

CONTENTS

Illustrations ix

Introduction	1
1 A Social Practical Account of Rituals	22
2 Marking Boundaries, Distributing Goods	48
3 Performing and Recognizing Authority	83
4 Habits, Virtues, and Freedom	113
5 Expressing Beliefs, Passions, and Solidarity	148
Conclusion: The Rituals of Our Politics	189

Acknowledgments 197

Bibliography 201

Index 211

Introduction

ON A STREET on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, a crowd of Jewish protestors gathered. Some wore kippot and tallit, head coverings and prayer shawls; others held signs with slogans such as “Equal Justice for All” or biblical verses and Talmudic phrases in Hebrew and English such as “Anyone who destroys one soul—it is like destroying an entire world.” At the front of the crowd, a young woman spoke into a bullhorn. “We will sit a shiva in the street!” she cried, referring to the weeklong period following a Jewish funeral when relatives of the deceased stay home to mourn and receive visitors.

Earlier that day, it had been announced that the New York City police officer who had killed Eric Garner would not be indicted. These were the early days of the Black Lives Matter movement, and the killing of Garner, an unarmed Black man, on a sidewalk in Staten Island had been met with grief, anger, and mass protest. The Grand Jury’s decision once again brought people to the streets throughout New York City and across the country. This particular protest, with the declaration that the protestors would sit shiva in the street, placed their actions in the context of Jewish practice and the rituals of mourning. It blurred the boundary between the home where shiva is ordinarily observed and the city street where the protestors had gathered, and between the supposedly private realm of religion and the public realm of politics.

In unison, the protestors recited the Mourner's Kaddish. "Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, b'alma di v'ra chiruteih . . .," their voices rising and falling together in an intonation familiar to anyone who grew up spending Saturday mornings in synagogue. This prayer is traditionally recited by Jews grieving the death of parents or other family members. The recitation of the Mourner's Kaddish is considered to be an obligation, reserved for the loss of one's closest kin, those to whom one owes one's very existence. The words of the prayer affirm God's goodness and Jewish continuity in the face of mortality, tragedy, and the absurd. Those words are spoken in Aramaic, an ancient language that few modern Jews are likely to understand, so the prayer is learned viscerally, its sound and rhythms taking shape in the mind and body as it is uttered day after day in mourning, week after week in worship, year after year in remembrance.

The gestures that accompany the prayer are learned, too, and differ from one Jewish community to another. In some congregations, only mourners stand to recite the prayer, while others remain seated and add their voices to the recitation at moments of particular emphasis. In other communities, mourners stand first and are then joined by the rest of the congregation who rise as they are able and recite the prayer with the mourners in an expression of solidarity.

At the protest, by reciting the Mourner's Kaddish together, the assembled joined their bodies and voices in an act of political mourning. A Kaddish for Eric Garner. Following their recitation of the prayer, the protestors spoke Garner's name and the names of more than twenty others who had recently been killed by New York City police. They uttered the words, "I am responsible."

The Mourner's Kaddish has since become a recurrent feature of progressive Jewish activism in the United States, but at that time, in December 2014, there had been few instances in which the prayer had been recited in protest.¹ I could not, and still cannot,

1. To my knowledge, the few times that U.S.-based activists had recited the Kaddish in protest prior to the Mourner's Kaddish for Eric Garner were in response to

stop thinking about it. I thought about it when I returned to synagogue and listened to my fellow congregants recite Kaddish for their loved ones. And I thought about it a few years later when I heard about protestors gathering to recite Kaddish for migrant children who died in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and about mourners assembling outside the Supreme Court to recite Kaddish for Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg. I wondered about the significance and effects of these recitations, what was happening when people gathered to recite that prayer, on the street or in shul or on the steps of the Supreme Court, in mourning for kin or for strangers. And so began the thinking that led to this book. How, and why, are rituals enacted toward political ends? How, and why, do rituals appear in protests and social movements that seek justice? And what do these seemingly extraordinary political enactments of rituals have in common with their more ordinary enactments?

The Politics of Ritual delves into these questions. It considers how rituals give rise to communities, by creating and transforming their boundaries and distributing goods within them, and it shows how rituals transform the people within those communities, by shaping their habits and dispositions. In particular, it considers when and how rituals are put to democratic and justice-seeking ends. When rituals are enacted in protests and social movements, they are often aimed at redrawing the boundaries of political communities and redistributing goods within them. Sometimes this means adapting, improvising on, or transforming existing rituals; other times it means creating and implementing new ones. When Jewish protestors recited the Mourner's Kaddish for Eric Garner, they drew on an existing ritual and adapted it to a new situation.

the deaths of Palestinians killed by Israeli soldiers. I wrote about the later recitation of the Mourner's Kaddish in progressive Jewish protests against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in summer 2019 in "For These Progressive Jews, Prayer Is Part of the Protest," *Religion & Politics*, September 10, 2019, <https://religionandpolitics.org/2019/09/10/for-these-progressive-jews-prayer-is-part-of-the-protest/>.

Their ritual innovation blurred the boundary between public and private, between politics and religion, between stranger and kin. Why they might have done so, and what their act *did*, for them and for others—those are among the questions that have haunted my thinking about that event and that I hope to answer in these pages.

This book begins precisely where my first book, *Hegel's Social Ethics*, ended. On the face of it, these two projects have little to do with one another. *Hegel's Social Ethics* offered an interpretation of nineteenth-century German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* that highlighted the ethical stakes of what Hegel calls reciprocal recognition—a relationship in which people treat one another as both authoritative and accountable agents. Hegel was interested in rituals, in their role in processes of conflict and reconciliation, and in how they could bring about this kind of reciprocal recognition, but his account of this is more implicit than explicit. I finished writing *Hegel's Social Ethics* shortly after the Kaddish for Eric Garner took place, and the final paragraph of that book turns to that event as a site of ritual innovation, political contestation, and expanded ethical obligation. The present book, *The Politics of Ritual*, is a result of my having been moved by that event and my seeking to better understand what was at stake in it. This book is not about Hegel, but I write it as someone committed to the ideas that norms are created and transformed through social practices, that power relations can be restructured from within, and that just and democratic authority is generated and sustained in relations of reciprocal recognition—commitments that I credit to having thought with Hegel for a while.

I wrote much of this book in a context both unsettlingly like and unlike the one in which I began to consider the relationship among ritual, politics, and protest, in the midst of a pandemic that seemed to change everything and the ceaseless repetition of anti-Black violence that seemed to insist that nothing would ever change. In sum-

mer 2020, after several months of social distancing, illness, and isolation, hundreds of thousands of Americans took to the streets to demand racial justice and political transformation. Protestors marked and mourned the murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and too many other Black and brown Americans killed by police. In the streets, at makeshift memorials, and in houses of worship, people protesting Taylor's death incanted, "Say her name!" Insisting on the importance of remembering and speaking Taylor's name, these protestors became, as Joseph Winters argues, participants "in a ritual of conjuring and mourning, . . . witness to the afterlife of black death."² Thousands showed up for the funeral and homegoing celebration for George Floyd. His homegoing took its place in a Black funeral tradition that resists the violence of living in a white supremacist society by insisting on the dignity of the deceased.³ From die-ins to homegoings, protestors have been mourning and mourners have been protesting.

