

## Deconverted A Journey From Religion To Reason

"A superbly argued book." —Richard Dawkins, author of *The God Delusion* The New York Times bestselling author of *Why Evolution is True* explains why any attempt to make religion compatible with science is doomed to fail In this provocative book, evolutionary biologist Jerry A. Coyne lays out in clear, dispassionate detail why the toolkit of science, based on reason and empirical study, is reliable, while that of religion—including faith, dogma, and revelation—leads to incorrect, untestable, or conflicting conclusions. Coyne is responding to a national climate in which more than half of Americans don't believe in evolution, members of Congress deny global warming, and long-conquered childhood diseases are reappearing because of religious objections to inoculation, and he warns that religious prejudices in politics, education, medicine, and social policy are on the rise. Extending the bestselling works of Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and Christopher Hitchens, he demolishes the claims of religion to provide verifiable "truth" by subjecting those claims to the same tests we use to establish truth in science. Coyne irrefutably demonstrates the grave harm—to individuals and to our planet—in mistaking faith for fact in making the most important decisions about the world we live in. Praise for *Faith Versus Fact*: "A profound and lovely book . . . showing that the honest doubts of science are better . . . than the false certainties of religion." —Sam Harris, author of *The End of Faith*

What is it like to be a preacher or rabbi who no longer believes in God? In this expanded and updated edition of their groundbreaking study, Daniel C. Dennett and Linda LaScola comprehensively and sensitively expose an inconvenient truth that religious institutions face in the new transparency of the information age—the phenomenon of clergy who no longer believe what they publicly preach. In confidential interviews, clergy from across the ministerial spectrum—from liberal to literal—reveal how their lives of religious service and study have led them to a truth inimical to their professed beliefs and profession. Although their personal stories are as varied as the denominations they once represented, or continue to represent—whether Catholic, Baptist, Episcopalian, Methodist, Mormon, Pentecostal, or any of numerous others—they give voice not only to their own struggles but also to those who similarly suffer in tender and lonely silence. As this study poignantly and vividly reveals, their common journey has far-reaching implications not only for their families, their congregations, and their communities—but also for the very future of religion.

Gold-medal winner of a Next Generation Book Award, silver-medal winner of the Independent Publishers Book Award. As featured on the PBS NewsHour "A gem of a book." — LIBRARY JOURNAL (STARRED REVIEW) A step-by-step guide to raising confident, open-minded kids in an age of religious intolerance. *Relax, It's Just God* offers parents fresh, practical and honest ways to address issues of God and faith with children while promoting curiosity and kindness, and successfully fending off indoctrination. A rapidly growing demographic cohort in America, secular parents are at the forefront of a major and unprecedented cultural shift. Unable to fall back on what they were taught as children, many of these parents are struggling, or simply failing, to address issues of God, religion and faith with their children in ways that promote honesty, curiosity, kindness and independence. The author sifts through hard data, including the results of a survey of 1,000 nonreligious parents, and delivers gentle but straightforward advice to both non-believers and open-minded believers. With a thoughtful voice infused with humor, Russell seamlessly merges scientific thought, scholarly research and everyday experience with respect for a full range of ways to view the world. "Relax, It's Just God" goes beyond the numbers to assist parents (and grandparents) who may be struggling to find the right time place, tone and language with which to talk about God, spirituality and organized religion. It encourages parents to promote religious literacy and understanding and to support kids as they explore religion on their own -- ensuring that each child makes up his or her own mind about what to believe (or not believe) and extends love and respect to those who may not agree with them. Subjects covered include: • Talking openly about our beliefs without indoctrinating kids • Making religious literacy fun and engaging • Talking about death without the comforts of heaven • Navigating religious differences with extended family members • What to do when kids get threatened with hell

