



Theological Perspectives for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness: Public Intellectuals for the Twenty-First Century (New Approaches to Religion and Power)

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Given the constant public attention to the current challenges facing the U.S. as a nation and a people, this book embraces and enacts the moral, social, and political responsibility of academics to serve as public intellectuals, i.e. to upbuild and enhance the society which we inherit, in which we live, and which we envision for the future. Mostly theologians and ethicists, the authors explore new meanings of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" in an attempt to reconceptualize the meaning of key virtues and values that defined the basic founding self-understanding of the American people.

Some of the essays address issues around globalization, racism, ethnoracism, immigration, poverty, militarism, gender, sexuality and connect these issues with their implications for the meaning of "life, liberty, and... happiness." Others focus on these values themselves and their implications for public life. The logic of these essays is inspired by some of mujerista theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz's characteristic convictions: the crucial role of learning from the experiences of others, especially disempowered groups, involved in la lucha or the struggle for justice; the centrality of lo cotidiano or the everyday for innovative epistemologies and ethics, or ways of knowing and living; and, the testimony of her life to the significance of fuerzas para la lucha or God-given strength for the struggle.

Rather than wield religion as a weapon or a ruse in irrational appeals, the book attempts to reimagine a shared American mythos and ethos, by reminding us of our shared stake in creating an America committed to the life of all peoples and species, to the full developments of our capabilities as an exercise of liberty, and to the happiness that true solidarity can bring as we are and become a people for the common good.

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