Rituals play a role in both protest and mourning, as well as in imagining and enacting a world that is better: more just, more democratic. Rituals can conjure not only a past but also a future, as Joshua Dubler suggested to me, "prefigur[ing] in the present the as-yet unrealized abolitionist future."⁴

Rituals involve sequences of bodily acts, shared by a group, and enacted in relation to a set of rules or norms for their performance.

2. Joseph R. Winters, "Nothing Matters: Black Death, Repetition, and an Ethics of Anguish," *American Religion* 2.1 (2020): 3.

3. On Black funeral traditions, see Nyle Fort, "Refusing to Give Death the Last Word," *Boston Globe*, June 4, 2020, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/06/04/opinion/refusing-give-death-last-word/>; Karla F. C. Holloway, *Passed On: African American Mourning Stories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). Holloway shows, in particular, the close connections between Black churches and funeral homes in the development and practice of mourning rituals.

4. Joshua Dubler, personal correspondence, March 25, 2021.

Rituals of mourning, for instance, are shared, norm-governed responses to the loss of someone who matters to members of the group. Because of this, rituals of mourning are value-laden. The question “Whom shall we mourn, and how?” is a normative, or evaluative, one. The answer is often taken for granted. But sometimes, people are jolted into asking and arguing about how they ought to answer. This may lead them to ask who the “we” are, how “we” are related to the person or people being mourned, what obligations people have to one another, and whether the usual ways of mourning are possible or even desirable under the present circumstances. It may lead them to ask whether they can and should enact the rituals that they have at hand, adapt them, or abandon them.

When Jewish protestors sat shiva in the street and recited Kaddish for Eric Garner, they took the received options for mourning in the Jewish tradition and adapted them to a new situation. Their answer to the question “Whom shall we mourn?” included Garner, a man who was neither Jewish nor protestors’ kin but to whom the protestors took themselves to have an obligation nevertheless. Their enactment of the ritual moved it from its usual setting, the homes and synagogues of Jewish mourners, into a public space, a city street.

Likewise, during the Covid-19 pandemic, when people struggled to mourn the loss of the people who mattered to them, they considered the usual ways of burying and mourning their dead and asked whether they were possible under the current circumstances. In the early months of the pandemic, many traditional rituals of mourning were suspended or radically altered. There were no more large in-person funerals, no more condolence visits. I worried about how depoliticizing this might be. If people could not gather in ritual, what would the politics of the pandemic become? This worry may seem misplaced, a kind of non sequitur: *What do rituals have to do with politics, anyway?* But as elected officials ignored and downplayed the threat of the virus, my mind kept returning to the politics and protests of an earlier epidemic,

the AIDS crisis, and the work of the activist organization ACT UP. As the death toll from AIDS rose and politicians ignored the virus and maligned its victims, members of ACT UP enacted political funerals that combined ritual and protest. Processing through city streets with caskets and urns that contained the remains of friends, lovers, and kin, these mourners-become-activists publicly grieved, demanded recognition for their losses, and sought to make politicians answerable for their callousness and cruelty.

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic's social distancing and physical isolation, what could make ordinary people's losses visible, known, public? How would people recognize one another in grief and solidarity, and hold one another responsible for sustaining the goods of the community they share?

As it turned out, rituals did not disappear during the pandemic, nor did the politics of ritual. Many people innovated and improved on their existing rituals to mark and mourn loss, and to demand different policies, making the connections among grief, rituals, and politics explicit. Early in the pandemic, activists dropped mock body bags on a Trump property, protesting the Trump administration's indifference toward victims of the pandemic and demanding recognition for loss. In that act, the *absence* of ritual was the point; the unceremonious treatment of these unmarked body bags was intended to highlight the inhumanity of the administration's approach to the pandemic. The absence of ritual pointed to a failure of justice. Those who lost their lives weren't being recognized; they had been denied goods—not least, care and concern—that they were due. Then, in late spring 2020, as the death toll in the United States reached 100,000, a group of more than 100 Muslim, Christian, and Jewish clergy led a National Day of Mourning and Lament, marked by rituals of mourning and lamentation in mosques, churches, synagogues, and other houses of worship across the country, as well as interfaith vigils, prayers, and public ceremonies that honored the victims of the pandemic, recognized mourners' grief, and called for healing—both physical and political. Rev. Jim Wallis, president of the Christian social

justice organization Sojourners and one of the organizers of the Day of Mourning and Lament, wrote that “our prayers for the healing of this nation must acknowledge the brokenness of our democracy and rededicate ourselves to repair the injustices this pandemic has revealed, even as we work for the healing of those who are afflicted with the virus.”⁵

In this and other cases, people adapted existing rituals of mourning to mark their losses and protest the conditions of those losses. These acts alone may not have done much to change the outcome of the policies or the course of the pandemic. But, as I hope to show, that kind of political efficacy isn’t the only mark of rituals’ political power and significance. In each case, these adaptations and innovations had to make explicit the normative question—“Whom shall we mourn, and *how*?”—and to grapple with how to answer it. Who is the “we”? What do “we” owe to the dead, or to the grieving, or to the living?

The *Politics* of Rituals

Rituals are social practices. They are complex activities shared by a group and governed by the norms of that group. This way of describing rituals can help us see the work that rituals do in and for groups, and how they can change over time as people argue about the boundaries of the group and the norms that ought to be in force within it. It also highlights their political significance—and their democratic possibilities. That’s because, as social practices, rituals distribute goods. They help determine who is included and excluded from a group, who occupies which roles and has what powers within it, which habits and virtues are cultivated, and which beliefs, passions, and stances are shared. They are *political* because they are among the practices by which people create

5. Jim Wallis, “National Day of Mourning and Lament,” National Council of Churches, June 1, 2020, <https://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/a-national-day-of-mourning-and-lament/>.

and maintain communities. And they can be *democratic* when they involve collective action that aims to correct arbitrary exclusions and to redistribute goods to those to whom they are due in and around those communities.

Of course, there's nothing *necessarily* democratic about rituals. They can exclude as easily as they can include; they can preserve an unjust status quo and they can distribute power to the powerful. But neither is their political significance limited to the consolidation and maintenance of unjust power relations. I locate politics wherever people act in concert to create, sustain, and transform the relationships and structures of their communities. At times, my way of talking about the "politics" of ritual may strike some readers as overly expansive, too easily conflated with ethics or social life more broadly. Bonnie Honig has raised a similar concern about recent scholarship on the politics of lamentation. In her work on *Antigone*, Honig writes that "in the place of the currently seductive politics of *lamentation*, I find in the play [*Antigone*] . . . a more robust *politics* of lamentation, in which lamentation is not 'human,' ethical, or material—tethered to the fact of finitude—but an essentially contested practice, part of an *agon* among fractious and divided systems of signification and power."⁶ What makes lamentation political, Honig argues, is its role in contesting political structures and power relations. Heather Pool takes up Honig's concern in her work on political mourning, attending to the processes by which some deaths, and grief for those deaths, become a matter of democratic politics. Political mourning, Pool argues, differs from private (or even public, but non-political) mourning insofar as it aims to reconfigure the boundaries of the polis and to encourage people to take responsibility for the well-being of its inhabitants.⁷ The charge, from both Honig and Pool, is to recognize

6. Bonnie Honig, *Antigone, Interrupted* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 2.

7. Heather Pool, *Political Mourning: Identity and Responsibility in the Wake of Tragedy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2021), 12.

the distinctively *political* features of lamentation and mourning, respectively, and to distinguish those features from the merely social or ethical.

