

CURRENT ISSUES
IN NORTH AMERICAN AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Rethinking Church and State with the Satanic Temple

Prof. Joseph Laycock
Texas State University



Baphomet statue in front of the Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock, Aug. 16, 2018

The Satanic Temple was formed in 2013 as a non-theistic Satanic group. In only a few years, they have sued to hold Satanic prayer invocations at city council meetings, sued to erect statues of the devil next to monuments to the Ten Commandments at state capitols, and filed lawsuits claiming that state restrictions on abortion infringe on their religious rights. The internal revenue service has recognized The Satanic Temple as a tax-exempt church, but critics argue they are merely atheists who are exploiting the idea of religion. In his lecture, Dr. Laycock argues that The Satanic Temple is forcing a public conversation about how we define such concepts as religion and religious freedom.

In cooperation with



nas.uni-bonn.de

Tuesday
May 4, 2021
6:00-7:30 pm

Online event, to be
streamed via Zoom.
Please register via
lecturesbonn@gmail.com.

Joseph Laycock is an associate professor of religious studies at Texas State University. His research interests include moral panic, religion and role-playing games, Marian apparitions, and spirit possession. He has written several books on new religious movements and American religious history. His book *Speak of the Devil: How the Satanic Temple Is Changing the Way We Talk about Religion* came out with Oxford University Press in 2020, and a volume on *Religion, Culture, and the Monstrous* (co-edited with Natasha L. Mikles) with Lexington Books in 2021.

NORTH
AMERICAN
STUDIES
PROGRAM

UNIVERSITÄT  BONN