

# [PDF] Roger Williams And The Creation Of The American Soul: Church, State, And The Birth Of Liberty

John M. Barry - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

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Author: John M. Barry

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## Description:

**From** \*Starred Review\* Barry traces American separation of church and state back to earliest colonial days, when John Winthrop (1588-1649), first governor of Massachusetts Bay, and Roger Williams (1603-83), founder of Rhode Island, argued over whether government should enforce religious conformity, a dispute that eventuated in—besides such more immediately consequential things as banishment (and worse) for dissenters from colonial theocracies—Williams' written formulation of the concept Jefferson boiled down to "wall of separation between church and state."

Barry likes to get to the roots of his subjects, so he delves farther back about Williams, in particular, to the inspiration he took from his patron Edward Coke, England's greatest jurist, and Coke's bitter rival in government, Sir Francis Bacon. From Coke, Williams garnered faith in the law and due process as well as, through Coke's battles with James I and Charles I, the importance of maintaining the rights of Englishmen (Coke's concept) against divine-right regimes, whether under king or, as in Massachusetts Bay, council. From Bacon, Williams imbibed a penchant for real-world (scientific) testing of beliefs (hypotheses) that led him to launch Rhode Island. Winthrop and Williams were on cordial terms almost to the former's death, which is just one fascinating strand in the swath of history Barry brings to urgent life with the same focused intelligence that distinguished his *The Great Influenza* (2004). --Ray Olson

**Review** "John Barry's *Roger Williams and the Creation of the American Soul* establishes Williams as a brave thinker and also a deft political actor ... Mr. Barry puts Williams squarely among our great political thinkers, crediting him with bringing liberal democracy to the American colonies."

John M. Barry is "a sophisticated sorter-out of theological strands."

"Roger Williams is one of those figures, famous but forbidding, who hover at the periphery, imposing, important, indispensable to our history and culture and yet still distant, unknown to most Americans ... and yet Williams may be ... the one whose breath gives life to modern American culture and whose fingerprints are most evident on the American Constitution. The task of reviving Williams has fallen happily to John M. Barry, chronicler of the great influenza of 1918 and the great Mississippi flood of 1927."

"Roger Williams deserves our thanks for his courage to fight for religious freedom and individual liberty with his very life at a time when few thought it anything but the rankest heresy. And John Barry deserves our thanks for illuminating this critical and timely chapter of American history ... Barry tells the story with passion and an eye for fine detail."

(The Seattle Times )

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