I take their charge seriously and have thought much about how this book addresses it.⁸ As a scholar of theories of religion and religious ethics, I have devoted much of the book to developing a detailed account of the politics of *rituals* rather than the *politics* of rituals, to borrow Honig's formulation. But I insist on the politics, too, and so here, I want to be clear about what I mean by politics and why I think rituals are, or ought to be, an object of political analysis.

To begin with, let me say a word in defense of the broad sense of politics that I mentioned above: politics as involving concerted action to create, sustain, and transform the relationships and structures of communities. This way of thinking resists locating politics only in the actions of, and responses to, the nation-state, and it rejects any sharp distinction between communities that are properly public (and thus a site for politics) and those that are private. It casts a wide net.⁹ This stems in part from my training in religious studies, which tends to the ongoing processes by which nation-states have attempted to wall religion off from the "political" proper. Such attempts cast religion as a matter of private conviction that appears in the public sphere of politics only as a tres-

8. I am grateful to the anonymous reader for Princeton University Press who challenged me to be more explicit about my account of politics, and to Joel Schlosser for pointing me toward Heather Pool's work on this point.

9. This sense of politics has affinities with what Luke Bretherton calls the "informal mode of politics," located in the relational practices of ordinary citizens as opposed to the "formal mode of politics" involved in law and statecraft. Bretherton thinks of this informal mode of politics not as activism, narrowly construed, but as "being neighbors," in the sense of working with and alongside those with whom one finds oneself to shape a shared community and to tend common goods. See Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019); and "Politics in the Service of Society: My Response to My Interlocutors," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 33.2 (2020): 262–70.

passer. Religions, meanwhile, regularly transgress the boundaries drawn for them by nation-states as religious people and groups imagine and enact other ways of configuring such things as community, law and obligation, authority, and agency.¹⁰ Religions stake claims about what people are like and how people thus constituted ought to live together. To locate politics in and around nation-states, without tending to the complications posed by religious people, practices, and life-worlds—whether those complications are posed at home, in places of worship, or in the streets—risks limiting our imagination for other ways of living with and alongside other human and more-than-human beings. When religious individuals and groups enact rituals, they often embody, if only fleetingly, these other ways of being and living.

Wini Breines coined the term “prefigurative politics” to characterize the political structures and activities of social movement groups of the 1960s New Left, groups such as Students for a Democratic Society.¹¹ These groups were committed to participatory democracy, a form of political engagement that was decentralized, non-hierarchical, and nominally leaderless. And while their radical vision was of a society governed by participatory democratic principles and practices, more immediately, they sought to implement this form of democratic life in their internal organizing and

10. These processes are the topic of secularism studies and of political theology, as the scholarly location of work that considers the relationship between religion and politics, the influence of (particularly Protestant) theology on the formation of the nation-state, and the tensions and ongoing negotiations between religious life-worlds and contemporary political configurations. Apropos of this book's topic of the politics of ritual, the journal *Political Theology* recently published a roundtable discussion titled “Organizing, Protests, and Religious Practices,” which considers how a variety of religious practices appear in, and as, forms of democratic action and protest. See Aaron Stauffer, ed., “Round Table Discussion: Organizing, Protests, and Religious Practices,” *Political Theology*, March 18, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2021.1899701>.

11. Wini Breines, *The Great Refusal: Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962–1968* (New York: Praeger, 1982).

decision-making processes.¹² This is what Breines refers to as prefiguration, the flip side of the New Left's antipathy toward "strategic politics," the effort to build institutions and wield political power in ways legible to elected officials and governing institutions.¹³

Political analysts' distinction between prefigurative and strategic politics tends to cast the former as largely expressive and the latter as effective, in the sense of being concerned with bringing about a given end. As Francesca Polletta notes, for instance, in this literature "prefigurative goals risk sounding very much like expressive ones—defined only by their opposition to considerations of strategy."¹⁴ But, Polletta argues, this misses much of what prefigurative politics does. Participatory democratic movements try to enact structures and practices that anticipate those of the society that they hope for; in doing so, they aren't merely expressing dissatisfaction with current political arrangements while pining ineffectually for something better. These movements, their structures and practices, also do the pressing work of forging solidarity and shaping citizens with democratic dispositions.

This distinction between prefigurative and strategic politics may sound familiar to readers who are acquainted with theories of ritual, for it echoes a similar distinction that is sometimes used to cordon ritual off from ordinary action. Ritual, on such accounts,

12. There are important criticisms of the particular form that the organizations of the New Left took, including the way that their apparent "leaderlessness" gave way to *unaccountable* leadership and decision making. See, for instance, Jo Freeman's classic essay, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," which critically examines the organizational structure of early second-wave feminist groups (*Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 17 [1972–73]: 151–64). Francesca Polletta also considers the strengths and weaknesses of the structure of groups such as SNCC, SDS, and feminist consciousness-raising groups in the 1960s and 1970s in *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). I understand these authors' criticisms of the weaknesses of those movements' particular structures and practices to be distinct from a criticism of prefiguration as such.

13. Breines, *The Great Refusal*, 6.

14. Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*, 7.

is a kind of symbolic or expressive action, defined in contrast to more quotidian, strategic, or efficacious action. On this way of thinking, rituals symbolize or express things, whereas ordinary actions do things. But this distinction is just as unhelpful for understanding ritual as the prefigurative/strategic distinction is for understanding politics, and for similar reasons. Rituals unsettle any sharp distinction between expressive and effective action, not least because rituals, like all other human activities, *do* things. Rituals draw boundaries around groups; they distribute goods to members of those groups; they shape people's habits and dispositions; and they can, as Polletta writes of participatory democratic practices, "generate new bases for legitimate authority."¹⁵ Rituals can prefigure other ways of being and living together, and any such prefigurations are rarely, if ever, *merely* symbolic or expressive.

When rituals are enacted in protests and social movements, they often anticipate a world that doesn't yet exist: a world in which nation-state borders are sites of hospitality and neighbor-love; a world in which human beings live in grateful relationship with the more-than-human inhabitants of the earth; a world in which the justice and peace for which people yearn have arrived. But even as rituals prefigure a world that is not-yet, they are *working* on the people and politics of the world that is: shaping them and making claims on them. As this book aims to show, rituals can be prefigurative at the same time that they are formative and performative—they enact an as-yet-unrealized world, even as they transform the people who still reside in the world as it currently is. They can bring about social and political changes that nudge what currently is closer to what is not-yet.

The world anticipated by rituals may be more or less democratic than the one that practitioners inhabit. But rituals can anticipate and contribute to a democratic politics when they involve the concerted action of ordinary people to bring about a more just distribution of goods, including power and freedom. People act

15. Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*, 7–8.

not only politically but also *democratically* when they work together to contest unjust power relations and social and political arrangements, acknowledge and distribute authority and accountability, and encourage and cultivate habits of political participation. Throughout the book are examples in which people enact rituals intended to do these very things.

The perspective on democratic politics taken here has affinities with agonistic democratic theories that emphasize the activities of ordinary citizens and the role of ongoing contestation in political life. But whereas many agonists locate democracy primarily in the disruption of the existing order and the arrival of the new, the view that I develop here explores how rituals, as political acts and as routinized and norm-governed activities, often move between reproduction and disruption or between tradition and critique. Because rituals often concern shared goods and sacred objects—because rituals relate to these goods and objects, tend them, regulate access to them, and distribute them—it might seem like rituals are the sorts of activities that fall on the side of tradition, the status quo, the already-is. But they are far more dynamic than that. Rituals can be sites of tending *and* of transformation; understanding how they do these things can help us think about how people might go about caring for the communities in which they find themselves while enacting those that they hope to bring about.

