

David C. Cochran

Professor of Politics

Peace & Justice Minor – Irish Studies Minor

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education

Ph.D., University of Maryland at College Park, Department of Government and Politics, 1996

M.A., University of Maryland at College Park, Department of Government and Politics, 1994

B.A., Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1991

academic employment

Assistant, Associate, and Professor of Politics, Loras College, Dubuque, IA, 1996 to Present

books

Stopping Hitler Without War: The Case for Nonviolence, Then and Now (Cascade Books, forthcoming)

The Catholic Case Against War: A Brief Guide (The University of Notre Dame Press, 2024).

The Catholic Church in Ireland Today, co-edited with John Waldmeir (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

Catholic Realism and the Abolition of War (Orbis Books, 2014).

The Catholic Vote: A Guide for the Perplexed, with Clarke Cochran (Orbis Books, 2008).

Catholics, Politics, & Public Policy: Beyond Left and Right, with Clarke Cochran (Orbis Books, 2003).

The Color of Freedom: Race and Contemporary American Liberalism (The State University of New York Press, 1999).

articles, chapters, and reviews

“Just War, Just Peace and the U.S. Attack on Iran.” *National Catholic Reporter*. 26 June 2025.

“Watching Christians Celebrate Killing: The Trump Team’s Appalling War-Plan Chat.” *Commonweal*. 1 April 2025.

“Political Science Contributions to Centering Nonviolence.” *Political Theology Network*. 28 March 2025.

“If Iowa Values Religious Liberty, It Won’t Push Private Colleges to Ditch DEI.” *The Des Moines Register*. 23 February 2025.

- “Making Sense of the Election: Predictable Result, Unpredictable Future.” *Commonweal*. 11 November 2024.
- “The Catholic Critique of War is Hiding in Plain Sight.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 6 May 2024.
- Review of *The Rise and Fall of Christian Ireland*, by Crawford Gribben. *Church History* 92, no. 2 (June 2023).
- “After 9/11 and Afghanistan, Does Just War Theory Have a Place in Catholic Thought?” *America*. 16 September 2021.
- “Come, Follow Me: Why Catholics Should Support Liverpool FC.” *America*. 12 August 2021.
- “Why the Russian Revolution Actually Owes its Success to Nonviolent Resistance.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 13 July 2021.
- “Embracing Nonviolence,” chapter contributor. In *Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace in the Church and the World*, Rose Marie Berger, Ken Butigan, Judy Coode, and Marie Dennis, eds. (Pax Christi International, 2020).
- “How Hitler Found his Blueprint for a German Empire by Looking to the American West.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 7 October 2020.
- “The View from Iowa: Inside the Shifting Politics of a Swing State.” *Commonweal*. 10 August 2020.
- “The Realism Objection to Setting Aside Just War Theory: A Response.” *Expositions* 13, no. 2 (2019).
- “The Irish Revolution’s Overlooked History of Nonviolent Resistance.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 20 January 2019.
- “The Hidden Success of the 1928 Peace Pact.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 26 July 2018.
- “Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Menominee, Illinois.” Contribution to “An Ordinary Sunday: A Nationwide Survey of Parish Masses.” *Commonweal*. 22 September 2017.
- “Dethroning Irish Catholicism: Church, State, and Modernity in Contemporary Ireland.” In *Tracing the Cultural Legacy of Irish Catholicism: From Galway to Cloyne and Beyond*, Eamon Maher and Eugene O’Brien, eds. (Manchester University Press - UK, 2017).
- “Wither the Catholic Vote.” *Political Theology Today*. 18 November 2016.
- “In Plain Sight.” Review of *The Boys in the Bunkhouse: Servitude and Salvation in the Heartland*, by Dan Barry. *Commonweal*. 9 September 2016.
- “Caucus-Going: A Republican and a Democrat Look Back at Iowa,” with Christopher Budzisz. *Commonweal*. 11 March 2016.
- “A World Without War: Why It’s No Fantasy.” *Commonweal*. 8 January 2016.
- Review of *Becoming Catholic: Finding Rome in the American Religious Landscape*, by David Yamane. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 54, no. 2 (May 2015).
- “What Slavery, Ordeals, Duels, and Lynching Can Teach us About Abolishing War.” *Waging Nonviolence*. 8 May 2015.
- “Examining the Catholic Church in Ireland: Past, Present, and Future,” with John Waldmeir. *The Irish Times*. 17 February 2015.
- “What Now? Notes on Catholic Social Teaching, Public Policy, and the Midterm Elections.” *Political Theology Today*. 14 November 2014.

