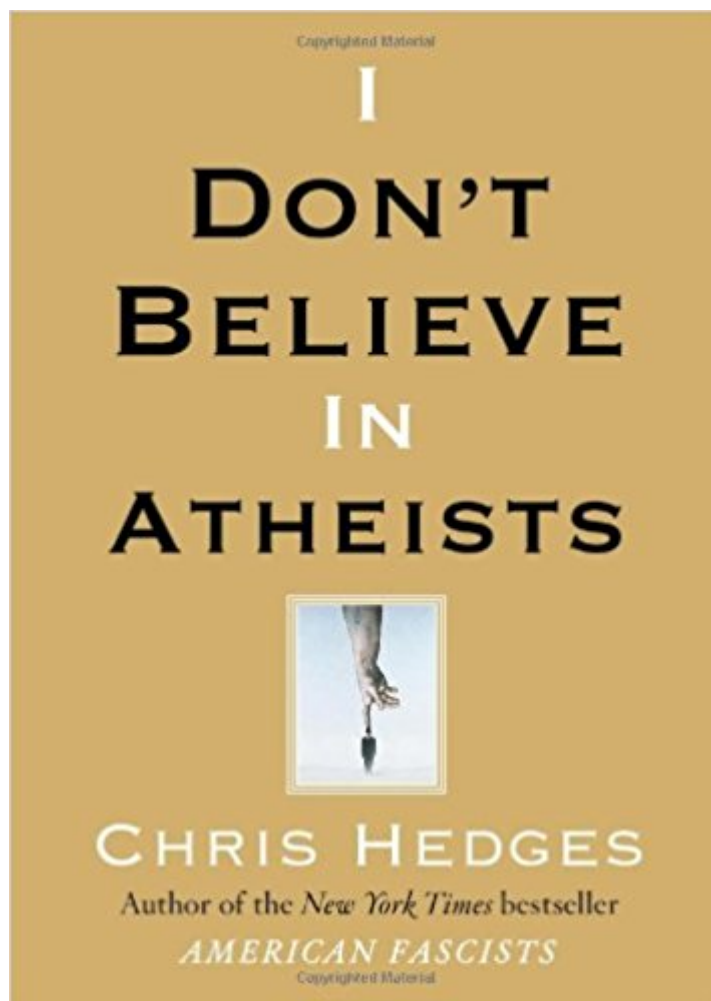


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I Don't Believe In Atheists



Synopsis

From the New York Times bestselling author of *American Fascists* and the NBCC finalist for *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* comes this timely and compelling work about new atheists: those who attack religion to advance the worst of global capitalism, intolerance and imperial projects. Chris Hedges, who graduated from seminary at Harvard Divinity School, has long been a courageous voice in a world where there are too few. He observes that there are two radical, polarized and dangerous sides to the debate on faith and religion in America: the fundamentalists who see religious faith as their prerogative, and the new atheists who brand all religious belief as irrational and dangerous. Both sides use faith to promote a radical agenda, while the religious majority, those with a commitment to tolerance and compassion as well as to their faith, are caught in the middle. The new atheists, led by Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris, do not make moral arguments about religion. Rather, they have created a new form of fundamentalism that attempts to permeate society with ideas about our own moral superiority and the omnipotence of human reason. *I Don't Believe in Atheists* critiques the radical mindset that rages against religion and faith. Hedges identifies the pillars of the new atheist belief system, revealing that the stringent rules and rigid traditions in place are as strict as those of any religious practice. Hedges claims that those who have placed blind faith in the morally neutral disciplines of reason and science create idols in their own image -- a sin for either side of the spectrum. He makes an impassioned, intelligent case against religious and secular fundamentalism, which seeks to divide the world into those worthy of moral and intellectual consideration and those who should be condemned, silenced and eradicated. Hedges shatters the new atheists' assault against religion in America, and in doing so, makes way for new, moderate voices to join the debate. This is a book that must be read to understand the state of the battle about faith. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review Hedges is clear from the outset: there is nothing inherently moral about being either a believer or a nonbeliever. He goes a step further by accusing atheists of being as intolerant, chauvinistic, bigoted, anti-intellectual, and self-righteous as their archrivals, religious fundamentalists; in other words, as being secular versions of the religious Right. Like best-selling atheists Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and Daniel Dennett, Hedges is disgusted with the Christian Right, going so far as to call it the most frightening mass movement in American history. Even more disturbing for Hedges, however, is the notion, which many atheists and liberal churchgoers share, that as a species humanity can progress morally. There is nothing in human nature or human history to support the idea, Hedges maintains, nor that the flaws of human nature will ever be overcome. He discusses the dark sides of the Enlightenment, Darwinism, consumer culture, the justifications for America's wars (including in Vietnam and now Iraq), and obsession with celebrity, among other equally hot topics. His purpose in this small, thought-provoking book is, he says, to help Americans, in particular, accept the limitations of being human and, ultimately, face reality. --June Sawyers

