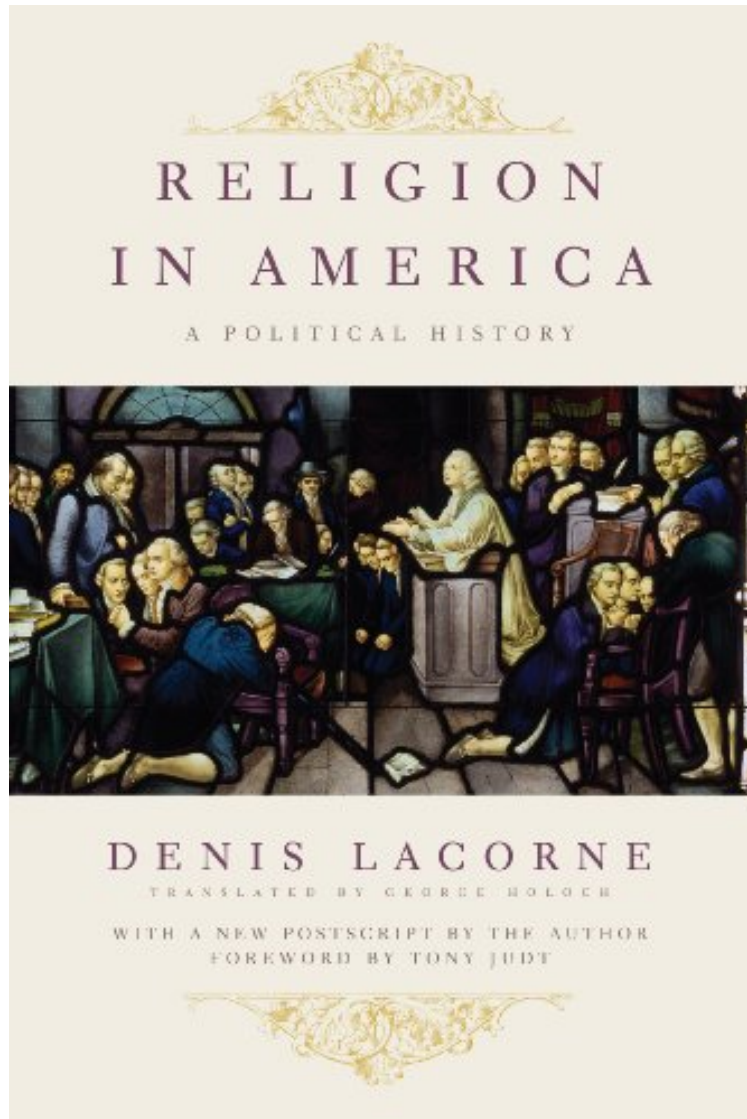


[PDF] Religion in America: A Political History (Religion, Culture, and Public Life)

Religion in America: A Political History (Religion, Culture, and Public Life)

Denis Lacorne

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Denis Lacorne : Religion in America: A Political History (Religion, Culture, and Public Life) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Religion in America: A Political History (Religion, Culture, and Public Life):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Unique perspectiveBy Robert B. MillerA unique perspective religion using comparative analysis of US and French societies. Some great quotes; not your standard fare.0 of 0 people found

the following review helpful. Insightful analysis of religion in American politics
By Ellen Hampton This is a strong analysis of the role of religion in the American political landscape, particularly pointing out the nuance in specific areas that are frequently misinterpreted at face value. Denis Lacorne is a French professor of political science whose informed outsider view brings the distance required to tease out fundamental threads of American culture from the larger political weave. His analysis of presidents and presidential candidates' use of religion in campaigning and positioning in the culture is astute and enlightening. At the same time, Lacorne's perspective leads to a long analysis of the French historiography on American religiosity, but then declines to develop a full comparison of the two nations' positions on secularity in governance, which IMHO would have been useful. He does a good job of revealing the exaggerated shadow of the Puritans, particularly as seen from abroad (the French tend to blame anything remotely conservative about American society on the Puritans). It would have been interesting to consider regional differences of religion in politics, but perhaps that would require another book! All told, an excellent and insightful look at the crossroads of American religion and politics.
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A bit of a niche interest
By Papa Redden If a survey of French thought about the role of religion in America sounds interesting to you, then this book will do the trick. The writing is accessible, the criticism, fact correction, and context is helpful, and it's a quick read.

Denis Lacorne identifies two competing narratives defining the American identity. The first narrative, derived from the philosophy of the Enlightenment, is essentially secular. Associated with the Founding Fathers and reflected in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Federalist Papers, this line of reasoning is predicated on separating religion from politics to preserve political freedom from an overpowering church. Prominent thinkers such as Voltaire, Thomas Paine, and Jean-Nicolas Dmeunier, who viewed the American project as a radical attempt to create a new regime free from religion and the weight of ancient history, embraced this American effort to establish a genuine "wall of separation" between church and state. The second narrative is based on the premise that religion is a fundamental part of the American identity and emphasizes the importance of the original settlement of America by New England Puritans. This alternative vision was elaborated by Whig politicians and Romantic historians in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is still shared by modern political scientists such as Samuel Huntington. These thinkers insist America possesses a core, stable "Creed" mixing Protestant and republican values. Lacorne outlines the role of religion in the making of these narratives and examines, against this backdrop, how key historians, philosophers, novelists, and intellectuals situate religion in American politics.

Lacorne is an acute yet friendly observer of US politics and culture. The parts of the book that form a straightforward essay on religion in America are wise, sympathetic, and vividly written. But his weaving of this account into the story of France's long obsession with America is fascinating in its own right, and casts light on the larger theme. Sorting through the insights and misconceptions of his predecessors is unexpectedly revealing: quite often funny, too. (Financial Times) Anyone interested in religion and politics in the U.S. stands to be deeply informed by Lacorne's lucid, intelligent book. (Booklist) Forceful and intelligent. (Kirkus s) it surveys its subject with grace and insight, as well as a lot of information. (Jim Cullen Cutting Edge) It's an edifying read for someone seeking grounding in the subject as well as a user-friendly course adoption. (Jim Cullen History News Network) This book provides a much welcomed viewpoint from outside our ongoing religious squabbles in American politics. Lacorne admirably avoids oversimplification while remaining eminently readable. (Library Journal) A fascinating and noteworthy study of American religion. (Eldon J. Eisenach Journal of American History) On a shelf groaning with books on politics and religion, Denis Lacorne's study will stand out for its distinct perspective and erudition. (Thomas E. Buckley American Historical) The book is quite thorough, considering the substantial historical period being covered. Examples from legal cases to travel narratives, public school curricula changes to political pulpits are expertly chosen, and the resulting exploration is as concerned with the specifics of the topics as it is a general commentary on broad overarching concepts. (Saliha Chattoo Studies in Religion) Suitable for college-level political history and religion holdings alike a fine scholarly assessment and history, this is a recommendation for any college-level collection! (Midwest Book)
About the Author Denis Lacorne (PhD, Political Science, Yale) is University Professor of History at l'Institut d'tudes Politiques de Paris and Director of Research at CERI-Sciences-Po. He is the author of (translated into English) Religion in America: A Political History (Columbia, 2011) and The Rise and Fall of Anti-Americanism: A Century of French Perception (Palgrave, 1990), the editor of The Measure and Mismeasure of Populations: The Statistical Use of Ethnic and Racial Categories in Multicultural Societies (Palgrave, 2011), and the co-editor (with Tony Judt) of With Us or Against Us: Studies in Global Anti-Americanism (Palgrave, 2005) and (with Tony Judt) The Politics of Language: Identity Politics in a Multilingual Age (NYU, 2004).