- “Irish Catholicism’s Two Abuse Crises,” *Commonweal*. 12 August 2014.
- “On Killing Soldiers: Was it Legitimate to Shoot at Joseph Ratzinger During World War II?” *America*. 13 May 2014.
- “War and the Surprising Realism of Catholicism’s Peacemaking Agenda.” *The Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 11, no. 1 (Winter 2014).
- “Just Below the Surface: The Role of Race in This Year’s Election.” *Commonweal*. 12 October 2012.
- “Winner Take Nothing.” Review of *The Spirit of Compromise*, by Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, and *Our Divided Political Heart*, by E.J. Dionne. *Commonweal*. 14 September 2012.
- “Plutocracy or Democracy? America’s New Gilded Age.” *Commonweal*. 10 February 2012.
- “Religion and Freedom.” *Public Discourse: Ethics, Law and the Common Good*. 9 January 2012.
- “Creative Tensions: The Catholic Tradition and American Political Life.” *Journal of Religion & Society*, Special Supplement 6, *The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: Scholarship, Faith, and Higher Education* (2011).
- “Civic Conscience.” Review of *The Ethics of Voting*, by Jason Brennan. *America*. 14 November 2011.
- “Identity Crisis.” *America*. 1 August 2011.
- Review of *Catholics and Politics: The Dynamic Tension between Faith and Power*, by Kristin E. Heyer et al., *Journal of Church and State* 52 (Winter 2010).
- “Shifting Gears: Breaking our Addiction to Cars.” *Commonweal*. 13 March 2009.
- “How Protecting Religious Freedom Sustains Freedom Itself.” In *The American Experiment: Religious Freedom*, Margaret Monahan Hogan and Laretta Conklin Frederking, eds. (The University of Portland Press, 2008).
- “A Flat Tax to Save Social Security.” In *Since Sliced Bread: Common-Sense Ideas From America’s Working Families*, Don Stillman, ed. (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2007).
- “Democracy, Pluralism, and the Catholic Tradition.” *Church* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2006).
- “Consistent to its Way.” Review of *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins*, by Mark and Louise Zwick. *The Review of Politics* 68, no. 3 (Summer 2006).
- “Toward a Catholic Understanding of American Multiculturalism.” *The Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 3, no. 1 (Winter 2006).
- “Catholicism, Pluralism, and Democracy in America.” In *The Foundation of Freedom*, William Hund and Margaret Monahan Hogan, eds. (The University of Portland Press, 2006).
- “How Catholic are the Candidates? A 2004 Presidential Election and Catholic Social Teaching Report Card.” *National Catholic Reporter*. 1 October 2004.
- “Liberal Political Theory’s Multicultural Blind Spot and Race in the United States.” In *Racial Liberalism and the Politics of Urban America*, Carl Stokes and Theresa Melendez, eds. (Michigan State University Press, 2003).
- “A Multicultural Fable.” *Dissent*. Spring 2001.
- “Complicating Military Intervention’s Moral Case.” *Peace Review* 8, no. 4 (December 1996).
- “War-Pacifism.” *Social Theory and Practice* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1996).

“Ethnic Diversity and Democratic Stability: The Case of Irish Americans.” *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 4 (Winter 1995-96).

conference and other academic presentations

“Centering Active Nonviolence in Catholic Social Teaching: A Dialogue.” Presented as part of a webinar panel sponsored by the Political Theology Network’s Catholic Re-Visions Project, August 2025.

“The Role of Religious Liberty in Building Peace in the World.” Presented at the Annual Iowa Religious Freedom Day’s Symposium on The Role of Religion in Peacemaking, World Food Prize Hall of Laureates, Des Moines, April 2025.

“The Effectiveness of Nonviolent Methods of Conflict Resolution and Community Self-Defense.” Presented as part of the Seminars Supporting the General Assembly of the Synod Series, Catholic Institute for Nonviolence, Rome, Italy, October 2024.

“Embracing Nonviolence and Working to End War.” Presented as part the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative’s virtual Fall Seminar Series, October 2024.

“The State of Peace and Integral Human Security in the World.” Presented (remotely) to the Annual General Assembly of Pax Christi International, Brussels, Belgium, June 2024.

“Nonviolent Civil Resistance and the Irish Revolution.” Presented at the Midwest Regional Meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies, University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis, October, 2018.

“Dethroning Irish Catholicism: Church, State, and Modernity in Contemporary Ireland.” Presented at the Midwest Regional Meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, October, 2015.

