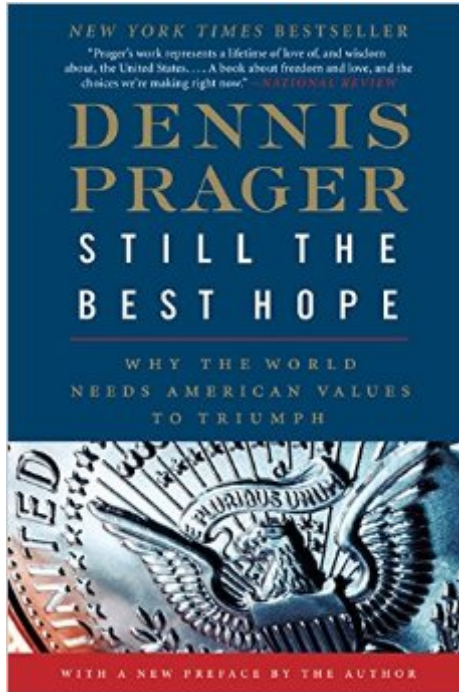


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Still The Best Hope: Why The World Needs American Values To Triumph



Synopsis

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.

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Customer Reviews

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?"

Dennis Prager has provided a tour de force for conservative thought. First of all, before reviewing the book that was written, it is important to debunk the reviews about the book that was not written. (For those want a review of the real book, please skip down 3 paragraphs.) The 1-star reviewer below "Shade" clearly has not even purchased, let alone read, this book. This is easily proved by his question and statement: "why won't Prager tell you that the original intention of E Pluribus Unum was to indicate that out of many states (the original thirteen) one nation could be forged (with a central, federal government)? Instead he chooses to interpret this phrase from some singular conservative perspective, insisting that his is the only true and proper interpretation." But on page 373 Prager wrote, "At first the pluribus in E Pluribus Unum referred to the thirteen original colonies - and the motto was adopted in order to help forge these many colonies into unum, one nation." This is typical of those who attack Prager. They consistently attribute things to him he did not say or simply make something up, which anyone who actually listens to or reads him knows is untrue. But truth is obviously not as high a value as smearing a thoughtful conservative who changes minds and hearts every single day. "Shade" has provided yet another example proving one of Prager's main theses in section 1 of his book - the Left would rather demonize the Right than tell the truth. One more example of Shade's distortion: "In Prager's simplistic reductio ad absurdum there are only three, that's right THREE, philosophies in all the world." Prager never even suggested these are the only three "philosophies in all the world." In fact, you only have to get to page 16, still in the introduction, to see in bold letters, "Is there a Fourth - the Chinese - Alternative?" Prager then discusses their ideology as a model but dismisses it as a viable option for global hegemony. The reviewer shows his own simplistic reductio ad absurdum by falsely assuming that viable hegemonic ideologies are the same as any ideology. Prager does not discuss anarchy, for example, since it is not a viable hegemonic ideology. Shade also fails to provide another possible global alternative that does not fall under the three Prager deconstructs. Now for the 2-star review: "It's ironic how Prager routinely criticizes the left for its narcissism, and then he turns around and writes a book about how wonderful the U.S. empire is." At least this reviewer got half of it right - Prager does consistently point out how much better Leftists think they are than conservatives, morally, intellectually, etc. Prager wrote a 400 page book and spent only 80 on the American value system, let alone the US. The other 310 pages are not about the US, so arguing that he wrote a book about the US Empire is absurd and, as with the above, demonstrates that the reviewer did not read the book and is more

