

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

8-18-2016

August 18, 2016: America Would Not Ban the Burkini

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. (2016). August 18, 2016: America Would Not Ban the Burkini. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/1032>

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.

Title: America Would Not Ban the Burkini

Date: 2016-08-18T05:13:00.001-04:00

8/18/2016—Well, for one thing, it would be unconstitutional. In addition, most Americans believe it is one's own decision to wear clothing because of religious beliefs. Some French towns have now banned the clothing a few Muslim women use to go to the beach. The media reports it is something like a wetsuit and covers most of the body. It's just anti-Muslim bigotry. I'm actually happy to see these bans because they demonstrate the intolerance of Europe. Yes, France is an especially anti-religious society, but other European countries have banned the building of Mosques. Now, as the Trump campaign demonstrates, America is not all that tolerant either. But we are more welcoming of people than perhaps any other country in the world. That is our heritage. Back to Europe. For years, some people on the left have promoted a kind of narrative about religion. It was said, that religion is not necessary to be a decent society. Europe was secular and Europe was generous and kind. And happy, as polls showed. The European welfare state is a genuine accomplishment I wish America would emulate. But we now see that it is based on self-interest. We take care of ourselves. The European welfare state is most akin to old people in America (I am one) voting to protect social security. The trick, however, is to build a genuine community, in which other people are protected by public policies. People not like oneself. Now, religiously-oriented America looks a lot better. Does all this mean you can't be good without God? Of course not. It means, however, that religion provides a healthy base for a society. Now that religion is waning, another source of meaning and goodness is urgently needed. Humanism will not cut it. That is just an unjustified worship of oneself.