The Book and Its Aims

The Politics of Ritual offers a social practical account of ritual, and it argues for rituals' political significance and power. In particular, it considers when and how rituals contribute to just and democratic politics. It also reflects on how people adapt existing rituals or create new ones in order to redraw boundaries or redistribute goods, including power, around and within their communities. It argues, moreover, that these adaptations and innovations are part of a dialectic of continuity and change that is *always* part of people's ritual life, rather than an idiosyncratic feature of modern religion or politics.

The book focuses on justice-seeking rituals and democratic politics for two reasons. The first is that the impulse is often to view rituals as powerfully enforcing the status quo. This *can* be true, but it is not always. Rituals aren't static; they are dynamic social practices that involve change and contestation over time. The second reason is simply that rituals can and often *do* play an important role in the struggle for justice. I hope to convince readers, particularly those who want to envision and build a different kind of world together, of the need for rituals in which the communities people deserve can be enacted and embodied.

Nevertheless, the examples in this book are not confined to enactments of rituals in protests and social movements. Some of the examples involve activists enacting rituals in protests; others involve the denizens of a nation-state enacting civic rituals in everyday life.¹⁶ Others still involve religious individuals or groups enacting the rituals of their tradition, but in ways that contest how those rituals configure community or distribute power. These contestations often take place in the midst of broader political contestation and change—as when, in the midst of second-wave feminist movements that demanded equal rights for women in political and economic life, Episcopal women enacted an ordination ceremony to demand inclusion in the (then) all-male priesthood. What holds these various examples together—what makes them worth thinking about under the banner of the “politics of ritual”—is that, in each case, they are enacted in ways that attend to the norms invoked and the communities created by them, and in ways attentive to the distribution of justice, power, and freedom. It is my assumption—typically implicit, although I'll make it explicit here—that distinctions between the religious and the secular (and

16. I typically use the term “civic ritual” to refer to rituals that have a political community or its associated symbols as their primary object. My reason for doing so is pragmatic; in religious studies, this is the term that's commonly used to refer to such rituals. However, in what follows (and particularly in chapter 4), I aim to show that there's a greater degree of disagreement and contestation over such rituals than might be assumed by the term and its association with scholarship on civil religion.

thus between, say, religious and so-called civic rituals) have little to do with the ways that people actually move among the spaces and communities they're in. The significance of religious ritual is never fully cordoned off from political concerns; the significance of civic ritual is best understood in light of theories and histories of religion.

To consider how and when rituals enact or bring about just or democratic ends we'll need to pay careful attention to what rituals are and what they do. I draw on ritual theory, social practice theory, and philosophy of language to attend to the latter. Like scholars in the field of "lived religion," such as David Hall, Robert Orsi, and R. Marie Griffith, I am interested in how people practice religion in their everyday lives, in how their religious practices emerge both within and outside of religions' institutional forms.¹⁷ Like those influenced by theorists of practice such as Pierre Bourdieu and Catherine Bell, I am interested in how rituals, as bodily practices, can shape subjects and reproduce social, cultural, and political norms—but also in how they can transform them. My approach integrates the insights of these influential intellectual movements with renewed attention to belief and language, topics sometimes left by the wayside in the recent turn toward embodiment, practice, and power. The resulting account helps make sense of how, and why, rituals have political power and significance, and

17. See, for instance, Griffith, Hall, and Orsi's contributions in David A. Hall, ed., *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Robert Wuthnow's *What Happens When We Practice Religion?: Textures of Devotion in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020) offers a thematic survey of recent literature in and around religious studies that has taken this practical turn, including work influenced by lived religion, social practice theory, and ethnographic work outside of religious studies. Leigh Eric Schmidt's *Consumer Rites* and Kathryn Lofton's *Consuming Religion* are also relevant precursors to this project, particularly in the ways that they trouble the boundaries of the religious and the secular in their approaches to ritual. Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Lofton, *Consuming Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

how, and why, people argue over existing rituals and, sometimes, create new ones.¹⁸

Readers eager to get to the politics may be tempted to skip the first chapter, which focuses on the term “ritual” and defines it for the purpose of this study. In doing so, however, they would miss the account of what rituals and social practices are and of how such practices change. This account is taken up and expanded upon in later chapters, each of which considers one or more of the things that rituals do, things that matter to our political lives. Each of the chapters should be intelligible on its own, although it is my intention that they build on one another to contribute to the broader framework and account of the politics of ritual.

18. This book is one of a growing number of recent works considering rituals and democratic practice. For instance, researchers associated with the project *Reassembling Democracy: Ritual as Cultural Resource* have published two volumes of essays that are interdisciplinary and international in scope, and constitute an archive of fieldwork-informed case studies on the use of ritual in democratic movements. While these volumes do not present a single analytical or theoretical framework, this book shares several of that project’s assumptions: that there is no sharp distinction between religious and secular rituals, and that rituals can be deployed both to bolster and to transform existing political arrangements. Moreover, this book develops the theoretical claim, noted in the introduction to *Ritual and Democracy*, that “ritual acts and performances construct, reveal, and mobilise pervasive cultural and political resources,” and, in doing so, they can shift and transform the “cultural and political processes that constitute society” (1). In what follows, I hope to develop this theoretical claim and offer a framework that can reflect back on the case studies and examples collected in that project and others like it. See Graham Harvey et al., eds., *Reassembling Democracy: Ritual as Cultural Resource* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), and Sarah M. Pike, Jone Salomonsen, and Paul-François Tremlett, *Ritual and Democracy: Protests, Public and Performances* (Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2020). One of the lead coordinators of the Reassembling Democracy project, Sarah M. Pike, has also written an ethnography of eco-activists in organizations such as Earth First!, characterizing their protests and actions—including long-term tree-sits—as rituals and rites of passage. See Pike, *For the Wild: Ritual and Commitment in Radical Eco-Activism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017). See also, as mentioned above, Stauffer, “Round Table Discussion.”

Chapter 1, “A Social Practical Account of Rituals,” clarifies the terms and topic of my inquiry. It begins by discussing some “formal” characteristics of ritual: routine, repetition, and rules. I argue that, while these *are* typically features of rituals, focusing on these formal characteristics alone obscures how rituals work dynamically to shape—and change—people and societies. After all, if rituals are nothing more than routines, strictly governed by rules and repeatedly enacted, then how could they be anything but static and status quo supporting? By considering rituals as social practices that take place over time, we can begin to see how people improvise within these inherited frames, pull them into new contexts, and change the norms and routines themselves. Moreover, we can begin to see how rituals are bound up with concerns about power and justice.

Because rituals “belong” to groups—that is, because they are social practices—chapter 2, “Marking Boundaries, Distributing Goods,” considers the relationship between rituals and the boundaries of groups. People engage rituals to create, maintain, and transform boundaries around and within their communities. In doing so, people both recognize the salience of certain roles and identities within their communities and allocate material and normative goods to the people who inhabit those roles and identities. This means that the presence, absence, and content of rituals can be matters of justice, whether a person or a group is recognized and given the goods that are their due. Disagreements and debates about rituals—whether they should be performed, who ought to be able to participate in them, what ought to be said or done in them, and what their consequences ought to be—are often disagreements about whether the structure and the distribution of goods and ills within a group are just or unjust. Rituals enacted at the U.S.-Mexico border highlight the contingency and injustice of nation-state borders by enacting other kinds of communities with other kinds of boundaries. Rituals do boundary work.

