

Book Buzz

With Carolyn Larson

Head Librarian at Lihue Public Library

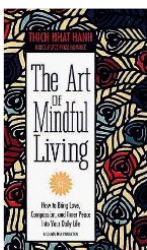
Bringing you the buzz on new, popular and good books available at your neighborhood library.

Book annotations are culled from online publishers' descriptions and published reviews.

BOOKS OF SPIRIT – December 2, 2009 Column

December is Spiritual Literacy month. Throughout the ages, the scriptures of most religions have proclaimed that humanity is one great family. And the collected wisdom of the world's religions shows the oneness of the human spirit confirming that our differences are superficial and our similarities are deep. As guardians of access to information in a democratic society, public libraries strive to make information from all points of view available at libraries. Book Buzz this week features a sampling of books of the spirit available at your neighborhood library. Whether you seek to understand other religions or you desire to further your own spiritual life, your public library makes a range of materials available.

Happy Reading!

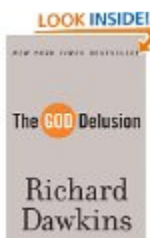


The Art of Mindful Living

By Thich Nhat Hanh

294.3 Ha

The Zen meditation master and Nobel Peace Prize nominee offers his practical teachings about how to bring love and mindful awareness into our daily experience. Try also Nhat Hanh's **Living Buddha, Living Christ**. For more on Buddhism look for **The Way to Freedom: Core Teachings of Tibetan Buddhism** by the Dalai Lama and **Essential Zen**, a collection of writings edited by Kazuaki Tanahashi.



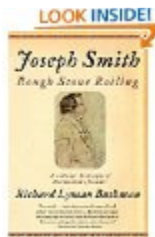
The God Delusion

By Richard Dawkins

211.8 Da

In this provocative book the author, scientist and outspoken atheist argues the improbability of the existence of a supreme being and makes a compelling case that faith is not just irrational but potentially deadly. Along the same lines is **God, The Failed Hypothesis** by Richard J. Stenger.

For excerpts on the subject of religion from other notable non-believers such as Mark Twain and Albert Einstein try **The Portable Atheist** compiled by Christopher Hitchens.

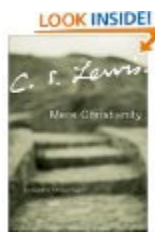


Joseph Smith: A Rough Stone Rolling

by Richard L. Bushman.

289.3 Bu

This book, an updated and expanded version of his earlier **Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism** presents an in-depth look at the Smith family, the start of the Mormon religion, and some of its early doctrines and foundations. Look also for **Faith: The Essence of True Religion** by Gordon B. Hinckley, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.



Mere Christianity

By C.S. Lewis

230 L

This classic volume is the compilation of three of the author's popular works: **The Case for Christianity**, **Christian Behaviour** and **Beyond Personality** whose purpose is to prove that at the center of all denominations there is a something or a Someone who against all divergences of belief and all differences of temperament speaks with the same voice; the central core of agreement that is "mere" Christianity. Also look for **The Wide Wide Circle of Divine Love: The Biblical Case for Religious Diversity** by W. Eugene March.



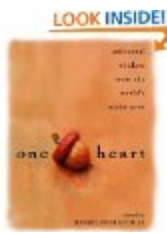
No God but God: The Origins, Evolutions and Future of Islam

By Reza Aslan

297 As

In this very readable introduction to Islam, the author charts the growth of Islam from Muhammad's model community in Medina—depicted as a center of egalitarian social reform—through the chaotic contest to define the faith after the Prophet's death. Fifteen centuries after

Muhammad, Islam has reached the age at which Christianity underwent its reformation. However, both modernizers and their "fundamentalist" opposites call themselves reformers, and the victory of the former is not assured. For the Muslim experience try out **Being Muslim** by Haroon Siddiqui.



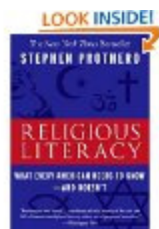
One Heart

Universal Wisdom from the World's Scriptures

Edited by Bonnie Louise Kuchler

204.32

Choosing to look at similarities rather than differences, the author turns to the scriptures of many faiths to find compassion, acceptance, humility, integrity, faith, wisdom, discipline and surrender. She illustrates the shared teachings of seven faiths: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Taoism. This is a light yet profound read. See also **Welcome to the Wisdom of the World and its Meaning to You: Universal Spiritual Insights Distilled from Five Religious Traditions** by Joan Chittister and **How to Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries** by Deepak Chopra.



Religious Literacy

What Every American Needs to Know and Doesn't

By Stephen R. Prothero

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Author Prothero reveals that Americans are both deeply religious and profoundly ignorant about religion. He proposes that such ignorance is perilous because religion "is the most volatile constituent of culture." He traces the surprising historic roots of this ignorance and prescribes concrete solutions that address religious education while preserving First Amendment boundaries about religion in the public square. See also **The Essence of World Religions: Unity in Diversity** compiled by Pravin K. Sha.



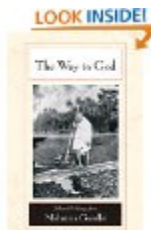
This I Believe (Volumes I and II):

Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women

Edited by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman

170.44 Th

These books are based on the 2005 NPR renaissance of a 1950s radio show of the same name and capture the best essays from *This I Believe* then and now. **The Book of Dead Philosophers** by Simon Critchley sketches the deaths of philosophers. And in chronologically surveying the philosophers he provides a sweep through the history of philosophy itself.

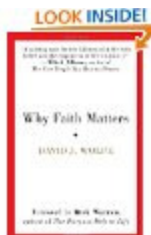


The Way to God

Selected Writings from Mahatma Gandhi

294.544 Ga

Gandhi became famous as the leader of the Indian independence movement, but his enduring significance as a spiritual leader whose ideas offer insight and solace to seekers of every practice and persuasion is demonstrated in this collection of his writings—his intellectual, moral, and spiritual approaches to the divine. For a primer on Hinduism try **Introducing Hinduism** by Vinay Lal. Or try the more recently published **The Vedanta Way to Peace and Happiness** by Swami Adiswarananda.

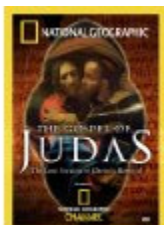


Why Faith Matters

By Rabbi David J. Wolpe

200 Wo

The author of this book takes readers through the origins and nature of religion and shows how faith traditions don't offer easy simplistic answers for the intellectually weak but sparks believers to ask even more difficult questions. Noted religious scholar Karen Armstrong writes a similar book in **The Case for God**. And in **The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief** author Francis S. Collins rebuts Dawkins' arguments in *The God Delusion*.



For DVD films and documentaries try **Deliver Us from Evil**, **The Four Noble Truths**, **The Gospel of Judas**, **Inside Mecca**, **An Introduction to Scientology**, **Jesus Camp**, **The Mormons**, **The Nativity Story**, **The Passion of Christ**, **Religulous**, or **Twist of Faith**.