

BEYOND TOLERATION

THE
RELIGIOUS
ORIGINS OF AMERICAN
PLURALISM



CHRIS BENEKE

Beyond Toleration The Religious Origins Of American Pluralism

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Beyond Toleration The Religious Origins Of American Pluralism:

Beyond Toleration Chris Beneke, 2006-10-19 At its founding the United States was one of the most religiously diverse places in the world Baptists Methodists Catholics Episcopalians Presbyterians Congregationalists Quakers Dutch Reformed German Reformed Lutherans Huguenots Dunkers Jews Moravians and Mennonites populated the nations towns and villages Dozens of new denominations would emerge over the succeeding years What allowed people of so many different faiths to forge a nation together In this richly told story of ideas Chris Beneke demonstrates how the United States managed to overcome the religious violence and bigotry that characterized much of early modern Europe and America The key Beneke argues did not lie solely in the protection of religious freedom Instead he reveals how American culture was transformed to accommodate the religious differences within it The expansion of individual rights the mixing of believers and churches in the same institutions and the introduction of more civility into public life all played an instrumental role in creating the religious pluralism for which the United States has become renowned These changes also established important precedents for future civil rights movements in which dignity as much as equality would be at stake Beyond Toleration is the first book to offer a systematic explanation of how early Americans learned to live with differences in matters of the highest importance to them and how they found a way to articulate these differences civilly Today when religious conflicts once again pose a grave danger to democratic experiments across the globe Beneke s book serves as a timely reminder of how one country moved past toleration and towards religious pluralism

Beyond Toleration : The Religious Origins of American Pluralism

Chris Beneke Assistant Professor of History Bentley College, 2006-09-25 At its founding the United States was one of the most religiously diverse places in the world Baptists Methodists Catholics Episcopalians Presbyterians Congregationalists Quakers Dutch Reformed German Reformed Lutherans Huguenots Dunkers Jews Moravians and Mennonites populated the nations towns and villages Dozens of new denominations would emerge over the succeeding years What allowed people of so many different faiths to forge a nation together In this richly told story of ideas Chris Beneke demonstrates how the United States managed to overcome the religious violence and bigotry that characterized much of early modern Europe and America The key Beneke argues did not lie solely in the protection of religious freedom Instead he reveals how American culture was transformed to accommodate the religious differences within it The expansion of individual rights the mixing of believers and churches in the same institutions and the introduction of more civility into public life all played an instrumental role in creating the religious pluralism for which the United States has become renowned These changes also established important precedents for future civil rights movements in which dignity as much as equality would be at stake Beyond Toleration is the first book to offer a systematic explanation of how early Americans learned to live with differences in matters of the highest importance to them and how they found a way to articulate these differences civilly Today when religious conflicts once again pose a grave danger to democratic experiments across the globe Beneke s book serves as a timely reminder of how one

country moved past toleration and towards religious pluralism *The Emergence of Religious Toleration in Eighteenth-Century New England* Jeffrey A. Waldrop, 2018-04-09 This book examines the life and work of the Reverend John Callender 1706 1748 within the context of the emergence of religious toleration in New England in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a relatively recent endeavor in light of the well worn theme of persecution in colonial American religious history New England Puritanism was the culmination of different shades of transatlantic puritan piety and it was the Puritan s pious adherence to the Covenant model that compelled them to punish dissenters such as Quakers and Baptists Eventually a number of factors contributed to the decline of persecution and the subsequent emergence of toleration For the Baptists toleration was first realized in 1718 when Elisha Callender was ordained pastor of the First Baptist Church of Boston by Congregationalist Cotton Mather John Callender Elisha Callender s nephew benefited from Puritan and Baptist influences and his life and work serves as one example of the nascent religious understanding between Baptists and Congregationalists during this specific period Callender s efforts are demonstrated through his pastoral ministry in Rhode Island and other parts of New England through his relationships with notable Congregationalists and through his writings Callender s publications contributed to the history of the colony of Rhode Island and provided source material for the work of notable Baptist historian Isaac Backus in his own struggle for religious liberty a generation later *The Religious Roots of the First Amendment* Nicholas P. Miller, 2012-06 Arguing that commitments by certain dissenting Protestants to the right of private judgment in matters of Biblical interpretation helped promote religious liberty and religious disestablishment in the early modern West this text describes a continuous strand of this religious thought as well as the thinkers who spread it

