

**NATE ELA**  
Curriculum Vitae

School of Public and International Affairs  
University of Cincinnati  
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College of Law  
University of Cincinnati  
407 College of Law Building  
P.O. Box 210040  
Cincinnati, OH 45221

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**POSITIONS**

2020- Assistant Professor of Political Science and Law, University of Cincinnati  
2021- Faculty Affiliate, Department of Sociology, University of Cincinnati  
2017-2020 Visiting Scholar, American Bar Foundation  
2019 Instructor, Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law  
2015 Adjunct Professor of Sociology, Lasell College  
2007-2008 Teaching Fellow, Harvard Law School  
Clinical Litigation Fellow, Harvard Law School Human Rights Program

**EDUCATION**

2018 Ph.D. (Sociology), University of Wisconsin-Madison  
2012 M.S. (Sociology), University of Wisconsin-Madison  
2007 J.D. *cum laude*, Harvard Law School  
2000 B.A. *magna cum laude* (Political Science), Columbia University

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Articles** (\* indicates peer review)

“Property and the Problem of Disuse,” forthcoming 2023, *Washington University Law Review* vol. 100 ([SSRN](#))  
“The Duty to Vote in an American City,” forthcoming 2022, *Howard Law Journal* vol. 66 ([SSRN](#))  
2020 \* “The Promise of Property: Legal Optimism and Collective Efficacy in Chicago’s Urban Agriculture District.” *Social Problems* ([SP](#) | [SocArXiv](#))

- 2019 \* “Use-Based Welfare: Property Experiments in Chicago, 1895-1935.” *Social Science History* 43(2): 319-344 ([SSH](#) | [SocArXiv](#))
- 2017 \* “Litigation Dilemmas: Lessons from the Marcos Human Rights Class Action.” *Law & Social Inquiry* 42(2): 479-508. ([LSI](#) | [SocArXiv](#))
- 2016 “Urban Commons as Property Experiment: Mapping Chicago’s Farms and Gardens.” *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 43(2): 247-294. ([FULJ](#) | [SSRN](#))
- 2012 “Reviewing Walker’s First Year: An Agenda for the One Percent.” *Social Policy* 42(1): 12-19 (lead author, with Edo Navot, and Emanuel Ubert).
- 2007 “Introduction: Reveling in Resistance, Imagining Reconstruction.” *Unbound: Harvard Journal of the Legal Left* 3: i-v. (with Lauren Coyle and Zinaida Miller, equal authorship). ([Unbound](#))

### Book Chapter

- 2017 “Land Tenure for Urban Farming: Toward a Scalable Model.” (lead author, with Greg Rosenberg) In *Good Food, Strong Communities: Promoting Social Justice Through Local and Regional Food Systems*, Steve Ventura and Martin Bailkey, eds. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press. ([MUSE](#) | chapter content as [website](#)).
- Reprinted in *This Land is Ours: International Perspectives on the Community Land Trust*, John Emmeus Davis, Line Algoed, and María E. Hernández Torrales, eds. (Terra Nostra Press, 2020).
  - Audiobook version of chapter released as podcast (2020), available [here](#)

### Works in Progress

*Fix the City: The Long Struggle to Put Land to Use.* (Book manuscript under review at University of Chicago Press, in revisions)

“Urban Slack” (in preparation)

“The Conservative Politics of Compulsory Voting in America” (in preparation)

“Reclaiming the Commons: An Institutional Genealogy.” ([SocArXiv](#))

### PUBLIC-ORIENTED WRITING

#### Policy Reports and Analysis

- 2015 “Cultivating Productive Landscapes: A Vision for Urban Agriculture in the Millennium Reserve.” (equal authorship with Erika Allen) Chicago Food Policy Action Counsel report submitted to Coastal Program of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Steering Committee of the Millennium Reserve. ([Report](#) | [Appendices](#))

