

Interview Question and Answer with Gary McDougall
Author of “Don’t Tell Me There Ain’t No God”

1. *Tell us about yourself.*

I am a Born-Again Christian, and the child of undocumented immigrant parents who came across the border while my mother was pregnant with me so I could be born on U.S. soil and be an American Citizen. I spent most of my life pursuing the American dream. Along the way I have had a variety of life experiences that some say make my life an extraordinary one—I will let others be the judge of that. All I will say is that my life has been many things, but it has never been boring...

2. *Give us a brief description of the book.*

My life can be broken down into two distinct parts, which is reflected in the book; before I came to faith in God and after I came to faith in God, and how it led me to the American dream. The book shows the contrast between the two.

3. *Why did you write “Don’t Tell Me There Ain’t No God”?*

Initially the book was to be a personal memoir to my children, who were young, 12 and 14 years old at the time while I am a senior citizen—had my children late in life. I was not confident that I would be around long enough to see them grow into full adulthood, with stable careers and children of their own. The book was a way of leaving something behind that they could draw inspiration and courage from by sharing what I overcame to succeed, and that they could too.

After I completed the memoir, I shared the contents of the draft manuscript with family, friends, and colleagues. The feedback I got was that the story was so compelling and inspirational that I should share it with more than just family, but with the world. So, I added more information and decided to publish it.

4. *How did you come up with the title?*

After all I have been through in my life, it has shown me that there is a God. Therefore, I say Don’t Tell Me There Ain’t No God because God proved it to me.

5. *As the child of undocumented immigrant parents how has the current Immigration issues affected you and/or your family?*

Both my parents are deceased. However, my father never became a Citizen or Legal Permanent Resident. He self-deported in the 1990s. My mother became a Citizen through the Reagan Amnesty program. I also have siblings who came to the U.S. as non-citizens when they were little children (DACA) and grew up not knowing they were not Citizens. They also went through the Amnesty program.

As a retired Law Enforcement officer (LEO), I believe in the rule of law. Therefore, it is my opinion that we should follow immigration law and use our constitutional rights to petition our government representatives to find a compromise to the current crisis that would continue to allow immigrants to migrate to the country in a humane, but legal way.

6. *In your book, as teenager you and your girlfriend decided to have an abortion. How did that decision affect the both of you then and how did it affect you in your adult life?*

Having an abortion was a traumatic experience for both of us. However, it was far worse for her than for me. I cannot imagine what she suffered physically and emotionally, as I could never experience it as a man.

If I had to do it all over again, at that time and age, knowing what I know now, I am not sure I would have gone through with it. However, I believe it is a terrible decision to have to make and I understand how difficult it must be for a woman. That said I am still torn between Pro-Choice and Pro-Life. Ultimately, as a Christian, I believe we will all stand before the judgement seat of Christ one day and give an account of our actions. Therefore, I will let God be the judge.

7. *What can readers hope to learn from this book?*

It is my hope that readers will be encouraged and come to know that no matter what you may be going through, others have gone through it too or worse and were able to overcome it. Therefore, so can they, and in the end realize their manifest destiny as I did.