"Chris Hedges reminds us that the point of religion is not to make us disdain those who think differently but rather to help us become decent, responsive, and moral human beings." - 0, The Oprah Magazine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hedges, if I recall correctly began his career(?) as a young first time Presbyterian minister. His observations on the secular and ecclesial worlds are on point, in my view. The promise of science or religion have yet to be realized in this world, and considering the lovely state of affairs in the world at the beginning of the 21st century. wherein the evils of past centuries are revisited and improved upon, amelioration of humanity may remain an unattainable goal. Reading Hedges was balm upon my weary soul, who is tired of waiting for better days. Ich betete insbrÃ nstig fÃ r die ErlÃ ssung, und anstatt dessen bekam einen verspÃ teten FÃ hrer, einen rÃ mischen Kaiser, der zu alle Zeiten paÃ t--leider!

I am an atheist but felt and understand the need to be more open to the complex situation that is the human condition.

ONE OF HEDGES BETTER EFFORTS.

Finally!! Mr. Hedges analysis of contemporary atheism in North America is accurate and objective. This work destroys the present-day atheist thinkers' shallow and illogical premises that lead to nothing but commercial profits for them. May Chris Hedges clear critical thinking eliminate the pseudo-philosophical garbage that obstructs the way to Truth and human progress, Gonzalo T. Palacios, PhD

Interesting look into ethics and extremes in faith

After reading reviews of this book I was set back from ordering it. But then I read 6 other books by Chris Hedges, all of which were amazing. Based on the reviews I have to say it seems Hedges has angered a lot of atheists that didn't read the first 8 pages of this book. First of all Hedges acknowledges that the New Atheists he's talking about in this book do not represent the views of all Atheists and that atheists can be and often are just as moral as the next person. He also mentions that the new atheists are a group that has little to no power in this country. This book is an extension from debates he had with Hitches and Harris and other New Atheists. He discusses the dangers of fundamentalism in this book and how the ideas of Hitchens, Harris, and the New Atheist, if they were to go mainstream and powerful, are just as dangerous as views from Christian Right extremists that he discusses in his book American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America. A simple example of this correlation between the 2 fundamentalist groups is this- Both Chris Hitchens, a new atheist, and Pat Robertson, a christian extremist, support war in the name of annihilation, such as the war in Iraq.

Hedges is great. A Spiritual Autopsy of Science and Religion is a totally different, and fantastic look at the excesses of atheist thought - from an atheist!

Chris Hedges, in his 2007 book, "I Don't Believe in Atheists," faults "new atheists" Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and others with utopianism, which he describes as a

dangerous legacy of both the Christian faith and the Enlightenment. Historically, utopian ideologies have often called for the eradication or silencing of those whom they perceive as impediments to human progress. The book's title reminds me of a scene from an Italian comedy of the early sixties. A young police officer is idling in the office of his superior and begins gazing at a map of Italy pinned to the wall. Then he places his hand over the island of Sicily and tilts his head dreamily as if imagining what Italy would be like if Sicily did not exist. A smile spreads over his face. Hedges' title is puzzling. Certainly, he could not be analogizing with the expression, "I don't believe in God," though he is clearly evoking it. Atheists do exist, after all. And why "atheists" rather than "atheism?" Why emphasize personalities rather than ideas? The answer to that question may lie in the psychological dynamics of confrontation. After all, the book was written very soon after Hedges' much-publicized debate with Sam Harris at UCLA in May of 2007, and his debate with Christopher Hitchens in San Francisco shortly thereafter. This book has the flavor of "Things I wish I had said." Even more puzzling is that the book is not about atheism so much as it is about utopianism. The two are not synonymous, after all, though Hedges treats them as though they were. Hedges suggests that both Christianity and Enlightenment atheism spawned utopianism. I wonder if he considered for a moment that utopianism may have spawned some of the worst aspects of both.

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