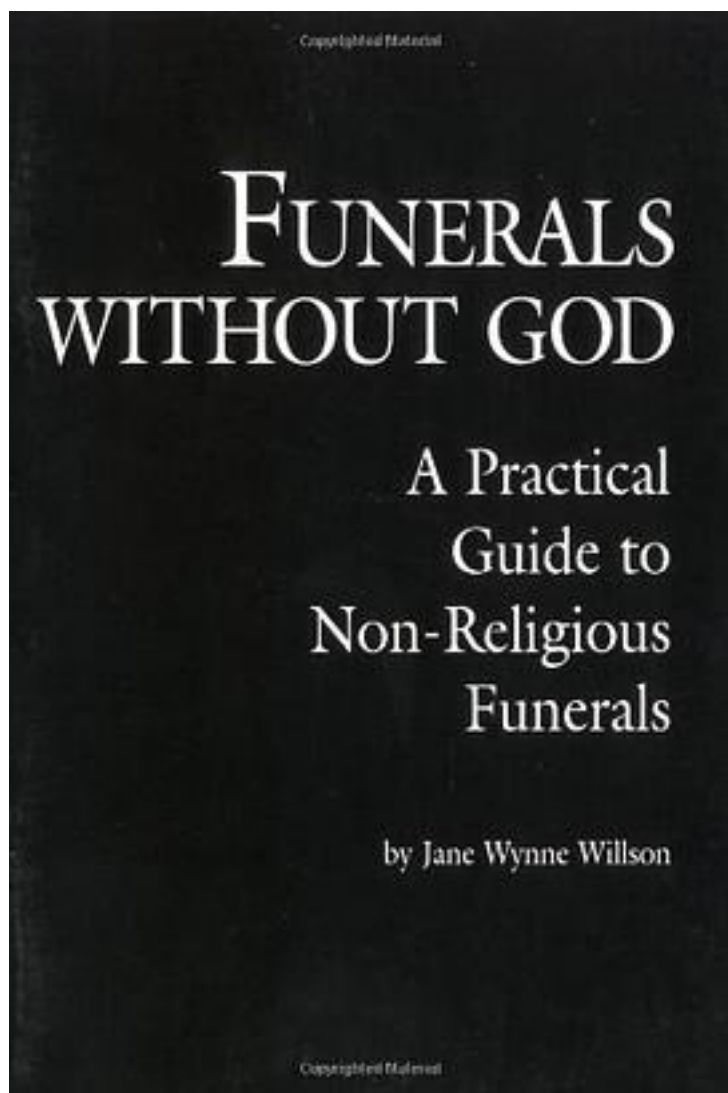


Funerals without God



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The main purpose of this booklet is twofold: to help Humanists who are thinking of becoming officiants on a regular basis; and to help families and friends who are faced with the need to organize a ceremony themselves at short notice. A third group who may find parts of it useful are funeral directors coping with funerals where there is no officiant and the family has no wish to play an active role.

The booklet aims to set out clearly the basic format of a Humanist ceremony, to suggest possible readings and turns of phrase, and to state simply the various practical measures that need to be taken. In short, it is a straightforward working manual.

"[It was] the first funeral I had attended where I felt comfortable, and comforted by the words spoken."

"... it gave me a sense of great peace."

"To hear others publicly proclaim their love, respect and admiration for my husband made the funeral an uplifting experience. Afterwards so many who had attended told me that it was the most interesting, most moving, most relevant and best funeral that they had ever been to. Their remarks gave me a great deal of comfort and I knew that I had treated my husband's atheism with the respect and dignity that it deserved."

"A large number of those present, from a wide range of beliefs and backgrounds, later expressed what we can only call enthusiasm for an experience that was new to them, and in many cases compared very favourable with the often awkward and impersonal alternatives with which they were familiar."

"Bearing in mind that this is a form of ceremony which has not yet gained wide acceptance, we consider ourselves fortunate ... to have received such expert and personal attention."

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