

# Public Justice for All

Supplement to the annotated  
bibliographical listing of the works of  
James W Skillen from 1/2008-3/2012

with an introductory essay, suggested  
research topics, and appendices for  
students, teachers and lecturers to  
assist ongoing research

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May 2012

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# ***Editorial Preface***

Public Justice for All, an annotated bibliographical list of the writings of James W Skillen (1944-), first appeared in 2007 and its 2008 updated edition is still available at the All of Life Redeemed web-site. This update covers the period January 2008 until March 2012. It replaces a February 2010 update. As indicated previously, the listing, though extensive, is not complete. This update includes most publications from 2008 and also some from previous years not listed previously. This edition is issued with an introductory essay written specifically to assist students and teachers of political science. It might help other readers of Skillen's writings as well. The document includes six appendices to facilitate student and other research. These are:

- Appendix 1 - Newly Listed Items from 1974 Until 2007;
- Appendix 2 - On-Line Lectures and Interviews 2003- 2012;
- Appendix 3 - List of Subjects
- Appendix 4 - List of Names
- Appendix 5 - Some Scholarly Collaborators
- Appendix 6 - 54 Key Articles and Essays

Any future update will need to incorporate items in Appendices 1 & 2 with a view to eventually providing a comprehensive list. Since 2008 Skillen's CPJ writings have been incorporated into the list but many of the important essays he wrote as President of the Center for Public Justice in Washington are still not included. Short of a full and comprehensive listing of all his published writings, the Center's [web-site](#) does provide links to all articles written for [Public Justice Report](#) (PJR) from May 1989 until Dec 2007 when it ceased publication. It also provides an archival listing for those years. Other items - Capital Commentary, Root and Branch, Election Series - written by Skillen and others, are also archived and available from that web-site. Skillen was in charge of CPJ from 1982 so there will be quite some work involved in any such complete listing. He continues research, writing and public speaking, and meanwhile CPJ continues to make some of his earlier writings available when they are deemed relevant for current political reflection.

This bibliography aims to act as a guide to Skillen's work, a significant amount of which can be accessed by a "Google search". By this means it has been possible to link items to sites for podcasts, MP3 and vimeo lectures. There will be some anomalies and absences that careful readers will detect from perusing the list. And so, this is still a "working document", while Skillen's contribution is still a "work in progress". Most items listed in the initial edition of this bibliography were of articles published before the availability of the "world wide web". Now on-line audio and video recordings join other published articles from Skillen's persistent attempt to commend the pursuit of justice as part of the Christian way of life.

This listing begins from 373 to coincide with the 372 items previously listed up until the end of 2007. The "end date" (March 2012) is somewhat arbitrary, chosen to allow for a set number of items that can then be referred to by the various appendices.

The aim is to place this distinctive body of work before students, teachers and others, particularly those living and working in the Asia-Pacific region. That is also part of the motivation for my introductory essay, "The AoLR James W Skillen Bibliography and Student Research Projects". How can consideration of Skillen's writings provide helpful insight and suggestions to readers, teachers and students? Twenty possible research projects are suggested, framed for use at different educational levels. Only a selection of possible topics can be covered, and comment on some aspects of Skillen's contribution is left for another occasion. Meanwhile it is my hope that this bibliography can assist whoever consults it - whether students, teachers, researchers, policy-analysts or simply citizens in pursuit of justice.

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May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012

# ***The AoLR James W. Skillen Bibliography*** ***Including*** ***Research Projects for Asia-Pacific Students***

## **Introduction:**

This essay is written to accompany the latest update of [Public Justice for All](#), an annotated bibliography of the publications of James W. Skillen. The base document, along with examples of Skillen's work, can be found at the All of Life Redeemed web-site. Readers seeking an overview of Skillen's career, his publications and his work for the Center for Public Justice, should consult that earlier edition.<sup>1</sup> This essay, with various suggestions for research, has been written with Christian students of the Asia-Pacific region in mind. I believe Skillen's contribution may be helpful to them in their studies at high school and at university. Of course, political science students may readily find his work relevant to what they are studying but, in my view, most of his writings are pertinent for students in most fields.

For Skillen, politics is a God-given responsibility to love our neighbours with public justice. This view is of decisive significance for understanding any nation's political life and I will explain below how it has influenced my own political contribution. As I do so, I will also describe the pertinent connection of Skillen's exploration of American civil religious faith, to my own work in sociology.<sup>2</sup> I hope that what follows will encourage Christian students of the Asia-Pacific region<sup>3</sup> to consider Skillen's political contribution and also his other writings.

## **Skillen's Critique of "America First" and Australian Politics**

From an early stage, Skillen's analysis of American politics sought to identify the *religious ideology* that drives US policy domestically and internationally. I came across this in 1973, as a young graduate, working for a small Christian political party in Brisbane, Australia. A subscription "swap" had been arranged between our magazine *Crucible*, and *Politikon*, the magazine of the US-based National Association for Christian Political Action (later to become the Association for Public Justice). Skillen's 3-part series, "America First", was published in *Politikon* in 1973 (see No. 11 in Annotated Bibliography). The argument was published in expanded form

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<sup>1</sup> As well, they will find much on the Centre for Public Justice website <http://www.cpjustice.org> and its on-line archives.

<sup>2</sup> See Bruce C Wearne **The Theory and Scholarship of Talcott Parsons to 1951 - a Critical Commentary** Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1989.

<sup>3</sup> By putting it this way, I do not suggest that Skillen's work is only, or even primarily, of relevance for Christian students. To the contrary. But, in this bibliographic introduction I am wanting to explain to Asia-Pacific Christian students the reasons I believe his work is highly relevant for their studies and their ongoing contribution to this region.

in 1981 (see No. 67), and attempts to give a comprehensive exposé of the *religious faith* driving American politics. Part I concluded with these words:

*All too many of us have been willing to believe that America is the world's only hope for peace, prosperity, and democracy, and that since this is the case, whatever aids America's national interests necessarily aids the world. Why have we been so unable to see through this idolatry?*<sup>4</sup>

This struck me as very significant. It is still a formulation worthy of careful and sustained reflection. Skillen obviously thinks so because he has been constantly developing this understanding of the "American Experiment" in his writing over 4 decades.<sup>5</sup> More recently, it has come to expression in his critique of President George W. Bush's "war on terror", as well as his sharp and penetrating explanation of how the civil religious drive implicit in America's political self-definition confronts Islam's understanding of its world-wide mission (see 410 & 416 below).<sup>6</sup>

For me, this initial confrontation with Skillen's work confirmed a growing awareness about my own involvement in Australian political life. As a Christian, a young adult who had only just become eligible to vote, I began to perceive many complex issues that lay ahead if we were to develop an authentically *Christian* contribution to Australian political life. In those days evangelical Christians like myself were still experiencing the aftermath of Billy Graham's 2<sup>nd</sup> "crusade" (1970), turning over in our minds the implications of the widespread criticism that evangelicals and churches had merely become advocates of the "American way of life". And also, the Marxist view of religion-as-opiate seemed to be endorsed by the evangelist's support for America's undeclared war in Vietnam.<sup>7</sup>

*Pie in the sky when you die bye and bye, it's a lie!*<sup>8</sup>

So the interesting thing for me about Skillen's analysis of American political life was that it confirmed my suspicion that "all too many of us" in Australia had also been willing to believe "that America is the world's only hope for peace, prosperity, and democracy." Skillen was concerned with the way "national self-interest" had been accepted within the US political community as the legitimate first principle of American foreign policy. My problem was, and is, that this *ideology* has been taken-for-granted within Australian politics. As an *American* political doctrine, it might have to be

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<sup>4</sup> James W Skillen "America First: Part I The Contemporary International Context" *The NACPA Politikon* 3:3, Aug-Sept 1973, 1, 6-7 at p.7.

<sup>5</sup> James W Skillen **Recharging the American Experiment: Principled Pluralism for Genuine Civic Community**, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> James W Skillen **With or Against the World? America's Role Among the Nations**, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield 2005.

<sup>7</sup> See my article "The Salt of the Earth is no Opiate for the Masses" *FCS Newsletter* No 12 (April 1978), pp.1-4. <http://www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk/wearne.htm>

<sup>8</sup> These were lyrics from a Monash Labor Club song at the time. See Michael Hyde ed **It is Right to Rebel** Canberra, The Diplomat 1972.

twisted and turned to suit the fabric of our own national discourse, but it was and certainly is, alive, alongside a strong Australian commitment to "national self-interest" as our first principle.<sup>9</sup>

This formulation of Skillen's critique of American politics, helped me address a very complex problem with Australian foreign policy. Since the US entry into the Pacific war of World War II, our own concept of "national self-interest" in the conduct of "foreign affairs" has meant an ongoing accommodation of our laws and policies to the "America first" principle of American foreign policy.<sup>10</sup> In other words, the Australian Government had come to form the foreign policy of our commonwealth with the view that we could indeed put ourselves first (Australian national self-interest), if we first indulged the American tendency to justify its international role in terms of its self interested self-definition. And that is why, in Australia, the liberalism of the Liberal Party, together with the social-liberalism of the Labor Party, have continued to develop policies and perspectives that effectively endorse President Woodrow Wilson's view, from the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that America's "exceptional" destiny is to keep the world safe for democracy.

That ambiguous political commitment would lead in time to the shameful expulsion in 1985 of New Zealand from [ANZUS](#) - the post-war defense treaty that had come into effect in 1951. The Labour Government of David Lange has refused to allow nuclear armed battleships to dock at New Zealand's ports. The Hawke Labor Government simply complied with US demands and the Hawke Government gave no attention to the fact that significant *American* cities had refused such dockings of their own nation's nuclear-armed fleet. Americans under their flag can do what they please, but clients had to do what they were told. And to this day that remains a serious blot on Australia's standing in the South Pacific and particularly with its nearest and closest neighbour.<sup>11</sup>

But in the mid-1970s, whatever this "America first" critique may have meant in a day-to-day sense in the US context, it soon became glaringly evident that there was much work to be done in Australia, if a genuinely

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<sup>9</sup> It should be kept in mind that when young people of my generation raised doubts about this ideology they immediately faced stern criticism from an older generation who deeply appreciated the US for the military defeat of Japan in the Coral Sea War and thus saved Australia from possible Japanese invasion. <http://www.anzacday.org.au/history/ww2/bfa/coralsea.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> My response to Skillen's "America first?" series was written in 1974 as "The Nixon-Kissinger Euphoria and Australian Foreign Policy" *Crucible* July-August 1974 4:2 pp.5-8. See also, "Will the defeat of the USA in Vietnam mean a new course in Australian Foreign Policy?" *Radix* Sept-Oct 1975, 2:5, 16-19; Review of J W Skillen **International Politics and the Demand for Global Justice** *Zadok Center News*, Dec 1982, 24 p.13. (see *Public Justice Report* Aug-Sept 1982 pp.6-7.)

<sup>11</sup> Prime Minister David Lange (1942-2005) led New Zealand's bi-partisan refusal of US nuclear-powered naval vessels. His debate with the Reverend Jerry Falwell at Oxford University in March 1985 is found on Youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeHTziiFVx0> . Australia should extend "reconciliation" and issue a formal apology to New Zealand for this treachery.

*Christian* contribution to national and regional politics was to develop. Skillen's critique of the "America first" doctrine could be read here in ways that were consonant with the criticism of Australian evangelicalism and its promotion of the "American way of life". But, it is notable that even among the most strident antipodean radicals who wanted to "smash US imperialism", there was, and remains, a wide acceptance that "the American way of life" points in the political direction that we too, in this part of the world, should be taking into the foreseeable future.

Moreover, the most common "radical" critique of American sociology that was focused upon the social system theory of Talcott Parsons, did not draw attention to Parsons' pre-theoretical accommodation to this same civil religious commitment. Instead, the criticism within sociology in Australia and New Zealand universities was just as it had been developed in the US, namely the accusation that Parsons had compiled an incoherent theoretical justification for preserving capitalist civilisation, endorsing the US "power elite" that had cumulatively gained in strength from World War I. Parsons' theory was accused of lacking what C. W. Mills (1916-1962) held to be most important, "the sociological imagination".<sup>12</sup>

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the influence of "the American way of life" has certainly made a world-wide impact, and it is still readily assumed in many places that the US is the world's best example of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. "The American way of life" is therefore ascribed *normative* status, and that remains to this day, even if, in recent years, its financial credentials have come under a very dark cloud, and its National Security Strategy seriously distorts genuine global growth and development via the constant exponential growth in its military spending. In this sense, it is in fact a self-defeating "way of life", and this is seen in the way the US economy is now in a perpetual slide. The "American way of life" may be liberal humanistic code for a society that has a democratic form of government and a national political agenda that bows to the dictates of the "free market". But under that banner we also see a complex military arrangement in which the US maintains bases, ships and armaments, ready for any development it considers to be a threat to the *Pax Americana* and to its hyper-power status.

## **My Study of 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Sociology and Talcott Parsons**

My study of the sociological contribution of Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) has shown how his view of the discipline is inextricably rooted in this same American civic faith. Parsons saw his sociological theory developing

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<sup>12</sup> So, the authorisation for this critique was also American. See C W Mills **The Power Elite** 1956 and **The Sociological Imagination** 1959. One interesting fact is that Mills was taught sociology by Clarence Edwin Ayres (1891-1972) the same person who first introduced Parsons to sociology at Amherst College in 1921-1922.

from the modernising mix of European ideas in the seedbed of the American way of life.<sup>13</sup> He progressively came to see sociology, a relatively new scientific discipline, as a peculiarly American opportunity. Consider his December 1949 comments, when he was installed as President of the American Sociological Society (ASS):

*Yet I like to think of sociology as in some sense a peculiarly American discipline, or at least an American opportunity. There is no doubt that we have the leadership now. Our very lack of traditionalism perhaps makes it some ways easier for us than for some others to delve deeply into the mysteries of how human action in society ticks... Can American sociology seize the opportunity? One of our greatest national resources is the capacity to rise to a great challenge once it is put before us.*<sup>14</sup>

Careful examination of Parsons' argument, against the background of his theoretical development, leads us to the conclusion that, for him, the rise of the US, as the world's "new lead society", provides sociology with the environmental conditions from which the scientific fruit it was destined to produce can be brought forth. In this sense Parsons' sociological theory emerged most decisively in the 1950s and 1960s, and for that reason his work was the discipline's "ruling paradigm" when I studied SOC101 in 1969. But what do we note here? This justification for the "ruling paradigm" of this emergent social science, as given by one of sociology's leading 20<sup>th</sup> century exponents, presupposes the very "way of life" that such as a social scientific discipline should, also in its American forms, be subjecting to scientific systematic scrutiny.

And Parsons not only made an appeal to what he *believes* about sociology but to what he has in mind for *American* sociology. His discipline, his *American* discipline, is thus declared to be on the verge of assuming the leading role in the latest phase of sociology's scientific development. Sociology's current "prospects" can be realized because of an *American* ability by *American* sociologists to rise to a great challenge. This belief is nothing other than a pre-theoretical *religious* commitment directing his theoretical reflection. To cut a long (philosophical) story short, in Parsons' own terms, it must be a "personal value". But here it is put forward as if it is an indubitable "public fact". And so, we would be quite entitled to note that the "strict separation" between facts and values, which has repeatedly

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<sup>13</sup> I have analyzed the theory of "convergence", as Parsons documented it, in his **The Structure of Social Action: A Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent European Writers** New York, McGraw-Hill 1937. See Bruce C Wearne "Talcott Parsons's Appraisal and Critique of Alfred Marshall" *Social Research* 48:4 Winter 1981, pp. 816-851. The earlier form of "convergence" saw Weber, Durkheim and Pareto as contributing to the emergent sociological theory. Later on, from the 1940s, the "convergence" also included Freud and Pareto receded from view even if the "residues" of a neo-Machiavellian perspective were still evident.

<sup>14</sup> Talcott Parsons "The Prospects of Sociological Theory" *American Sociological Review*, 15, 1950, pp. 3-16, cited in T Parsons **Essays in Sociological Theory** rev edn New York, Free Press, 1954 pp. 348-369 at pp. 368-369.



been set forth as a *sine qua non* of the sociological discipline<sup>15</sup> is, at this point, suspended to allow Parsons to announce a new phase in sociology's scientific development! Of course, it is still affirmed, but that now indicates a dogma of what must be believed if sociology is to be sociology. In other words: this *American* belief has somehow sidestepped the strictures that are upon all of other *personal* beliefs and because of this it is received as a primary requisite for sociology in its current phase.

That address, therefore, raises an issue that has to be resolved by any critical interpretation of Parsons' *American* sociology. His presidency of the ASS (as it was then called) is not usually considered to be a major factor in his contribution simply because his theoretical work developed both prior to, and long after, he held that professional association's office. Of course he did not need to refer to his one-time presidency to justify any of his theory's postulates. But, what he did say, in his capacity as ASS President, throws a piercing light for us upon his entire project - the theoretical arguments he had developed up to that point in time and those which he continued to develop subsequently. We might say the comments help us to see what was of vital importance to Talcott Parsons himself, something pre-theoretical, a basic motive for his theorising, something from which his theory was derived. And is that not a *religious* commitment? It has certainly not been derived from his theorising. The profession of this belief cannot simply be set to one side as of no account. Any critical examination of his theory must refer to it in some way or other. It is of such weight that it is of the weft and woof of his theory of the social system.

Two decades later, in a book outlining his mature theory, he stated:

*The United States' new type of societal community, more than any other single factor, justifies our assigning it the lead in the latest phase of modernization.*<sup>16</sup>

This is why I assert that Parsons' contribution to sociology was motivated by civil religious beliefs and commitments that were both secularised and *American*. So, keeping this in mind, we see that for Parsons, sociology, *qua*

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<sup>15</sup> I may have simplified the central issue that is at stake here, but it is clearly a problem that Parsons' theory fell into, not least because of his view of theoretical thought being a dependent and independent variable in the historical development of science's autonomy. An important exchange that took place some years later is found in the inaugural edition of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* vol. 1 1961 between William L Kolb "Images of Man and the Sociology of Religion" (pp. 5-22) and Parsons' "Comment" (pp. 22-29). Parsons concludes his reply to Kolb's commendation of a Judaic-Christian "image of humankind" for sociology with these highly relevant words for our current consideration: "It thus seems to me that Professor Kolb, in trying in the name of human freedom to escape the restrictions of a positivistic orthodoxy, which only in a very qualified sense exists, would impose a new set of restrictions on the freedom of the social scientist. In this sense his central argument can be turned directly against him. To be sure, most American sociologists will in the nature of the case have personal commitments in the Judaic-Greek-Christian (note my insistence on including the Greek reference) tradition. But as social scientists these commitments must be regarded as tentative and capable of being transcended. Otherwise the *comparative* sociology of religion would scarcely be possible."

<sup>16</sup> Talcott Parsons **The System of Modern Societies** Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall Inc 1971 p.114

scientific discipline, is not simply a consequence of modernization, but in its "new lead phase", as *American* sociology, it has taken on a role which is a major factor in advancing "the latest phase", the American phase, of modernization.<sup>17</sup>

This suffices for the present to illustrate some of the findings from my own scholarly research and contribution to sociology. There is much more that needs to be said apart from what I have outlined in schematic terms above. Sure, it confirms the importance of critically examining a theorist's pre-theoretical commitments and beliefs as one tries to interpret any sociological argument. But it also indicates that we need to ask questions about the way *sociology has been taught in the non-American universities* and whether, *in the discipline itself*, there has been an uncritical (albeit unintended) promotion of "American exceptionalism" because the underlying American bias has not been put to the test of a critical examination (a transcendental critique) of the preconditions for sociological study *per se*. These are matters which drive to the heart of the future development of a genuine science of sociology not only within the US academy (and the US polity) but across the globe and hence also in this region. They will have to be addressed to restore the distinctive integrity<sup>18</sup> of sociological science, and this certainly cannot be left to American scholars, and not even America's Christian sociologists. Insight is needed into how this *secularised religious belief* has led the way in the *sociological* examination of "The American way of life", in which the task of a science of society is justified by what is, in fact, an *American mythology*.

Let me note in passing that I am not suggesting that Parsons' *religious* commitment to (a version of) "American exceptionalism" means that he was no longer engaged in sociology. What I am saying is that his social system theory is plunged into ambiguity, if not broken by an irreconcilable tension, because of his *belief* that *religious belief* cannot be allowed to impinge upon the autonomy of theoretical thought. He might say that this critique of mine implies that he was not doing sociology, but merely propagandising, but I am quite prepared to reckon with his contribution to sociology since my analysis is not predicated on a separation of theoretical analysis from personal values. Rather, in the terms developed by Herman Dooyeweerd:

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<sup>17</sup> The 1986 volume containing Parsons' paper "Social Science: A Basic National Resource" is also useful for developing a fully rounded understanding of Parsons' vision for sociology. This is Parsons' 1948 invited paper, responding to the request of the Social Science Research Council Committee to commend support for the social sciences to government so that social science be included in the National Science Foundation. It appealed for a stronger bond between polity and academy. See Samuel Z Klausner and Victor M Lidz (eds) **The Nationalization of the Social Sciences** Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986.

<sup>18</sup> "Distinctive integrity" is the term suggested by Keith Sewell as equivalent to "sphere sovereignty" in the revised edition of Hendrik van Riessen **The University and its Basis** Wantirna, ACHEA Press, 1997.

*A sharp distinction between theoretical judgments and the supra-theoretical pre-judgments, which alone make the former possible, is a primary requisite of critical thought.*<sup>19</sup>

Sociology, and American sociology, has for many decades been aware of the civil religious character of American political life. But in general it can be said that, as a discipline, it has presented a scientific viewpoint that has accommodated this civil religious commitment to "American exceptionalism" and kept it hidden, rather than critically exposing it.<sup>20</sup> The US is often presented as the polity which safeguards the rights of people to private religious belief by appeal to the necessarily *secular* character of the public sphere. Skillen's analysis of American civil-religion, on the other hand, explains how this "America first" belief has decisively shaped a predominant American understanding of America's role in the world. In Christian terms the doctrine of "America first", whether it still appeals to its Christian "background" or not, is a heresy pure and simple. But in Parsons' sociological theorising we confront his accommodation of this secularised religious view in the confident affirmation that American sociology was on the cusp of giving a "new lead" to the discipline *because of America's exceptional status*. So what has happened to the strict separation of facts from values? It has been suspended even as it is dogmatically and uncritically *professed* as a basic scientific disposition.

Clearly, any further work from my own pen in sociological theory should also elaborate on this very important aspect of sociology's development as a scientific discipline in which it has been bound *religiously* to America's civil religious heritage. Skillen's critique comes from within the *American* polity and academy, as does the implicit endorsement of America's "exceptional" status in the theory of Talcott Parsons. But my work does not. This brief *excursus* explains "in a nutshell" how my own contribution to sociology has had to confront the "American way of life" and the religious commitment to this "way" that is also evident at the root-level of sociology's pre-theoretical religious beliefs. I would suggest, therefore, that Christian scholarship, particularly in the social sciences, can not avoid responding to the pervasive influence of "the American way of life". In sociology, analysis of "the impact of the American way of life" and its manifestations around the globe, is certainly called for, but not for the purpose of launching some nationalist critique opposed to the informal

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<sup>19</sup> Herman Dooyeweerd **A New Critique of Theoretical Thought Vol 1** Amsterdam, H J Paris 1953, p.70.

<sup>20</sup> The "radical critique" of the 1960s and 1970s failed to expose American sociology's accommodation to this religious ideology. But it must also be noted that sociology in more recent times, also outside the US, has continued the discipline's secularised accommodation to civil religion via "third way socialism" advocated most forcibly by Anthony Giddens in **The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy** Cambridge, Polity Press 1998.

and indirect imperialism of the US.<sup>21</sup> Rather, such analysis should be taken up in solidarity with fellow Christian scholars in North America and elsewhere. Americans need to learn how their "way of life" has been positively appropriated as well idolatrously absolutised.

So this critique of Parsons' sociological theory exposes how it rests upon an "America first" assumption. Here, in this essay commending Skillen's contribution to social and political science, we also draw attention to how Skillen's work helpfully points the way for Christian scholars wherever they are. In the Asia Pacific region we have a scholarly task ahead of us to examine the "American Way of Life" and its impact upon our own societies and that includes the way we have understood the sociological study of our own societies - whether that is Australia and New Zealand, Fiji, New Guinea, East Timor, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Korea, Japan or the Philippines. We need deepened insight into how, despite all the fanfare about its Christian character, this "way of life" has become a conduit for a secularised world-view, civil religious approach to government and politics. It has been carried along by a presumption that the integrity of education and science is secured by a secularised public sphere, in which religious belief is subjectivised and privatised.

Skillen's "America first?" exposé helps us to distinguish between the study of what people do in their many responsibilities and the religious commitment that must necessarily come to expression in their "way of life". But if the "American way of life" has presumed to privatize all other ways of life based on other religious beliefs, we are then examining the impact of a "way of life" which in significant ways has turned itself into its own idol! That is the problem we deal with here. To put it succinctly: a truly *Christian* sociology should seek to distinguish between the concrete social expressions of a "way of life" and the underlying religious commitments that direct the way humans give expression to their social responsibilities.

### **What We Seek as Christian Students of the Asia Pacific Region**

A fresh perspective is what we seek, and as we do so we will also become aware of how our lives confront America's world-wide influence. How are we, as Christians engaged in science and scholarship, to make our distinctive contribution from this region of the globe in response to this challenge? This is where we live, where we too heed the biblical call to pursue justice and peace. As Skillen's work is commended to Christian students, of whatever nationality, discipline and level of education, we remember that our calling is to form our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Niall Ferguson *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire* New York, The Penguin Press 2004

<sup>22</sup> It is said that John Calvin dated his conversion to the time he became teachable as a student in

Christian students have a calling to fulfill, called to "bear witness" wherever we live (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:7-8), working together for the discipling of nations, living mercifully as those to whom God's mercy has been shown. Our identity is found in our membership of what the scriptures call the Body of Christ. As members of this Body, we are put to work where we are, called into service with our many responsibilities. This membership defines our identity in a calling which transcends national boundaries and regional limitations.

Life on this planet has unfolded in amazingly complex and enriching ways. Our diverse responsibilities - in families, and friendship, in marriage, in school, in clubs and associations, in the market place, as citizens and workers - present many complex challenges. Our responsibilities intersect in a rich fabric of interwoven, historically unfolded, interdependence in which as image bearers of the Lord we are called to serve our neighbours. Skillen has developed his scientific and scholarly perspective by giving sustained attention to the normative character of this dynamic social complexity, and has done so largely from within the US polity of which he is a citizen. But because his political theory gives concerted attention to how all of these responsibilities function in the political community, we can read it with profit as we relate to our tasks as *Christian* citizens, pursuing public justice as that is reflected and respected (or not) in our laws and ways of public governance.

But, of course, that is not all. The Christian life has never been easy going, and the promotion of justice and peace faces many obstacles. Skillen has also addressed the difficulties that have to be faced, the hurdles and the diversions which those pursuing public justice will have to face when normative considerations are ignored, when might over-rides right, when love of neighbour is suspended by pragmatic impatience.

### **The Student's Task in Our Shrinking Globe**

Politics, sociology, economics, history and psychology are not just so many hurdles to be overcome on the way to a job we won't get if we don't have that "bit of paper". But for decades, education has been in the front line of political attempts to transform and integrate the many kinds of human endeavour into a "way of life" that equates progress and human fulfillment with commercial success and material advancement. As part of this transformation, "higher education" has become a site for politicians turning social "goods" like schools into business enterprises. Consequently, the above-mentioned sciences have been diminished as mere hurdles on the path to getting that "bit of paper". However, there is a *Christian* way to respect these disciplines, to give them their due, and avoid this "assembly

line" mentality. Skillen, for example, has sought to "do justice" to all sciences, these social science disciplines in particular. These disciplines are ways in which we concertedly focus upon the details of our lives. They are ways to examine how we serve our neighbours with love and justice.

As persons who hold a variety of responsibilities, we undertake these scientific studies with our self-understanding already developed to a considerable extent, seeking further insight into the ways in which our lives are formed. Indeed, despite the sin, which is brought into our broken lives with our own cooperation, our lives are yet held together by God's special favour. He keeps His word to us, His image-bearers. And although studies can in no way overcome our sin, they can remind us of the responsibility we retain every day again for the future of this planet. Particularly in the social sciences, we identify various ways our lives should unfold in service to neighbours near and far, through justice, kindness and generosity. Whatever the discipline, our scientific reflection is of immediate relevance as we seek a *repentant path, a normative direction* for our lives.

Thus science is part of our stewardship; the social sciences are, in fact, ways in which we can begin to grasp the wealth of resources that are at our disposal, deepening our understanding of who we are, clarifying what we have been doing and indicating how we should be living from here on.

Thus, these sciences make their own contribution to our understanding of what we are called to do. As those who have been created in the image of God, we are invited to be stewards within the wide extent of creation - in our families, marriages, communities, schools, churches, associations, clubs, political communities. The entire human community is called to live in the shadow of God's merciful protection, to join in the historic chorus of praise to the Lord, loving Him above all by simply walking in His ways, developing everything we do in this creation to bring out its splendour, its glory (Matthew 5:16).

Now of course what has just been stated is a confession, a statement of belief concerning the meaning and purpose of the social sciences in relation to our manifold responsibilities, wherever we are located, wherever we give ourselves to our tasks. This is not to say that other confessions, expressing other religious beliefs, are not possible. In fact, if one looks carefully at the work produced within these disciplines, one will soon come across a variety of religious beliefs, pre-theoretical commitments which are presupposed by the analysis of human society. But here we have begun a process by which we, who have *professed* our belief in Christ, will not allow our "way of life" to be privatized by the civil religious demand that we consider our work to be religiously neutral. But also we will resist any temptation to turn it into an idol.

So, it seems that non-American Christians like ourselves, students of this Asia-Pacific region, can't avoid confrontation with some aspect of the "American way of life". We might well say it has *idolatrous* features. But we should not fool ourselves into thinking that that is sufficient. Skillen might have identified the *religious, yes the idolatrous*, commitment that dominates the political self-definition of the US, both domestically and in its contribution to international justice. But though that insight may be of immense help to us, it does not do our work for us. Our calling then is to undertake research and explore how nationalistic idolatries have become "ways of life" in our own context, in our own citizenship, and also in our scholarship. We should read Skillen's work as a call to take up this critical regional challenge with great urgency. We need deeper and sharper insight into the religious beliefs that undergird political life in our polities. We need deeper and sharper insight into how the Christian way of life should pursue justice here in this region. We need deeper and sharper insight into how the Christian way of life has been accommodated to non-Christian political agendas. We need to repent and we need to get to work.

Skillen has not done our work, even if what he has published helps us get started. One key way of getting started is to focus upon the appeals that are made in our own social contexts to the "American way of life". What impact does this "way of life" have upon our local communities? What part have Christians had in this? We need discernment about the underlying *religious* beliefs at work in our societies. And how are we to live a life that challenges such beliefs by the concerted pursuit of justice, if not by the development of a *Christian* political option? Here our work may begin to show us ways in which we can co-operate *regionally* in response to our calling to be Jesus' disciples. We need to work together on this.

### **Reflecting Upon Our Regional Experience of American Influence**

Following this introduction is a list of suggested research projects designed for research within school and university course-work. From what I have said so far, it would seem that one very crucial focus for research in this region would involve deepening our understanding of the impact of "the American way of life" upon our Asia-Pacific communities. So, let me list some examples of this impact from my own regional experience that can serve as a starter to recognise where the "American way of life" (AWoL) has made its mark. We also need to unpack this term in relation to what we actually experience. Hopefully others, in other polities, can augment these *Australian* examples and continue the discussion on the blog we've set up at [ALoR-Asia](#). This is the question: **Can we identify instances where the American way of life has a taken-for-granted impact in our region?**

\* In the days immediately after the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 terrorist attacks, a crowd gathered in Sydney holding up placards "We are all Americans now!" This showed a deep solidarity with Americans about this dreadful attack.

\* Australian electoral politics has increasingly taken on a "Presidential style" even though we retain a parliamentary form of democracy with the British Monarch as Head of State. When a recent Australian Prime Minister was deposed and replaced by his party's vote, he reportedly said that this was against his better judgment because, after all, at the last election it was he who had been voted in as Prime Minister. But this is not how our electoral system works. Our electoral does not involve a vote for PM in the way American voters, in their electoral system, cast a vote for President.

\* Ask any Australian, or New Zealander, who was born, say before 1951 (when I was born), where they were when news came that the American President John F Kennedy (1917-1963) has been assassinated. (Australian boys of my age will also remember that moment when a cricket test ended in a tie with the West Indies in 1961). They may also recall where they were when the first time a man stepped out onto the lunar landscape in 1969. And then of course there was the resignation of President Nixon in August 1974, and film footage of the last helicopter leaving Saigon in April 1975. Many will have vivid memories of those events.

\* Among the banners being carried in the "Vietnam Moratorium" marches of 1970 and 1971 in Melbourne were those saying: "End US Imperialism!"; "Australia is not the 52<sup>nd</sup> State!" There was also one saying "Make the US the 7<sup>th</sup> State".

\* In this country we play "Australian Rules Football" and used to refer to it as "Aussie Rules". Now, with increased commercialisation it is known by its corporate logo, "AFL", modelled on American basketball's "NBL".

\* Churches and para-church bodies from across all denominations provide numerous examples of Christian people being encouraged to think about and live their faith in ways that have initially tried and then found to succeed in North America. Of course, there is local resistance to the "Americanisation" of Christianity, and many now are being taught to read the bible in ways that claim to challenge imperialist ideology. There is a constant flow of "American" and "Anti-American" sentiment flowing through evangelical, Anglican, Roman Catholic, ecumenical, reformed, traditional protestant, anabaptist and orthodox efforts. And so, "purpose driven living", "moral majority" politics, and an allegedly liberal progressive accommodation to latest insights derived from the "Jesus seminar", confront the "new perspective" on the New Testament and the regular visits of lecturers, consultants, seminar leaders and media celebrities instruct the faithful with the latest insights so that they can enter into public debate about "faith and ... " whatever, "politics" included.

The above examples illustrate something of the way Australians, almost instinctively, interpret themselves. They indicate strong sentiments and attachments. Our country's political movements regularly express solidarity with US trends, groups deemed to be similarly placed on the political left-right spectrum. Indeed, the US "way of doing politics" even influences the way we are "anti-American". Thus our talk about ourselves, and about what we do, shows a deep impact of this "way of life". There are also many examples in commerce and industry. Further research might



arise from exploring these examples further and in greater depth.<sup>23</sup>

Here, again as a "starter", are three "regional" issues that can be explored to deepen appreciation for American influence across the region.

\* Consider Skillen's view. *"Americans do not generally associate the military with government but with the nation. The military defends the nation and its free citizens from attack and oppression. The military is not part of the government bureaucracy that many, particularly on the right, deride as wasteful, as an interference of misguided interference in individual and market freedoms. With the political process and government facing ever greater crises of confidence and paralysis, it is all the more clear that almost the only rallying point for national unity is defense of the nation, defense of freedom, against a threatening outside enemy."* [10 years on](#) *Perspective Newsletter* 45:2 September pp. 1-3 at p.3 (438).

Is not this a similar concept of military autonomy that is implicit in post-colonial dictatorial régimes where the military rules? Consider Myanmar and Fiji. Consider also the impact upon those promoting justice and standing against these illegal régimes when the US by a unilateral decision, with UK and Australian compliance, proceeded to attack Iraq in defiance of the UN.

\* We might also ask whether in Indonesia the military has been subjected to greater civilian oversight since East Timor's independence in 2002 under the leadership of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

\* Compare and contrast the Indonesian Constitution and its Five Principles (pancasila) upholding a multi-religious state, with the American Constitution's First Amendment with its provision for "free exercise" and "non-establishment" .

Of course, we do not forget that there are also many other influences from other countries and cultures at work in the countries of our region. The US does not, indeed cannot, have it all its own way. But there is also an awareness of, say, growing Indian dominance of telecommunications and cricket, (plus a large presence among suburban taxi-drivers in Australia's major cities), as well as Chinese dominance in manufacturing (plus many Chinese students in higher education courses in Australia and New Zealand). Most of those reading this will be doing so with the help of Apple or Microsoft computer technology which have assisted us in the production of this material. And we recently discovered that when the American financial system suffers pneumonia the rest of the world writhes with chronic fiscal wheezing. Many also talk as if the debate about "gay marriage" will be well and truly over should the US, despite its constitutional tensions between state and federal jurisdictions, go ahead to redefine marriage law to include homosexual friendship. But that will just presage the beginning of deeper world-wide ambiguity over marriage, and also over US moral "leadership" of the "liberal democratic" west.<sup>24</sup> Our

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<sup>23</sup> The above list could well be the start of a discussion (if not a book) that "clears the ground" for an exploration of how Skillen's version of Christian democratic politics should be read in an Australian political context i.e. where our *cultural* colonial status is confirmed by our constant importing (rather than exporting) of *ideas*..

