FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥

The Ways of an Atheist

Bernard Katz
Prometheus Books (February 1999)
Unknown $18.98 (152pp)
978-1-57392-273-9

Bernard Katz, senior editor at The American Rationalist and a popular essayist for The Truth Seeker, devotes time, space and energy telling readers what is known to almost anyone who has thoughtfully studied religion: God has done bad things, much of the symbolism and many of the practices of the Christian church are rooted in paganism, that intolerant acts and killing have been carried out in the name of religion and theology has sought to dominate science.

Katz divides his study into the following sections: What About God; Religion and Mental Illness; Archeology and the Bible; Jesus: Warts and All; The Meaning of Christian Symbols; Jews, Catholics and Fundamentalist Protestants; Science Versus Religion; and finally, Secular Humanism in which he does a mea culpa for having been a secular humanist himself.

In all these sections, Katz is predictable and adds only a limited amount to the believer versus non-believer dialogue. Most distressing is his failure to provide a sound reason to be a non-believer. The main problem here is that Katz is reactive rather than proactive. The title suggests that we are about to read a thoughtful book about atheism. For example, one might expect to find discussions of why one becomes an atheist and how, perhaps, the world might be better if it were dominated by atheist thought. Instead we get a screed against organized religion.

The Way of an Atheist adds little to a serious discussion of religion. The tone of the book is condescending and chatty. It degenerates into an “us” versus “them” diatribe revealing very little that we didn’t already know. This book will surely not offend the religious; it might, however, be disappointing to those who appreciate a thoughtful, rational, in-depth discussion of atheist thought.

JOHN B. ROBBINS (January / February 1999)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author provided free copies of his/her book to have his/her book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the author for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love and make no guarantee that the author will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission’s 16 CFR, Part 255.