"Does a god exist? This question has undoubtedly been asked, in one form or another, since man has had the ability to communicate. . . Thousands of volumes have been written on the subject of a god, and the vast majority have answered the questions with a resounding 'Yes!' " "You are about to read a minority viewpoint." With this intriguing introduction, George H. Smith sets out to demolish what he considers the most widespread and destructive of all the myths devised by man - the concept of a supreme being. With painstaking scholarship and rigorous arguments, Mr. Smith examines, dissects, and refutes the myriad "proofs" offered by theists - the defenses of sophisticated, professional theologians, as well as the average religious layman. He explores the historical and psychological havoc wrought by religion in general - and concludes that religious belief cannot have any place in the life of modern, rational man. "It is not my purpose to convert people to atheism . . . (but to) demonstrate that the belief in God is irrational to the point of absurdity. If a person wishes to continue believing in a god, that is his prerogative, but he can no longer excuse his belief in the name of reason and moral necessity."

"...and then Noah loaded the dinosaurs onto the ark." Assertions like these seem comical until you realize that many Christian parents aren't kidding when they teach them to their children as facts. Every day, impressionable young minds are conditioned to blindly accept wild biblical tales of floating zoos, talking shrubbery, 900-year-old humans, the undead, curses, levitation, demon/human hybrids and men who obtain super-human strength from the length of their hair. Allegiance to these teachings is expected, often demanded. Curiosity is muted. Doubt is frowned upon as a sin. And for those who dare to raise a dissenting hand, the threat of Hell looms ominously. A former religious radio host raised in the cradle of Christianity, Seth Andrews battled his own doubts for many years. His attempts to reconcile faith and the facts led him to a conclusion previously unthinkable, and this once-true believer ultimately became the founder of one of the most popular atheist communities on the internet.

Star Map: A Journey of Faith, Doubt, and Meaning is a touching and deeply personal philosophical memoir about a young man's wrestling match with fanatical faith and his frantic search for truth and meaning. Against the backdrop of pressing social issues of the 1960s such as the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement, Lewis Vaughn's journey transforms him from a young Christian fundamentalist to a disillusioned agnostic to an atheist seeker of meaning in a godless world. A single horrifying moment begins the breakdown of his faith, and the following examination of his faith's tenets eventually erodes it completely. But the struggle to survive the ravages of doubt is only half the tale. After the collapse of his religious beliefs and the sense of purpose it imparted, he feverishly sets out to discover whether there could be any meaning in life at all without religion. Along the way he stumbles on the strongest empirical argument against the reliability of faith as a source of knowledge, and sees that life does indeed have meaning without religion. In the end, he never regains the faith he lost, but finds something better.

The research studies included in this Special Issue highlight the fundamental contribution of the knowledge of environmental history to conscious and efficient environment conservation and management. The long-term perspective of the dynamics that govern the human–climate ecosystem is becoming one of the main focuses of interest in biological and earth system sciences. Multidisciplinary bio-geo-archaeo investigations into the underlying processes of human impact on the landscape are crucial to envisage possible future scenarios of biosphere responses to global warming and biodiversity losses. This Special Issue seeks to engage an interdisciplinary dialog on the dynamic interactions between nature and society, focusing on long-term environmental data as an essential tool for better-informed landscape management decisions to achieve an equilibrium between conservation and sustainable resource exploitation.

In this incendiary new work, the controversial author and speaker Peter Rollins proclaims that the Christian faith is not primarily concerned with questions regarding life after death but with the possibility of life before death. In order to unearth this truth, Rollins prescribes a radical and wholesale critique of contemporary Christianity that he calls pyro-theology. It is only as we submit our spiritual practices, religious rituals, and dogmatic affirmations to the flames of fearless interrogation that we come into contact with the reality that Christianity is in the business of transforming our world rather than offering a way of interpreting or escaping it. Belief in the Resurrection means but one thing:

