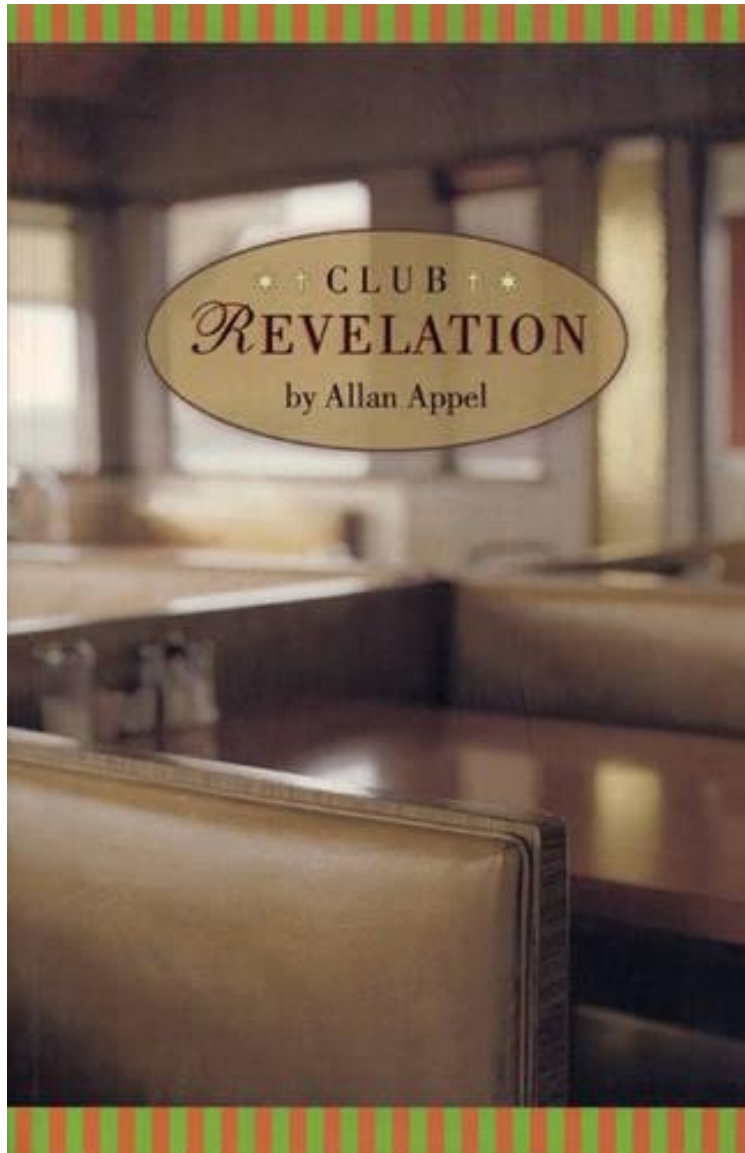


(Download) Club Revelation

## Club Revelation

*Allan Appel*

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**Allan Appel : Club Revelation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Club Revelation:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Funny, dark, and oh-so-New YorkBy Deborah ClearmanAccording to David Brooks in the NY Times on September 19, 2014, “friendship is not in great shape in America today. In 1985, people tended to have about three really close friends, according to the General Social Survey. By 2004, according to research done at Duke University and the University of Arizona, they were reporting they had only two close

confidants. The number of people who say they have no close confidants at all has tripled over that time.” I don’t know what universe Brooks and his surveyors live in; friendship is alive and well in New York City, where Allan Appel’s hilarious novel CLUB REVELATION takes place. I read CLUB REVELATION recently, and it seems as fresh as if it just came out. Yet it hails from pre 9/11 2001, and it’s full of the energy of the new millennium. Christians and Jews are looking for spiritual salvation in odd places and predicting the End Times. Full of surprising plot turns and witty dialogue, it’s a real New York story—sharp and on the edge of manic. New York is where cultures collide and someone is always trying (and usually failing) to create the next big thing. New York is also the place where unlikely people become friends. At its heart, this is the story of friendship—among couples who have been friends for decades, between seekers and their spiritual advisors, between husband and wife as they weather crisis. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Flat characters, stilted dialogue...By A Customer While the premise of this novel sounds quite interesting, Appel has managed to write a tale of surprisingly little depth. The first problem is the characters. It takes Appel a great number of pages to make one Jewish husband distinct from another or one non-Jewish wife distinct from another. Even then, the characters usually seem like mouthpieces for the religious musings at hand, rather than flesh and blood people. And then there's the dialogue... While apparently many reviewers are pleased with the snappy New York repartee, the letters to home by the fundamentalist would-be restaurateur simply don't ring true: for example, snake-handling and St. Jerome aren't usually in a shared fundamentalist lexicon. Also, the characters are said to be "fiftyish", but they don't sound like (or act like) "fiftyish" people, seeming to be far more unsettled and breezy. I wonder if the ages given were necessary to make them ex-60s liberals; it seems a bit convenient. Finally, the ending is quite disappointing: suffice it to say that Appel manages to build one round, convincing character, then dramatically finishes her story in an unsatisfying (and unfair) manner. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Big and the LittleBy Paul Bass Some books I love because the characters are fun and the situations so novel, I can't put the books down. Other books I love because the writer, through the story, taps into Big Questions of life, that make me question my own existence. This book did both. It was a rollercoaster ride.

