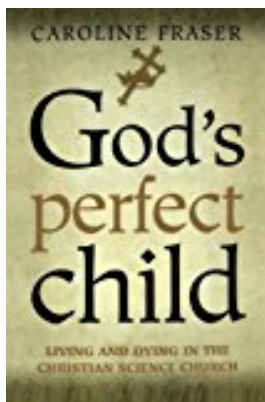


[PDF] God's Perfect Child: Living And Dying In The Christian Science Church

Caroline Fraser - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: God's Perfect Child: Living a
Author: Caroline Fraser
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Description:

In *God's Perfect Child: Living and Dying in the Christian Science Church*, Caroline Fraser delivers the most intelligent, humane, and even-handed history yet published of this important American religion. *God's Perfect Child* begins by telling the life story of Mary Baker Eddy, who founded Christian Science in 1879. Eddy built the church from a fringe sect into a mainstream religion whose wealth and power exceeded that of many Protestant denominations in the mid-20th century--and

were considerably augmented by the church's once-popular newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Fraser, a literary critic and poet who was raised a Christian Scientist, has a relentless analytic bent and an acute eye for physical detail, both of which are in evidence on every page of this book. Her stories of parents whose attempts at faith-healing resulted in their children's deaths are especially poignant. These stories also illuminate and analyze the fears and pains that have plagued many Christian Scientists who subscribe to Eddy's belief that individuals can control their physical destiny by force of faith. Ultimately, Fraser has little sympathy for the obdurate self-reliance advocated by Christian Scientist doctrine, which she sees as a forerunner to the extremist paranoia of contemporary cults. "The suggestibility, infatuation, and enthusiasm that sparked Christian Science ... lies behind our current anxious fixations on imaginary perils and medical conspiracies," Fraser writes. "Florid though they may seem, such fears can have far from imaginary consequences."

The goal of Fraser's book is to track down and annihilate irrational fears in the religion of her childhood; her reason for doing so, however, exudes an undeniably spiritual grace: "Should we continue to pursue [these fears], our providences will surely grow ever more remarkable." --*Michael Joseph Gross* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Freelance writer Fraser spent her childhood practicing the teachings of Christian Science. She was told that she was "God's Perfect Child" and that any errors she made, including being carsick every Sunday as she and her family traveled to her grandparents' house, were due to her "Mortal Mind." Although she left the church before she entered college, Fraser acknowledges that Christian Science is "profoundly complex" and "worth understanding in its own right." She sets out in this scintillating religious history to show the good, but especially the harm, that Christian Science has done. She opens with a brief biography of Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, whose Science and Health is studied reverentially by church members. She reveals Baker Eddy's fear of the material world and the ways in which she fashioned this fear into a religion that resists the advances of the scientific age. Fraser traces the development of Christian Science from a small sect to today's large political and religious organization that attracts numerous followers eager to embrace its messages of human perfectibility and self-reliance. In the course of her history, the author also briefly examines the lives of some famous Christian ScientistsADoris Day, Carol Channing and Mr. Ed's Alan YoungAand their contributions to the church. But, Fraser's history is also a rousing expos?. Not only does she reveal what she sees as Mary Baker Eddy's neuroses, but she also delves into what she calls the church's "pernicious" teachings that illness is not real (it's only the "Mortal Mind" obscuring the "Divine Mind") and that people can heal themselves without the benefit of medical help. Fraser combines episodes from her own experience with an evenhanded historical analysis in this first-rate social and religious history. (Aug.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the edition.

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