

RELIGIOUS STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

Hosted by the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Co-sponsored by the Department of Political and Global Affairs
and the Holocaust Studies Program

Become Ungovernable: Covert Tactics, Racism, and Civilizational Catastrophe



Sarah Riccardi-Swartz, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Religion and Anthropology
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Thursday, October 2, 2025

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Student Union, Room 224

Considering racialized theo-political ideas espoused by far-right Christians in the American South, Riccardi-Swartz looks at their paradoxical need for social-moral securitization through nationalist policies and government policing in relationship to their anti-democratic desires to become ungovernable as citizens of heaven.

Exploring the notion of an imperiled Christian civilization at the hands of “deep state” elites, she shows how far-right Christian anxieties over the “catastrophe” of democracy apocalyptically lead to covert sociopolitical tactics aimed at liberating the far-right self from the assumed system of

Western liberal oppression. In tracing this out, she looks at how post-Soviet Russia becomes a salvific geo-political possibility for those fleeing ideological cartographies of assumed white Christian marginalization in the United States.

Utilizing ethnographic data and media analysis, Riccardi-Swartz shows how transnational, digital flows of religiosity and racism are co-constituted in the illiberal dramaturgy of white panic and mythos of ungovernability that draws together actors from the American South and Putin’s Russia into a global imaginary of anti-democratic political possibilities for disaffected people.

**Free lunch will be provided on a first come, first served basis.
This event is free and open to the public.**

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