Diplomatic History Speaker Series

Andrew Preston

“Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith”

Friday, February 15, 2013
12:30 p.m.
Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43201

To register for this event, RSVP on Eventbrite by Wednesday, February 13, 2013. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Ann Powers at powers.108@osu.edu.

Andrew Preston is senior lecturer in American history and a fellow of Clare College at Cambridge University, where he also serves as editor of The Historical Journal.


His most recent book is Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy (Knopf, 2012). In addition to articles in scholarly journals, he has written for the Toronto Globe & Mail, History Today, the Boston Globe, Religion & Politics, Politico, the TLS, and ForeignAffairs.com.

Abstract

From the first colonists to the presidents of the 21st century, religion has always shaped America’s relationships with other nations. During the presidency of George W. Bush, many Americans and others around the world viewed the entrance of religion into foreign policy discourse, especially with regard to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as a new development.

Despite the official division between church and state, the presence of religion in American foreign policy has been a constant. Yet aside from leaders known to be personally religious, such as Bush, Jimmy Carter and Woodrow Wilson, few realize how central faith has always been to American governance and diplomacy—and indeed to the idea of America
Based on his recent book, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, Preston's lecture will trace in broad outline the historical relationship between religion and American foreign relations, and use two case studies by way of example.