

A statement on Adrian Vermeule's false, violent, and discriminatory statements

Dear Deans Sells, Jefferson, Sherman, Claypoole, and Cohen,

We are writing to you because HLS Professor Adrian Vermeule has, for over a year, been making highly offensive, discriminatory, and violent statements in online posts. It has also come to our attention that Prof. Vermeule has recently been using his personal Twitter account to spread election disinformation. While we understand that Prof. Vermeule speaks only for himself, and not for the Law School, the administration should not ignore the harm his words cause. You will find examples of the statements at issue in the Appendix. **We urge you to take action** to address this issue with Prof. Vermeule directly and to mitigate the harm his interaction with students may cause through the measures detailed below.

First, Prof. Vermeule's tweets are contributing to the harmful spread of election disinformation. While every election will highlight substantial disagreements on a wide range of issues, Prof. Vermeule's statements cross the line of ordinary political disagreement and veer into baseless conspiracy theories which undermine the electoral process itself.

For example, as unsubstantiated allegations of widespread voter fraud spread following the election, Prof. Vermeule tweeted *"Lol the election isn't over until Team Joe fixes up your ballot for you"* and *"Kids, not sure if you knew this, but missing ballots have magical properties that make them visible only between midnight and 6am."* His post-election retweets included statements such as *"Even a Saddam Hussein had to make some pretence of not getting 100% of the vote in an Iraqi election ... 'Baghdad on the Delaware.'" And these examples only scratch the surface. Prof. Vermeule may try to play off his statements as a joke, but they amount to a pattern of promoting demonstrably false conspiracy theories. His statements are harmful to democracy and unbelievably divisive. To work at Harvard Law School is to be granted a platform and a level of legitimacy. Prof. Vermeule is abusing this platform in order to undermine democracy and delegitimize the results of the election.*

But it does not end here. Prof. Vermeule has repeatedly propagated violent and offensive language on his Twitter account. [In one tweet](#), referring to an event titled "Summit on Principled Conservatism," Vermeule wrote *"The very first group for the camps."* Any invocation of concentration or internment camps is despicable and unacceptable—and above all, it is not a joke. Many HLS students are descendants of Holocaust survivors, victims of genocide or of internment, or enslaved people; some [may even have relatives currently in](#) these sorts of camps. In response to a tweet that read *"...visitors to Spain in the 1950 and 1960s found ex-Spanish Civil War communists/socialists working on chain gangs, building roads, cleaning public places, etc. General Franco did not shoot them, instead wanting them to 'redeem themselves by work..." Prof. Vermeule wrote: "The Good Society 🤩."* This language is not

normal and it cannot be normalized. It is a language that promotes violence on the basis of political opinion and it cannot be tolerated. Prof. Vermeule demonstrates a disdain for opposing viewpoints, such as those of communists and socialists, who *are* equal members of our society.

This is not about 'academic freedom.' Professor Vermeule has repeatedly glorified and called for violence against those with different political viewpoints. For example, amidst the ongoing anti-police brutality protests around the country, he retweeted: "*The best defence against evil men are good men who are skilled at violence.*" Prof. Vermeule also advocated for the forcible removal of Black Lives Matter protesters in Portland, tweeting "*Time for a whiff of grapeshot,*"¹ In response, someone asked Prof. Vermeule "*Why are there no high pressure hoses?*" to which Vermeule responded "*Good question.*" Prof. Vermeule's tweets display an unacceptable pattern of supporting violence against Black protesters.

Professor Vermeule has also made statements indicating an intolerance that runs counter to HLS's Policy on Discrimination. Prof. Vermeule has suggested that the United States should give immigration priority to confirmed Catholics over members of other religious groups. Prof. Vermeule [said](#) that state laws barring atheists from holding public office or serving on juries were "*sensible*" because "*atheists can't be trusted to keep an oath.*" Prof. Vermeule has demonized abortion, same-sex marriage, and transgender people, comparing them to "*polygamy, consensual adult incest, or who knows what.*" Most recently, Prof. Vermeule was interviewed for an article where he criticized "liberalisation of abortion, same sex marriage becoming the law of the land and allowing sexualised drag queens near young children." Prof. Vermeule uses transphobic and pathologizing language like "transgenderism." His language treats LGBT identity as inherently sexual, deviant, and predatory.