Chapter 3, “Performing and Recognizing Authority,” builds on these claims about the goods and ills that rituals create and dis-

tribute, focusing on the relationship among rituals, power, authority, and recognition. Contrary to Bourdieu's claim that people's enactments of rituals involve the exercise of power that has been authorized in advance, I argue that people sometimes enact rituals in ways that exercise power that can only be authorized retrospectively. That is to say, sometimes people enact rituals that they aren't actually supposed to enact—and sometimes, their performances succeed nevertheless! I elaborate on the argument that rituals can be performative in the sense that they can “count as” something other than, or in addition to, the discrete bodily acts that constitute them. As performatives, rituals bring about changes in the social world. What makes an enactment of a ritual successful is not always fully spelled out beforehand; rather, the conditions for success are often recognized and negotiated after the fact. It is through novel enactments of a ritual that changes in what the ritual counts as, and who it counts for, can be brought about. Politically speaking, this matters because novel enactments of rituals can distribute power in new ways—including ways that challenge domination and unjust exclusion in religious and political relationships. As we'll see, Episcopal women, ordained to the priesthood in unsanctioned ceremonies in the midst of the women's movement, and Black Catholics, who innovated on Roman Catholic liturgy to enact new authority structures influenced by the Black Power movement, drew on existing ritual frames to claim authority. In this way, rituals can transform power relations.

Critical social theorists, including Bourdieu, often emphasize the role of rituals and other social practices in reproducing existing social structures and power relations. In chapters 2 and 3, I suggest how enactments of rituals *tend* to conform to the norms and standards of already-existing practices while regulating boundaries, sustaining social structures, and distributing power. But those chapters also include examples of people and groups who challenge and change those norms, standards, and practices in ways that encourage new structures and relationships. Chapter 4, “Habits, Virtues, and Freedom,” takes on the apparent tension between

these two things. In particular, it considers rituals aimed toward forming political subjects and constituting a people, and asks, “Which people? Constituted how? With what habits and virtues in mind?” Thinking through these questions alongside the work of scholars in ritual studies—including Bourdieu, Saba Mahmood, and Catherine Bell—I consider the constitution of habits and *habitus* that reproduce social norms and power relations, as well as the possibility that people engage in rituals in ways that self-consciously engage, and sometimes transform, those norms and relations. Rituals, I argue, can shape citizens with habits and dispositions that are just and democratic.

Many of the same scholars who emphasize rituals’ role in discipline and habit formation resist the notion that rituals ought to be understood as expressing beliefs. In the examples that most interest such theorists, people’s enactments of rituals are better understood as inculcating abilities and skills according to scripts, rules, and authorities than as expressing beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. But these two things—inculcation and expression—need not be treated as an either/or. Chapter 4 suggests a way of thinking about how people’s repeated enactment of a ritual or set of rituals can inculcate habits and dispositions while also generating the reflective and expressive resources to challenge and change them; chapter 5 then shifts its focus to expression itself—to the idea that rituals express things, including political ideals and stances.

In chapter 5, “Expressing Beliefs, Passions, and Solidarity,” I consider how rituals *express* things of political significance. Rituals can express commitments and ideals. They also express attitudes and emotions, including the passions of grief and anger and the stance of solidarity. I outline an account of expression in which the ritual expression of a belief or attitude creates and distributes obligations, entitlements, authority, and other statuses, rather than merely revealing otherwise private and inner mental states. I return to examples of rituals of mourning enacted in overtly political ways to mark untimely and unjust deaths, including the political funerals of the AIDS crisis and the die-ins of the Black Lives

Matter movement, and I consider the politics of expressing grief, anger, and solidarity in and through rituals. Finally, the conclusion, “The Rituals of Our Politics,” returns to the relationship between rituals and democratic politics.

This book offers an approach to rituals that combines theoretical and philosophical considerations of rituals as social practices with context-specific analysis. The examples that appear throughout the book and in the conclusion are intended as contextual opportunities for thinking through the politics of ritual (and the rituals of our politics). There is a wide range of such examples. Many, although by no means all, are situated in relation to contemporary American politics; many, although by no means all, have Christian roots or resonance. Nevertheless, and as other examples in the book suggest, there is nothing uniquely modern, American, or Christian about the politics of ritual, nor about the ways that rituals can be contested or changed. Rituals create, sustain, and transform social and political worlds; the shape of the worlds we come to inhabit depends on the activities we undertake in common—crucially, on our rituals.

I N D E X

Page numbers in *italics* refer to figures and tables.

- academic lecture, as social practice, 34–35
- accountability: 72, 85, 152, 154–56, 160, 166–67; democratic action as involving, 14; domination and, 164; solidarity and, 179, 183–84
- act-tokens, 24n3
- act-types, 24n3
- ACT UP, 7, 175
- agency: of democratic actors, 45–46, 45n27; political freedom and, 135n39
- AIDS, 7, 20, 175
- Allen, Danielle, 116, 116n8
- Allin, John M., 109
- Althusser, Louis, 99–101
- anger: 152, 156, 175–76, 177n35; expressing, 169–71; in politics, 170n26. *See also* passions
- Anscombe, Elizabeth, 167n21
- Antigone* (Sophocles), 9
- Apostles' Creed, 157
- Aquinas, Thomas, 124n17
- Aristotle: account of habit, 122–24, 124n17; account of virtues, 30n9, 123–24; on anger, 170, 170n26; habitus, 126, 128, 139; *technē*, 122, 123, 141
- Asad, Talal, 150–51, 185
- Aslam, Ali, 180–81
- Austin, J. L., 40–42, 91–93
- authenticity, 168–69
- authority: in administration of rituals and sacraments, 90; democratic, 89n7; enacting, 103–7; holding and exercising power, 89–90; recognition of, 111–12; rituals and, 18–19, 96–103; as social good, 90–91; speaker's, 93–94
- Aztec sacrifice, 43
- baptism, 53, 157, 160, 160n14
- beliefs, 157–69
- Bell, Catherine: on postures and gestures, 137–38; redemptive hegemony, 140; ritualization, 138–40; ritual mastery, 29n7; ritual studies, 20; as theorist of practice, 16
- Bellah, Robert, 116–18
- Bellamy, Francis, 113–14, 115, 118, 146
- Bernacer, Javier, 122
- Biden, Joe, 81n40
- Black formalism, 146
- Black Lives Matter, 1, 20–21, 175–76
- Black national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, 145–46, 147n52
- Black Power movement, 19, 85, 105, 144n48
- Black Unity Mass, 105–7, 108
- bodies. *See* embodiment
- Book of Common Prayer, 87, 109
- border Eucharists, 78–82

