



We might say that it's a season of house calls for the ol' Doc. The little cabin in the trees is being sold, and when we first heard about it, our response was to quit the day job. This might not make sense to those unfamiliar with the local version of Musical Houses, but a handful of local renters lose their houses each summer when the real estate fishery opens, and summer is when every available roof is sheltering a summer worker, a participant in the Haystack Program, or a vacationer.

One might live in a well-hidden tent and take out a membership in the fitness club to use the shower, but the prospect of lining up for the few houses that become available for the rainy season (November through June) isn't nearly as attractive as prospecting for a fresh perspective, and the most effective prescription for Doc is to get his boots re-heeled, his bow re-haired, and to hit the road and play a bunch of music.

A few months back, a pianist, a woman a generation older than Doc, was talking about a common response from friend and stranger alike: "It must be wonderful to..." The pianist exclaimed, "They don't understand. You play because you have to!"

Well, there's a galaxy of reasons to play music, and playing because you have to play doesn't exclude any of the other reasons. It can take you places and show you things you might not see in a hundred lifetimes, and teach you things you don't even have the words to express. Living without it is like staying in shallow waters, and your very self begins to fade. Perish the thought!

So Doc is off doing research and development. Temporarily surrounded by bear, cougar, bobcat, and Horowitz playing Liszt (we can take it), we're putting together the down payment on a Learjet and preparing to go out in search of the groove.

After all, leaving home is far too important to be left in the hands of children. Cheerio, amigos y amigos, monitor this frequency for further whistling.

Book Review The Godless Constitution: The Case Against Religious Correctness

by James D. Patton

It is summer time, and the living is easy. Bill Clinton is in office, and Bob Dole is on the campaign trail. Newt Gingrich and his boys are at the wheel of Congress, and the Christian Coalition is in the back seat. Many would like to make laws based on what they think the Bible says, and an election is coming.

It seems like an appropriate time to take another look at our Constitution and what the framers actually had in mind; this is what the authors Isaac Kramnick and R. Lawrence Moore have done in relation to the question of church and state. Kramnick is a professor of government at Cornell University and Moore a professor of history at the same institution. Their book, *The Godless Constitution*, is not a comprehensive look at the Constitution: rather, it is an attempt to answer political activists such as Ralph Reed, Pat Robertson, and Jerry Falwell who seem intent on making religion, particularly the Christian religion, an integral part of the political process. A frequent argument of such people for mixing church and state is that this is what our founding fathers had in mind.

If readers are looking for background information on specific articles or amendments to the Constitution, reading *The Godless Constitution* will not be of any direct help. However, I find this limitation one of the book's strengths. Kramnick and Moore created a scholarly but readable book by keeping a tight focus and presenting sufficient, supporting evidence but not engaging in "citation overload." (If you are not familiar with "citation overload," try reading a doctoral thesis sometime.)

The book does several things. After an introductory chapter, Kramnick and Moore show that the lack of mention of God or Christianity in the Constitution was not an oversight on the part of the signers but deliberate. For example, they note that William Williams, a delegate to the convention, proposed a change in the preamble that would have specifically acknowledged "...one living and true God..." The authors also call attention to the heated debate at the convention of the "no religious test" clause and the fact that eleven of the thirteen new states did have some form of test. Unlike the debate over state's rights versus federal powers, Kramnick and Moore point out, few textbooks make serious mention of the religious argument and that the proponents of a secular Constitution prevailed.

The authors also examine the background that caused this secular approach to be taken in writing the Constitution. Here they look at two basic lines of reasoning. Ironically, the first is typified by Roger Williams who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony and who can hardly be accused of lacking religion. Williams believed that for any nation or colony to claim that it had a divine contact with God was blasphemy and served to harm religion. He also argued that government was strictly for the secular world and should be concerned only with secular laws. In his view, the worst thing about mixing the two was that it corrupted religion. Williams argued that it was for the sake of religion that state and religion should be separated.

