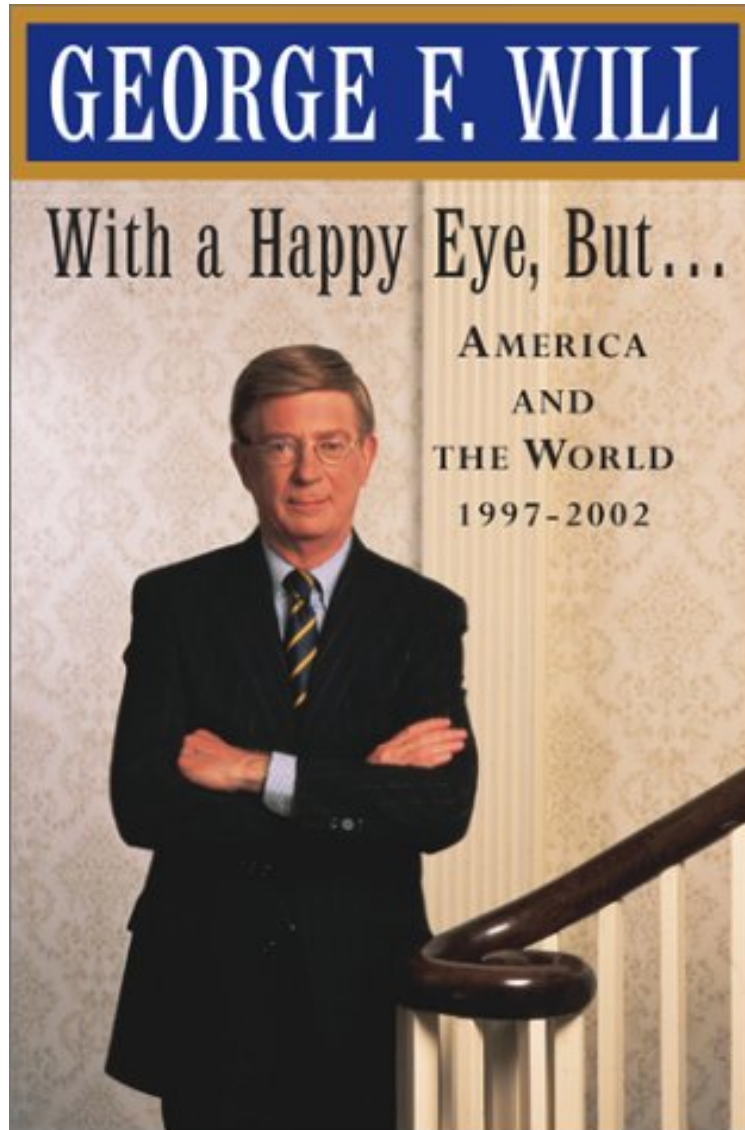


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With a Happy Eye But . . . : America and the World, 1997--2002

George F. Will

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George F. Will : With a Happy Eye But . . . : America and the World, 1997--2002 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised With a Happy Eye But . . . : America and the World, 1997--2002:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Collection of Columns and a Snapshot of AmericaBy TigerTCGeorge Will's "With a Happy Eye But...: America and the World, 1997-2002" is a collection of select George Will columns during the turn of the century. (There are also a few longer pieces in the book, such as the text of a few

commencement speeches he made during this time.) Most of the columns cover the hot issues of the day - Clinton's impeachment, Kosovo, partial birth abortion, education, 9/11 and terrorism - especially where those intersect with George Will's pet issues, such as campaign finance reform. There is also a collection of his "biographical" columns on famous or interesting personalities, such as Patrick Moynihan and author Patrick O'Brian. Still, reading these columns, written to advocate positions and influence readers, one can see that George Will often over-stated his position or overplayed his hand (missile defense really did not end up being the most important issues of the 1990s), but this is also a nature of the columnist. I was also disappointed that the book did not include any of George Will's columns on the 2000 election fiasco. I remember that Will's columns during the post-election fight were, as usual, cogent, insightful, and stinging. I wanted to keep a contemporary account of this debacle, but none of these columns made the book. Despite these minor drawbacks, anyone who is even moderately a George Will fan or a political junkie should buy this book both as a collection of his columns and a snapshot of America at the turn of the century. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A good book for fans of George Will. By ROBERT KINGSLEYA nice collection of the articles of George Will. If you are a fan of Mr. Will's writing, you will enjoy this book. If you are not familiar with his writing, this book would be a great introduction to his writing. This book contains a cross section of how Mr. Will views America, from it's people to events, from controversies to it's pastimes. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. America at the Turn of the 21st Century By Eric Mayforth George Will's seventh collection of columns covers the period from 1997 to 2002, and the opening essay that Will wrote describes the prosperous "holiday from history" that Americans enjoyed until 9/11/01, when the terrorist attacks injected big, consequential questions back into our political discussions. This collection includes more than just columns--there are a couple of commencement addresses, as well as a great speech Will delivered at Princeton concerning cultural literacy and the importance of reading. As has been the case for decades, ethical and moral questions have abounded in American life, and some of the columns the author wrote around the turn of the century addressed issues such as stem cell research, privacy, abortion, and school prayer. Will devoted several columns each to education and to the free speech issues involved in the fight over campaign finance reform. American conservatism lost a giant in 1998 with the passing of Barry Goldwater, and Will wrote a column remembering the Arizonan's contributions to conservatism and to the nation. Some of the other people that Will devoted columns to during these years include Princess Diana, Vince Lombardi, C.S. Lewis, John Adams, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and James Madison. Five of Will's year-end columns are here as well, rounding out yet another great collection of writings by one of American conservatism's indispensable thinkers.

