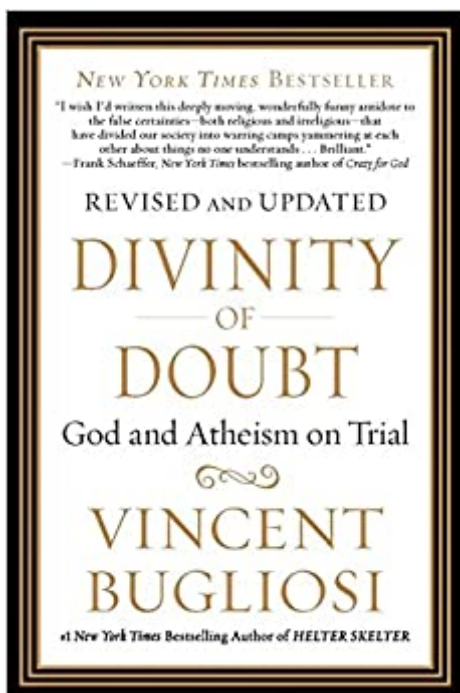


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Divinity Of Doubt: God And Atheism On Trial



Synopsis

In this controversial New York Times bestseller, Vincent Bugliosi, the fearless attorney who prosecuted Charles Manson, turns his critical eye on both religious believers and the atheists, indicting both camps for the intellectual shortcuts each takes to arrive at their conclusions. He argues lucidly and persuasively why agnosticism-and a healthy skepticism toward certainty of all kinds-is the most responsible position to take with regard to the existence of God. *Divinity of Doubt* sets a new course amid the explosion of bestselling books on religion, urging us to recognize the limits of what we know, and what we cannot know, about the ineffable mysteries of existence.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The question of the existence of God has captured the imaginations of pundits and pedants around the world. On one side are the theists, the believers. On the other side are the atheists, the ardent unbelievers. Bugliosi finds himself in a third category -- the agnostic, one who admits that he doesn't know if God exists, and may even insist that it isn't possible to know if there is a God. The author is a well-known attorney as well as a writer, whose best-known book, *Helter Skelter*, documented the horrific Charles Manson murders. He turns his attention here to a broad and often biting study of the proponents, and opponents, of Godism. He addresses some of the oldest questions in Christendom -- the problem of evil, the sometimes contradictory accounts of sacred events, etc. -- and sees no inevitability of a God in any of the answers proposed by even the best scholars. He ends his thoughts with a simple "God should only be a question." Sometimes pedantic but always eloquent, this is a fascinating read. (Apr.) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"I wish I'd written this deeply moving antidote to the false certainties--both religious and irreligious--that have divided our society into warring camps yammering at each other about things no one understands."--Frank Schaeffer, "New York Times" bestselling author of "Crazy for God""I found myself following my wife around the house reading passages of Bugliosi's book to her out loud. I wish I'd written this wonderfully funny deeply moving antidote to the false certainties -- both religious and irreligious -- that have divided our society into warring camps yammering at each other about things no one understands."--Frank Schaeffer "New York Times" bestselling author of "Crazy for God: How I Grew Up as One of the Elect, Helped Found the Religious Right, and Lived to Take All (or Almost All) of It Back" "Always eloquent, this is a fascinating read." --"Publishers Weekly" "Bugliosi's arguments, while familiar, are well-reasoned, clearly presented, and provide a good introductory survey of the theist-versus-atheist-versus-agnostic debate." --Booklist

Overall, this book was absolutely phenomenal. I feel Bugliosi does an extraordinary job at examining various aspects of religion and atheism while presenting logical arguments and explanations throughout the book. I ended up giving it 4 stars for reasons explained below. I think Bugliosi hits the nail on the head when talking about philosophical evidence and a very solid thought process to establish significant doubt on all ends of the spectrum; thus justifying the title of this book. I think the read, as a whole, was, while being a bit wordy at times (as are many philosophical texts), very brilliant. I think he manages to address the major points of religious debate in a very precise fashion and presents it in a way that the reader can understand. This being said, as many have written here, my one critique of the book is his lack of scientific knowledge. Granted, as others have demonstrated, he clearly says he does not understand, nor attempt to masquerade around as though he understands, the science pertaining to religious debates. However, herein lies the problem with presenting this argument and opening the so-called "Pandora's Box." Entire disciplines of science cover the topic of evolution, which is not a simple concept that can be accurately portrayed over the course of dinner or some short period of time. It proves even difficult to broadly skim over the subject, as a whole, over the course of a semester in a graduate level class. This would be even more difficult to describe to an individual with admittedly minimal scientific knowledge. For example, say I were to debate Einstein's Theory of Relativity. I would feel entirely inadequate to even address the complex issue of Relativity (ie. Evolution) if I did not have the grasp Algebra (equivalent to basic scientific knowledge), much less Calculus (in this case, biochemistry and biology). In addition to this, as stated, his logic is very sound. Logical analysis of theology is

simply that, examination of the written word and interpreting the written and implied word as best as possible while practicing critical thinking and maintaining a sound, observable train of thought. When we talk about science, it becomes incredibly difficult to dispute (or in his case, essentially omit) evidentiary support and maintain a degree of logic in the discussion. Again, back to the Relativity issue, I may dispute that E does in fact equal mc^2 because I do not think that it is equal to the constant of light squared, that the concept of this exponential relationship does not make any logical sense to me. However, the explanation of this phenomenon is demonstrated through a degree of high mathematical calculations that even brilliant mathematicians would have difficulty coining on their own. Ok, I'm realizing this is getting pretty damn long, so to cut it short... Great book. Great read. Definitely support the author's train of thought. Really, really, really wish he had educated himself more on the scientific issues... Had he done that, it would have been a 5 star review, without a doubt.

I found it a tiny bit difficult to read because Vincent Bugliosi is smarter than I am. As a former prosecutor he pretty much cements his opinions with undisputable facts. I have to say I was completely hoping it would go the other way from the way it did. Anyone questioning their religious beliefs, be they Christian, Protestant, Born-Again Christians, Atheists, Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Agnostics are included. It is a truly researched book. I found it entertaining enough to even read the footnotes. :-)

Vincent Bugliosi does a proper courtroom analysis of the "reality of god" as outlined in the old and new testaments and concludes that if "he exists" the good books do a lousy job of making the case. However atheists don't altogether convince Bugliosi that they have incontrovertible evidence that "he" does not. Being an agnostic he claims is the proper position at least for him. God may or may not exist but "he" gets no help in convincing any body with a brain from what is written in scriptures. As Bugliosi points out, Gertrude Stein wrote "There ain't no answer. There ain't going to be any answer. There never has been an answer. That's the answer."

In the preface Bugliosi writes: "But if at the end of this book, you didn't find several (and hopefully many more) fresh insights that caused you to say to yourself, 'Hey, I never thought of this before, not only will I be surprised, but more importantly. I will feel I had no business letting trees be cut down to print this book.' " In my opinion, he had no business letting trees be cut down. The style he brings, that of a prosecuting attorney is novel and some fun. But, to this reader, he says nothing

new.

Bugliosi's take on matters of faith were thought provoking, although his style was occasionally a bit bipolar as he seemed to play devil's advocate for one or both opposing positions. In all, I enjoyed the book and his writing style, as it allows the reader to experience his various perspectives and draw his or her own conclusions.

I agree with others who criticized his books. Written by a lawyer as a brief, not researched as would be done by a good writer with supporting facts. It is one sided, his opinions.

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