Participation in an Insurrection. "What Pete does in this book is take you to the edge of a cliff where you can see how high you are and how far you would fall if you lost your footing. And just when most writers would kindly pull you back from edge, he pushes you off, and you find yourself without any solid footing, disoriented, and in a bit of a panic...until you realize that your fall is in fact, a form of flying. And it's thrilling." --Rob Bell, author of Love Wins and Velvet Elvis "While others labor to save the Church as they know it, Peter Rollins takes an ax to the roots of the tree. Those who have enjoyed its shade will want to stop him, but his strokes are so clean and true that his motive soon becomes clear: this man trusts the way of death and resurrection so much that he has become fearless of religion." --Barbara Brown Taylor, author of Leaving Church and An Altar in the World "Rollins writes and thinks like a new Bonhoeffer, crucifying the trappings of religion in order to lay bare a radical, religionless and insurrectional Christianity. A brilliant new voice—an activist, a storyteller and a theologian all in one—and not a moment too soon." --John D. Caputo, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion Emeritus, Syracuse University "What does it mean when the Son of God cries out, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me'? Brilliantly, candidly, and faithfully, Rollins wrestles here with that question. You may not agree with his answers and conclusions, but you owe it to yourself and to the Church at large to read what he says." --Phyllis Tickle, author, The Great Emergence "Excellent thinking and excellent writing! I hope this fine book receives the broad reading it deserves. It will change lives, and our understanding of what religion is all about!" -- Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation; Albuquerque, New Mexico

An Evangelical Christian minister walked away from her faith and became an atheist. Raised in the confines of Evangelical Christianity from a young age, Cassie Fox served and sought the God she loved with all of her heart. A true believer, she attended Bible college and became an ordained minister, fervently preaching the Gospel to others with passion. After years of living a life dedicated to her faith in God, she learned information that cast her religious beliefs in a different light. In this raw, transparent, and sometimes heartbreaking autobiography, Cassie Fox shares her gripping journey as she battled and agonized over the implications of her newfound understanding until she ultimately found peace and healing in the least expected of places. Walk through this incredible, life changing story of triumph, and discover the message of optimism and hope she found at the end. Black Sheep: My Journey from Evangelical Christianity to Atheism is an empowering, true story. Buy Black Sheep: My Journey from Evangelical Christianity to Atheism today!

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William Lobdell's journey of faith—and doubt—may be the most compelling spiritual memoir of our time. Lobdell became a born-again Christian in his late 20s when personal problems—including a failed marriage—drove him to his knees in prayer. As a newly minted evangelical, Lobdell—a veteran journalist—noticed that religion wasn't covered well in the mainstream media, and he prayed for the Lord to put him on the religion beat at a major newspaper. In 1998, his prayers were answered when the Los Angeles Times asked him to write about faith. Yet what happened over the next eight years was a roller-coaster of inspiration, confusion, doubt, and soul-searching as his reporting and experiences slowly chipped away at his faith. While reporting on hundreds of stories, he witnessed a disturbing gap between the tenets of various religions and the behaviors of the faithful and their leaders. He investigated religious institutions that acted less ethically than corrupt Wall St. firms. He found few differences between the morals of Christians and atheists. As this evidence piled up, he started to fear that God didn't exist. He explored every doubt, every question—until, finally, his faith collapsed. After the paper agreed to reassign him, he wrote a personal essay in the summer of 2007 that became an international sensation for its honest exploration of doubt. Losing My Religion is a book about life's deepest questions that speaks to everyone: Lobdell understands the longings and satisfactions of the faithful, as well as the unrelenting power of doubt. How he faced that power, and wrestled with it, is must reading for people of faith and nonbelievers alike.

Seth Andrews idolized Rush Limbaugh. He listened to Glenn Beck. He read Ann Coulter. He watched Fox News. He was an

evangelical Christian once tethered to right-wing media, which constantly warned of an attack on American values by liberals and secular humanists. Today, Seth is a liberal and secular humanist. This book explores the Fox News culture, which both reflects and informs American conservatism, shaping public opinion on important issues like religion, government, race, foreign policy, war, protest, LGBT rights, and the Constitution. It's an exposé of conservative media's "closed systems" which constantly feed on (and feed into) public outrage, ignorance, bigotry, and fear. It's also the story of one man's personal journey into a larger and better world.

