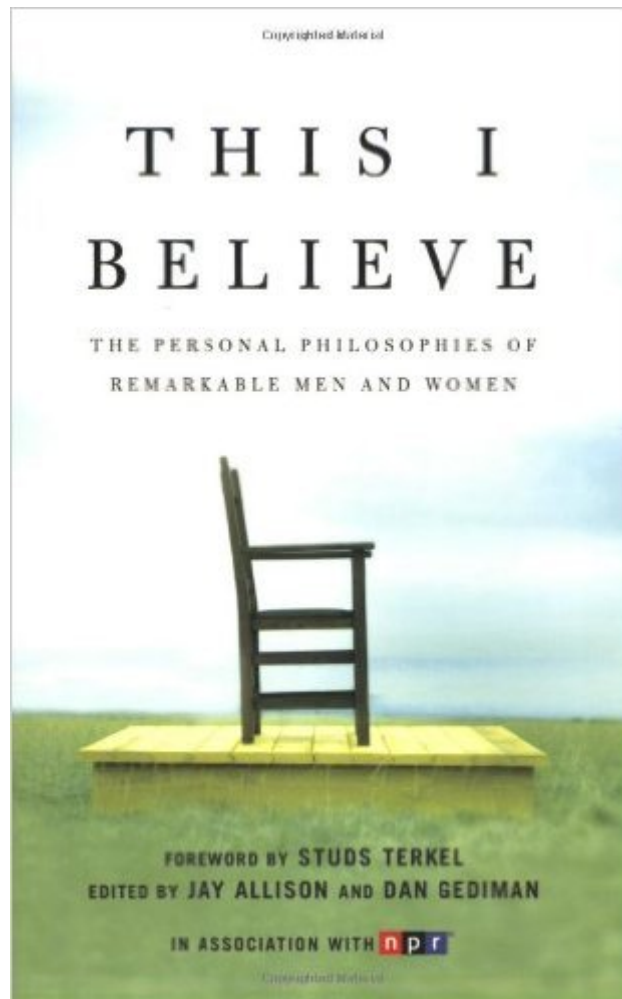


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This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies Of Remarkable Men And Women



Synopsis

"A welcome change from the sloganeering, political mudslinging and products of spin doctors." •The Philadelphia InquirerBased on the NPR series of the same name, This I Believe features eighty Americansâ •from the famous to the unknownâ •completing the thought that the book's title begins. Each piece compels readers to rethink not only how they have arrived at their own personal beliefs but also the extent to which they share them with others. Featuring many renowned contributorsâ •including Isabel Allende, Colin Powell, Gloria Steinem, William F. Buckley Jr., Penn Jillette, Bill Gates, and John Updikeâ •the collection also contains essays by a Brooklyn lawyer; a part-time hospital clerk in Rehoboth, Massachusetts; a woman who sells yellow pages advertising in Fort Worth, Texas; and a man who serves on Rhode Island's parole board. The result is a stirring and provocative trip inside the minds and hearts of a diverse group of people whose beliefsâ •and the incredibly varied ways in which they choose to express themâ •reveal the American spirit at its best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been working too much lately, getting into my car at night with my head still swimming about all the things that are going on at the office. I try not to get like this, but sometimes, especially at this time of year, it's hard not to. Someone sent me a copy of an interesting audiobook though and I wanted to share a bit about it with you. Listening to it in 15 minute snippets on the way to and from work these past few weeks has turned me around. If you're a public radio junkie, the series it's

based on is probably old news to you. It's called "This I Believe" and it's a compilation of essays from individuals writing about what they believe in. Very simple concept. The people who have written essays are young and old, famous and not, successful and not, religious and not. There are some from the 1950s, some from 2006. I'm finding that spending a few minutes on my drive to and from work every day where I stop thinking about what happened today or what needs to happen tomorrow does me good as a person. Some of them made me cry (probably more than I should admit) and some made me laugh. Some I fast-forward through b/c I've no interest in the topic - but with 80 distinct essays to listen to, you can fwd through quite a few and still have lots to listen to. You might be one of those people who is going to think this is smarmy, a little too saccharin or otherwise not as clever as you'd like -- but you should at least listen to a couple of excerpts. You may be surprised by the range of this collection - there are essays on the belief in science and math and the written word; others about kindness and hope and family; some on pizza delivery drivers and good barbecue and feeding monkeys on your birthday.

Clearly, I'm in the minority on this one. But this book just didn't work for me at all. It seems like such a promising concept, too - "based on the NPR series of the same name, 80 essayists - from the famous to the previously unknown - complete the thought that begins the book's title". But the result is - despite being a bestseller - a dreadful book. If I had checked it out in a bookstore, rather than buying it here on Amazon, I might have figured it out from the back cover. Here are the four 'quotes from inside' that the publishers use as a teaser: "I believe in the goodness of a free society. And I believe that the society can remain good only as long as we are willing to fight for it." Jackie Robinson. "I believe in empathy." Azar Nafisi. "I believe in the pursuit of happiness. Not its attainment, nor its final definition, but its pursuit." Andrew Sullivan. "Be cool to the pizza delivery dude; it's good luck". Sarah Adams. Well, yes. Am I supposed to argue with any of these noble sentiments? Hardly (though I might suggest a different justification for being cool to the pizza delivery dude than trying to generate future good karma). But it's precisely the completely unobjectionable, generally safe nature of the assorted beliefs expressed in the book that make it - and I may burn in hell for this - a major YAWN. If you crack open the book and can wade through some of the most mind-numbingly pompous prose imaginable, there are further nuggets to be gleaned: Benjamin Carson believes that "there is no job more important than parenting". William F.

When I first received my copy of "This I Believe," I had no idea that it was actually from a popular 1950s radio show of the same name. Originally, "This I Believe" was hosted by Edward R. Murrow.

It was aired throughout the United States and became so popular that two volumes of the essays were published and hit the Top-10 Bestseller's list for three years. It was easy to become hooked as I read the first essay, and though some of the essays are 50 years old, they are still very relevant to what we are going through now as individuals and as a society. The essays (of which there are 79) are 3-4 pages each and are essentially a brief outline of why the writer has a particular belief. The essays are personal stories which are written in a positive manner without being judgmental, preachy or obnoxious. Some of the more well known writers include: William F. Buckley, Jr., Albert Einstein, Helen Keller, Bill Gates and Penn Jillette (of Penn and Teller fame). In the "Afterward" written by Dan Giedman, he explains the history of the famous radio show and how he was inspired to put together a book of some of the more famous essays from the show, while including some new essays from both famous and unknown writers of our day. The appendix includes the original introduction of the radio show "This I Believe" by Edward R. Murrow, how to write your own "This I Believe" essay, and suggestions on how to use "This I Believe" in your own community. They also challenge you to write your own "This I Believe" essay and send it in to their website [...] "This I Believe" is thoughtful, inspiring and thought provoking. It would provide invaluable insights and topics for those interested in public speaking or blogging.

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