

Alex Zakaras

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Politics, September 2005
Princeton University
Fields: Political Theory, Public Law, Comparative Politics
- M.A. Politics, 2003
Princeton University
- B.A. Social Studies, 1998
Harvard University
Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

PUBLICATIONS: BOOKS

Freedom for All: What A Liberal Society Could Be. Yale University Press, 2025.

The Roots of American Individualism: Political Myth in the Age of Jackson. Princeton University Press, 2022.

Winner, Best Book in American Political Thought (2022), awarded by the American Political Thought section of the American Political Science Association

Individuality and Mass Democracy: Mill, Emerson, and the Burdens of Citizenship. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

J.S. Mill's Political Thought: A Bicentennial Retrospective, co-edited with Nadia Urbinati. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

PUBLICATIONS: ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

“Ralph Waldo Emerson,” forthcoming book chapter in the *Princeton History of American Political Thought*, Princeton University Press.

“Citizens’ Complicity in State Action: Exploring the Limits,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 39, no. 3 (2025): 230-242.

“Review Essay: The Crisis of Liberal Modernity and the Conservative Restoration,” *American Political Thought* 14, no. 3 (Summer 2025): 433-447.

“Nature, Religion, and the Market in Jacksonian Political Thought,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 39, no. 1 (Spring 2019): 123-133.

“Complicity and Coercion: Toward an Ethics of Political Participation,” *Oxford Studies in Political Philosophy* 4 (Jan. 2018): 192-218.

Winner of the 2016 Marc Sanders Prize for best essay in political philosophy.

“Democracy, Children, and the Environment: A Case for Commons Trusts,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 19, no. 2 (2016): 141-162.

“Individualism,” peer-reviewed encyclopedia chapter (6600 words), in the *Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, ed. Michael Gibbons, William Connolly, Diana Coole, Elizabeth Ellis. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.

“The Hanford Advisory Board: Participatory Democracy, Technology, and Representation,” co-authored with Alex Sager, *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 2014): 142-155.

“Expensive Speech, Illegitimate Power: Corporations and Free Expression,” *Polity* 45, no. 4, (October 2013): 525-553.

“A Liberal Pluralism: Isaiah Berlin and John Stuart Mill,” and “Reply to Galston and Crowder,” *Review of Politics* 75, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 69-96 and 111-114.

Also published in Chinese in *Isaiah Berlin and Contemporary China*, Liu Dong and Xu Xiangdong, eds., (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2015).

Translated into Portuguese and republished in the Brazilian journal *Intuitio* 11, no. 2, (December 2018): 161-193.

“Against Democratic Contractualism,” *Representation* 47, no. 1 (2011): 51-61.

“Individuality, Radical Politics, and the Metaphor of the Machine,” in *The Edinburgh Critical History of Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Alison Stone. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

“Lot and Democratic Representation: A Modest Proposal,” *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory* 17, no. 3 (September 2010): 455-471.

Translated into Chinese and republished in *Open Times*, the journal of the Guangzhou Academy of Social Sciences, December 2012: 38-55.

“John Stuart Mill, Individuality, and Participatory Democracy,” in *J.S. Mill’s Political Thought: A Bicentennial Retrospective*, co-edited with Nadia Urbinati. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

“Isaiah Berlin’s Cosmopolitan Ethics,” *Political Theory* 32, no. 4 (August 2004): 495-518.

“Affirmative Action at the Michigan Law School,” “Why Attack Iraq?” “A Tale of Two Task Forces,” “Making Marriage Gay,” “Federal Funding for Stem Cell Research,” and “The Space Shuttle *Columbia*,” in *Ethics and Politics: Cases and Comments*, Fourth Edition, Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, eds. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2006).

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS

Winner, Best Book in American Political Thought (for *The Roots of American Individualism*—see above), awarded in August 2023 by the American Political Thought section of the American Political Science Association.

Recipient of a year-long faculty fellowship from the UVM Humanities Center, AY 2019-2020.

Recipient of the 2016 Marc Sanders Prize for best essay in political philosophy (for “Complicity and Coercion: Toward an Ethics of Political Participation”—see above).

Recipient of a visiting research fellowship at the Institute of Sustainable Solutions (at Portland State University) for AY 2011-2012.

Recipient of an “Enduring Questions” grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (in the amount of \$15,000), for the period July 2009 to June 2011, for the preparation and teaching of an interdisciplinary course titled “Individualism and Its Dangers.”

Visiting Research Scholar at the Princeton University Center for Human Values, 2007-08.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Elliott A. Brown Green and Gold Professor of Law, Politics, and Political Behavior, University of Vermont (May 2026 – present)

Courses taught: Introduction to Political Theory, American Political Thought, Liberalism and Its Critics, Ethics and Public Policy, Democratic Theory, American Individualism, Global Justice.

Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Vermont (Sept. 2023 – present)

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Vermont (Sept. 2011 – Aug. 2023)

Visiting Fellow, Department of Political Science, Yale University (Oct. 2013 – Aug. 2014)

Visiting Scholar, Institute for Sustainable Solutions, Portland State University (Sept. 2011 – June 2012)

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Vermont (Sept. 2005 – Aug. 2011)

Visiting Research Scholar, University Center for Human Values, Princeton University, and Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Politics (Sept. 2007 – July 2008)

Course taught: Ethics and Public Policy (with Stephen Macedo)

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

“Equal Freedom: Reflections on the Moral Foundations of Liberalism,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the Political Studies Association, Glasgow, Scotland, March 2024.

“Equal Freedom,” invited talk delivered to the Yale political theory workshop in New Haven, CT, November 2nd, 2023.

“The Rise of Free Market Ideology: An American History,” invited talk delivered at the University of Vermont as part of the Histories of the Present lecture series, Burlington, April 2023.

“The Rise of Free Market Ideology: An American History,” invited talk delivered at Northwestern University, Evanston, April 2023.

“The Roots of American Individualism,” author-meets-critics panel (on my book) at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Montreal, September 2022.

“Individual Rights in Abolitionist Thought,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, held virtually via Zoom, May 2020.

“Freedom and the Market in the Conservative Mind: the Political Thought of the American Whig Party,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, San Diego, CA, April 2019.

“Freedom and the Market in the Conservative Mind: the Political Thought of the American Whig Party,” invited paper presented at the Abigail Adams Institute, Cambridge, MA, March 2019.

“Democracy and Personal Independence in Jacksonian Political Rhetoric,” paper presented at the annual conference of the Society for U.S. Intellectual History, Chicago, IL, November 2018.

“Frontier Evangelicals and Jacksonian Political Thought,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the New England Political Science Association, Portsmouth, NH, April 2018.

“Nature and the Market in Jacksonian Political Thought,” invited paper presented at Yale University as part of a conference titled “Andrew Jackson at 250: Race, Politics, and Culture in the Age of Jacksonian ‘Democracy,’” December 2017.

“Depoliticizing the Market: Nature and Providence in Early American Political Thought,” invited paper given at Columbia University as part of a conference titled “Docile Individuals? Privacy, Community, and the State,” October 2016.

“Class, Property, and the Fruits of Labor: Justice in Jacksonian Political Thought,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA, September 2016.

“Complicity and Coercion: Toward an Ethics of Political Participation,” paper presented to the Oxford Studies in Political Philosophy workshop, Barcelona, Spain, June 2016. Peer-reviewed.

“Virtue and Democracy in Jacksonian Political Thought,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, San Diego, CA, March 2016.

“Virtue and Democracy in Jacksonian Political Thought,” invited paper presented to the Georgetown Political Theory Workshop, Washington, D.C., November 2015.

“A Natural Order: Labor, Property, and Equal Rights,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, Las Vegas, NV, April 2015.

“Personal Independence in the Early Republic,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, Washington, D.C., August 2014.

“Republican Legacies in Jacksonian America: The Ideal of Personal Independence,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, Seattle, WA, April 2014.

“Republican Legacies in Jacksonian America: The Ideal of Personal Independence,” paper presented to the Yale Center for the Study of Representative Institutions, March 2014.

“Democracy, Future Generations, and Commons Trusts,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, Hollywood, CA, March 2013.

Guest on Wisconsin Public Radio’s *Kathleen Dunn Show* for an hour-long discussion of Thoreau’s essay “Civil Disobedience,” December 19th, 2012.

“The Hanford Advisory Board: A Case Study in Democracy, Technology, and Representation,” paper scheduled for presentation at the American Political Science Association Conference in New Orleans, LA, September 2012 (conference cancelled by hurricane).

Guest on National Public Radio’s *On Point*, hosted by Tom Ashbrook, for an hour-long discussion of Emerson’s “Self-Reliance” (the show was titled “Too Much Self-Reliance?”), January 4th, 2012.

“Complicity and the Ethics of Democratic Participation,” invited paper presented to the political theory colloquium at Washington University in St. Louis on Sept. 30th, 2011.

“Individualism and Social Order in American Political Thought,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, Seattle, WA, September 2011.

“A Liberal Pluralism: Isaiah Berlin and John Stuart Mill,” paper presented at the New England Political Science Association Conference, Hartford, CT, April 2011.

“A Liberal Pluralism: Isaiah Berlin and John Stuart Mill,” invited paper presented at the International Symposium on Isaiah Berlin and Contemporary China, Beijing, China, March 2011.

“Complicity and the Ethics of Participation,” paper presented to the University of Vermont moral philosophy colloquium, November 2010.

Author-meets-critics roundtable on my book, *Individuality and Mass Democracy*, at the New England Political Science Conference, Newport, RI, April 2010.

“Individuality, Radical Politics, and the Metaphor of the Machine,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Conference, San Francisco, CA, April 2010.

“Lot and Democratic Representation,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, Vancouver, BC, March 2009.

“Lot and Democratic Representation,” paper presented at conference titled “Beyond Elections: the Legitimacy of New Forms of Representation,” Princeton, December 2008.

“Expensive Speech, Illegitimate Power,” paper presented to the Princeton Political Philosophy Colloquium, February 2008.

“Citizenship, Rationality, and Complicity,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference, Las Vegas, NV, March 2007.

“Why Participate?” paper presented at the Northeastern Political Science Association Conference, Boston, Mass., November 2006.

“Publicity and Public Opinion in J.S. Mill’s Political Thought,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, Washington, D.C., September 2005.

“Varieties of Political Freedom,” talk delivered to politics and history panel at the Institute for Humane Studies annual conference, Arlington, Virginia, May 2004.

“J.S. Mill and the Active Mind,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association conference, Portland, Oregon, March 2004.

“Isaiah Berlin’s Cosmopolitan Ethics,” paper presented at the Southern Political Science Association conference, New Orleans, January 2004.

“Emerson and the Vulnerability of the Democratic Individual,” paper presented at American Political Science Association annual conference, Philadelphia, August 2003.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Secretary-Treasurer, American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy
(2011-2014)

LANGUAGES

French (native speaker)
German (reading knowledge)