A journey from faith via evidence. Why a university professor gave up religion and became an unbeliever. Rob J Hyndman is Professor of Statistics at Monash University, Australia. He was a Christadelphian for nearly 30 years, and was well-known as a writer and Bible teacher within the Christadelphian community. He gave up Christianity when he no longer thought that there was sufficient evidence to support belief in the Bible. This is a personal memoir describing Rob's journey of deconversion. Until recently, he was regularly speaking at church conferences internationally, and his books are still used in Bible classes and Sunday Schools around the world. He even helped establish an innovative new church, which became a model for similar churches in other countries. Eventually he came to the view that he was mistaken, and that there was little or no evidence that the Bible was inspired or that God exists. In this book, he reflects on how he was fooled, and why he changed his mind. Whether you agree with his conclusions or not, you will be led to reflect on the nature of faith and evidence, and how they interact.

Unique insights from an atheist's Sunday-morning odyssey When Hemant Mehta was a teenager he stopped believing in God, but he never lost his interest in religion. Mehta is "the eBay atheist," the nonbeliever who auctioned off the opportunity for the winning bidder to send him to church. The auction winner was Jim Henderson, a former pastor and author of *Evangelism Without Additives*. Since then, Mehta has visited a variety of church services—posting his insightful critiques on the Internet and spawning a positive, ongoing dialogue between atheists and believers. *I Sold My Soul on eBay* tells how and why Mehta became an atheist and features his latest church critiques, including descriptions of his visits to some of the best-known churches in the country. His observations will surprise and challenge you, revealing how the church comes across to those outside the faith. Who better than a nonbeliever to offer an eye-opening assessment of how the gospel is being presented—and the elements that enhance or detract from the presentation. Mehta announced prior to his churchgoing odyssey that he would watch for any signs of God's existence. After spending Sunday mornings in some of the nation's leading churches, what happened to the man who sold his soul on eBay? Did attending church change his lack of belief? The answers can be found inside.

This is a story of a true Christian who believed for nearly three decades, having grown up the son of evangelical missionary parents, later becoming a missionary himself. Yet he slowly lost his faith and now no longer holds it. In this part-autobiography, part-expose, Ken traces his journey from evangelical missionary to secular humanist while remaining part of a committed Christian family. He looks back at a number of reasons he remained a believer for over a decade after his initial doubts began at university, critically evaluating each one in a separate chapter. Whether or not you agree with Ken's conclusions, you will find his journey and his reasons for taking it fascinating and informative. You will end up better understanding, if not appreciating, the mind of apostates whose desire is to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

Have you been harmed by toxic religion? Learn how to recover and reclaim your life. Psychologist Marlene Winell is uniquely qualified to address the subject of this book. In addition to her personal experience with leaving fundamentalist religion, she has worked with clients recovering from religion for 28 years. She is known for coining the term Religious Trauma Syndrome. *Leaving the Fold* is a self-help book that examines the effects of authoritarian religion (fundamentalist Christianity in particular) on individuals who leave the faith. The concrete steps for healing are useful for anyone in recovery from toxic religion. In this book you'll discover: - what you can expect about stages of religious recovery - information about the key issues of recovery - relevant family dynamics - the power of manipulations - motivations for belonging and for leaving religion - specific steps for healing and reclaiming life - further steps for rebuilding life in the present *Leaving the Fold* is the only self-help psychology book on the subject of religious recovery. The accessible, compassionate writing is ideal for the reader who needs clear information and concrete help. Buy *Leaving the Fold* and begin your healing journey today

This practical guide--written with humility, compassion, and understanding--helps parents teach their children about standing up to religious proselytization and recognizing all forms of discrimination that hamper human dignity and democracy. It's for parents who wish for their children to question everything and reach their own conclusions based on verifiable evidence. Above all, Arel makes the argument that parents should lead by example--both by speaking candidly about the importance of secularism and by living an unabashedly secular life. "With stories by women from a wide range of religious communities--including Evangelical Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, Calvinist, Moonie, the Unification Church, and Jehovah's Witnesses--the writers in *Beyond Belief* pull back a heavy curtain to reveal what they love about their lives within these communities, along with the pain that comes from the rigid expectations and diminishment of women so often built into religious orthodoxy."--Back cover.

