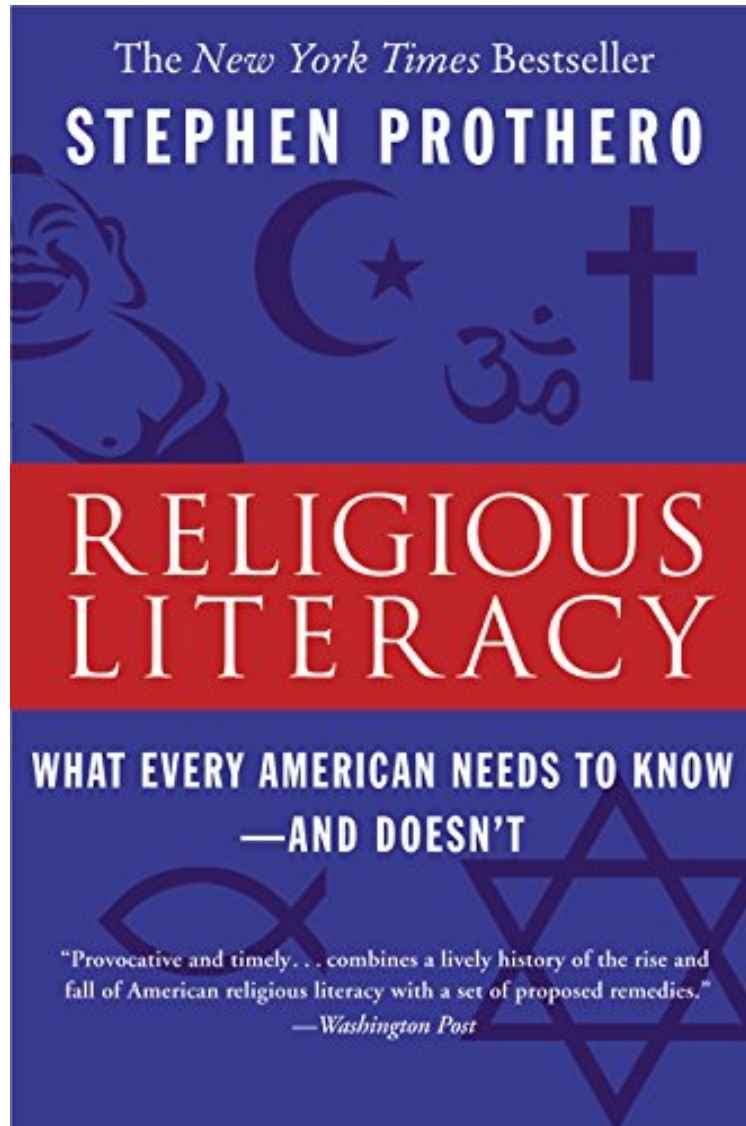


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Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know--And Doesn't

Stephen Prothero

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#236145 in Books Stephen Prothero 2008-03-11 2008-03-11 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .86 x 5.311, .62 #File Name: 0060859520371 pages ISBN13: 9780060859527 Condition: New Notes: BRAND NEW FROM PUBLISHER! 100% Satisfaction Guarantee. Tracking provided on most orders. Buy with Confidence! Millions of books sold! | File size: 53.Mb

Stephen Prothero : Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know--And Doesn't before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know--And Doesn't:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Minimum Religious Literacy By kthdimension Both readers that are religiously literate and illiterate will benefit from this book. For those that are illiterate, Dr. Prothero outlines and defines what he considers to be essential religious knowledge following a lengthy discourse on *why* religious knowledge is essential. For the religiously literate, however, his discussion of how religious education has evolved (devolved?) in America as well as its current slide toward being more emotional and less intellectual will motivate you to re-review his religious glossary. I grew up in a non-religious home so I count myself among those with a sub-par religious literacy and, as such, found the breadth and depth of this book spot on. Regardless of your religious literacy, however, you'll likely agree that "Americans' knowledge of religion runs as shallow as Americans' commitment to religion runs deep" (pp. 26) -- this book is a first step in the direction back toward generalized religious literacy.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Another good buy from By Patte Another good buy from .com! This site always has what I'm looking for and I'm a very happy customer. You will be too.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good News By bethie For me, the first part was preaching to the choir. Yes, indeed we so need to understand the beliefs of others. The definitions were so good that instead of passing the book to someone else, I bought the book for others and intend to keep my copy as a reference.

