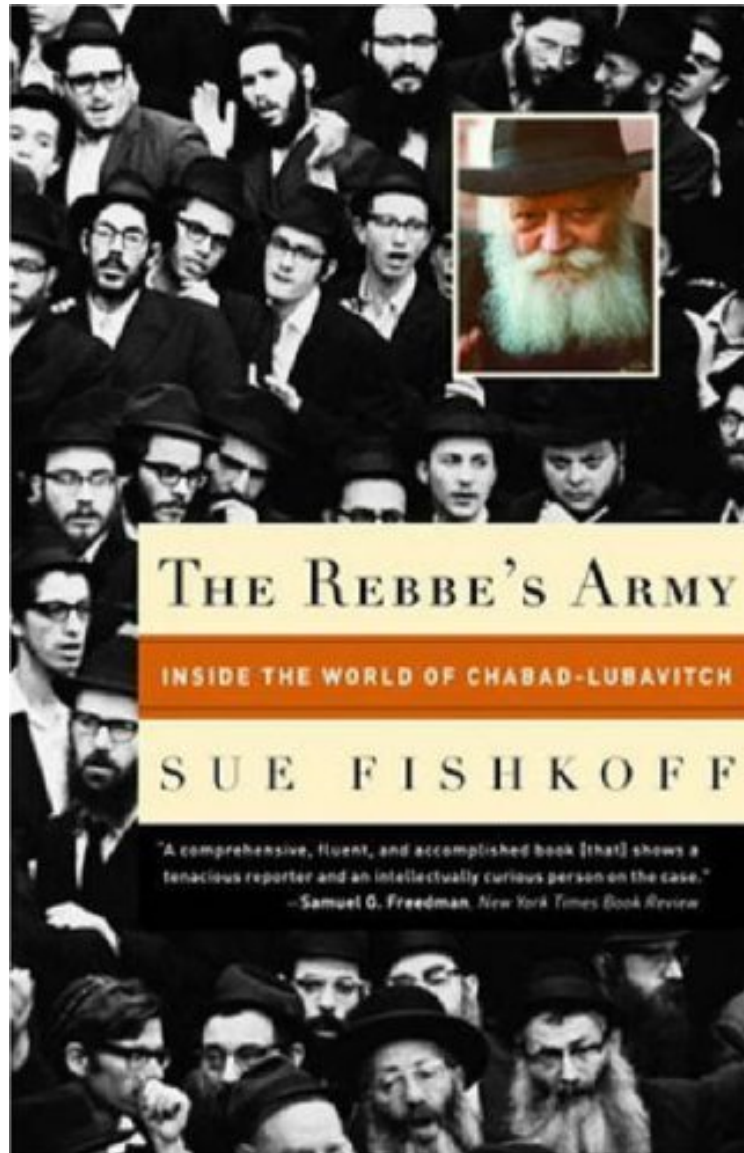


(Download ebook) The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch

## The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch

*Sue Fishkoff*

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**Sue Fishkoff : The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Chabad: A special place in the heart.By Manuel BlancoI read the review by "brooklynboy" and found it to be very negative and untrue. I consider it to be more of a personal attack on Chabad rather than a review. I have found "The Rebbe's Army" to be inspiring and a great insight to my almost lost