- 2012 “Assessing Food Systems Sustainability and Resilience.” (lead author, with Satya Rhodes Conway and Marion Reitz) Mayors Innovation Project.
- 2009 “Cultivos Contaminados, Culturas Amenazadas: La Situación de los Transgénicos y Los Derechos Humanos en Pueblos Indígenas de Colombia.” 2009. ([online](#))
- Lead author, report submitted by Colombian indigenous and environmental organizations to U.N. Special Rapporteur for Indigenous Issues.
  - English translation, “Contaminated Crops, Threatened Cultures: Genetically Modified Organisms and the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Colombia,” submitted as parallel report to the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, May 2010. (Available via [CESCR website](#))
- 2009 “Ya sabemos que el TLC es ilegal. Ahora, ¿Qué hacer?” (“We know that the free trade treaty is illegal. Now, what to do?”) *Revista Semillas* 40-41: 34.
- 2006 “On Salvaging.” *Philippine Human Rights Update* 20(2). ([TFDP](#))

### **Blogging**

- 2014-2015 Regular posts at the [Legislation Law Prof Blog](#).

### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- 2021 Best article by a graduate student in vols. 42-43 of *Social Science History*, Social Science History Association (for “Use-Based Welfare”)
- 2017 Best Scholarly Article Award (Honorable Mention), American Sociological Association Section on Human Rights (for “Litigation Dilemmas”)
- 2016 Distinguished Graduate Student Paper Award, American Sociological Association Sociology of Law Section (for “Litigation Dilemmas”)
- 2016 Graduate Student Paper Prize (Honorable Mention), Social Problems Theory Division, Society for the Study of Social Problems (for “Reclaiming the Commons”)

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

#### **Research and Writing**

- 2021-2022 University of Cincinnati Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Research Advancement Award
- 2021 University of Cincinnati Faculty Launch Award
- 2016 Mellon-Wisconsin Summer Dissertation Fellowship
- 2014-2015 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, Law and Social Sciences Division (Award ID SES-1423371)
- 2014-2015 Lincoln Institute of Land Policy C. Lowell Harris Dissertation Fellowship

- 2012 Social Science Research Council Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship  
2008-2009 Henigson Human Rights Fellowship, Harvard Law School

### **Training and Travel**

- 2017 Law and Society Association International Meeting Graduate Student Travel Subsidy  
2016 Graduate Students Travel Award, Department of Sociology, UW-Madison  
2015 Funded participant, Harvard Law School Institute on Global Law and Policy, 2015 Workshop (Doha, Qatar)  
2014 Funded participant, Harvard Law School Institute on Global Law and Policy, Workshop on Global Poverty and Heterodox Development Pathways, Sciences Po Law School  
2013 Funded participant, Summer Institute in New Economics  
2012 Graduate Student Travel Award, Department of Sociology, UW-Madison

### **RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS**

- 2017-2020 Visiting Scholar, American Bar Foundation  
2015-2017 Associate, Harvard University Department of African and African-American Studies  
2014-2015 Graduate Research Fellow, Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin – Madison  
2011-2013 Honorary Graduate Fellow, University of Wisconsin Law School Institute for Legal Studies  
2007-2008 Visiting Researcher, Harvard Law School

### **INVITED TALKS**

- 2022 “The Conservative Politics of Compulsory Voting in the United States”  
Panel on New Approaches to Sub-National Politics, Social Science History Association, Chicago, Nov. 17-20.  
2022 “Policy Tools for Promoting Residents’ Interests in a Context of Gentrification”  
Lincoln Heights Roundtable, Lincoln Heights, Ohio, Mar. 10.  
2021 “Fix the City: Vacant Land and Social Policy”  
Planning and Law Division of the American Planning Association, Vacant Property webinar, Oct 21.

- 2021 “Reclaiming the Commons”  
Inframarginalism Conference, University of Kentucky College of Law, Feb. 18.
- 2021 “Cultivating the City: Urban Agriculture and the Promise of Property”  
Ohio University Sociology and Anthropology colloquium, Feb. 11.
- 2020 “The Legal Roots of Urban Inequality: Racially Restrictive Covenants and Redlining in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America” (with Meghan Morris)  
Cincinnati Bar Association Real Property Law Institute, Dec. 18.
- 2019 “Property and the Problem of Disuse”  
Property Works in Progress conference, Boston, Sept. 20-21.
- 2019 “Cultivating the City: Urban Agriculture and the Promise of Property”  
Northwestern University Sociology Department colloquium, May 9.
- 2018 “Reflecting on the Relevance of Marxian Concepts in Contemporary Sociology”  
Money, Markets, and Governance Workshop, session on Marx’s relevance to contemporary social sciences, University of Chicago, May 1.
- 2013 “Cultivating a Commons?”  
University of Chicago Law School, Nov. 19.
- 2013 “Modeling Progressive Law for States and Cities: The American Legislative and Issue Campaign Exchange”  
Northwestern Law, Nov. 7.; Stanford Law, Nov. 2-3; IIT Chicago-Kent Law, Sept 7;  
Northern Illinois University Law, Sept. 4; John Marshall Law, Feb. 25.
- 2012 “Introducing ALICE: The American Legislative and Issue Campaign Exchange”  
Yale Law School, Feb. 18; Loyola Chicago Law School, Feb. 25.
- 2009 “Genetically Modified Organisms and the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Colombia.”  
Universidad Libre Law School, Bogotá, Colombia, Aug. 21.

