



Still the Best Hope: Why the World Needs American Values to Triumph

Dennis Prager

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Conservative radio host and syndicated columnist Dennis Prager provides a bold, sweeping look at the future of civilization with *Still the Best Hope*, and offers a strong, cogent argument for why basic American values must triumph in a dangerously uncertain world. Humanity stands at a crossroads, and the only alternatives to the “American Trinity” of liberty, natural rights, and the melting-pot ideal of national unity are Islamic totalitarianism, European democratic socialism, capitalist dictatorship, or global chaos if we should fail. America is *Still the Best Hope*, as this eminently sensible, profoundly inspiring volume so powerfully proves.

Still the Best Hope: Why the World Needs American Values to Triumph Details

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From Reader Review Still the Best Hope: Why the World Needs American Values to Triumph for online ebook

Brenda says

Since most American schools, especially high schools teach little American History these days, this book is very informative. It explains the American value system and what is called the American Trinity, E Pluribus Unum, (Out of many, ONE), Liberty, and In God We Trust. (All of which are on our American coins).

It outlines the views of Leftism, (extreme Liberalism), Islamism, (Not Muslims but those Muslims who have taken Islam to extremes, such as those who attacked the U.S.A on 9-11-2001) and Americanism as seen by our Founders. It is written with clarity and fairness.

I particularly love the addendum, where there are charts explaining the difference in Liberal/Leftist Views and American Conservative views, on pages 395-399.

There is also a sobering chart on page 169 giving conservative totals of people killed in the last century by Communist/Socialist regimes. It's staggering. Far more than in any war America has fought in or the total of wars America has fought in, totaling 94,350,000. This is without the totals of World War II Jews.

I would recommend this book to anyone.

Dennis Prager is a highly esteemed radio broadcaster with 30 years in the business, who discusses not only politics, but male/female relations, ultimate issues and has a Happiness Hour every week. His motto is "CLARITY OVER AGREEMENT".

Neal says

Very compelling book. Prager is very sincere and writes with authority. One of the best for the year.

y Marc Jacobs Amazon Review

This review is from: Still the Best Hope: Why the World Needs American Values to Triumph (Hardcover)

This book explains why the American Value System is superior. In fact, this book explains precisely what the American Value System is. Of course, conservatives will read this book with great enthusiasm.

Conservatives will nod their head in agreement and simply enjoy the clarity of Mr. Prager's arguments. The intended audience for this book includes our liberal Democrat friends, relatives and neighbors. It is hard to imagine intelligent, open-minded and thoughtful readers of this book not being deeply affected by the ideas presented here. I believe that if every American who usually votes Democratic did read this book - the political landscape would change one reader at a time as the book is read and absorbed. I wish every member of our government would read this book. I wish every member of the media would read this book. I wish every religious leader in America would read this book. I wish every high school student with a thirst for knowledge would read this book. That is my dream of things that never were and me asking, "Why not?"

Karl says

I didn't give it the full five stars because I'd actually heard and read most of the points the author made before, while he was preparing the book. Not his fault.

This book sets out to describe what American values are, what the alternatives are, and why American values are the best choice for running any society. Yes, "any". You don't have to give up your national identity to adopt American values; it is sufficient that you adopt the American Trinity to your own nation.

The American Trinity is a set of three core values which are stamped on every U.S. coin: Liberty, E Pluribus Unum, In God We Trust.

Liberty is freedom from interference by others. It is the right to swing our fists, so long as we stay clear of others' noses.

In God We Trust: Prager writes:

Since liberty means that the state will be too small to effectively morally constrain each individual, this presents a problem. If, as the Founders believed, people are not basically good, what or who will keep people from acting poorly? If inherently flawed people will inevitably abuse power, won't inherently flawed people inevitably abuse liberty? The answer, of course, is yes. And that is the reason for the second value of the American value system—God."

God in this case is specifically the god of the Hebrew Bible, and particularly the god of Micah 6:8 whose demand is that we "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God". Obviously, some visions of God are less suited as the source of our inalienable rights than others.

