

Religion and Brazilian Democracy

As Brazilian democracy faces a crisis of legitimacy, political divisions grow among Catholic, evangelical, and nonreligious citizens. What has caused religious polarization in Brazilian politics? Does religious politics shore up or undermine democracy? *Religion and Brazilian Democracy: Mobilizing the People of God* uses engaging anecdotes and draws on a wealth of data from surveys and survey experiments with clergy, citizens, and legislators to explain the causes and consequences of Brazil's "culture wars." Though political parties create culture-war conflict in established democracies, in Brazil's weak party system religious leaders instead drive divisions. Clergy leverage legislative and electoral politics strategically to promote their own theological goals and to help their religious groups compete. In the process, they often lead politicians and congregants. Ultimately, religious politics pushes Brazilian politics rightward and further fragments parties. Yet *Religion and Brazilian Democracy* also demonstrates that clergy-led politics stabilizes Brazilian democracy and enhances representation.

Amy Erica Smith is Associate Professor of Political Science at Iowa State University. Smith's research has attracted funding from the National Science Foundation, Fulbright, Mellon, and Templeton, and the Award for Early Achievement in Research at Iowa State University. Her work on democracy in developing countries has appeared in top political-science journals and in the Portuguese-language book *Legitimidade e qualidade da democracia no Brasil: Uma visão da cidadania* (2011, with Lucio Rennó, Matthew Layton, and Frederico Batista Pereira).

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Religion and Brazilian Democracy
Mobilizing the People of God

AMY ERICA SMITH
Iowa State University



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For Tibi, Oscar, and Adam

Com muito amor

Și cu drag

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