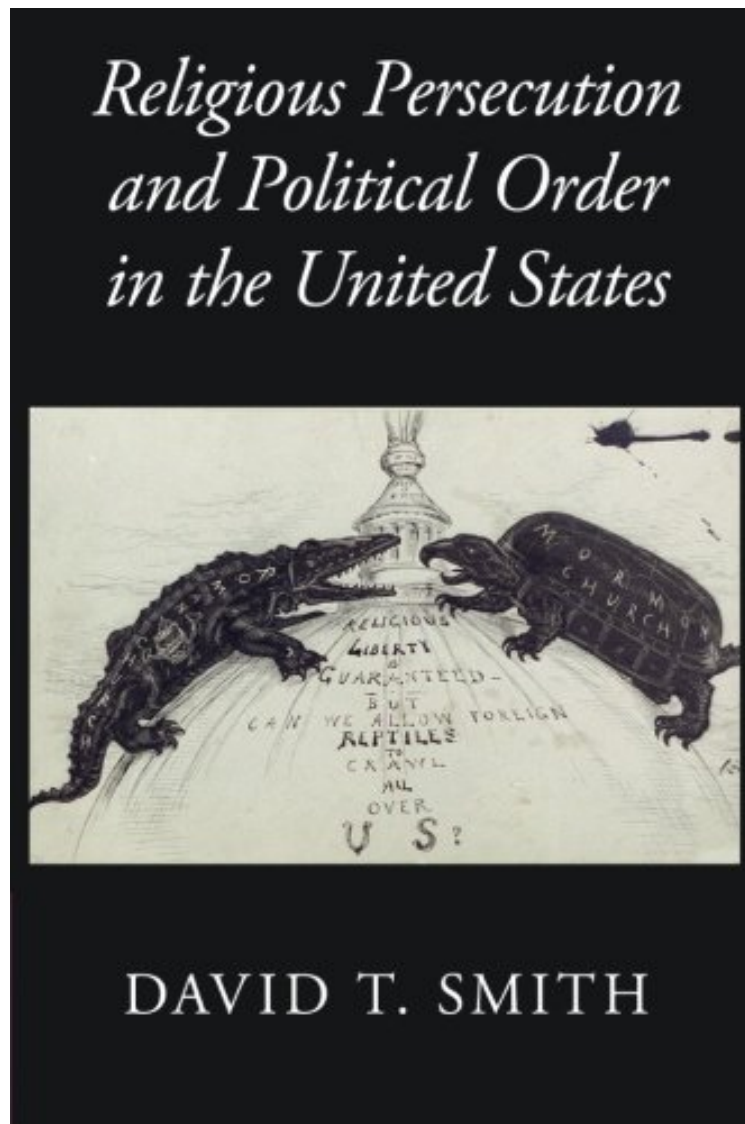


[Download] Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States (Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics)

## Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States (Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics)

David T. Smith

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#2505027 in Books David T Smith 2015-11-12 2015-11-12 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.98 x .67 x 5.981, .0 #File Name: 1107539897283 pages Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States Cambridge Studies in Social Theory Religion and Politics | File size: 68.Mb

David T. Smith : Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States (Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States (Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. High quality scholarship on an important question  
By Leanne Powner  
Review of Smith D T 2015  
In *Religious Persecution and Political Order in the United States*, David T. Smith presents a sweeping but meticulously designed and painstakingly researched argument about the role of the state in encouraging or dispersing persecution of religious minorities in both historic and contemporary America. Smith's particular contributions come from refocusing both the independent and dependent variables commonly used in the study of religious persecution. First, he shifts the dependent variable from the literatures focus on why particular groups are victimized and when to how the state responds. This implicitly answers the question of when persecution occurs: when the state allows it. But the major contribution of this shift to this study and to the field more generally is that it increases comparability of cases across time. Second, Smith's carefully defined independent variable the threat to public order allows for differentiation in prediction both across and within cases, and both historically and contemporaneously. It potentially allows extension of the argument to non-American contexts as well. One of the major strengths of book is arguments ability to transcend time and successfully explain not only early persecution of Mormons but modern persecution of Muslims. Most of this derives from the very carefully crafted research design and well-articulated theory. Smith is able to provide nuanced explanations of all of his cases based on contingent combinations of variable values. This kind of highly detailed theory development is rare in qualitative work of all subfields; to the best of my knowledge, its particularly rare in American political development, which tends to have less of a focus on variables as such. This book is a worthy model for other work in its subfield. One underdeveloped aspect of the book, I think, is a claim on p 31 that effectively acts as a necessary condition: that civil societys involvement is necessary for converting prejudice into persecution. Traces of evidence for this claim are throughout the book, but bringing them together would have added an important insight to the book to help understand, for example, why modern anti-Muslim prejudice has failed in most cases to develop into full-blown persecution. Government efforts to distinguish between good and bad Muslims only go so far; they may explain government behavior but not societal behavior. The role of civil society in helping individuals overcome the collective action problem necessary for persecution to arise is left underdeveloped or at least underspecified.

Religious freedom is a foundational value of the United States, but not all religious minorities have been shielded from religious persecution in America. This book examines why the state has acted to protect some religious minorities while allowing others to be persecuted or actively persecuting them. It details the persecution experiences of Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholics, Jews, the Nation of Islam, and orthodox Muslims in America, developing a theory for why the state intervened to protect some but not others. The book argues that the state will persecute religious minorities if state actors consider them a threat to political order, but they will protect religious minorities if they believe persecution is a greater threat to political order. From the beginning of the republic to after 9/11, religious freedom in America has depended on the state's perception of political threats.

About the Author  
David T. Smith is jointly appointed in the United States Studies Centre and the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Sydney. He earned a PhD in Political Science from the University of Michigan and is a graduate of the University of Sydney. His research focuses on political relations between governments and religious communities.