E Pluribus Unum -- Out of many, one:

THE MOTTO OF AMERICA, E Pluribus Unum, is rare, if not unique as a governing principle or motto of a country. For good reason: No other nation is made out of as "many" as America is. In virtually every society in history, the national or group identity was correlated with its ethnic or racial identity. No other nation calls itself a "nation of immigrants," as Americans—of all political persuasions—routinely call America.

Americans are a tribe one can join. And once one has joined it, one is as American as any descendant of the Plymouth Colony or Daughter of the American Revolution. A citizen who was naturalized an hour ago is an American, and is considered as much American as one who was born here. There are very few other countries that can make this claim.

Aside from its uniqueness, E Pluribus Unum is one of the reasons America developed so rapidly and achieved a level of prosperity that surpassed every other country.unlike the United States, Latin America engaged in what Harrison calls "familism," discrimination on the basis of blood relationships. People did not trust non-blood relations and therefore gave jobs and opportunities to family members— who, of course, were also members of the same ethnicity and race.

E pluribus unum demanded that Americans treat other Americans as members of the same tribe. That meant, among other things, people have much greater freedom to hire and fire based on merit instead of family or tribal loyalty.

And indeed, any nation can adopt the values of liberty, of national unity over tribal, group, or family loyalty, and of being responsible to a higher power no matter what your status may be in society. You don't have to quit being Chinese or Buddhist to adopt these values. Indeed, adopting them may well make you more Chinese.

It would also make them freer, stronger, safer, more prosperous, and better places in which to live. And frankly, I wouldn't mind if the entire world became a great place to live.

Curtis Aguirre says

I am reading this as part of a discussion group. I disagree with about 90% of what Prager says. His biggest methodological error to date is that he takes everything he doesn't like about modern society and lumps it under the term "Leftism." It is an ironic parallel to what Hitler did in *Mein Kampf* where he lumped everything he hated under Judaism and Socialism. (To be clear: I am not saying that Prager is a Nazi. He is definitely NOT! This is an observation about method, not content. I am saying that his method of reasoning follows similar lines to Hitler's in *Mein Kampf*). Anyway, this book gives me some insight into why some people talk the language they do.

Maureen Lang says

I've always liked Dennis Prager because, of all the conservative talk show hosts out there, I believe him to be one of the more level-headed and less offensive ones out there. I'm an admitted conservative which I do not apologize for, yet it saddens me when those I agree with on issues often publicly say offensive things to or about liberals. Fiery talk may heighten ratings and name recognition, but it does little to persuade those who might be on the fence between conservative and liberal or who are just barely on the other side (assuming those firmly in the liberal camp will never be convinced otherwise).

In Prager's book, he makes it a point to say he firmly believes there are good and bad people on both sides of the liberal/conservative mindset. Saying that, of course, does not mean a liberal would read this book and enjoy it. Quite the contrary; it spends the majority of its pages defining what the liberal mindset is, using their own words, news stories, events and observations. Prager has interviewed a number of liberals on his radio show, so he is no stranger to the topic. But because Prager is a conservative, it logically follows that someone from his opposite end of the spectrum won't paint a rosy, appealing picture of the opponent's views. He describes the Leftist views as have been classically portrayed elsewhere, ever since Communism was first envisioned: Big Government is appealing only to those who want to be taken care of, and are willing to give up their freedom (and ultimately even their individuality) in order to live with as few personal responsibilities as possible. Materialism, he said, is the basis for the Leftists' fairness doctrines, so taking from those who have more and giving it to those who have less is the correct thing to do in their mind. The book also goes into a definition of Islamist thinking, which was less detailed than the thorough and fascinating Leftist definition. I thought he might have spent a little more time on the plight of women who are suppressed under this cultural/political/religious regime, but otherwise that, too, was insightful. It ends with defining American morals, reminding the reader how great our country is and the incredible sacrifices we've made in the name of freedom. For that reason alone I wish everyone would read this book,

because it's an important and wonderful reminder. Our founders may not have shared the same evangelical beliefs that I have, they may have had a wide and varied understanding of God even among themselves. But they understood that if this new country was to survive, one that limited the government's power and where people would be more free than any other place on earth, then they must accept the notion that we all need to be accountable to something bigger than a government. If we are all ultimately accountable to God, we can trust those around us if they believe the same. They will at least try to do the right thing. I couldn't agree more.