## **CONFERENCE ORGANIZING**

- 2018 “Law & Social Welfare Distribution,” open session, Sociology of Law Section, American Sociological Association annual meeting, Philadelphia, August 12-13.
- 2017 “Reimagining Access: Institutional Experiments in the Postindustrial City” (with John Robinson, Washington University in St. Louis Dept. of Sociology), session co-sponsored by the LSA collaborative research networks on Legal Geography and Technology, Law, and Society, and by the International Research Group on Law and Urban Space; Law and Society Association annual meeting, Mexico City, June 20-23.
- 2016 “The Sociolegal Researcher as Social Justice Advocate: Challenges and Opportunities” (with Thomas Mitchell, University of Wisconsin Law School), service panel, Law and Society Association annual meeting, New Orleans, June 2-5.

- 2015 “Bending Toward Justice? Reflecting on the Role of Sociological Research in Advancing Social Change” (with Thomas Mitchell, University of Wisconsin Law School), service panel, Law and Society Association annual meeting, Seattle, May 28-31.
- 2015 “Re-envisioning the City: The Limits and Possibilities of Property” (with John Robinson, Northwestern University Dept. of Sociology), Legal Geography Collaborative Research Network session, Law and Society Association annual meeting, Seattle, May 28-31.
- 2014 “The History of Urban Agriculture” (with Monica White, University of Wisconsin-Madison Dept. of Sociology), two sessions, Growing Power Urban & Small Farms Conference, Milwaukee, Nov. 6-9.
- 2012 Workshop on the Sociology of Urban Agriculture (with Erik Olin Wright), Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Oct. 5-7.
- 2007 “Resistance and the Law: Radicalism, Extremism, Legitimacy, Cooptation” (with editors of *Unbound*), spring *Unbound* symposium, Harvard Law School, March 16-17.

## CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

- 2022 “Activating Urban Slack”  
Law and Society Association, Socio-Legal Approaches to Property research network (CRN 49) session, Lisbon (online), July 13-16.
- 2021 “The Duty to Vote in an American City”  
Law and Political Process Study Group, American Political Science Association, Seattle/Online, Oct. 3.
- 2021 “How Voting Became a Duty in Kansas City”  
Midwest Sociological Society, Online, Nov. 20-24.
- 2021 “Property and the Problem of Disuse”  
Law and Political Economy workshop on private law, Online, Jan. 8.
- 2019 “How Voting Became a Duty in Kansas City”  
Social Science History Association, Chicago, Nov. 20-24.
- 2019 “The Promise of Property: Cultivating Legal Optimism and Collective Efficacy in Chicago’s Urban Agriculture District”  
American Sociological Association, Community and Urban Sociology Section roundtable session, New York City, Aug. 10-13.
- 2019 “Locking in the City We Want: Organizational Experiments as a Path to Urban Transformation”  
ASA Community and Urban Sociology Section Pre-Conference Workshop, New York City, Aug. 9.
- 2019 “Properties of Urban Resilience”  
Law and Society Association, Socio-Legal Approaches to Property research network (CRN 49) session, Washington, DC, May 30-June 1.

