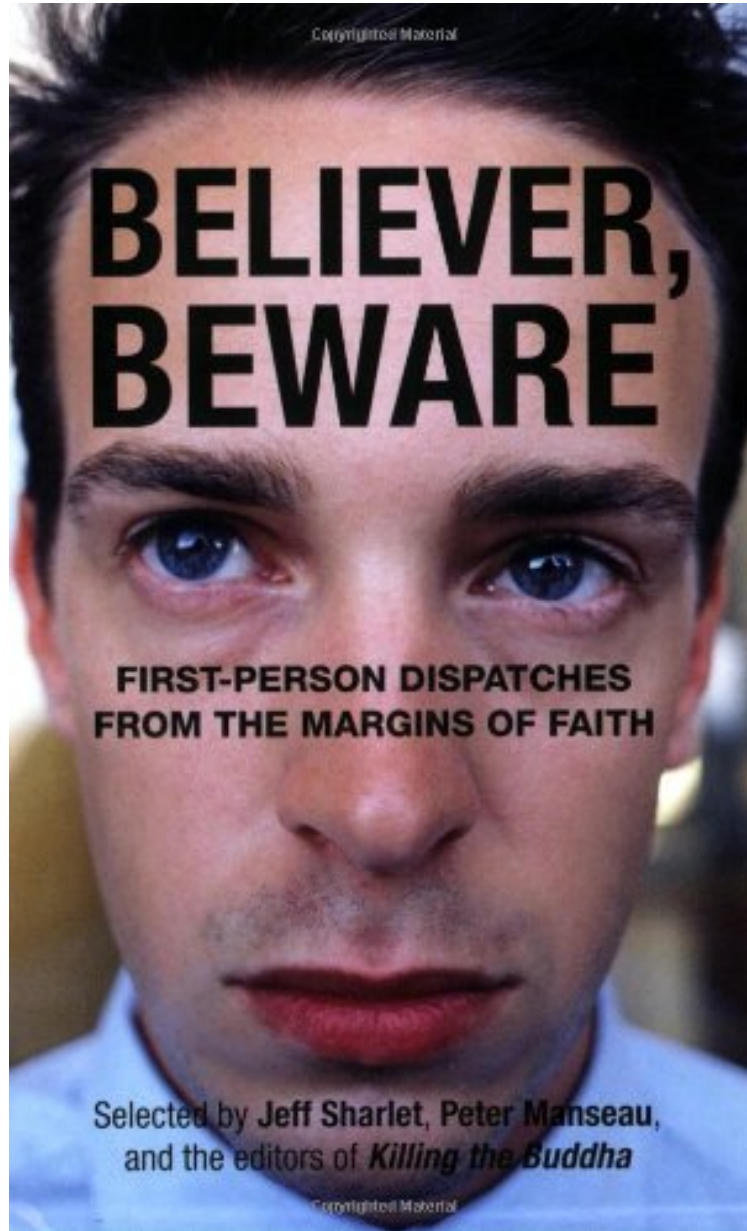


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## **Believer, Beware: First-person Dispatches from the Margins of Faith**

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**From Beacon Press : Believer, Beware: First-person Dispatches from the Margins of Faith** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Believer, Beware: First-person Dispatches from the Margins of Faith:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Long winded. By Mary J. Ward Not as scholarly as I expected but nevertheless, worth the read. Anyone interested in religion might be interested in this book. 11 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Not an atheist screed! By Jon M. Lennon Which is disappointing because that's what I thought I was buying. Believer, Beware was still an excellent read. It is a collection of short stories, articles, blogs what not by many different writers with different viewpoints. Jews, Muslims, Christians, Agnostics and Atheists all get a say in the book. Some of the stories are amusing, some sad, some thoughtful. Overall a good read. 98 of 103 people found the following review helpful. This Book "Gets" The Funny (And Poignant) Side of Religion By Frank Schaeffer I grew up as a missionary kid, pastor's sidekick, God merchant, Religious Right leader, you name it. I long since escaped if not to sanity then to a little more happiness. I read other people's books about religion and most are from the outside in. "Believer Beware" is from the inside out. It is also laugh out loud funny, touching, irreverent and yet, in a deeper way, pays religion the ultimate compliment: it's worthy of scrutiny, debate and measuring up on a very personal scale of intimate first hand experience. This is a book for anyone who knows two things: first, that for better or worse religion is important; second, that experiencing religion can be a harrowing passage into the darker side of human frailty. And yet... here is a book that does not reject faith but rather asks the question: what can faith mean to me after I discard the prejudice that too often comes with the territory of believing you have "the" answers? Readers will find brilliant writing here, world-class story telling by some veterans of the trade, such as the luminous Jeff Sharlet, and newcomers like Quince Mountain, who tells the funniest and best written story - "Cowboy For Christ" -- of transgendered disaster, fundamentalist religion and self discovery I've ever read (a story that made me want to read the novel of which this could be a first scintillating chapter.) This is the most amusing and touching book I've sucked up in years. Recovering religion survivors (of all faiths) will embrace "Believer Beware" in the same way that one revisits childhood memories that both haunt and comfort.

A Killing the Buddha Anthology The second collection to spring from KillingTheBuddha.com, Believer, Beware presents true tales of sex ed in Catholic school, witches in Kansas, sects and the city, Buddhists in the barbershop, Sufis under your nose, an adolescent Jewish messiah in Queens, and more. In a world riven by absolute convictions, these ambivalent confessions, skeptical testimonies, and personal revelations speak to the subtler and stranger dilemmas of faith and doubt-of religion lost and found and lost again.

From Publishers Weekly This is the second collection of contributions to the online magazine Killing the Buddha (which Sharlet and Manseau founded) to be published in book form. The editors are among the smart, candid, and insightful authors whose personal narratives form the book's 35 brief chapters. The selections represent a wide range of experiences from cheating on bar mitzvah prep to discovering hunger as spiritual food in a Ramadan fast, from sabotaging Bible camp to stumbling upon barbershop theology. Contributions reflect the scope of religious diversity, including orthodox Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Islam, Zen Buddhism and even a meditation on agnosticism. Some are funny, others heartbreaking, and some are simply revelatory. Despite the variety, the collection is unified by the contributors' wrestling with received religious traditions and expectations for belief and practice, each articulating a particular moment of the author's life. The voices are refreshingly honest. Given the narratives' personal nature, readers will not jive with each one but will find particularly thought provoking those that hone in on their own questions, suspicions and experiences. (July) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. P About the Author Jeff Sharlet and Peter Manseau are cofounders of the online literary magazine Killing the Buddha. Sharlet is also the author of The Family, and a contributing editor to Harper's and Rolling Stone. Manseau's other books include Vows, Rag and Bone, and the novel Songs for the Butcher's Daughter.