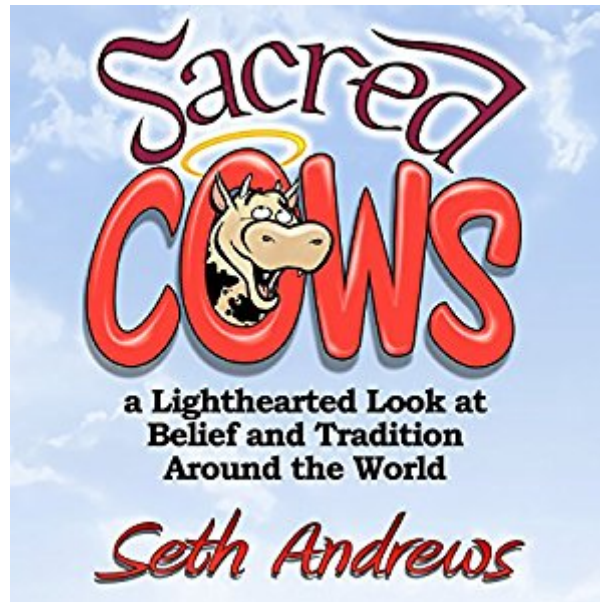


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# Sacred Cows: A Lighthearted Look At Belief And Tradition Around The World



## Synopsis

Did you know that God forbids the tying of shoelaces on Saturdays? Or that humans emit a colorful aura that can be discerned only with a Third Eye? That bountiful harvest requires the flinging of a live goat from a church bell tower? That instead of wishing upon a star, we can wish upon a...cow? Well into the 21st century, our species continues to participate in beliefs and customs that seem more suited to the Bronze Age than the Information Age, some of which involve poisonous snakes, holy smoke, urine bubbles, crystals, tarot cards, aliens, costumed virgins, and, of course, an offering plate. Join Seth Andrews for a random romp across the planet and a humorous look at some of humanity's Sacred Cows.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hours and 4 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Seth Andrews

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

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Best Sellers Rank: #7 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Religion #10 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Atheism #58 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor

## Customer Reviews

The humor varies from a quiet smile to laughing out loud. What I consider to be great humor is the kind that leaves one thinking about their assumptions, and in this regard this book is great humor. It may be that when we learn to laugh at our inconsistencies and tendencies toward magical thinking, we can dismantle them and approach life in a way that more closely aligns with truth or reality. But buyer beware, Satan is revealed to be a kind of socially engaged liberal while christian icons seem to have a flair for the deceptive. Seth shows us that it is indeed a funny world when observed from the most obvious vantage points.

Sacred Cows: A Lighthearted Look at Belief and Tradition Around the World by Seth

Andrews "Sacred Cows" is a lighthearted look at odd religious beliefs around the world.

Premiere atheist podcaster of The Thinking Atheist, video producer and author Seth Andrews takes the reader on a provocative journey on absurd religious beliefs. This entertaining 198-page book includes the following nineteen chapters: 1. Once Bitten, 2. Air Supply, 3. Blowing Smoke, 4. Sacred Cows, 5. Are You Naked Under Those Clothes?, 6. Death Becomes You, 7. Die in the Sky, 8. The Fortune Tellers, 9. The Penis Parade, 10. Santa's Little Helper, 11. Rise Up and Walk!, 12. Free Long Necks for the Ladies, 13. Circus of the Stars, 14. Sabbath Mode, 15. Can You Put Me Up For The Night?, 16. Wag the Dog, 17. The Order, the Doctrine and the Dude, 18. Running with the Devil, and 19. This is the End (Beautiful Friend).

**Positives:**

1. A well-written, conversational, brief, witty and entertaining book to read.
2. The fun topic of odd religious beliefs around the world.
3. Great visual format. Loved the cartoon drawings that complement the lighthearted narrative.
4. Andrews makes it perfectly clear that this is a layman tour of odd beliefs and never deviates from it. In short, he makes a promise and keeps it.
5. Andrews engaging and provocative personality shines through the entire book.
6. Interesting facts spruced throughout the book.
  - an estimated 125 snake-handling churches take literally the words of Mark 16:18, "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."
  - A look at Papal infallibility and the three conditions that must be met to be so.
  - A humorous look at Hinduism and an amusing list of animals worshipped around the world.
  - The amusing Batshit Scale applied to Mormon beliefs.
  - One of the oddest chapters, the Church of Euthanasia. Its slogan: "Save the Planet, Kill Yourself."
  - A fascinating look at fortune tellers. In reference to Sylvia Browne, "Out of the 115 recorded predictions analyzed by S.I., her success rate came in at...zero."
  - Some chapters are laugh out loud funny, check out the festival called, Kanamara Matsuri.
  - The true story behind Saint Nick and the Krampus poem.
  - A look at the scoundrel that is Peter Popoff. It seems that Popoff was receiving cues from his bride via a tiny earpiece receiver he'd passed off as a hearing aid (why the hell would a faith healer need a hearing aid?), and when Randi went public with the information, Peter Popoff spiraled from protest to admission to humiliation to bankruptcy within the course of a year.
  - Amusing look at body modifiers. Also in the modify-by-disk department, the Kayan women of Burma have a thing about the neck.
  - Scientology's E-Meter. In fact, according to ex-Scientologist Marc Headley, author of the book *Blown for Good: Behind the Iron Curtain of Scientology*, the nifty Mark VIII Super Quantum E-Meter will set you back a cool \$5,000.
  - Dudes, there's a chapter on Jediism and Dudeism.
  - The panic behind Dungeons & Dragons exposed.
  - End of times examples.
  - Notes

