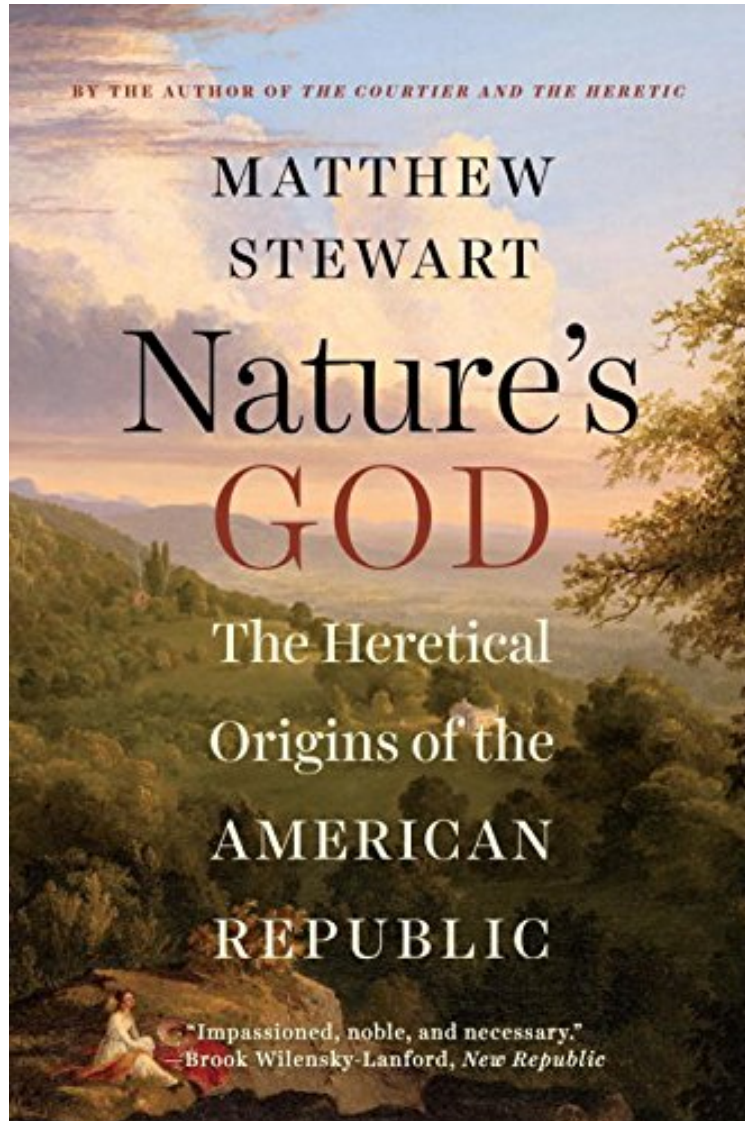


[Read download] Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic

## Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic

Matthew Stewart

audiobook / \*ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#182297 in Books WW Norton Co 2015-07-06Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.30 x 1.50 x 5.50l, .0  
#File Name: 0393351297576 pagesNature s God The Heretical Origins of the American Republic | File size:  
74.Mb

**Matthew Stewart : Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic:

26 of 27 people found the following review helpful. What the Founding Fathers were really up to.By Evelyn UyemuraThis may be more background info on the philosophical origins of deism and what it really meant to people at the time than you want, but if you're tired of Christians trotting out quotes from Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, or

George Washington that make them sound like evangelicals, you should make the effort to get through this. The writing is clear and fairly snappy, but the author traces every line of the intro to the Declaration of Independence back to the ancient Greek philosophers--Why "we hold these truths to be self-evident"? Who is this "Creator" who endowed us with rights? What does "the pursuit of happiness" mean? It turns out that "Nature and Nature's God" might just mean "nature," and deism is more or less the equivalent of atheism, in his parsing. And it turns out that Ethan Allen was quite a revolutionary indeed, and in fact all the founding fathers were trying not just to separate from the British motherland, but to create a whole new sort of society, never seen before in political history. Well worth the effort. 46 of 49 people found the following review helpful. A fantastic (and demanding) intellectual tour de force. By Alberto Cairo Touriço Be warned first: This is not an easy read. It will require your full attention and some familiarity with the philosophers and thinkers discussed. Stewart takes for granted that you know a bit about Epicurus, Spinoza, Descartes, Franklin, Jefferson, etc. That said, the information you need about those authors beforehand can easily be found on the Internet, so you should not be afraid of picking this book up. If you have enjoyed smart humanistic books, like Grayling's 'The God Argument', you will like this one, too. 'Nature's God' is not a strident rant against deities, but an extremely intelligent discussion of why a society based on secular skepticism is the best we humans can expect. (And about why the notion of the U.S. as a Christian Nation is nonsense.) Rewarding and elegantly written.

Recommended. 117 of 123 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed this book and what I learned from it. By Queens Librarian I enjoyed this book and what I learned from it, however the writing got a bit too dense and repetitive in parts for my taste. The premise is essentially that America was never meant to be a Christian nation as many of the Founding Fathers were deists who believed in private, independent spirituality. Thomas Jefferson, for example, would be surprised that we haven't all become Unitarians by now. The book centers on Ethan Allen's autobiography which bears a striking similarity to the writings of Thomas Young (one of the Boston Tea Party perpetrators). Young's writings, in turn, reflect the works of Spinoza and Locke who can trace some of their ideas back to Lucretius and Epicurus. This is where some people's eyes are likely to start glazing over. The most enlightening parts to me are when the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are examined philosophically to prove the founders' underlying deism. The chapter on the pursuit of happiness alone was worth the time and effort leading up to it. If you find your eyes glazing over at certain sections, skip ahead a bit. There's plenty of meat behind the gristle.

Longlisted for the National Book Award. Where did the ideas come from that became the cornerstone of American democracy? America's founders intended to liberate us not just from one king but from the ghostly tyranny of supernatural religion. Drawing deeply on the study of European philosophy, Matthew Stewart brilliantly tracks the ancient, pagan, and continental ideas from which America's revolutionaries drew their inspiration. In the writings of Spinoza, Lucretius, and other great philosophers, Stewart recovers the true meanings of Nature's God, the pursuit of happiness, and the radical political theory with which the American experiment in self-government began.

Impassioned, noble, and necessary. - Brook Wilensky-Lanford, New Republic [A] splendidly polemical account of the philosophy of the founding fathers. - Jonathan Ree, Prospect (UK) Enthralling and important [A] pleasure to read, its often surprising conclusions supported by elegant prose. - Buzzy Jackson, Boston Globe Eloquently argued. - Wendy Smith, Los Angeles Times Impressive refreshing. - Barton Swaim, Wall Street Journal Brilliant breathes fresh life into our understanding of the American Revolution. Beautifully written and lucidly argued, Nature's God will set the agenda for serious discussion of the American Revolution's significance in world history. - Peter S. Onuf, author of The Mind of Thomas Jefferson Splendid imaginative but never fanciful, even at its most surprising. - Alan Ryan, author of The Making of Modern Liberalism A lively, powerful, and erudite refutation of the myth that the framers of our secular Constitution had any intention of founding an orthodox Christian nation. - Susan Jacoby, author of Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism About the Author Matthew Stewart is the author of Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic, The Courtier and the Heretic: Leibniz, Spinoza, and the Fate of God in the Modern World and The Management Myth: Debunking the Modern Philosophy of Business. He lives in Boston, Massachusetts.