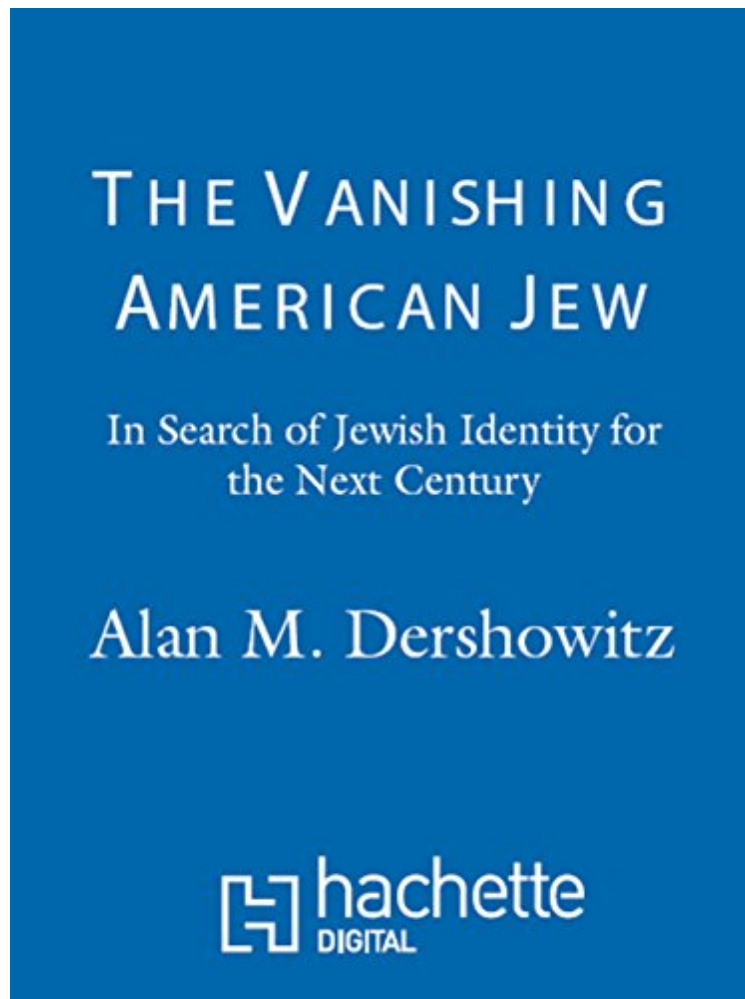


(Download) The Vanishing American Jew: In Search of Jewish Identity for the Next Century (English Edition)

## The Vanishing American Jew: In Search of Jewish Identity for the Next Century (English Edition)

Von Alan M. Dershowitz

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**Von Alan M. Dershowitz : The Vanishing American Jew: In Search of Jewish Identity for the Next Century (English Edition)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Vanishing American Jew: In Search of Jewish Identity for the Next Century (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. "The Vanishing American Jew"---NOT so "vanishing" afterall!Von Ein KundeLet me say right from the beginning that I am a non-practicing, totally "Secular" American Jew. Apart from the fact that I was born a Jew; have been blissfully married to the same Jewish woman for over thirty-five years; have a son who was bar mitzvah'd (because my mother-in-law would have made our life a hell if he hadn't been); as well as a daughter who WASN'T "bas"-mitzvah'd because

