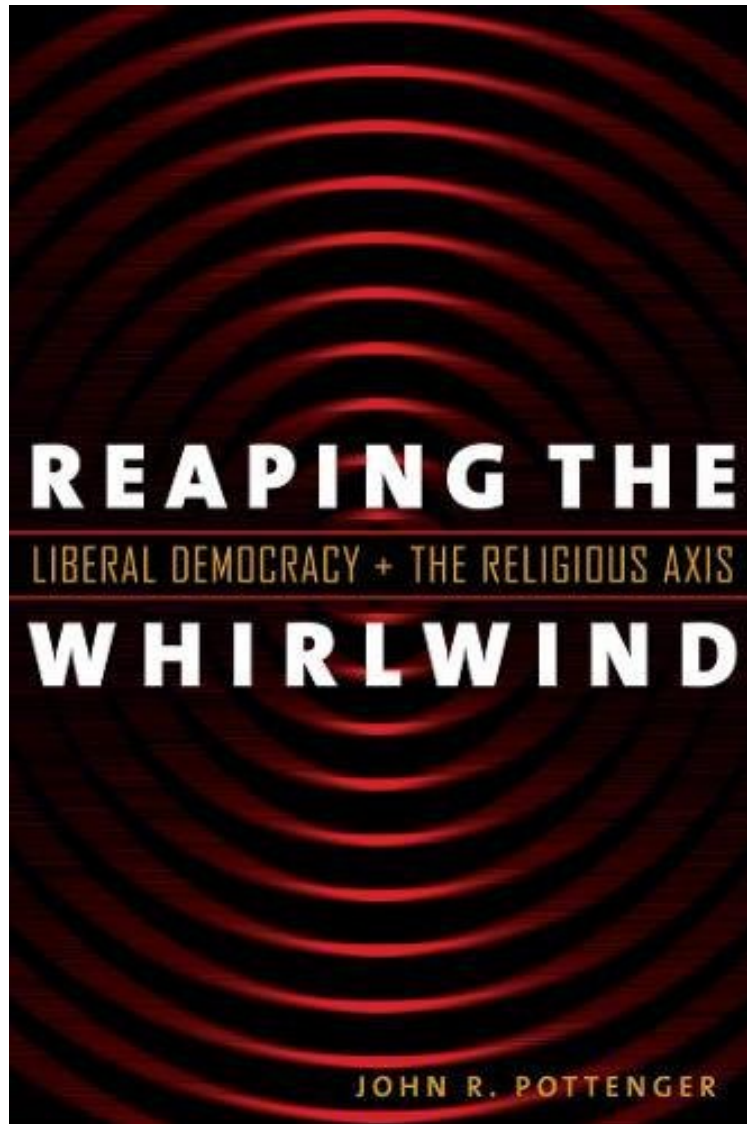


[Free pdf] Reaping the Whirlwind: Liberal Democracy and the Religious Axis (Religion and Politics)

Reaping the Whirlwind: Liberal Democracy and the Religious Axis (Religion and Politics)

John R. Pottenger

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John R. Pottenger : Reaping the Whirlwind: Liberal Democracy and the Religious Axis (Religion and Politics)
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reaping the Whirlwind: Liberal Democracy and the Religious Axis (Religion and Politics):

As early as the sixteenth century the liberal democratic state has been forced to confront the question of religion in politics. The result has been a tense and uncomfortable balancing act. Today, in the public square of liberal democracy, a number of religious confessions and beliefs compete for attention. In the American experience, some sense of religious pluralism and relative social harmony has been maintained. However, for this relationship to prevail, a tension must continue to exist that balances the political and social pursuits of self-interest with meeting the objectives of the common good. In *Reaping the Whirlwind*, John R. Pottenger shows how this process began in the modern world, and how societies attempt to manage this ongoing conflict. The first part of the book lays the groundwork of his analysis by using examples from history to demonstrate the genesis of political and religious "whirlwinds." It goes on to explore contemporary case studies, such as conflicts between Mormons and Evangelicals in the United States, liberation theology in Latin America, Islam and the state in Uzbekistan, and radical Christian reconstructionism. Pottenger believes that the formal institutions of liberal democracy should maintain this turbulence, even as religious activism threatens to upset the balance. He concludes by advocating religious liberty and recognizing the individual and social need for expression. At the same time, he maintains that the survival of liberal democracy requires that these religious traditions not dominate the public sphere.

Introduction Part I: Religion and Politics 1. Mixing Religion and Politics: The Case of the Ten Commandments 2. Religion, History, and Logic: The Genetic Fallacy Part II: Foundation and Structure of the Modern State 3. Axes of History: Abandoning the Universal Christian Commonwealth 4. The Religious Axis: Rationality, Conscience, and Liberty 5. Constitutional Protection: America, Religious Liberty, and the Factual Imperative Part III: Challengers to Liberal Democracy and the Religious Axis 6. Mormons vs. Evangelicals: Uneasy Coalitions in the Public Square 7. Liberation Theology's Methodological Insurgency: Confronting Liberal Democracy 8. Islam and the State: Modifying Liberal Democracy 9. Christian Reconstructionism: Defying the Religious Axis Conclusion 10. The End of Civil Society Endnotes "In this fascinating book . . . Pottenger examines critically the challenges to liberal democracies and concludes that the constitutional structure of the modern liberal-democratic state has the potential to contain the whirlwind of religious sectarianism resulting from its commitment to religious freedom and diversity. This book displays impressive scholarship in political theory, religion and politics in the United States, and knowledge of comparative politics." Mary Segers, professor, Department of Political Science, Rutgers University "John Pottenger approaches religion and its multiple manifestations with learning and empathy, the same qualities that inform his understanding of liberal democracy. As he points to the merits of contemporary religious expression across many borders and in many varieties, he also notes the challenges if not dangers such expression poses for the political and religious freedoms so tenuously acquired in recent times. His analysis is clear and probing, which makes his recommendations all the more persuasive and timely." Charles Butterworth, professor, Department of Government Politics, University of Maryland "Challenges the reader to look at the role of the state in resolving the tensions between religious values and social harmony as well as the difficulty of balancing individual freedom and the common good. [Pottenger] asks the big questions and comes up with meaningful answers. This is a must read for those who want to explore below the surface of civil society." Jo Renee Formicola, professor, Department of Political Science, Seton Hall University About the Author John R. Pottenger is an associate professor of political science at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. He is the author of *The Political Theory of Liberation Theology*.