

Duquesne University

## Duquesne Scholarship Collection

---

Hallowed Secularism

The Collective Works of Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian  
Van Kaam C.S.Sp. Endowed Chair in Scholarly  
Excellence and Professor of Law

---

1-30-2011

### January 30, 2011: Amy Chua and the Mommy Wars

Bruce Ledewitz

*Duquesne University*, ledewitz@duq.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism>



Part of the [Constitutional Law Commons](#), and the [Law and Philosophy Commons](#)

---

#### Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2011). January 30, 2011: Amy Chua and the Mommy Wars. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/500>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Collective Works of Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian Van Kaam C.S.Sp. Endowed Chair in Scholarly Excellence and Professor of Law at Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hallowed Secularism by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection. For more information, please contact [beharyr@duq.edu](mailto:beharyr@duq.edu).

Title: Amy Chua and the Mommy Wars

Date: 2011-01-30T07:31:00.002-05:00

1/30/2011—Amy Chua used to be a serious person. Her 2003 book *World on Fire* argued that democracy in a free-market globalizing context unleashes powerful ethnic and other hatreds, including resentment against the United States and Israel, which are expressed in religious terms. Her second book, *Day of Empire*, “examine[d] seven major empires and posit[ed] that their success depended on their tolerance of minorities.” (from Wikipedia) She was and is a Yale Law Professor. But now she has published a memoir of raising her two daughters using strict, sort of Chinese techniques, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*. She might as well have written *Fear of Flying*. I would not read the book and I don’t have to. I did read a long excerpt in the *Wall Street Journal*. All I had to read was the phrase “tons of studies” to know that Chua had written, ironically, a lazy book. Instead of pushing herself to do her job, instead of continuing to contribute to international affairs, instead of even doing serious study of parenting, she chose to push her kids and then crow about it. Talk about Western self-indulgence. Why did no one ask her whether Chinese mothers write memoirs? I’ve seen this script before and I have one piece of advice for these strict mothers, or fathers: push yourself and leave your kids alone. There are many ways to raise a child. The most important ingredient is love. The goal is a healthy person. Working through the night on a piano piece without stopping to go to the bathroom is very likely to lead to a neurotic. There are much better ways to teach tenacity. And compassion. Maybe this lifestyle will work out for Chua’s kids. As I say, there are many ways. But you can tell that Chua never did much oral argument as an attorney. If she had, some judge would have told her that an anecdote is not an argument.