

James Madison Program
in American Ideals and Institutions

PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE CITY

THE SPIRITUAL SOURCES
OF CIVIC STRUGGLE

STEVEN D. SMITH

Warren Distinguished Professor of Law,
University of San Diego

2017 Charles E. Test, M.D. Distinguished Lectures

TUES
MAY 9

**The Pagan City, the Christian
City, and the Secular City**
4:30 p.m.

WEDS
MAY 10

**Culture Wars as Pagan
Counterrevolution**
4:30 p.m.

THURS
MAY 11

Coming Home?
The Imminent Immanent City
4:30 p.m.

All lectures take place in
Lewis Library 120

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Standard depictions of the Culture Wars as a conflict between “secular” and “religious” constituencies resonate with an entrenched historical paradigm, interpreting Western history as having advanced in stages, from classical paganism to Christendom to modern secularism. But observers find these “secular vs. religious” depictions inadequate in accounting for the manifestly religious attitudes, rhetoric, and actions on both sides of the cultural divide. Taking influential lectures by T. S. Eliot as a point of departure, the present lectures will propose that our cultural struggles are better understood as a modern reenactment of the Fourth Century conflict between enduring religiosities represented by Christianity and paganism. And contemporary movements, often described as “progressive,” amount to a counterrevolution on behalf of what Eliot called “modern paganism” and seek to reverse the Christian Revolution of late antiquity.

STEVEN D. SMITH is Warren Distinguished Professor of Law and Co-Director of the Institute for Law and Religion at the University of San Diego. He was previously the Robert and Marion Short Professor at Notre Dame Law School and the Byron R. White Professor of Law at the University of Colorado. He is the author of *The Rise and Decline of American Religious Freedom* (Harvard University Press, 2014), *The Disenchantment of Secular Discourse* (Harvard University Press, 2010), *Getting Over Equality: A Critical Diagnosis of Religious Freedom in America* (New York University Press, 2001), and *Foreordained Failure: The Quest for a Constitutional Principle of Religious Freedom* (Oxford University Press, 1995), among other books, chapters, and articles. Professor Smith received his BA from Brigham Young University and his JD from Yale University.

