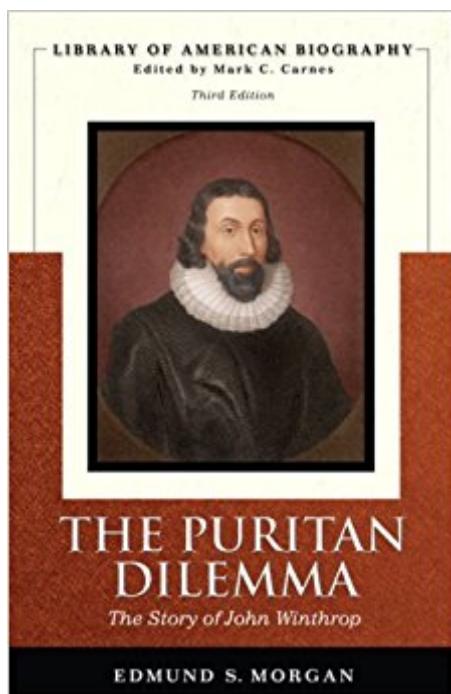


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The Puritan Dilemma: The Story Of John Winthrop (Library Of American Biography)



Synopsis

Caught between the ideals of God's Law and the practical needs of the people, John Winthrop walked a line few could tread. In every aspect of our society today we see the workings of the tension between individual freedom and the demands of authority. Here is the story of the people that brought this idea to our shores: the Puritans. Edmund Morgan relates the hardships and triumphs of the Puritan movement through this vivid account of its most influential leader, John Winthrop. The titles in the Library of American Biography Series make ideal supplements for American History Survey courses or other courses in American history where figures in history are explored. Paperback, brief, and inexpensive, each interpretive biography in this series focuses on a figure whose actions and ideas significantly influenced the course of American history and national life. In addition, each biography relates the life of its subject to the broader themes and developments of the times.

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Customer Reviews

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American History Survey courses or other courses in American history where figures in history are explored. Paperback, brief, and inexpensive, each interpretive biography in this series focuses on a figure whose actions and ideas significantly influenced the course of American history and national life. In addition, each biography relates the life of its subject to the broader themes and developments of the times.

Need for school was very good copy delivered on timely matter very satisfied

only bought this book for class

school book.

Well worth a read for those interested in Puritan issues.

Great job.

Great condition!

Had to read it for school.

This book is a good overview of Puritanism in England and New England in the first half of the 17th century, especially the role of John Winthrop in establishing a Puritan commonwealth in the vicinity of Boston, Mass under the auspices of the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1630. Little time is spent on day-to-day living conditions in the new Mass. Bay colony - and they were harsh. Much of the book is concerned with the subtle but explosive differences in Puritan thought that Winthrop was forced to deal with: Separatism, Presbyterianism (hierarchical, inclusive) vs. Congregationalism (flat, independent, & exclusive), or such deviating thought as Arminianism and Antinomianism. In some cases, dissident residents were banned from the colony, such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson. In addition, the author shows the gradual inclusion of adult male church members in the governance of the colony from the original conception of only the few members of the Company exercising absolute control. The author maintains that the basics of church-state separation existed, yet there is no doubt that both sectors were concerned with rooting out and punishing ungodly behavior. The author shows that the survival of the colony owed a lot to Winthrop as he resisted

tendencies of some towards separatism and purity - in other words, fanaticism. At times he was voted out of the governor's office, but the colony always returned to him. A rather understated aspect of the book is any real feel for living in a totally religious community under constant surveillance and the superiority of those who wish to judge who had been saved or not (or worse). Somehow the spread of that mindset into representative government is not especially heartwarming. The myopic idea that a pure, godly community, superior to others, could be established plagues us even today.

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