



"Negro President": Jefferson and the Slave Power

Garry Wills

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In "Negro President" the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Garry Wills explores a pivotal moment in American history through the lens of Thomas Jefferson and the now largely forgotten Timothy Pickering, and "prods readers to appreciate essential aspects of our distressed but well-intentioned representative democracy" (Chicago Tribune).

In 1800 Jefferson won the presidential election with Electoral College votes derived from the three-fifths representation of slaves — slaves who could not vote but were still partially counted as citizens. Moving beyond the recent revisionist debate over Jefferson's own slaves and his relationship with Sally Hemings, Wills instead probes the heart of Jefferson's presidency and political life, revealing how the might of the slave states remained a concern behind his most important policies and decisions.

In an eye-opening, ingeniously argued exposé, Wills restores Timothy Pickering and the Federalists' dramatic struggle to our understanding of Jefferson, the creation of the new nation, and the evolution of our representative democracy.

"Garry Wills is a thinker of first rate. He combines the vigor of the social critic with the depth of the historian, and to these he adds the even rarer gifts of the philosopher." — New Republic

"A thorough political analysis of another founding father's involvement in slavery." — San Francisco Chronicle

Garry Wills, a distinguished historian and critic, is the author of numerous books, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning Lincoln at Gettysburg, Saint Augustine, the best-selling Why I Am a Catholic, and Henry Adams and the Making of America.



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