<sup>24</sup> see "Biden comments on same-sex marriage expose White House divisions" in *Washington Post* May 8, 2012. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>. Recent statements by the US President and his

lives are being shaped by many commercial, political, ethical and religious influences and our immediate political future is indeed uncertain on many more fronts than simply what stock-market movements or political popularity trends can tell us.

In this situation, our Christian task is to develop a coherent perspective so that we are not taken completely by surprise when political tensions erupt, when new fashions exploit the "frontiers" of public decency, or when diplomatic and military alliances bring on new problems. Increased trade and commercial contacts have an impact upon local economies and industry, and these days educational programmes see students travelling the world in order to complete degree requirements from back home. There are exotic trends in the arts, trendy fashions that capture social media and news services, as well the many dimensions of popular culture (music, art, film, literature,). Not all are evidence of US dominance, but our region, along with the entire globe, exhibits the global reach of US influence. This is evident, not only from US military and political power, but in our own nation-building and our over-dependence upon motor cars and oil. US influence may not be all-consuming, but that is no excuse for failing to sharpen our insight about the American impact upon who we are, the opportunities we have and the time in which we live.

In particular, Christians should not ignore the fact that many of the "Christian influences" that we welcome into our lives have, since the end of World War II, arrived on an international tide of a surging misconception about American prestige. We are all part of a global international community which, in decisive ways, is also shaped by the US view of its own international responsibility.

## **AoLR and Christian Scholarship**

So we come to our present concern with Skillen's work, and note that this too is fully part of this historically significant dimension of our 21<sup>st</sup> century lives. But let us also give full cognisance to an important fact - this updated bibliography is available from the [web](#) due to work by Skillen's *Christian* colleagues who are, in actual fact, not members with him of the

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Vice President suggest that such a change to the way homosexual friendship may be lawfully understood if such people choose, has little or no impact upon the way the law considers marriage between a man and a woman. In this, as elected public officials, they give every indication that they have not actually thought through how they see government as a tool to change reality, changing by law the way citizens, and the people around the globe, **think**. They mask their own promethean reach by silly childish talk about "wanting to create history," which we last heard from President George W Bush in his *National Security Strategy* building on President Reagan's "Star Wars" initiative. The latter was often criticised by his political opponents for trying to implement a "vision" gained from watching Luke Skywalker. This "same-sex marriage" proposal comes out of the same civil religious and promethean stable, with every indication that the US president presides over a political community that prefers pragmatic dreams to the difficult task of reforming the conduct of its political affairs.

US political community. Apart from myself, Steve Bishop the initiator and proprietor of AoLR is from Bristol in England, and Chris Gousmett, who has launched the [AoLR-Asia web-site](#), has done so from New Zealand. Other parties to this "regional" venture reside in Singapore (Lay Hendra Wijaya), Seoul (Wesley Wentworth) and Manilla (Romel Bagares). And to say it once more, although this introductory essay commends the writings of an *American* political scientist, it is specifically addressed to students of "our" Asia-Pacific region.

Our respective regional political communities are part of a complex international political order which has surely been influenced by political ideas grown and matured from within the "American way of life". But, this region, like the US itself, is yet to see the emergence of a sustained *Christian democratic* movement along the lines Skillen suggests.<sup>25</sup> And yet, our identity as a small dispersed group of Christians working together on a still tiny project in this expanding region is neither cancelled, nor confirmed by the hyper-power status of the US, nor will it be by the emergence of any regional mega-power (China or India or Indonesia).

Why are we engaged in this project? How do we see ourselves? In view of all that has been said above concerning our critical confrontation with American power and influence throughout the world, "Public Justice for All" is not mere "advertising". To read this as a middle-man's shpeel for an American "product", would be to fail to appreciate the fact that North America is indeed part of our shrinking globe which is expanding in new intensity,<sup>26</sup> where all people are increasingly confronted with each other. As *Christian* thinkers and professionals who commend Skillen's *Christian* insights to the *Christian* students of our region, we find ourselves called upon to discern what is good and what is evil, learning to distinguish between our *identity* as followers of Jesus, who has our complete loyalty, and the respective tasks He gives us as citizens of the countries in which He has placed us.

There are many useful insights that can be gleaned from Skillen's searching *Christian* critique of [America's Two Exodus Stories](#), but however helpful this example of an American critique of US civil religion may be, we all still face a situation where we have differing local national traditions and as *Christian scholars and scientists* we are therefore called to support biblically-directed scholarship that critically examines: Japanese militarism; Australian neo-liberal statism; the political sources of New Zealand's very unequal society; Fiji's "coup culture"; Indonesia's pancasila;

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<sup>25</sup> James W Skillen **In Pursuit of Justice: Christian-Democratic Explorations** Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield 2005.

<sup>26</sup> See James W Skillen "The Expansion of our Shrinking Globe" *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* Summer 1991 pp.4-5, 27 (No. 205) <http://www.allofliferedeemed.asia/news/james-w-skillen-the-expansion-of-our-shrinking-globe/>

China's efforts to rehabilitate Confucius; Korean shamanism; and much more besides. Historical scholarship that explores the colonial residues from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries is also called for. There are significant instances of the need for ongoing reconciliation with indigenous peoples throughout the region, and also between nations, as I have pointed out with respect to Australia's relationship with New Zealand.

### **And in Addition ...**

At the conclusion of this introductory essay, readers will find some 20 research suggestions to students, teachers, tutors, lecturers, professors and supervisors, each drawing attention to some or other aspect of Skillen's contribution. I also hope to include such suggestions in future updates to the [Clouser](#) and [Goudzwaard](#) bibliographies.

Like Goudzwaard and Clouser, Skillen's writings are characterised by a consistent effort to give due respect, do justice, to the many and varied institutions and social settings in which we live out our lives. Skillen refers to this as the many *responsibilities* that, as part of our participation in the *imageo Dei*, are now evident in our complex differentiated social life. Goudzwaard alerts us to this same reality when he writes about the simultaneous realisation of norms in cultural-historical development and Clouser discusses norms in a similar way as well.<sup>27</sup>

All three, in concert with other reformational thinkers, seek to side-step what Skillen calls "sceptical negativism", the attitude that characterises much of modern and post-modern life in western societies. Within the political communities of the West, many citizens have developed negative and grudging views of government derived from classical liberalism, in which the primary function of government is to protect the sovereignty which individuals exercise over their own lives.<sup>28</sup> In all western societies, the same classical liberal view has presumed that advanced formal education is the key to individual autonomy and well-being. But in these societies, it is glaringly obvious that after decades of intense transformation of universities into giant, multi-campus job-training enterprises, many graduates hold a very negative view of their education, society and contribution as citizens, along with deeply nihilistic views of themselves, and the future.

The call to political and academic involvement as part of our human vocation to love God with all that we are and to render loving service to all our neighbours in all the responsibilities that we carry, sounds strange,

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<sup>27</sup> Bob Goudzwaard **Capitalism and Progress: A Diagnosis of Western Society** Grand Rapids, Eerdmans 1979, p. 65. Roy A. Clouser **The Myth of Religious Neutrality** Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press 2005, pp. 274-280, see espec. p.280.

<sup>28</sup> Hence the US acquiescence in the construal of the "gay marriage" issue as one of protecting the "rights" of individuals.

even weird, to the modern (and post-modern) ear. But that is the base-line commitment that has motivated Skillen's work. His work is a concerted effort to give a readily available alternative to this debilitating world-view, as much for the "public square", as for the halls of academia; as much for life in one's local community as with one's own household. Our citizenship connects us in many ways to our responsibility to contribute to a healthy global society.

### **And in conclusion ...**

And it is for reasons such as these, that AoLR stands as an encouragement to all students. Some will be enrolled in university courses. Others may have missed out on getting a place and wonder what they should do next. There will be those who sense they should have studied harder when they were at school. Will some reading this be encouraged to advance their own education by private research? We also expect there will be those who take their cue from Winston Churchill, that their education will not be interrupted by any schooling.

It is not difficult to see why many students avoid formal education when it is dominated by a commercialised learning ethos. They have met too many graduates for whom a job is simply another form of conveyor belt, enslaved to the promised relief once the job is over. But relief doesn't seem to have arrived. They have met too many people who have lived by this world-view who cannot give a coherent assessment of life's purpose.

And when such uncertainty confronts students, seemingly from every side, is it any wonder that they become uncertain about themselves, their education, and feel compelled to stay on out of a fear that some serious injury will result from trying to "get off" the treadmill. Consumerist education is fuelled by such fear. Many good students are turned away from the kind of scholarly research that we are considering here.

By saying this, I am not wanting to dishearten or alarm anyone; to the contrary. This description of what seems to face so many erstwhile students in university and college courses around the world, is to say, with Jim Skillen:

*Don't go that way! It is a dead-end. Turn around (Mark 1:14-15).*

Such a turn around is not some internal, psychological state that has to be willed into existence by pious desires. It is not some private cultic matter, but a turn-around from the heart allowing a new way of understanding, a new sense of who we are in our many-sided responsibility, gladly living out of the unpriceable gift of being made in God's own image. That, for Skillen, is human identity. This turning around opens our studies to the fact that political service is the search for ways to love our neighbour with public justice. That is indeed the way by which the Lord God promises to

richly bless our lives as citizens living under His rule.

As students of political theory our aim is to become qualified analysts of public justice, who offer concrete every-day perspectives to help our neighbours. They too have to negotiate complex differentiated difficulties, and in sharing the load we learn that human responsibility is never put on ice. Life in God's Kingdom is now and not left until the end of some life-long and mythic assembly line. Neither do we melt as we study within problematic course structures. We seek instead to sense the leading of God's Spirit that will freshen up our studies. Our responsibility remains intact. God, in Christ, confirms us in His image. That is the gifted context in we live, relying upon Christ Himself to integrate our lives, as citizens of His Kingdom. We love our neighbours as ourselves, acting justly with mercy, looking to the Coming of the Resurrected and Ascended King.



# **Twenty Research Topics and Suggested Links**

## **High School & Junior College/ Under-Graduate**

### **Why study politics at all?**

The question is a pretty obvious one. But it has to be addressed and especially so when you start studying politics at senior high school level. That is as good a time to address this question.

What have you learned already in earlier years about politics and citizenship and how have you learned it?

Think about assemblies at school when politicians or public servants are invited to speak. Also think about what you have learned from family-life, church-life and even by being a member of a local sporting club, or youth organisation.

Think about the differences between "political studies" as a subject you choose to study in your final high-school years and what you have already learned about government, citizenship and politics from all other sources.

Can you identify some of the specific things you want to understand about politics from what you know already?

Can you outline good reasons why political life should be studied in school both as a compulsory and ordinary part of the education of all students and also as a subject in which you can choose to specialise when you get to higher grades?

What kind of education will it be if the study of politics is not part of the curriculum?

What are the consequences of citizens not being sufficiently educated about their political responsibilities? How could political studies in school become a part of an unjust political régime?

How does a political community's view of tolerance (or lack of tolerance) have an impact upon what is studied in school and how it is discussed?

How can political studies as a school subject contribute to genuine public justice and tolerance for different political viewpoints? How does the study of politics at any level avoid becoming a matter of dispute between different political beliefs and ideologies? Explain how you think it is possible to study politics while remaining true to one's beliefs about what government is and how the political community should be organised.

Explore the contribution schools make to political life. Identify graduates from your school who have become involved in politics either in government at some level or in political parties. Interview them.

As well, set up interviews with various teachers in your school and your school's principal. Interview these people by interview schedules you develop to probe some of the issues raised by the above questions. Report on these interviews in your research reports. Compose an article describing your research and your findings for the school's student newspaper.

What role should political parties have in political education? And how should Christians work together to insure that they are rightly educated about their obgoing responsibilities?

**To get you started:** ["When citizens can't agree"](#) (234), ["Educating Christian Citizens: Where to Start"](#) (329, 431), ["Civic responsibility for Christians"](#) (228).

## Definitions

In political science it is important to develop accurate definitions of all social institutions, organisations and relationships, and of government, political organisation and key concepts. Read and summarise the following. What other important things are missing from the list? Develop your own political studies word-book or dictionary. To begin develop entries for the following:

Government (264), (346), (422), (425), (439), (441), (449)

Political parties (336)

Representation (47), (264), (393), (441)

Public justice/ tolerance (137), (143), (309), (325), (437)

Public administration, stewardship, responsibility (154), (156), (228), (297)

## Learning to Ask Political Questions and to Put Dissenting Views

Work in groups of four students. From this list, chose 4 issues to be explored by your group (e.g death penalty, poverty, nuclear weapons, religion).

[Unlinked numbers refer to the [2008 consolidated bibliography](#); blue numbers and links are from more recent publications and can be accessed directly.]

Choose one article for each issue. Each student is to read each of the 4 articles chosen. They are then to develop a set of questions (3-6) to explore each of these 4 issues as responses to what they have read in the articles. These questions should not only explore Skillen's view of the topic but probe the normative demand for "public justice" for each issue. Justify your questions for each issue in one page outlining the principle that is at stake in this matter.

For your group project on each article-issue choose 3 sets of questions and justifications (one from each of 3 members). The fourth member writes a "dissenting minority report" defending his/her set of questions and explanation against those already selected. This should briefly compare and contrasts his/her views and arguments with the views and arguments of the "chosen" three for each issue. In other words each member takes a turn at writing a dissenting opinion about his/her own set of questions.

Death Penalty (185), see also [Death Penalty](#)

Torture (355), [\(382\)](#). Imprisonment (202)/(220), [\(409\)](#)

Food, Poverty and Hunger (70), (209), (210), (262), (290), [\(373\)](#), [\(404\)](#)

Abortion and upholding life (81), (91), (144), (195), (281), [\(428\)](#)

Pragmatism (122), (160), [412](#)

Pluralism (375), (417), [\(418\)](#)

Environment, resource and land management (77), (78), (79), (198), [\(430\)](#)

Defense/nuclear weapons (94), (104), (172), (317), (338), (357), (368), [\(429\)](#)

International Justice (191), (223), [\(291\)](#), [\(320\)](#). Globalization [\(205\)](#)

Economics [\(394\)](#), [\(407\)](#), [\(419\)](#), [\(442\)](#) .

Religion (347), (348), [\(388\)](#) [\(437\)](#), [\(443\)](#), [\(444\)](#)

## Government and Life Together:

Consider the discussion in ["Conserving the Environment"](#) and summarize the argument. Apply these principles to the analysis of your own local and regional, state and national levels of government. Are there areas where the authority and responsibility of lawful government to provide public-legal governance and protection of "the commons" is vague, compromised or undermined by other interests?

Investigate the way on which lawful government in your political community



oversees and regulates:

- (i) the ownership of pets and animals;
- (ii) the collection and disposal of garbage and sewerage;
- (iii) the maintenance of roads and pathways;
- (iv) the development of properties either for housing or business;
- (v) the provision of water, gas and electricity;
- (vi) the control of plants and the eradication of pests;
- (vii) makes provision for welfare services;
- (ix) the taking of possession of unused land for development.

Which tasks come under which level of government and how is proper accountability to the public interest maintained?

## Undergraduate

### Why study politics at all? (see topic 1 above).

In the light of what has already been disclosed by your study of politics, consider the arguments put forward in the lecture "[The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics](#)", and its published [paper](#) (see No. 54 in Appendix 6 below). Evaluate the potential for political studies to become subservient to various social institutions in an unjust and ideologically loaded manner. Consider the way in which universities, professional associations, churches, various ideological movements, political parties and government itself can, for their own self-interested purposes, compromise and subvert the distinctive contribution of political science.

### Practicum

This project probes the extent to which politics is part of "every-day life." These topics refer to social and public venues that can be explored for how they function in public-legal and political ways.

In these settings students can gain first-hand experience and their reports will document their experiences and observations. ([137](#)), ([156](#)) and ([228](#)).

a) **The Bus. Travelling and Conduct on Public Transport** - fares and fare evasion; concession fares; identity cards; school buses; what can and cannot be consumed on the bus; how is conduct regulated, monitored and enforced? Private and public transport providers. Explore passenger deviance; ID and concession fares. How is compliance enforced? What punishments are meted out for offenders?

b) **Church in the Housing Estate** - explore the history by which permission was granted for the building of the church; was it part of the original plan for the estate? Explore issues relating to the church building's relation to its immediate community: the parking of cars in neighbouring streets, the construction of car-parks, building requirements, complying with local character in building construction, noise restrictions and other local ordinances governing the conduct of church communities in residential areas. The development of community groups in housing areas.

Consider also church sporting teams and the public regulations concerning "working with children" checks on those involved. How does the church view these civic requirements.

c) **Police, Neighbourhood Watch and Local Security** - what policing occurs in the local area? Is there a "Neighbourhood Watch" group? Does a local security firm patrol the streets? Why? Why not? How is graffiti discouraged in your

community? Does it occur? Where? Why? What does local council do to keep the place graffiti free? What can be done by local initiative to enhance safety? What can you say about street life (walking the dog, playing, recreation, homelessness) in this community?

d) **Local By-Laws / Ordinances** - walking the dog, scooping the poop; skateboarding on roads and paths, cycling; crossing the roads; noise restrictions; boundary disputes; fences; rubbish collection; overhanging trees; conserving local character.

e) **Violence and Bullying (school-yard & elsewhere)** - how does school relate to the local police? Dispute resolution among young people at school and in public-life. Violence. Gangs. Explore problems of crowd control at children's sporting events.

(f) **Security and Surveillance** - explore security and surveillance in the following: local supermarket; gated communities; nursing homes and hospitals; schools. Employment & volunteering, police checks & clearances.

(g) **Road Rules and Traffic Restrictions** - who may lawfully drive a motor vehicle? What rules govern bicycle use? What other restrictions hold over roads? Speed restrictions. Preferred route? Heavy vehicle routes. Car registration and insurance.

(h) **Land** - How is land use regulated and managed? Public free space. Wetlands. National parks. Marine parks. Fishing and gaming licenses.

(i) **Signage** - Document the public signs that are part of your (urbanised?) life. Explore the regulation of public signs. Houses for sale, notices for property development. Street signs. Speed restriction signs. Other road signs. Signs which warn of danger. Artistic and local heritage signs. Other public notices.

(j) **Aged Care** - become a regular visitor or volunteer for a local retirement home or aged care facility. Note the procedure you have to follow to get clearance to visit. Explore the facility's public philosophy. Find someone who needs a visitor for reading, playing chess, talking or just going for a walk. Sharpen your insight by finding out the regulations that govern such a community. How do such facilities protect people's dignity? What is Government's role in ensuring these places are managed with love and justice?

## What is a Public Philosophy?

Public Philosophy (105), (137), (149), (212), (228). Why is pragmatism self-defeating as a public philosophy? (122), (160). What is a "public philosophy"? Why does a modern nation need a public philosophy or is it perhaps possible for political discourse to be developed without some basic ground rules for the administration of public justice and the furtherance of political debate?

## Body Politics

Beginning with Skillen's critical theoretical article, "[Sandel and Nagel on Abortion](#)", explore the alternative that is given, which it is claimed neither Sandel nor Nagel consider. Is that interpretation right? Judge for yourself from the primary sources and consult [The New York Review of Books](#) as well as the ensuing debate between them. Identify as clearly as you can, the argument of both writers and then state in summary form Skillen's alternative view. Is it a compelling alternative? Why? Why not? What is the basic normative political principle (or principles) to which Skillen appeals?

## Local Government

Source material: "[The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics](#)", "[Politics on One World](#)", and "[Toward a Comprehensive Science of Politics](#)"

(153). See also [\(137\)](#) , [\(156\)](#) and [\(228\)](#).

Develop an account of the various constituted "levels" of public governance and specify the way in which local government "works" in your polity. Who is qualified to vote? Who is qualified to stand for office, for election to council and various statutory committees? Who does vote? Who does stand? Who gets elected? How is local government structured? How does local/city government relate to other levels of government? Are national political parties active in local politics? Why? Why not? How does "local government" relate to other levels of government? What decisions can it make? What is the sphere of its own responsibility? How are local conflicts about development resolved? How is accountability to citizens safeguarded? How are the rights of rate-payers safeguarded in relation to the rights of residents and citizens? What are the problems which local councils and their officers face with the efficient and effective administration of justice?

Sit in the public gallery of your local Council on six consecutive occasions and, if permitted, take notes. If not, find out how you might be able to do so. This should then provide you with knowledge of council's deliberations and the contentious issues with which they are dealing for your further research.

Explore council's planning scheme and identify an issue of public interest e.g an application to buy an nursing home in order to develop a set of residential apartments for wealthy young couples seeking a holiday destination.

## Government and Environmental Justice

Source material: "[The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics](#)", "[Politics on One World](#)", and "Toward a Comprehensive Science of Politics" (153). See also [\(137\)](#) , [\(156\)](#) and [\(228\)](#).

See also (79), (198), (257), (267), [In Pursuit of Justice](#) 2004 (328) chapter 2 "Civil Society and Human Development" (see also 315) and chapter 7 "Liberalism and the Environment", and [\(351\)](#).

How should government relate to the way citizens care for the physical and natural environment, for plant-life, gardens, open spaces, for animal and bird life, for pets and control of insects.

Explore your local government, council, or other body that has responsibility for maintaining public health, disposal of sewerage, disposal of household and industrial waste, the oversight of residential cultivation and development - the keeping of pets, animals and birds, the growing of vegetables and fruit.

Consider the ways in which the various levels of government - national, state, regional, town or municipality - contribute through laws and ordinances to ensure environmental care and justice.

What weaknesses can you identify? Is your local authority given recognition by your national constitution? How is its accountability maintained?

What are the current political issues, and the major and minor players, that argue about the respective merits of **conservation** and **development**? How are these two aspects of human culture understood?

Could a nation's environmental responsibility be facilitated by the explicit recognition of local government responsibilities in a national constitution?

## Honours and Graduate or Professional Diploma

### Why study politics at all? (See topics 1 and 5 above)

What is the relationship between the study of politics as you would do so in school and the political education that should be encouraged by government? How should the various organs of political education co-operate in civil society and why should they co-operate?

### Political organisations

Read, study and evaluate the underlying approach to [Christians Organising for Political Service](#) (57). Consider the view espoused and compare that with the ["Is there a place for 'Christian Politics' in America?"](#) (537).

What, according to Skillen, are the basic constraints upon any contemporary effort (i.e. in the US or elsewhere) that would form a national political party into an integral facet of Christian political service?

### Reconciliation from Generation to Generation

Critically assess the argument for the ongoing development of affirmative action policies at all levels of public governance for citizens of minorities who, over the course of a nation's historical development, have been subjected to generation-to-generation injustices and exploitation.

See chapter 5 "The Cause of Racial Justice" [In Pursuit of Justice: Christian-Democratic Explorations](#) (328).

### Public Justice and Adult Maturity

Expound the basic argument in the following statement:

An important moment of truth in liberalism, ... , is its recognition that the mature adult should be recognized as a responsible person and not reduced to a mere pawn of the state or to some other role or relationship. This insight was made possible by the development of open societies in connection with the historical differentiation of the modern political community. In other words, the development of a public-legal order, in which the independence of other associations and institutions are recognized, has also opened up a sphere of private civil law in which people are recognized as free persons - as individuals - and not only as family members, employees, students, spouses, church members, and citizens. A just state or political community not only recognizes the independent authorities and responsibilities of nongovernment organizations and institutions, It also recognizes and protects the rights of individual persons as such.

This is from Chapter One "What Distinguishes a Christian-Democratic Point of View?" [In Pursuit of Justice: Christian-Democratic Explorations](#) (328), p.10.

If this then is a valid and legitimate part of a Christian-Democratic political point of view, how are its adherents to guard against alliances with an historically elitist view that presumes that citizens of polities where this view of differentiated adult responsibility is recognized are in some way a "cut above" people in societies that do not have the benefits of such developments in private civil law within the public legal order?

Investigate Skillen's view of political *humility*. See (26), (199), (227), (234), (256), [\(427\)](#), [\(428\)](#), [\(430\)](#) and elsewhere.

See also comments says about how Christians should talk about their political endeavours in Skillen's 2003 [Francis Schaeffer Lectures "Jesus and Caesar; Christian Faith and Political Process"](#) (324).

## Masters and Doctoral Projects

### Why study politics at all?

Skillen has repeatedly addressed this question over his career. As a part of a "more theoretical" research project investigate his answer to that question. But in such a project the student researcher will also consider Skillen's argument alongside theoretical perspectives put forward by other political theorists. In such a project, the student would not only delve deeply into Skillen's writings but also other thinkers would come under consideration (e.g. Pierre Bourdieu, Miroslav Volf, Christian Smith, Alasdair MacIntyre and John Rawls). Of course, his writings *in toto* can be approached from this angle. It would be a valid topic for doctoral research just as Skillen approached Dooyeweerd's writings to write "The Development of Calvinistic Political Theory in the Netherlands with Special reference to the Thought of Herman Dooyeweerd" (No. 12). So what was Dooyeweerd's answer to this question?

### Shari'a Law and Democracy

From the interview with Jim Skillen on *Inner Compass* "[Democracy and Sharia law: Can They Co-Exist?](#)", consider his views of the possibilities of Shari'a law being accommodated to political life and state law. Critically evaluate the value of his theory of religious pluralism for Indonesia with a predominantly Muslim populations (95%) though with no strong desire for Shari'a to be imposed by the state. Explore the way Skillen explores the challenge of Shari'a - consider his contribution to Ahdar and Aroney eds [Shari'a in the West](#) (417), "[Watch Turkey](#)" (356), and "Islam and the USA" in Goheen and Glanville eds [The Gospel and Globalization](#) (410).

### The US, the Po-Mo Holy Roman Empire and International Justice

From Chris Laidlaw's [interview](#) with Jim Skillen on Radio New Zealand consider the view that the US is acting internationally as a modern equivalent to the Holy Roman Empire?

Explore the scholarship that explores the character of the Holy Roman Empire as well as 20th century analyses "American exceptionalism".

Consider Skillen's view of the ambiguous place the US government gives to itself in the international sphere and identify the contribution of America's civil religion to its self-identification as the servant of Providence to make the world safe for democracy (Woodrow Wilson).

See: "Three Zionisms in the Shaping of American Foreign Policy", [With or Against the World](#), "Is there a place for Christian Politics in America?" "Freedom Idealism and the US National Security Strategy". See also "Zionism as Racism" (21).

Explore various other nationalist identities of nations in the Pacific rim whether the secularised "Lucky Country" (Australia), "God's own country" (New Zealand), and the various other civil religious commitments that drive nationalist politics in Fiji, Indonesia, Vietnam, China (the Middle Kingdom), South Korea, Japan and the Philippines.

See "International Justice: is it Possible?" (19), "Problems of International Integration" (20), "International Interdependence and the Demand for Global Justice" (27), "Norms for the International Economic Order" (37), [International Politics and the demand for Global Justice](#) (67), "Who wields international justice?" (191), "The question of structure and vision in European integration" (216).



## The major facets of Skillen's political theory

Identify the leading characteristics of James W Skillen's political theory And in particular the manner in which it draws upon a neo-Calvinistic world-view of Abraham Kuyper. See Skillen and Carlson Thies, "Religion and Political Development in 19th century Holland" (73), Skillen's other contribution to Temple University's Center for the Study of Federalism under Daniel Elazar, *In Pursuit of Justice - Christian Democratic Reflections*. See also his introduction to Kuyper [The Problem of Poverty](#) (206), "From Covenant of grace to Equitable Public Pluralism" (245). "Covenant, Federalism and Social Justice" (293). "Can There be Just Politics Without Covenantalism?" (299), [Calvin, Calvinism and Politics](#) (403, 533), "Reformed ... and always Reforming?" (405) and "Covenant" (521). Identify Skillen critical argument about the inability of Calvinists to develop a political perspective that decisively avoided an established church and why its churches and culture has to such a great extent been so decisively secularised by accommodation with the American civil faith which presupposes the privatisation of religion.

## Political Studies and America's God.

Explore the hypothesis that Skillen's political theory can be understood as the response of a Christian to an educational culture indebted to the religious influence of Thomas Jefferson upon America's educational culture and schooling system at all levels. (138)

## Can Christian education ever be private?

With chapter 6 "Equal Education for All" [In Pursuit of Justice: Christian -Democratic Explorations](#) 2004 (328) as your starting point, explore this question in relation to the principles and policies enunciated by Skillen and his collaborators in the Center for Public Justice concerning schools in the US polity. Do not limit your research to North America or even western liberal-democratic polities but explore the issue of Christian parental responsibility for "the nurture and admonition" of their children in polities that tend toward a totalitarian control over education, or where the public-legal order has not adequately recognised adult responsibilities and tend to over-ride non-government authority by state and political community dominance. [Disestablishment a Second Time](#) (with Rockne McCarthy and William Harper) (76) , [Justice for Education](#) (129), [Thomas Jefferson and the Religious Character of Education](#) (138), [Religion and Education Policy: Where Do We Go From Here?](#) (187), [Parental Freedom of Education Choice](#) (215).

# **SUPPLEMENT TO THE ANNOTATED LIST OF PUBLICATIONS JAMES W SKILLEN (up until 2012)**

NB From the beginning of 2008 Skillen's Center for Public Justice publications - Public Justice Report, Capital Commentary and Root and Branch - are included in the listing. The Number 373 coincides with the last number in the 2nd 2008 edition. Other items that have come to light from earlier years are listed consecutively at the end of this listing with their respective years. The bibliography is compiled to be of assistance to those making use of Skillen's writings in their research. A future update will seek to comprehensively avoid most of the anomalies, repetitions and redundancies that accompany the current versions of the listing.

## ***Publications 2008 - March 2012***

### **2008**

373. [Food, Fuel, and Farming](#) Capital Commentary, January 4.

This is a broadsheet that explains the way market-distortions that push up the price of food, that encourage the growth of carbon emissions to the disadvantage of farmers in poor countries result from foolish Government policies. The discussion begins with the increases in the price of food and the attempt to promote ethanol production. Actually, suggests Skillen - referring to Robert Samuelson in the [Washington Post](#) 12/12/07 - the supplementing of gasoline with ethanol may actually create a false sense of progress and **increase rather than decrease** oil dependency. In a bad year competition between food and ethanol producers could push prices even higher. The latest farm bill produces market distortions which will hinder the development of alternate fuels. Meanwhile support for American farmers makes it impossible for farmers in poor countries to compete on the American market.

[Faith and the Presidency](#) *Root and Branch* 10, January 17.

This is a further discussion of the way religion is referred to in the (American) political realm. It covers developments over the last 50 years, including JFK's assurance that a Roman Catholic presidency would not mean a church controlled White House. Skillen reviews Mitt Romney's confession of Christian faith in recent times.

The religious affirmation in Romney's speech is quite thin, the values claim general, and the political relevance indirect and largely unhelpful.

Huckabee admits to wanting to amend the Constitution to insert standards that comply with God's law for marriage and the unborn. For the rest - Clinton, Obama, Edwards and McCain - the faith to which they appeal refers ultimately to faith in America and its promises. And Skillen's conclusion:

What we have, then, in the campaign rhetoric is civil religion as ground for moral values and morality as ground for self-government.

But in all this the responsibilities that belong to government and other institutions, organizations and relationships are not clarified.

"Pluralism as a Matter of Principle" (Part III, Chapter 7) in John A Coleman S J (ed.) [Christian Political Ethics](#) Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford pp. 141-152.

This article is Skillen's contribution to a republication of a previously published exchange with David Little's "Conscientious Individualism: A Christian Perspective on Ethical Pluralism" (No. 317) in Richard Madsen and Tracy B Strong (eds) [The Many and the One: Religious and Secular Perspectives on Ethical Pluralism in the Modern World](#) 2003. Skillen's 12 page article focuses upon Little's appeal to Roger Williams as justification for his approach (Skillen's other comments on Williams are at Nos. 164, 122 and 135). For Skillen something more basic than "conscientious individualism" is required because

the individual conscience is not the ultimate seat of authority. The Creator and the

Creator's moral law function as the authority and the normative standards for human beings.... Biblically speaking, the commandments were not addressed to individual consciences but to persons in community, including those who held institutional authority as parents, priests, elders, judges, kings, and prophets.

The reply to Little begins with Skillen's alternative view of Williams' contribution.

What we might call Williams's strong affirmation of structural pluralism is on display in his distinction between church and state. At the same time, within each of those spheres he was not at all an ethical pluralist and certainly not an ethical relativist.

### [Civil and Religious Laws in England](#) *Root and Branch* 11 Feb 29

An interesting American interpretation of a lecture by the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury suggesting that Muslim (sharia) law be accommodated within the British legal system. On the one hand, the lecture supports freedom of association for diverse "religious communities" even if in a peculiarly English, or British, manner. On the other hand, the Archbishop's argument relates social pluralism to universal secular law. Skillen discerns equivocation in the proposal. He notes that "relating to something other" is not peculiar to Jews and Muslims. There is more to this than merely relating to the British legal system. Skillen notes that the Archbishop affirms freedom of association to avoid a clash of loyalties between state and culture. But can this be the reason for including legal recognition of *sharia* within the British legal system? British Christians (the "mainstream" of secular British society) also owe ultimate allegiance to God who transcends both the Crown and the Church of England. So is Williams suggesting disestablishment of the Church of England to allow it to become but one of many religious communities under the crown or pluralizing the Church in order that some elements of *sharia* be included within its established framework? Skillen's second set of observations they focus upon Williams' proposal to redefine the role of public law. Williams' concern is that minorities shouldn't be allowed to become "too isolated" in their cultural practices from the mainstream. The law should monitor non-mainstream affiliations and ensure that marginal practices incompatible with mainstream understandings of liberty are restrained. Skillen's implied caveat is that this will inevitably impinge upon freedom of citizens (if that is what they are) in marriage, private finance, education and other non-state areas of life. The Archbishop's plea for a reconceived "social pluralism" is not putting the emphasis where it should be placed: if the public laws are not justly serving the actual population then they must be changed through the democratic transformation of the political community.

### [Broader Picture, Better Politics](#) *Cardus (Comment)*, Reviews and Opinions, March

1.

This is an appeal to American citizens (and other North Americans) to think in a Christian way about the upcoming presidential campaign of 2008. A more modest patriotism should characterize those who claim to honour the Lordship of Christ Jesus, and they should be reading their bibles with a much greater recognition of the immediacy of its teaching for their political lives.

### [Is the Economic Crisis a Moral Issue](#) *Capital Commentary* April 11

While the title of this broadsheet links economy and morality, the article begins with a discussion of diverse languages that refer to normative demands in the different social spheres. And so with discussion of the "credit crunch" or the "economic crisis" **one cannot avoid questions of justice and injustice and, hence, the issues are inextricably moral.** This then is a discussion of political morality, of tax policy, bank services, and how people are provided for in order to pay daily costs.

This is not just a consequence of some massive technical glitch which was unanticipated in the workings of some massive machine, the crisis is no innocent accident, *A Financial Times* article explores the gap between rich and poor and notes how the growth in pre-tax income from 1979-2005 was inordinately in favour of the rich (1.3% per year for poorest households, less than 1 per cent for middle income earners and over 200 percent for those in the top 1 per cent of household earnings). In 1979 the differential was 1:8:23; by 2005 1:21:70!. The immorality is not just about the decisions of individuals and businesses; it is also a great deal of *immoral injustice* on the part of government.

"The Pluralist Philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd" in Jeanne Heffernan Schindler (ed) [Christianity and Civil Society: Catholic and Neo-Calvinist Perspectives](#)  
Lexington Books, Lanham pp. 97-114

The initial endnote indicates this contribution depends in part on Skillen's 2003 article, "*Philosophy of the Cosmological Idea: Herman Dooyeweerd's Political and Legal Thought*" (see No. 323).



This is a slightly briefer and refined version of the original 62 page journal article. The footnotes have been reduced considerably. The article begins with a brief statement of the basic orientation of Dooyeweerd's contribution to scholarship. A brief account of Dooyeweerd's critical examination of the possibility of philosophical thought, is then immediately followed by an exposition of how Dooyeweerd's general transcendental-critical method explored the **Dialectical Antinomy in Modern Liberalism** (98-101). It comes down to an exploration of the liberal view of human freedom, as developed by Kant, and focused upon practical reason as the origin of moral obligation. If the rational self is autonomous while also obligated then at one and the same time the self is free from all law and is the law that constitutes its own freedom. The subsequent discussion explores how liberal ideology impacts Medicare in the American polity

... people cannot live in a complex differentiated society without authoritative government and civic obligations. The liberal ideology foments the illusion of autonomy with a corresponding weakening of governance.

**Creation Order as Ground of Societal Pluralism** (101-103) explores the way Dooyeweerd's pluralist social philosophy will approach the comprehensive study of social institutions and the social fabric of diverse responsibilities. This is a normative philosophy seeking to identify how the various institutions, organisations and relationships are in fact accountable for how they give expression to human responsibility *Coram Deo*. **Human Identity and Creation's Modalities** (103-104) is a brief outline of how sphere sovereignty is maintained between social spheres in an inter-dependent social fabric. **The Differentiation and Integration of Human Society** (106-106), the author expounds upon the way human society has emerged or developed through history. Humans are called to give shape to their callings in history. Some relationships are founded biotically (in marriage and family), whereas others are founded culturally or historically (a newspaper or a trade union). The discussion broaches the question of healthy social differentiation, which could not have come about without the differentiation of a *public-legal order with its own normative identity qualified by the juridical modality* (p. 106). **Toward a Just Pluralism** explores the structural pluralism by which no one societal organisation or institution has the superintending authority over all the other social relationships. The differences between public and (two types of) private law are expounded. Internal private law refers to the rights of bodies to oversee their internal affairs.

Laws of the state cannot be just if they violate the internal authority and responsibility of the non-government spheres of life. Civil private law (common law) pertains to the realm in which individual freedom and equal treatment should be recognised and guaranteed by the state as a matter of right (p.108).

Here is "the juridical asylum of the human personality", counter-balancing any excessive communal demands within legal life. Skillen exposes why liberalism has got it wrong. Liberalism assumes that this is the original sphere of human autonomy, whereas this sphere cannot come into existence without the public legal power's protections against the over-stepping of public officials of their offices. The State that is responsive to its calling to ensure public justice is undermined by the absolutization of individual freedom or of the state. To conclude Skillen make a brief comparison between "sphere sovereignty" and the idea of a "subsidiary" relationship among associations and institutions. Dooyeweerd's social theory is compared with that which tries to refer to public life in terms of a whole and its parts. This clarifies why from a Christian standpoint it make no sense to speak of the autonomy of non-state institutions within the state. Autonomy/subsidiarity refers to a whole and its parts. The **Conclusion** draws the state (or political community) as an institution through which humans are called to respond with creative, history-making stewardship.

### [Political Speech and Action](#) *Root and Branch* 12, May 1

This addresses the common presumption that a common public reason should guide political debate. Skillen broaches two difficulties. The first difficulty is with the manner in which "religion" is defined as the opposite of "secular".

Granting equal treatment to citizens of diverse faiths in our constitutional system does not set the political system apart from religious convictions; it just means that the political community is no longer constitutes as a community of faith.

It is simply not true that public reason is the only thing that people of diverse faiths have in common. People of similar faith may well disagree on public policy, and thus it is quite legitimate for voters to seek to have candidate give an account of how their approach to government is rooted in the faith that shapes their lives. The second difficulty is that the view too narrowly focuses upon the Constitutional protection of religious freedom as if this is merely a matter of recognizing an individual's conscientious beliefs. "Free exercise" is not merely about freedom to have whatever beliefs one has in private. It is also a matter of how a child's education is chosen by its parents;

how social service providers serve those in need. Such protection of "freedom of religious exercise" would lead to genuine pluralism. Citizenship is about membership in a political community in which citizens can freely participate from their diverse points of view.

### [America and Israel](#) *Root and Branch* 13, June 2

Religions, says the author, are ways of life, functioning like glasses in that they help us get things into focus. The article explores the *American way of life* as a religion. The US support for the state of Israel is expression of this way of life, this civil religious viewpoint. And it is in conflict, at a religiously deep level with other religions.

Skillen explores the dismissal of Robert O'Malley from the Obama re-election team for his suggestion that Israel as much as the Palestinians were responsible for the failure of recent peace initiatives. A bizarre taboo is at work in US public life that means raise questions about Israel are never raised for fear of being denounced by powerful lobbies. But why are Jewish and Christian evangelical voters so pro-Israel.

The author outlines the central thesis that will become part of a book he is writing.

The Christian Zionists, the American Jewish Zionist and America's own new Israelite self-definition come together in a coalition of religious forces that has the power of an (almost) established civil religion. It is the religion of the American way of life that sustains both other conventional "religious" Zionism. For genuine public debate insight is needed about the religious character of the American way of life.

### [Rule of Law Succumbs to Torture for Safety](#) *Capital Commentary* June 6

Can torture be sanctioned by the President without abrogating the rule of law? Skillen notes:

Pragmatism in support of American safety supposedly justifies the exceptional means that appear necessary to the president to achieve that end.

The argument explains that the "enhanced interrogation techniques" do not make the US any safer .... Illegitimate methods to obtain information means that a court abiding by the rule of law will not proceed to prosecution. Principle above pragmatism is more and more a political need for the entire political community, for the US and for the world at large.

### [Does Our System Demand Too Much of the President?](#) *Election Series '08* No 1 July 12

As President of the Center for Public Justice, Skillen introduces an "Election Series '08" for consideration among those who are following CPJ's policy development. This is the only time in the cycle of American elections that the people of the US come together in one election. In this election the entire political community is the electorate. This is the one and only public official elected by them. That is at the root of America's too great demand upon its head of State.

The discussion draws on reflection from Larry Siedentop of Keble College, Oxford about the democratic deficit in the EC. This is seen in the French, Dutch and Irish rejection of the latest EC proposal. While governments are represented in Brussels, the citizens themselves are not integrated into the governance of the Union. It's not just economic benefits, but membership, and adequate representation that is missing. Skillen compares this with the American situation where political cynicism is also on the rise. The US also has a democratic deficit. Representation has become abstracted from the people who do the voting, if they vote. It is against this cynicism that Barack Obama has marshaled younger voters into a nation-wide movement for change. Siedentop misrepresents the situation in the US by comparing it favourably with the EC, but what is lacking is genuine civic education by political parties which have become little more than electoral machines. *Congress is even less democratic today than it was decades ago.* The common good of the national polity needs to be strengthened in a comprehensive way. Democratic renewal must bring about a new and enduring form of political accountability from those elected to govern.

### ["The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics"](#) paper presented at the conference sponsored by Metanexus Institute, "Subject, Self, and Soul: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Personhood" Madrid Spain July 13-18.

[Paper](#) *Transdisciplinarity in Science and Religion* No. 6, 2009, pp.377-389

This article includes the author's most recent attempt to build upon discussions in which he has sought to specify the particular concern of political science (see Nos. 6, 19, 20, 27, 42, 48, 62, 67, 127, 153, 229, 376). The article's abstract for the conference reads:

The discipline of political science is still too much influenced by the ideal of finding a

method that will do for politics what Newton did for physics (as one author puts it). The quest for a "hard" science of political behavior that focuses on "facts" separated from "values" generally controls much if not most of the discipline. In this century-long quest, the discipline has important assumptions and methods from sociology, psychology, mathematics, biology, economics, and other sciences in various attempts to achieve a cause-and-effect explanation of political behavior. This paper tries to expose the weakness and adequacy (sic!?) of these typically reductionist approaches to political science and outlines an approach that not only rejects modal reductionism but identifies the object of political science as the norm-responsive institutional community that is constituted by government and citizens (or subjects). The political community (or "state" as it is referred to throughout much of the world) is a norm-responsive entity that cannot be properly understood from the prejudicial point of view of a fact/value dichotomy. Instead, it must be recognized as an historically dynamic institution that functions in all modalities of human experience (physical, biotic, psychical, social, linguistic, logical, economic, juridical, ethical, and more) and is distinguishable from other institutions and organizations, such as the family, church, school, and business corporation. Political science, therefore, must be an entity science that entails multi-modal normative analysis with full self-consciousness of its philosophical and religiously deep assumptions. [BCW NB the reference on p. 3 to sociology as a modal or aspectual science - whereas via the appropriation of Max Weber's historical economics there has been a strong tendency to view sociology as a science of an aspect of rational action, this influence has been modified by Durkheim's approach which is to view society in *factual* terms (and hence as a conglomerate of entities) via the analysis of its structural components.]

The paper is arranged with the following sections: an introduction examining the view of Jon R Bond and setting forth an alternative strategy in philosophical and historical terms (pp. 1-3); a discussion **Distinguishing the Analyzable** in which a brief discussion of what is involved in the scientific analysis of reality's modal aspects with a specification of the term political as

*.. that which pertains to the life and operations of the state or political community* followed by an analysis of the 2007 Presidential address by Robert Axelrod to the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association (pp. 3-10); an attempt to answer the question

**What Should Constitute a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics** (pp. 10-16) in which the author shows that it is possible to present a workable alternative view of what the discipline should be. This is not just a statement offered "in dissent" but has the reformation of political science in view pointing to a starting point for the science that does not put faith in scientific method itself.

### [World Language, Mutual Understanding](#) *Capital Commentary* July 19

This is Skillen's reflections on multi-cultural global culture. He had been attending a conference in Madrid Spain and attended the famous Prado museum which was but a short distance from the train station where the terrorist bombing had been perpetrated three years previously. It is a descriptive essay about the importance of "diplomacy in many languages". Diplomacy must be developed at a highly sophisticated level to meet the challenges of a shrinking globe (No. 206).

### [The Fannie-Freddie Bail Out](#) *Capital Commentary*, August 1

How is the recent "Fannie-Freddie Bail Out" to be interpreted. It is a bill which enables the US Government to guarantee the mortgage creditworthiness of two GSEs - Government sponsored enterprises. Threatened with their collapse the Government had to act to the tune of \$5 trillion. They had been kept viable by foreign investment but with a collapse in house prices and a withdrawal in investment capital they were threatened with bankruptcy.

The broadsheet lays out in straightforward terms what has happened and how it is to be interpreted. Market and regulatory failures are now to be paid for through taxpayer's monies. The losses have been socialized. The public bails out the market's investors so that they will stay and keep the free market wheels turning.

Skillen explains why adequate regulation of the market is needed to ensure that private investment failures are not paid for by tax payers.

"Is A Science of Politics Possible?" *The Global Spiral* 2009.09.01, also found in *Axiomathes* 20:1, 95-106. see No. 384 for hard copy pdf.

This is a re-written version of the conference paper listed in No. 384. The material is arranged under different headings. After a substantial introduction, a critical representation of the views of Bond and Axelrod is presented, which concludes:

The proper object of study for political science, I would contend, can be nothing less than the institutional political community of government and citizens.

The material is then organised in different sections under the following two headings: **What is the object of study?** concluding

In sum, my starting assumption is that the "political" is not a universal function of all human affairs, the study of which can yield a reductionist, cause-and-effect explanation of human behavior.

and **What Constitutes a Non-reductionist Science of Politics?**

... politics must be an *entity* science, not first of all a *modal* or *aspectual* science.

In Conclusion, Skillen writes

The aim of this paper has been to suggest that the reason for the failures and inadequacies of modern political science is that it has not adequately identified and distinguished the proper object of its study and that this inadequacy is due, in part, to the religiously deep assumptions about human nature and the nature of science with which much of its research begins. A different starting point with different assumptions about human nature, science, and political life is needed.

The implication is that a new view of science is needed and not just of political science.

### [Campaign Attention to "Religion"](#) Root and Branch 14 Sept 2

The Presidential campaign has seen both Republicans and Democrats giving attention to the "religion factor". The views of Dean Gerson, speech-writer for President Bush, are examined. Gerson, an evangelical Christian, had written in the *Washington Post* offering advice to candidate Obama but does so ambiguously.

Gerson is among those who want a religious America, not a secularist America.

According to this view, the presidential campaign is about which candidate should be authorized to represent the true American faith and way of life. In analyzing the respective merits of McCain and Obama, Skillen interprets their campaigns are two options within the dominant civil religion. It is a question of whether the old fashioned civil religion, or a new expression of the dominant faith will prevail. Skillen predicts a McCain victory seems unlikely.

### [Interview](#) with Chris Laidlaw, Sunday Morning Programme, Radio New Zealand, 7 September

The interview lasts 19 minutes, covering a range of questions about the orientation of the Center for Public Justice. The discussion covers the long tradition of Christian attempts to control government, or of turning national political communities into communities of faith. US civil religious nationalism views the US as God's means of leading the world forward and it is currently fired by a profound anxiety about America's No. 1 status. Why is the US political system so caught up in civil religious fervour? Skillen suggests that the way American's view politics, and the structure of America's system of political representation including the way the president is viewed, makes a major contribution to this. The president represents the people's love of the nation which actually is also deeply suspicious of government itself. The election while presupposing that the US is God's chosen nation to lead the world, expects so much and yet continues to search for a small federal government. This civil religious anxiety fills the vacuum brought on by the absence of national political parties. The discussion reviews the prospects of McCain and Obama in the forthcoming election. Skillen briefly comments on CPJ's policies - neither candidate comes close to agreeing with "most of what we are for." The problematic structure of US governance is evident in the election but this is not raised as an issue by the candidates. Whoever is elected will have to negotiate the many tensions, complexities and ambiguities.

### [The Root of the Problem](#) *Capital Commentary* Sept 26

The root of the problem - the problem being: why have so many mortgage assets lost their value and become illiquid? - is a lack of trust.

Banks and investment firms had enticed people to take out mortgages not adequately backed by the value of the homes they were buying. Lending institutions and homebuyers were gambling that housing prices were on a perpetual climb. Government policies encouraged individuals and companies to buy now and pay later. The trust was lacking to begin with; why should people put their trust in the government bail-out plans?



Trust will not be restored until real responsibility and genuine accountability are re-established at every point around the circle.

## Taking Citizenship Seriously: Christian Responsibility in Today's Political Context. Francis A. Schaeffer Lectures, October 2-5. Covenant Seminary.

Speaker: Dr. James Skillen, President, Center for Public Justice

Presidential Politics in a Post-Everything America - with GOP Congressman John Hancock.

<http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/audio/7893/>

McCain vs. Obama: Christian Electoral Tensions

<http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/audio/7894/>

Cynicism and Idealism: Redeeming Political Structures

<http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/audio/7895/>

God Bless America and Global Politics: Where Is Jesus?

<http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/audio/7896/>

Christian Leadership in Poverty and Family Initiative Reform

<http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/audio/7897/>

Skillen's 2003 Francis Schaeffer Lectures "Jesus and Caesar; Christian Faith and Political Process" are available at <http://www.resourcesforlifeonline.com/series/89/>

## [McCain, Obama and America's Two Exodus Stories](#) *Election Series '08*, No 8 Oct

15

Skillen continues the Election Series articles by giving a further account of how American civil religion manifests itself in contemporary political life. It is the backdrop against which most political debate in American makes sense.

The first story is that of the Puritans who, in covenant with God, took their exodus from oppression in Britain and set out to the new promised land. The second story was authored by America's slaves - mostly in song. Both exodus stories had distinctive views of America's system of governance. In the first story the federal government was to be a servant of the states, not the head of a national polity. In the second story a strong federal government led the fight against slavery and established equal civil rights for all citizens. Skillen explains how McCain and Obama relate to America's dominant Exodus stories - McCain representing the Puritan errand into the wilderness, and Obama the aspiration for a new day when equal rights for all is realised.

The views of the candidates with respect to freedom and government are examined. In terms of national defense, for example, McCain approaches the military as the expression of the nation's love of freedom; for Obama it is one department of government. Finally, the weaknesses of the two Exodus stories are canvassed. The first story runs off the tracks with American exceptionalism, while the second sees progress in more and more identity groups claiming their "rights". The author encourages readers to move beyond these stories when they consider how to vote and concentrate

...on the hard work of building a sustainable and trustworthy republic that can, with modesty and forethought, conduct the hard work of multidimensional diplomacy in a shrinking, warming, warring world.

## [Guidelines for Voting](#) *Election Series '08*, No 9 Oct 29

Here is a brief catalogue of CPJ's "Guidelines for Voting". What is outlined here is a summary of CPJ's [policy platform](#), and an analysis of how the candidates stand in relation to these various policy areas. 1. What is a political community? 2. What are the tasks of government in the political community? 3. What is the task of citizenship? 4. How should welfare policy be framed? Who "provides" welfare? How should welfare provision be regulated? 5. Education policy - does it promote justice for families, schools and equal treatment of all citizens? 6. How is human life protected at all stages? 7. Homosexuality - how do candidates define marriage? Is marriage a civil rights matter? 8. Security and defense. 9. Religious freedom. 10. The environment. 11. The family. The approaches of both major candidates in each of these policy areas is examined. Critical questions are raised concerning the administration of justice in relation to pressing problems.

\_\_\_\_\_ and Amy Sherman with help from Rudy Carrasco [Toward Civic Justice and Economic Empowerment](#) 5<sup>th</sup> Nov, 13 pp.

This is the fruit of a nine-month collaborative effort in which the authors seek to provide guidance for biblical Christians to attend to their callings as creational stewards, as those who seek God's shalom for their cities. It is outlined in terms of a "two step" method of presentation - **Foundational Principles** - the way things ought to be; the way things are; the way of the King - and **Practical Applications** with **Eight Principles of Christian Economic Empowerment** to enable readers to begin to apply the principles and avoid politically correct and socially popular ways of economic life. These include 1. a high view of human dignity, potential, creativity, freedom, and responsibility; 2. recognizing our identity as stewards to form genuine opportunities for resource management of up and coming generations; 3. affirming the amazing creational diversity and complexity of personal and social life; 4. affirming the important contributions of governments, individuals, families, and the associations of civil society for a healthy, prosperous society; 5. respecting entrepreneurial activity; 6. emphasizing a distinctive Christian approach to business; 7. affirm the role of government in economic matters; 8. acknowledging our Christian responsibility to protest against economic injustice.

### [The Obama Victory](#) *Capital Commentary* November 7

Obama's election confirms a process by which it has become more and more evident that this national political community demands national governance. His victory puts paid to the view of the American republic that allowed the structure of the republic to take care of itself. It cannot do that. Skillen reviews the role of the federal government since Roosevelt's new Deal and Johnson's great society. Reagan and Bush represent concerted efforts to arrest the trend, or the speed, at which the United States has proceeded toward a national polity in which it is no longer merely a federally protected collection of State polities. Moreover the US is no longer able to set its own course in its own terms. The US has moved beyond the governance advocated by Roosevelt and Johnson (Democrat) and Reagan and Bush (Republican) and now requires coherent and accountable national governance. This changing context also requires a very different foreign policy. Obama's victory however does not necessarily draw attention to the structural problem now presenting itself to the US - its Constitution militates against the kind of national governance the country now requires. The national polity of the US is "underserved" domestically and internationally by an out-of-date governing system. How can the structure of the republic be reformed over the long term?

### [The Question of National Governance](#) *Election Series '08*, No 10 November 17

Skillen has taken the opportunity of the Obama election to enunciate his deepened appreciation for the federal integration of the US national polity. It is Skillen's response to the responses that were made to his *Capital Commentary* (No. 389) where explained how America's political landscape has changed over 75 years.

Federal politics inadequately represents citizens of the national polity. This is seen in the outmoded system of representation in Congress in which members are not specifically held accountable for governing in the interests of the nation as a whole. There is but one office bearer elected by the national electorate. In this skewed system the central government is subject more and more to un-elected interest groups.

It hasn't always been the case that the US is characterized by a genuinely national polity, but it is now, he says, which raises the question of how Americans should view their constitution. He also implies that a polity that lacks valid representation and hence genuine accountability is in part a cause of the nation's economic woes, its ongoing inability to adequately face up to the need for just governance. He illustrates this by merely listing some of the ongoing endemic problems that seem to defy solution; the financial crisis; the lack of an adequately funded health-care system; issues of energy, transportation and environment; the degradation of national infrastructure; the disarray of social security; the inability of Congress to fund the federal governments operations.

All these issues that require sound legislative decisions by both houses of Congress and the president on behalf of the nation as a whole. Yet legislative battles over these issues increasingly lead nowhere because the congressional brokering process works primarily to try to satisfy competing state and regional interests and competing national interest groups.

If the governing philosophies that dominate the polity do not change there will be perpetual emergency reactions, where elected legislators and presidents seek to solve problems short-term in defiance of the political platform upon which they have stood in their election campaigns.

This is clearly an attempt by the soon to retire president of the Center for Public Justice to assist

the members and supporters in their ongoing interpretation of political life as the presidency of Barack Obama unfolds and as long-term impacts of legislation are felt in society's diverse institutions. These must be recognised and upheld by government. The responsibilities that belong to these (families, churches, businesses, universities, schools etc) are themselves the most important limits on the federal government's actions. This is the view that the Center promotes, over against those who would put states' rights and individual rights as the primary means of structuring the Federal Government's mandate. And this recognition is by no means the same as the question of the different levels of government. In the US today there is confusion over the politicized role of the judiciary, which is relied upon to define matters that should rightly be defined by law makers. The Supreme Court is not a legislative body, says Skillen. The US is caught in its own political system and at least part of the problem is the blurring that occurs to the difference between the art of campaigning and the art of governance. A very important dimension is also in need of revival - and that is citizenship itself needs to be emancipated from passivity, on the one hand, and reliance upon interest groups on the other. A new kind of nationwide citizens association is needed, he says.

### [The Left Wing of America's Civil Religion](#) Root and Branch 15, December 3

Also available [here](#). This is an examination of the underlying "left-wing" appeal by Sally Quinn of the Washington Posts' "On Faith" column that President Obama should demonstrate symbolically that he will be an inclusive President by joining the Episcopal Cathedral parish when he comes to Washington. This continues Skillen's examination of America's civil religion and this is identified by him as its "left wing".

The inner weaknesses of the argument are exposed; the assumption of Ms Quinn is that to criticize inclusiveness is to reject the equal rights of all citizens. Quinn's article is an attempt to manoeuvre public discussion about the President's faith onto one side in a denominational dispute. Skillen's reply brilliantly exposes the inner weakness of her inclusivist ideology by showing her support for a denominational mind that repeatedly aspires to change churches with their own religious beliefs into religious communities with the soul of the state. He concludes by issuing a challenge to Quinn in relation to her "inclusiveness": What if President-elect Obama views the office of President as an office in the political community, and not as an office of America's civil religion? Will Quinn think less of the Obamas both as Christians and as the first family, if they decide not to join the Washington National Cathedral?

### [Entitlement](#) *Capital Commentary* December 19

This Christmas meditation looks at the financial crisis and economic recession in a context where Americans have gotten used to expecting their "entitlements". An exclusive and inordinate concentration upon securing **my** entitlements will misconstrue the overall situation, by concentrating solely upon the way the system's failures impact **me**. The system is revealed as broken and there is a grave injustice in the breaking of promises, the violation of trust, and our failure to provide to others what we owe to them. Christmas reminds us that the coming of the Son of God who was entitled to everything and discounted his claim to everything. Disenfranchised himself of every divine privilege, and became a servant - one who owes everything and claims nothing. Only the entitlements that come from following Him endure forever.

The more we give ourselves to loving and doing justice to those who are also entitled to the love of God, the more we gain.

## 2009

### [Inauguration by Fire](#) *Capital Commentary* January 16

Skillen reflects upon three tensions that will test the leadership of the new president. The first is created by the opposing forces of a crisis in confidence that has gripped the country about America's ability to solve its problems, on the one hand and the ongoing pressure to take immediate action to show that something is being done to address these issues, on the other. The second tension deals with America's traditional belief that hard work and self-confidence can get the job done. But are the problems getting too large and too complex? The third tension is about the way a president should communicate to the public. How is optimism to be balanced with a frank assessment of how difficult things are at home and how limited America's impact can be abroad? The truth must be told and responsible government must be encouraged.

### [Colson on Prayer, Church, and America](#) *Root and Branch* 16 Jan 19

This is a respectful, albeit hard-hitting exposé of Chuck Colson's attempt to maintain his Christian faith while holding on to a remnant of his belief in American exceptionalism. It is an examination of the world-view inherent in Colson's December 20, 2008 Breakpoint radio commentary. The problem with Colson's discussion, Skillen says, is that the church he is thinking about is composed of Americans who have turned away from consumerism. It is as if Christianity has failed if God's mercy is not transmitted to the world via the thrifty, hard-working American Christian church goers. The church in Colson's view becomes a means to the end of fulfilling God's special plan for America.

In praying for the church Colson should think of it not as a mean to America's end but as God's truly chosen people - Israel fulfilled through the in-grafting of believers from every nation into Christ (Rom. 11:13-24).

### [Can Trust Be Restored?](#) *Root and Branch* 17 February 23

How is trust to be restored? The question is posed smack bang in the middle of the efforts of governments to tackle the financial crisis by an injection of trillions of dollars into banks and investment companies that have all but nationalized institutions which were thought to be "flagships" of government support for a free market. The separation of commercial and investment banking that came with the abolition of the Glass-Steagall Act has meant that large sums of money have come into the hands of greedy men that should never have come their way. The Federal Reserve now resembling a public hedge fund leverages at more than 50:1 (Niall Ferguson). What about bolstering supervisory standards in the institutions that led us into this disaster? Bad laws, faulty regulatory systems, negligent oversight and errant patterns of finance and governance need to be exposed before they can be corrected. Can the new president regularly report on his contribution to overcoming this crisis, in a way that concertedly and frankly builds trust in order to begin the work of overcoming these systemic failures? Skillen suggests that President Obama should grasp this problem - the restoration of trust is a top priority requiring frank disclosure of what government is seeking to do to avert disaster with regular reports to the nation.

### ["New Politics" Still Just a Promise](#) *Capital Commentary* March 13

This is a description of the state of play between the President and Congress. The Republicans in Congress are in denial and simply adopt an opposition mode; the Democrat leadership are trying to grab the spoils, the control of the public's debit card. The American way of doing politics is somehow revealed as a disconnect between what elected office bearers are willing to do now and what they say they intend to do later on. The Washington DC experiment in federal funds for a voucher programme to enable 1700 poor students to attend non-government schools was unable to receive the promised grants in the bill Obama signed into law. Skillen's judgement is terse; *signing the bills exemplifies the kind of leadership he is choosing to exercise today, and actions speak louder than promises*. This is old politics.

### [Calvin, Calvinism, and Politics](#) *Root and Branch* 18 April 9

This is a discussion of the contribution of Calvin and Calvinism in this 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Calvin's birth. Yes Calvinism has made an indispensable contribution to the strong and enduring culture of institutional diversity in western society and beyond. There is a comprehensive footnote giving recent publications that provide insight into the Calvinist contribution. Skillen's concern is to direct attention to the tendency found among many Calvinist streams and offshoots to identify one or other modern state as a "new Israel", and this, of course finds its way into the US self-definition in



1776. Similar or related views can be seen in the Calvinists of Scotland, England, The Netherlands and among the Afrikaners. Skillen's concern is that the Reformed tradition should have long since recognized that "Christian" nationalism is a patently unbiblical idea. The government's task is the doing of justice in humility and fear before God and in so far as the Reformed tradition has promoted this view of government it has done right. There's no biblical basis for promoting any one government to act out of nationalistic or messianic motivation (see Nos. 393, 335).

### Hunger and Justice Capital Commentary April 10

This is a discussion of the situation in which 1 out of 10 Americans are reliant on food stamps for their daily food. Sure, a wealthy country like the US can look after its hungry, but the numbers are considerable, and worrying. But then the world problem is worse than that. Something like 20% of the world's population, at least, are chronically malnourished.

The discussion of hunger leads into a broader analysis of the widespread feeling of injustice that circles the globe. The debt-for-equity demands for bailing out car producers, contrasts with the fact that such a requirement was not needed when the US government bailed out the banks and financial institutions. The widespread sense of economic injustice and the approval of political leaders won't last long if such concerns are not met in concrete ways.

### "Reformed ... and Always Reforming?" in Sandra F Joireman (ed) Church, State and Citizen - Christian Approaches to Political Engagement Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York.

This contribution to a book about the perspectives of different Christian traditions upon international politics begins with discussion of **The Reformed Tradition** and some standard scholarly views about Calvinism, from Max Weber and W Fred Graham. The essay notes that the ideas of sin and predestination constitute the stereotypical view of "Calvinism" and asks:

Is there anything more to it than that? And what about John Calvin himself? Most important for our purposes, what if anything has the Reformed tradition contributed to government and politics, and particularly to international relations and foreign policy?

The "reformed" wing of the protestant reformation, identified with Calvin and Calvinism, is described. Calvin and the early Calvinists were not revolutionaries. They were not seeking to start something new. This approach has a world-wide spread, also in notable centres of learning. But it has also become identified with the doctrines of total depravity and double predestination which gives a lop-sided picture of its actual influence with an overly dogmatic theological tendency. Later in the essay under **States and International Relations** Skillen makes this clarifying comment:

The simplicity and unity of God's creational purposes fall from view, however, if one assumes that reality is constituted most fundamentally by a dualism between this creation and another world, or between the damned and the saved, or between Christian nations vs non-Christian nations.

The emphasis is upon God's one creation and the gospel, as the revelation that in Christ God will indeed bring creation to fulfillment so that His sovereign purposes reach their Sabbatical rest! God keeps His promises.

The essay is densely argued. In one place it notes similarities between Calvin and the Anabaptists in contrast to Lutherans and Roman Catholics. Both added "godly discipline" to the list of marks of the true church. Calvin differed from the Anabaptists with respect to the role of the magistrate - the political community is subject to Christ Jesus in Calvin's view in contrast to "government outside the perfection of Christ" in the Schleithem confession of 1527. Luther and Calvin also disagreed strongly over how government's responsibility is to be understood. In **Theological Distinctives**, Calvin's comprehensive view of "Creation, Fall, Redemption" is outlined, and Skillen concludes by suggesting that in contrast with Luther and the Anabaptists, Calvin was, indeed, a social reformer.

He wanted men and women in society to mirror God again, and that would require the ongoing reformation of every sphere of life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The next section "Church and State" is an important discussion of Calvinism's endorsement of societal differentiation and in the terms of Abraham Kuyper, of "sphere sovereignty". This section starts with an interesting and provocative sentence:

Most Christians today, we can probably say, are Anabaptists in the sense that they contend for free churches in open societies with governments that give equal treatment to all citizens regardless of their faith.

Calvin had assumed that the state should enforce true religion. So how are Calvinists, Christians in the reformed tradition, to take their stand over against Calvin? Hence the *semper reformanda* implied in the essay's title. Kuyper's unconditional disapproval of the burning of Servetus is noted. But the reformed Christians, in reaction to church control of the state have too often allowed their religion to be privatized as a civil religion has dominated the public square. The essay discusses the problem of "secular" politics - Kuyper advocated secularization when that meant de-ecclesiasticization, but resisted secularization if by that term was meant the religious neutrality of political life. Calvin's notion of the Old Covenant fulfilled in the New Covenant takes the bible of both testaments as a whole. There has been a negative consequence in Calvin's view of the "covenant community" found in nations which developed a "new Israelite" imagination. The New England Puritans, Knox in Scotland and the Afrikaners in South Africa have all been imbued with this notion. It has found a secularised form in the United States with "exceptional nation" of Woodrow Wilson and his latter-day disciple George W Bush.

"Government Due to Sin?" is the next theological distinctive to be discussed. Though Calvinists are usually closer to Augustine than to Aquinas, there is a minority stream within Calvinism that sees the government of the political community based in God's purposes in creation and thus come closer to Aquinas who argued that humans are political **by nature**. Skillen develops this view by reference to the flow of biblical revelation from Genesis to Revelation.

To be sure, if it had not been for sin there would be no need for the retributive functions of government, just as there would be no need for parental punishment of children.

And then, in discussing the stereotypes of any Calvinist obsession with predestination, Skillen observes that the development of a political community needs to be understood in terms of developing a facet of creatureliness, our being fashioned in the image of God.

If the reader will grant this hypothesis, at least for the sake of argument, then the meaning of God's sovereignty comes into view not first of all as an overwhelming power to predestine some sinners to heaven and some to hell. Rather God's sovereignty comes into view as the origin of human creatures, made in the image of God and called to love and serve God with everything we are and have, including our stewardship of the political community for the good of our fellow creatures.

There follows "Christianity and Civil Religion" a discussion of how such an understanding of biblical religion puts it on a spiritual collision course with the civil religion that dominates American self-identity, the idolatrous nostrum that the US is God's new lead nation in history.

**States and International Relations** explains that the normative demand of public justice for our political communities throws any alleged "end of history" brought in by the world-wide acceptance of the liberal state, as a misunderstanding of the historical and cultural task to which humans are called. Nations stand in need of Christ's reconciliation.

**Warfare and International Politics** reaffirms reformed commitment to just-war criteria by which Governments discipline themselves and their peoples for their own defense. Just-war criteria are as good a point of departure for thinking about strengthening and renewing healthy international relations.

In **Conclusion** Skillen reiterates the importance of a biblical basis for just governance, and the just use of force, in the face of a very serious international situation. Today it is widely assumed around the globe that *governments [should] act aggressively out of a nationalistic, messianic, or totalitarian motivation to try to force the world into the shape they wish it to have*. Justice in humility and fear before God is the exact opposite of this. Governments, all governments, of large and small nations, need to learn to act co-operatively

to uphold laws of distributive justice for the positive good of the commons - both the domestic commons within individual countries and the international commons of the world.

"To Look at the World Entirely Afresh" (Editor's Introduction) and "Contending Ways of Life" (Conclusion) in [Prospects and Ambiguities of Globalization: Critical Assessments at a Time of Growing Turmoil](#) Lexington Books, Lanham 1-8, 107-123.

In his introductory chapter, Skillen writes:

Our purpose, as authors, is to try to illuminate the global landscape and to provoke debate and critical reflection in classrooms and living rooms. Americans are go-getters, problem-solvers, forward-looking achievers. We want to get things done and make

progress. We don't like barriers that stand in our way. We have a difficult time understanding those who don't share this approach to life. But what if the American way of life is sagging with doubts and hampered by growing weaknesses rather than gathering steam with one success after another? If, to some degree, whether great or small, doubts and weaknesses are growing, then critical reflection on global changes and on the foundations of American life is called for – and perhaps urgently so. . . .

Where will all of this take us? No one knows. The optimists point to all the achievements of globalization that are lifting millions of people out of poverty and are pushing countries toward greater cooperation to achieve their mutual and combined interests. Pessimists point to the growing tensions among peoples and nations over food, fuel, and water, and over control of the direction that global shrinkage should take. More wars and conflicts rather than fewer may be the result. . . .

As Christians we are particularly concerned to gain a deeper understanding of how people throughout the world – all created in the image of God – can deal with their responsibilities for, and their distrust of, one another. Rejecting all utopian illusions about the triumph of human goodness, contradicted as those illusions are by human selfishness, crimes, and hatreds, we also refuse to ignore the constant evidence of God's mercy and grace toward humans throughout all generations, a sustain mercy and restraining grace that make possible forgiveness, renewal, cooperation, and the continuing search for ways to resolve conflict and to build patterns and institutions of greater justice and stability.

There are 6 chapters apart from Skillen's introductory and concluding essays. They are (2) Steven E Meyer, *National Defense University*, *Kaleidoscopic Change in World Affairs: Emerging Patterns of Sovereignty and Governance*; (3). *Max L. Stackhouse, Princeton Theological Seminary Faith and Globalization*; (4). *Rodney D. Ludema, Georgetown University, Globalization and the State: A View from Economics*; (5). *Alice-Catherine Carls, University of Tennessee, Martin The New Silk Road: Central Asia at the Global Crossroads*; (6). *Charles L. Glenn, Boston University Schooling and the Not-So-Sovereign State*; (7). *Dennis R. Hoover, Institute for Global Engagement Evangelical Christians: The New Internationalists?*

["Social Justice, Free Markets, and Evangelicals"](#) American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Tuesday June 23 Wolhstetter Conference Center, 12.00-2.00 pm.

In this exchange Skillen takes on the radical libertarian, who seeks to re-connect the evangelical community to that Republican interpretation of the American story, that views the US as a Christian society with a small and non-interfering federal government. "At this event, Marvin Olasky will discuss the false dichotomy between freedom and justice and offer his ideas on reconciling these aims." Olasky's summary of his presentation begins:

What is the best way to help Americans in need? How we approach this question cuts to our core beliefs about how society should be rightly ordered. For some, the free market is the most natural tool to use in the fight against poverty because it fosters innovation and prosperity while providing equal opportunity to all citizens. Others argue that social justice is best achieved through economic redistribution, in which a benevolent, centralized government levels the playing field and ensures equal results for all citizens. If the free market is the most efficient way to deliver goods and services across the American economy, does the risk of economic inequality make it unjust? If the idealism of social justice stifles economic growth through policies designed to ensure similar outcomes for all, does it take mobility and opportunity from the very people it is trying to save? Society often portrays mercy and equality as goals that conflict with innovation and efficiency. But is it true that free markets are incompatible with social justice?

The presentation, with jokes and cynicism, feeds a blurring of political complexity by simply appealing to some notion of "small government" as a timeless normative principle. Skillen's response is to avoid the cynicism and to try to demonstrate that it is possible to discuss political responsibility without getting lost in idealistic utopias. His approach is to highlight the evident complexities in America's political reality which Olasky's approach reduces to problems concerning large government.

### "Celebrating Independence" Capital Commentary July 3<sup>rd</sup>

This is a call of a "Christian patriot" to indeed be thankful to the Lord God for the good things the US has been able to do since the day the colonists declared their independence from Great Britain. A federal republic which initially intended to not maintain a standing army, also experimented in a new style of representative government. The US has survived its own Civil War until today it the world's chief hyper-power. Nevertheless Skillen advises his readers to reflect upon the fact that the US has had to achieve much more than its original constitution had envisaged, even if it is now on the brink of bankruptcy as the world's largest debtor nation. There are many problems that the US has to overcome on the path to being a genuine promoter of public justice, not only abroad but also most markedly at home. The American polity stands in need of a radical revision of its own independence.

### "Prison Madness" Root and Branch 19 July 13.

In this broadsheet Skillen reflects on the startling and troubling facts of the decayed and decaying situation in the prison system of the US. One out of 31 Americans - a staggering 7.3 million - are either behind bars, on probation, or on parole, and in all likelihood they carry the scars of added trauma from the abuse suffered while incarcerated. The issue has been pushed to the front of Congressional consideration by a first time Senator.

Christians should be pleading for God's forgiveness for our complicity in a criminal justice system that perpetrates and perpetuates so much injustice. And genuine repentance means turning around to do what is right. Some trenchant responses by readers can be found [here](#).

### "Islam and the USA: Contrasting Visions of the End of History" in Michael W Goheen and Erin G Glanville eds The Gospel and Globalization: Exploring the Roots of a Globalized World Vancouver, Regent College Press pp. 217-230.

This is a reworking of material that Skillen has been working on for many decades concerning the distinctive structure of the American polity and how it is predominantly shaped by a civil-religious vision of America's own exceptional place in history. In his 1993 paper "Toward a Contemporary Christian Democratic Politics in the United States" in John Witte Jr ed Christian and Democracy in Global Context Boulder, Westview pp. 85-99. "Forgotten Depths" (No. 219), Skillen had observed:

What we find in much of the early political history of the United States is a witness to something that stands at odds with the quest for limitless power and freedom that motivates so many people today.

In that paper he outlines an approach to the study of America's political history that would explain why any "Christian democratic" aspirations of its earliest years as Puritan colonies were subsequently eclipsed. In his more recent publications - With or Against the World (No. 329), Skillen has explored why America seems to adopt an ambiguous posture with respect to the international order. And this a further refinement of the argument of Chapter 2 of that book, by comparing Islam and the USA. It may appear strange to compare a world religion that dates from the 7<sup>th</sup> century with the United States of America which is not yet 250 years old. But, Skillen argues, by doing so, the contrasting visions of world history can be clarified, their similarities and differences specified.

The peculiarity of America's civil-religious mission to make the world safe for democracy can now be compared ... with Islam's mission. And that comparison can be enhanced by comparing both to the Soviet communist mission. The comparable factor that can be found in Islam, the USA, and Soviet communism is the conviction that history is moving toward the fulfillment of a universal human destiny and the primary historical force authorized to lead the world to that destiny is a specially chosen vehicle (Islam, the USA, or the communist proletariat), which must overcome diametric opposition in order to fulfill its mission.

After briefly introducing the topic, the discussion is organised under the following headings: **The Dar-Islam and the Dar al-Harb** - Islam is committed to a view that the end of goal of history is the whole world's submission to Allah; **Western Christianity and the Rise of Enlightenment Secularism** - a discussion of the historical inheritance within which the USA has developed its vision of itself *to be both the leading example and the vanguagr of freedom and self-government for the whole world*; **The Third Rome** - an excursus into the way in which Soviet communism - the major threat to the US vision in the twentieth century - was a secularised version of the Caesaropapist leadership of Ivan IV from 1547 who believed it was the Russian imperialism



mission to complete Christ's rule over the earth; **The USA: Making the World Safe for Democracy; Contrasting Soviet Communism, Islam and the USA**; and a **Conclusion** which seeks to identify the differing visions of Islam and the USA, and to give an explanation of the reason they both anticipate conflict with each other in the decades ahead.

The chapter Concludes with a series of questions about the future shape of global society. American civil-religious nationalism and Islam (traditional and radical) are among the most vibrant, history-shaping movements in the world today. They need to be examined carefully and scrupulously by Christians who should become more involved in taking their discipleship seriously in all dimensions of their lives.

### [Crunch Time: American Idealism, the Economy, and Afghanistan](#) *Root and Branch* 20 September 2

Skillen takes the three elements - the religious faith directing the 'American way of life', the serious problems of economic management and public fiscal rectitude, as well as waning public confidence concerning the war in Afghanistan - and explains the "deeper questions of this summer".

As with his previous broadsheets over many decades, this is formulated to commend a "stronger, shared vision of what a just republic should be in this shrinking world... sustainable prosperity will require hard work, durable savings, and stewardly investments in place of debt-induced consumption, unending warfare, and limitless grasping for the fulfillment of life's meaning in this age."

### [The Impractical Pragmatism of Healthcare Reform](#) *Capital Commentary* October 23

In this commentary on the efforts of the president and congressional leaders to broker a health-care deal, Skillen writes his own first "post-presidential" contribution for CPJ. He now signs himself as "Senior Fellow", continuing to focus CPJ's ongoing work in policy research. In the background of this analysis is Skillen's critical appraisal of the US system of "interest group brokerage" as the preferred path of "do what will work" governance. The critical point is summed up in the following terms:

Today in Washington we are witnessing a political process so weighed down by decades of bits-and-pieces pragmatism (Medicare and drug benefits for seniors; Medicaid for the poor; state-governed insurance companies; tax-free health benefits for employees in some companies; free-market this and government-run that) that continuing along the line of pragmatic incrementalism is no longer practical.... But what they finally come up with will almost certainly not constitute a coherent, long-term answer.

The final paragraphs are an annotated listing of important books and articles that can assist US readers understand why a break with the political tradition of "pragmatism as usual" is an important initial step to face up to health-care reality.

### ["Christian Counselling in the Public Square: Principled Pluralism for the Common Good"](#) *Edification: Journal of the Society for Christian Psychology* Volume 3, Issue 2, 2009 pp. 5-38

Skillen's article in the lead "Discussion Article" in this edition of *Edification* which features a "Dialogue on Christian Psychology". The abstract for the article reads:

Increasingly, the psychological profession recognizes the diversity of perspectives on, and approaches to, counseling and the study of psychology. This essay supports the legitimacy of distinctively Christian approaches in this field. This is not to suggest that nothing is common among all approaches, but that what is common in diagnosis, scientific assessments, and accountability standards are often contended from different perspectives. At the same time, psychologists, psychiatrists, and counselors with distinctive points of view must carry out their work in a public governance and accreditation context. That context is also regularly in contention, and its rules and laws are made by professional organizations and public officials who operate from different points of view on what is good and just for the public. Christians in the academic and professional field of psychology should not assume that the common terrain of science and public governance is "secular" (and neutral) and that their Christian viewpoint is only of private 'religious' significance. Rather, they should contend for the equal

treatment, in their profession and under public law, of diverse approaches in the field, including their own: in other words, genuine pluralism. They should also work openly and cooperatively from their distinctive viewpoint to help shape the laws and rules that will govern everyone in the profession.

Skillen begins his discussion by commenting on the views contained by an Oxford University professor, Tom Burns Psychiatry: A very Short Introduction (2006). It is debatable, says Burns, whether an entirely 'atheoretical' diagnostic system is possible. But then in California these days there are more people with psychotic diagnoses in prison than in mental hospitals. Important questions for practitioners are raised about the public demeanor of the counselling professions. The discussion proceeds with a discussion of **Freedom for Diversity in Counselling and research**. This is followed by a section, **Pluralism in Support of the Public Commons. Some Implications for Psychological Services** are then spelled out. Skillen concludes with the following statement:

You as professionals in the arena of psychological services, teaching, and research have some particular gifts and insights that should have an important influence in shaping what will be the all-or-nothing public laws of the land, the up-or-down rules that will govern your professions. If you do not exercise that responsibility in various individual and associational ways as part of your contribution to the Christian enrichment of citizenship, then you will, in essence, be choosing to concentrate only on your private responsibility, leaving the responsibility of shaping life in the public square in the hands of others. That, I contend, we must not do.

There is a good array of respondents: Jaleel Abdul-Adil of the University of Illinois, Chicago; Anna A Berardi and Nancy S Thurston, George Fox University, Portland and Newberg; William Hathaway, Regent University; Bert H Hodges, Gordon College; Kalman J Kaplan, University of Illinois in Chicago College of Medicine; P Scott Richards, Brigham Young University; James M Siwy, Richmond Graduate University; Mary Stewart van Leeuwen, Eastern University. The contribution of van Leeuwen is of particular note in that it outlines the response of the Psychology Department at Eastern University to the kinds of public and political issues that face the profession and which Skillen has outlined.

Skillen also replies to these extensive responses with a four-and-a-half page "Genuine Public Pluralism and the Establishment of Justice" (pp. 34-38). He stresses the importance of keeping different vocations separate and explains why he has used the example of Chaplaincy in the military as one example of the way government forms its contribution to co-operate with the religious diversity at work in the public domain.

["The biblical call to social responsibility"](#) (March-April 1994); ["The question of authority"](#) (May-June 1994); ["What constitutes a political community"](#) (Sept-Oct 1994); ["Government with representation"](#) (Jan-Feb 1995); ["Political fairness and equity"](#) (July-August 1995); ["Government and the responsible society"](#) ((May-June 1996); ["Freedom of religion; freedom of conscience"](#) (Nov-Dec 1996) in "Advancing a Christian Perspective - NSW Council of Churches <http://www.nswchurches.org/content/Articlesbysubject.aspx>

These are republications of articles from 1994-1995 from Public Justice Report and are here also linked to the forms in which they appear from the Center web-site.

## 2010

### [Continuity and Discontinuity in the New Year](#) *Capital Commentary* January 1

This is a brief overview of the political situation that confronts the US - and the world - at the beginning of a new year. The broadsheet is one which echoes with relevance for the ongoing work of the Center. The purpose of the article is to face up to the widespread cynicism and despair that grips politics at home and abroad. And the message is a simply and straightforward one. Political activity, like anything else we do, makes sense as a humble thank-offering to God. We will slip into despair and cynicism if we think we can save ourselves by our own efforts. Christian politics is first and foremost, looking ahead with great anticipation to God's fulfillment of creation and making all things new.

"Three Zionisms in the Shaping of American Foreign Policy" Chapter 4 (pp. 87-109) of Jonathan Chaplin with Robert Joustra (eds) God and Global Order - the

Power of Religion in American Foreign Policy Waco, Baylor University Press.

"Shari'a and Pluralism" in Rex Ahdar and Nicholas Aroney Shari'a in the West Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 91-102.

"Democracy and Sharia law: Can They Co-Exist?" Interview with Shirley Hoogstra  
*Inner Compass* Calvin College

"Doing Justice to Entrepreneurial (and Other) Responsibilities" *Journal of Markets and Morality* Vol. 13, Nr 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 319-344.

"Semper Reformanda in All of Life" *Pro Rege* September pp. 16-25.

This is the publication of a paper delivered at the "Calvinism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conference" at Dordt College, April 10, 2010.

"How to do Justice to Diverse Identities in the Middle East" *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 8:3 (Fall 16<sup>th</sup> Sept.), pp. 41-45.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is characterized by asymmetries in power and resources. The best option for justice is the emergence of two neighboring states that cooperate in dealing equitably with their diverse citizens. Whatever was believed about the long-term prospects of a Jewish state in Palestine after the Holocaust and World War II, it is evident 60 years later that stable, secure and just governance in that region is far from having been realized and may be more in doubt now than then. Still open are these questions: How likely is the survival of the Western, democratic state of Israel in a region that has not had much experience with that form of government? How should the most significant diversities in that region (ethnic, religious, cultural) be governed to achieve stability, security, and justice for all? Are we closer to or farther from such a goal today than in 1948?

"Constituting a Political Community" *Capital Commentary* October 22 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

SAET interview on politics and theology #1 (Society for the Advancement of Ecclesial Theology) October 27

"Government" *Capital Commentary* October 29 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Citizenship" *Capital Commentary* November 12 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Justice for Education" *Capital Commentary* November 19 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Just Welfare Policy" *Capital Commentary* November 26 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Upholding Life" *Capital Commentary* December 3 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Security and Defense" *Capital Commentary* December 10 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").

"Conserving the Environment" *Capital Commentary* December 17 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* as "Guidelines for Government and Citizenship").



"Educating Christian Citizens: Where Do You Start" in *Logos Bulletin* (Surabaya, Indonesia). Originally published 2004-2005 (see No. 329).

## 2011

"Imaging God in Caring for Creation" in *Logos Bulletin* (Surabaya, Indonesia).

"The Seven Days of Creation" *Calvin Theological Journal*, April, 46:1, pp. 111-139.

"Covenant" in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*

["Freedom Rising"](#) a meditation on the Freedom of Conscience Window in the Church of St John the Baptist in Gouda, The Netherlands, May 1<sup>st</sup>.

<http://www.artway.eu>

["A Good Tax-Reform Proposal"](#) *Capital Commentary* May 27 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* in 2005).

["Public Justice and True Tolerance"](#) *Capital Commentary* September 2, 2011 (this is an excerpt from **Confessing Christ and Doing Politics** APJ Education Fund 1982).

["10 years on"](#) interview with Bob Sweetman *Perspective Newsletter* 45:2 September pp. 1-3.

["The Question of Authority"](#) *Capital Commentary* October 7, 2011 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* in 1994).

"Christ's Kingship Over All: to what kind of militancy does He call us" and "Shepherds or Conquistadors? Assessing fundamentalist politics at home and abroad with the wisdom of Bernard Zylstra" in Zylstra Symposium on Politics and Culture, *Is Religion a Public Good?* Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario November 8&9 2011.

["Government and Representation"](#) *Capital Commentary* November 4, 2011 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* in December 1994).

["Government and Responsible Society"](#) *Capital Commentary* December 16, 2011 (this is a reprint of what was previously published in *Public Justice Report* in June 2006).

## 2012

["Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Conscience"](#) *Capital Commentary* January 6. (Republished from *Public Justice Report* December 1996).

["Political Speech and Action: The Religion and Society Debate"](#) *Capital Commentary* February 4. (Republished from *Root and Branch* May 2008 see No. 380 above).

["Seeking Harmony in China"](#) *Capital Commentary* February 18 (Republished as excerpt from *Root and Branch* April 2007).

["Calvin, Calvinism and Politics"](#) *Capital Commentary* February 25 (excerpt from *Root and Branch* April 2009, see No. 403 above)

"Foreword" to Ryan McIlhenny (ed) *Thy Kingdom Come: Neo-Calvinists on the Two Kingdom Perspective* (Presbyterian and Reformed 2012)

# Appendix 1

## Newly Listed Items from 1974 Until 2007

### 1974

["Love's Labours Lost... or Found?"](#) Speech to CLAC's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention, Saturday April 6. see *The Guide* March 1974 p. 16.

### 1990

"Government" in Walter A Elwell (ed) Evangelical Dictionary of Theology Baker, Grand Rapids 1990, pp. 477-479. A revised edition appeared in 2001 and the entry pp. 516-519 was unchanged.

This contribution cites some of Skillen's early writings (57, 67, 69) as well as the works which he had reviewed of Mouw (No. 28) and Yoder (No.9), which would indicate that it was composed in the early 1980s. Sadly the later revised edition simply republishes the earlier essay.

The essay begins with **The Biblical Witness** explaining that Government is similar to other forms of stewardship in creation - each with a responsibility for administering part of God's creation under God's authority. The general biblical teaching is reviewed, leading on to a discussion of the positive tasks of distribution and retribution, a "public responsibility". This is a responsibility to look after the general public health and welfare of the entire society. Though Government administers the legal code it is also subject to law and as such is a part of God's self-revelation - God's Kingship is attested in scripture along with His being Father and Shepherd.

**Christian Responses in History** reviews the way in which the early Christian communities functioned politically and what they taught. The Christianization of the Roman Empire coincided with the Romanization (or Imperialization) of the religion of God's grace in Christ. The split between East and West saw the Eastern church following closely to the Roman tradition, whereas the West was patterned by a ecclesiastical sovereignty over feudal estates. Minorities within East and West opposed such earthly entanglements, and the Reformation was partly in protest against Roman dominance over politics and culture. The Anabaptists drew on the previous minority traditions of withdrawal while the Calvinists and Lutherans accommodated the emerging centralized state powers. In the West Roman, Calvinist, Lutheran and Anabaptist reinterpretations of Christianity meant alternative views of public legal order competed whereas in the East the age-old pattern was maintained. Christians these days try to adapt their faith to one or other of the various ideologies that struggle for dominance in the "secular" political realm.

**Key Issues and Questions for Our Day** are outlined. The first is the relation of the Biblical revelation to political life. What is the biblical revelation about justice and how does that throw a light upon competing ideologies and policies? The second is: What is the state and how is it's special task to be understood in a complex, differentiated society? Third: How is politics to be understood as a global task for all citizens and their governments everywhere?

The demand for justice is increasingly the demand for **global justice**, and Christians should be leading the way to an understanding of what the proper human stewardship of government means in response to Christ the King.

### 1997

["Is there a place for 'Christian Politics' in America?"](#) Seminar Paper delivered to post-graduate students at the University of Bloemfontein, RSA, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

### 2002

["Interview with Jim Skillen"](#) *Catapult Magazine* 1:5, 8-21 November. This interview was linked to a Faith Engaged Conference on "The State of the Church". His lecture is no longer available at this site.

## 2003

["Creative Justice - In Celebration of Martin Luther King Day"](#) January Series Lecture, Calvin College, January 20, 2003.

## 2004

"Freedom-Idealism and the U.S National Security Strategy" *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 2:2 (Fall). (Formerly *The Brandywine Review of Faith and International Affairs*. From 27 April 2010 available from Routledge on line - see entry 326 in 2008 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). This is an edited excerpt from [With or Against the World?](#) (No. 331). See Appendix 5 (No. 34).

*"[America] conspicuously lacks the voracious appetite for territorial expansion overseas that characterized the empires of the West European seaboard. It prefers the idea that foreigners will Americanize themselves without the need for formal rule - Niall Ferguson.*

America is a peculiar sort of empire, and lately it is an empire peculiarly obsessed with security. Its preoccupation with self-preservation is related not only to the fact that it is a state, like other states, with an obligation to protect its own citizens from terrorism and other threats. The US is also, in its own eyes, the *exceptional state*, with a world-historical mission. American national identity continues to be animated by the belief that the goal of history is democracy and freedom for every people - and that America is the model. That is why Americans rarely interpret security in terms limited to simple national self-interest (much less imperial self-interest). Instead, security interests are legitimated in unabashedly idealistic (and self-flattering) terms; in order for the goal of freedom and democracy to be reached by all peoples, America must remain unassailable as both exemplar and vanguard.

["Principled Public Pluralism: a Christian View of Government and Civic Responsibility"](#) lecture delivered at ["The Cross and the Crown: Christians at the Crossroads in the Public Square"](#) conference at Briarwood Presbyterian Church, October 9-10.

## 2005

["The Role of the United States in the World Community"](#) Debate with Richard Land, Center for Applied Christian Ethics, Wheaton College, September 15, 2005.

## 2006

["Evangelicals and American Exceptionalism"](#) *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 4:3 (Winter). (From 26 April 2010 available from Routledge on line.)

In his essay on evangelical and American foreign policy ("God's country?" *Foreign Affairs* Sept/Oct 2006), Walter Russell Mead says at the outset, "Religion explains both Americans' sense of themselves as a chosen people and their belief that they have a duty to spread their values throughout the world." Yet Mead leaves the weighty implications of this sentence largely unpacked in the essay that follows. Mead makes the mistake of most commentators on religion and politics: he spends most of his time discussing theological and ecclesiastical characteristics of evangelicals compared with other Christians, which have relatively little to do with government and foreign policy. Consequently, he does not sufficiently illuminate the religiosity of Americans as *Americans* when they think of "themselves as a chosen people". That is the point at which the particular connection between *Americanism* and evangelicals, or *Americanism* and any other religious group, becomes truly significant for foreign policy.

## 2007

["Justice, Even in War"](#) *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 5:2 (Summer). Friday 1 June. (From 26 April 2010 available from Routledge on line.) This is a [republication](#) of No. 357.

When the directors of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) sign a declaration against torture, one can be sure that worries about the Bush administration's conduct of foreign and military affairs are deepening. Why? Because the NAE is a generally conservative coalition that represents many who have strongly supported President Bush. After years of mounting evidence of Guantanamo Bay prisoner mistreatment and well-known abuses at Abu Ghraib that have not been satisfactorily answered by the White House and the Pentagon, many evangelicals now feel compelled to speak out. The evangelical Declaration Against Torture is commendable in many ways, but it does not address utilitarian pragmatism that prizes protection over justice.

["The Role of Religion in Public Debate"](#) **Audio download available** - a panel convened by The Federalist Society, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Moderator Hon Diane S Sykes, US Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit with Prof Robert Audi. Prof R Kent Greenawalt, Hon Michael W McConnell and Dr James W Skillen. Mayflower Hotel, Washington DC.

Here is an excerpt from the published "Panel Discussion and Commentary" published in the Regent University Law Review Vol. 20 2007/2008.

**Dr. Skillen:** Just a few comments. I am anxious to hear questions. I am quite in agreement with Mike McConnell and the general statement that he laid out. It seems to me that to prejudge how someone may speak is itself a judgment about who may participate as a citizen and who may not. But everyone who is a citizen should be free to participate in public debate without qualification. Also, I would say, if at many points where Professor Audi uses the terms "secular," "secular reasoning," or "secular reasons," he would instead speak of public-legal reasons or political reasoning, I would be quite sympathetic. That is to say, anyone who is speaking to matters of political or legal life should offer public-legal arguments from their religious or nonreligious point of view. It will not be very helpful in political discussions for someone to say simply that God told them something, or that science has lately shown, or that their best friend thinks this or that. A speaker needs to argue, for example, that Congress or the courts should do something, and then, of course, what should follow is an argument for why that "something" will be just or sound for the common good.

"Thy Kingdom Come!" Blacknall Lectures on Faith and Society, Blacknall Memorial Presbyterian Church, Durham, NC, Lectures October 26 & 27, 2007. [Sermon Acts 1 1-11](#), [First Lecture](#), [Second Lecture](#).

## Appendix 2:

# On-Line Lectures and Interviews 2003-12

### 2003

- Martin Luther King Day address, January 20, Calvin College [Creative Justice](#) (No. 452)
- [Francis Schaeffer Lectures](#) Covenant Seminary, November "Jesus and Caesar: Christian Faith and Political Process". [Interview: James Skillen and John Porter, Choosing Sides in the Debate Over the Bible's Political Directives, Choosing Sides Question and Answer](#) (No. 324)

### 2005

- Debate with Richard Land, Center for Applied Christian Ethics, Wheaton College, September 15 (No. 455). ["The Role of the United States in the World Community"](#)

### 2007

- Blacknall Lectures on Faith and Society, Blacknall Memorial Presbyterian Church, Durham, NC, "Thy Kingdom Come!" October 26 & 27. (No. 459) [Sermon Acts 1 1-11](#), [First Lecture](#), [Second Lecture](#)
- National Lawyers Convention, "Shining City Upon a Hill: American Exceptionalism" November 15
- Federalist Society panel, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Moderator Hon Diane S Sykes, US Court of Appeals, 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit with Robert Audi, R Kent Greenawalt, Hon Michael W McConnell and James W Skillen. Mayflower Hotel, Washington DC. (No. 458) ["The Role of Religion in Public Debate"](#) **Audio download available**

### 2008

- Paper presented at the conference sponsored by Metanexus Institute, "Subject, Self, and Soul: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Personhood" Madrid Spain July 13-18 (No. 384). ["The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics"](#)  
[Paper Transdisciplinarity in Science and Religion](#) No. 6, 2009, pp.377-389
- Radio Interview with Chris Laidlaw, Sunday Morning Programme, Radio New Zealand, September 7 (No. 389). [Interview](#)
- Francis A. Schaeffer Lectures, Covenant Seminary, October 2-5. [Taking Citizenship Seriously: Christian Responsibility in Today's Political Context](#) (No. 391).  
[Presidential Politics in a Post-Everything America](#) - with GOP Congressman John Hancock. [McCain vs. Obama: Christian Electoral Tensions](#), [Cynicism and Idealism: Redeeming Political Structures](#), [God Bless America and Global Politics: Where Is Jesus?](#), [Christian Leadership in Poverty and Family Initiative Reform](#).
- Conversation on America's Future, Chesterton House, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, November 1. [Roundtable Question & Answer](#) **(NB. Unlisted)**

### 2009

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Tuesday June 23 Wolhstetter Conference Center, ["Social Justice, Free Markets, and Evangelicals"](#) (No.407)

### 2011

- Interview with Shirley Hoogstra *Inner Compass* Season 11, 2010-2011. Interview No. 1123, Calvin College (No. 418) ["Democracy and Sharia law: Can They Co-Exist?"](#)
- Sermon Cloud "Inside Out 76": Interview, May 4, 2011 [Death Penalty](#) **(NB. Unlisted)**

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## **Appendix 5 - Some Scholarly Collaborators**

There are many scholars identified in my introductory essay to the 2008 Bibliography. A substantial number are political scientists, theorists of political-economy, policy analysts and workers involved in civic education. Their work has strong consonance with Skillen's philosophical contribution. They also offer important contributions and their work deserves the attention of political science students as well.

Some of these are

[Govert Buijs](#) (1964-)

[Stanley Carlson-Thies](#) (1950- )

[David Caudill](#) (1951-)

[Jonathan Chaplin](#)

[Roy Clouser](#) (1937-)

[Carl H. Esbeck](#)

[Bob Goudzwaard](#) (1934- )

[John Hiemstra](#)

[Case Hoogendoorn](#)

[David Koyzis](#) (1955- )

[Paul Marshall](#) (1948- )

[Amy L Sherman](#)

[Mary Stewart van Leeuwen](#)

[Alan Storkey](#) (1943- )

[Elaine Storkey](#) (1943-)

[Charles Strohmer](#)

[Hillie van de Streek](#) (1959-)

[John Witte Jr](#) (1959)

[Bernard Zylstra](#) (1934-1986)

## **Appendix 6 - A Selection of Books, Articles & Essays**

### **Biblical Studies**

["Civic responsibility for Christians"](#) *New Horizons* October 1994 3-4 (228).

**A Covenant to Keep - Meditations on the Biblical Theme of Justice**  
Grand Rapids, CRC Publications, Center for Public Justice. 2000 (285)

["Reading the Bible in Public"](#) *Comment*, March 3, 2006 (335)

"Imaging God in Caring for Creation" in *Logos Bulletin* (Surabaya, Indonesia) 2011 (432).

"The Seven Days of Creation" *Calvin Theological Journal*, April, 46:1, 111-139, 2011 (433)

### **Calvinism, neo-Calvinism, Reformation**

with Stanley Carlson-Thies, "Religion and Political Development in Nineteenth-Century Holland" *Publius*, Summer 1982 43-64, (73)

"From Covenant of Grace to Equitable Public Pluralism: The Dutch Calvinist Contribution" *Calvin Theological Journal* 31 67-96 (1996) (245)

"Reformed ... and Always Reforming?" in Sandra F Joireman (ed) **Church, State and Citizen - Christian Approaches to Political Engagement** Oxford Univ Press 2009. (337, 405).

["Semper Reformanda in All of Life"](#) *Pro Rege* September 2010, 16-25 (420).

### **Christian politics, parties and organisation, civic education**

**Christians Organizing for Political Service: A Study Guide Based on the Work of the Association for Public Justice** Washington: DC, APJ Education Fund 1980 (57)

["The Gift of Administration"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 9:3 Fall 1988, 26 (156)

["Politics for Government, or Politics for Politics?"](#) *Prism* Sept/Oct 1994, 16-20 (233)

["When Citizens Can't Agree"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* Winter 1994, 18 (234)

["Christian Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"](#) published in a booklet with responses and Korean translation Seoul, Korea, May 19. 1998 (274)

["Educating Christian Citizens: Where Do You Start?"](#) in *Logos Bulletin* (Surabaya, Indonesia). 2010 (431 & 329 [2004-5])

## Christian social-political thought

["Augustine and Contemporary Evangelical Social Thought"](#) *The Reformed Journal* January 1979, 19-24 (40).

Chapter 5 "Public Justice and True Tolerance", 54-62 in [Confessing Christ and Doing Politics](#) APJ Education Fund (No 42, 69 and 143)

"Pluralism as a Matter of Principle" in Richard Madsen and Tracy B Strong eds **The Many and the One: Religious and Secular Perspectives on Ethical Pluralism in the Modern World** Princeton, Princeton University Press, 257-268. 2003 (319).

["The Revelatory and Anticipatory Character of Politics"](#) CPJ Background Paper #95:5 1995 (239, 279)

## Christian world-view

["Politics and Eschatology: Political Action and the Coming of God's Kingdom"](#) AACCS Conference paper 1978 republished as "Christian Action and the Coming of God's Kingdom", in [Confessing Christ and Doing Politics](#) 1982, 88-103 (36 & 69)

["Step into My Office"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 9:2 Summer 1988, 29 (154)

["Don't Just Do Something; Sit There!"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 7:3 Fall 1986, 31-32 (122)

["The Mandate for Justice"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 8:4 Fall 1987, 31 (137)

## Democracy

["Democracy and Social Reform"](#) - Chinese translation in B Fulton and C Yau (eds) **Faith and Freedom - Christian Contributions to the Development of Modern Democracy** Pasadena, China Ministries International, 56-66 1990 (177)

"Toward a Contemporary Christian Democratic Politics in the United States" in J Witte ed **Christian and Democracy in Global Context** Boulder, Westview 1993, 85-99. (219)

"Political Parties" in **Encyclopedia of Christianity** Vol.4 Eerdmans 2006, 76-7 (336)

["Christian Democracy" – an Oxymoron?](#) *Root and Branch* 9, November 19, 2007 (372)

## US Politics and International Affairs

["Don't Just Do Something; Sit There!"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 7:3 Fall 1986, 31-32 (122)

[The Scattered Voice: Christians at Odds in the Public Square](#) \* Grand Rapids, Zondervan 1990 (190)

["Is there a place for 'Christian Politics' in America?"](#) May 8<sup>th</sup> 1997 (450)

[In Pursuit of Justice: Christian-Democratic Explorations](#) Lanham Rowman and Littlefield 2004 (328)

Kuyper Lecture 2000 ["American Statecraft: A New Art for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"](#) 2000 (291)

["American Statecraft, the United Nations, and Iraq"](#) *Pro Rege* March 2003, 1-12 (320)

[With or Against the World: America's Role Among the Nations](#) Lanham Rowman and Littlefield 2005 (331). Excerpt Chapter 2 "Forgotten Depths" [here](#) and Chapter 10 "What Role Among the Nations?" [here](#)

## Education, schooling

[Disestablishment a Second Time](#) (with Rockne McCarthy and William Harper) Christian University Press and Eerdmans 1982 (76)

["Justice for Education"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 8:2, Spring 1987, 31 (129)

["Thomas Jefferson and the Religious Character of Education"](#) *Religion and Public Education* 14:4 Fall 1987, 381-385. (138)

["Religion and Education Policy: Where Do We Go From Here?"](#) *The Journal of Law and Politics* 6:3 Spring 1990, 503-529 (187)

["Parental Freedom of Education Choice"](#) in William B Ball, ed., **In Search of a National Morality: A Manifesto for Evangelicals and Catholics** Grand Rapids, Baker, 172-181 (215)

## Welfare

(with Stanley Carlson-Thies) **A New Vision for Welfare Reform: An Essay in Draft** Washington, Center for Public Justice 1994 (225). This is contained as appendix to 244 (see below No. 41 this list). See web-site of [Center for Public Justice](#) for details.

"The Question of Being Human in Assessing the Requirements of Welfare Policy Reform" pp. 119-144 in J W Skillen and S W Carlson-Thies (eds)

**Welfare in America: Christian Perspectives on a Policy in Crisis** Grand Rapids, Eerdmans 1996 (244). For details see web-site of [Center for Public Justice](#)

["Christian Counselling in the Public Square: Principled Pluralism for the Common Good"](#) *Edification: Journal of the Society for Christian Psychology* Vol. 3, Issue 2, 2009 pp. 5-38 (413)

"Civil Society and Human Development" in Roland Hoksbergen and Lowell Ewert eds **Local Ownership, Global Change: Will Civil Society Save the World?** World Vision/MARC 2002, 183-202. This essay subsequently Chapter Two in [In Pursuit of Justice - Christian Democratic Explorations](#) 2004, 19-40 (see No. 31 above) (328).

### Religion and Politics

"Religion and Politics" **Dictionary of Contemporary Religion in the Western World** Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove 2002, 103-6 (309)

"Islam and the USA: Contrasting Visions of the End of History" in Michael W Goheen and Erin G Glanville eds **The Gospel and Globalization: Exploring the Roots of a Globalized World** Vancouver, Regent College Press 2009, 217-230. (410)

"Three Zionisms in the Shaping of American Foreign Policy" in J Chaplin with R Joustra (eds) **God and Global Order - the Power of Religion in American Foreign Policy** Waco, Baylor University Press 2010. Chapter 4, 87-109. (416)

"Shari'a and Pluralism" in Rex Ahdar and Nicholas Aroney **Shari'a in the West** Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, 91-102. (417)

### International relations and globalization

**International Politics and the Demand for Global Justice** Sioux Center, Iowa, Dordt College Press 1981 (67). Early forms of Chapters 4 "Unity and diversity among states" and 5 "Three Contemporary Views of International Unity and Diversity" are found [here](#).

["The Expansion of Our Shrinking Globe"](#) *Christian Legal Society Quarterly*, Summer 1991 4-6 (205)

["Politics on One World"](#) *Philosophia Reformata* 66, 117-131 2001 (304) (free download)

"To Look at the World Entirely Afresh" (Editor's Introduction) and "Contending Ways of Life" (Conclusion) in [Prospects and Ambiguities of](#)

## Globalization: Critical Assessments at a Time of Growing Turmoil

Lexington Books, Lanham 2009, 1-8, 107-123 (406).

### **Political science, political theory**

"Toward a Comprehensive Science of Politics" in J Chaplin and P Marshall (eds) **Political Theory and Christian Vision: Essays in Memory of Bernard Zylstra** Lanham, University Press of America 1994, 57-80 (229 & 153 [see *Philosophia Reformata* 1988]).

"Philosophy of the Cosmomic Idea: Herman Dooyeweerd's Political and legal Thought" *The Political Science Reviewer* XXXII 2003,318-380. Revised version in "The Pluralist Philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd" in Jeanne Heffernan Schindler (ed) **Christianity and Civil Society: Catholic and Neo-Calvinist Perspectives** Lexington Books, Lanham 2008,97-114 (323 & 379) (Download copy available from Intercollegiate Review publisher of *The Political Science Reviewer*.)

"The Necessity of a Non-Reductionist Science of Politics" paper presented at the conference sponsored by Metanexus Institute, "Subject, Self, and Soul: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Personhood" Madrid Spain July 13-18. 2008. A revised version is "Is A Science of Politics Possible?" *The Global Spiral* 2009 (384 & 387). *Transdisciplinarity in Science and Religion* 6, 2009, 377-389. [Paper](#)