"Honest, like down-to-the-core honest, beyond what most people are capable of, especially in public on the topic of faith." —Kelly Corrigan, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Middle Place* In the tradition of Barbara Brown Taylor and Sue Monk Kidd, Sarah Sentilles offers a poignant, beautifully wrought memoir of her personal crisis of faith. Sentilles was on the way to becoming a priest when she ultimately faced the truth: she no longer believed. Her moving story examines the question of how you leave the most powerful being in the universe—and, if you do, where do you go? *Breaking Up with God* is an inspiring reflection no matter where you stand on the matter of faith.

This book uses evolutionary psychology as a lens to explain religious violence and oppression. The author, a clinical psychologist, examines religious scriptures, rituals, and canon law, highlighting the many ways in which our evolutionary legacy has shaped the development of religion and continues to profoundly influence its expression. The book focuses on the image of God as the dominant male in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This traditional God concept is seen as a reflection of the "dominant ape" paradigm so evident in the hierarchical social structures of primates, with whom we have a strong genetic connection. The author describes the main features of male-dominated primate social hierarchies—specifically, the role of the alpha male as the protector of the group; his sexual dominance and use of violence and oppression to attain food, females, and territory; in-group altruism vs. out-group hostility (us vs. them); and displays of dominance and submission to establish roles within the social hierarchy. The parallels between these features of primate society and human religious rituals and concepts make it clear that religion, especially its oppressive and violent tendencies, is rooted in the deep evolutionary past. This incisive analysis goes a long way toward explaining the historic and ongoing violence committed in the name of religion.

Atheism's leading lights have long been intellectuals raised in the secular and academic worlds: Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens. By contrast, Jerry DeWitt was born and bred into the church and was in fact a Pentecostal preacher before arriving at atheism through an extraordinary dialogue with faith that spanned more than a quarter of a century. *Hope After Faith* is his account of that journey. DeWitt was a pastor in the town of DeRidder, Louisiana, and was a fixture of the community. In private, however, he'd begun to

question his faith. Late one night in May 2011, a member of his flock called seeking prayer for her brother who had been in a serious accident. As DeWitt searched for the right words to console her, speech failed him, and he found that the faith which once had formed the cornerstone of his life had finally crumbled to dust. When it became public knowledge that DeWitt was now an atheist, he found himself shunned by much of DeRidder's highly religious community, losing nearly everything he'd known. DeWitt's struggle for identity and meaning mirrors the one currently facing millions of people around the world. With both agnosticism and atheism entering the mainstream—one in five Americans now claim no religious affiliation, according to a recent study—the moment has arrived for a new atheist voice, one that is respectful of faith and religious traditions yet warmly embraces a life free of religion, finding not skepticism and cold doubt but rather profound meaning and hope. *Hope After Faith* is the story of one man's evolution toward a committed and considered atheism, one driven by humanism, a profound moral dimension, and a happiness and self-confidence obtained through living free of fear.

For more than twenty years, Charles Templeton was a major figure in the church in Canada and the United States. During the 1950s, he and Billy Graham were the two most successful exponents of mass evangelism in North America. Templeton spoke nightly to stadium crowds of up to thirty thousand people. However, increasing doubts about the validity of the Old Testament and the teachings of the Christian church finally brought about a crisis in his faith and in 1957 he resigned from the ministry. In *Farewell to God*, Templeton speaks out about his reasons for the abandonment of his faith. In straightforward language, Templeton deals with such subjects as the Creation fable, racial prejudice in the Bible, the identity of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus' alienation from his family, the second-class status of women in the church, the mystery of evil, the illusion that prayer works, why there is suffering and death, and the loss of faith in God. He concludes with a positive personal statement: "I Believe."

