

The Routledge Historical Atlas Of Religion In America (Routledge Atlases Of American History)



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

..."a successful popular summary told with zest and authority...strengthened by well designed cartography...this book deserves a wide market in both institutional and home libraries."-Church History March 2002 "[A] useful research tool and outstanding teaching resource...an excellent contribution, highly recommended for libraries and courses in US religion.."-Religious Studies Review, January 2002 "Carroll offers another excellent volume in the 'Routledge Atlases of American History' series. His small but extremely important publication provides a succinct, current atlas with the most up-to-date commentary.... Highly recommended for every library."-Choice, 10/01 "This interesting approach to exploring religion's impact on U.S. history will be useful in the religion and history collections of academic libraries."-American Reference Books Annual, 2000 "An excellent reference book on America's rich religious history."-Christian Science Monitor, 2/21/01

Bret Carroll is the author of Spiritualism in Antebellum America. He is Assistant Professor of History at California State University, Stanislaus.

Bought this for a college class, but the book is fascinating and easy for anyone to read.

This atlas is very comprehensive and contains colour maps showing the religious composition of the various regions of the United States from the pre-colonial days down to the present. The atlas is also very useful for those who are interested in the emigration of the various ethnic groups to America as religious affiliation is closely tied to ethnicity and country/area of origin (especially in the colonial period to the 1800s). It can be observed from these maps that different ethnic groups arrived during different periods and that their settlement were concentrated in specific regions. For the period before independence (ie. 1776), there are maps showing the emigration of the Puritans/Congregationalists from the counties of Eastern England to New England, the Anglicans to Virginia and other Southern states along the Atlantic coast, Northern English and Welsh Quakers to Pennsylvania, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians to the Middle colonies and thereafter, onwards to the backcountry. There were also the Dutch Reformed (and some French Huguenot) in New York who settled there when that state belonged to Holland, and the Lutherans, Reformed and Mennonites who emigrated from Germany to the Middle colonies. Meanwhile, Louisiana was mainly Catholic due to French and some Spanish settlers. A phenomenon which I found interesting was the transformation of denominational affiliation in the Southern states from Anglicanism and Presbyterianism to Baptist (and Methodist) and later, the emergence of Unitarians and Universalist among the Yankees in New England. All these showed regional trends. This religious affiliation can be traced as migrants moved Westwards from the original colonies. Hence, the Yankees brought with them Congregationalism to the Midwest whilst Texas, Arkansas etc. had large Baptist and Methodist groups due to settlers from other Southern states. In the 1800s, one can see how America was transformed from an almost exclusively Protestant Anglo-Saxon/Western European civilisation with the immigration of Catholics from Ireland, Germany and continental Europe. Orthodox immigrants from Eastern Europe in the late 1800s to early 1900s added even greater to the diversity. And of course, in the late 20th century, America became a microcosm of the world with immigrants from Asia, Africa etc. [with large numbers of Buddhists (of various sects), Hindus, Bahais, Sikhs and Muslims (who enjoyed a phenomenal growth in part due to the large-scale conversions among African-Americans)]. This atlas also has maps showing the religious transformation in the African-American community i.e. from having their own Methodist and Baptist denominations to the formation of Black Hebrew organisations and the Nation of Islam and quasi-Muslim sects (such as Moorish Science). The last few maps showed that despite the change in ethnic composition over the years, the various regions are still unique in their concentration of various denominations.

The graphics in this text provide a useful visual supplement to standard books on U.S. religious

history. Unfortunately, the text is filled with distracting errors - misspellings, incomplete sentences that end abruptly, and times where it seems the text was patched together without checking to make sure the result made any sense. A revised version is definitely called for, but until then this still remains a worthwhile purchase for its combination of helpful content and low cost.

Brett Carroll's Historical Atlas of Religion in America provides a focus on the history and geographic development of American religions, providing maps and visual details to bring alive the connections between American political and religious history. From parts played by religious groups of Europe to the development of sects in the country, this provided a well-rounded survey.

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