

(and obviously to the French conception of its own secularity). The thong is not a religious symbol, however offensive some may find it. In short, Scott's book is a wonderful discussion about how well and how badly societies respond to religious challenges. I strongly recommend it.

***God and Country: America in Red and Blue.* By Sheila Kennedy. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007. viii + 254 pp. \$24.95 Paper**

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Sheila Kennedy has written an engaging, wide-ranging look at political values in contemporary America. It is the latest entry in a growing literature addressing what have been variously termed the "culture wars," "values divide," or "red state/blue state divide." This book breaks no new research ground, but does provide much contextual information that will be useful to general audiences. The book concludes with an intriguing argument that adds substantially to the overall dialogue about American political values.

Kennedy's book is most similar in approach to James Davison Hunter's *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (1991). Like Hunter, Kennedy reviews cultural conflict throughout American history and proceeds to analyze a variety of contemporary issue areas. She begins by describing the roots of two longstanding, coexisting American worldviews: that of the "Planting Fathers," the British colonizers, whose vision was rooted in Puritan notions of moral commonwealth; and that of the "Founding Fathers," the writers of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, whose vision was rooted in Enlightenment notions of individual freedom. These conflicting premises have been complicated over the years by increasing ethnic and religious diversity; divisive controversies over slavery, the theory of evolution, and responses to modernity; the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which ultimately resulted in the Bill of Rights being applied to the states; and the development of mass communication.

The result is a complicated variety of worldviews, not simply two. Kennedy identifies two general tendencies, however, that appear very similar to the two sides in the culture wars as described by other authors such as Hunter. These tendencies are evident in debates about social issues, where fundamentalists and modernists disagree across different conceptions of “the good” as regards evolution, gay rights, abortion, and school prayer, as well as in debates about government welfare policy, the environment, criminal justice, and national security. In each case, people find it difficult to communicate across differences in worldviews that make it difficult to understand, much less accept the validity of, the premises of the other side. Seemingly objective data on policy outcomes are by and large shut out of the values debate, either due to their technical complexity (as with scientific assessments of the environment), or because they challenge the premises of one or the other worldview.

In her concluding chapter, Kennedy argues that it is possible for Americans to learn to talk across cultural and ideological divides. Moreover, this cross-cultural dialogue is essential because the only alternative is “domination” (218) of one group by the other. One key is to recognize five values, which according to surveys are widely shared: equality, tolerance, individual choice, rule of law, and empirical evidence. Another option is to break down obstacles to cross-cultural discussion through civic education. Such education could overcome ignorance of the Constitution, reenact the Fairness Doctrine to force people to seek out a full range of viewpoints, and make government fairer by opening processes and reducing the winner-take-all nature of elections.

The book is well written and is likely to appeal to undergraduates and general readers alike, while the concluding argument will intrigue readers at all levels. It describes a complex, evolving phenomenon in as uncomplicated a way as possible, omitting no essential steps along the way. I will give this a long look for my Religion and American Politics course, where John White’s fine *The Values Divide* (2003) is starting to seem dated due to its focus on the 2000 presidential election. I expect Kennedy’s concluding argument to provoke some good class discussion once students have had a chance to absorb and reflect on the material in earlier chapters.

I recommend the book with a few caveats. One is the relative lack of opinion data; there are no tables at all. It is difficult to present an accurate sense of the complexity of contemporary public opinion in words alone. The typical policy chapter describes two opposing, religiously based

approaches to a given issue area — such as “Social Gospel” and “Social Darwinism” with regard to welfare — and then analyzes how these play out in specific issue debates. As a result, most of the space is devoted to the more extreme voices. This is understandable, but the reader must bear in mind that opinion exists on a spectrum, not a simple two-sided battle line. As a result, the reader may not be particularly well prepared for the hopefulness of Kennedy’s concluding argument.

Kennedy also struggles, as have other authors, with nomenclature: what should the two poles in the culture wars be called? Hunter uses the terms “orthodox” and “progressive”; Kennedy primarily employs “fundamentalist” and “modern,” occasionally switching to other terms such as “Puritan,” “Christian Right,” and “Enlightenment.” I have no problem with this approach, but it may be confusing to undergraduates. I do object to her use of “anti-choice” to describe opponents of abortion (119), as this term is politically loaded. I would have preferred “pro-life,” which how opponents of abortion refer to themselves.

***The UN Secretary-General and Moral Authority: Ethics and Religion in International Leadership.* Edited by Kent J. Kille. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007. \$29.95 Paper**

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The basic issue researched in the book is the extent to which secretaries-general of the United Nations — Norway’s Trygve Lie, Sweden’s Dag Hammarskjöld, Burma’s U Thant, Austria’s Kurt Waldheim, Peru’s Javier Perez de Cuellar, Egypt’s Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and Ghana’s Kofi Annan — acted as “moral authority.” The impact of each secretary-general’s religious and ethical values on his politics and decision-making processes are studied in each case. In the first chapter (“Moral Authority and the UN Secretary-General’s Ethical Framework”), the book’s editor, Kent J. Kille, presents theoretical guidelines to which each of the contributors to the book worked to adhere.