Negin says

Dennis Prager is a favorite of mine and here he gives a clear and strong argument for a return to American values and the two forces that are opposing it. This book is profound and what I always appreciate with Prager is that there is none of the type of nastiness and contempt that one sees so often today.

It was challenging for me to pick my favorite quotes. I've included a few here. Other quotes are shown at the end of my review.

“One of the credos of my life is taken from Viktor Frankl, a Jewish survivor of Nazi concentration camps, who was a psychiatrist and author. In his highly influential book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, he related that after the war someone asked him if he 'hated the German race.' He responded that he did not because in his view, 'There are only two races, the decent and the indecent.' That is how I divide the world. Not between Muslim and non-Muslim, black and white, or American and non-American, but between the decent and indecent. The issues I raise about Islam are not about the decency of Muslims, but about whether Islam in its traditional Islamist configuration is more or less likely than the American value system to produce good societies.”

“The Left, which dominates the media, the arts, and most of intellectual life in the West, has rendered criticism of Christianity and Zionism acceptable, even laudable, but criticism of Islam unacceptable. Why has the Left done this? Because the enemy (radical Islam) of my enemy (America and Israel) is my friend, and because the Muslim world is regarded as the underdog vis-à-vis powerful America and Israel, and the Left supports what it perceives as the underdog.”

“Given the amount the human suffering Communists have caused, why is Communist so much less a term of revulsion than Nazi? When people describe particularly evil individuals or regimes, why do they use the terms Nazi or fascist but almost never Communist? And, unlike Hitler, Communist mass murderers are rarely used as examples of evil incarnate. Sometimes, in fact, they are used in a heroic or even entertaining way. There are “Mao” restaurants in various cities in the Western world. It is unlikely that there are any “Hitler” restaurants in the West. So, too, while Che Guevara T-shirts and posters are ubiquitous, there is nothing similar celebrating a Nazi, or fascist, or perhaps any non-Communist killer.”

“I have devoted much of my life to studying, writing, and lecturing about the subject of happiness. In particular, I have advocated that people act as happy as possible even when they do not feel happy. This is, I believe, both a moral obligation to all those who are in our lives—it is unfair to others to inflict our bad moods on them—and a particularly effective way to increase our own happiness, since acting happy elevates one's mood. This is hardly controversial—in just about every area of life, human beings deeply influence how they feel by how they act. As a rule, those who object to this idea of acting contrary to how one feels are people on the Left—because on the Left, feelings are sacrosanct.”

Karen Hanson says

This isn't a book I would normally read but I gave it a chance because my husband liked it so much. I tried to keep an open mind but for the most part, all this book did was succeed in making me enraged. I listened to it in the car and found myself yelling at it on a regular basis.

I would say I'm a moderate liberal or "LEFTIST" as Prager calls it (about a million times, I might add). I don't agree with ALL the typical Liberal positions, but for the most part, it's the party I most identify with. But that's probably because I'm a young idiot. According to Prager the Democratic party is made up of wet-behind-the-ears college kids with big egos and small, naive brains. But I digress.

I'll admit that Prager had a few valid points. I think the Left has taken the Politically Correct message too far. I also agree that some of the ways in which the Left has tried to promote equality amongst the races has hurt more than it's helped. Things like Affirmative Action. I also agree that we're getting too uptight with our children... not allowing them to compete for fear of them feeling bad if they lose, banning certain foods in schools because of a handful of allergies, etc.

But for the most part, Prager just sounded like a typical Right-Winger pushing his agenda by using obscure or even ridiculous examples and pointing the "evil" finger. For instance, he says that all the 60 year olds in the party dress like 20 year olds. And that liberal colleges (which is pretty much all of them) teach to be open-minded in an irresponsible way. So much so, that it convinced a regularly heterosexual woman to be bisexual. And also that the Left thinks it's ok for a woman to masturbate in front of a college class for educational purposes. I don't know who these people are that agree with this stuff, but I can pretty much guarantee they are few and far between. In my opinion it seemed as though Prager was comparing the moderate Right to the wacko far Leftists (like those in the Communist camp). Not a fair comparison of the two parties and not a good representation of the typical left leaning American.

Prager liked to talk as if the Right was this meek, intelligent, awesome entity that was constantly at the fists of the suppressing Leftists. Always being called names and made to look like they're evil and stupid. Well guess what Prager, I hate to break it to you, but neither party is devoid of blame in that game. Both parties hammer each other mercilessly and both parties try to force their agendas on the other. It's how this thing works, for better or worse.

While Prager did make me take a second/deeper look at what I believe, he hardly made his case. I wanted to hear more about why his defined "American Values" were the answer, not why the Left is wrong.

Kristen says

Should be required reading in middle school history or social studies. I think I will require my daughter to read it.

Mark Carr says

Prager is a believer. A believer in the American way of life and the core values that helped shape this nation and to a larger degree the world through its influence and hope. In this book he sets out to explain clearly and with plenty of evidence.

While at times I found the depth of his analysis a little steep for my attention span, I found his logic and explanations credible. You might not agree with his conclusions, but you understand how he got there. Most intriguing to me is his explanation of how Judeo-Christian values underpin the core principals of our country that allows for all religions to flourish and grow here under the freedoms those values gave birth to.

If your political leanings are toward conservative, you will find an kindred voice and a well reasoned, well thought out thesis for beliefs you hold. If your political leanings are more liberal, you will at least be able to ready and understand the logic and reasons behind the conservative movement in America today. While Prager doesn't pretend to represent a voice for all it can certainly be said that he gives voice to many who still believe this country is one of the greatest to ever exist in history.

Louis says

Having listened to Dennis Prager for years it is easy to conclude he is among the wisest men in the world. His insite is kind and compassionate for the individual yet critical when necessary of the oversteps by government into the lives of Americans.

This is a well written book that gradually takes you step by step to the present state of today's insanity. If you have children or grandchildren, it is worth purchasing multiple copies of so it can be shared with them. With "progessives" and "liberals" taking over education, there needs to be something that conveys what American has traditionally been before all history is revised in Orewellian fashion (if you have not read George Orwell 1984 or Animal Farm, those are must reads). Children and students of all ages need to know how and why the USA is exceptional.

Not convinced? Dennis Prager has online, 5 minute, university caliber classes to undo the damage done by the political left (Prager University - www.prageru.com).

If you are a Democrat or "liberal" that has a feeling something is just not right in the world today but can not figure out what it is, read this book, visit Prager University and perhaps even podcast Dennis' radio show from Itunes.

Mark says

I'm always hesitant reading books by Radio Talk Show Hosts because I fear it being nothing more than a text version of their programs.

Honestly, I have to say that is the case here, but Dennis Prager is so brilliant in his description of America's Culture War, that this book represents the best and most concise version of his life's work.

Prager sums up the purpose of this book by saying that while many people love America, few can put into clear words what exactly makes America unique and exceptional, not even patriotic conservatives.

This book takes care of that problem while going in depth with the two main competing ideologies in the

world today: Leftism and Islamism.

Most of the book is about the Left.

Prager always says he aims for clarity over arguments, and that is what makes his writing so refreshing: Still the Best Hope never feels like a hatchet job on the Left, merely an accurate description of the way they think and behave.

He constantly brings attention to the fact that while most Leftists are good people with noble intentions, the effects of their policies are not good and that this blindspot is part of the Leftist character.

The middle section on Islamism is kind of repetitive.

Prager distinguishes the Islam faith from Islamist ideology. The former is not necessarily bad; the latter is a fascist and suppressive political movement.

Interesting much of this section is not about Terrorism, but instead about Islamist cultures.

Finally, Prager speaks of the American value system as intended by the Founders and how it makes for an exceptionally prosperous and good nation.

He describes this in the most clear and perfect way I can imagine it.

Still the Best Hope is for everyone.

Leftists who want to challenge themselves should read it and wonder if Prager's description of their policies really match their idealism.

Moderates will get a better understanding of what exactly the two parties are always arguing over.

Conservatives will finally have a firmer and clearer grasp on what it is they are trying to conserve and why it's so important.

It's well written, easy to read and enlightening.

Barry says

The best book I have read that clearly explains the Left, Islamism, and American Values. His case is clearly made at how American Values from the Founders, though not all Christian, were all God concentric. Without God, the moral values this country is based on will fall. That man is innately evil and a God belief establishes moral values of a society. The Left believe man is basically good and any evil man does is a result of his environment, poverty, and lack of opportunity. As a result, the Left is soft on crime, soft on capital punishment. This world view is one reason they hated GW Bush for his 'axis of evil' because the left believes no country is evil except America.

I marked this book up so bad no one will want to read my copy. Thank you Dennis, your life work has become a reread for me again and again. This country and world make a lot more sense now and the puzzle that is this political atmosphere are far more clear.

While I agree that America exceptionalism is exactly the Best Hope, as America more and more abandons God, as Europe has, I am not optimistic of the future for my children and grandchildren of this country and world.

ryan shiitake says

Wow.

This was a *stunning indictment* - clear, cogent, thorough, level-headed - of both "Leftism" (think Western Europe, supporters of the ideal of socialism) and Islamism (not Islam per se, but those who support sharia-based rule of law or who feel 9/11 was justified), as well as a passionate and unwavering defense of the "American Trinity": Liberty, "In God We Trust", and "E Pluribus Unum."

As a self-identifying liberal, one who has spent many years soaked in the "mainstream media" (CNN, Huffington Post, The Daily Show with Jon Stewart et al), this book has made me seriously reconsider many of the things I previously held evident (or as Prager would argue, "felt" evident).

After all, it's obvious that the Left is the party of compassion decency, fairness, tolerance, and "social justice", right? And the Right is simply a collection of jingoistic, Bible-thumping, homophobic, sexist, racist, and Islamophobic flag-waving zealots, right?

This book helped explain and/or confirm many of my sneaking suspicions: that many on the Left are either unable or unwilling to call things out as "wrong" or "evil" (because of moral relativism); the most principled men in our country are those of the military; the motto "war is not the answer" is naïve and foolish; the values of wisdom and authority are underappreciated by liberals; America is not nearly as racist as Leftists proclaim; much of modern art, particularly its scatological fringe, is pathetic; the war in Afghanistan is/was justified and it's not "jingoistic" or "Manichean" to say that much of Islamism - e.g. the Taliban, murdering of innocent tourists, the bombing in Boston - is morally repugnant; a woman's "right to choose" is selfish; welfare contributes to laziness, and a degradation of personal responsibility; crime is not caused by poverty and/or racism...

I highly, highly encourage any "open-minded" liberal to read this book. Prager goes toe-to-toe with intellectual titans such as Howard Zinn and Sam Harris, suggesting that far from doing more harm than good, the US has in fact done the most good in the world, brought the most freedom, and is one of the few remaining countries willing to bleed and sacrifice in the fight against evil.

Many liberals do not fully understand or appreciate the effect of today's media (or equivalently, world opinion at large), our typical way of schooling (e.g. the "self esteem" movement, the fear of having one's feelings hurt), and confirmation bias.

It is always said that the best debaters are usually those that can argue for either side: all people should strive to continually have their opinions challenged, and I challenge any one with strong opinions (Left or Right) to read this book.

But be forewarned: if you're a liberal, after reading this book, you might just end up turning conservative.

Jerry says

A well presented argument for why traditional American values are better than the alternatives.

Conservative America and liberal America hold different visions for America.