Prof. Vermeule is, of course, free to have his own political opinions. However, his statements raise questions about whether he will treat all students fairly and undermine the ability to learn in his classroom. How can we trust that the content of Prof. Vermeule's classes is accurate, if he peddles baseless conspiracy theories? How can Muslim, Jewish, atheist, and LGBTQ students in Professor Vermeule's classes trust that he will treat them fairly when his public statements demonstrate that he views their identities with contempt? How can Black students effectively learn in Prof. Vermeule's class when he calls for Black Lives Matter protesters to be shot with high-pressure water hoses? As students, we need to know that our professors will not think less of us, grade us more harshly, or treat us differently on the basis of our identities. Even if Prof. Vermeule does not bring these opinions into class, the public nature of these statements mean that they will inevitably impact students' ability to learn or trust what he says. Students are less likely to feel comfortable going to office hours, discussing class topics, or engaging with Prof. Vermeule at all, as they justifiably believe he has disdain for them. This is not a question of academic freedom; it is an issue of potential discrimination and of student dignity. We must be able to exist in a classroom without feeling trauma if we are to effectively learn, and Harvard

¹ **Grapeshot** was a form of ammunition from a cannon in Napoleonic times, and it is a quote from Napoleon describing how he dispersed crowds with cannon fire. He fired **grapeshot** into the crowd, and so a "**whiff of grapeshot**" refers to that incident.

must ensure that its professors are not discriminating against their own students on the basis of religion, race, political opinion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

These dynamics are particularly harmful considering Prof. Vermeule's status as one of the few professors who teaches Administrative Law. In both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years, HLS offered only **two** sections of Admin Law. Each year, one of those two sections was with Prof. Vermeule. Admin Law is one of law school's foundational courses. It is not uncommon for the waitlist for a given Admin Law class to exceed 300 people. For many students hoping to clerk, to work for the federal government, or to practice administrative law, the course is more of a requirement than an elective. Many HLS students who need to take administrative law will not be able to avoid taking a class with Professor Vermeule. Additionally, Prof. Vermeule has taught Legislation and Regulation in the past, such that many 1Ls have been forced to take classes with him. Finally, Prof. Vermeule's statements undermine HLS's ability to attract a diverse student body, if prospective students learn that HLS is the kind of place where prominent professors can spout highly offensive rhetoric without consequence.

We ask that Harvard Law School take the following steps:

1. Release a statement condemning Prof. Vermeule's spread of inaccurate conspiracy theories about the election, violent rhetoric, and intolerant statements. (Stanford University [recently came out against](#) a professor in a similar fashion, so it would not be unprecedented for HLS to do the same.)
2. Conduct an investigation into whether Prof. Vermeule is spreading misinformation or discriminatory content in his classes and/or discriminating against students on the basis of characteristics protected by HLS's Policy Against Discrimination, and take appropriate action until the investigation is completed.
3. Create at least two sections of Administrative Law per semester, so that no student is forced to take a class with Prof. Vermeule.
4. Commit that going forward, 1Ls will not be required to take a class with Prof. Vermeule.