The United States is one of the most religious places on earth, but it is also a nation of shocking religious illiteracy. Only 10 percent of American teenagers can name all five major world religions and 15 percent cannot name any. Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe that the Bible holds the answers to all or most of life's basic questions, yet only half of American adults can name even one of the four gospels and most Americans cannot name the first book of the Bible. Despite this lack of basic knowledge, politicians and pundits continue to root public policy arguments in religious rhetoric whose meanings are missed or misinterpreted by the vast majority of Americans. "We have a major civic problem on our hands," says religion scholar Stephen Prothero. He makes the provocative case that to remedy this problem, we should return to teaching religion in the public schools. Alongside "reading, writing, and arithmetic," religion ought to become the "Fourth R" of American education. Many believe that America's descent into religious illiteracy was the doing of activist judges and secularists hell-bent on banishing religion from the public square. Prothero reveals that this is a profound misunderstanding. "In one of the great ironies of American religious history," Prothero writes, "it was the nation's most fervent people of faith who steered us down the road to religious illiteracy. Just how that happened is one of the stories this book has to tell." Prothero avoids the trap of religious relativism by addressing both the core tenets of the world's major religions and the real differences among them. Complete with a dictionary of the key beliefs, characters, and stories of Christianity, Islam, and other religions, *Religious Literacy* reveals what every American needs to know in order to confront the domestic and foreign challenges facing this country today.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . For a nation brimming with religion, Prothero wants to know why so many people lack genuine knowledge about their religion as well as others. Believing that American culture seriously lacks knowledge about the fundamentals of most world religions, he argues that schools need to teach classes that legitimately explore all world religions. In the tradition of E.D. Hirsch, he provides a collection of quintessential terms that define the current religious landscape. While the dominant presence of Christianity may cause resentment among secularists, the author is fairly objective in his discussion and justification for such reliance on Christianity. In terms of sound quality, the editors missed several vocal shifts, points where the author begins reading a new sentence in a distinctively different voice than the previous sentence. As narrator, Prothero proves competent but not entirely compelling. His pacing and emphasis certainly work well with his material, but his soft voice and relaxed tone leave something to be desired. Though these are his own written words, he doesn't command the text in the way one would expect.

From Booklist *Starred* The author of *I[^] American Jesus* (2003) opens this important book with a paradox. To wit, Americans are deeply religious *I[^]* and profoundly ignorant about religion; that is, one of the most religious countries is also a nation of "religious illiterates." Prothero calls religious illiteracy dangerous because religion is one of the greatest forces for good--as well as evil--in the world. Nowadays, standing on shaky religious ground can be literally a matter of life and death. To cite two brief examples of America's religious illiteracy: only half of American adults can name one of the four Gospels, and 10 percent of Americans believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Prothero defines religious literacy--what it is, and what it is not. He also discusses the two great religious revivals in U.S. history, the Second Great Awakening of the nineteenth century and the postwar revival of the 1940s and 1950s. He argues both the constitutionality and the necessity of teaching--with an emphasis on spreading knowledge, not inculcating values--about religion in public schools and higher education. He suggests that every U.S. public high school should require a course on the Bible and another on the religions of the world. And he devotes an entire chapter to "a modest list" of a hundred or so religious terms that he deems essential, from *I[^]* Abraham to *I[^]* Zionism, to any American's religious knowledge. A must-read on its subject. June Sawyers Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved This book is a must-read not only for educators, clergy and government officials, but for all adults. (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) Smart but gentle, loving but blunt, Prothero is uniquely qualified to guide us

through the fraught fields of faith. (Bruce Feiler, author of *Walking the Bible and Where God Was Born*) A compelling, provocative, wholly innovative historical interpretation of the place of learning in American religious life. I love this book! (Lauren F. Winner, author of *Girl Meets God and Real Sex*) Provocative and timely . . . Combines a lively history with a set of proposed remedies. (Washington Post Book World) Remarkable...an especially deft examination of the reasons for Americans religious literacy. (Washington Monthly) Religious Literacy presents a compelling argument for Bible-literacy courses. (Time magazine) Prothero makes you want to go back to college ... a scholar with the soul of a late-night television comic. (Newsweek) Compelling and persuasively presented . . . a critical addition to the debate about teaching religion in public school. (San Francisco Chronicle) Prothero's book can be recommended for its readability. It is constantly interesting, very well-written, and chock full of essential information about all religions. This could be one of the most important books to be published this year. It deserves serious attention. (Journal of American Culture)