Constitutional Hardball.” *Maryland Law Review*, 81.1 (2021): 380-393
- “Solitude before Society: Emerson on Self-Reliance, Abolitionism, and Moral Suasion.” *Polity* 48.1 (2016): 29–54

#### In Progress

*Constitutional Hardball: How States Restrict the Right to Vote*, book manuscript in preparation, supported by 2022 Library of Congress Kluge Fellowship

#### Review Essays

- Review of *The Antebellum Origins of the Modern Constitution* by Simon Gilhooley, *Perspectives on Politics*, 19.4 (2021)
- “The State Constitutions’ Influence on American Political Development.” *Journal of Politics* 81.4 (2019): 85-89

“The Critical Minute: Recording and Remembering Early American Political Thought.” *Tulsa Law Review* 54.2 (2019): 367-73

#### Commentary

“Statehood, Partisanship, and the Constitution.” *The Constitutionalist*, May 14, 2021

“Congress must fix a fatal flaw in the D.C. statehood bill.” *Washington Post*, April 13, 2021

“Is the two-century battle for D.C. statehood finally near an end?” *Washington Post*, March 23, 2021

“The best way to secure the Capitol is to make D.C. a state.” *Washington Post*, January 13, 2021

“Republicans’ Supreme Court gambit may backfire. Here’s how.” *Washington Post*, Sept. 24, 2020

“The person who changes the Constitution.” *The Atlantic*, January 17, 2020

“D.C. statehood is back on the House’s agenda. Here’s why it faces an uphill battle.” *Washington Post*, September 19, 2019

“Trump wants to change the rules of citizenship. Here are three reasons his proposal might be unconstitutional.” *Washington Post*, October 31, 2018

“The Equal Rights Amendment is one state from ratification. Now what?” *Washington Post*, June 20, 2018

#### INVITED PRESENTATIONS

---

“Constitutional Hardball in Historical Perspective”

Constitution Day Address, University of Maryland Baltimore County, September 2022

“Civil and Voting Rights under America's State Constitutions”

Political Science and Public Administration Speaker Series, University of Toledo, March 2022

“Federalism and Decentralization of Conflict in American Political Development”

American Politics Workshop, University of Maryland, October 2021

“Federalism and American Constitutional Experimentation”

Constitution Day Address, Hartwick College, September 2021

“Understanding the Resilience of the American Constitution”

Colloquium Series, Kinder Institute, University of Missouri, January 2021

“Reflections on the Voting Rights Act”

Black History Month Lecture, Dept. of History and Government, Bowie State University, Feb. 2020

“State Constitutions, Railroads, and Prohibition: 1870-1920”

Discussion Group on Constitutionalism, University of Maryland School of Law, March 2019

“Emerson on Self-Reliance, Mobbing, and Constitutional Reform”

Political Theory Workshop, Department of Government, Georgetown University, September 2018

“For the Punishment of Crime: The Antebellum Northern Foundation of Convict Slavery”

Discussion Group on Constitutionalism, University of Maryland School of Law, February 2018

#### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

---

“Hardball Republic: Constitutional Hardball During Periods of Ordinary Politics”

Western Political Science Association Meeting, March 2022

Northeastern Political Science Association Meeting, November 2021

American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2021

- New England Political Science Association Meeting, April 2021  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 2021  
 International Forum on the Future of Constitutionalism Conference, January 2021
- “The Lost Clause: Reinterpreting the Declaration’s Silence on the Atlantic Slave Trade”  
 Association for Political Theory Meeting, November 2020  
 American Political Thought Workshop, Claremont College, July 2020
- “For the Punishment of Crime: The Antebellum Northern Foundation of Convict Leasing”  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, May 2020  
 Northeastern Political Science Association Meeting, November 2019
- “A Durable Shift in Article V Constitutional Politics” with David Bateman, Stephan Stolher  
 University of Toronto Political Development Workshop, October 2019  
 Law and Society Association Meeting, May 2019  
 State Politics and Policy Conference, May 2019
- “Laboratories of Democracy? State Antecedents to Federal Rights” with David Bateman, Stephan Stolher  
 American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2018  
 Law and Society Association Meeting, June 2018  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 2017
- “From the States to the Nation with the Nineteenth Amendment” with Dawn Teele  
 American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2017  
 Law and Society Association Meeting, June 2017  
 State Politics and Policy Conference, June 2017  
 Southern Political Science Association Meeting, January 2017
- “‘When All Uniters Are Isolated:’ Emerson’s Antislavery Constitutionalism”  
 Northeastern Political Science Association Meeting, November 2017  
 American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2017  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 2017  
 Racism, Immigration, and Citizenship Conference, Johns Hopkins University, March 2017  
 Graduate Political Theory Workshop, University of Pennsylvania, March 2017  
 Association for Political Theory Meeting, October 2016
- “‘The Union Indissoluble:’ Suffrage, Federalism, and Jacksonian Constitutional Stability”  
 Graduate Conference in Public Law, University of Texas, October 2016  
 American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2016  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, March 2016
- “‘Experience Must Be Our Only Guide:’ Constitutional Instability at the American Founding”  
 Penn Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism Graduate Workshop, September 2015  
 Graduate Conference in Public Law, University of Texas, September 2015
- “American Reconstitution: Federal and State Constitutional Development since 1776”  
 American Political Science Association Meeting, September 2015  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 2015  
 Graduate Political Science Conference, University of Pennsylvania, February 2015
- “Rousseau and Emerson on Solitude, Sympathy, and the American Indian”  
 Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, April 2014  
 Western Political Science Association Meeting, March 2014
- “Violence and Antislavery Moral Suasion in David Walker’s *Appeal*”  
 Graduate Political Science Conference, University of Pennsylvania, March 2013

