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0521842182 - John Locke's Politics of Moral Consensus  
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## John Locke's Politics of Moral Consensus

The aim of this highly original book is twofold: to explain the reconciliation of religion and politics in the work of John Locke and to explore the relevance of that reconciliation for politics in our own time.

Confronted with deep social divisions over ultimate beliefs, Locke sought to unite society in a single liberal community. Reason could identify divine moral laws that would be acceptable to members of all cultural groups, thereby justifying the authority of government. Greg Forster demonstrates that Locke's theory is liberal and rational but also moral and religious, providing an alternative to the two extremes of religious fanaticism and moral relativism.

This fresh new account of Locke's thought will appeal to specialists and advanced students across philosophy, political science, and religious studies.

Greg Forster is a senior research associate at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA  
[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521842181](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521842181)

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First published 2005

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Forster, Greg, 1973–  
John Locke's politics of moral consensus / Greg Forster.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 0-521-84218-2 (alk. paper)

1. Locke, John, 1632–1704 – Contributions in political science. 2. Locke,  
John, 1632–1704 – Religion. 3. Political science – Philosophy. 4. Politics and  
religion. I. Title.

JC153.L87F67 2005  
170'.92–dc22 2004054766

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84218-1 hardback  
ISBN-10 0-521-84218-2 hardback

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*This book is dedicated with love and admiration to  
Elizabeth Ann Forster*

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Plato has no hesitation in asserting that  
to be a philosopher is to love God.

It immediately follows that the seeker after wisdom  
(which is the meaning of “philosopher”)  
will only attain to happiness  
when he has begun to enjoy God.

Augustine of Hippo  
*The City of God*, Book VIII, Chapter 10

I want to know God's thoughts.  
The rest are details.

Albert Einstein

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## Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the many people who helped make this book a reality. As with any book, there are far too many people to thank them all, but I will do my best not to leave any truly heinous omissions.

The guidance of Professor Steven Smith of the Yale Political Science Department, Professor Norma Thompson of the Yale Whitney Humanities Center, and Professor Nicholas Wolterstorff of the Yale Divinity School was invaluable as I was writing the doctoral dissertation that produced this book. They read drafts, provided advice, and gave generously of their time. They corrected innumerable errors and flaws, for which I am grateful; no doubt errors and flaws remain, for which I take sole responsibility. My dissertation committee – Professor Smith, Professor Thompson, and Professor Jennifer Pitts of the Yale Political Science Department – also made a large investment of time and labor for which I am grateful.

Brett Marston, John Gould, and Patricia Nordeen provided help, advice, and mutual support to a fellow graduate student, for which I owe them a good portion of my sanity.

The faculty, graduate students, and staff of the Yale Political Science Department provided invaluable academic and administrative support as I was working on this book.

Yale University provided significant funding for the completion of this book.

The editors and staff of Cambridge University Press worked diligently to successfully bring this book to completion.

I am not in the least ashamed to thank my mother, Susan Forster, for her love and support over the years, as well as my brother Brian Forster.

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The unfailing friendship of Caroline Stack, Mandy Bissell, Mike Carter, and Jennifer Rackow has sustained me through more hardships than I care to recall. I can never hope to repay their many kindnesses.

I am indebted beyond expression to my wife, Elizabeth Ann Forster. “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it; if a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned” (Song of Solomon 8:7). This book is dedicated to her.

Above all I am grateful to God. “Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost you all you have, get understanding. . . . If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God” (Proverbs 4:7 and 2:3–5).



## List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this book to refer to Locke's major works. Spelling and capitalization have been updated to the current standard, but punctuation has been left undisturbed. Italics have been removed except where they are necessary to convey the meaning of a passage.

- E Followed by Book.Chapter.Section, Page (e.g., E IV.10.1, 619)  
*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*  
 Edited by Peter H. Nidditch  
 New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.
  
- R Followed by Paragraph, Page (e.g., R 242, 172–3)  
*The Reasonableness Of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*  
 Edited by George W. Ewing  
 Washington, DC: Regnery, 1965.
  
- L Followed by Paragraph, Page (e.g., L 37, 31)  
*A Letter Concerning Toleration*  
 Edited by Patrick Romanell  
 Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice–Hall, 1950.
  
- T Followed by Treatise.Section, Page (e.g., T I.88, 63)  
*Two Treatises of Government*  
 Edited by Mark Goldie  
 London: Everyman, 1993.

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