The second line of reasoning for a secular constitution was that the mixing of the two often manifest itself in religious tyranny. Kramnick and Moore write that our ancestors were well aware of the problems caused by early theocracies in the New World and of the linking of church and state in England. The founding fathers wished to keep government simple and under control of the people. Religion was, for them, a personal affair and not the concern of government. In support of this position, the authors clarify the context of the famous Jefferson Quote, "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." It was written in reaction to attacks against Jefferson by Philadelphia clergy and their efforts to insert religion in government. Kramnick and Moore write, "To the eighteenth-



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century liberal mind of a Thomas Jefferson, shaped by English ideals, there were two great sources of tyranny...kings, such as mad George III, and priest, such as the clergy of Philadelphia."

In defending their position of an historically secular Constitution, Kramnick and Moore make their best argument for the prevailing thought of its signers through the voice of Jefferson who wrote in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, "The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as are injurious to others. But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods, or no God. It neither breaks my leg, nor picks my pocket." This is the classic "Liberal" position toward the role of the state.

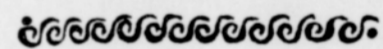
The final portion of the book points out some of the struggles we have historically had with the idea of separation of church and state and how the outcomes have not always been in compliance with our Constitution but with political expediency and religious correctness. They are well aware of inconsistencies in politics and politicians. The authors argue with those who claim we were founded as a Christian nation and state, "It is not true that the founders designed a Christian commonwealth, which was then eroded by secular humanists and liberals; the reverse is true. The framers erected a godless federal constitutional structure, which was then undermined as God entered first the US currency in 1863, the federal mail service in 1912, and the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954."

While *The Godless Constitution* is unlikely to change the minds of those who have an image of our founders as religious men in the tradition of Pat Robertson, it is well worth the time reading. It is clear in its intent, and provides researched support for its conclusions. It packs a great deal of substance into its 191 pages.

I would like to have seen the authors use end notes, but this is a minor criticism which they anticipated and answered in "A Note On Sources." The "Note" pages provide sufficient bibliographic information on the areas researched to allow readers to check for accuracy and context.

While Kramnick and Moore will probably not rival Steven King in reading popularity, their book is far more instructive and at least as frightening as *Cujo*.

Kramnick, Isaac and R. Lawrence Moore
The Godless Constitution: the case against religious correctness
W.W. Norton and Company, Inc.
New York, N.Y. 1996, 191 pages



SASQUATCH SEARCH UNSUCCESSFUL

by our field correspondent

John Day, July 17 [delayed] After weeks of fruitless searching, the American Association of Scientists Seriously Seeking Sasquatch has called off its eastern Oregon sasquatch search.

"We were looking all around the area [see ULE, April 1996] where Professor Carberry photographed a sasquatch during the summer of 1994," said Dr. George Burns Jr., president of the AASSSS. "We had people on the ground as well as several aloft in high tech sailplanes. These silent snoopers were equipped with the latest infra-red heat detectors which are so sophisticated they can spot a snake or lizard on the desert floor... and we did, but we didn't detect any sasquatch."

Burns went on to say that the 4-week search had covered not only the area where Carberry's picture had been taken but many square miles of adjacent territory.

"We know these creatures can cover a lot of ground in a day or two, so we checked out as much of the surrounding area as we could. We found nothing. It's discouraging but we remain optimistic that some day someone will get the Ultimate Proof that sasquatch exist."

When I asked what the "ultimate proof" would have to be, he sighed and said: "A body. While we have no intention of ever shooting one, we cannot prevent someone else from doing so. We would note that there is no reward for shooting one and in some areas to shoot one would be against the law. We hope to get one that has died of natural cause -- even a skeleton would be acceptable."

The AASSSS, Burns said, will now revert to a more passive approach, interviewing those who claim sasquatch sightings and trying to find a pattern in the location of witness' observations. "We might," he said, "given enough data, be able to predict when and where a sasquatch might appear. It's a long-shot but we think it's worth a try." ●●●

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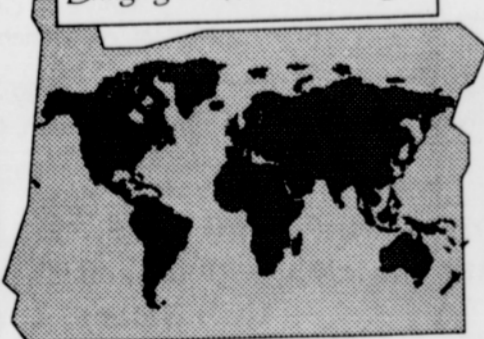
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