



Constantine and the Bishops: The Politics of Intolerance (Ancient Society and History)

By H. A. Drake

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Historians who viewed imperial Rome in terms of a conflict between pagans and Christians have often regarded the emperor Constantine's conversion as the triumph of Christianity over paganism. But in *Constantine and the Bishops*, historian H. A. Drake offers a fresh and more nuanced understanding of Constantine's rule and, especially, of his relations with Christians.

Constantine, Drake suggests, was looking not only for a god in whom to believe but also a policy he could adopt. Uncovering the political motivations behind Constantine's policies, Drake shows how those policies were constructed to ensure the stability of the empire and fulfill Constantine's imperial duty in securing the favor of heaven.

Despite the emperor's conversion to Christianity, Drake concludes, Rome remained a world filled with gods and with men seeking to depose rivals from power. A book for students and scholars of ancient history and religion, *Constantine and the Bishops* shows how Christian belief motivated and gave shape to imperial rule.

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Editorial Review

Review

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"A thoughtful and erudite book that breaks the mold... A powerful study with a strong, coherent thesis, *Constantine and the Bishops* is animated by a fresh vision of the early fourth century. It skillfully incorporates major historical themes in unexpected and rewarding ways." -- Richard Lim, *Speculum*

About the Author

H. A. Drake is a professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

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