- borders: defined, 75–76n36; immigration politics and, 76n37; naturalization ceremonies, 77; neighborhood, 75–77; rituals at, 48–50, 78–82; territorial, 82
- boundaries: borders and, 82; defined, 75; distribution of goods, 59–66; rites of passage, 61–66; rituals and, 18, 67–74
- Bourdieu, Pierre: on community membership, 66; enactments of rituals, 19; on habitus, 126–28; ritual studies, 19–20; on speaker's authority, 93–94; as theorist of practice, 16
- Bowlin, John, 124n17
- Brandom, Robert: common-law model of normativity, 31; expressive freedom, 141n46
- Breines, Wini, 11–12
- Bretherton, Luke, 109n
- Brown, Karen McCarthy, 36–37
- Brown, Michael, 174
- Brown, Wendy, 76–77n37
- Bush, Stephen, 54–55
- Butler, Judith: gender interpellation, 100n19; grievability, 174; liturgy, 94–95
- Cambodian Buddhism, 60
- candlelight vigils. *See* vigils
- Carlos, John, 142
- Castor, N. Fadeke, 77–78
- Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 83, 85
- Catholics. *See* Roman Catholicism
- Christianity: American civil religion and, 117; conversion to, 53; Eucharist, 35, 78–82, 189–90; expressing belief, 157–68; feminist and womanist theology in, 164–65; Tahrir Square and, 180; virtue and, 150. *See also* baptism; creeds; Roman Catholicism
- Church of the Advocate, 85–88, 88, 109
- civic ritual, 15–16, 15n16, 118–19, 142, 178, 191
- civic virtues, 135–36
- civil religion, 116–18, 117n9
- coming-of-age ceremonies, 37, 50–51, 58, 63, 66
- common-law model of normativity, 31
- communion. *See* Eucharist
- coronation, 43, 63–64
- Corrigan, Daniel, 87
- Council of Constantinople (381 CE), 158
- Council of Nicea (325 CE), 158
- Covid-19. *See* pandemic
- Craig, David, 68
- creeds, 157–68
- Cressler, Matthew J., 105n27, 106–7
- Crossley, Nick, 186
- Cuneo, Terence, 181
- Dandelion, Pink, 58n10
- Darling, Pamela, 110–11
- Decosimo, David, 124n17
- democratic authority, 89n7
- democratic rituals, 190–91
- democratic politics, 9, 12, 13–14, 135n39, 190–96
- Derrida, Jacques, 95n14
- diasporic communities, 77–78
- Dickinson, Anthony, 120–21n12
- discursive injustice, 42
- disposition. *See* habit(s)
- distributive justice, 37–38, 73, 74
- domination, 45, 45n27, 116n8; freedom from, 134–36, 134n37, 135–36n39; habitus and, 127; liturgical language and, 164; testimonial injustice and, 156
- Douglas, Mary: on boundary crossings, 59; criticism of student protests, 195; grid and group, 52n4; on marginalization in groups, 72n31; on rites of passage after incarceration, 71
- Dubler, Joshua, 5
- Durkheim, Émile: civic ritual, 142; definition of religion, 117–18; ritual and the sacred, 195n4; solidarity, 177–78

- Eastern Orthodoxy, 24, 161, 164, 181
eco-activism, 177n37
Eisenhower, Dwight, 116n8
embodiment, 128; embodied disposition, 126, 130, 140; embodied sense, 29; practice theory and, 16; solidarity and, 179–81. *See also* habitus; practical knowledge
enactment(s), rituals and, 23–26, 35
entitlement, 154
environmental liberation, 39
Episcopal Church: legislative bodies of, 85n3; women's ordination in, 15, 19, 22, 83–90, 98, 104, 107, 109–10
ethical formation: process of, 131, 134; ritual, virtue and, 124–32
Eucharist: administration of, 110; Body of Christ, 80, 190; border, 78–82; Episcopal Church, 87; politics of, 189–90; Roman Catholic, 35, 78–82
expression: beliefs, 157–69; debate about rituals as, 150–52; passions, 169–77; as social relational act, 154–57; solidarity, 177–85; speaker's act as, 155
expressive freedom, 141, 141n46, 142, 144–45, 193
Fajr prayer, 24–25, 28, 125, 130
Fassin, Didier, 75–76n36
feminism: anger and politics in feminist thought, 170n26; Christian theology and, 164–68; ritual innovation and, 66, 66n23, 67; second-wave, 12n12, 15, 89. *See also* womanist theology
filioque, 161, 164
first order desires, 129–31
Flag Code, 116n8
Flores, Nichole, 179n39, 186
Floyd, George, 5, 193
Foucault, Michel, 45n27, 70n27
Frankfurt, Harry, 129
Fraser, Nancy, 37n18, 73
freedom, 134n37; civic virtues, 135–36; domination and, 134–36, 134n37; expressive, 141, 141n46; habituation and, 132–40. *See also* political freedom
Freedom Seder, 39
Freemasons, 194
Fricker, Miranda, 44, 156
Galatians 3:28, 86
Gan, Julia, 29n8
Gandhi, Mahatma, 39
Garner, Eric, 1–4, 6, 176, 192–93
Geitz, Elizabeth Rankin, 165–66
gender: habitus and, 127–28; ideologies, 100; interpellation, 100n19; Nicene Creed and, 165–66; rites of passage and, 37, 65–68; social roles and, 56, 56–57n9. *See also* feminism; misogyny
Ginsberg, Ruth Bader, 3
Gould, Deborah, 175
Graybiel, Ann, 120–21n12
Great Liturgy, 181–82
“grid and group”, 52n4
grief: expressing, 171–74; grievability, 174; ritual expressions of, 177n35. *See also* mourning rituals; passions
Griffith, R. Marie, 16
groups: boundary work of, 51–59, 190; distribution of goods in, 59–66; initiation ritual for, 52–53; rituals and, 18; social roles within, 54–59
habit(s): Aristotle's model of, 122; neuroscience of, 120–21n12, 120–24; reciting pledge, 118–19; rituals and, 19–20; virtues and, 119–24
habituation, 29; freedom and, 132–40; habits and, 141–42; initiation and, 31; processes of, 29n7, 133n36; reciting Mourner's Kaddish, 192–93; relationship with freedom, 136; social practice, 31

