

CURRICULUM VITAE

Eric Nelson

Harvard University
Department of Government
1737 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA
02138

ACADEMIC POSITION

2014- Robert M. Beren Professor of Government
 Harvard University

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

2009-2014 Professor of Government
 Harvard University

2009 Frederick S. Danziger Associate Professor of Government
 Harvard University

2005-2009 Assistant Professor of Government
 Harvard University

2003-2007 Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows

2001-2003 Research Fellow, Trinity College, Cambridge

HIGHER EDUCATION

2002 Ph.D., Trinity College, Cambridge, England
 Faculty of History
 Thesis: The Greek Tradition in Early-Modern Republican Thought

2000 M.Phil., Trinity College, Cambridge, England
 Faculty of History
 Committee on Political Thought and Intellectual History
 Honors: Distinction
 Thesis: The Greek Tradition in English Republican Thought

1999 A.B., Harvard University

Honors: *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa (inducted as a junior)
Concentration: History

PUBLICATIONS

Books

The Theology of Liberalism: Political Philosophy and the Justice of God
(Harvard/Belknap, 2019); Chinese edition, forthcoming in 2025; Arabic edition
forthcoming in 2025.

The Royalist Revolution: Monarchy and the American Founding (Harvard/Belknap,
Hardcover 2014; Paper 2017; Chinese edition, 2019).

-Society of the Cincinnati History Prize (2015)

-a *Choice* outstanding academic title; “Top 25 Books for 2015” selection

-Finalist, George Washington Book Prize (2015)

*The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political
Thought* (Harvard/Belknap, Hardcover 2010; Paper 2011; French edition 2022; Chinese
edition forthcoming, 2025.

-Erwin Stein Preis, awarded by the Erwin-Stein-Stiftung, Germany (2015).

-Laura Shannon Prize in Contemporary European Studies, awarded by the
Nanovic Center for European Studies at the University of Notre Dame (2012).

-a *Choice* outstanding academic title of 2010.

The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought (Cambridge University Press, Hardcover
2004; Paper 2006).

(ed.) *Thomas Hobbes: Translations of Homer*, 2 vols., The Clarendon Edition of the
Works of Thomas Hobbes (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2008; Corrected edition, 2009).

Articles

“Reply.” Symposium on Eric Nelson, *The Theology of Liberalism* in *The Jerusalem of
Review of Legal Studies* 26 (2022).

“James Wilson and the Ancient Constitution” in *Georgetown Journal of Law and Public
Policy* 17 (2019).

“Representation and the Fall” in *Modern Intellectual History* 15 (2018).

“What kind of book is *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*?” in *The New England Quarterly* 91 (2018).

“*The Ideological Origins and the History of Political Thought*” in *Eighteenth Century Studies* 50 (2017).

“‘Barons’ Wars, under Other Names’: Feudalism, Royalism, and the American Founding” in *History of European Ideas* 42 (2016), Special Issue, *The Machiavellian Moment Turns Forty: Re-thinking J.G.A. Pocock’s Intellectual Legacy*.

“A Response to Professor Helfman’s Review of *The Royalist Revolution*” in *Harvard Law Review* 128 (2015).

“Hebraism and the Republican Turn of 1776: A Contemporary Account of the Debate over *Common Sense*” in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 70 (2013).

“Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-75” in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68 (2011).

-A reply to critics: “Taking Them Seriously: Patriots, Prerogative, and the English Seventeenth Century” in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68 (2011).

“From Primary Goods to Capabilities: Distributive Justice and the Problem of Neutrality” in *Political Theory* 36 (2008).

“‘Talmudical Commonwealths’ and the Rise of Republican Exclusivism” in *The Historical Journal* 50 (2007).

“Utopia through Italian Eyes: Thomas More and the Critics of Civic Humanism” in *Renaissance Quarterly* 59 (2006).

“Liberty: one concept too many?” in *Political Theory* 33 (2005).

“Greek Nonsense in More’s *Utopia*” in *The Historical Journal* 44 (2001).

-Reprinted in *The Norton Critical Edition of Utopia*, ed. George Logan (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011).

“‘True Liberty’: Isocrates and Milton’s *Areopagitica*” in *Milton Studies* 40 (2001).

Book Chapters

“Beyond the ‘Wretched Subterfuge’: Liberalism, Freedom, and Responsibility” in *Rethinking Liberty Before Liberalism*, ed. Hannah Dawson and Annalien De Dijn (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

“Publius on Monarchy” in *The Cambridge Companion to The Federalist*, ed. Jack Rakove and Colleen Sheehan (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

“Prerogative, Popular Sovereignty, and the American Founding” in *The History and Theory of Popular Sovereignty*, ed. Richard Bourke and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

“From Selden to Mendelssohn: Hebraism and Religious Freedom” in *Freedom and the Construction of Europe: New Perspectives on Philosophical, Religious, and Political Controversies*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

“Translation as Correction: Thomas Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s” in *Why Concepts Matter: Translating Political and Social Thought*, ed. Martin Burke and Melvin Richter, (Brill, 2012).

“Shakespeare and the Best State of a Commonwealth” in *Shakespeare and Early-Modern Political Thought*, ed. David Armitage, Conal Condren, Andrew Fitzmaurice (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

“The Problem of the Prince” in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

“Republican Visions” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, ed. John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig, and Anne Phillips (Oxford University Press, 2006).

Online Publication

“Flipping his Whigs: A response to Gordon S. Wood” (2016)

“Are We on the Verge of the Death Spiral that Produced the English Revolution of 1642-1649?”, *History News Network* (12/14/2014).

Book Reviews

“Politics and Anti-Politics.” Review of *In God’s Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible* by Michael Walzer. *The Jewish Review of Books* (Fall 2012).

“The Unlikely Key.” Review of *I have always loved the Holy Tongue: Isaac Casaubon, the Jews, and a Forgotten Chapter in Renaissance Scholarship* by Anthony Grafton and Joanna Weinberg. *The New Republic* (March 2011).

Other Publications

“Justice Sotomayor was right for the wrong reasons” in *The Economist* (July, 2025)

“Wagner and the Antisemitism of ‘The Ring’” in *Commentary* (February, 2022)

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2016	Visiting Fellow Commoner, Trinity College, Cambridge
2016	International Visiting Fellowship, Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Cambridge
2015	Doctor of Laws, <i>honoris causa</i> , Middlebury College
2015	Walter Channing Cabot Fellowship, Harvard University
2015	Society of the Cincinnati History Prize: awarded by the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of New Jersey
2015	Finalist, George Washington Book Prize
2015	Erwin Stein Prize: awarded by the Erwin-Stein-Stiftung, Germany.
2012	Laura Shannon Prize in Contemporary European Studies: awarded by the Nanovic Center for European Studies at the University of Notre Dame.
2011-2012	John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship
2011-2012	Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars: awarded by the American Council of Learned Societies.
2003-2006	Junior Fellowship, Harvard Society of Fellows
2001-2005	Research Fellowship, Trinity College, Cambridge
2004	William F. Milton Fund Grant
1999	British Marshall Scholarship: awarded by the British government to 40 Americans annually for two or three years’ study at a British university. Thomas Temple Hoopes Prize: awarded for high achievement on a senior thesis written at Harvard College. Thesis: <i>The Reluctant Humanist: Thomas Hobbes and the Classical Historians.</i> Seymour E. and Ruth B. Harris Prize: awarded annually to one senior thesis written in the social sciences at Harvard College.

NAMED LECTURES

Gaspar G. Bacon Lecture. Boston University (2025).

Carlyle Lectures. University of Oxford, UK (2025).

John Robert Seeley Lectures. University of Cambridge, UK (2024).

St. Elizabeth Seton Lecture. Portsmouth Abbey School, Portsmouth, RI (2019).

István Hont Memorial Lecture. University of St Andrews, Scotland (2016).

Society of the Cincinnati History Prize Lecture. Anderson House, Washington DC (2015).

The Navin Narayan Memorial Lecture in Social Studies. Harvard University (2013).

The John Hamilton Fulton Lecture in the Liberal Arts. Middlebury College (2013).

The Laura Shannon Prize Lecture. University of Notre Dame (2012).

The Templeton Lecture on Religion and World Affairs. Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia (2011).

RECENT INVITED PAPERS AND LECTURES

“How America Became a ‘Democracy’.” Delivered at the Institute of Historical Research, London, February, 2025.

Reply to Critics, Conference on the 20th Anniversary of Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought*, University of St. Andrew’s, Scotland, February, 2025.

“The Early-Modern Rehabilitation of Democracy.” Delivered at the Workshop in Law, Philosophy, and Political Theory,” UC Berkeley, November 2023.

“Philo and the Early-Modern Rehabilitation of ‘Democracy’.” Delivered at the University of Paris-Sorbonne, Maison de la Recherche, Center for the Study of Monotheisms, Paris, May 2023.

Symposium on the publication of the French translation of Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, Pol-Ethique, Paris, May 2023.

“The Early-Modern Rehabilitation of Democracy.” Delivered at the Humanities Center, Frederick Douglas Program, Providence College, Providence, RI, February 2023.

“The Early-Modern Rehabilitation of Democracy.” Keynote Lecture. Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Oxford and Cambridge Society of New England, Winchester, MA, December 2022.

Comment on Michael Rosen, *The Shadow of God*, Book Launch Symposium, Humbolt Universität, Berlin, June 2022.

"Article II and the 'Spirit of '75'". Delivered at the conference on "Histories of Presidential Power," Stanford Law School, Palo Alto, CA, May 2022.

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the conference on “Liberalism and its Discontents” at the Lefrak Forum on Science, Reason, and Modern Democracy, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, April 2022.

“Philo and the Early-Modern Rehabilitation of ‘Democracy’.” Delivered at the Jewish Law Workshop, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, March 2022 (via Zoom)

“Early Modern Studies: The Crisis and the Opportunity” (with Anthony Grafton), Program in Renaissance Studies, Yale University, February 2022 (via Zoom).

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the Morningside Institute, New York City, November 2021.

Reply to Critics, Symposium on *The Theology of Liberalism*, The Law and Humanities Workshop, IDC Herzliyah, Israel, June 2021 (via Zoom).

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the George Washington Forum, Ohio University, Athens, OH, April 2021 (via Zoom).

“Beyond the ‘Wretched Subterfuge’: Liberalism, Freedom, and Responsibility.” Delivered at the Political Theory Colloquium, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN, March 2021 (via Zoom)

“Thomas More’s *Utopia*.” Delivered at the Nova Forum for Catholic Thought, University of Southern California, January 2021 (via Zoom).

Reply to Critics, Symposium on *The Theology of Liberalism*, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, December 2020 (via Zoom).

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the Humanities Center, Yale University, New Haven, February 2020.

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the Centre for Ethics, Politics, and Religion, Charles University, Prague, February 2020.

“Beyond the ‘Wretched Subterfuge’: Liberalism, Freedom, and Responsibility.” Keynote Lecture. Delivered at the Duke Graduate Conference in Political Theory, Duke University, Durham, NC, February 2020.

“The Theology of Liberalism.” Delivered at the Providential Modernity Seminar, The Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University, Durham, NC, February 2020.

“Liberalism and Theodicy.” Keynote Lecture. Delivered at the conference on “Holy Wars and Sacred States: Religious Conflict, the State, and Sacred Power in Early-Modern Europe,” Queen’s University, Belfast, July 2019.

Comment on Michael McConnell’s Tanner Lectures, “The President Who Would Not Be King: Executive Power and the Constitution,” Princeton, NJ, November 2018.

“Merit and Theodicy.” Delivered at the conference on “Political Meritocracy in Comparative Historical Perspective,” Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, November 2018.