Jewish Heritage. I purchased this book after meeting Rabbi ShmuelFuss, his charming wife, Tzipora (also an awesome cook) and their young son Mendel. They were given my name and number from a mutual friend, they called, came over and the rest has changed my life in a very positive manner. Contrary to "brooklynboy's" review I have never heard a negative word from this Chabad Rabbi who I now consider it an honor to call "Friend" "Teacher." I will go further to say that if every leader of every country thought as the members of Chabad do or treat others as they do everyone they meet the world would be a much better place. The book written by a non-Orthodox Jew touches the hear and soul with her experiences and interviews. The book has depth and tells us of Chabad's determination dedication to reach teach Judaism to every Jew they meet. It has been very helpful with my weekly studies with Rabbi Fuss. Sue Fishkoff's book is "food for thought" and a must read for all Jews and those interested in learning about the Jewish faith.Sincerely Respectfully,Manuel (manny)Blancomasontruth@aol.com1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great religious iconBy D-UnitThe Rebbe continues to amaze3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Super Snapshot of the Lubavitch Jewish communityBy Dr. Marc AxelrodThis is a sympathetic snapshot of a Hasidic Jewish community in Crown Heights, a community within Brooklyn, New York. You learn about the history of Hasidic Judaism, but mostly about the distinctives of Chabad-Lubavitch. You learn about the seven rebbes that have led the movement through the years, including the seventh and final rebbe, Menacham Mendel Schneerson. He stated that he would be the last rebbe before the coming of the Messiah, and even though he died in 1994, a number of Lubavitchers think that Schneerson may someday return as the Messiah.Lubavitchers stres the importance of reaching other Jews and helping them to get back in touch with God and with their Jewishness. Although they steadfastly maintain that they are not trying to convert all Jews to their particular brand of Judaism, they nevertheless feel that the power of the rebbe is working through them as they convince male Jews to put on tefillin or to recite the Shema and the VieHaftah.It surprised me to discover that Lubavitch-Chabad believes in reincarnation, and that the Exodus generation must come back and fulfill the rest of the 613 commandments left undone before the Messiah can come.I was impressed to read about how many baal-teshuvah (Masters of repentance) there are in Chabad-Lubavitch. Many non-practicing Jews have embraced a Torah-true lifestyle and have converted to the movement.You will also read in this book about how the rebbe has inspired people to leave the comforts of New York for far off mission fields to inspire and guide small numbers of Jews in places like Anchorage, Alaska and Shanghai, China, and Gurnee, Illinois.I was also interested to read about the importance of the mikvah (the women's ritual cleansing center. The rebbe feels that this is so important that a Jewish community should be willing to sell its Torah scroll and its synagogue in order to build or renovate a mikvah if necessary. Why? Because a woman cannot be cleansed from her monthly flow unless she enters the mikvah, and they cannot have sex. I guess I can see why men would want to make sure that there is a mikvah nearby!There are some things about Chabad-Lubavitch that won't appeal to everyone: The excessive veneration of the rebbe, the unwillingness to read literature other than ultra-conservative Jewish literature, the separation of men and women in the synagogue, the lack of openness to the existence of a Palestinian state, the reluctance of Chabadniks to recognize no-Orthodox forms of Judaism, etc.But you will be impressed by the love and the sincerity of heart that Chabad-Lubavitchers display in their ministries to other Jews. You will also applaud their efforts at starting drug treatment centers and prison ministries that reach non-Jews on occasion as well.You will also marvel at the amount of money that non-Jews and liberal Jews give to the movement. This is a great look at a special group of people. Highly recommended.

Excuse me, are you Jewish? With these words, the relentlessly cheerful, ideologically driven emissaries of Chabad-Lubavitch approach perfect strangers on street corners throughout the world in their ongoing efforts to persuade their fellow Jews to live religiously observant lives. In *The Rebbes Army*, award-winning journalist Sue Fishkoff gives us the first behind-the-scenes look at this small Brooklyn-based group of Hasidim and the extraordinary lengths to which they take their mission of outreach. They seem to be everywhere in big cities, small towns, and suburbs throughout the United States, and in sixty-one countries around the world. They light giant Chanukah menorahs in public squares, run Chabad houses on college campuses from Berkeley to Cambridge, give weekly bible classes in the Capitol basement in Washington, D.C., run a nonsectarian drug treatment center in Los Angeles, sponsor the worlds biggest Passover Seder in Nepal, establish synagogues, Hebrew schools, and day-care centers in places that are often indifferent and occasionally hostile to their outreach efforts. They have built a billion-dollar international empire, with their own news service, publishing house, and hundreds of Websites.Who are these people? How successful are they in making Jews more observant? What influence does their late Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson (who some thought was the Messiah), continue to have on his followers? Fishkoff spent a year interviewing Lubavitch emissaries from Anchorage to Miami and has written an engaging and fair-minded account of a Hasidic group whose motives and methodology continue to be the subject of speculation and controversy.From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers WeeklyThis remarkable ethnographic profile goes behind the scenes of Lubavitcher Judaism to explore how the movement's enthusiastic young emissaries, or schlihim, carry the Rebbe's message throughout the world. Armed with pamphlets, Shabbos candles and the dream of making all Jews more observant, these idealistic