- 2019 “Making Property Useful”  
Association for the Study of Law, Property, and Society, Syracuse, NY, May 17-18. Law and Society Association, Toronto, June 9-11, 2018.
- 2017 “Visions of a City Transformed: Urban Farming in Progressive-Era Chicago”  
Newberry Library Urban History Workshop, Nov. 11.
- 2017 “Use-Based Welfare: Property Experiments in Chicago, 1895-1935.”  
American Sociological Association, Welfare State Regular Session, Montreal, Aug. 12-15.
- 2017 “The Promised Land? Englewood Reckons with an Urban Agriculture District”  
Law and Society Association, Mexico City, June 20-23.
- 2017 “Experimental Fields: Inventing the Urban Agriculture District.”  
American Association of Geographers, Boston, Apr. 5-9.  
Law and Society Association, Mexico City, June 20-23.
- 2016 “Use-Based Welfare: Property Experiments in Chicago, 1895-2015.”  
ASA Economic Sociology Section Pre-Conference Workshop, Seattle, Aug. 19.  
Boston College Environmental Sociology Working Group, Apr. 1.  
Workshop on Economic Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mar. 31.
- 2016 “Reclaiming the Commons, Activating Space: A Dual Genealogy.”  
American Sociological Association, Seattle, Aug. 20-23.  
Society for the Study of Social Problems, Seattle, Aug. 19-21.  
Workshop on Economic Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Feb. 25.
- 2016 “Urban Commons as Property Experiment: Mapping Chicago’s Farms and Gardens.”  
Society for the Study of Social Problems, Seattle, Aug. 19-21.  
International Association for the Study of the Commons, Bologna, Nov. 6-7, 2015.
- 2015 “Reclaiming the Commons: Genealogy of a Sociolegal Imaginary”  
International Association for the Study of the Commons, Bologna, Nov. 6-7.  
Law and Society Annual Conference, Seattle, May 28-31.
- 2015 “Claiming land by cultivating identity: The search for common ground in Chicago’s farms and gardens.”  
Rural Sociological Society, Madison, WI, Aug. 6-9.
- 2015 “Commoning as an Urban Social Practice.”  
Workshop on Economic Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mar. 25.
- 2015 “Regulating the Resilient City: A Project to Study Socio-Ecological Urban Governance.”  
Workshop of the Harvard Institute for Global Law and Policy, Doha, Jan. 2-10.
- 2014 “Jensen’s Dream, Deferred.”  
Growing Power Urban & Small Farms Conference, Milwaukee, Nov. 6-9.
- 2014 “Commoning as an Urban Social Practice.”  
Midwest Law and Society Retreat, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Oct. 24-25.
- 2014 “The Urban Agriculture Land Trust as a Vehicle for Commoning.”  
Urban Agriculture Law Conference, U. Maryland School of Law, Sept. 19.

- 2014 “Cultivating a Commons? Urban Farming and Property Law in Chicago, 1893-1920.”  
Fifth Workshop on the Ostrom Workshop, Indiana University, June 18-21.
- 2014 Participant, Roundtable on Global Development and Heterodox Development Pathways.  
Sciences Po Law School, Paris, May 19.
- 2013 “Cultivating a Commons? Urban Farming and Emerging Property Norms in Chicago,  
1909-1920.”  
Association for Law, Property, and Society, Minneapolis, April 26-27.  
Law and Society Association, Boston, May 30-June 2.
- 2013 “Jensen’s Dream, Deferred: Urban Farming and Property in Chicago, 1909-1920.”  
American Society for Environmental History, Toronto, April 4-6.
- 2012 “Law, Land, and Urban Farming in Chicago.”  
Midwest Law and Society Retreat, Madison, WI, Sept. 20-21.
- 2012 “Urban Agriculture Growth Coalitions: Laying the Legal Groundwork for the Garden  
Cities of Tomorrow.”  
Law and Society Association, Honolulu, June 5-8.
- 2011 “How to Analyze Alien Tort Litigation and Social Movement Mobilization? Lessons from  
the Marcos Human Rights Class Action.”  
Law and Society Association, San Francisco, June 2-5.
- 2011 “Four Ways of Thinking About Alien Tort Litigation and Social Movement  
Mobilization.”  
Conference on Renewing Radical Scholarship, Upham Woods, WI, May 27-29.
- 2010 “The Resilience Research Center.”  
Workshop on the Social Economy, Upham Woods, WI, Dec. 11-12.
- 2007 “The Globalization of Collective Litigation: A Structural Approach.”  
Visiting Researcher Colloquium, Harvard Law School, Nov. 28.

