

**ALEXIS N. WALKER**

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**Academic Positions**

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Assistant Professor, Department of History and Political Science, Saint Martin's University; August 2016 to present

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Stetson University; August 2014 to May 2016

**Education**

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Ph.D. Cornell University, Department of Government, Ithaca, NY; May 2014  
Major Field: American Politics, Minor Field: Comparative Politics

M.A. Cornell University, Department of Government, Ithaca, NY; January 2012

B.A. Willamette University, Salem, OR; May 2006, Magna Cum Laude

**Manuscript**

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**Solidarity's Wedge: How America's Federalized Labor Law Divides and Diminishes the Effectiveness of Organized Labor**

In 2010, the number of public sector union members surpassed private sector members for the first time in U.S. history, while total union density continued to falter. 2011 marked the beginning of several very public attacks on public sector employees' collective bargaining rights, most notably in Wisconsin. How do we make sense of these key features of the contemporary labor movement? Why are public sector unions vulnerable to legal retrenchment of their rights and why is the labor movement on the decline? The answers to these questions have deep historical roots: I find that the exclusion of public sector employees from the foundation of private sector labor law, the 1935 Wagner Act, federalized American labor law resulting in the delayed growth of public sector unions, their continued legal vulnerability, and lasting divisions within organized labor that weaken the labor movement today. This work illustrates the powerful role public policies—in this case, federalism—can have in shaping the fortunes of a seemingly “private” organization and, further, sheds light on the current battles over public sector collective bargaining rights in states like Wisconsin.

## Research Interests

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American Politics, American Political Development, Public Policy, Political Participation, Federalism and Organized Labor

## Fellowships, Grants and Awards

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American Political Science Association William Anderson Award for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of state and local politics, federalism, or intergovernmental relations, 2015  
Stetson University Summer Grant for Professional Development, 2015  
Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy Research Grant, 2012  
Sage Fellowship, Cornell University, 2008, 2012  
Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, 2007 (Declined due to family illness)  
Phi Beta Kappa, 2006  
Politics Department Honors, 2006  
G. Herbert Smith Presidential Scholarship, 2002-2006  
Willamette University's Academic Honor Roll (Dean's List), 2002-06  
Carson Undergraduate Research Grant, 2005  
Edmund Arthur and Helen Cavitt Smith Scholarship, 2004

## Academic Publications

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"Partisan Preemption: the Strategic use of Federal Preemption Legislation," with Mallory SoRelle, *Publius: the Journal of Federalism*, Fall 2016 46(4): 486-509.  
"The Historical Presidency: 'The Fibre of which Presidents Ought to be Made': Union Busting from Rutherford Hayes to Scott Walker," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, March 2016: 194-207.  
"Labor's Enduring Divide: The Distinct Path of Public Sector Unions in the United States," *Studies in American Political Development*, October 2014: 175-200.  
"Citizenship," with Suzanne Mettler, for *The Oxford Handbook on Social Policy in the United States*, edited by Daniel Beland, Christopher Howard, and Kimberley Morgan, Oxford University Press, 2014.  
"Policy Speech in the Nineteenth Century Rhetorical Presidency: The Case of Zachary Taylor's 1849 Tour," with Richard J. Ellis, *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, June 2007.

## Public Outreach Publications

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"Both Democrats and Republicans Care About 'States' Rights'--When It Suits Them," with Mallory SoRelle, *The Washington Post*, Monkey Cage Blog, June 23, 2017: <https://t.co/xCIQHMDyRI>.  
"How U.S. Labor laws Have Divided Public and Private Sector Workers and Undermined Union Clout," *Scholars Strategy Network*, SSN Basic Facts, October 2013: <http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/brief/how-us-labor-laws-have-divided-public-and-private-sector-workers-and-undermined-union-clout>.

## **Book Reviews**

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“Forging Rivals: Race, Class, Law, and the Collapse of Postwar Liberalism, by Reulle Schiller,” *Perspectives on Politics*, 14(3) 2016.

## **Working Papers**

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"Labor's New Rank and File: The Heterogeneous Political Preferences and Behavior of Public and Private Sector Union Members" (In Preparation).

“Stigmatized or Politically Disillusioned Recipients? Policy Feedback and the Dampening Effect of Means-Tested Programs on Recipients’ Participation,” (In Preparation).

“Labor’s Organized Divisions: How the Federalized Nature of American Labor Law Engenders Organizational Rifts in Labor’s Political Activities” (In Preparation).

“Primary Voting and General Election Turnout” with Michael Jones-Correa (In Preparation).

## **Reviewer**

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*Studies in American Political Development*

## **Prospective Course Offerings**

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- Introduction to American Politics
- Labor Politics
- The U.S. Welfare State
- The Politics of Public Policy
- Political Inequality
- American Political Development
- American Exceptionalism
- Political Participation
- Federalism
- Qualitative and/or Research Methods

## **Teaching/Academic Employment**

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### Instructor

- American National Government
- American Political Development
- State and Local Politics
- Congress and the Presidency
- Senior Project
- The U.S. Welfare State
- U.S. Labor Politics
- The Politics of Public Policy
- American Exceptionalism

### Teaching Assistant, Cornell University

- The American Left: A Critical History, Professor Jefferson Cowie, Spring 2014.
- Introduction to United States Labor History, Professor Jefferson Cowie, Fall 2013.
- Introduction to American Politics, Professor Robert Spitzer, Summer 2013.