included. Negatives: 1. Some amusing stones left unturned, as an example Jainism and some of their extreme practices such as not harming bugs. 2. Also, I would have added a chapter on religious practices with drugs. 3. Drawings aside, this book I suspect would be much better as an audio book. 4. Fun while it lasted but too brief. 5. Not all major religions covered. 6. Some missed opportunities came to mind that would have added value: a table illustrating animals worshipped (narrative there but better captured visually via a table). 7. No formal bibliography. In summary, this is the perfect book to read on the beach. It's fun, entertaining and provocative. The high-quality drawings complement the humorous tone. Andrews gives the audience exactly what he promised a light-hearted tour of odd religious beliefs around the world and in that regard he doesn't disappoint. There were some stones left unturned but overall the book entertains and raises some eyebrows too. I recommend it!

Further recommendations: *Here and Now: A Whimsical Take on God* by Jeff Stilwell, *God Bless America: Strange and Unusual Beliefs and Practices in the United States* by Karen Stollznow, *Crucifying America* and *Atheists Can't Be Republicans* by C.J. Werleman, *Faith Healers* by James Randi, *Inside Scientology* by Janet Reitman, *Atheist Camel* by Bart Centre, *Nonbeliever Nation* by David Niose, *The Dark Side of Christian History* by Helen Ellerbe, *Nailed* by David Fitzgerald, *The God Argument* by A.C. Grayling, *50 popular beliefs that people think are true* by Guy P. Harrison, *The Moral Landscape* by Sam Harris, *Freethinkers* by Susan Jacoby, *The Religion Virus* by Craig A. James, *Society Without God* by Phil Zuckerman, *Why I'm Not a Christian* by Richard Carrier, and *Why are you Atheists so Angry?* by Greta Christina.

I received this book today and finished it today. I found myself laughing more than I should. Mr. Andrews has an amazing way with words. He writes in conversation style. It's like you are listening to a great storyteller. You are! I found myself getting a bit squeamish and embarrassed at some of the stuff I once believed myself (psychics) what amazes me about this whole book is, even though he is pointing out the absurdity of these beliefs. He does it without disrespect. I know that sounds crazy. Like it says it's a "lighthearted look at belief and tradition around the world". I give this book 5 stars. I wish I could give it 105 stars! If you like to laugh. You won't be disappointed.

This review is for the audiobook; I enjoy Seth's podcasts so I bought the audiobook. I may

have to get the paper copy to see some of the illustrations. He does do a good job of verbally explaining the illustrations, but it is not the same as seeing them. Both immensely entertaining and thought provoking. My two teens and I listened to parts of it together. They were rolling their eyes and face palming, but also asking questions. Good questions and thoughtful ones. Some chapters made them laugh outloud, others had them groaning at the gullibility of humans and some incited anger over the charlatan behavior of "prophets". My son's comment about halfway through was "Too bad I have morals, otherwise I could start a religion and get rich". No religion or tradition is safe. If you are a mainstream Christian, accustomed to laughing about those nutty Scientologists while secure in the belief that your own religion is safe from mocking, this book may make you wince. The chapter on the Pope made us laughing out loud "be sure to keep your Pope vacuum sealed". Somehow he manages to point out the absurdity of many human beliefs and traditions without outright cruelty. A great audiobook for a long drive, it sparked many thoughtful conversations with my kids. This book is irreverent, funny and thought provoking.

It was a good book. Somewhat funny. Most of the information has been heard before by listening to the podcasts. I was able to skip several paragraphs because I've heard the information many times before. I'd love to say it was a wonderful read. Over all it was good. I appreciate the effort by the author.

A fantastic read. Let's put it this way, I received this book Saturday and finished it before the day ended. From snake handling to crazy funeral ceremonies, you'll learn a lot about the cultures and religions of the world and have a laugh at most of it. Other points might shock you (I love animals) and one particular chapter will hurt (The prequels are good movies...) I gladly preordered this book ages ago and for good reason. Seth Andrews knows how to write a good book and I'll bet his audio version is even better.

I just finished listening to the audiobook. It is EXCELLENT! Seth Andrews nails his points with humor and manages to do so in a manner that leaves a person laughing out loud, snickering, chuckling and most importantly, thinking. Thank you, Seth Andrews.

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