## **MEDIA**

Recorded interview for story about community land trusts and affordable housing, for “Two  
Americas” series syndicated by E.W. Scripps National, Mar. 2022.

Quoted in “Thousands spent so far defending Lebanon’s concealed carry ordinance; costs  
expected to rise,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Dec. 7, 2021

Live interview for “Lawsuit claims city’s tax break program for homeowners is discriminatory,”  
*Cincinnati Edition*, WVXU, Oct. 20, 2021

Interviewed for “Where Did Marcos Hide His \$10 Billion Fortune?” *Bloomberg Businessweek*,  
July 2021

Recorded interview for “Why Aren’t Elmwood Place and St. Bernard Part of Cincinnati?” *OKI  
Wanna Know*, WVXU, Oct. 28, 2020.



## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **University of Cincinnati**

School of Public and International Affairs

Law and Inequality in the City (S21)

Seminar on Law and Capitalism in America (S21, S22)

Law, Markets, and Politics in the United States (F21)

American Courts & Judicial Process (F20, F21)

College of Law

Land Use Law and Development (cross-listed with School of Planning, S21, S22)

Land Use Law and Advocacy-Practice One (S21)

Seminar on Law and Capitalism in America (S21, S22)

### **Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law**

Public International Law (S19)

### **Lasell College**

Social Policy, Department of Sociology (F15)

### **Harvard Law School**

Community Action for Social and Economic Rights (Teaching Fellow), 2007-2008

International Human Rights Clinic (Clinical Litigation Fellow), 2007-2008

### **Escola Secundária Francisco Manyanga, Sussundenga, Mozambique**

Geography and English as a Foreign Language (as Peace Corps volunteer), 2001-2002

## **SERVICE**

### **To Universities**

University of Cincinnati

School of Public and International Affairs

Undergraduate committee, 2020-

Inclusive Excellence cluster on community engagement, 2020- (chair, 2021-22)

Pre-Law Advisor, 2020-21

College of Law

Clinics committee, 2020-

University

Social Justice Advisory Committee, 2021-

Pre-Professional Advising Center Pre-Law Committee, 2020-

Reviewer, UC Office of Research Arts, Humanities, and Social Science Research Award, 2021-22

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Center for Culture, History, and the Environment, Workshop Planning Committee, 2013  
Sociology Department Social Committee, 2012-2013

### **To the Profession**

American Sociological Association, Section on the Sociology of Law

Graduate Student Member, Section Council, 2017.

Member, Distinguished Student Paper Award committee, 2017.

Law and Society Association

Co-organizer, Service Panels on sociolegal research and social change, 2015 and 2016.

Chair/discussant, panel on “Inter/Action in Environmental Law Settings:

Constituting and Understanding Social Action,” 2011 Annual Conference,  
San Francisco.

American Planning Association

Presentation to Webinar on Property Vacancy, Oct. 2021

Cincinnati Bar Association

CLE Presentation for Real Property Law Institute, Dec. 2020

Occasional peer review: *American Journal of Sociology*; *International Journal of Transitional Justice*; *Journal of Politics & Economics*; *Law & Social Inquiry*; *Social Problems*; National Science Foundation.

### **To the Community**

Cincinnati Interfaith Worker Center

Member, Legal Advisory Council, 2021-

Chicago Food Policy Action Council

Volunteer research on urban agriculture and land use policy, 2011-2015.

Co-Organizer (with Erika Allen, Growing Power) of roundtable discussions on potential urban agriculture land use in the Millennium Reserve, September 2014 - February 2015.

Co-Organizer (with Erika Allen, Growing Power) of discussion session on land tenure strategies for urban agriculture, Chicago Food Policy Summit, March 2014.

Co-Organizer (with Erika Allen, Growing Power) of panel discussion on land use and urban agriculture, Chicago Food Policy Summit, March 2013.

Englewood Urban Pathways Project

Volunteer research on cooperative business models for urban farming, 2015.

Northwestern University Conference on Human Rights, Jan. 2012.

Chair and Discussant, Session on “Defining the Right to Food.”

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

American Sociological Association  
American Political Science Association  
Law and Society Association  
Midwest Sociological Society

## **BAR ADMISSION**

Massachusetts, 2007-