she was lucky enough to be born a girl and did not have to be "mitzvah'd" ANYTHING to win family approval as a Jew---apart from , and because of all I have just said, I have often asked myself: "What right do I have to CONSIDER MYSELF A JEW?" I mean--I have rarely stepped foot in a Synagogue for heaven's sake! Attended a Passover service or fasted on the High Holy Days.I don't speak or understand the Jewish language and have only an elementary knowledge of Jewish customs and traditions.(enough to 'get by' and that's about it.) So AM I A JEW?, I have often asked myself. Do I DESERVE TO THINK OF MYSELF AS A JEW? The easy answer for me has always been YES---because I am a "Reformed" Jew and as such, can be as religious (or non-religious) as I want and still be thought of as a Jew---at least by other, non religious, secular Jews. Just one more thing before I address my comments specifically to Dershowitz's, scholarly and extremely readable and informative book, "The Vanishing American Jew"---an extremely IMPORTANT thing: I FEEL that I am a Jew---feel it to the very depths of my being! I LIKE "BEING" A JEW; feel TOTALLY COMFORTABLE being a Jew; and never have wanted to be anything but Jewish or being a Jew! .... Now to the Dershowitz book and why I feel "The Vanishing American Jew" should be read by all Jews, and even non-Jews alike---in fact, by ANYONE who is interested in the significance and meaning of the Jewish faith in particular, but to those who are Gentile in their beliefs and traditions as well. A brief synopsis of the book: Dershowitz points out that the Jewish religion is in jeopardy of "vanishing" because anti-Semitism is on the wane throughout our country (as well as in other parts of the world)and because the Jewish people are no longer as besieged by enemies as in the past and are becoming more and more accepted into the "mainstream" of American life, intermarriage is becoming more and more acceptable by members of the Jewish and Christian faith. Because of intermarriage, there is an increasing likelihood, says the author, that children and grandchildren will no longer feel as closely "bound" to the Jewish faith as in the past---and that, in fact, the very ESSENCE of Judaism is in jeopardy of disappearing. Whereas being surrounded by enemies and fighting against them was previously the bond for holding Jews together---now, says Dershowitz, the real enemy lies WITHIN OURSELVES. We have become so "successful" (not just in a monetary sense, but in a humanistic sense, as well, that we are on the verge of losing our IDENTITY as a people---the Jewish people are becoming so ASSIMILATED into American life, that the very MEANING of what it is to be a secular Jew is becoming harder and harder to discern. Dershowitz is an extremely committed Jew. He was raised and educated in the Orthodox, Jewish tradition and later became a committed,Secular Jew. He frankly admits that his son has intermarried into the Christian faith, and gives cogent reasons why he fully accepts his son's choice of a non-Jewish mate. One of the many virtues of his book---and there are too many to be able to enumerate them all---is that Dershowitz is able to call upon his rational way of thinking (he is, afterall, one of this nation's premier legal, defense attorneys)to address many of the problems of the Vanishing American Jew, and in a rational and scholarly way, offer his own prescriptions for the future of American Jewry.Dershowitz's book is a fascinating compendium of almost all aspects of the Jewish religion: its various "sects", religious beliefs and rituals, and traditions. His book is well annotated, and his footnotes are as interesting to read as the text itself. Never pompous, or dry, he has the ability to make everything he says, extremely interesting, while, at the same time, injecting a tremendous amount of HUMOR as well. In fact, one of the most interesting devices Dershowitz uses to put across his serious and well reasoned ideas is his sprinkling of JOKES throughout the book. These jokes are not only extremely funny in themselves, but every one of them illustrates the more serious points he is making. Humor and seriousness are intertwined throughout the book, and the result is a totally satisfying reading experience that not only addresses some of the most important questions and issues facing American Jewry today--but also provides at least some "tentative" answers and solutions to the question I have long asked myself and which I stated earlier: "Am I really a Jew---and can I really consider myself Jewish in view of my secular beliefs and lack of day-to- day involvement in American Jewish life? The answer I may as well give you now--and is just one of the reasons I found this book to be so enlightening and an important one to read. The answer is YES! But not for the reasons one might think. Only in the very last Section/Chapter, when the author offers his own, very personal view of whether or not American Jewry can continue to survive into the next century, does Dershowitz succeed in articulating ever so clearly why it is that I FEEL SO GOOD being an American Jew. Some hints: "Justice"; "Give"; "Learn"; "Argue". The above can only begin to make sense if readers of my review take the interest and the trouble to discover for themselves the wealth of pleasure and meaningful information that Dershowitz provides in his fascinating book. One more hint! You may agree or disagree with everything Dershowitz has to say, but as far as this particular Jew is concerned, he has made me feel.....Oh, so good! Better, in fact, than old fashioned, Grandma's chicken soup. At last I have an answer to why I feel so glad and comfortable to be a Jew. And non-Jews will feel equally at home and comfortable with their religion(s)as well. "The Vanishing American Jew" speaks with uncommon intelligence--as well as with great humor and warmth---to religious (and non-religious) people the world over. Sample its pleasures---you won't be sorry!0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. asked the right questions, but has the wrong answersVon Ein KundeThe author, accurate in his identification of the problems of Jewish assimilation, none the less cannot come to an answer that will in fact keep the Jews from vanishing.Secular Judaism, cultural Judaism, and any other form that does not require adherence to halacha and Torah values, cannot survive. The book sounded like a justification for the fact that Dershowitz, coming from an Orthodox background, had a son that married out of faith.I am sure that this fact alone, how it happened and how it could have been prevented, had a