For about two decades John W. Loftus was a devout evangelical Christian, an ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and an ardent apologist for Christianity. With three degrees—in philosophy, theology, and philosophy of religion—he was adept at using rational argumentation to defend the faith. But over the years, doubts about the credibility of key Christian tenets began to creep into his thinking. By the late 1990s he experienced a full-blown crisis of faith. In this honest appraisal of his journey from believer to atheist, the author carefully explains the experiences and the reasoning process that led him to reject religious belief. The original edition of this book was published in 2006 and reissued in 2008. Since that time, Loftus has received a good deal of critical feedback from Christians and skeptics alike. In this revised and expanded edition, the author addresses criticisms of the original, adds new argumentation and references, and refines his presentation. For every issue he succinctly summarizes the various points of view and provides references for further reading. In conclusion, he describes the implications of life without belief in God, some liberating, some sobering. This frank critique of Christian belief from a former insider will interest freethinkers as well as anyone with doubts about the claims of religion.

Tim Sledge pulls back the curtain on Southern Baptist life as he chronicles nearly four decades of ministry in this highly personal, sometimes painful, and frequently provocative spiritual autobiography. Part memoir, part exposé, part polemic—this is an account of failures as well as accomplishments—and very nearly a case study in how faith may begin, how it evolves, and how it can fall apart. Sledge traces the childhood origins of his sincere faith, his efforts at spiritual obedience, his theological education, his climb up the ladder in ministry, his insights into the challenges of growth-oriented leadership, and his pioneering work in faith-based recovery ministries that ultimately guided participants in 20,000 support groups across the U.S. A recurring theme in his story is coming to grips with the significance of being an adult child of an alcoholic. After a fall from grace and a growing awareness that faith no longer worked for him, his journey took a new direction that required examining alternatives to his former belief system including Deism, agnosticism, humanism, and atheism. Ultimately, he found new ways to live a positive, value-driven life and emerged as a new version of the same person he had always been, still interested in creating avenues for personal growth in the lives of others. *Goodbye Jesus* is a relatable and thoughtful read for those seeking to better understand the evangelical mindset, for Christians who are questioning their faith, for ministers trying to decide whether to stay or go, and for those who have left their faith and are dealing with its loss.

The two-volume *Cambridge History of Atheism* offers an authoritative and up to date account of a subject of contemporary interest. Comprised of sixty essays by an international team of scholars, this History is comprehensive in scope. The essays are written from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including religious studies, philosophy, sociology, and classics. Offering a global overview of the subject, from antiquity to the present, the volumes examine the phenomenon of unbelief in the context of Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jewish societies. They explore atheism and the early modern Scientific Revolution, as well as the development of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and its continuing implications. The History also includes general survey essays on the impact of scepticism, agnosticism and atheism, as well as contemporary assessments of thinking. Providing essential information on the nature and history of atheism, *The Cambridge History of Atheism* will be indispensable for both scholarship and teaching, at all levels.

Did you know God forbids the tying of shoelaces on Saturday? Or that humans emit an color aura which can only be discerned with a Third Eye? That bountiful harvest requires the flinging of a live goat from a church bell tower? That instead of wishing upon a star, we can wish upon a...cow? Well into the 21st century, our species continues to participate in beliefs and customs that seem more suited to the Bronze Age than the Information Age, some of which involve poisonous snakes, holy smoke, urine bubbles, crystals, tarot cards, aliens, costumed virgins and, of course, an offering plate. Join Seth Andrews for a random romp across the planet and a humorous look at some of humanity's sacred cows.

*God Bless America* lifts the veil on strange and unusual religious beliefs and practices in the modern-day United States. Do Satanists really sacrifice babies? Do exorcisms involve swearing and spinning heads? Are the Amish allowed to drive cars and use computers? Taking a close look at snake handling, new age spirituality, Santeria spells, and satanic rituals, this book offers more than mere armchair research, taking you to an exorcism and a polygamist compound—and allowing you to sit among the beards and bonnets in a Mennonite church and to hear L. Ron Hubbard's stories told as sermons during a Scientology service. From the Amish to Voodoo, the beliefs and practices explored in this book may be unorthodox—and often dangerous—but they are always fascinating. While some of them are dying out, and others are gaining popularity with a modern audience, all offer insight into the future of religion in the United States—and remind that fact is often stranger than fiction.

