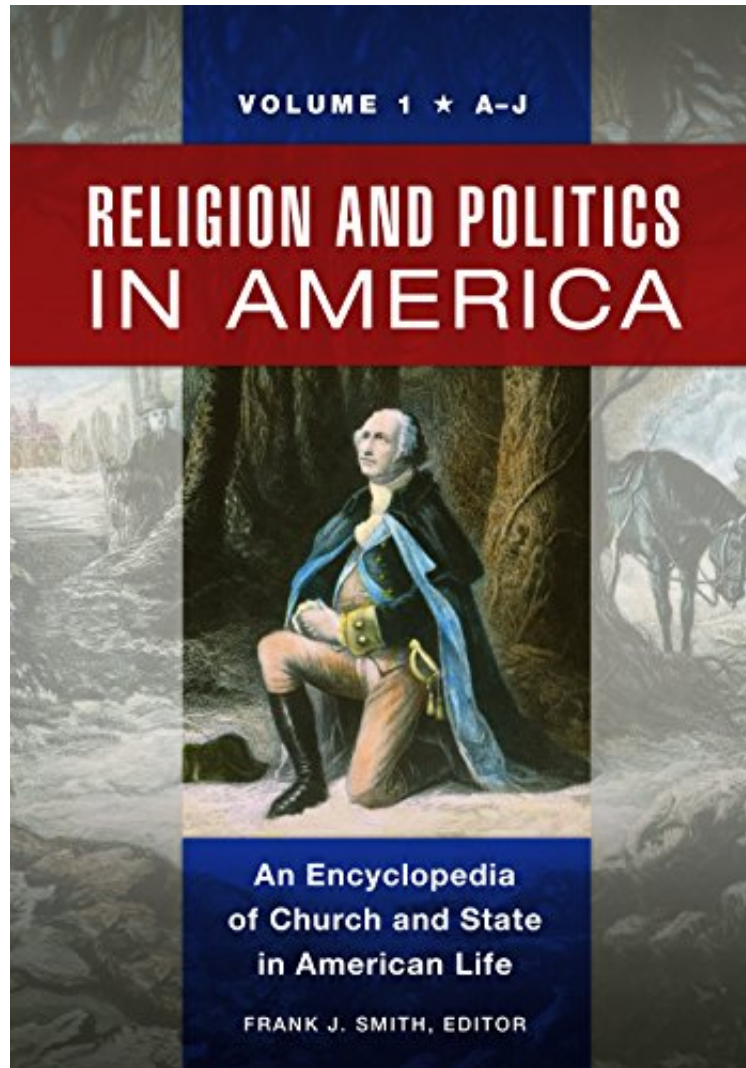


Religion and Politics in America: An Encyclopedia of Church and State in American Life

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From ABC-CLIO : Religion and Politics in America: An Encyclopedia of Church and State in American Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Religion and Politics in America: An Encyclopedia of Church and State in American Life:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Wealth of InformationBy KMBThis is a mammoth accomplishment from Frank Smith pastor of the Atlanta RP Fellowship. With hundreds of entries from over a hundred contributors this encyclopedia explores the complex relationship between the church and state spanning from the colonial period to present day.The encyclopedia begins with a fine introduction by Smith on the philosophical and

religious context of the fledgling United States. The author, who is well equipped to defend, asserts that the Christian principles formed the basis of our nation's common law. Nevertheless, through developing philosophical trends on both sides of the Atlantic (e.g. Hegel, Emerson, Darwin, etc) there has come a great war between religion and politics in our culture. With well developed reasons Smith gives an account for why we are where we are. The rest of the two volumes is an encyclopedia. One might be tempted to think in our internet age of Wikipedia such a work, while representing the best of scholarship, is somewhat unnecessary. But this reviewer would like to put such temptations aside. These volumes contain a wealth of information and documentation on a great diversity of subjects relating to the state and church. Perhaps one of the most useful features is the trustworthy guide at the end of each entry directing readers to further study. In doing this, the authors have helped to draw lines of contour and connection to people, places, and events that may appear, at first glance, unrelated. But it is a reminder of the sophisticated web that connects the movement of history. Unfortunately, the cost of these two volumes will prove to be a burden to many and hinder a wide and popular readership. But for those with the means and will, this encyclopedia will prove to be a great reference.

Can a judge display the Ten Commandments outside of the courthouse? Can a town set up a nativity scene on the village green during Christmas? Should U.S. currency bear the "In God We Trust" motto? Should public school students be allowed to form bible study groups? Controversies about the separation of church and state, the proper use of religious imagery in public space, and the role of religious beliefs in public education are constantly debated. This work offers insights into contemporary controversies regarding the uneasy intersections of religion and politics in America. Organized alphabetically, the entries place each topic in its proper historical context to help readers fully grasp how religious beliefs have always existed side by side--and often clashed with--political ideals in the United States from the time of the colonies. The information is presented in an unbiased manner that favors no particular religious background or political inclination. This work shows that politics and religion have always had an impact on one another and have done so in many ways that will likely surprise modern students.

"It is a valuable resource for public and private libraries and homeschoolers, as well as churches and other houses of worship for their libraries." - ProtoView "Recommended as a reference to survey and introductory courses on religion and politics in America and to general readers interested in how religious and civic groups engage in political activity." - Booklist "This user-friendly compendium covers a wide array of topics. . . . [T]he work is an approachable and useful means to enrich one's understanding of the relationship between religion and politics. Summing Up: Recommended. All readership levels." - Choice "This encyclopedia is particularly appropriate for libraries and research centres serving religious communities, congregations, high school students, undergraduates and graduate students. It is suitable for large, comprehensive general collections, as well as collections focused on U.S. history, politics, and religion. Though the historical perspective is largely Euro-centric, the encyclopedia provides a manageable, one-stop resource on concepts of religion and politics in the USA and can serve as a springboard to further research on the mosaic of identities and intellectual traditions in that nation." - Reference sAbout the Author Frank J. Smith, PhD, DD, is president of Tyndale International University, Los Angeles, CA, and assistant professor at Georgia Gwinnett College, Lawrenceville, GA.