



## **American Buddhism as a Way of Life (SUNY series in Buddhism and American Culture)**

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# American Buddhism as a Way of Life (SUNY series in Buddhism and American Culture)

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*Explores a range of Buddhist perspectives in a distinctly American context.*

The United States is becoming more comfortable with Buddhism each year. Celebrity converts, the popularity of the Dalai Lama, a stream of references in popular culture, and mala beads on every third person's wrist all indicate that Buddhism is becoming an accepted part of American life, even if a relatively small percentage of the population actually describes itself as Buddhist. This book investigates the ways in which Buddhist and American ways of life have inflected one another. Gary Storhoff and John Whalen-Bridge have organized this unique collection in accordance with the Buddhist concept of the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. "Buddha" discusses two key teachers who popularized Buddhism: Alan Watts and D. T. Suzuki, correlating their personal situations with the approaches to spirituality they proclaimed. "Dharma" is concerned with the impact of Buddhist ideas and texts on the most pressing social problems faced by Americans, including bioethics, abortion, end-of-life decisions, and identity theft. "Sangha" treats Buddhism in relation to social relationships, with chapters on family life, generational shifts, Asian American communities, the gay/straight divide, and Buddhist artistic practices—such as the making of a Zen garden—used to strengthen communal bonds.

"...an original, representative, and thoroughly informative look at 'American Buddhism' introducing itself into and becoming an accepted part of American life." — *CHOICE*

"The title of the book is quite appropriate, for it does not delve into Buddhism as a religion, but explores ways Buddhism has come to shape the way many Americans think and act. Already it is obvious that a great range of topics could be explored, and the editors present a remarkable variety of essays." — *Studies in American Culture*

"I like the range of topics, particularly those that are not usually considered in Buddhist studies, such as Buddhism and the family. The book provides a number of valuable new perspectives that help to deepen our understanding of American Buddhism." — David Landis Barnhill, coeditor of *Deep Ecology and World Religions: New Essays on Sacred Ground*

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#### **Jason Braden:**

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