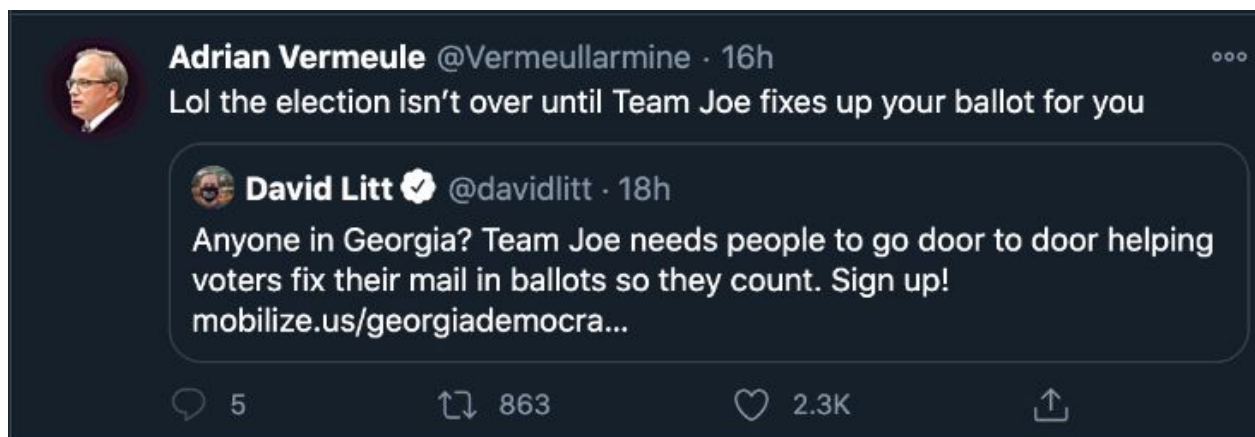
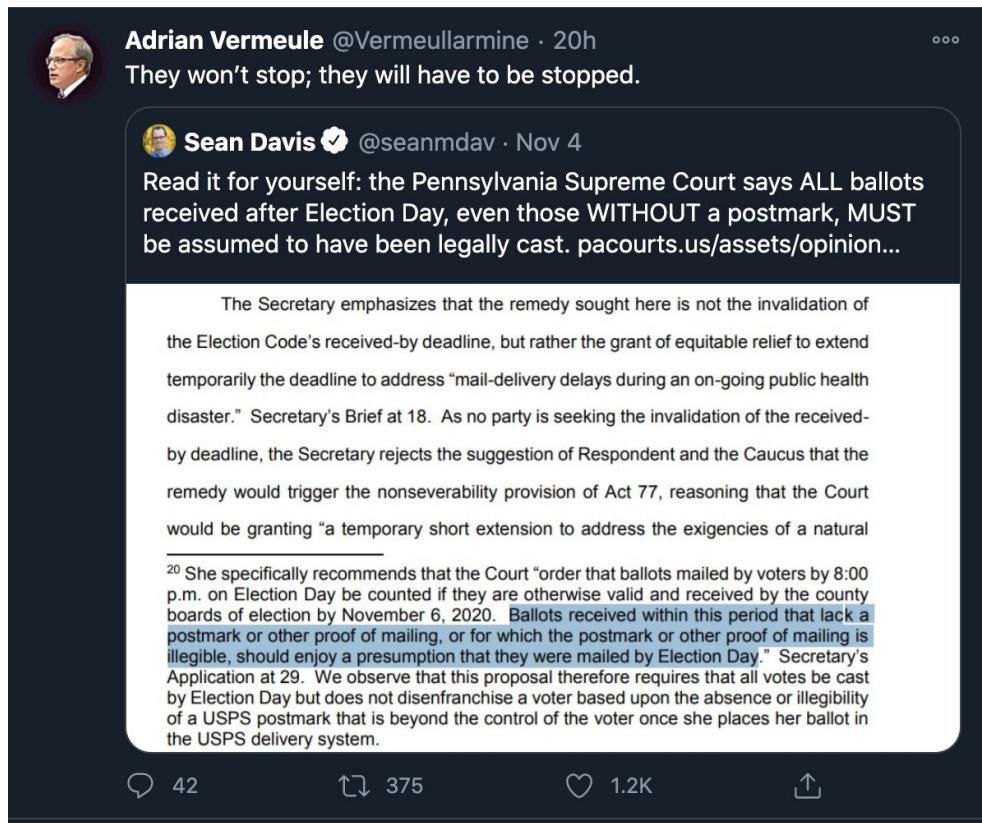
Sincerely,

The Harvard Parity Project (HPP)
The Equal Democracy Project (EDP)
Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
La Alianza
Harvard Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (APALSA)
Alliance for Reproductive Justice (ARJ)
Progressive Jewish Alliance (PJA)
Middle Eastern Law Students Association (MELSA)
HLS Immigration Project (HIP)
Harvard African Law Association (HALA)
Harvard Law School Lambda

APPENDIX

Below are screenshots of tweets, some since deleted, that we have found on his account or through students who collected these in the past when they felt particularly harmed.

Election Disinformation





Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · Nov 4

...

Replying to @SohrabAhmari

It's fun when the margins reach Soviet levels of unanimity
twitter.com/taniel/status/...

This Tweet is unavailable.

49

326

1K



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Riva @rivatez · 20h

...

can't wait for the same media who told us Epstein killed himself and that millions would die from Covid to now tell us who won the election lol

84

1.6K

6.3K



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 4h ...

Totally normal!



FiveThirtyEight @FiveTh... · 5h

Two more batches of Pennsylvania vote were reported:

-23,277 votes in Philadelphia, all for Biden

-about 5,300 votes in Luzerne Cou...

44

238

1,096





Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 1h

Lol 🤔



Ryan James Girdusky ✓ @RyanGirdusky · 2h

Between 6am and 8:30am... they found 25-35k more ballots in Georgia. twitter.com/wsbtv/status/1...

[Show this thread](#)

19

34

234



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 1h

Kids, not sure if you knew this, but missing ballots have magical properties that make them visible only between midnight and 6 am

19

87

377



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Gray Connolly @GrayConnolly · 17h

Replying to [@Vermeullarmine](#)

Even a Saddam Hussein had to make some pretence of not getting 100% of the vote in an Iraqi election "Baghdad on the Delaware"

13

135

851



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Chateaubriand ٠ @Chateaubriand_ · 1h

The Democratic Party believes they're entitled to Saddam Hussein-levels of support from their constituencies. Now, after receiving only Vladimir Putin-levels, they are outraged and are experiencing an existential crisis.



New York Times Opinion ✓ @nytopinion · 13h

"The percentage of L.G.B.T. people voting for Trump doubled from 2016, moving from 14 percent to 28 percent. In Georgia the number was 33 percent," writes @CharlesMBlow. "This for a president who has attacked trans people in every way imaginable." nyti.ms/3kYPzLt

4

56

229





Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 15h

...

A lot of you are upset because you woodenly imagine an "Election Day" with "rules." Instead you must come to think of the election as a process, a kind of improvisational dance that expresses our commitment to make sure everyone can vote when and as they feel like it.

17

255

1.7K



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 15h

...

Once again, I forgot that almost all of twitter is dominated by midwit literalists. Why do I never learn.

14

19

349



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Ian Miles Cheong @stillgray · 16h

...

Secretary of the Commonwealth in PA, everyone. Do you trust her to be impartial?



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 16h

Fun!

[Show this thread](#)



Kathy Boockvar

@KathyBoockvar

Secretary of the Commonwealth @PAStateDept For
Views expressed are my own. Follow @PAStateDept
[#ReadytoVotePA](#)

📍 Pennsylvania, USA [votespa.com](#) 📅 Joined

884 Following 2,328 Followers

Followed by Justin Riemer



Kathy Boockvar

@KathyBoockvar

Using the title 'Pre
demeans the office

7:49 AM · Mar 7, 2017 · Twitter

1 Retweet 3 Likes

194

2.2K

4K



↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



The Redacted Man @theredactedman · Nov 4

...

The election is over and people are playing games.

GA: "A pipe burst!"

PA: "You really expect me to count all these right now?!"

AZ: "Those 1 million votes aren't going to make a difference, Biden won!"

MI: "Can't call it, there's some ballots blowing down 7 mile right now!"

💬 137

↻ 3.8K

❤️ 9.3K



↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Sohrab Ahmari ✓ @SohrabAhmari · 5h

...

Here we go. Suddenly tallying and reporting stop in urban precincts. And magically more Biden votes are conjured in the coming hours and days.



[Learn about US 2020 election security efforts](#)

💬 449

↻ 1.2K

❤️ 4.1K



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 1h

...

"The President of the Reich" is back, baby!



Michelle Goldberg ✓ @michelleinbklyn · 17h

If Biden ends up winning with 52 percent of the popular vote, he'll have a historic mandate. Ronald Reagan's total in 1980 was 50.7. But our sclerotic minoritarian institutions will likely make it impossible for him to govern. Our system is deeply broken. [twitter.com/NateSilver538/...](https://twitter.com/NateSilver538/)

💬 4

↻ 5

❤️ 70



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 1h

...

cambridge.org/core/books/web...



↻ 2

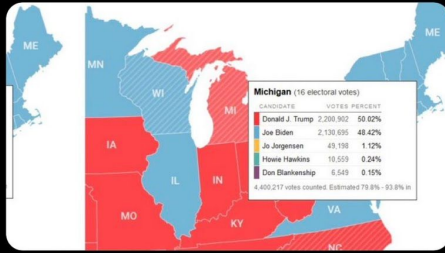
❤️ 17



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Fr. Brendon Laroche @padrebren... · 1h ...
Just one man's opinion, but this is absurd.



28

221

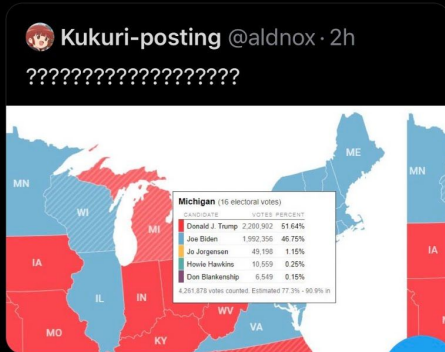
705



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



AGenZConservative @AP... · 2h ...
Not normal. 100% of the ballots went to Biden. Not even 1 vote for Trump.



217

3,080

5,369



Offensive and Violent Statements

Making Light of Concentration/Reeducation Camps



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 39m

The very first group for the camps



12

6

42



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Phillip Blond @Phillip_Blond · 3h

Only a matter of time gentlemen only a matter of time



Sohrab Ahmari @SohrabAhmari · 4h

Fortunate to get a chance to finally meet @Vermeullarmine in person before we're both sent to the camps.



2

2

52



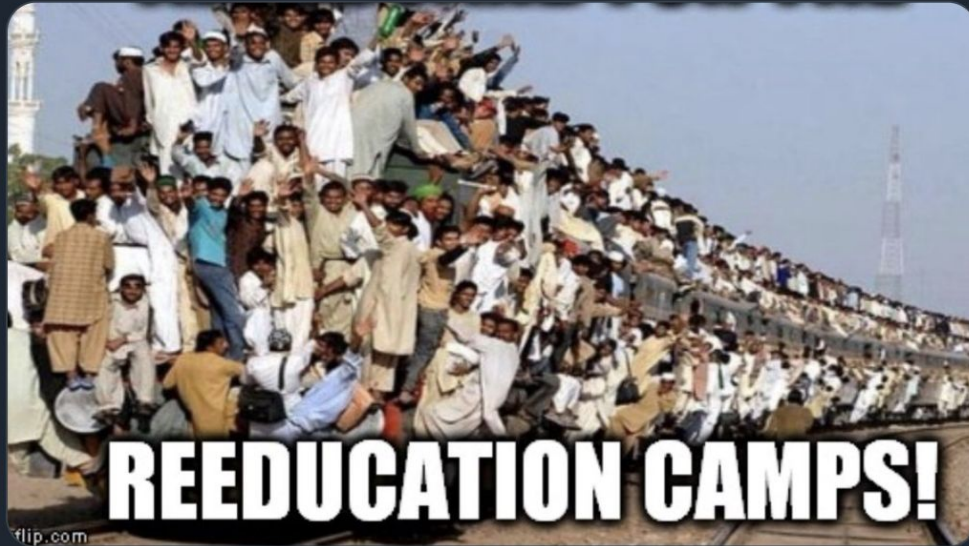


Ellen Anderson @MochaLite · Nov 9

...

Replying to @Vermeullarmine

Whew! We thought you'd been picked up by Jake Tapper, AOC, and the "unity through conformity" crew.



1



2



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · Nov 9

...

Oh soon, I'm sure, but once I get this MS done who cares



2



Glorifying Violence



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 1d ...

Time for a whiff of grapeshot



Brendan Gutenschwager @B... · 1d

The protesters have brought out a guillotine to the streets #Portland
#PortlandProtest



52

80

608



Helena Morrissey DBE ✓ @Mor... · 18h ...

Why are there no high pressure water hoses?

10

1

19



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarm... · 18h ...

Good question

2



3





Gray Connolly @GrayConnolly · 3h



As an extreme case, British visitors to Spain in the 1950s and 1960s found ex-Spanish civil war communists/socialists working on chain gangs, building roads, cleaning public places etc. General Franco did not shoot them, instead wanting them to 'redeem themselves by work'...



1



1



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 3h



The Good Society 🍷



1



1

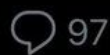


Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Margarita @margaritaevna95 · 1d

The best defence against evil men are good men who are skilled at violence.



97



901



4,010



[Show this thread](#)



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 3m ▾

Maybe we could ask the Crips to enforce public order and, in return, acknowledge that they hold a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence. If necessary we could offer them regular payments, called "shmaxes" or something.



Art TakingBack @ArtVall... · 1d

Crips gang stops Antifa/BLM looters from looting and kicks them out of Long Beach 👉 👉

[Show this thread](#)



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 2m ▾

My big takeaway from the Chaz episode is that it's actually pretty cool to have a well-defined public authority.





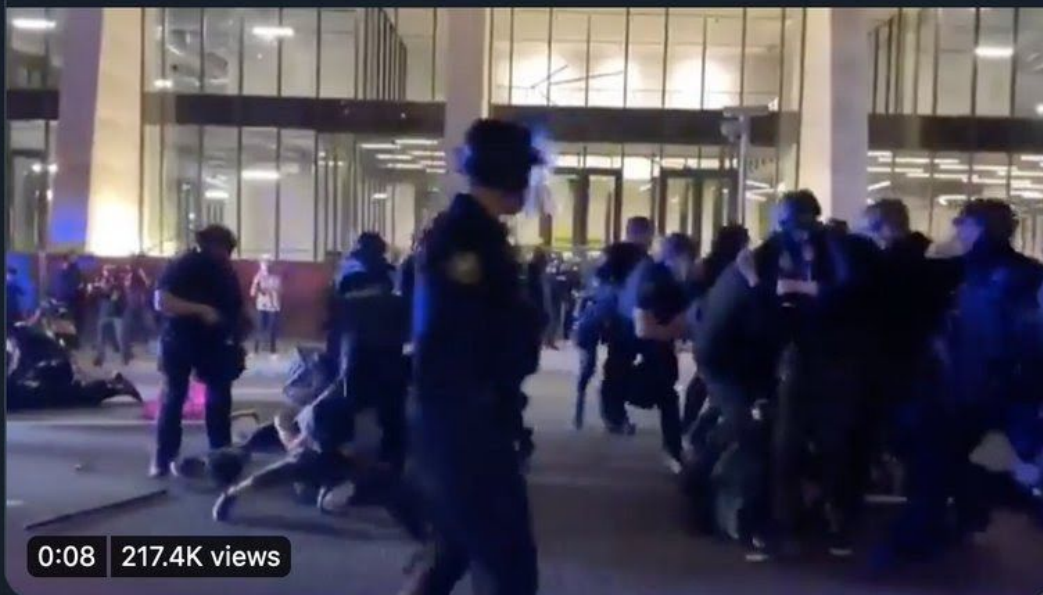
Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 3h

Antifa really need to work on their shield wall.



Ian Miles Cheong @stillgray · 9h

Antifa gets absolutely crushed by Portland Police.



21

33

225





Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 3h

This won't stop by itself; it'll get worse and worse until it is met by some sort of counterforce.



Rita Panahi @RitaPanahi · 5h

Statue of Christopher Columbus pulled down by protesters in Minnesota.
Lunacy.



32



297





Adrian Vermeule
@Vermeullarmine

...

At the crossroads



Deacon Paul Conneely @DeaconPaulC · Nov 2

Replying to @Vermeullarmine

You'll soon know when you either: (1) wake up to find yourself in Buk 13 of Stalag Locke; or (2) find your house and car on fire, along with your book collection, and 90% of Twitter drowning in a vale of murderous tears.

9:00 AM · Nov 2, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Gladden Pappin @gjppappin · Nov 5

...

Fancying themselves Talleyrands, they soon found themselves purged



Sohrab Ahmari  @SohrabAhmari · Nov 5

I'm repulsed by those conservatives racing to kiss the ring of a terrifying new regime* (some giving slobbering overt kisses, others signaling with a strategic silence).

* Given the censorship, etc., I insist on calling it "the regime" the way liberals talk about Belarus.



4



18



134





Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullar... · 22m ...

"It's just democracy"



Ron Coleman @RonColeman · 1h

Our Trump legal team and poll watchers are being barred from the ballot counting - despite a court order



2



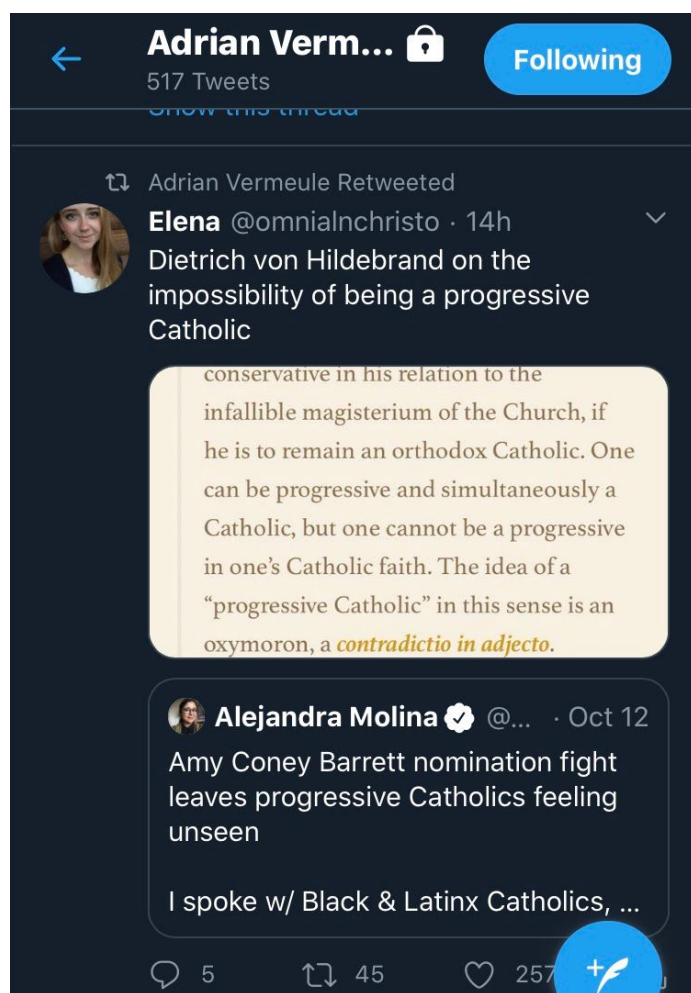
16



74



Religious Intolerance



↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Chateaubriand ن
@Chateaubriand__