Religious fundamentalists and biblical literalists present any number of arguments that attempt to disprove evolution. Those with a sympathetic ear often fail to critically examine these creationist claims, leading to an ill-informed public and, perhaps more troubling, ill-advised public policy. As Aron Ra makes clear, however, every single argument deployed by creationists in their attacks on evolution is founded on fundamental scientific, religious, and historical falsehoods—all of them. Among their most popular claims is that evolution is a religion, that there are no transitional species, that there are no beneficial mutations, and that supposedly sacred scripture is the infallible word of God. Yet, as the evidence and data plainly show, each of these claims is demonstrably and unequivocally false. There is simply no truth to creationism whatsoever, and the entire enterprise rests on a foundation of falsehoods. This book explains and exposes the worst of these lies, and should be read by all who honestly care about following the evidence no matter where it might lead in pursuit of the truth. Great journeys often start with a single question. For D. K. Evans, a newly married professional in the Christian-dominated South, that question was, "Why Do I Believe in God?" That simple query led him on a years-long search to better understand the nature of religion and faith, particularly as it applies to the Black community. While many taking such a journey today might immerse themselves in the writing of Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens, Evans took inspiration not only from John Henrik Clarke, Yosef-Ben

Jochannan, Hubert Harrison, and John G. Jackson, champions of a rich Black tradition of challenging religious orthodoxy, but also from many others in his own community who had similarly come to question their core religious beliefs. While this journey eventually led him to discount the notion of God, he calls on all to ask their own questions, particularly those within the Black community who act on blind faith. While their own journey might not lead to his truth, he acknowledges, that is the only way they will ever emancipate themselves from the truths thrust on them by others and arrive at their most important truth—their own.

"An essential feature of religious experience across many cultures is the intuitive feeling of God's presence. More than any rituals or doctrines, it is this experience that anchors religious faith, yet it has been largely ignored in the scientific literature on religion. This book delves into the biological origins of this compelling feeling, attributing it to innate neural circuitry that evolved to promote the mother-child bond. Dr. Wathey, a veteran neuroscientist, argues that evolution has programmed the infant brain to expect the presence of a loving being who responds to the child's needs. As the infant grows into adulthood, this innate feeling is eventually transferred to the realm of religion, where it is reactivated through the symbols, imagery, and rituals of worship. The author interprets our various conceptions of God in biological terms as supernormal stimuli that fill an emotional and cognitive vacuum left over from infancy. These insights shed new light on some of the most vexing puzzles of religion, like the popular belief in a God who is judgmental and punishing, yet also unconditionally loving; the extraordinary tenacity of faith; the greater religiosity of women

Christopher Hitchens, described in the London Observer as "one of the most prolific, as well as brilliant, journalists of our time" takes on his biggest subject yet—the increasingly dangerous role of religion in the world. In the tradition of Bertrand Russell's *Why I Am Not a Christian* and Sam Harris's recent bestseller, *The End Of Faith*, Christopher Hitchens makes the ultimate case against religion. With a close and erudite reading of the major religious texts, he documents the ways in which religion is a man-made wish, a cause of dangerous sexual repression, and a distortion of our origins in the cosmos. With eloquent clarity, Hitchens frames the argument for a more secular life based on science and reason, in which hell is replaced by the Hubble Telescope's awesome view of the universe, and Moses and the burning bush give way to the beauty and symmetry of the double helix.

In much of the Muslim world, religion is the central foundation upon which family, community, morality, and identity are built. The inextricable embedment of religion in Muslim culture has forced a new generation of non-believing Muslims to face the heavy costs of abandoning their parents' religion: disowned by their families, marginalized from their communities, imprisoned, or even sentenced to death by their governments. Struggling to reconcile the Muslim society he was living in as a scientist and physician and the religion he was being raised in, Ali A. Rizvi eventually loses his faith. Discovering that he is not alone, he moves to North America and promises to use his new freedom of speech to represent the voices that are usually quashed before reaching the mainstream media—the Atheist Muslim. In *The Atheist Muslim*, we follow Rizvi as he finds himself caught between two narrative voices he cannot relate to: extreme Islam and anti-Muslim bigotry in a post-9/11 world. *The Atheist Muslim* recounts the journey that allows Rizvi to criticize Islam—as one should be able to criticize any set of ideas—without demonizing his entire people. Emotionally and intellectually compelling, his personal story outlines the challenges of modern Islam and the factors that could help lead it toward a substantive, progressive reformation.

