



Praise for ***Funny You Don't Look Like a Rabbi: A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation*** by Rabbi Lynnda Targan...so far...

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In her touching memoir, ***Funny You Don't Look Like a Rabbi/ A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation***, my Jewish feminist friend, Lynnda Targan describes how she became a rabbi at 55, after juggling work, family and intense study, and triumphed over her shaky confidence, other people's sexism and ageism, institutional resistance, and personal loss." (**Letty Cottin Pogrebin, bestselling author of *Deborah, Golda and Me, Getting Over Getting Older***)

A Review by Letty Cottin Pogrebin in Tikkun Magazine.

<https://www.tikkun.org/lynnda-targans-funny-you-dont-look-like-a-rabbi>

"Funny You Don't Look Like a Rabbi, A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation is both a compelling personal memoir and a deep reflection on faith. Rabbi Targan takes us on a trying and joyous journey that readers will very much wish to share." (**Rabbi David Wolpe, Max Webb Senior Rabbi Sinai Temple, Los Angeles, author of *Why Faith Matters***)

"With levity, warmth, and personal truth Rabbi Lynnda Targan describes a feminine version of a traditionally masculine journey. It is not so much a tale of battling and overcoming (although there's a fair amount of that, too) as much as a tale of listening, offering, receiving, trying, listening again, and then trying a new way. Reading this book is like hearing a good friend's life story, wanting the best for her, and knowing that the only reason she's telling it to you is because she wants the best for you, too." (**Rebecca Barry, bestselling author of *Recipes for a Beautiful Life and Later at the Bar***)

Many people fantasize about changing careers but never take the leap. Lynnda Targan jumped headfirst, and the story she recounts will embolden and inspire others. It was no easy path to choose the rabbinate, considering the hurdles for women —particularly moms, let alone starting the process at age 50 — but Rabbi Targan felt the pull of our text and teachings, and crossed the threshold with moxie and prayer. This memoir reminds us all of what's possible. (**Abigail Pogrebin, bestselling author of *My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew and Stars of David***)

"Lynnda Targan's journey to the rabbinate is anything but typical. She writes of overcoming her challenges and obstacles with determination and grit, with the help of her family, her deep *yiddishkeit* and a few 'angels' along the way. Targan's memoir is an

inspiring story of personal transformation and ultimate faith." **(Rabbi/Cantor Angela Buchdahl, Senior Rabbi, Central Synagogue, New York City)**

Lynnda Targan's ***Funny, You Don't Look Like a Rabbi*** is equal parts affecting humility and hard-earned pride, and a compelling account of the endless hurdles negotiated, crises endured, doubts stared down, and faith – in herself and in her spiritual path – embraced. It's a lovely portrait of joy in spiritual yearning and a life transformed. **(Jim Shepard, author of The Book of Aron)**

Lynnda Targan offers a powerful passionate take on what it takes to decide to become a rabbi as a middle-aged woman in the late-twentieth, early twenty-first century. Lynnda fearlessly embarks on an intense journey that includes going back to school to engage in whole new fields of study. As her teacher in the earliest years of this transformation, I was there pushing her hard. It is a joy and a privilege to witness and now read her account of this process. I am humbled by all she has accomplished, and I am thrilled to say that I was there back then and here now to see her publish this terrific book! **(Dr. Laura Levitt, Professor of Religion, Jewish Studies and Gender at Temple University, author of The Objects that Remain)**

Rabbi Lynnda Targan's moving memoir about her personal journey towards spirituality and the Rabbinate reflects her warmth, genuine passion to help others, and deep love of family, friends, and the community at large. Her good humour and her touching anecdotes make the book come alive while providing a window into the fascinating world of Jewish sources. An elegant book by an elegant lady! **(Dr. Pam Peled, author of *How to Have a Husband and Live with your Lover (At the Same Time)*, *For the Love of God and Virgins*, and *Three Ladies, Three Lattes, Israel*)**

"An excellent enlightened and enlightening soul-journey to self-discovery and spiritual leadership." **(Rabbi Wayne Dosick, Ph.D. author *Living Judaism and The Real Name of God*)**

"An exciting book..." **(Rabbi Richard Address, Founder of *Jewish Sacred Aging* and host of its *Seekers of Meaning* TV show and Podcast)**

This is an intensely personal memoir of a full life's journey. From the turmoil of a dysfunctional childhood home to success in her personal and professional adult life, Lynnda Targan takes the reader along as she achieves one milestone after another but always knows there is something missing. She finds her answer in the spirituality that leads her to a lifetime of study that culminates in the Rabbinate, and allows her to fully realize her Jewishness as a woman in a male dominated realm. In that accomplishment she sets an example for anyone who might think they cannot follow their dreams. **(Steven J. Barrer, MD, author of *Exercise Will Hurt You*)**

