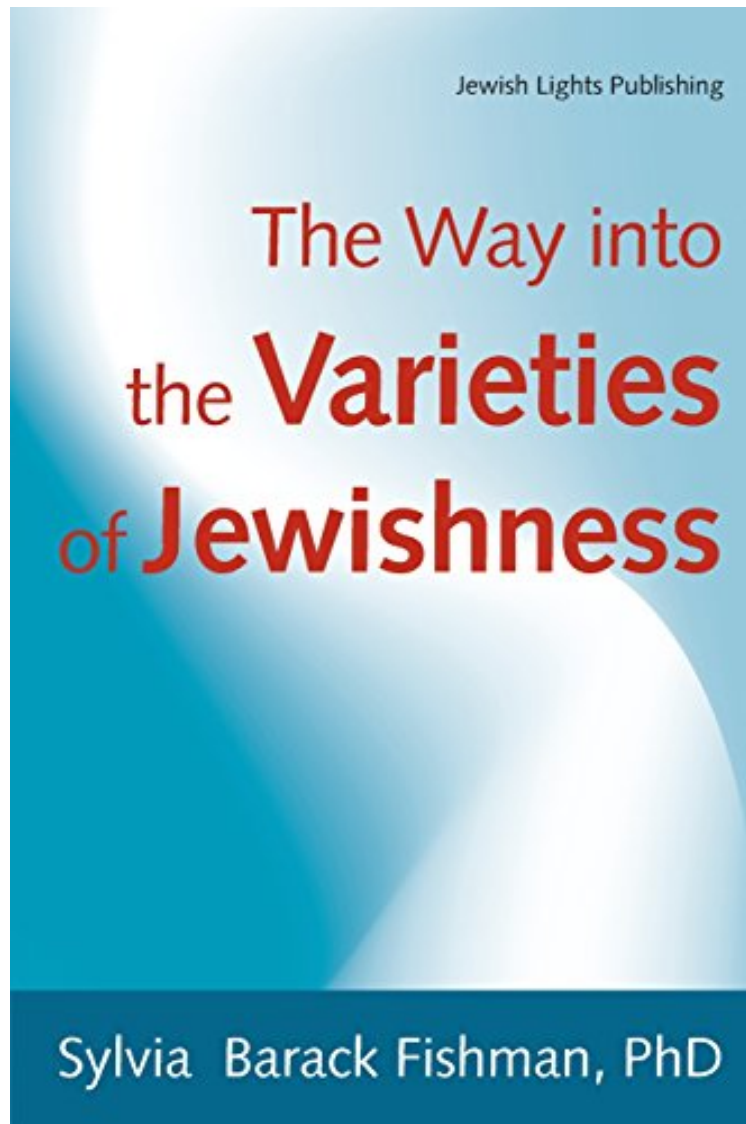


[Download ebook] The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness

The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness

Sylvia Barack Fishman

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Sylvia Barack Fishman : The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy scott j piresgood book prompt shippimhg0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy guaranteedWill buy again4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Conditions for Jewish Renaissance in AmericaBy David MittelbergJust when you were wondering what would be the book to send friends and family alike for the Holiday season, along comes a miraculous response to your

quest. This incredibly readable book offers us all, an insightful and sympathetic analysis of the historical roots of Judaism together with the many varieties of Jewishness that have unfolded in contemporary America. Tracing the continuum of diversity from biblical times through the 2000 years of diaspora life, Fishman explains how being Jewish and Jewish culture evolved in interaction with widely different cultures yielding diverse outcomes. Similarly, we are led through the story of American Jewry through the continuous development of the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Renewal and Secular movements, all of which contribute to the culture and ethnic capital of American Jews. Finally, Fishman offers an innovative typology of Jews by Choice together with a sensitive discussion of the challenges faced by conversionary households who themselves bring a new source of energy and commitment to American Jewry. Following the analysis of both the richness and comparative strengths and challenges of the different branches of American Jewishness, demonstrating how each in turn, has learned important lessons from the other, Fishman turns her critical eye to the horizon of the next generation of American Jews. In so doing, Fishman suggests an agenda for those seeking to sustain American Jewishness. The renaissance of Jewish life so vibrant in an important minority of American Jews reported by Fishman, needs to be linked to the less affected vast majority of American Jews. This may be attained by developing enhanced social networks, opportunities for informal and experiential youth and adult education as well as the structured experience of Jewish Peoplehood through engagement with other Jewish communities in Israel and worldwide. This is a book that is informed by the latest thinking of the American Jewish renaissance it describes, yet written in a language every American, Jew and non Jew alike, can both understand and identify with. This rare combination indeed, makes it a must for all your Holiday reading. David Mittelberg

An accessible introduction to the many ways Jews understand Jewishness and identify themselves and their communities throughout history and today. For everyone who wants to understand the varieties of Jewish identity, its boundaries and inclusions, this book explores the religious and historical understanding of what it has meant to be Jewish from ancient times to the present controversy over Who is a Jew? Beginning with the biblical period, it takes readers era by era through Jewish history to reveal who the Jewish community included and excluded, and discusses the fascinating range of historical conflicts that Jews have dealt with internally. It provides an understanding of how the Jewish people and faith developed, and of what the major religious differences are among Jewish movements today.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Anyone who's befuddled by the differences among Jewish communities will appreciate this marvelous primer by Brandeis University professor Fishman. Before turning to the many expressions of Judaism found in America, she devotes the first two chapters to a useful summary of the history of Judaism in the ancient world and in Europe. Then she examines contemporary Judaism's three main branches Reform, Conservative and Orthodox. Here she explores many fascinating trends, ranging from the rise of feminism in Modern Orthodox Judaism to the tensions between more and less observant Conservative Jews. Fishman also discusses Reconstructionist, Renewal and secular Judaism, and she spends an entire chapter on converts to Judaism ("Jews by choice"). Today's Jewish communities face challenges. Reform Judaism, for example, must balance some members' growing interest in traditional practices with the resistance of other congregants. Conservative Judaism struggles with self-definition and loses some members to Reform and Orthodox communities. But all in all, Fishman finds contemporary American Judaism having a renaissance, with more Jews of all stripes availing themselves of top-notch adult education and taking advantage of the constant publication of Jewish literature and scholarship. This is an excellent introduction to the diversity of Jewish life. (Dec.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Fishman writes in her cogent introduction to this highly approachable account that its primary purpose is to describe the historical emergence and development of the diverse ways that Jews today connect to their Jewishness. She highlights some significant and striking diversities of the Jewish experiences in earlier times and portrays the broad spectrum of contemporary American modes of Jewishness. Chapter 1 discusses some of the biblical narratives and draws on archaeologists' and historians' views of the Israelite tribes that established themselves in what became the ancient land of Israel. Chapter 2 follows the evolutions of what would become Sephardic and Ashkenazi varieties of Jewishness in medieval and Renaissance societies. Chapter 3 explores what Fishman describes as religious decentralization, secularization emancipation,^AB and the types of Jewish Enlightenments. The next four chapters comprise the book's major focus on the contemporary American form of Jewishness that evolved and developed in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Chapter 8 explores what Fishman labels the spiritual journeys of "Jews by choice," tracing Jewish attitudes toward conversion historically and in contemporary America. George Cohen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved About the Author Sylvia Barack Fishman, PhD, a well-known author of many articles and books including Double or Nothing? Jewish Families and Mixed Marriage and Jewish Life and American Culture, is professor of contemporary Jewish life at Brandeis University, and codirector of the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute. She speaks frequently at temples and Jewish

communal events as well as at academic conferences.