Democratic Temperament
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With a New Preface by the Author

In *Democratic Temperament* Joshua I. Miller argues that political concerns were in fact central to William James's intellectual work and links James to the contemporary public dialogue by treating him as a theorist of action and exploring the complexities of that theory. Miller also relates the philosopher's thought to his own political experiences and observations and—by explicating, criticizing, and meditating on James—develops provocative new ideas about issues facing democracy today.

At the heart of the book is James's description of the “democratic temperament,” which comprises a willingness to act, the placing of public good ahead of private comfort, generosity toward one's opponents, and mutual respect among citizens of different viewpoints, races, genders, classes, and religions. Miller sees this temperament as a healthy corrective to the mean spiritedness that characterizes so much current political discourse, which is precisely what makes James's insights so relevant to today's political environment.

“A beautifully written and argued book about a major, and remarkably neglected, American thinker. The book also stands as an exemplary exercise in the very virtues Miller finds in William James—tolerance, mutual respect, nonviolence.” —Jean Bethke Elshtain, author of *Democracy on Trial*

“A welcome addition to the revival of American pragmatism. Miller has performed a genuine service for those who would enlist James in the cause of participatory democracy.” —American Political Science Review

“Miller's study is a refreshing and thoughtful rebuttal to the many who have patronized James as a romantic individualist innocent of the hard facts of modernity.” —Journal of American History

Joshua I. Miller is professor of government and law at Lafayette College. He is the author of *The Rise and Fall of Democracy in Early America, 1630–1789: The Legacy for Contemporary Politics*. 

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