Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

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M.A. in Political Science, May, 2017, University of Missouri-St. Louis
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The Church and Michael Brown:
The Influence of Christianity on Racialized Political Attitudes in Ferguson, Missouri

Date: March 31, 2021
Time: 3:00pm-4:00pm
Place: Zoom Link- https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/98454468753

Abstract
This study examines whether the Christian faith played a pacifying or inspiring role in racialized politics following the death of Michael Brown and subsequent uprisings in Ferguson, Missouri. To evaluate the role of religion in responding to racialized crisis, the author examines both the attitudes of individual citizens and the actions of faith leaders. Using data gathered from two exit-polls conducted by the author in Ferguson and the surrounding area during the period between the death of Michael Brown and the decision not to indict the officer who killed him and then again after the grand jury decision, the author finds religious and racial gaps in the acceptance of narratives about the death of Michael Brown. The analysis of exit-poll data also shows a racial cleavage in perceptions of congregational response to the Ferguson Moment. The author then uses interviews with clergy from across the St. Louis region to analyze the various ways faith leaders responded to the crisis and the doctrinal, demographic, and place-based variables that may have influenced these responses.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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