



Does God Make a Difference?: Taking Religion Seriously in Our Schools and Universities

Warren Nord

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In this provocative book Warren A. Nord argues that public schools and universities leave the vast majority of students religiously illiterate. Such education is not religiously neutral, a matter of constitutional importance; indeed, it borders on secular indoctrination when measured against the requirements of a good liberal education and the demands of critical thinking. Nord also argues that religious perspectives must be included in courses that address morality and those Big Questions that a good education cannot ignore. He outlines a variety of civic reasons for studying religion, and argues that the Establishment Clause doesn't just permit, but requires, taking religion seriously. While acknowledging the difficulty of taking religion seriously in schools and universities, Nord makes a cogent case for requiring both high school and undergraduate students to take a year long course in religious studies, and for discussing religion in any course that deals with religiously controversial material. The final chapters address how religion might best be addressed in history, literature, economics, and (perhaps most controversially) science courses. He also discusses Bible courses, and the relevance of religion to moral education and ethics courses.

While his position will be taken by some as radical, he argues that he is advocating a "middle way" in our culture wars. Public schools and universities can neither promote religion nor ignore it. Does God Make a Difference? increases our understanding of a long and heated cultural conflict; it also proposes a solution to the problem that is philosophically sound and, in the long run, eminently practical.

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