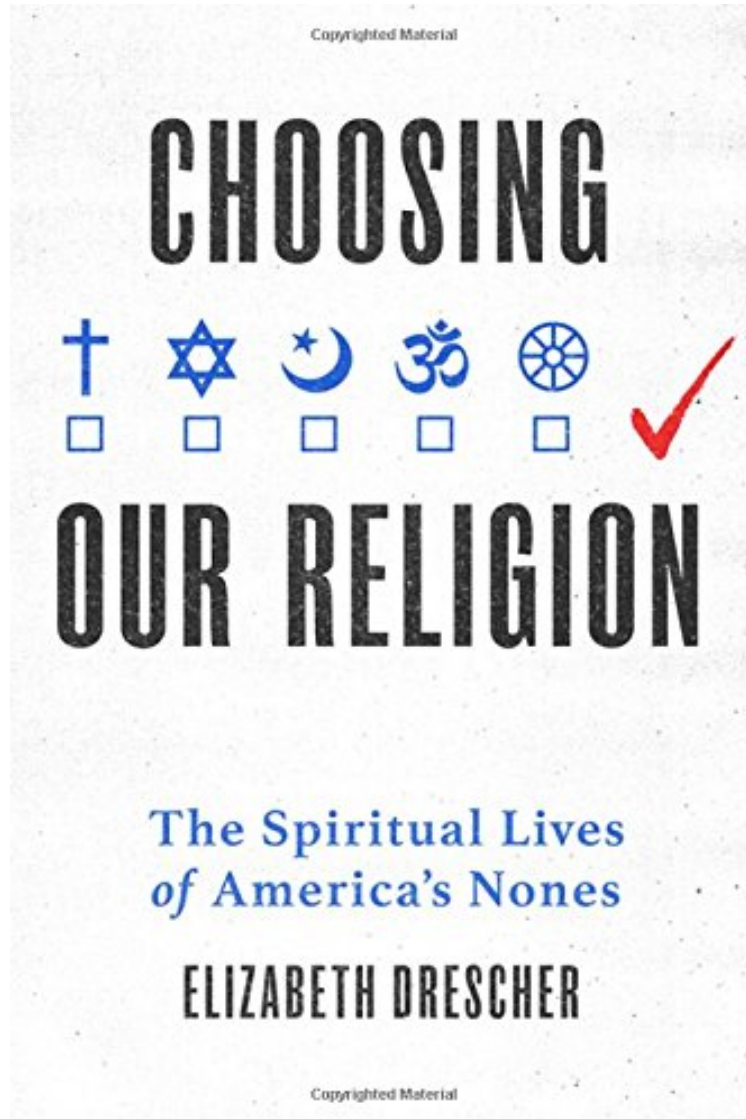


Choosing Our Religion: The Spiritual Lives of America's Nones

Elizabeth Drescher

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Elizabeth Drescher : Choosing Our Religion: The Spiritual Lives of America's Nones before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Choosing Our Religion: The Spiritual Lives of America's Nones:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good, maybe a little wordyBy Frank FiglozziI was pointed to this book by a review in America Magazine, and really liked it. It really opened my eyes as to the beliefs of Nones and other non-denominational groups in the US (my wife and I are both Catholic). It was very thorough and detailed.My

reason for four stars rather than five: I thought it was somewhat wordy, and significant sections weren't of interest to me. In all, though, a good read for anyone interested in the status of religion in the country today. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I underlined so many things that my pen literally ran out of ink. By Keith Anderson I underlined so many things in this book that my pen literally ran out of ink. This is an excellent book for anyone that wants to understand the "rise of the Nones (the religiously unaffiliated)" and the changing landscape of American religious and spiritual practice. What sets this book apart is the many, many quotes from Nones themselves about their spiritual lives, how they make meaning, the resources they use to deepen their spiritual lives, and even raising their kids. As a parish pastor, this book has been invaluable in understanding how to better understand people beyond and within my congregation, connect with how they make meaning, and support them in their spiritual lives. This is by far, for me, the best book on the subject of the Nones. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It's a book that centers the lived experiences of "nones" and not - like many works on the religiously unaffiliated - on an ...By Gillian M. Kratzer As a person who identifies as spiritually ambiguous, the respect with which Dr. Drescher treats the beliefs and practices of a wide range of "nones" is both refreshing and gratifying. She rightly points out that categorizing an entire group of people based solely on their lack of formal affiliation with an organized religion doesn't even really explain who we aren't, let alone who we are. It's a book that centers the lived experiences of "nones" and not - like many works on the religiously unaffiliated - on an external perspective that's more concerned with how we can be lured back to the flock. Dr. Drescher accomplishes all this in a writing style that's approachable and fun. I highly recommend this book.

To the dismay of religious leaders, study after study has shown a steady decline in affiliation and identification with traditional religions in America. By 2014, more than twenty percent of adults identified as unaffiliated--up more than seven percent just since 2007. Even more startling, more than thirty percent of those under the age of thirty now identify as "Nones"--answering "none" when queried about their religious affiliation. Is America losing its religion? Or, as more and more Americans choose different spiritual paths, are they changing what it means to be religious in the United States today? In *Choosing Our Religion*, Elizabeth Drescher explores the diverse, complex spiritual lives of Nones across generations and across categories of self-identification such as "Spiritual-But-Not-Religious," "Atheist," "Agnostic," "Humanist," "just Spiritual," and more. Drawing on more than one hundred interviews conducted across the United States, Drescher opens a window into the lives of a broad cross-section of Nones, diverse with respect to age, gender, race, sexual orientation, and prior religious background. She allows Nones to speak eloquently for themselves, illuminating the processes by which they became None, the sources of information and inspiration that enrich their spiritual lives, the practices they find spiritually meaningful, how prayer functions in spiritual lives not centered on doctrinal belief, how morals and values are shaped outside of institutional religions, and how Nones approach the spiritual development of their own children. These compelling stories are deeply revealing about how religion is changing in America--both for Nones and for the religiously affiliated family, friends, and neighbors with whom their lives remain intertwined.

"The 'Nones'-the religiously unaffiliated-popped into public consciousness a decade ago, and have attracted attention ever since. Yet they remain largely unknown and misunderstood, especially when viewed as indifferent to, if not hostile toward, religion. Drescher's research focuses not on who they aren't but on who they are-and she finds them a remarkably diverse and fluid segment of our society, some, of course, negative toward organized religion, but most trying to find meaning in life experience... A good and informative read." --Wade Clark Roof, J.F. Rowny Professor of Religion and Society Emeritus, University of California at Santa Barbara" As the rate of religious disaffiliation nears 25% of the American population, the importance of understanding the 'Nones'-from roving seekers to settled nonbelievers-has risen correspondingly. Drescher offers a splendidly variegated account of the religious practices and engagements that continue to flourish among the unaffiliated. The spiritual voices of the 'Nones' emerge with unusual clarity and resonance in these pages." --Leigh E. Schmidt, author of *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality From the Back Cover*" The 'Nones'--the religiously unaffiliated--popped into public consciousness a decade ago, and have attracted attention ever since. Yet they remain largely unknown and misunderstood, especially when viewed as indifferent to, if not hostile toward, religion. Drescher's research focuses not on who they aren't but on who they are--and she finds them a remarkably diverse and fluid segment of our society, some, of course, negative toward organized religion, but most trying to find meaning in life experience: by holding on to a strand of belief picked up from somewhere or self-constructed; in conversations with family members and others; by cultivating spirituality in ways that work for them; reading books on metaphysics and biographies; coping with the questions that children ask; and like all of us by contending with and being overwhelmed by the joys of life and the ultimate challenges of aging, illness, and death. A good and informative read." --Wade Clark Roof, J.F. Rowny Professor of Religion and Society Emeritus, University of California at Santa Barbara