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### June 13, 2007: Hallowed Secularism's Relationship to American Religious Democracy

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Title: Hallowed Secularism's Relationship to American Religious Democracy

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6/13/2007 What is the connection between this work, Hallowed Secularism, and my recent book, American Religious Democracy: Coming to Terms with the End of Secular Politics (Praeger 2007)? They seem to be inconsistent. The book argues for much, much greater openness to religion in America's public square, whereas Hallowed Secularism foresees growing secularism world-wide, including in America. This likelihood of growing secularism was one of the points that Jeff Maurone made in criticizing American Religious Democracy on his blog and in an e-mail response to me. Here is what I sent back to him: \* \* \* \*You would be very surprised to hear that I agree completely with your fundamental point, that secularism is the rather inevitable trend. To clarify [American Religious Democracy's] point, we have thrown off certain legal, political and cultural constraints on religious discourse in the public square. These constraints were recent and artificial. They had no business in a genuine democracy. Now that they are gone, or going, political life will be, for a long while here in America, much more religious. But the trend of globalization is not changing and it introduces world-wide secular culture, differently pitched in different religious civilizations. My next book, which I am working on now, is tentatively to be called, Hallowed Secularism (a phrase I steal from Doctorow). It introduces religion as quite a different phenomenon than merely the dogmatic religions of Christianity, Judaism etc. Religion is the source of hope both personally and historically, that is socially. No culture, including a secular one, can do without it. American Religious Democracy sees the political left as currently forced to reconsider the language, concepts and essence of religion. That will be good preparation for this new secular world in which transformation and repentance will be more needed than ever, and harder to find.