- habitus: cultivation of, 132; Aristotelian conception of, 126; Bourdieu's interest in, 126–28, 140; Mahmood's use of term, 126n24
- Hall, David, 16
- “hands up”, 144n48
- Harris, Ian, 60n14
- Haslanger, Sally: on social practices, 26–27n4; distribution of goods, 34
- Hegel, G.W.F., 4
- Heyward, Carter, 84
- Hiatt, Suzanne, 87n6
- Hollywood, Amy, 95n14
- Holy Spirit, 161
- Honig, Bonnie: on politics of lamentation, 9, 10; on public things, 194
- House of Bishops (Episcopal Church), 22, 85n3, 88, 109–10
- House of Deputies (Episcopal Church), 85n3
- humanity, 51–52n3
- Hunt-Hendrix, Leah, 178n38
- iftar, 22, 26, 183, 191
- improvisation. *See* innovation
- initiation: into a social practice, 30–31; rituals/ceremonies of, 32, 52–53, 63, 77, 91
- innovation, 4, 7, 30, 30n9, 32, 66–68, 95, 145, 189
- interpellation, 98–103; gender and, 100n19; misinterpellation, 102n22
- Iraq war, 148, 153
- Islam: Fajr prayer, 24–25, 28; habitus of pious Muslims, 130; iftar, 26, 191; mosque movement, 124–26, 132–33; ritual prayer (*salat*), 29n8; roles in, 54–55; *shahada*, 157, 161; Tahrir Square for Juma prayers, 180
- James, William, 120–21
- Jay, Nancy, 36n15
- Jefferson, Thomas (statue), Unite the Right rally and, 186
- Jim Crow, 115, 146–47
- Johnson, James Weldon, 145
- Johnson, John Rosamond, 145
- Judaism: conversion to, 53, 65; feminist liturgical innovation and, 66n23, 164n16; mourning rituals in, 2, 173; Passover seder, 38–39, 39n19; rituals in Jewish activism, 1–4, 2–3n1, 176, 192–92; *sh'ma*, 92, 157, 157n12, 161–62; social roles in Reform congregation, 54. *See also* Freedom Seder; Mourner's Kaddish
- justice, 37; conception of, 73; distributive, 73, 74; recognitive, 73, 74; rituals, social goods and, 33–39; rituals in search of, 67–74
- Kaepernick, Colin, 142–44, 143, 147n52, 167
- Kahn, Jonathon, 183–84
- Kellerman, Bill Wylie, 191
- Kicanas, Gerald F. (Bishop of Tucson), 79, 79
- Kimmerer, Robin Wall, 152
- King, Martin Luther, Jr., 39, 86
- Kosman, Aryeh, 67n24
- Kukla, Quill (Rebecca Kukla): on felicity of speech acts, 42, 42n21; normative statuses, 97, 97n16, 101–2; performatives, 96, 97n16; on vocatives, 98–99; on women expressing emotion, 156
- Laidlaw, James, 30n9
- lamentation, politics of, 9, 10
- Lance, Mark: normative statuses, 101–2; vocatives, 98–99
- Las Posadas, 48–50. *See also* Posada sin Fronteras
- Lee, Robert E. (statue), Unite the Right rally and, 185–86
- Lewis, John, funeral of, 193
- “Lift Every Voice and Sing”. *See* Black national anthem

- liminality: anxiety-producing, 63; rites of passage, 65, 71, 73; Turner on, 61n17; van Gennep's discussion, 61–62, 61n17
- liturgy: abandonment of, 166; activism, 191n1; adoption of creed into, 158, 160, 162; Black Catholics and, 105–7, 105n27; Black formalism, 146; Episcopal Church, 109; faith-based social movements, 193; Jewish liturgical calendar, 38; in Judaism, 157, 157n12; language of, 91, 100–101; liturgical direct action, 191; Orthodox, 24, 164, 181–83; Quaker meeting and, 58n10; and performative force, 91, 94–95; prayer, 32, 163–64; Protestant, 162; rites of passage, 82; Roman Catholic, 19, 35, 48, 87, 94–95, 157–58, 161, 164; Snarr on liturgical activism, 191n1; in wedding ceremony, 68; Wolterstorff's work on, 24, 24nn2–3
- lived religion, 16n17
- Lofton, Kathryn, 16n17
- MacIntyre, Alasdair: characterization of traditions, 31, 31n10; characterizing social practices, 26–27n4; initiation into a practice, 30–31
- McWhorter, Ladelle, 69–70, 70n27
- Mahmood, Saba: Aristotelian conception of habitus, 126, 126n24; first order desires, 130; ethical formation, 136–38; ritual studies, 20; role of rituals, 128; second order volitions, 131; women's participation in mosque movement, 124–26, 132–33, 133n36
- Manne, Kate, 56–57n9, 111
- Markell, Patchen, 135n39
- marriage ceremony, 41, 43, 62–63, 68–70, 98, 107n29
- Martel, James, 102n22
- Mauss, Marcel, 151n4
- Middleton, Kate, 62–63, 68
- misogyny, 56–57n9, 111
- monarchy, 63–64
- Moran, Richard, 153–55, 172
- mosque movement: piety in, 125; women's participation in, 124–26, 132–33
- Mourner's Kaddish, 22, 139; for Garner, 2, 3, 176, 192–93; for Ginsberg, 3; politics of, 190; progressive Jewish activism and, 2–3; recitation of, 2–3, 123, 173
- mourning rituals, 1–4, 6, 8, 25–26, 60, 139–40, 171–74; in Black Lives Matter protests, 175; during Covid-19 pandemic, 7–8, 26; in eco-activism, 177n35; habit and, 123; political funerals as, 175. *See also* grief; Mourner's Kaddish; *p'chum ben*, festival of the dead; political mourning
- Muir, Edward, 63–64
- Murillo, Jose Ignacio, 122
- Murray, Pauli, 111–12
- Myerhoff, Barbara, 139
- national anthem, 142, 143, 145, 167
- National Day of Mourning and Lament, 7–8
- National Education Association, 114
- National Flag Conference, 116n8
- nation-states, borders and, 76n36, 78
- naturalization ceremonies: borders and, 77; United States, 114n2
- neighborhood borders, 75–77
- neuroscience of habit, 121–24
- New Left, 11, 12, 12n12
- Nicene Creed, 158–62, 164–68
- nostalgia, 194
- oath of allegiance, 114n2
- Oath of Conformity, 84, 86, 107
- Obama, Barack, 64

- obligation: accountability and, 152; changes in, 40–43, 50–51; Mourner’s Kaddish and, 2, 6, 176, 192–93; performatives and, 108, 152–53; rites of passage and, 58–59, 65; role-specific, 56–57, 63–64; solidarity and, 179, 184
- O’Malley, Sean (Cardinal), 78–79
- ordination, women in Episcopal Church, 83–90. *See also* Philadelphia Eleven
- Orsi, Robert, 16
- pandemic: mourning the dead during, 6–8, 25–26; ritual and protest in, 4–5, 174n28, 193; social distancing and isolation, 7
- particular(s): academic lecture, 34; Fajr prayer, 25; enactments of rituals as, 24n2, 25, 33
- passions: expressing, 169–77; reason and, 170n24. *See also* anger; grief; wonder
- Passover seder, 38–39, 39n19; Freedom seder, 39; Zoom seder, 26
- patriotism, 118, 142
- p’chum ben*, festival of the dead, 60
- performative(s): rituals as, 40, 91–96, 108; term, 42n22
- Perry, Imani, 145–46
- Philadelphia Eleven: ordination of, 83n1, 87–90, 104, 107, 109; women at Church of the Advocate, 88; women claiming authority, 111
- Piccard, Jeannette, 87
- piety, 118, 125, 126, 129, 130, 131, 136, 144
- Pledge of Allegiance, 114n2, 142, 178; children reciting, 118, 120; and civic piety, 118; as civic rituals, 191; recitation of, 113, 162–63, 163n15, 167; refining and codifying, 116n8
- political freedom, 135–36n39
- political mourning, 9, 174–77
- political theology, 11n10
- politics: in defense of, 10–11; democratic, 9, 12, 13–14, 135n39, 190–96; formal and informal modes of, 10n9; issue of grievability, 174; rituals of, 8–14, 189–96. *See also* democratic politics
- Polletta, Francesca, 12, 12n12, 13
- Pool, Heather, 9, 175–76
- Posada sin Fronteras (Inn without Borders), 48–50, 78
- postures of subordination, 137
- power: agential and structural, 44–47; politics of ritual, 45–47; rituals, pragmatics and, 40–47. *See also* authority
- practical knowledge, 29, 31, 138, 139–40
- practical wisdom, 139, 142
- precedents, 31–33, 41, 43, 95–96
- prefigurative politics, 5, 11–13, 105, 107, 149, 181, 193
- prison system, incarceration and community reentry, 71–72
- Protestant Christianity: adult baptism in, 160; liturgy and, 55; political theology and, 11n10
- protests: AIDS crisis, 7; Black Lives Matter, 144n48, 175–76; border Eucharist, 81; Covid-19 crisis, 25–26; democratic action and, 11n10; eco-activists, 17n18, 177n35; Floyd’s killing, 5; Garner’s killing, 1–4, 6, 176, 192–93; habits and, 123; national anthem, 143–45, 147n52, 167; Pledge of Allegiance, 118; rituals in, 13, 15, 47, 174, 178; Roman Catholic Church, 106; student, 195; Tahrir Square, 180–81; Taylor’s killing, 5; Trump administration, 7, 76–77n37, 77, 174n28; Unite the Right rally, 185–88; US-Mexico border, 77, 191; Westboro Baptist Church, 183–84; women in the priesthood, 83. *See also* vigils
- Quakers. *See* Society of Friends
- queer ritual innovations, 67; commitment ceremonies and, 68–69

