

[PDF] Moral Minority: Our Skeptical Founding Fathers

Brooke Allen - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Moral Minority: Our Skeptical

Author: Brooke Allen

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In this study of the religious lives of six framers of the Constitution, which began as an article in *The Nation*, Allen (*Twentieth-Century Attitudes*) ably demonstrates the uncontroversial thesis that many of the founding fathers were not very devout. Franklin was a skeptic and a humanist who displayed outright "contempt for the niceties of Christian observance." Washington was, like other Virginia gentry, a vestryman in his local Episcopal church, but he was not especially pious. Adams's Puritan heritage left him with a commitment to hard work but not to Calvinism. Jefferson, unsurprisingly, appears as a devotee of reason and a champion of religious freedom, a cause in which Madison joined him. Hamilton's piety was mainly "opportunistic," and the religiosity he evinced on his deathbed had "no effect" on his participation in American politics. In the concluding chapter, Allen summarizes the history of the Enlightenment, that philosophical

watershed that "produced the founders," and she ends by warning that Enlightenment values are now under threat. Allen's sparring partners are, of course, those representatives of the religious right who claim that America was founded as a Christian nation. Unfortunately, they are not likely to read this book, and those readers already generally inclined to agree with Allen-including most serious students of American history-won't learn anything new.

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Review Meticulously researched and eminently readable. . . . Enthusiastically recommended for all collections. (D. L. Davey *Library Journal*)

Ms. Allen succeeds perfectly. (Adam Kirsch *New York Sun*)

Enlightening, infectiously enthusiastic scrutiny. (Ray Olson *Booklist*)

Careful and provocative reading. . . . Allen's book is welcome counterweight. (Darryl Hart)

Allen's clear and intelligent eye is a pleasure . . . a fine small book. (Peter Matthiessen, novelist and non-fiction writer, twice winner of the National Book Award)

Allen lucidly demolishes the fundamentalists' revisionist history of the Constitution. . . . An elegant and riveting defense. (Heather MacDonald)

Well documented, exuberantly argued and quite persuasive. (George Will, winner of the Pulitzer Prize *The New York Times*)

Allen provides honest answers to the questions about the religious beliefs and practices of Washington and the other key founders. (Myron A. Marty *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*)

If our right-wing adversaries insist on claiming that Washington and Franklin actually wanted the United States to be a Christian theocracy, Allen's book certainly can help to refute that outrageous lie. (Emile Schepers *People's Weekly World*)

Her argument marks a salient starting point for an informed debate on a compelling topic. Those who call the U.S. a 'Christian Nation' when referring not only to the religious beliefs of its citizens but to the structure and intention of its government ought to welcome the contrarian challenge she poses. (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)

Allen delivers a rationalist polemic against those who would make of the American Founders observant, believing Christians in the modern sense. . . . Ms. Allen writes with facility. (Aram Bakshian Jr. *The Wall Street Journal*)

This is an excellent book about the beliefs of the six founders and well worth a read. Highly recommended. (Marty Dodge *Blogcritics Magazine*)

A mighty case for the religious questioning of America's Founding Fathers . . . thoughtful, diligently researched and often eyebrow-raising. (*Blue Ridge Business Journal*)

[Written] in a brisk, highly readable style. (*Village News*)

This is a thoughtful, well-written book. (Alvena Bieri *Newspress*)

Examine[s] the . . . Founding Fathers to convincingly demonstrate that Christian belief did not guide their political thinking . . . an excellent concluding chapter. (Milton Berman *Magill Book Reviews*)

A small, and wildly underappreciated book. (Nicholas F. Benton *Falls Church News-Press*)

Able demonstrates the uncontroversial thesis that many of the founding fathers were not very devout. (*Old Durham Road*)

Allen's book . . . brings the substantial literary talents of a public intellectual to the dialogue on church and state in America. (*The Journal of Southern History*)

Informed by substantial research in their writings and provides numerous quotations. (Allen Gibson *The Historian*)

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