

OSTROM WORKSHOP **TOCQUEVILLE LECTURE SERIES**

Frank Lovett

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“The Rule of Law in the Age of Trump”

Friday, September 29, 2017

11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Woodburn Hall 218

Cosponsors: Political Theory Luncheon (Political Science) and Tocqueville Program

While the rule of law is surely a very important good, the standard discussions in the literature lead many to conclude that the rule of law is either a relatively trivial political ideal, or else a redundant one. What is needed is a persuasive defense of the rule of law that properly reflects its great significance for human well being. The first step towards building such an argument is to question a widely shared but often unnoticed assumption that the rule of law should be understood as a virtue of legal systems. The path is then cleared for a civic republican argument for the rule of law, built on two theses: first, the thought that an ideal society would be one in which no one is the master of anyone else, and second, the thought that our freedom from domination is not natural or pre-institutional. We then consider the significance of this civic republican conception of the rule for the ongoing debate about Donald Trump’s presidency.



Frank Lovett is associate professor of political science and director of the program in Legal Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. His first book, *A General Theory of Domination and Justice* (Oxford, 2010), won the APSA Foundations Best First Book Prize in Political Theory (2011). His latest book is: *A Republic of Law* (Cambridge, 2016) ([website](#)).

Presentations are open to the public. You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon (sturgeon@iu.edu; 812/855–3151).