Appel's hilarious novel follows three interfaith Jewish/Christian couples who unwittingly rent the ground floor of their brownstone to a charming Southern evangelist. Serving his own blend of Christian cuisine, he opens a restaurant in the space, hoping to convert the Jews of the Upper West Side. His scheme destroys the harmony of the building when one of his six landlords finds comfort in the preacher's conversion-by-gastronomy methods. Appel's mix of comedy and theology conjoin effortlessly in an entertaining, fast, and funny story which reevaluates our meanings of faith and marriage in twenty-first century America. Allen Appel is a novelist and playwright whose books include *The Rabbi of Casino Boulevard* and the anthology *A Pocket Apocalypse: A Handy Guide to the End of the World*. His work has appeared in *The National Jewish Monthly* and *The Progressive*. He lives in New York City. Also Available by Allan Appel: *High Holiday Sutra* TP \$13.95, 1-56689-065-9 • CUSA

From Publishers Weekly Once one gets past the blatantly sitcom-like premise of Appel's new novel, this story about the disruptive and redemptive power of religion in the lives of three interfaith couples living on the Upper West Side of Manhattan is surprisingly entertaining. When William Harp, the son of a Southern evangelist minister, opens a restaurant on the bottom floor of a brownstone owned by three old friends and their wives, they have no idea that he plans to make it a Christian-themed cafeteria that he hopes will entice the area's many Jewish residents to convert. All too conveniently, the distaff side of the three couples are all originally Christian (one is now Buddhist) who have accepted their husbands' religions by osmosis, wisecracking in Yiddish and otherwise feeling comfortable in a largely Jewish social milieu. Again, all too conveniently, none of the couples has had children, so the wives are entirely free to pursue their careers. But when Harp's proselytizing Christianity reawakens Marylee Jeffers Levine's longings for spiritual salvation, personal and domestic turmoil ensue for the Levines, the Klains and the Belkins. Appel (*The Rabbi of Casino Boulevard*) handles the dilemma he's created with considerable wit and sophistication. If his theological explanations sometimes tend toward the didactic, he balances his commentary with clever plot twists, nicely textured characterization and the kind of breezy dialogue instantly recognizable as wry and irreverent New York lingo. The laugh factor is also high; one of the funniest scenes is Harp's description, in a letter to his demanding father, of the contretemps that results when the restaurant's holy snake, Annabel, eats a Buddhist tenant's holy sheep. The cross fertilization of religions that marks the novel's denouement is good-natured and satisfying, if not classically ecumenical. Author tour. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal While his previous novel, *High Holiday Sutra*, humorously juxtaposed Judaism and Buddhism, Appel's latest features a standoff between evangelical Christians and Jews. Three couples own a brownstone in New York; the husbands are Jewish, the wives are not. The lower floor of this brownstone has hosted several restaurants, none of which has succeeded, Murray's Curries being the biggest flop. Along comes William Harp, the son and representative of a rich and famous evangelical preacher. His goal is to open a restaurant in this Jewish bastion and, through good food and good preaching (a Bible on every table), to bring the Jews around to Christianity. The ramifications of this missionary zeal are startling, and the book's language and conversations are laced with wit. The cleverness and sarcasm wear thin after a while, however, as

the couples' neuroses come to the fore, Harp is revealed as a pretender, and the reader wishes they would either resolve their issues or admit to irreconcilable differences. For larger fiction collections. Patricia Gulian, South Portland, ME Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Three couples, the husbands Jewish and the wives nominally Christian, live in a jointly owned brownstone on New York's Upper West Side. While the brownstone is religiously diverse (a Buddhist lama lives in the basement), the women consider themselves, with some resentment, Jews by osmosis. Into their lives of quasi-contentment enters Billy Harp, a charismatic, snake-handling, evangelical preacher--a walking catalog of southern Protestant stereotypes--sent by his father on a mission to convert the Jews of the Upper West Side and facilitate Jesus' return. To do this, he opens a restaurant, Club Revelation, on the ground floor of the brownstone, hoping to attract Jews to Christ through fine cooking. One of the wives, Marylee, the most discontented in her marriage, befriends Billy and eventually converts, and the entire building is thrown into spiritual and emotional turmoil. Appel has written humorous fiction with religious themes before (*High Holiday Sutra*, 1997), and he shows the hand of a deft theologian, crafting a truly funny, spiritually observant novel of religious identity and experience. John Green Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved