



Pluralism and Liberal Politics (Routledge Studies in Contemporary Philosophy)

By Robert Talisse

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In this book, Robert Talisse critically examines the moral and political implications of pluralism, the view that our best moral thinking is indeterminate and that moral conflict is an inescapable feature of the human condition. Through a careful engagement with the work of William James, Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls, and their contemporary followers, Talisse distinguishes two broad types of moral pluralism: metaphysical and epistemic. After arguing that metaphysical pluralism does not offer a compelling account of value and thus cannot ground a viable conception of liberal politics, Talisse proposes and defends a distinctive variety of epistemic pluralism.

According to this view, certain value conflicts are at present undecidable rather than intrinsic. Consequently, epistemic pluralism countenances the possibility that further argumentation, enhanced reflection, or the acquisition of more information could yield rational resolutions to the kinds of value conflicts that metaphysical pluralists deem irresolvable as such. Talisse's epistemic pluralism hence prescribes a politics in which deep value conflicts are to be addressed by ongoing argumentation and free engagement among citizens; the epistemic pluralist thus sees liberal democracy is the proper political response to ongoing moral disagreement.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In this provocative book Talisse scrutinises the thesis of value pluralism and its alleged relationship with liberalism. [He] should be commended for writing a stimulating and provocative book that is crammed with a plethora of refreshingly pithy arguments." --*Edward Hall*, Political Studies Review

"[A] fascinating book, containing a wealth of argument. Talisse presents a strong challenge to value pluralists and pragmatists alike, and the book represents a much-needed corrective to common assumptions about the supposedly natural link between pluralism and liberalism. *Pluralism and Liberal Politics* ought to be read by anyone with an interest in contemporary debates about pluralism and political liberalism." --*Jethro Butler*, Plurilogue

About the Author

Robert B. Talisse is Professor of Philosophy, Professor of Political Science, and Chair of the Department of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University. His research is focused on contemporary issues in liberalism and democratic theory. He is the author of *Democracy After Liberalism* (Routledge), *A Pragmatist Philosophy of Democracy* (Routledge) and *Democracy and Moral Conflict* (Cambridge). He is the editor of the journal *Public Affairs Quarterly*, and co-host of the popular podcast, *New Books in Philosophy*.

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