

"Nancy Ammerman's *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes* offers the most in-depth, yet wide-ranging mapping of religious/spiritual/secular sensibilities in the everyday lives of contemporary Americans yet to emerge. She weaves a tapestry that shatters many of our taken-for-granted assumptions about people's circumscribed life-worlds. The book deserves a serious reading on the part of anyone who would try to describe this emerging, but exceedingly complex mix of the sacred and the secular."

—Wade Clark Roof,

J.F. Rowny Professor of Religion and Society,
University of California at Santa Barbara

Religion, Nancy Tatom Ammerman argues, is never confined to a house of worship. In *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes*, Ammerman examines the stories Americans tell of their everyday lives—from dinner table to office and shopping mall to doctor's office, from the things that matter most to the routines they take for granted—listening for the times and places where the ordinary meets the spiritual.

In addition to conducting interviews and observing her subjects, Ammerman asked them to keep oral diaries and take pictures of places that are meaningful to them, offering a window into the presence and absence of religion and spirituality in ordinary lives and in commonplace physical and social spaces. The stories come from a diverse array of ninety-five Americans—both conservative and liberal Protestants, African American Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Mormons, Wiccans, and people who claim no religious or spiritual proclivities—across a range that stretches from committed religious believers to the spiritually neutral. Ammerman surveys how these people talk about what spirituality is, how they seek and find experiences they deem spiritual, and whether and how religious traditions and institutions are part of their spiritual lives.

NANCY TATOM AMMERMAN is Professor of Sociology of Religion at Boston University, where she teaches in the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Theology. She has written award-winning books on America's conservative religious movements and on the role of religious organizations in community life.