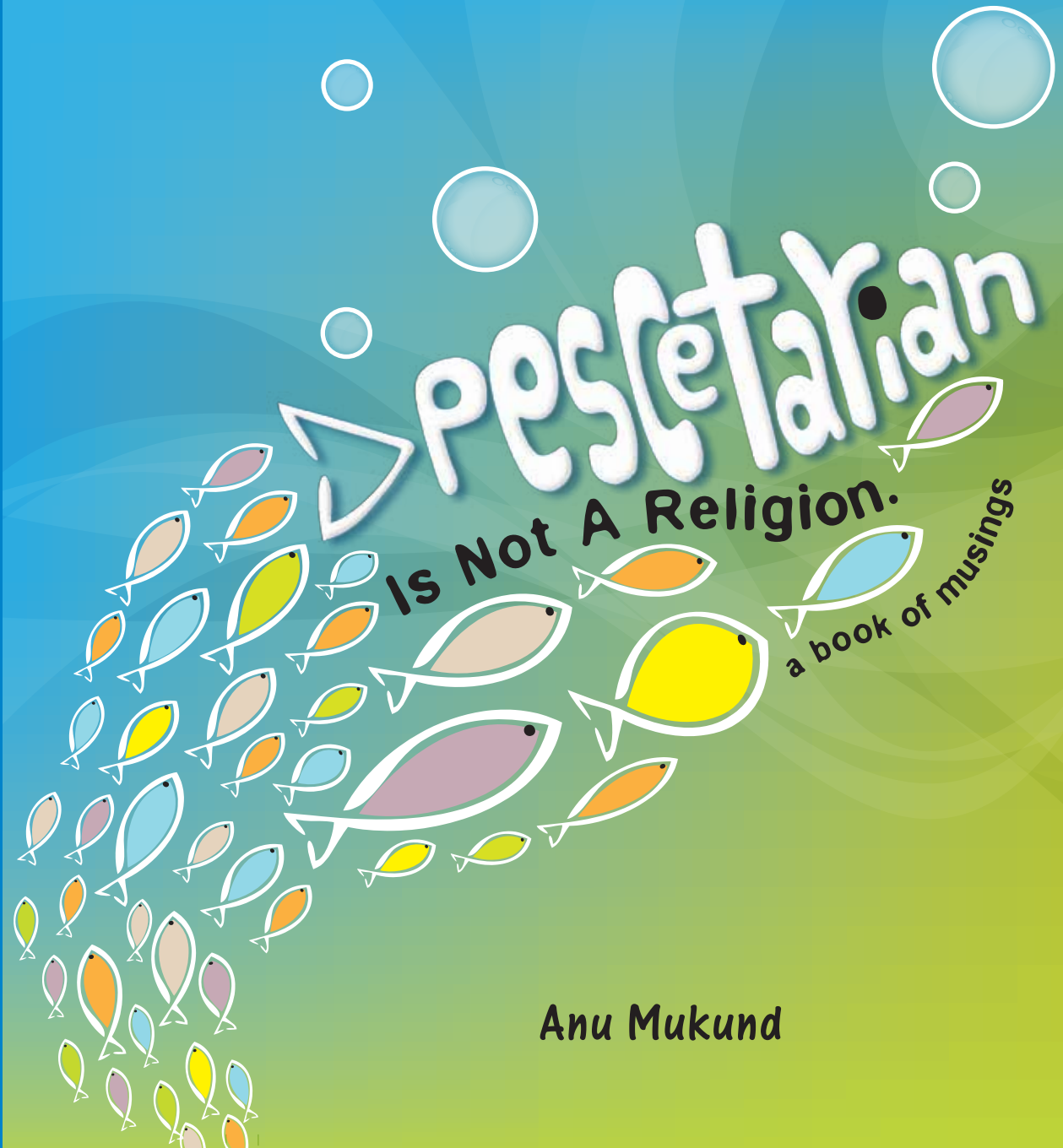


We wear what we think is cool,  
use slang we know sounds stupid  
but, hey, it's what everyone else  
is saying, and we pray that by  
blending in with all our peers,  
we'll somehow stand out.