In the introduction to this, the seventh collection of the newspaper and magazine columns, book reviews, speeches, and occasional writings of George Will, he notes the bemusement with which some may react to his choice of title. W. H. Auden wrote his poem "The Horatians" from which the following lines are taken: "We can only do what it seems to us we were made for, look at this world with a happy eye but from a sober perspective." The poem was written in 1968. It was a year notable in the United States for assassination, riot, war, and political violence unseen for the preceding 100 years. If humanity could be instructed to view that world with a happy eye, can America today do any less, faced with the clearest and most coherent expression of national unity since the Second World War? "With a Happy Eye But . . . is both a clear description of the attitude that informs these collected pieces (and the attitude of their creator) and an admonition to Americans.

From Publishers Weekly The fifth collection of conservative pundit Will's columns (The Morning After, etc.) shows his usual erudition (the title comes from Auden), but they seem more outdated this time around. The terrorist attacks figure prominently in an overwrought introduction ("The scream of the incoming aircraft was a howl of negation"), but most of the "current events" addressed the battle between gay activists and the Boy Scouts, pressure on members of the European Union to accept the euro, disabled golfer Casey Martin's fight to use a golf cart on the pro tour feel like curious relics of a pre-September 11 world, and his longstanding complaints about the wickedness of Oliver Stone and the decline of civilization on liberal college campuses come across as cranky grumblings. He gets in plenty of digs at Bill Clinton: "not the worst president the republic has had, but... the worst person ever to have been president"; he even finds occasional fault with George W. Bush (though the worst adjective he can think of to describe Bush's initial waffling over the Enron scandal is "Clintonian"). The final chapters are heartfelt memorials to Will's father and to columnist Meg Greenfield, but one wishes that Will had applied the level of sustained reflection they show to a fuller analysis of one or two subjects, such as the contested 2000 election or the war on terrorism, instead of the jumbled impressions offered here. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This book is the seventh volume of Will's collected columns, essays, and addresses to be published since 1978. Given his fame as a syndicated newspaper and Newsweek columnist (he won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1976) and as a television personality (he has served as an analyst with ABC News since the early 1980s), readers come to this work with high expectations that are not disappointed. In this book, Will describes contemporary Americans as "naive optimists." Within the context of the Clinton years, the 2000 elections, and the shadow of 9/11, he opines on the inevitability of war, the necessity of the death penalty, the need for the military to remedy moral values, the

fundamental flaws of a (liberal) intelligensia "too short on certitude," and his impatience with a society "too squeamish to call evil by its right name." An accomplished essayist, Will provides a model for writing that dismisses alternative viewpoints, and though his writings are valuable to readers across the political spectrum, they may leave liberals spluttering. Recommended for general collections in high school, public, and academic libraries. Jean S. Caspers, Linfield Coll. Lib., McMinnville, OR Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Pundits pontificate: it's their job. But few seem to take as much pleasure in pontificating as syndicated columnist Will, a regular on ABC's Sunday-morning This Week. (Who but Will would title columns "What the Remorseless Improvers Have Wrought" or "Hillary Clinton's Insouciant Insincerity"?) Will is also a master at cross-platform synergy: this is his seventh collection, composed primarily of columns but also including commencement addresses and other pieces. (Each essay is dated, but previous publication data are omitted.) Several sections of the collection are relatively focused: "The World" addresses foreign policy; "Justice and Injustice," court decisions and legislation; "Reasonable Doubts," culture and lifestyle; "Contingencies Large and Small," politics; and "Regulating Campaigning," the campaign finance reform movement Will despises. Broader in scope are Will's opening "Overture," whose 28 essays range in subject from patriotism and the marines to the Unabomber, Rodney King, Tiger Woods, and Santa Claus; the section's last five pieces are year-end assessments of 1997 through 2001. Will closes with a "People" section whose subjects include Princess Diana, Hitler, C. S. Lewis, Joe DiMaggio, the late Washington Post columnist Meg Greenfield, Will's father, and Will himself at age 60. A wallow for Will fans but unlikely to convert the uncommitted. Mary Carroll Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved