

# **Roger Williams and the Creation of the American Soul: Church, State, and the Birth of Liberty**

John M. Barry



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A revelatory look at the separation of church and state in America—from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Great Influenza* 

For four hundred years, Americans have fought over the proper relationships between church and state and between a free individual and the state. This is the story of the first battle in that war of ideas, a battle that led to the writing of the First Amendment and that continues to define the issue of the separation of church and state today. It began with religious persecution and ended in revolution, and along the way it defined the nature of America and of individual liberty. Acclaimed historian John M. Barry explores the development of these fundamental ideas through the story of Roger Williams, who was the first to link religious freedom to individual liberty, and who created in America the first government and society on earth informed by those beliefs. This book is essential to understanding the continuing debate over the role of religion and political power in modern life.

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