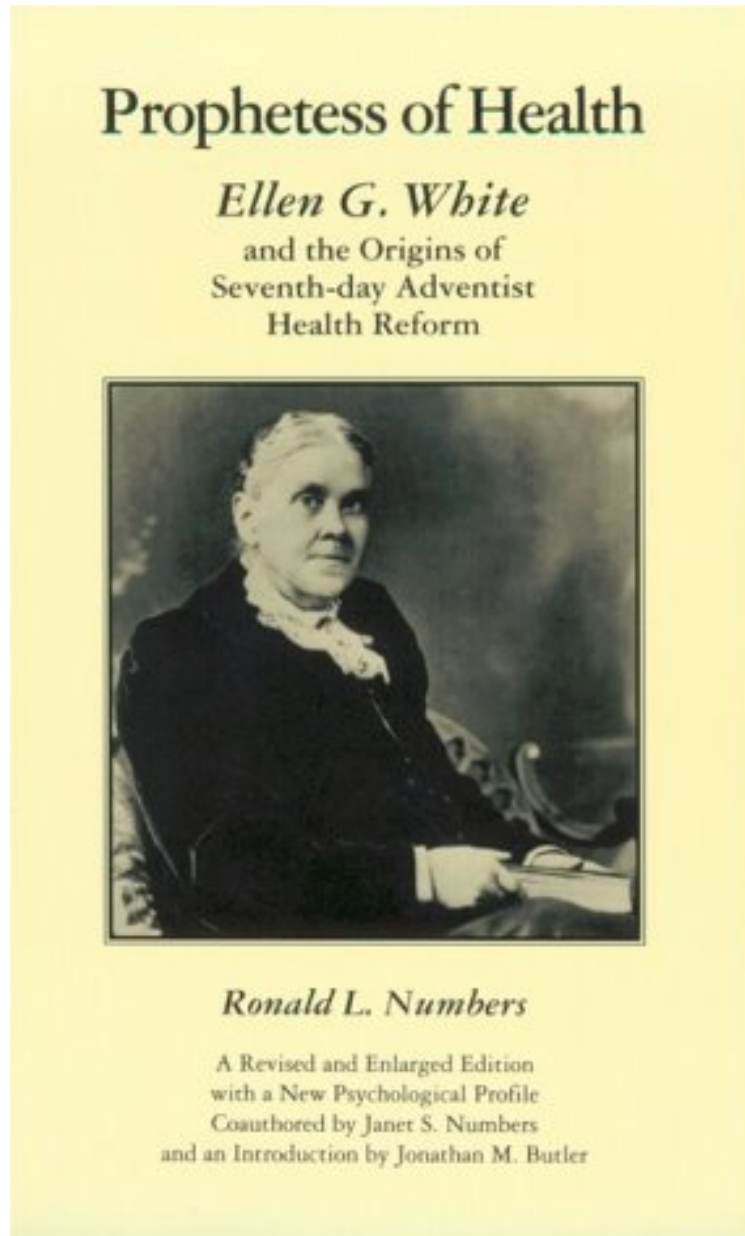


# Prophetess of Health: Ellen G. White and the Origins of Seventh-Day Adventist Health Reform

*Ronald L. Numbers*

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**Ronald L. Numbers : Prophetess of Health: Ellen G. White and the Origins of Seventh-Day Adventist Health Reform** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Prophetess of

Health: Ellen G. White and the Origins of Seventh-Day Adventist Health Reform:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. WELL-BALANCED By Caribbeancredit Cardcorp 'Prophetess of Health' is a well-balanced, thoroughly-researched, scholarly book. It is neither apologetic nor polemical. It is an eye- and a mind-opening mine of information. The work has succeeded admirably in doing what the author set out to do: place Mrs E. G. White firmly within the context of health reform in the 18th century, and show her invaluable contribution, among other health reformers, to the popularizing of that reform, even though her audience might have been different from theirs. If in achieving this, he unmasks the intrigue and other unsavoury actions of some E. G. White apologists, it is a necessary side effect of uncovering the truth.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Martha Haynes Book is in great condition.

22 of 25 people found the following review helpful. A Remarkable History Of A Remarkable Woman By Jon G. Jackson First, I should say that I know a lot about Ellen White. I've read several of her books (some of which are quite interesting). I'm a graduate of Loma Linda Medical School, a Seventh Day Adventist school originally founded by Mrs. White. And I've even been to her house in Napa Valley, near St. Helena, California, where she had many of her "visions of the night." Ellen White was the prophet whose writings helped establish the SDA church in the 1800s. Seventh Day Adventists believe in "the spirit of prophecy," which is to say they believe God didn't stop communicating with mankind in ancient times, but rather selects certain prophets through history when a new "message" is needed (though, they seem to believe Ellen White is the only one since the early days of Christianity). In their theology, a great emphasis is placed on the Biblical books of Daniel and Revelation, which are seen to contain prophecies particularly applicable to our contemporary times. They are sometimes considered a "cult," which I think is mere bigotry. It's more accurate to see them more in line with evangelical or fundamental Christian denominations, with a few unique doctrinal beliefs. Given that Ellen White is considered by most Adventists as second only to the Bible with regards to literal inspiration, this book by Ron Numbers is seen as nothing short of blasphemy. The General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists allowed Numbers access to their vault of unpublished materials, only to find themselves "betrayed" by his ultimate conclusions. How dare he suggest that many of White's "visions" were actually copied word-for-word from some of the books in her personal library! And how dare he suggest she was used as a "pawn" in the hands of the all-male leaders of the original SDA church in trying to establish their legitimacy! In my own view, whatever the truth in these things, Numbers diminishes White a bit more than she deserves. Yet, it's hard to argue with the evidence he presents. The problem (perpetrated by the SDAs themselves) is that we're trying to interpret events of a hundred or more years ago in the light of our current "values." This is, after all, the era of "zero tolerance." Am I right, or am I right? In this book, Ron Numbers presents a fascinating history of the Seventh Day Adventist church. From their earliest origins following the "Great Disappointment" of 1844, Numbers follows the difficult development of a new religion. They faced more than a few crises along the way. Far from the least of these was the powerful personality of John Harvey Kellogg. Yes, this is the Kellogg of the Kellogg's cereal company. Yes, he was an early Seventh Day Adventist. But Kellogg's was rather different in those days. His company was first started in an effort to produce natural health foods, as promoted by Mrs. White. (There's even an interesting anecdote in which some guy named Post toured Kellogg's factory, and Kellogg's stance that he was unconcerned that Post would copy what he was doing, as this would further the health message he so strongly believed in.) Yet, Kellogg became a "problem" to those early Adventists. He wanted more power than they were willing to grant him. Needless to say, he's now considered an "apostate" by contemporary Adventists. This is just one of several episodes that Numbers chronicles with revealing accuracy. No wonder this book was found so alarming by "the powers that be" in the 1970s SDA church! I'm not an Adventist, in case you're wondering. But, I find these kinds of histories more than a little fascinating. Given the context, Numbers was a brave man to put this in print when he did. I'm also rather proud, in a way, that Numbers wrote this book when he was an Assistant Professor of the History of Medicine and the History of Science at the University of Wisconsin...right here in Madison! This is probably a book you'll have no interest in at all, if the history of religion is a lost topic for you. But, if you've read this far in my review, you just might discover a few items here that will reward your searching. If your goal is hostile anti-Adventism...forget it! You'll find what you want here, but what a petty argument you're pursuing. Take a broader view. See this in the context of the whole of history. What a fascinating development!

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