

Karen Taliaferro

Karen Taliaferro

School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership

Arizona State University

Karen.Taliaferro@asu.edu

414.286.4242

Experience

August 2017-present Arizona State University: Assistant Professor, School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership

2016-2017 Villanova University: Visiting Assistant Professor, Augustine & Culture Seminar Program

2015-2016 Princeton University: Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate Fellowship, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions

2014-2015 Georgetown University School of Foreign Service – Qatar: Research Fellow

2006-2008 Peace Corps Volunteer, Tilouguite, Azilal, Morocco

Education

Ph.D. in Government (Political Theory major, Islamic Studies and Comparative Government minors), Georgetown University, 2015

Dissertation: The Possibility of Religious Freedom: Natural Law in Pagan, Islamic and Christian Traditions. Passed with distinction.

Committee: Joshua Mitchell (co-chair), Timothy Shah (co-chair), and Charles Butterworth (University of Maryland, Emeritus)

M.A. in Political Theory, Georgetown University, 2013

Classics (certificate study while enrolled in Political Science Ph.D. program), 2009-2010

Honor's B.A. in Political Science and French, Marquette University, 2005

Publications

Monograph: *The Possibility of Religious Freedom: Early Natural Law and the Abrahamic Faiths*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Reviewed in *Law and Liberty*, *Journal of Church and State*, and *Journal of Law and Religion*

Interviewed about book on *New Books Network* and *Cross and Gavel* podcasts

Articles: "Ibn Rushd and Natural Law: Mediating Human and Divine Law" *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 28, Iss. 1 (Jan. 2017)

Chapters in peer-reviewed publications:

Karen Taliaferro

(forthcoming) “Disenchantment Revisited: Science and Medieval Metaphysics in a Late-Modern World.” In *New Approaches to Disenchantment*. Edited by Charles Butterworth and Rasoul Namazi. Éditions L’Harmattan (Paris), expected late 2023.

(forthcoming) “Can Mosque and State be Separated? Should They?” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Religion and Politics*. Edited by Shannon Holzer. Palgrave Macmillan Press, expected late 2023.

“An Indecisive Truth: Divine Law and Philosophy in the *Decisive Treatise and Commentary on Plato’s Republic*,” in *Plato’s Republic in the Islamic Context: New Perspectives on Averroes’s Commentary*. Edited by Alexander Orwin. Rochester Series in Medieval Political Thought, University of Rochester Press, 2022.

“Creating Sovereignty: Religious Authority, the Social Contract and the Need for Political Friendship” in *Polis, Nation, Global Community: The Philosophic Foundations of Citizenship*. Edited by Ann Ward, Routledge Press, 2022.

“Elitist Democracy and Epistemic Equality: Aristotle and Ibn Rushd on the Role of Common Beliefs,” in *Reason, Revelation and Law in Islamic and Western Theory and History*. Edited by R. Charles Weller and Anver Emon. Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2021.

“The Early Rawls: What is Justice as Fairness?” in *John Rawls and Christian Social Engagement: Justice as Unfairness*, Lexington, 2015.

Under review

(chapter in peer-edited volume) “Shari‘a for the Masses: Understanding Religion for the Many in Ibn Rushd’s *Exposition of the Methods of Proof*.” Edited by Abdelali El-Amrani Jamal. Institute for Epistemological Studies – Europe. Expected 2023.

In progress

(article) “*Shar‘a* and *shari‘a*: A study of divine law in a trilogy of Ibn Rushd’s works.”

(monograph) *Truth Does Not Contradict Truth’: The Political Thought of Ibn Rushd*

“Natural Law in Islam,” in *Natural Law: an intellectual history*. Edited by William M.R. Simpson, Jonathan Price and Justin B. Dyer.

Book reviews and review essays:

Reopening Muslim Minds: A Return to Reason, Freedom, and Tolerance. Mustafa Akyol. Acton Magazine, December 2021.

Originalism’s Promise. Lee Strang. *Starting Points Journal*. June 18, 2020.

Sunnis and Shia: A Political History. Laurence Louër. *Law and Liberty*, April 20, 2020.

Karen Taliaferro

Christianity and Natural Law. Edited by Norman Doe. *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 61, Iss. 1 (Winter 2019)

Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto. Bryan Van Norden. Columbia University Press, 2017. In *Expositions*, Vol 12, No. 2. (Winter 2018)

Redefining the Muslim Community: Ethnicity, Religion and Politics in the Thought of Alfarabi. Alexander Orwin. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. *Interpretation Journal* Vol. 44, Iss. 1 (Fall 2017)

Select Conference Papers and Invited Talks

2023: "Averroes on Human and Divine Intellect: A Window into His Islamic Writings." Seventeenth Annual Marquette Conference on Aristotle and the Aristotelian Tradition(s), Milwaukee, WI.