- Rabaut, Louis, 116n8
Rappaport, Roy A., 137, 137n42
Reckson, Lindsay, 144n48
recognition: authority and, 89, 96–107;
expression and, 155–56; of loss, 7,
174, 175, 177n35; of normative status,
40–42, 43, 73; justice and, 46, 51,
69–71, 72, 73, 74; provoking, 103–7;
reciprocal recognition, 4; of women’s
ordination, 109–12. *See also* recogni-
tive justice
recognitive justice, 37–38, 72, 73, 74
Reid, Eric, 143, 143–44
Rerum Novarum (1891), 178
restorative justice, 72
rites of passage: gender and, 37, 65–68;
defined, 61; distribution of goods
through, 66–68; incarceration and,
71; as performatives, 108; van
Gennep on, 61–62, 69–70
ritual(s): authority and recognition,
96–103; authority to perform, 108–9;
as correct or excellent performance,
32–33; defining boundaries, 22–23;
definition of, 23n1; desire for, 193–94,
195–96; enactments and, 23–26;
expressing passions, 169–77; express-
ing solidarity, 177–85; expressive,
150–52; external and internal bound-
aries, 74–82; force of the performa-
tive, 90; formal characteristics of, 18;
habits and virtues, 119–24; habitua-
tion and freedom, 132–40; incarcera-
tion and community reentry, 71–72;
improvisation and refusal, 141–47;
liturgical, 94–95; mourning, 1–2, 6,
8; pandemic, 4–5; as performatives,
91–96; politics of, 8–14, 189–96; prag-
matics and power, 40–47; protests and
social movements, 1–2, 151; recogni-
tion of, 96–103; rejection of, 194, 195;
rules or norms for, 5–6; in search of
justice, 67–74; sincerity and, 167–69;
social goods and justice, 33–39; as
social practices, 26–33; term, 17; virtues
and ethical formation, 124–32
ritualization, 138–40
ritual mastery, 29n7
Rivers, Clarence (Father), 106–7
Roberts, John (Chief Justice), 64
Rogers, Melvin, 136n39
Roman Catholicism, 35, 48, 161, 164;
Apostles’ Creed, 157; Black liturgy
in, 106–7; border Eucharists, 78–82;
Eucharist, 22, 35–36; liturgy, 19, 106–7;
Nicene Creed, 158–62, 164–68; norms
changing in, 56n8; priests and rites
during pandemic, 25; Las Posadas, 48;
performative force of liturgy, 94;
social roles in, 55–56; structure of
parish, 57–58; Nuns and Nones, 193
Rotary club, 52–53, 194
routine: individual versus shared,
27–28, 28n6; innovation and, 32, 69,
95; as sequence of acts, 23–24; as
universal, 24
Ruether, Rosemary Radford, 164
Rule of Saint Benedict, 150, 151n5
Rutler, George, 86

St. Dorothy Church, 105
St. John the Divine, ordination service
at, 83, 85, 104
salat, 25, 29, 54; in mosque movement,
125, 129–30; in Tahrir Square, 180–81.
See also Fajr prayer
same-sex marriage, 68–70
Schmidt, Leigh Eric, 161n7
scripts, 24n2
second order volitions, 129–32
Second Vatican Council, 94, 105
secularism, 11n10
seder. *See* Passover seder
Seligman, Adam, 167–68
shahada, 157, 161
shiva, 1, 6, 173, 191
sh’ma, 92, 157, 157n12, 161–62
Signer, Michael, 187

- sincerity, 154–6, 167–8
Smith, James K. A., 160n14
Smith, Tommie, 142
Snarr, C. Melissa, 191n1
social goods, 33–39
social movements: rituals of, 15, 17n18, 47;
 political emotion and, 170–71, 170n24;
 prefigurative politics and, 12–13.
 See also democratic politics; protests
social practices: rituals as, 26–33; theory,
 16n17
social relational acts, 154, 166, 168–69
social roles, 54–59
Society of Friends (Quakers), 58,
 58n10, 161
Sojourners, 8
solidarity, 182; economies, 178,
 178–79n38; expression of, 177–85
Soskice, Janet Martin, 165
speech acts, 40–43, 91–94, 99–102, 156,
 172. *See also* Austin, J.L.; Kukla,
 Quill; performatives
spiritual citizenship, 77–78
sports, idiosyncratic routines in, 28n6
“Star-Spangled Banner”. *See* national
 anthem
Stout, Jeffrey, 45n27, 134n37, 151n5,
 170–71n26
Students for a Democratic Society, 11

Tahrir Square, 180–81
Taylor, Breonna, 5
technē, 122, 123, 141
transformative justice, 72
Trump, Donald: Covid-19 crisis, 7,
 174n28; on immigrants and United
 States, 76n37; on national anthem, 144
Turner, Nat, 39
Turner, Victor, 61n17
Tweed, Thomas, 53–54

Unitarian Universalism, 149, 161
United States: Conference of Catholic
 Bishops, 81n40; Immigration and
 Customs Enforcement, 3; legal
 system of, incarceration and com-
 munity reentry, 71–72; National
 Anthem, 142; naturalization cer-
 emony, 114n2; Pledge of Allegiance,
 113, 142
Unite the Right rally, 185–86
universal(s): academic lecture, 34;
 liturgies, 24, 24n2; rituals as, 33
U.S.-Mexico border, 18, 74; Bishop of
 Tucson passing communion wafer,
 79; Catholic Mass at, 191; Posada sin
 Fronteras (Inn without Borders),
 48–50, 78

van Gennepp, Arnold: marriage sym-
 bolism, 62; rites of passage, 61–62,
 69–70
Vesely-Flad, Rima, 72
vigils, 148–49, 152, 187–88
virtues, 124–32
Vodou ceremonies, 36–37, 37n17

Wallis, Jim, 7–8
Washington, Paul, 85–86
Waskow, Arthur, 39
Webster, Daniel, 115–16
Westboro Baptist Church, 183–84
William (Prince), 62–63, 68
Williams, Rowan (Archbishop), 62
Willie, Charles, 86
Winters, Joseph, 5, 177n35
Wolterstorff, Nicholas: act-types and
 act-tokens, 24, 24n3; focus of social
 interaction, 27; on liturgy, 24, 24n2,
 42n22
women’s movement. *See* feminism
womanist theology, 164–8
wonder, 169. *See also* passions

yahrzeit, 173
Young, Iris Marion, 128
Youth’s Companion, The (magazine),
 114, 114n3