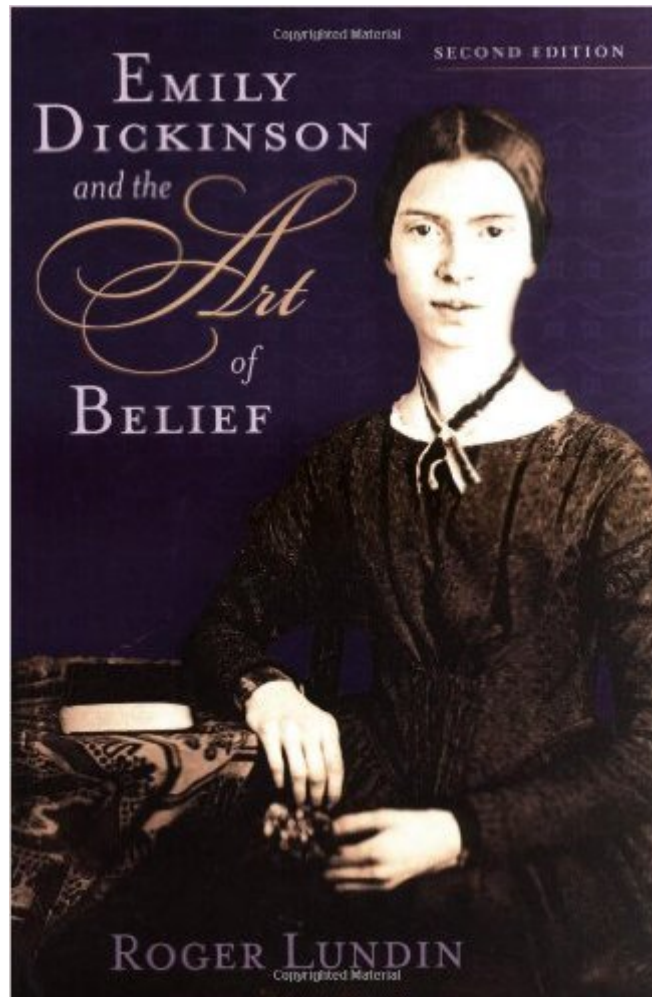


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Emily Dickinson And The Art Of Belief (Library Of Religious Biography (LRB))



Synopsis

Garnering awards from Choice, Christianity Today, Books & Culture, and the Conference on Christianity and Literature when first published in 1998, Roger Lundin's *Emily Dickinson and the Art of Belief* has been widely recognized as one of the finest biographies of the great American poet Emily Dickinson. Paying special attention to her experience of faith, Lundin skillfully relates Dickinson's life -- as it can be charted through her poems and letters -- to nineteenth-century American political, social, religious, and intellectual history. This second edition of Lundin's superb work includes a standard bibliography, expanded notes, and a more extensive discussion of Dickinson's poetry than the first edition contained. Besides examining Dickinson's singular life and work in greater depth, Lundin has also keyed all poem citations to the recently updated standard edition of Dickinson's poetry. Already outstanding, Lundin's biography of Emily Dickinson is now even better than before., the volume begins with a look at early christology and covers the whole of the New Testament from the Gospels to Revelation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a lay person, knowing more of Roger Lundin's academic reputation than of Emily Dickinson's life and work, I was intimidated by the prospect of reading his biography of the poet, "Emily Dickinson and the Art of Belief." However, as the foreword assures us, this book is not meant for the "cognoscenti" alone, but for us "uninitiated outsiders" as well. And as the departing shore of the

book's introduction became faint, I found only the calm seas and smooth sailing of a real page turner. I was soon fascinated by Dickinson's enigmatic life as Lundin carefully unfolded the practical details of her life in nineteenth century Amherst, as well as her development as a poet, an intellectual, and a religious thinker in an era on the edge of modernity. One of the most poignant themes in the book was Dickinson's progressive reclusiveness--and for all the reasons Lundin gives for it, I wasn't completely satisfied until the very last chapter. A surprising dimension of the book is the discussion of Emily's political, cultural, and religious milieu--which we eventually come to learn is key to understanding Dickinson's discomfiting questions and world view. The only fault I find in the book is not at Lundin's hand, but Emily herself. Though she leaves us in awe of her literary genius and spiritual sensitivity, her seemingly selfish reclusiveness and her failure to ever clearly declare the state of her soul left me feeling sorry for her. Although I have been taught never to judge in these matters, as a Christian I can't help but wonder, "was she or wasn't she?" Did she ever make the leap of faith? Lundin never gives us a definitive "yes" or "no," but yet gives enough data that we can make our own educated determination.

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