Funny, You Don't Look Like a Rabbi: A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation, is a superb and unique addition to the "spiritual journey memoir" genre. Rabbi Lynnda Targan details her challenging, sometimes heartbreaking, but always inspiring path to answering a spiritual call, and becoming a rabbi in her 50's. Her writing is artful and gripping—this is a book you won't want to put down. For those who know the pioneering pluralistic seminary she attended, the Academy for Jewish Religion, this will bring back memories and fill in history to stir your heart. **(Rabbi Shohama Weiner, first woman president of a rabbinical seminary and "co-editor of *Seeking and Soaring: Jewish Approaches to Spiritual Guidance and Development*)**

Rabbi Targan is a classmate, a friend and a colleague. She tells the story of her journey to become a rabbi, something that for many women was not an option. She catalogs her journey through and to the Academy for Jewish Religion. She is an excellent writer and story teller and I found myself laughing and sometimes crying. She tells a parallel yet different path to my own, illustrating the idea of 70 Faces of Torah, which is the slogan of AJR. A woman in mid-life, herself a business owner, searching for something more in Judaism, rejected by one of the other seminaries, and through serendipity or "bashert," destiny, finds AJR. Life is not necessarily easy and as she had a friend point out, "You only choose the rabbinate when there is nothing else you can do." I remember when my rabbi said exactly the same thing. The Jewish people and the rabbinate are better because Lynnda and her unique brand of optimism are in it. **(Goodreads, Rabbi Margaret Frisch, author of *A climbing Journey Towards Yom Kippur: The Thirteen Attributes of the Divine*)**

Rabbi Lynnda Targan, the author ***of Funny You Don't Look Like a Rabbi, A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation*** is a really good writer. I like her style and the way that her chapters start and end. The writing is clear, informative and very charming. And it's an amazing story! Rabbi Targan has overcome many trials and tribulations, but the way she tells it comes off as a woman of fortitude and heartfelt soul. She simply moves ahead and on to the next undertaking with aplomb. **(Judy Stacey Goldman, author of *Fodor's Israel, The Underground Jerusalem Guide and The Flavor of Jerusalem* with Joan Nathan)**

Funny You Don't Look Like a Rabbi/ A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation, written by Rabbi Lynnda Targan is first and foremost a story of a woman's personal journey of becoming a Rabbi. Her passionate and revealing story allows the reader to travel by her side as she recounts numerous life challenges on her pursuit to enter the rabbinate. As she pursues her dreams, a myriad of obstacles emerge that would cause most to abandon the pursuit of achieving one's dreams. As her story unfolds, she describes these many personal obstacles encountered on her journey to become a Rabbi. The roadblocks included early traumatic family experiences, the multitasking and balancing of study with family responsibilities and the multitude of barriers entering a male-oriented profession where women were not readily accepted. These challenges

undoubtedly would discourage most individuals from pursuing their dreams, especially at the age of 50 where many choose to enjoy life rather than seek new professional challenges. However, as the story evolves, far more important messages emerge providing the reader with new opportunities for personal self-reflection and introspection. I found the book much less about life experiences, professional pursuits and not obtaining one's dreams but more about an individual's ability to respond and react to these challenges with decisiveness, positivity and inner strength. The story now gently urges the reader to take personal responsibility for life decisions and direction, embrace life with a passion and systematically let go of self-doubts that prevent you from achieving your dreams. The words resilience, empowerment and taking personal responsibility for oneself now begins to resonate loudly and clearly. The main character, the emerging Rabbi or teacher is providing the reader with suggestions to better control your life by taking charge. One's ability to bounce back from personal difficulties and obstacles and to move forward with your life takes determination and grit – a toughness only you can engender. This book challenges you to seize the day (*carpi diem*) and keep your eye on the prize. (**Robert Vogel, Professor Emeritus, LaSalle University. Author of Writers Matter, Empowering Voices of Israeli and Palestinian Teens--Cultural Narrative Building through Writing**)

The book, ***Funny You don't Look Like a Rabbi, A Memoir of Unorthodox Transformation*** by Rabbi Lynnda Targan opens with beginning chapters of extraordinary prose employing metaphors of pain and suffering from the perspective of her childhood. The author has the exceptional gift of capturing and transforming emotion into empowerment. (**Rabbi, Dr. Leslie Schotz, D.Min, Shalom: A Congregational Guide to Jewish Meditation and Spiritual Direction for Jewish Children**)