“Abolitionist Rather Than Pacifist: Understanding the Vatican’s Position on War since *Gaudium et Spes*.” Presented at Joy & Hope: Fiftieth Anniversary of *Gaudium et Spes*, University of Notre Dame, March, 2015.

“War and the Surprising Realism of Catholicism’s Peacemaking Agenda.” Presented at Peace Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Celebrating 50 Years Since *Pacem in Terris*, University of Notre Dame, March, 2013.

“Catholicism and the Politics of Race and Ethnicity in the United States.” Presented at Catholicism and Public Cultures in Ireland, France, United Kingdom, and North America, Institute of Art, Design, and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, June 2009.

“Creative Tensions: The Catholic Tradition and American Political Life.” Presented at The Catholic Intellectual Tradition as a Source of Scholarly Wisdom, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, March 2009.

“The Catholic Vote and Voting Catholic.” Presented as the Sr. Annette Moran memorial lecture at Carroll College (Helena, MT), October 2008.

“Catholic Voting Dilemmas.” Presented at Symposium on Catholics and Voting, Lewis University (Romeoville, IL), October 2008.

“Catholic Norms, Voting, and Prudential Judgment,” with Clarke E. Cochran. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, August 2008.

- “The Catholic Vote.” Keynote address at the annual Rev. William J. Young Social Justice Summer Conference, sponsored by the University of St. Thomas and the Archdiocese of Houston and Galveston, Houston, June 2008.
- “The Catholic Diocesan College and University: A Comparative Analysis of Mission Documents and Collaborative Opportunities,” with Fr. Nicholas Rouch. Presented at Weaving Dynamic Relationships: The Diocesan College/University Serving the Church and the World, Loras College, Dubuque, IA, May 2008.
- “Consistent Catholics and Voting Booth Conundrums.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the New England Political Science Association, Providence, RI, April 2008.
- “American Politics, Religion, and the War on Terrorism.” Presented as a set of lectures and moderated discussions over two days for the Iowa Ecumenical Leader’s Retreat, an annual gathering of bishops, presbyters, synod presidents, and other leaders of the state’s Christian denominations, June 2007
- “How Protecting Religious Freedom Sustains Freedom Itself.” Presented at the University of Portland Garaventa Center’s The American Experiment: Religious Freedom Conference, Portland, Oregon, April 2007.
- “Prudence and the Dilemma of the Faithful Catholic Voter.” Presented at Public Policy, Prudential Judgment and the Catholic Social Tradition, the 2006 Annual Conference sponsored by the Terrence J. Murphy Institute for Catholic Thought, Law, and Public Policy at the University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 2006.
- “Experimenting with Expression: A Test of Free Speech on Campus,” with Christopher B. Budzisz. Presented, by Budzisz, at the American Political Science Association’s Annual Teaching and Learning of Political Science Conference, Washington, DC, February 2006 (co-author but unable to attend the conference where Budzisz presented our paper).
- “The Challenges of Catholic Political Life Today.” Presented at Benedictine University in Lisle, IL as their Fall 2005 Visiting Scholar in Catholic Thought, October 2005
- “Toward a Catholic Opposition.” Presented at Benedictine University in Lisle, IL as their Fall 2005 Visiting Scholar in Catholic Thought, October 2005
- “Catholicism, Pluralism, and Democracy in America.” Presented at Teaching, Faith, and Service: The Foundation of Freedom, a conference sponsored by University of Portland’s Garaventa Center and University of Notre Dame’s Center for Ethics and Culture, Portland, Oregon, June 2005.
- “Toward a Catholic Understanding of American Multiculturalism.” Presented at the Villanova University Conference on Catholic Social Thought and Racism, November 2004.
- Participated in a “Breakfast with the Author” session for *Catholics, Politics, and Public Policy* at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics, Chicago, January 2004.
- “Using *The Godfather* to Teach *The Prince*.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, September 2002.
- “Catholic Politics and American Democratic Pluralism.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, September 2001.
- “Liberal Political Theory’s Multicultural Blind Spot and Race in the United States.” Presented at Race in 21st Century America: A 2nd National Conference, Michigan State University, April 2001.

- “Kymlicka’s Multicultural Citizenship and African Americans.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, September 1998.
- “Color-Blind Liberalism.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association, Newark, November 1995.
- “War-Pacifism.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Political Science Association, Gettysburg, April 1995.
- “Autonomy, Morality and Community: Charles Taylor on Human Agency.” Presented at the Annual Conference of the New York State Political Science Association, NYC, April 1995.

talks and workshops

Averaging around 8-10 talks and workshops per year for on-campus and off-campus groups (student clubs, class visits, faculty development sessions, civic organizations, parishes, Theology on Tap sessions, high schools, retreat centers, deacon formation classes, etc.)