substantial influence on his writing. Though I share his pain and his concern for future generations, his solutions, other than Jewish education, are not sufficient. Education will hopefully attract the disenfranchised and other non Orthodox Jews to finding their roots and returning to basic Jewish law. That will keep the Jewish nation from vanishing.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Factual as well as easy to read.Von Ein KundeGave a different perspective, and was mentally provocative. I'm still thinking about Dershowitz' views, and it has been several weeks since I read the book.

KurzbeschreibungIn this urgent book, Alan M. Dershowitz shows why American Jews are in danger of disappearing - and what must be done now to create a renewed sense of Jewish identity for the next century. In previous times, the threats to Jewish survival were external - the virulent consequences of anti-Semitism. Now, however, in late-twentieth-century America, the danger has shifted. Jews today are more secure, more accepted, more assimilated, and more successful than ever before. They've dived into the melting pot - and they've achieved the American Dream. And that, according to Dershowitz, is precisely the problem. More than 50 percent of Jews will marry non-Jews, and their children will most often be raised as non-Jews. Which means, in the view of Dershowitz, that American Jews will vanish as a distinct cultural group sometime in the next century - unless they act now. Speaking to concerned Jews everywhere, Dershowitz calls for a new Jewish identity that focuses on the positive - the 3,500-year-old legacy of Jewish culture, values, and traditions. Dershowitz shows how this new Jewish identity can compete in America's open environment of opportunity and choice - and offers concrete proposals on how to instill it in the younger generation..deMost recently in the spotlight as one of the many defense lawyers attending O. J. Simpson in his first criminal trial, attorney Alan M. Dershowitz is also a powerful advocate for the liberal Jewish tradition in this country. In an earlier book, *Chutzpah*, Dershowitz celebrated an end to Jewish isolation and institutional anti-Semitism in America; in his latest book, *The Vanishing American Jew*, he decries the perhaps inevitable result of this desegregation: assimilation. Dershowitz writes powerfully about his fear that, with nothing to struggle against and no powerful motivation to maintain traditions, American secular Jews will, within a few generations, lose their Jewishness. The author writes from a privileged position: raised an Orthodox Jew, he embraced secular Judaism in his young adulthood and thus comes equipped with an intimate understanding of what he has chosen to reject and accept. Though Dershowitz has no definitive answers for the problem of *The Vanishing American Jew*, the questions he raises may be the first step in discovering a solution..comMost recently in the spotlight as one of the many defense lawyers attending O. J. Simpson in his first criminal trial, attorney Alan M. Dershowitz is also a powerful advocate for the liberal Jewish tradition in this country. In an earlier book, *Chutzpah*, Dershowitz celebrated an end to Jewish isolation and institutional anti-Semitism in America; in his latest book, *The Vanishing American Jew*, he decries the perhaps inevitable result of this desegregation: assimilation. Dershowitz writes powerfully about his fear that, with nothing to struggle against and no powerful motivation to maintain traditions, American secular Jews will, within a few generations, lose their Jewishness. The author writes from a privileged position: raised an Orthodox Jew, he embraced secular Judaism in his young adulthood and thus comes equipped with an intimate understanding of what he has chosen to reject and accept. Though Dershowitz has no definitive answers for the problem of *The Vanishing American Jew*, the questions he raises may be the first step in discovering a solution.