2023: "*Sharʿ* and *sharīʿa*: A study of divine law in a trilogy of Ibn Rushd's works." Southern Political Science Association, Medieval Political Thought Conference within a Conference (virtual).

2023: *Invited Talk*: "Premodern Islam and the Inseparability of Religion and Politics," in "Religion's Refusal to Die" conference, American Enterprise Institute and LeFrak Forum on Science, Reason and Modern Democracy (Michigan State University); Washington, DC.

2023: "Who are the 'healthy'? Dialectic in the *Fasl al-Maqāl* and the *Kashf ʿan Manābij*. Institute for Epistemological Studies – Europe "Ibn Rushd and the Problems of Method" colloquium, Brussels, Belgium.

2022: *Invited talk*: "البعد الأخلاقي لمفهومى الاندوكسا عند أرسطو و بادي الرأي عند ابن رشد" ("The Ethical Dimension of the Concepts of Endoxa in Aristotle and Immediate Point of View in Ibn Rushd"). Mohamed bin Zayed University for Humanities Conference on Ethics and Philosophy, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

2022: "Whose Scholarship? Which Islam? Ibn Rushd and the Tension between Philosophers and Theologians." Middle East Studies Association annual conference, Denver, CO.

2022: "Disenchantment and Progress: Max Weber and the Possibility of Religious Knowledge." American Political Science Association, Montréal, Québec.

2022: "'Grotesque Inequality': Pandemic Effects on Mothers in the Academy." Roundtable organizer/presenter. American Political Science Association, Montréal, Québec.*

**Due to a medical emergency, I was not able to attend this roundtable; however, the other roundtable participants had received my paper.*

2022: "*Sharʿ* and *sharīʿa*: A study of divine law in a trilogy of Ibn Rushd's works." Sixteenth Annual Marquette Conference on the Aristotelian Tradition, Milwaukee, WI

Karen Taliaferro

2022: "Natural Law and the Islamic Tradition." Acton Institute Conference, "The Islamic Case for Liberty." (Virtual)

2022: "Differing Categorizations of People in the Thought of Ibn Rushd." Southern Political Science Association, San Antonio, TX

2021: *Invited Talk*: "Ibn Rushd and the *Sunan Ghayr al-Makṭūba*." Majlis, Acton Institute (virtual).

2021: *Invited talk*: "Can Mosque and State Be Separated? Should They?" Loeb Institute for Religious Freedom, George Washington University.

2021: "Creating Sovereignty: Religious Authority, the Social Contract and the Need for Political Friendship," American Political Science Association, Seattle, Washington.

2021: "Sharī‘a for the Masses: Understanding Religion for the Many in Ibn Rushd’s *Exposition of the Methods of Proof*." Women on Medieval Philosophy, University of Leuven (Belgium).

2021: "Sharī‘a for the Masses: Understanding Religion for the Many in Ibn Rushd’s *al-Kashf ‘an Manābij*." Institute for Epistemological Studies – Europe (virtual conference due to pandemic).

2020: *Invited talk*: "Teaching Medieval Arabic and Islamic Philosophy," National Classical Education Symposium, Phoenix, Arizona.

2019: "Le Maroc comme Leader pour l’Afrique: une perspective américaine," Forum International de Tiznit pour les Cultures Africaines, Tiznit, Morocco.

2019: "A Tale of Two Laws: Gods, Mortals, and the Decisive Treatise in Averroes’ *Commentary on Plato’s Republic*," Colloque de la Société Internationale d’Histoire des Sciences et de la Philosophie Arabes et Islamiques, Naples, Italy

2019: *Invited talk*: "Between Gods and Men: Natural Law and Religious Pluralism," James Madison Program Annual Conference, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

2018: "Doubt and Faith in Islam and Judaism" panel chair and discussant, Middle East Studies Association Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX

2018: *Invited talk*: "Islam, Western Civilization and Bridging the Gap," National Association of Scholars conference, Phoenix, AZ

2017: "Epistemic Equality in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy: Beyond Elites and Masses," American Political Science Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA

2016 "The Role of Religious Authority in Democracy," American Political Science Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA

2016 "*Antigone’s* Tragedy: Human and Divine, not Natural," Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2016 "An Islamic Natural Law? Averroes, Aristotle and the Unwritten Law of Nature," James Madison Program, Princeton University

2015 "Mediating Reason and Revelation: Istihṣān and the Necessity of Taqlīd," British Association of Islamic Studies, London, UK

Select Awards & Fellowships

Karen Taliaferro

2023-2024 Faculty Fellow, Braver Angels College Debates and Discourse Program (\$20,000)

2020-2023 Fellow, Recovering Truth Project. Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University (\$10,000)

2022 Duke University, Kenan Center for Ethics; awarded \$5000 to develop and teach course in civil discourse

2019 Jack Miller Center Summer Institute Fellowship

2015-2016 Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate Fellowship, James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University (\$50,000)

2014-2015 Georgetown University School of Foreign Service-Qatar Predoctoral Research Fellowship (\$52,000)

2013-2014 Bradley Foundation graduate student research fellowship (\$20,000)

2011-2012 National Security Education Program Boren Fellow (Arabic), Fez and Ouaouizaght, Morocco

2005 Phi Beta Kappa, Marquette University

Select Courses

Comparative Political Thought (*CEL 394; taught twice*)

Great Ideas in Ethics and Politics in Comparative Perspective (*CEL 100; taught eight times*)

Medieval Political Thought (*CEL 394; taught twice*)

Faith and Reason (*CEL 494/ 598; taught once*); graduate seminar

Political Leadership and Statesmanship (*CEL 394; taught once*)

Statesmanship and American Grand Strategy (*CEL 475; taught twice*)

Religion and Politics: The Trial of Galileo (*CEL 394; incorporates a Reacting to the Past historical role-playing course; taught twice*)

Non-ASU courses:

Ancients and Moderns seminars (*Villanova University freshman great books program in Augustine and Culture Seminar Program*)

Modern Political Theory (*John Jay Institute for Faith, Society and Law; taught twice*)

Natural Law, Islam and Human Rights (*Princeton University; independent study with Ph.D. student, taught once. Note that for reasons pertaining to my appointment at Princeton, the instructor of record was Keith Whittington, though he did not intervene in development, teaching or evaluation.*)

Languages

French – fluent (written and spoken)

Arabic – proficient (written and spoken)

Karen Taliaferro

Berber/Tamazight – proficient (spoken)

Latin – basic knowledge (written)

Memberships and Service to the Profession

Founding Associate Director, American Academy of Sciences and Letters (2023 – present)

Member, Advisory Board, Collins Center for Abrahamic Heritage, Acton Institute (2023 – present)

Member, Advisory Board, *Journal of Christian Legal Thought* (2022 – present)

Research collaborator, Institute for Epistemological Studies – Europe (2021– present)

Member, Aristotle and ‘the Arabs’ International Working Group (2021 – present)

Founding member, Academic Freedom Alliance (2021 – present)

Fellow, Recovering Truth Project – Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University (2020-2023)

Reviewer, *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, Lahore, Pakistan (2020-present)

Member, Public Justice and Natural Law Working Group (interdisciplinary and international group of scholars working on natural law and contemporary affairs; 2020-present)

Advisory Board Member – Société Internationale d’Histoire et des Sciences et de la Philosophie Arabes et Islamiques (2019-present)

Affiliate Scholar – Faith and Liberty Discovery Center, Philadelphia, PA (2018-present)

Various scholarly association memberships (American Political Science Association, Middle East Studies Association, et al.)

Select SCETL and ASU Service

Unit representative, Dean’s Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Fall 2022-present

Working Group Faculty Member, ASU Center for Maghrib Studies, 2021-present

Co-facilitator, Faculty Reading Group, 2017-2020

Collaborator, ASU-Starbucks partnership diversity training “Redline” (provided critical feedback on short courses designed to promote understanding of diversity in matters of race, gender, nationality, ability, inter alia), 2018

Member, Graduate Studies Committee, 2020-present

Advisor, AEI Student Group, 2021-present

Faculty hiring committees

2017-2018 – Director Graduate Studies

2019-2020 – European Historian

2021-2022 – European Historian (became double search to include specialist in Economic Thought)

Karen Taliaferro

2022-2023 – Teaching Assistant Professor

Other Professional Experience

Peace Corps Volunteer – Health Sector, Azilal, Morocco (2006-2008)

Le Figaro – assistant to Washington-based journalist Laure Mandeville (2009)