Questions about “religious views” affecting a judge’s jurisprudence are premised on a fundamentally Protestant and Liberal worldview. For Catholics, religious truth is universal and all-encompassing. It’s not merely the private preferences of a voluntary sectarian club.

5:06 PM · Oct 13, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

I want to suggest a principle of immigration priority that should, I hope, be broadly acceptable or at least intriguing for all right-thinking persons concerned that current American immigration policy is racist and classist, explicitly or implicitly, de jure or de facto. The principle is to give lexical priority to confirmed Catholics, all of whom will jump immediately to the head of the queue. Yes, some will convert in order to gain admission; this is a feature, not a bug.

This principle will disproportionately favor immigrants from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. (Note here that the priority is for actual Catholics, not for applicants from “historically Catholic countries”; relatively few Western Europeans will pass through the eye of the needle, and the Irish will be almost totally excluded). It will disproportionately favor the poor, and will draw no distinction between those seeking asylum based on a fear of persecution, and those fleeing “mere” economic hardship. It will in effect require opening the southern border of the United States, although immigration from Canada will rightly become a rare and difficult event, at least if we do not count a small subset of Quebecois.

I venture to say that any opposition to this proposal almost necessarily defends some alternative principle of immigration priority that allocates fewer spots to non-whites and to the poor, and is thus a troubling indicator of racism and classism infesting whoever voices that opposition. We must overcome the know-nothing bigotry of the past. As the superb blog Semiduplex observes, Catholics need to rethink the nation-state. We have come a long way, but we still have far to go — towards the eventual formation of the Empire of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and ultimately the world government required by natural law.

^this is an excerpt from a [blog post](#) by Prof. Vermuele



Adrian Vermeule
@Vermeullarmine

Follow



Sensible, atheists can't be trusted to keep an oath



Madeline Marsanne @MadelineOnMars

In contradiction with the US Constitution, 8 states technically bar atheists from holding public office or serving on juries.

1:19 PM - 23 Dec 2019

21 Retweets 257 Likes



Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Gladden Pappin @gjppap... · Oct 12



« To persuade the Indian people to Christianity was, indeed, the duty & work of the Church, & upon that duty she entered from the beginning, & continued, & still continues, to pursue in continuous charity, reaching finally the furthest limits of Patagonia »

—Leo XIII on Columbus



3

23

128



Anti-LGBTQ+



^“sex -sanity” is the phrase at issue here.

The first, more straightforward claim is that liberalism is destined to fail because it follows a deterministic process of decline. This is the view expounded in Vermeule’s 2018 essay “Integration from Within,” that “the progression...from one form of liberalism to another unfolds by logical dynamic, an inner necessity.” Vermeule often presents liberalism as being propelled by an “internal mechanism” of “relentless aggression,” a kind of moral avant-gardism that can never be satisfied, let alone reversed. For liberalism, he argues, “yesterday the frontier was divorce, contraception, and abortion; then it became same-sex marriage; today it is transgenderism; tomorrow it may be polygamy, consensual adult incest, or who knows what.” He chastises conservatives like Ross Douthat for failing to acknowledge that liberal regimes always move in this direction.

^this comes from an [article](#) quoting Prof. Vermeule’s “[A Christian Strategy](#)”



↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Sohrab Ahmari  @SohrabAhmari · 1h ...

A West that has heated debates over whether men can have periods has no business telling [#Belarus](#) or whatever how to govern herself.

💬 34

↻ 103

❤️ 602





When an individual assigned male at birth affirms their gender as female, she is a transgender woman, not a transgender man. It is clear here that this language is used to mock the idea of a trans woman playing women's sports and to misgender trans women.

Anti-Women and harmful to students who have had abortions



Adrian Verm... 

Following

517 Tweets



Adrian Vermeule  @Ve... · Oct 12

Completely agree. It's a "who decides" question and the who is God.



Pete Buttigieg  @Pet... · Oct 12

We need to trust women to make their own health care choices.



IF WE CAN'T AGREE ON WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE, I HOPE WE CAN AGREE ON WHO SHOULD DRAW THE LINE.
IN MY VIEW, IT'S THE WOMAN WHOS FACED WITH THAT DECISION IN HER OWN LIFE.
PETE BUTTIGIEG

 18   286 

 Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Sohrab Ahmari  @SohrabAhmari · 2d

Tremendous. She's even more awesome than we thought.



Brian Fallon  @brianefallon · 2d

NEW: Amy Coney Barrett signed her name to a full-page ad run by a group that says it believes abortion providers should be prosecuted.

...

[Show this thread](#)

 13  194  904 



Adrian Vermeule 🔒

@Vermeullarmine



Maybe you should have thought of that before calling him a gang rapist?



Brett Kavanaugh Emerges as Unlikely Liberal
Hope for Court Swing Vote
[bloomberg.com](https://www.bloomberg.com)

9:44 AM · 9/23/20 · [Twitter for iPad](#)

COVID-19

Verizon


11:55 PM

12%

<

Tweet

+



Adrian Vermeule @Vermeullarmine · 3h

"Let me be very clear: if there is a vaccine, then we must lock down to protect life until it becomes available. If there is no vaccine, then a lockdown becomes all the more necessary in order to flatten the curve again."


5

17

113

↻

Adrian Vermeule Retweeted





Fr. Mark Bernhard @FrMbernhard

Replying to @Vermeullarmine

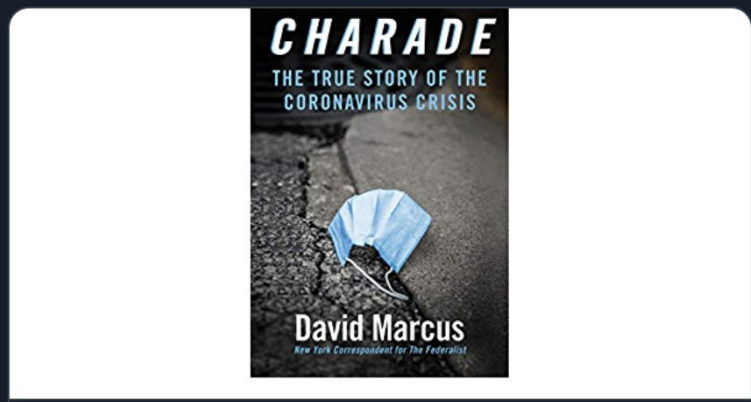
Men no longer know how to die.

11/11/20, 8:48 PM

 **Adrian Vermeule** @Vermeullarmine · Nov 9
What's it on?

 **David Marcus**
@BlueBoxDave


Replying to @Vermeullarmine



Charade: The True Story of the Coronavirus Crisis
Charade: The True Story of the Coronavirus Crisis
amazon.com

7:20 PM · Nov 9, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

2 Retweets 8 Likes

 **Who can reply?**
People @Vermeullarmine follows or mentioned can reply.

 **Adrian Vermeule** @Vermeullarmine · Nov 9
Replying to @BlueBoxDave
Nice! Go write!

Racist

↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Ian Miles Cheong ✓ @stillgray · 13h

Abolishing grades and standards to be "anti-racist" is inherently anti-Asian.

71

↻ 255

♥ 1,827



↻ Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



Jeremy McLellan ✓ @JeremyMc... · 17h

The most effective stereotypes are those where the victim can't argue back without confirming the stereotype. (Angry blacks, emotional women, etc.) The goal is to trap you until you just sit there and take it.



The Hill ✓ @thehill · 1d

Rep. @AOC: "The term 'white fragility' can really set a lot of people off... It's almost ironic."

 Adrian Vermeule Retweeted



J.D. Vance  @JDVance1 · Nov 1

...

Professor of "gender studies" and feminism at Duke thinks it's bad to worry about the birthrate in a country that has below replacement fertility and a welfare state that's built on young workers supporting retirees. Good to know what's en Vogue among our academic mediocrities.



bearistotle @gnrosenberg · Nov 1

America's "fertility rate" is an extremely normal thing to worry about, my dude! [twitter.com/JDVance1/statu...](https://twitter.com/JDVance1/status/1594444444)

[Show this thread](#)

 770

 899

 3.3K



[Show this thread](#)

^this is [racist ideology](#) and a white supremacist talking point. It evokes the concern of white nationalists that the white race will be submerged by the growth of minority populations. (ex. In linked Washington Post article it is "a far-right theory that immigration and differences in birthrates will cause the gradual replacement of white people by non-white people.")