

From the start of Robert Pirro's academic career, his scholarship and teaching have been informed by the question, What does politics have to do with making life worth living? In pursuit of answers to this question, he has focused his research on the political significance of works and theories of tragedy and ordinary language uses of "tragedy" and related terms. His publications, which include peer-reviewed articles in *POLITICAL THEORY* ("Václav Havel and the Political Uses of Tragedy" April 2002), *NEW POLITICAL SCIENCE* ("Remedying Defective or Deficient Political Agency: Cornel West's Uses of the Tragic" June 2004), *SOUNDINGS* ("Nelson Mandela and the Ordinary Uses of Tragedy in Private and Political Life" Spring/Summer 2002), *GERMAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY* ("Situating a German Self in Democratic Community: Greek Tragedy and German Identity in Christa Wolf's Mythic Works" Spring 2004), as well as the monograph, *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Tragedy* (2001), examine issues of meaning and politics in two main contexts: democratic thought in times of crisis and the aesthetic dimensions of German political theory. His latest work in the former area includes "Tragedy, Theodicy, and 9/11" *THESIS ELEVEN* August 2009), and "Cinematic Traces of Participatory Democracy in Early Postwar Italy: Italian Neorealism in the Light of Greek Tragedy" (*ITALICA* 3/2009). His latest work in the latter area includes "Tragedy, Surrogation and the Significance of African-American Culture in Postunification Germany: An Interpretation of 'Schultze Gets the Blues'" (*GERMAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY* Autumn 2008), "Goatsong in a Democratic Key? Tragic Legacies in German Politics and Culture" (*SOUTHERN HUMANITIES REVIEW* Spring 2009), and "*Luftkrieg* and Alien Invasion," an article manuscript on the significance of the 1996 Hollywood box office hit "Independence Day" for questions of national identity in post-unification Germany. He is currently at work on a book about politics and tragedy that takes as its starting point the Aeschylean sensibility that informed Senator Robert Kennedy's political thought and article manuscripts on Jane Addams and Primo Levi.

A Berkeley-trained teacher of political theory, Robert Pirro has taught the complete cycle of courses in the history of European political thought, as well as a course on American founders and senior- and MA-level seminars in feminist theory (focused on psychoanalytic considerations of mother-infant, mother-child relationships and their significance for adult political participation), aesthetic politics (informally referred to as, "Hippies and Nazis") and religion and politics. In teaching the department's gateway course, *Introduction to Political Science*, he combines broad consideration of the nature and meaning of politics and science with case studies of significant political phenomena such as revolution and genocide. He has also taught U.S. Presidency, Justice and Ethics, and American Government.

Dr. Pirro has presented papers at annual conferences of the American, Midwest, Western, and Southern Political Science Associations, as well as at Florida State University's Literature and Film Conference and the NEXUS Interdisciplinary Conference at University of Tennessee and has chaired or been a respondent on conference panels focused on the work of Hannah Arendt. He has also been an invited lecturer at Loyola University in New Orleans, as part of the Bieber Lecture Series (February 2003), at the John-F.-Kennedy-Institut für Amerikastudien, Free University, Berlin (July 2009) for the

Perspectives on American Literature and Culture Series, and at the Hannah-Arendt-Institut of the Technical University of Dresden, Germany (May 2006). His reviews of books on the political thought of Arendt, democratic theory, the liberal tradition, and German political culture have appeared in AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW, CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, SOUTHERN HUMANITIES REVIEW, POLITICAL THEORY, JOURNAL OF MODERN HISTORY, and GERMAN POLITICS & SOCIETY. Selected for participation in various programs, including a UC Berkeley Institute for International and Area Studies workshop, "Expression, Legitimation, Critique: Art as Politics," and a 2001 National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminar, "Literature and Values," at Chapel Hill, Dr. Pirro was awarded a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) grant for archival research in Berlin, Germany in 2004. He has lived and studied in Bologna, Italy and conducted numerous research trips to Germany.