interested in smearing a thoughtful conservative than in truth. One more: "Prager is often critical of the government, but doesn't take on that aspect of big government that causes so much suffering around the world, the military industrial complex." Prager discusses this on pages 49-51. He also discusses and debunks the Chris Hedges work (pointing out that those like him) castigates intolerance, but seems entirely unaware of the intolerance of his own rhetoric and positions regarding Christians in the US (see page 131). Finally, he discusses the role of the US military in that very context on pages 382-387. Here he argues that the US has been - despite its moral blemishes which he discusses on pages 380-383 - the least oppressive, least authoritarian, and most benign world superpower in human history and has liberated, among others, the Japanese, Chinese, Germans, South Koreans, Kuwaitis, and Iraqis, respectively. The fact that Japan, Germany, and South Korea have been able to turn into such wonderful societies while US troops have continued to "occupy" suggests how different the US "Empire" has been from every single other global power in recorded history. The US also leads the world in charitable giving and is the first place people all over the world look to when natural disasters or human-inflicted evils happen. Just as those in Haiti regarding the former and Kuwait regarding the latter. A final example to prove the reviewer never read the book nor likely listened to his show: "Most people who like Prager's views aren't interested in exploring alternative views." The whole point of the book is to explore alternative views and his shortest section is on the one he advocates. The book Prager did write is about the three most viable ideological systems in the world today - what he calls Leftism, Islamism, and Americanism. He provides a wonderful appendix at the end of the book listing the American and Leftist positions to major issues such as "the state," "primary source of evil," "family ideal," "individual's income," "place of religion in America," etc. Prager's thesis is that the best hope for a better world is embodied in the American value system, which is synonymous with conservatism. Prager devotes over half of the book to Leftism, precisely defining it, articulating what the ideology contains, why it is attractive to hundreds of millions of people, and its moral record during the 20th century. Leftism for Prager is embodied in the social democratic parties of Western Europe and the Democratic Party in the US. Ultimately he concludes that Leftism and all of its satellite ideologies - feminism, environmentalism, secularism, moral relativism, etc. - morally and economically bankrupt those who adhere to it. Prager contends that although its advocates use moral rhetoric and are well-intentioned, the policies they espouse produce selfishness, apathy, and, as seen in Western Europe's birth-rate, a staggering ennui. To support his case he looks not only to the obvious failures of 20th century far Left in the former Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Laos, and North Korea, but the seemingly successful cases like France, Germany, and Spain. Though he

admits these are decent countries that have relatively more liberty than most of the rest of the world, their preoccupation with economic equality and state-sponsored benefits has economically and morally bankrupted an entire continent. He claims that most people in these countries do not recognize true evil - communism, Islamism, Terrorism - and instead choose to fight lesser or quasi-evils like climate change, second hand smoke, or onomastic notions of "intolerance." Prager also shows how ideas from the Left pervade our most influential institutions - the university, primary and secondary schools, many churches and other religious institutions, Hollywood, and almost all media outlets - talk radio and Fox News excluded. His deconstruction of the language that the media uses in presenting what otherwise seems like "just the news" is particularly revealing. For example, he shows how AP reports frequently choose to use terms like "sectarian violence" to describe Islamic terror while carefully avoiding the terms "Muslim, Islamic," etc. - be it violence against Christians, Jews, or fellow Muslims. They do this, Prager notes, while carefully not ascribing Islamic influences to terrorism committed by those like Nidal Hassan who screamed "Allahu Akbar," before shooting 13 innocents, was a card-carrying member of "Soldier of Allah," and raised repeated red flags about his Islamist sympathies. Finally, Prager contends that Leftism's preoccupation with having others (the state) provide for even the able-bodied citizen has, and will continue to, wear away at the fabrics of what was once a dynamic European culture. In short, they have produced a culture that stresses individual benefits but collective (and therefore no meaningful) responsibility. Next Prager analyzes Islamism, which he defines as a political form of violent Islam that is embodied in Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al Qaeda. He never seriously considers the US as possibly moving toward Islamism, but does implicitly suggest that it poses a real threat to the African continent, the Middle-East where it already dominates in many areas, and even Southern and Western Europe. He indirectly suggests that the latter could fall victim to Islamism due to their Leftist commitment to multiculturalism, inability to recognize true evil and assimilate foreigners, and their quasi-pacifism. Prager, a scholar at the Middle-East Institute at the Columbia University School of International Affairs, is critical of Islamism, but takes pains to distinguish it from other forms of peaceful Islam that are practiced peacefully throughout the world. That said, he is also careful to note that the number of peaceful adherents to Islam is irrelevant to the threat of Islamism. He cites the relatively few Nazi supporters there were in Germany in 1932 or committed communists in the Soviet Union or China as evidence to suggest that it is not the presence of a peaceful majority that matters, but the hegemonic influence of the threatening minority and the way the majority responds to that threat, that are important. For example, only 7-10% of the Islamic world supports Islamism, but that minority is still no less a threat. Finally, Prager holds out hope for