young married couples set up shop in unlikely locales like Peoria, Ill.; Anchorage, Ala.; or Salt Lake City, Utah. There they will tirelessly teach and fundraise-not just for a year or two, but for the rest of their lives. Fishkoff, a regular contributor to *Moment* and *The Jerusalem Post*, draws upon dozens of interviews with these schlihim, their supporters and their detractors. Traversing the country to do her research, she attended Shabbos dinners, mikvah demonstrations, Friday afternoon street proselytizing sessions and even a star-studded Chabad telethon in Los Angeles. (The telethon, Fishkoff rightly points out, is the perfect symbol for the way these Hasids have simultaneously eschewed and engaged with American culture, using technology to further their outreach.) Most interestingly, she includes interviews with Reform and Conservative Jews who, surprisingly enough, are often the chief financial backers of local Chabad initiatives. Though Fishkoff makes an effort to include some individuals' critiques of the movement, this is by no means an exposé; one leaves the book sharing her own tender admiration for the energetic dedication of the Rebbe's followers. Fishkoff writes robustly and engagingly, and her portrait of Chabad is not only profoundly respectful, but also poignant and full of joy. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist

Although most people have not heard of the Lubavitcher Hasid, a sect of Orthodox Jewry, many are familiar with the outreach programs the group runs, such as the Chabad Houses on college campuses. Their aim is to make Jews more observant, and their inspiration comes from their now-deceased rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, who some believed to be the long-awaited Messiah. Fishkoff, a newspaper reporter, explains that her book is neither a history of the movement nor an exposé. Her focus is on Chabad's outreach programs and what motivates the many emissaries who are trying to bring Jews back to their roots. Eminently readable, rather like a very long *New Yorker* piece, this perceptive account explains the movement by introducing those who are a part of it: the L.A. rabbi whose star-studded telethon garners millions of dollars each year; the young rabbi at Harvard whose Chabad House is surprisingly popular; the Hasidic couples who have traveled to such unlikely places as Salt Lake City and Alaska to establish a religious foothold. Mostly positive in her comments, but no apologist, Fishkoff will draw in readers of many religious persuasions. Ilene Cooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved

"Rich in telling anecdotes and thumbnail portraits, Fishkoff's narrative is infused with the sense of joy radiated by her subjects.... For both the serious and casual observer of Jewish life, this is valuable reading." --Sande Brawarsky, *The Jewish Week*

"The Rebbe's Army shows a tenacious reporter and an intellectually curious person on the case. Fishkoff has brought the scattered shlichim indelibly together on the page." --Samuel G. Freedman, *New York Times Book*

"With a critical but appreciative eye, Sue Fishkoff explains why so many secular people have such a warm spot in their hearts for the Chabad movement, and especially for its army of shaliachs. A wonderful book about a fascinating group of people. We can learn much both from the book and from the emissaries about whom she writes." --Alan Dershowitz

"Chasidism teaches its followers human warmth, which is superbly reflected in Sue Fishkoff's book." --Elie Wiesel

"The Rebbe's Army is a fascinating account of the Chabad movement and its emissaries. I read it with interest and recommend it highly." --Jon Voight

"The Rebbe's Army is an accurate, detailed portrait of the outreach efforts of Chabad, which has become a major movement in American Judaism. Fishkoff intimately chronicles the life and work of the husband-and-wife emissaries of the late Rebbe: specifically, their efforts to revive Jewish commitment throughout the world. She reveals their inner struggles--even crises--and brings to life the unbelievable sacrifices they make. While painting a sympathetic picture, she manages to capture accurately the tensions within the movement, the variety of reactions to it within the wider Jewish community, and the difficulties engendered by the Rebbe's passing, which Chabad is still working to overcome." -- Lawrence H. Schiffman, Chair, Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University

"Fishkoff's account of the lives of the thousands of emissaries of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe is reportage of the highest order. We are given the facts about this Jewish monastic-missionary movement but, more important, we are taken into the inner lives and commitments of its emissaries. Fishkoff makes us see and understand these passionate, caring, and loving people." -- Arthur Hertzberg, author of *A Jew in America: My Life and a People's Struggle for Identity*

"Sue Fishkoff has provided a clear view of Lubavitcher Hasidim that will explain their mysterious attraction to many who have encountered them. The Rebbe's Army resonates with the wonder and fascination that have marked the meetings between the marginally Jewish and these emissaries of the charismatic rabbi from Brooklyn. For those who want to see what the appeal of Lubavitcher life is, and what makes these Hasidim so dedicated to their mission, this book is a good place to start." -- Samuel Heilman, Professor of Jewish Studies and Sociology, CUNY, and author of *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry* From the Hardcover edition.