



Agnostic A Spirited Manifesto

LESLEY HAZLETON

Agnostic: A Spirited Manifesto

By Lesley Hazleton

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“Vital” –*The New York Times Book Review*

“Provocative...[Hazleton] paddles the river of doubt with energy and exuberance.” –*The Seattle Times*

A widely admired writer on religion celebrates agnosticism as the most vibrant, engaging—and ultimately the most honest—stance toward the mysteries of existence.

One in four Americans reject any affiliation with organized religion, and nearly half of those under thirty describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious.” But as the airwaves resound with the haranguing of preachers and pundits, who speaks for the millions who find no joy in whittling the wonder of existence to a simple yes/no choice?

Lesley Hazleton does. In this provocative, brilliant book, she gives voice to the case for agnosticism, breaks it free of its stereotypes as watered-down atheism or amorphous “seeking,” and celebrates it as a reasoned, revealing, and sustaining stance toward life. Stepping over the lines imposed by rigid conviction, she draws on philosophy, theology, psychology, science, and more to explore, with curiosity and passion, the vital role of mystery in a deceptively information-rich world; to ask what we mean by the search for meaning; to invoke the humbling yet elating perspective of infinity; to challenge received ideas about death; and to reconsider what “the soul” might be. Inspired and inspiring, *Agnostic* recasts the question of belief not as a problem to be solved but as an invitation to an ongoing, open-ended adventure of the mind.



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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *Agnostic*:

"In Hazleton's vital, mischievous new book, the term [agnostic] represents a positive orientation towards life all its own, one that embraces both science and mystery, and values the immediate joys of life...In each of her wide-ranging reflections....she remains intimately grounded and engaged in our human, day-to-day life."
--*New York Times Book Review*

"A beautiful, inquisitive, energetic 200-page tribute to uncertainty... that's about 50 times as charming as anything Sam Harris has ever written and 500 times more inspiring than any of Joel Osteen's books...You might give yourself windburn turning these pages." --*Seattle Review of Books*

"Provocative...[Hazleton] paddles the river of doubt with energy and exuberance." --*Seattle Times*

"Hazleton makes a compelling case for why agnosticism matters, and sets out a comprehensive and thought-provoking definition of what it means. It's a powerful and deeply humanistic argument, told deftly through these pages." --*Vol. 1 Brooklyn*

"The title of Hazleton's "manifesto" on agnosticism is not a contradiction: she imbues the middle ground between belief and non-belief with spirit by showing that agnosticism itself is a disposition in favor of intellectual and emotional dexterity. A book that should be read as much by the believer (the religious or atheist) as anyone else." --*Flavorwire*, "A Must Read"

"A heady romp through the mind of an intellectual adventurer who relishes curiosity and questioning over the dubious comforts of dogma and certainty." --*Seattle Met*

"To be agnostic is not to sidestep the question of belief, for Hazleton, or to commit to a wishy-washy moral framework. It is instead to have enough backbone to stand firm in the liminality of uncertainty. She wants readers to give agnosticism a fair shake, and many will be convinced by her appealing voice and accessible prose." --*Publisher's Weekly* (starred)

"Here, with clever elucidation, are artful essays that celebrate the wonder of the unknown... Hazleton does not deny possibilities; she denies only assured and implacable dogma." --*Kirkus Reviews*

"Personably persuasive ... Informed by science, philosophy, literature, history, travel, hiking, and more, Hazleton's manifesto makes the suspension of conviction as attractive as any theist or atheist testament."
--*Booklist*

"At last, a liberating antidote to the either/or thinking of the atheist/believer debate. Hazleton makes an impassioned and persuasive case for the insights – and joys – to be gained from a stance of not-knowing."
--Reza Aslan, author of *Zealot and No God but God*

"It's a fraught enterprise to take on the big questions--God, meaning, mortality, existence--but Hazleton has done it here with remarkable aplomb, and in a singular voice devoid of pretension. Her manifesto is, for me, a celebration--a welcome infusion of joy in an arena preponderantly inhabited by dogmatists." --David

Guterson, author of *Snow Falling on Cedars*

“As a rabbi whose search for religious meaning is constantly renewed by doubt, I loved Lesley Hazleton's book. It is vibrant, challenging, extremely interesting, funny and profound. It is wise in its embrace of paradox, mystery and science.”

--Rabbi Rachel Cowan, Former Director of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality

Praise for *The First Muslim*:

“*The First Muslim* succeeds. It makes its subject vivid and immediate.” —Hari Kunzru, *The New York Times Book Review*

“Richly detailed and beautifully written . . . [Hazleton] is able to do with words what is almost never attempted in pictures . . . indispensable.” —*The Seattle Times*

“Like her subject, Hazleton brilliantly navigates ‘the vast and often terrifying arena in which politics and religion intersect,’ revealing the deep humanity of faith.” —*More*

“*The First Muslim* finds the human in the sacred.” —*The Stranger*

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Lesley Hazleton is an award-winning writer whose work focuses on the intersection of religion, history, and politics. She reported on the Middle East from Jerusalem for more than a dozen years, and has written for *Time*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Harper's*, *The Nation*, and *The New Republic*, among others. Her book *After the Prophet* was a finalist for a PEN Center USA Literary Award, and she is the recipient of *The Stranger*'s Genius in Literature Award. Hazleton lives in Seattle.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Harris:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their reader with their story or their experience. Not only the story that share in the books. But also they write about the data about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write to their book. One of them is this *Agnostic: A Spirited Manifesto*.

Maureen Bonds:

People live in this new day of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the extra time or they will get lot of stress from both day to day life and work. So , once we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely indeed. People is human not just a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, typically the book you have read is *Agnostic: A Spirited Manifesto*.

Deborah Lacey:

Are you kind of stressful person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your day time to upgrading your mind skill or thinking skill also analytical thinking? Then you have problem with the book in comparison with can satisfy your short space of time to read it because all this time you only find publication that need more time to be learn. *Agnostic: A Spirited Manifesto* can be your answer given it can be read by a person who have those short extra time problems.

Deon Henderson:

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