

The Handy Religion Answer Book (The Handy Answer Book Series)

By John Renard

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Providing detailed descriptions of the beliefs, rituals, history, and organization of the world's eight major religious traditions, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto, this fully revised and updated edition is an easytouse comparative guide for anyone seeking basic religious literacy. Clearly and eloquently written by a scholar with more than 40 years of study and teaching experience, The Handy Religion Answer Book is organized into chapters on each major religion and contains a wealth of information about their history, beliefs, symbols, membership, leaders, observances, and customs. The reference answers more than 800 questions, such as What is the significance of the Star of David? How did so many different Christian churches come into being? What is the importance of the month of Ramadan? What is an Ayatollah? and Do Taoists believe in heaven and hell?, as well as new questions concerning religion and violence and suborganizations that claim affiliation with the major faith communities. A glossary of religious terminology, maps of the general coverage areas for each religion, and suggestions for further reading are also included.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 9 Up-Concise and accessible, this book for lay readers provides elemental, balanced coverage of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism and CCT (Chinese Community Traditions), Shinto, and Confucianism. The author uses a question-and-answer format, with each question appearing in large, bold font, making browsing for a particular topic a breeze. The answers describe history, beliefs, signs and symbols, leadership roles, holidays and other regular observances, and customs and rituals, dispelling stereotypes in the process. Non-English words appear in italics and are defined within the sentence. Updates from the 2001 edition include combining some entries and making room for updated coverage by removing tangential questions. Occasional black-and-white photographs adequately supplement the text, but are otherwise unremarkable. All considered, this is an outstanding resource for those with a general interest in major religions of the modern world.-Jennifer Prince, Buncombe County Public Library, NCα(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Review

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"Renard...has produced a book that is inviting to sit down and read through chapter by chapter."— *St. Louis Post - Dispatch*

About the Author

John Renard, PhD, is a professor in the department of theological studies at Saint Louis University. He is the author of several books, including "Friends of God: Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment, and Servanthood"; "Islam and Christianity: Theological Themes in Comparative Perspective"; and "Tales of God's Friends: Islamic Hagiography in Translation." He lives in St. Louis, Missouri.

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