

## Pagans and Christians in the City

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# SYMPOSIUM

## PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE CITY

### INTRODUCTION

VICTORIA HARRIS<sup>†</sup> & JOHN KOMONDORA<sup>††</sup>

On February 1, 2019, the staff of the *St. John's Law Review* and *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies* proudly held a symposium discussing Professor Steven D. Smith's *Pagans and Christians in the City: Culture Wars from the Tiber to the Potomac*.<sup>1</sup> This was the second symposium that the *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies* has brought to St. John's University School of Law's campus in Queens, New York in as many years. The *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies* has a rich tradition of publishing thoughtful and stimulating work on the intersection of law and religion. In keeping this new tradition, the editors and staff look forward to hosting future symposia to supplement the Journal's print work with thought-provoking debate among top scholars in the field.

The Journal was thrilled to host the following scholars for the 2019 symposium on *Pagans and Christians in the City*: Helen M. Alvaré,<sup>2</sup> Perry Dane,<sup>3</sup> Rev. Brian Dunkle, S.J.,<sup>4</sup> Bruce P. Frohnen,<sup>5</sup> Abner S. Greene,<sup>6</sup> Paul Horwitz,<sup>7</sup> Michael P.

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<sup>†</sup> J.D., 2019, St. John's University School of Law; Editor-in-Chief, *St. John's Law Review & Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*.

<sup>††</sup> J.D., 2019, St. John's University School of Law; Senior Articles Editor, *St. John's Law Review & Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*. Both Authors would like to thank our Managing Editor Sean Kelly for the time and effort put into editing the symposium reflections, as well as the staff of the *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies* for their help in executing a successful event.

<sup>1</sup> STEVEN D. SMITH, *PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE CITY: CULTURE WARS FROM THE TIBER TO THE POTOMAC* (2018).

<sup>2</sup> Professor of Law, Antonin Scalia School of Law at George Mason University (Arlington, VA).

<sup>3</sup> Professor of Law, Rutgers Law School (Camden, NJ).

<sup>4</sup> Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (Boston, MA).

<sup>5</sup> Professor of Law, Ohio Northern University Petit College of Law (Ada, OH).

<sup>6</sup> Leonard F. Manning Professor of Law, Fordham University School of Law (New York, NY).

<sup>7</sup> Gordon Rosen Professor of Law, University of Alabama School of Law (Tuscaloosa, AL). Professor Horwitz's symposium reflection will be published in Volume 58 of the *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, forthcoming spring 2020.

Moreland,<sup>8</sup> and Anna Su,<sup>9</sup> as well as the author of *Pagans and Christians*, Steven D. Smith.<sup>10</sup> The symposium panelists reflected a wide range of viewpoints, backgrounds, faiths, and areas of research. This diversity allowed for a rich dialogue about Smith's text, which traverses the ancient roots of paganism and Christianity to offer thoughts on the question: "Is the combination of intellectual pantheism and a this-world-focused civil religion enough to declare the rebirth of paganism as a faith unto itself, rather than just a cultural tendency within a still-Christian order?"<sup>11</sup> The *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies* was lucky to have faculty advisor Marc O. DeGirolami<sup>12</sup> and the Honorable Richard J. Sullivan<sup>13</sup> as panel moderators for this event. The editors and staff would like to extend their sincere thanks to the St. John's Law School faculty and staff who contributed to this symposium,<sup>14</sup> as well as to the panelists for contributing the following insightful reflections.

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<sup>9</sup> Warren Distinguished Professor of Law, Co-Executive Director, Institute for Law & Religion, Co-Executive Director, Institute for Law & Philosophy, University of San Diego School of Law (San Diego, CA).

<sup>10</sup> Assistant Professor, University of Toronto Faculty of Law (Toronto, ON). Professor Su was unfortunately unable to participate in the symposium discussion panels due to inclement weather in her home city of Toronto, but her valuable reflection is included in this print collection.

<sup>11</sup> Ross Douthat, *The Return of Paganism*, N.Y. TIMES (Dec. 12, 2018), <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/12/opinion/christianity-paganism-america.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Professor of Law, Associate Director, Center for Law and Religion, St. John's University School of Law (Queens, NY).

<sup>13</sup> United States Circuit Court Judge, Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Sullivan serves on the Executive Board of the Center for Law and Religion at St. John's University School of Law.

<sup>14</sup> Special thanks to Professors Marc DeGirolami and Mark Movsesian (Frederick A. Whitney Professor of Contract Law and Director, Center for Law and Religion, St. John's University School of Law) for their support and assistance in planning this event, as well as the Center for Law and Religion at St. John's for their co-sponsorship. This event would not have been possible without the Office of Special Events (Claire Pollicino, Maureen Mulligan, Jennifer Manfredi) and Office of Marketing and Communications (Christine Patrizzo, Trent Anderson, Lori Herz, John Inzetta) at St. John's University School of Law.