“‘The Lord Alone Shall be King of America’: Hebraism and the Republican Turn of 1776.” Delivered at the conference on “The Bible and Political Thought,” Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, September 2018.

“Equality and Theodicy.” Delivered at the symposium on “Equality: The History of an Idea,” Stanford Law School, Palo Alto, CA, May 2018.

“Grotius on Representation: The Missing Theory.” Delivered at the conference on “The Intellectual Lives of Hugo Grotius,” Princeton, NJ, May 2018.

“Representation and the Fall.” Delivered at the Cambridge Political Thought and Intellectual History Seminar, Cambridge, UK, April 2018.

“Representation and the Fall.” Delivered at the Political Thought Workshop at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, April 2018.

“James Wilson and the Ancient Constitution.” Delivered at the Salmon P. Chase Colloquium on the Life and Career of James Wilson, US Supreme Court and Georgetown Law School, November 2017.

“The Talmud in Early-Modern European Political Thought.” Delivered at the conference on “The Talmud and Western History, Politics and Law” at Cardozo Law School, Yeshiva University, New York City, October 2017.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Plenary Lecture. Delivered at the Pennsylvania Appellate Courts Conference, Bedford, Pennsylvania, June 2017.

“Liberalism and Theodicy.” Keynote Lecture. Delivered at the conference on “Rights, the Human, and Literature in Early Modernity,” CUNY Graduate Center, New York City, April 2017.

“What kind of book is *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*?” Delivered at the conference on “Bernard Bailyn’s *Ideological Origins* at 50,” Yale University, April 2017.

“Barons’ Wars, under other names: Feudalism, Royalism, and the American Founding.” Delivered at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, May 2016.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at Georgetown Law School, Washington, DC, April 2016.

“‘The Lord Alone Shall be King of America’: Hebraism and the Republican Turn of 1776.” Delivered at the Institute for the American Constitutional Heritage/ Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman, April 2016.

“‘The Bargain Basis’: Rawls, Anti-Pelagianism, and Moral Arbitrariness.” Delivered at the Yale Global Justice Workshop, New Haven, March 2016.

“Magna Carta and the American Founding.” Delivered at the conference on “The Foundation of Liberty: Magna Carta After 800 Years” at the Hoover Institution, Palo Alto, CA, June 2015.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Somerset Club, Boston, May 2015.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Clements Center for History, Strategy, and Statecraft, University of Texas at Austin, April 2015.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the University of New Hampshire, Durham, April 2015.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, March 2015.

“‘The Bargain Basis’: Rawls, Anti-Pelagianism, and Moral Arbitrariness.” Delivered at the Political Philosophy Colloquium, Princeton University, February 2015.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Society for Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Boston, February 2015.

“‘The Bargain Basis’: Rawls, Anti-Pelagianism, and Moral Arbitrariness.” Delivered at the Centre for Ethics, University of Toronto, November 2014.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Conference for the Study of Political Thought, University of Toronto, November 2014.

“‘The Lord Alone Shall be King of America’: Hebraism and the Republican Turn of 1776.” Delivered at the American Political Thought Seminar, the Newberry Library, Chicago, April 2014.

“Property Without Appropriation.” Delivered at the Columbia Society of Fellows, New York, March 2014.

“‘The Lord Alone Shall be King of America’: Hebraism and the Republican Turn of 1776.” Delivered at the Religion and Politics Colloquium, Yale University, December, 2013.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Transitions to Modernity Colloquium, Yale University, October 2012.

“Property Without Appropriation.” Delivered at the Political Theory Workshop, Stanford University. October 2012.

“The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought.” Delivered at the Israel Democracy Institute, Jerusalem, July 2012.

“The Royalist Revolution.” Delivered at the Popular Sovereignty Network Workshop, Queen Mary, University of London, July 2012.

“How exceptional was the American Revolution?” Delivered at the conference on “Three Revolutions?: Remaking Political Society in Britain and America, 1640-1685,” Yale University, June 2012.

“Property Without Appropriation.” Keynote Address. Delivered at the London Graduate Conference in the History of Political Thought, University of London, May 2012.

“Reply to Critics.” Delivered at a roundtable panel on “The Hebrew Republic” at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association, Philadelphia, November 2012.

“Hebraism and Republicanism.” Delivered at the Paideia Decennial Conference, Uppsala, Sweden, August 2011.

“Property, Rules, and Rectification.” Delivered at the Political Theory Colloquium, UCLA, May 2011.

“The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought.” Delivered at the Center for the Liberal Arts and Free Institutions, UCLA, May 2011.

“Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-1775.”
Delivered at the Program for the Study of Liberty, UCLA, May 2011.

“Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-1775.”
Delivered at the Harvard Law School Faculty Colloquium, May 2011.

“Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-1775.”
Delivered at the Seminar on Political and Moral Thought, Johns Hopkins University,
Baltimore, February 2011.

“Seeing Rome Through Greek Eyes: Republican Decline in English Political Thought,
1516-1656.” Delivered at the conference on “Ancient Rome and Early Modern England:
History, Politics, and Political Thought,” The Huntington, Pasadena, CA, January 2011.

PEER REVIEW

American Political Science Review
American Political Thought
Eighteenth-Century Studies
European Journal of Political Theory
The Historical Journal
History of Political Thought
Journal of the History of Ideas
Journal of Politics
Modern Intellectual History
Philosophy and Public Affairs
Polis
Political Studies
Political Theory
Review of Politics
William and Mary Quarterly

TEACHING

Harvard

Ethical Reasoning 34: Liberty (with James Hankins and Jeffrey Miron) (Spring 2013)

Government 90pk: Thomas Hobbes (Fall 2005)

Government 97: Sophomore Tutorial in Government (Spring 2011)

Government 98df: Topics in Early-Modern Political Thought (Fall 2008)

Government 1023: Conservatism and its Critics (Spring 2021)

Government 1074: Political Thought of the American Founding (Fall 2009; Spring 2013; Fall 2014; Fall 2016; Spring 2022).

Government 1082: What is Property? (Spring 2006; Fall 2007; Fall 2010; Spring 2018)

Government 1094: The Jewish Political Tradition (Spring 2010; Spring 2022)

Government 2056: Political Thought of the English Revolution (Fall 2008; Fall 2016)

Government 2094: Liberalism and Theodicy (Spring 2016)

History 1474: Republics and Republicanism (with James Hankins) (Spring 2006, Fall 2009).

History 2113: Dante in Contexts (with James Hankins) (Spring 2014)

Literature and Arts B-62 (Core Course): The Politics of Music (with Alexander Rehding) (Spring 2008).

Philosophy 272: Foundations of Justice (with Amartya Sen) (Fall 2013)

Stanford Constitutional Law Center/ Institute for Constitutional History

Interdisciplinary Summer Workshop (with Prof. Michael McConnell): “Three English Revolutions,” July 2019.

Folger Shakespeare Library

Late Spring Seminar: “The Royalist Revolution: American Political Thought, 1763-1789,” May-June 2012.

Cambridge

Lecture course: “The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought” (four lectures given), Michaelmas Term 2002, Cambridge History Faculty.

Supervision of undergraduates in the Cambridge History Faculty for Parts I and II, Paper 19: History of Political Thought to c. 1700 (10/00-5/03).

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Director, Harvard Center for Jewish Studies, 2012-2015

Steering Committee, Harvard Center for Jewish Studies, 2009-present
Executive Committee, Harvard Center for Jewish Studies, 2008-present
Faculty Advisor, Harvard Football Team (2015-present)
FAS Standing Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (2016-present)
FAS Committee to Review the Undergraduate Council, 2008
Board of Trustees, Harvard Hillel (2017-present)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Rothschild Fellowships Committee in the Humanities and Social Sciences
Advisory Editorial Board, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*
Editorial Board, *Revista de Estudios Públicos*
Advisory Board, “Intellectual History of the Modern Age” Series, University of Pennsylvania Press