- Urban Politics, Professor Martin Shefter, Fall 2010, Spring 2011
  - U.S. Congress, Professor Martin Shefter, Spring 2010, Fall 2012
  - Government and Public Policy, Theodore J. Lowi, Fall 2009
- Research Assistant for Suzanne Mettler, Clinton Rossiter Professor of American Institutions, Cornell University, 2010-2013
- Research Assistant for Michael Jones-Correa, Professor of Government, Cornell University, 2009
- Research Assistant for Richard J. Ellis, Hatfield Professor of Politics, Willamette University, 2002-06
- Writing Consultant. Willamette University Writing Center, 2004-06
- Research Assistant for Melissa Buis Michaux, Assistant Professor of Politics, Willamette University, 2004

## **Academic Service**

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- Member, Faculty Development Committee, Saint Martin's University, 2017-present.
- Member, American Studies Committee, Stetson University, 2015-present.
- Graduate Coordinator for the Ethics and Public Life Speaker Series, 2013.
- Participant in the Public Sector Initiative, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, 2012.
- Initiative to bring together students and faculty studying public sector labor relations to discuss research and develop larger research questions and projects.
- Graduate-Faculty Liaison, 2009-2010
- Group of four graduate students who lead the orientation for first-year graduate students in the Government Department and organize a series of professionalization colloquium throughout the year.

## **Professional Affiliations**

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- Member, Scholars Strategy Network, <http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/scholar-profile/381>
- Member: American Political Science Association (sections: public policy and politics and history)

## **Volunteer Work**

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- Tutor, Black Lake Elementary, Olympia, WA, 2007
- Team Leader, AmeriCorps NCCC, California, Louisiana and Mississippi, 2006-2007

## **Presentations**

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### **Conferences:**

- “Fractured Union: Divided Labor Law and Public and Private Sector Union Conflict,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (September 3, 2015).

- “Fractured Union: Divided Labor Law and Public and Private Sector Union Conflict,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association (April 4, 2015).
- “Partisan Preemption: the Strategic use of Policy Design in Federal Preemption Legislation” (with Mallory SoRelle), presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (August 29, 2014).
- “Stigmatized or Politically Disillusioned Recipients? Policy Feedback and the Dampening Effect of Means-Tested Programs on Recipients’ Participation,” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (August 29, 2013).
- “Labor’s New Rank and File: The Heterogeneous Political Preferences and Behavior of Public and Private Sector Union Members.” Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago, IL (April 11, 2013).
- “The Distinct Paths of Public and Private Sector Unionization.” Presented at the Conference on Policy History in Richmond, VA (June 9, 2012).
- “Primary Voting and General Election Turnout” with Michael Jones-Correa. Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago, IL (April 1, 2011).

#### **Invited Presentations:**

- “Stigmatized or Politically Disillusioned Recipients? Policy Feedback and the Dampening Effect of Means-Tested Programs on Recipients’ Participation,” presented at the Democracy in America: Participation and Social Justice Conference, Stetson University (March 28, 2014).
- “Solidarity’s Wedge: How America’s Federalized Labor Law Divides and Diminishes the Effectiveness of Public and Private Sector Unions.” Cornell Government Department Graduate Colloquium (Spring 2013).
- “The Distinct Paths of Public and Private Sector Unionization.” Invited to present to the Politics faculty at Willamette University (November 1, 2012).  
Cornell Government Department Research Colloquium
- “Gaining or Losing a Voice for Working Americans? The Inclusivity, Mobilizing Strength, and Reputation of Organized Labor, 1947-2012.” (Fall, 2011).
  - “Stigmatized or Politically Disillusioned Recipients? Policy Feedback and the Dampening Effect of Means-Tested Programs on Recipients’ Participation.” (Spring, 2010).

#### **Training**

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Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, June 2011  
 WRIT 7100, Teaching First-Year Writing Seminar Training, Cornell University, Fall 2011  
 GOVT 6053: Comparative Methods in International and Comparative Politics, Cornell University, Spring 2009  
 GOVT 6029: Methods of Political Analysis, Cornell University, Spring 2009

#### **References**

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Suzanne Mettler (Dissertation Chair), Department of Government, Cornell University,  
Tel. (607) 255-3307, Email: [sbm24@cornell.edu](mailto:sbm24@cornell.edu)

Michael Jones-Correa, Chair, Department of Government, Cornell University, Tel. (607)  
255-3170, Email: [mj64@cornell.edu](mailto:mj64@cornell.edu)

Richard J. Ellis, Mark O. Hatfield Professor of Politics, Willamette University, Tel. (503)  
370-6081, Email: [rellis@willamette.edu](mailto:rellis@willamette.edu)

David Hill, Chair, Department of Political Science, Stetson University, Tel. (386) 822-  
7579, Email: [dhill@stetson.edu](mailto:dhill@stetson.edu)