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Nicholas Guyatt

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Nicholas Guyatt : Providence and the Invention of the United States, 1607-1876 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Providence and the Invention of the United States, 1607-1876:

Nicholas Guyatt offers a completely new understanding of a central question in American history: how did Americans come to think that God favored the United States above other nations? Making sense of previously diffuse debates on manifest destiny, millenarianism, and American mission, *Providence and the Invention of the United States* explains the origins and development of the idea that God has a special plan for America. The benefits and costs of this idea deserve careful consideration.

"In a work of admirable scope and learning, Nicolas Guyatt explores the transatlantic roots and multiple expressions of Americans' understanding of God's role in national life. He convincingly shows that providential ideas not only validated political goals but helped shape them, closing off some paths of development just as they opened others. *Providence and the Invention of the United States* is a superb contribution to our understanding of how American contested their national destiny from before the Revolution to the era of the Civil War." -Richard Carwardine, St. Catherine's College, University of Oxford

"Historians have long noticed that providential thinking played an important role in forging an American identity. Nicholas Guyatt does not dispute this notion but he complicates it. He shows that the idea of national providence, rooted in England but appropriated by American colonials after passage of the Stamp Act, became both a national consensus and a metaphor that served different political and sectional interests. Guyatt's book is intellectual history at its best." -R. Laurence Moore, Cornell University

"Nicholas Guyatt's study of providential reasoning is both well researched and capably argued. It goes much further than other scholars, including myself, have done to show how important the idea of providence was for almost everyone in the English-speaking world during the early modern period. But it also demonstrates convincingly that providence meant different things to different people at different times. This is a very good book." -Mark Noll, University of Notre Dame

"With learning and concision, Nicholas Guyatt has elegantly historicized the amorphous traditions of American providentialism, that regrettably powerful habit of cultural hyperbole, by which Americans have located themselves in God's order. He is especially cogent in showing with what passionate disagreement Americans have imagined that order, which turns out to have been rather disorderly." -Michael O'Brien, University of Cambridge

"[A] valuable insight into the nature of American politics that resonates not only for the period studied but into the twenty-first century. [...] Guyatt convincingly argues that providential understandings played a large role in shaping Americans' conceptions of law, national mission, race, and themselves. [...] It is a joy to read superbly crafted prose, and Guyatt's skill as a writer may even exceed his considerable skill as a historian. The book's readability promises that it may well reach the large audience interested in its subject matter." -Mark D. McGarvie, University of Richmond, *The Journal of American History*

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"Guyatt presents a rich, complex argument about the uses of national providential ideas in early America...This work should receive serious attention from scholars of the early republic" --*Journal of the Early Republic*

About the Author
Nicholas Guyatt is Assistant Professor of History at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, British Columbia. He has studied at Cambridge University (B.A., M. Phil.) and Princeton University (Ph.D.). This is his first academic monograph, but his fourth book; a work on apocalyptic Christianity will also be published in 2007. He writes about American history for the *London of Books* and the *Nation*.