British North America in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries Stephen Foster, 2016-11-10 Until relatively recently the connection between British imperial history and the history of early America was taken for granted In recent times however early American historiography has begun to suffer from a loss of coherent definition as competing manifestos demand various reorderings of the subject in order to combine time periods and geographical areas in ways that would have previously seemed anomalous It has also become common place to announce that the history of America is best accounted for in America itself in a three way melee between settlers the indigenous populations and the forcibly transported African slaves and their creole descendants The contributions to *British North America in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* acknowledge the value of the historiographic work done under this new dispensation in the last two decades and incorporate its insights However the volume advocates a pluralistic approach to the subject generally and attempts to demonstrate that the metropolitan power was of more than secondary importance to America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries The central theme of this volume is the question to what extent did it make a difference to those living in the colonies that made up British North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that they were part of an empire and that the empire in question was British The contributors some of the leading scholars in their respective fields strive to answer this question

in various social political religious and historical contexts **Toleration, power and the right to justification** Rainer Forst, 2020-03-25 Rainer Forst's *Toleration in Conflict* published in English 2013 is the most important historical and philosophical analysis of toleration of the past several decades Reconstructing the entire history of the concept it provides a forceful account of the tensions and dilemmas that pervade the discourse of toleration In his lead essay for this volume Forst revisits his work on toleration and situates it in relation to both the concept of political liberty and his wider project of a critical theory of justification Interlocutors Teresa M Bejan John Horton Chandran Kukathas Daniel Weinstock Melissa S Williams Patchen Markell and David Owen then critically examine Forst's reconstruction of toleration his account of political liberty and the form of critical theory that he articulates in his work on such political concepts The volume concludes with Forst's reply to his critics **The Cambridge Companion to the First Amendment and Religious Liberty** Michael D. Breidenbach, Owen Anderson, 2020-01-09 Offers historical philosophical legal and political insights into the First Amendment religious liberty and church state relations *How America Met the Jews* Hasia R. Diner, 2017-12-29 Explore how American conditions and Jewish circumstances collided in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries In this new book award winning author Hasia R Diner explores the issues behind why European Jews overwhelmingly chose to move to the United States between the 1820s and 1920s Unlike books that tend to romanticize American freedom as the force behind this period of migration or that tend to focus on Jewish contributions to America or that concentrate on how Jewish traditions of literacy and self help made it possible for them to succeed Diner instead focuses on aspects of American life and history that made it the preferred destination for 90 percent of European Jews Features Examination of the realities of race immigration color money economic development politics and religion in America Exploration of an America agenda that sought out white immigrants to help stoke economic development and that valued religion as a force for morality *A Common Grave* Susan Juster, 2025-06-03 From Nevis to Newfoundland Catholics were everywhere in English America But often feared and distrusted they hid in plain sight deftly obscuring themselves from the Protestant authorities Their strategies of concealment deception and misdirection frustrated colonial census takers and their presence has likewise eluded historians of religion who have portrayed Catholics as isolated dots in an otherwise vast Protestant expanse Pushing against this long standing narrative Susan Juster provides the first comprehensive look at the lived experience of Catholics whether Irish African French or English in colonial America She reveals a vibrant community that although often forced to conceal itself maintained a rich sacramental life saturated with traditional devotional objects and structured by familiar rituals As Juster shows the unique pressures of colonial existence forced Catholics to adapt and transform these religious practices By following the faithful into their homes and private chapels as they married christened infants buried loved ones and prayed for their souls Juster uncovers a confluence of European African and Indigenous spiritual traditions produced by American colonialism *An Age of Infidels* Eric R. Schlereth, 2013-03-05 Historian Eric R Schlereth places religious conflict at the

center of early American political culture He shows ordinary Americans both faithful believers and Christianity's staunchest critics struggling with questions about the meaning of tolerance and the limits of religious freedom In doing so he casts new light on the ways Americans reconciled their varied religious beliefs with political change at a formative moment in the nation's cultural life After the American Revolution citizens of the new nation felt no guarantee that they would avoid the mire of religious and political conflict that had gripped much of Europe for three centuries Debates thus erupted in the new United States about how or even if long standing religious beliefs institutions and traditions could be accommodated within a new republican political order that encouraged suspicion of inherited traditions Public life in the period included contentious arguments over the best way to ensure a compatible relationship between diverse religious beliefs and the nation's recent political developments In the process religion and politics in the early United States were remade to fit each other From the 1770s onward Americans created a political rather than legal boundary between acceptable and unacceptable religious expression one defined in reference to infidelity Conflicts occurred most commonly between deists and their opponents who perceived deists' anti-Christian opinions as increasingly influential in American culture and politics Exploring these controversies Schlereth explains how Americans navigated questions of religious truth and difference in an age of emerging religious liberty

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