The Left wants America to look like Western Europe. “The Left wants Europe's quasi pacifism, cradle-to-grave social democracy, socioeconomic egalitarianism, and secularism in America. The Right shares none of those goals. It regards pacifism as an accessory to evil; cradle-to-grave welfare state as economically and morally untenable; socioeconomic egalitarianism as subversive to liberty; and secularism as undermining both ultimate meaning and objective morality.” “The Left wants America not only to have a secular government, but to be a secular society as well.” “The Left wants Americans to identify as citizens of the world: it fears nationalism, especially of the American variety. The Right on the other hand, first identifies as citizens of America, and celebrates American nationalism.” “The Left therefore regards the notion of American exceptionalism as an expression of chauvinism and conceit. It often views European and world opinion as better than American as arbiters of what is good. The Right, on the other hand, has a low opinion of the United Nations and of world opinion as moral compasses.” “The Left is ambivalent about, and often hostile to, overt displays of American patriotism.” The Left subscribes more to the French Revolution, whose guiding principles were 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.' The Right subscribes to the American Revolution's formula, 'Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.' “The Left values equality of economic status above other societal values – most important, above liberty.” “The Left wants a world – and therefore America – devoid of nuclear weapons. The Right wants America to have the most advanced nuclear (and other) weapons in the world. The Right trusts American might more than it does universal disarmament as a vehicle to world peace.”

“For the left, intentions are all-important. Leftists are certain they mean well. This certitude regarding intentions is enough to legitimize Leftists' policies in their eyes – and, at least as important, to delegitimize their opponents' motives... What distinguishes Leftists is that for the Leftist intentions trump results... The worst aspect of intentions-based assessments is that if one assesses intentions more than results, one's opponents must be judged as having bad intentions.” “As important to the Left's success as any other factor – and often the single most important factor – is its ability to demonize ideas and especially people it opposes... The only way the Left can succeed is by libeling the Right. The Left rarely convinces Americans to adopt its views. Rather, it creates a fear of the Right.” The left labels opponents 'racist,' 'homophobic,' 'anti-worker,' 'fascist,' 'sexist,' 'Islamophobic,' or 'liars.'

“Why is there a word – Islamophobia – that pathologizes any critique of Islam, no matter how fair, but no word for the most rabid hatred of Christianity and Christians?”

Both Islam and Christianity proselytize seeking to convert the world to their religion. “But there are at least four significant differences between these two religions that seek to convert the world... First, Christians do not pose a threat to non-Christians. Non-Christians who live among Christians are not only not threatened – they are lucky. On the other hand, virtually all non-Muslim communities living among Muslim majorities live in fear for their safety. Second, Christianity not only accepts a separation of religious and secular authority; it essentially founded the idea with the New Testament statement, 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.' The concept of separation of church and state is alien to Islam, where the ideal has always been Sharia-based government. Third, Christianity does not seek to impose life-controlling religious laws on all Christians, let alone on non-Christians living in their midst. The Sharia is, as believing Muslims proudly explain, an all-encompassing code of conduct. Fourth, the fact is that the most humane and decent countries in the world nearly all have Christian origins. That is not true of states that grew out of Islam.”

Seth Hanson says

Don't you hate it when you read a book that forces you to take a step back and do some serious reevaluation? This book did that to me.

Dennis Prager lays out the case for why traditional Conservative, American, Judeo-Christian values are the best hope for the world. So what are American values according to Prager? He says that after much thought and study, he realized our essential values are inscribed on every U.S. coin:

1. Liberty
2. E Pluribus Unum
3. In God We Trust

Prager further contends that there are 3 primary ideologies currently competing for the allegiance of humanity:

1. American-style Democracy
2. European-style Socialism/Secularism
3. Islamic Sharia Law

As you can gather from the title of the book, he makes the case that American values and American-style democracy offer the best hope for humanity. And I have to say, he makes a very compelling argument and he does it in a very congenial, optimistic, and intelligent way.

If you think that Socialism is awesome and Religion is lame, I'd challenge you to read this book and see if it doesn't cause you to reconsider.