“Emerson on Solitude and Conversation”

French-Italian Graduate Society Conference, University of Pennsylvania, March 2013

Graduate Political Theory Workshop, University of Pennsylvania, January 2013

## FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

---

### Fellowships

Kluge Fellowship, Library of Congress, 2022

Fellowship, Jack Miller Center, 2015, 2017

Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2012-2017

Graduate Assistantship, University of Maryland, 2010-2012

### Awards

McWilliams Award for Best Faculty Paper in Political Theory, NPSA, 2018

Tom Carsey Award, American Political Science Association, 2017

Prestage-Cook Award, Southern Political Science Association, 2017

Best Graduate Student Poster in Law and Courts, American Political Science Association, 2015

### Grants

Summer Faculty Research Grant, Howard University, 2018

Summer Institute Stipend, National Endowment for the Humanities, 2018

Faculty Startup Grant, Howard University, 2017-2019

Dean’s Travel Grant, School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania, 2014-2017

Research Grant, Department of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, 2013, 2016

Travel Grant, Graduate and Professional Student Association, University of Pennsylvania, 2014-2016

Travel Grant, American Political Science Association, 2015

Travel Grant, School of Arts and Sciences Grad. Student Gov., University of Pennsylvania, 2014

Jacob K. Goldhaber Grant, Graduate School, University of Maryland, 2012

Travel Grant, Department of Government and Politics, University of Maryland, 2012

### Invited Participant

Antislavery Constitutionalism Seminar, Institute for Constitutional History, Fall 2018

Institute on Slavery and the Constitution, National Endowment for the Humanities, Summer 2018

Institute for Civic Studies, Tufts University, Summer 2013

## TEACHING

---

### Graduate Courses

Nature and Uses of Political Theory, Spring 2018, 2022, Fall 2020

Seminar in American Politics, Fall 2022

Approaches to the Study of Public Law, Spring 2020, Fall 2021

American Political Thought, Spring 2021, Fall 2018, 2019

### Undergraduate Courses

Introduction to Political Theory, Spring 2019, 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2019, 2020

Constitutional Law: Government Powers, Summer 2020, 2021, Fall 2017, 2019

Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Liberties, Spring 2018, 2019, 2020, Summer 2020, 2021

District of Columbia Government and Politics, Fall 2021, 2022

Introduction to American Politics (U. of Pennsylvania), Summer 2016, 2017

Modern American Constitutional Law, teaching assistant, (U. of Pennsylvania) Spring 2015

Early American Constitutional Law, teaching assistant, (U. of Pennsylvania) Fall 2014

American Political Thought, teaching assistant, (U. of Pennsylvania) Spring 2014  
Modern Political Thought, teaching assistant, (U. of Pennsylvania) Fall 2013  
Introduction to Political Theory, teaching assistant, (U. of Maryland) Fall 2010, 2011, Spring 2012  
Introduction to American Politics, teaching assistant, (U. of Maryland) Spring 2011

## SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIP

---

### Disciplinary service

APSA American Political Thought Section Board, 2021-present  
Discussant/Chair: 2022 Western Political Science Association Meeting, 2021 Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, 2021 New England Political Science Association Meeting, 2020 American Historical Association Meeting, 2018 Northeastern Political Science Association Meeting, 2012 Midwest Political Science Association Meeting  
Reviewer: *American Political Science Review*, *Review of Politics*, *American Political Thought*, *Publius: The Journal of Federalism, Law and Policy*, *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists*, Peter Lang Publishers

### Howard University service

Graduate dissertation advisor (two students), committee member (four students)  
BA-JD Program Committee member, College of Arts and Sciences  
Pre-Law Advisor, Department of Political Science  
Faculty Advisor, Charles Hamilton Houston Pre-Law Society  
Faculty Advisor, College Democrats, 2020-2021  
Judiciary Committee member, Graduate School, 2022-2023  
Undergraduate Committee member, Department of Political Science, 2021-2022  
Faculty Search Committee member, Department of Political Science, 2021  
Awards Committee member, Department of Political Science, 2018-2019

### Other service

Board member, DC Vote, 2022-present  
Legal Taskforce member, Equal Rights Amendment Coalition, 2019-2020  
Consultant to Brennan Center on U.S. Supreme Court amicus curiae brief in *Evenwel v. Abbott*, 2016

### Member

American Political Science Association, Northeastern Political Science Association, Western Political Science Association, National Capital Area Political Science Association, Association for Political Theory