Dating. Isn't there a better way? Reorder your romantic life in the light of God's word and find more fulfillment than the dating game could ever give - a life of purposeful singleness.

**#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Over two million copies sold!** "Packed with incredible insight about what it means to be a woman today."—Reese Witherspoon (Reese's Book Club Pick) In her most revealing and powerful memoir yet, the activist, speaker, bestselling author, and "patron saint of female empowerment" (People) explores the joy and peace we discover when we stop striving to meet others' expectations and start trusting the voice deep within us. **NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY O: The Oprah Magazine • The Washington Post • Cosmopolitan • Marie Claire • Bloomberg • Parade •** "Untamed will liberate women—emotionally, spiritually, and physically. It is phenomenal."—Elizabeth Gilbert, author of *City of Girls* and *Eat Pray Love* This is how you find yourself. There is a voice of longing inside each woman. We strive so mightily to be good: good partners, daughters, mothers, employees, and friends. We hope all this striving will make us feel alive. Instead, it leaves us feeling weary, stuck, overwhelmed, and underwhelmed. We look at our lives and wonder: Wasn't it all supposed to be more beautiful than this? We quickly silence that question, telling ourselves to be grateful, hiding our discontent—even from ourselves. For many years, Glennon Doyle denied her own discontent. Then, while speaking at a conference, she looked at a woman across the room and fell instantly in love. Three words flooded her mind: There She Is. At first, Glennon assumed these words came to her from on high. But she soon realized they had come to her from within. This was her own voice—the one she had buried beneath decades of numbing addictions, cultural conditioning, and institutional allegiances. This was the voice of the girl she had been before the world told her who to be. Glennon decided to quit abandoning herself and to instead abandon the world's expectations of her. She quit being good so she could be free. She quit pleasing and started living. Soulful and uproarious, forceful and tender, *Untamed* is both an intimate memoir and a galvanizing wake-up call. It is the story of how one woman learned that a responsible mother is not one who slowly dies for her children, but one who shows them how to fully live. It is the story of navigating divorce, forming a new blended family, and discovering that the brokenness or wholeness of a family depends not on its structure but on each member's ability to bring her full self to the table. And it is the story of how each of us can begin to trust ourselves enough to set boundaries, make peace with our bodies, honor our anger and heartbreak, and unleash our truest, wildest instincts so that we become women who can finally look at ourselves and say: There She Is. *Untamed* shows us how to be brave. As Glennon insists: The braver we are, the luckier we get.

The author presents a memoir of his personal struggle and transformation from Christian to atheist along with his perspectives on Christian thought and beliefs.

A former preacher tell why he abandoned the guidance of the Bible to follow the dictates of own conscience.

While belief in religious supernatural claims is waning throughout the West, evidence suggests belief in nonreligious supernatural claims is on the rise. What explains this contradiction? How can a society with a falling belief in God have a rising belief in ghosts, psychic powers, ancient astronauts, and other supernatural or pseudo-scientific phenomena? Taking the same anthropological approach he employed in his notable studies of religion, atheist author and activist David G. McAfee turns his attention to nonreligious faith-based claims. Whether going undercover as a medium, getting tested at Scientology headquarters in Los Angeles, or interviewing celebrity paranormalists and famous skeptics, he

leaves no stone unturned in his investigation. As in the case of religion, he finds an unwillingness among "believers" to critically examine their most closely held convictions. Only once individuals honestly assess their own sacred cows will they be able to ensure that their beliefs conform to the known facts—and that our decisions as a society are based on the best available evidence.

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