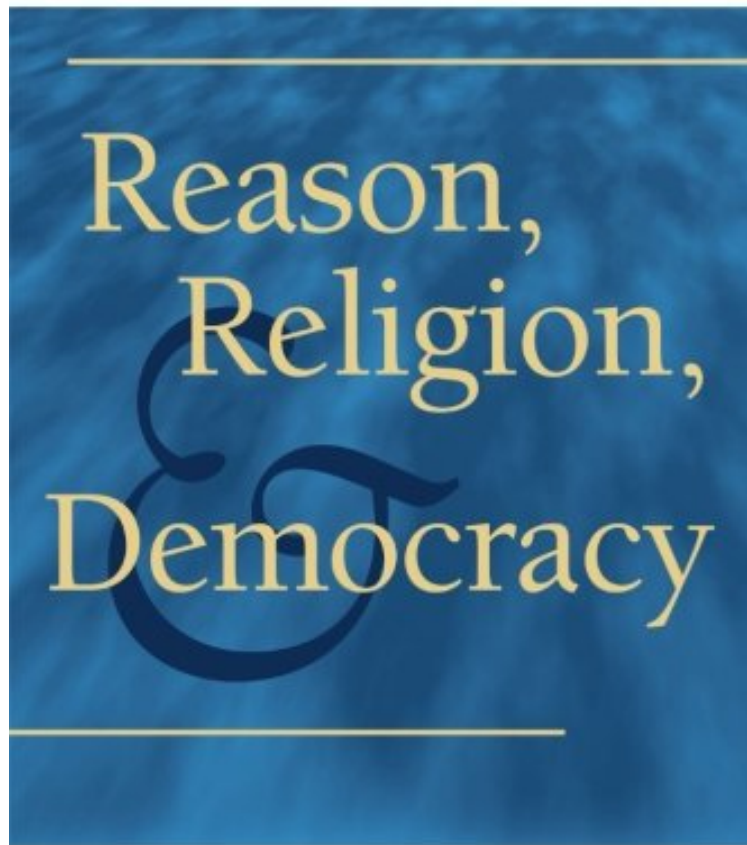


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Dennis C. Mueller

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Dennis C. Mueller : Reason, Religion, and Democracy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reason, Religion, and Democracy:

The rise of religious fundamentalism in different parts of the world in recent years and its association with terrorism has led to renewed interest in the nature of religion and its compatibility with Western institutions. Much of the focus

of this new interest has contrasted religion and science as systems of knowledge. This book also emphasizes the difference between religion and science as means for understanding causal relationships, but it focuses much more heavily on the challenge religious extremism poses for liberal democratic institutions. The treatment contains a discussion of human psychology, describes the salient characteristics of all religions, and contrasts religion and science as systems of thought. Historical sketches are used to establish a link between modernity and the use of the human capacity for reasoning to advance human welfare. The book describes the conditions under which democratic institutions can advance human welfare, and the nature of constitutional rights as protectors of individual freedoms. Extremist religions are shown to pose a threat to liberal democracy, a threat that has implications for immigration and education policies and the definition of citizenship.

"Mueller's new book tackles a very large question and approaches it with a very broad, but very fine brush. The first half of the book provides a biological explanation for the origin of both reason and religion and explores how reason and religion have affected the development of civilization and have, in turn, been affected by those civilizations. The second half of the book links religion and rationality to issues in contemporary politics. It focuses on such issues as the relationship between education, religion, and democracy; the effects of emigration; and constitutional design. I am impressed by the book and with the project itself. I found myself broadly sympathetic with the book's arguments and conclusions, and even where I disagree, the arguments are interesting and provocative." -Roger Congleton, George Mason University

"In addition to a wide-ranging and insightful discussion of religion and its history, Dennis Mueller analyzes religious intolerance and its lack of correlation with liberal democracy. One of the lessons in the book is that a competitive, "private" market in religion is an institutional means of keeping such intolerance in check. Monopoly in religion, like elsewhere, is not very forgiving. Mueller is well known for his work in other areas; he is a major economist. In my view this is his best book. Those of you who know his other works realize that this is a strong endorsement indeed." -Robert Tollison, Clemson University

"Dennis Mueller reworks enlightenment themes, offering a wide-ranging and provocative defense of the values of reason and liberal democracy and a critique of the role of religion: wide-ranging in terms of both ideas deployed and historical contexts considered; provocative in treating both religious fundamentalism of all forms and religious diversity as threats to liberal democracy." -Alan Hamlin, University of Manchester

"This is bound to be a controversial book. Mueller argues for consideration of restricted franchise - with only those 'with more education or loyalty to the state' forming the electorate. He questions the wisdom of the 'freedom to educate one's children as one pleases' and raises doubts about relatively open immigration policies. He underlines what he sees as a basic tension between religion (the 'antithesis of science') and liberal democracy. Above all, it is a courageous book, tackling difficult and tender questions about how the delicate balance between liberalism and democracy can best be managed. Not everyone will agree with his position. But everyone should agree that the challenges he points to are genuine and highly significant in the contemporary world." -Geoffrey Brennan, Australian National University

About the Author
Dennis C. Mueller is professor emeritus of economics at the University of Vienna. His main research interests are public choice, industrial economics, and constitutional political economy. He is the author of many articles and several books, including *Public Choice III* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), *The Corporation* (2003), and *Constitutional Democracy* (1996). Mueller is a past president of the U.S. and European Public Choice Societies, the Southern Economic Association, the Industrial Organization Society, the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics, and the International Joseph A. Schumpeter Society.