



2012

2012-13 Series Brochure - Power and Publics

University Center for the Humanities

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We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, to establish Justice, to insure domestic Tranquillity, to provide for the common defence, to promote the general Welfare, and to secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article I

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

The Senate shall be composed of two Senators from every State, chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, which shall have the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

The electors in each State shall have the sole and exclusive Power to choose the Senators and Representatives, and their Electors shall have the sole and exclusive Power to make and receive all Votes, and shall be sworn, according to the respective Oaths of Office, and shall be qualified as Electors of the President of the United States.



**University Center
for the Humanities**

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

2012-2013 Series

Power and Publics

Welcome

Welcome back to the University Center for the Humanities. Thank you for your participation in last year's series "Convergence of Cultures."

This fall we turn to the drama of national elections in our 2012-13 series "Power and Publics." Before all of us go to the polls, *Washington Post* columnist E.J. Dionne will be on campus to weigh the State of Michigan's power in the Presidential race. Following the election, *American Prospect* science writer Chris Mooney will measure the political impact of the results on the study of science. In January as we observe Martin Luther King Day, Stanford theatre historian Harry Elam will look back at the political performances given by Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, and in February Harvard professor Jocelyne Cesari will reflect on the Arab Spring and gauge the power of Islam in constructing democracies.

The Center is proving to be a popular and useful place to gather. We look forward to seeing you at events over the year ahead and hearing your ideas about the power of the humanities in public life.

Katherine Joslin, Director



About the Center

At WMU one can study the humanities with over 200 professors in 16 departments through more than 25 degree-granting programs. On campus, 14 interdisciplinary centers and institutes provide a wide array of teaching and research opportunities in the humanities.

Visit the University Center for the Humanities online at www.wmich.edu/humanities.

2012-2013 Series - Power and Publics

In the United States, elections dramatize the dynamics of power while mobilizing the public to participate in the democratic process. The 2012 elections inspire this year's theme, "Power and Publics." Taxpayers, primary voters, swing voters, independent voters, values voters, non-voters, minors, immigrants, Asian Americans, African Americans, evangelicals, bloggers, the 1%, the 99%, whites, blacks, Southerners, Yankees, liberals, conservatives, and people of color are all labels we place on individuals groups that have influence on our shared public life. This year, we invite you to join our community of humanists in a discussion of various publics and their political power.

Special thanks to Lofty Durham for creating and organizing "Power and Publics" and to David Rudge for his help in bringing the sciences into our discussions.

E.J. Dionne



E.J. Dionne, Jr. is a columnist with *The Washington Post*, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a professor at Georgetown University. His latest book is *Our Divided Political Heart: The Battle for the American Idea in an Age of Discontent*. His book *Why Americans Hate Politics* won the *Los Angeles Times* book prize and a National Book Award nomination. He is also the author of *Only Look Dead: Why Progressives Will Dominate the Next Political Era*, and *Souled Out: Reclaiming Faith and Politics After the Religious Right*. A nationally known and respected commentator on politics, Dionne appears weekly on National Public Radio and regularly on MSNBC and NBC's Meet the Press.

October 25, 2012 • 6:00 p.m. Dalton Center Recital Hall
“The Election and Our Divided Political Heart”

Our Divided Political Heart explores the tension between individualism and community throughout our nation's history. Dionne contends that maintaining a balance between these two ideas is a responsibility that comes with the privilege of being American. However, the Tea Party's interpretation of our history—an idealization of the Gilded Age and radicalized individualism—threatens this equilibrium. As Americans we must work together to restore the critical balance embodied by Lincoln, Clay, and Hamilton.

Chris Mooney



Chris Mooney is a science and political journalist, blogger, podcaster, and experienced trainer of scientists in the art of communication. He is the author of four books, including the *New York Times* bestselling *The Republican War on Science* and most recently *The Republican Brain: The Science of Why They Deny Science and Reality* (April 2012). He blogs for *Science Progress*, a website of the Center for American Progress and Center for American Progress Action Fund, and is a host of the Point of Inquiry podcast.

November 29, 2012 • 6 p.m. • 2008 Richmond Center
“Political Science 2012: What the Election Means for Science Policy on Climate Change and Beyond”

Over the past decade in America, science has grown increasingly politicized. Scientists roundly denounced the administration of George W. Bush for suppressing research and taking anti-scientific positions; when President Obama came in, he promised great changes but did not always deliver. And now what?

In this talk, Chris Mooney, who has covered the politics of science for a decade in Washington D.C., takes a look at the future of science policy under the next president (Obama or Romney). Will climate change legislation pass? Will the administration take science seriously?

Mooney will address these and other questions as he lays the ground work for science policy in the U.S. after 2012.

Harry J. Elam, JR



Harry J. Elam, Jr. is the Olive H. Palmer Professor in the Humanities and the Freeman-Thornton Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Stanford University. His books include the Erroll Hill Prize winning *The Past as Present in the Drama of August Wilson*. Professor Elam has won the Excellence in Editing Award from the Association of Theatre in Higher Education and the Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Society of Theatre Research, and was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre. In addition to his scholarly work, he has directed professionally for over twenty years.

January 24, 2013 • 6 p.m. • 2008 Richmond Center
“The Power and Politics of Performing Race”

What does it mean to “perform race?” How do we, and how can we, understand the relationship between race and performance? This talk will examine the meanings of various performances and explore the interrelation of racial performances in everyday life to those on stage and in film; the case studies in this presentation will be far ranging, going from the horrible spectacle of slavery to the plays of Lorraine Hansberry to the film *Bamboozled* and finally to the 2012 presidential campaign. After the election, Dr. Elam will look at how power and politics figured into representations of Mitt Romney and Barack Obama.

Jocelyne Cesari



Jocelyne Cesari, Professor at the French National Center for Scientific Research in Paris, holds the 2011-12 Minerva Chair at the National Defense University in Washington DC. She is also a Senior Visiting Professor of International Relations at the School of Advanced International Relations at John Hopkins University where she co-directs the Global Politics and Religion Initiative. At Harvard University, she directs the International Research Program called “Islam in the West.” Specializing in contemporary Islamic societies, she is the author of *Muslims in the West After 9/11: Religion, Politics and Law* and the forthcoming book *Islam Betrayed? The Making of Modern Islam and World Politics*.

February 19, 2013 • 6 p.m. • 2008 Richmond Center
“Islam and Democratization: Lessons Learned from the Arab Spring”

With the demise of the Ben Ali and Mubarak regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, Islam’s role in future regimes is a topic under considerable discussion. In light of current events, Dr. Cesari makes two counter intuitive claims. First, she broadens the approach of religion beyond ideas or beliefs by adopting an institutional approach. Second, she introduces State’s actions and policies as a factor in the politicization of Islam. She will ground her demonstration in original data produced in 2011-2012 as the Minerva Chair at the National War College. The findings shed new light on secularity and the role of Islam in democratization process, and open discussion for plausible democratic “Islamic” regimes.



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Supporting the Center

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