Topics include Catholic social teaching, war and peace, elections, political polarization, race and ethnicity, religion and politics, the U.S. Constitution, politics and media, and contemporary Ireland

courses taught

American Politics and Government	Community and Urban Design (Honors and non-Honors versions of First Year Seminar Course)
Issues in American Politics	Nationalism in Ireland (January-term travel course in Ireland)
Race and Ethnicity in American Politics	Catholicism in Contemporary Ireland (Summer travel course in Ireland)
Identity Politics in America	Say Nothing (First Year Seminar Course)
Just War and Pacifism	Utopia and Dystopia in Literature and Film (Honors course)
Foundations of Western Political Thought	Democracy and Global Diversity (Honors and non-Honors versions of General Education course)
American Political Thought	The Irish in America (General Education course – classroom and on-line versions)
Ancient Political Thought	Theories of Political Economy (team-taught Honors course)
Modern Political Thought	Electing the President (First Year Seminar course)
Political Thought and Contemporary Issues	
Global Ethnic Conflict	
Law and Society	
Constitutional Law	
Civil Rights and Liberties	
Political Themes in Film	
Senior Seminar/Thesis	

college committees

Academic Council	Higher Learning Commission Reaccreditation
Rank and Tenure	International Studies Program
Strategic Planning	International Day of Peace
Faculty Senate	New Faculty Orientation
Catholic Identity	Library Advisory
Honors Program	Archdiocese of Dubuque Synod
Legacy Symposium	Catholic Social Teaching Professional Development
Connections: Iowa's Catholic Intellectual Tradition Institute	Hispanic Serving Institution
Equal Employment Opportunity	Faith and Values Education
Catholic Studies Program	Democracy and Global Diversity Course
Learning Disabilities	Teacher Education
Pastoral Leadership Study Day	Miscellaneous Ad Hoc and Search Committees
Ahlgren International Affairs Lecture	

other positions and awards

- Coordinating Associate, The Catholic Institute for Nonviolence, Research Section on Nonviolent Practices and Strategic Power, 2024-present (a Rome-based institute focusing on making nonviolence research, resources, and experiences more accessible to Catholic leaders, communities, and institutions)
- Director, Loras College Irish Studies minor, 2023-present (academic minor integrating coursework and international study in Ireland)
- Co-Director, Loras College Peace and Justice Minor, 2013-present (academic minor integrating coursework and experiential learning)
- Director, John Paul II Scholars Program, 2021-2024 (student cohort program that includes scholarship, service, and programming)
- Director, Loras College Archbishop Kucera Center for Catholic Intellectual and Spiritual Life, 2006-2022 and 2026-present (programming and grants supporting Catholic life on campus and across the Archdiocese of Dubuque)
- Member, Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, Working Group on a New Moral Framework, 2017-2019 (an international group of scholars and activists that helped prepare a series of reports on Catholic teaching and nonviolence that was presented by Pax Christi International to the Vatican in 2019 to help form the basis for a hoped-for papal encyclical on the subject)
- Newman Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award, 2016 (Annual college-wide award given to a faculty member who has been at Loras College more than 12 years)

- Member, State Judicial Nominating Commission, 2007-2012 (appointed by Iowa Governor and confirmed by State Senate to commission that screens nominees for Iowa Supreme Court and Iowa Court of Appeals vacancies and creates a short list of finalists from which the Governor must choose one to fill each vacancy)
- Finalist, Best Idea Since Sliced Bread Contest, 2006 (Social Security reform idea was one of 7 finalists from among 22,000 submissions in best political idea contest sponsored by the Service Employees International Union, SEIU)
- Budde Teaching Excellence Award, 2005 (Annual college-wide award given to a faculty member who has been at Loras College fewer than 12 years)
- Benedictine University's Visiting Scholar in Catholic Thought, 2005 (The Visiting Scholar spends several days on campus giving two public lectures, visiting classes, and meeting with faculty, staff, and students)
- Catholic Press Association National Book Award, 2004 (*Catholics, Politics, & Public Policy* won 2nd Place in the Educational Books category)
- O'Connor Endowed Chair for Catholic Thought, 2000-2001 and 2009-2010 (Awarded each academic year to a Loras College faculty member to support research)