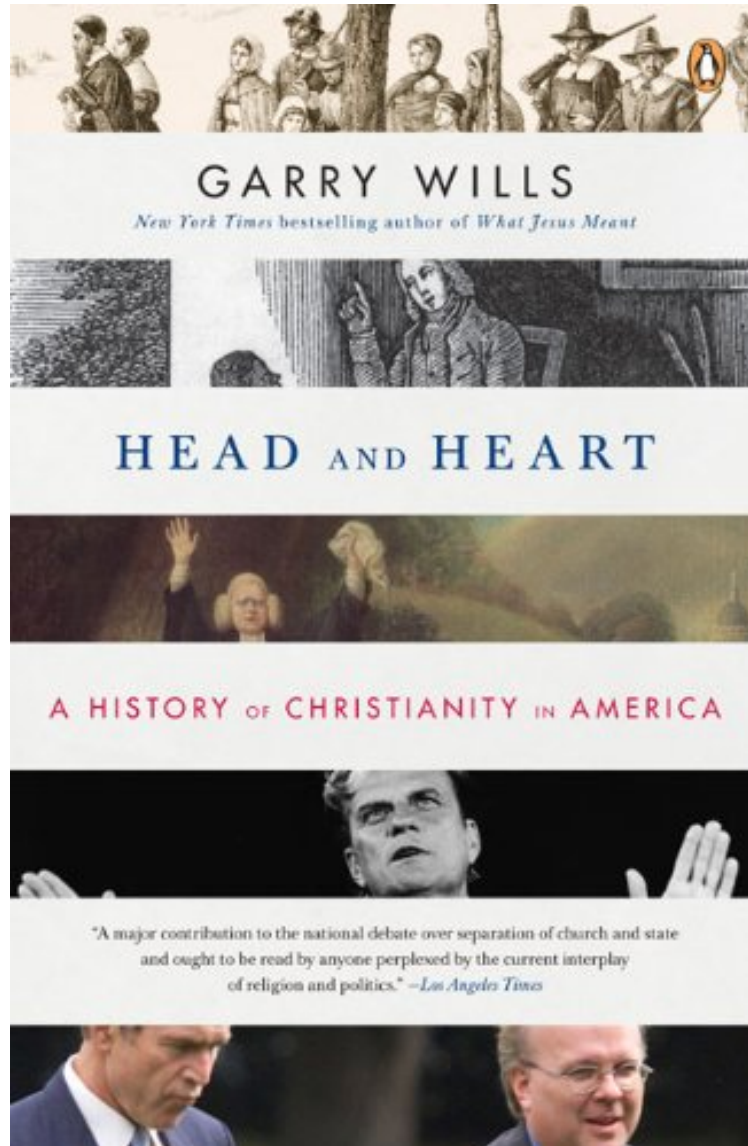


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Head and Heart: A History of Christianity in America

Garry Wills

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Garry Wills : Head and Heart: A History of Christianity in America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Head and Heart: A History of Christianity in America:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a history of the major movements in the ...By manndrakeThis is a history of the major movements in the Christian religion in the United States, starting with the Puritans and moving forward to the modern day. I have always trusted that Garry Wills has something interesting and insightful to say about any topic he chooses, and this is no exception. Whether you are Roman Catholic, Main Line Protestant, or

Independent this book is a valuable overview. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An Illuminating Take on a Difficult Subject By David Keymer I seem to be on a Garry Wills kick lately, not a bad thing to be on. Wills won two National Book Critics Award and has published numerous books, including translations (most notably of Augustine's Confessions), works of history and political criticism, and books about his own Roman Catholic faith. I had read Henry Adams and the Making of America (2005) and liked it. So when Head and Heart: American Christianities went on sale at .com for \$5.99 instead of the original \$29.96, I bought it. It's an interesting and (at least to my neophyte eyes) original history of Christian religion in the United States. Head and Heart is uneven -parts of it are too schematic and would benefit from further fleshing out--but I found it a very helpful book and a pleasure to read. His thesis, that the rationalist strand and the evangelical strand in American religion benefited most in dialogue with each other and that in the era of Karl Rover, dialogue was in scarce supply, helped me to frame my own criticisms of the overly partisan nature of religious debate today. He made a convincing case for the benefit to religion, not solely to the secular state, of the separation of church and state: the church's involvement in politics often has corrupted religion and tends to divert the faithful from attention to issues of salvation and worship. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Very Garry Wills Version of Religion in America. By Magyar This book is not a history of religion in America--it is Garry Wills' commentary on both the history of American religion, the various historical studies of American religion and the current situation. So for those who are looking for a straightforward and balanced history of religion in American, look elsewhere. That said, I must say that I enjoyed reading it Wills is a very engaging writer and his basic argument--when religion and politics gets too close, religion is the loser--makes sense. His comments on the current situation are very instructive. It would be interesting to see what he has to say about the position of other non-Judeo-Christian religions in America such as Islam and Buddhism. I think the 21st century is going to see a remaking of the map of religion in America

Look out for a new book from Garry Wills, What the Qur'an Meant, coming fall 2017. Gary Wills has won significant acclaim for his bestselling works of religion and history. Here, for the first time, he combines both disciplines in a sweeping examination of Christianity in America throughout the last 400 years. Wills argues that the struggle now, as throughout our nation's history, is between the head and the heart, reason and emotion, enlightenment and Evangelism. A landmark volume for anyone interested in either politics or religion, Head and Heart concludes that, while religion is a fertile and enduring force in American politics, the tension between the two is necessary, inevitable, and unending.

From Publishers Weekly Wills offers his insights into the ties between the history of the United States and Christianity, beginning with the founding fathers all the way to the current regime. The story is enlightening and a fascinating glimpse into a relatively unexamined past. However, Mel Foster's reading is wholly uninspired and all too familiar, offering only a straightforward narration that will surely lose most listeners with its mind-numbing approach. Foster has turned himself down a notch, reading at a sluggish pace as if the audience may not be able to follow along without extreme clarity. As thought-provoking as the material is, Foster's insipid narration makes listening a chore. A Penguin Press hardcover. (Jan.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred* The history of Christianity in the U.S. is a dialectic of the intellect and the emotions, Wills maintains in this big new book, which ought to be the one volume everyone interested in the subject reads--it is lucid and grandly informative--and reacts to, thus keeping the conversation alive. Although intransigently theocratic, the Puritans brought both heart (passion) and head (reason) to their religious practice, passionately persecuting dissidents unto death, reasonably fostering broad tolerance and social justice in the words and deeds of Roger Williams and repentant witch-trial judge and abolitionist pioneer Samuel Sewall. Eighteenth-century Quakers merged head and heart to spread antislavery sentiment. The deist Founding Fathers observed the head-heart conflicts and with the First Amendment opted the new federal government out of them by forbidding a national church. That "disestablishment" has been a godsend because, ever since, head and heart have seesawed in influence. Although the Puritans and disestablishment occupy the best pages in the book, Wills' traversal of nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments is full of what will be not only revelations to most Americans but also, they may decide, things they really ought to know. If it is disappointing that Wills ends in contention, arguing that the Bush II administration poses the greatest threat ever to disestablishment, it is also true that his case for seeing abortion as a nonreligious issue is as cogent as it is refreshing. Olson, Ray "A major contribution to the national debate over separation of church and state and ought to be read by anyone perplexed by the current interplay of religion and politics."--Los Angeles Times "Challenges the conventional wisdom on many issues while synthesizing much of the finest recent scholarship."--The New York Times Book "Essential reading."--St. Louis Post-Dispatch