If we have that self confidence  
in ourselves, our beliefs, and  
what is right and wrong for us,  
in due time, we will find that  
who we are is reflected in  
glimpses around us.

—Excerpts from the book



Anu Mukund



Anu Mukund is a recent graduate of Stony Brook University, with a major in Psychology and a minor in South Asian Studies. She will be pursuing a Master's degree in Marketing in the fall of 2013. She hopes to one day hold a teaching position in one of the domains that are of interest to her.

Apart from writing, Anu enjoys teaching and mastering the art of Bharatanatyam, a form of South Indian classical dance. She has an immense thirst for travel and learning about new cultures; and hopes to quench that desire throughout her life.

Anu currently resides in Rochester, New York.



## **Omega fail.**

*Ever have those moments where you look back at the past five minutes of your life and think, “Man, I really set myself up for that embarrassment.”? Well, I’ve had a lot of those. But the best part about these incidents? They usually make for funny stories in retrospect. Here’s one of my personal favorites...*

*It was my last year of college and, like many upperclassmen, I thought I pretty much ran the place. One of my reigning locations was the on-campus café and I visited it daily. Okay, who am I kidding, I went there at least four times a day. I used to work there after all and was seriously addicted to caffeine after four years of sleep deprivation. As I waltzed to the counter to place my afternoon order, I saw one of my former colleagues, and more importantly, one of my dear friends. We chatted for a few minutes at the counter, catching up on each other’s lives, while I felt about twenty pairs of eyes glaring impatiently at the back of my head.*

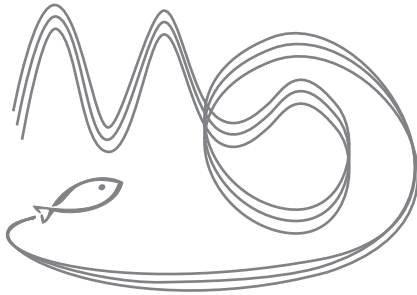
*As we talked for a bit the topic of food came up. At this point, I don’t really remember how it came up but I’m always hungry so it’s not surprising that the conversation took a gourmet turn. Anyway, I think we ended up talking about sushi and, as a vegetarian, I mentioned how much I loved avocado in my sushi rolls. To which my friend responded*

*that since she's a pescetarian, it's one of the few things on campus that she can eat and still find delicious.*

*And that's where I got this confused look on my face and asked ignorantly, "But, I thought you were Buddhist?" My friend stopped and stared for a few seconds, probably deciding how to answer. I honestly don't blame her; in hindsight, I don't know how I could have been that clueless. When she did answer, she cleared up my confusion by telling me that being pescetarian means being a vegetarian and throwing in some fish on your plate as well. After that we both laughed, me a little more due to my embarrassment at confusing fish for faith, and we went on with finally placing my afternoon regular.*

*So that's my story. And I thought it would make for a catchy title. I'd like to thank you for giving my book a chance. It's my first time trying it out as a writer, so please bear with me. Why did I write this book? What's it about? Well, turn the page and I think you'll find some answers.*





## Did I do that?

*It's late afternoon on a Tuesday and you're in your second semester of college. You just came out of another midterm and the seasons are finally showing their first signs of change. Leaves are starting to sprout, birds are chirping, and it's finally warm enough for you to forget your heavy coat. You feel a sense of relief and freedom but it's quickly stomped out by the feeling of foreboding about that huge project due in your Thursday morning class. You tell yourself, "Ok, let's take a small break. Watch the latest episode of How I Met Your Mother, grab a good lunch, and then get back to work. You know if you don't start today, you'll be in huge trouble on Thursday morning. That individual project counts as half your grade."*

*After finishing a satisfying veggie wrap and iced vanilla latté to the comedy of Neil Patrick Harris, you say to yourself, "Ok, let's do this! A+ here we come! Who said keeping up with schoolwork in college was hard? This is a piece of cake." You pull out a bulky folder filled with various handouts and finally single out the guidelines to your upcoming project. You glance down at the bulleted section your professor has constructed that states the minimal amount needed for a passing grade, followed by the percentages allotted to each portion of the project grade. Taking a deep breath, you exhale as you think of how*