the Muslim world by concluding that Islam - though it is in a low moral, intellectual, social, and economic state today, with its honor killings, intolerance of other religions, and obsession with de-legitimizing and destroying Israel - can have a bright future. He compares the medieval Christian world, which had many of the same characteristics - religious bigotry, little emphasis on liberty, etc. - to show how reformation is possible. He insists that the only way that it is possible, however, is if the Left, through organizations like CAIR, stop stymieing all criticism toward Islam and Muslims themselves unite in large numbers to condemn violence in their name. Here, as with the world in general, he believes that American Muslims hold out the best hope for Muslims elsewhere. Prager's last section, though brief, is on Americanism. Here he articulates, better than any writer I know of, the case for conservatism and American values. He insists that American values are, as inscribed on our coinage, E Pluribus Unum, In God We Trust, and, most important, Liberty. Prager contrasts these values with the Leftist values of Multiculturalism, Secularism, and Equality. Though not all Leftists disdain liberty and not all Rightists disdain equality, he carefully demonstrates where each differs. He outlines 11 total American values in addition to these three pillars, showing how reason, for example, is critically important in any culture, but is insufficient by itself. He also argues for the sanctity of human life, the distinction between animals and humans, the difference between nature and, as Jefferson would put it, Natures God, and the limits of using material wealth as the supreme value the way the Left does. Prager insists that these values are not specific to America and can be adopted by any country, using Uruguay and as an example. He draws an important distinction here - other nations may retain their own cultures while simultaneously adopting these values. Finally, Prager tackles the typical charges that Islamists and those on the Left make against America. Claims of "American Imperialism" are presented in context with comparable global powers to demonstrate how benign (despite sometimes overstepping bounds) the US has been over the last 100 years. He also presents a particularly compelling case for why America - even if one believes it is not a net force for good in the world - is better than any non-utopian alternative; namely, China, Russia, Iran, Turkey, Western Europe, and the UN. Though Dennis Prager has few moderate ideological positions (he is as ideologically pure a conservative as exists), his presentation is as calm, fair, and clear as anyone writing today of any persuasion. All Americans should read this book. Even if one detests the Right, this is as lucid an explanation of conservative thought as exists. We owe it to ourselves to read the best of those with whom we differ. This book qualifies as the best. Thoughtful moderates and liberals - though few Leftists - will find the text to be well-reasoned and the conclusions insightful, even if they disagree on certain matters. For others, it will change the way they view the world. The book is almost 400 pages, contains 350 endnotes, and at least

another 100 in-text references.

I am a graduate student at Penn State and have been looking for a book like this to help me stand against the Marxist/leftist thoughts in my classes. Most people in my classes are almost remorseful to be American and act as though every other country is somehow more noble and better than ours. This book explains why American values are the greatest elements to build a country, and why we should strive to restore our values within our country & share our values with the world.

Still the Best Hope, is the Statue of Liberty in hardcover. No other book combines such sharp insights into America's current state. No other book is at once so deep and so sensible, so succinct and so comprehensive, so American and so universal. In this extraordinary book, Dennis Prager, argues that the global social and political crisis of the 21st century is really an intellectual crisis. That is, a battle of ideas between American values and their alternatives. There is nothing partisan or one-sided about his argument. He makes his case fairly, lucidly, and persuasively. His book moves with a kind of worried grace probing the difference between liberal and conservative thought, and he has something urgent to teach the people on either side. Prager's sweeping analysis is a grand tour of American values. And the power these values have to light a torch of hope and liberty in a dark world.

I have easily read over 3000 books and would place this one in my top ten. I have been listening to Dennis for about six years now and was anxious to read this. Unlike the trolls who posted negative reviews, I actually read the book. Dennis has a gift. If you listen to him, whether you are atheist, Christian, agnostic, leftist, or whatever belief system you have, you cannot help but think, "this is a guy I could sit down with and have an amazing conversation." With his remarkable clarity, and exhaustive footnotes and examples, Dennis lays out a remarkable case for the Title of his book. I am a Christian, Dennis is a Jew. Yet through his radio show and this book, he has demonstrated to me that it truly does hinge on values. A remarkable book by a remarkable man. My hope is that many people will read this and look to the future of what a better society and legacy we can leave the future generations.

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