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Building on the philosophies of the social sciences and of religion, the book is concerned with the interplay between the inner powers of individuals and the structures of their societies and also with how these inner powers affect how they see outer realities. Dorothy Emmet looks at persons in a world of impersonal processes. She is critical of the notion of a personal God, but sees the emergence of personal activities as constrained but also sustained through 'an enabling universe'.

This volume reviews the current state of research on the most important Ephesian projects offering evidence for religious activity during the Roman period. The essays cover a wide range of materials and question traditional understandings of material culture in Ephesos.

It is now generally accepted that the structure and function of the human body deeply influence the nature of human thought. As a consequence, our religious experiences are at least partially determined by our sensory organs, emotional programs, sexual sensibilities, and the neural framework of our brains. In *Spirituality in the Flesh*, Robert C. Fuller investigates how studying the body can help us to answer the

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profoundest spiritual questions. Why is it that some religious traditions assign spiritual currency to pain? How do neurochemically driven emotions, such as fear, shape our religious actions? What is the relationship between chemically altered states of consciousness and religious innovation? Using recent biological research to illuminate religious beliefs and practices, Fuller delves into topics as diverse as apocalypticism, nature religion, Native American peyotism, and the sexual experimentalism of nineteenth-century communal societies, in every case seeking middle ground between the arguments currently emanating from scientists and humanists. He takes most scientific interpreters to task for failing to understand the inherently cultural aspects of embodied experience even as he chides most religion scholars for ignoring new knowledge about the biological substrates of human thought and behavior. Comfortable with the language of scientific analysis and sympathetic to the inherently subjective aspects of religious events, Fuller introduces the biological study of religion by joining together this era's unprecedented understanding of bodily states with an expert's knowledge of religious phenomena. Culling together insights from scientific observations, historical allusions, and literary references, *Spirituality in the Flesh* offers a bold look at the biological underpinnings of religion and opens up new and exciting agendas for understanding the nature and value of human religiosity. Originally published in 1997, *Medieval Liturgy* is a unique and interesting collection of nine essays that explores medieval liturgy from three distinct perspectives: historical, liturgical, and theological. The book includes

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contributions from eminent scholars of the time and discusses the development of 9th to 11th century ordines, the meaning of the Mass in the 12th and 13th centuries, medieval preaching, ordination practices, popular penance practices, marriage rites, the role of music in Eucharistic liturgy, and the relationship between liturgical architectural space and theology.

Winner of the Gustave O. Arlt Award in the Humanities
Three understandings of the nature of religion--religion as experience, symbolic meaning, and power--have dominated scholarly discussions, in succession, for the past hundred years. Proponents of each of these three approaches have tended to downplay, ignore, or actively criticize the others. But why should the three approaches be at odds? Religion as it is practiced involves experiences, meanings, and power, so students of religion should attend to all three. Furthermore, theorists of religion should have an account that carefully conceptualizes all three aspects, without regarding any of them as more basic than the others. *Visions of Religion* provides just such an account. Stephen S. Bush examines influential proponents of the three visions, arguing that each approach offers substantial and lasting contributions to the study of religion, although each requires revision. Bush rehabilitates the concepts of experience and meaning, two categories that are much maligned these days. In doing so, he shows the extent to which these categories are implicated in matters of social power. As for power, the book argues that the analysis of power requires attention to meaning and experience. *Visions of Religion* accomplishes all this by articulating a

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social practical theory of religion that can account for all three aspects, even as it incorporates them into a single theoretical framework.

By arguing for an approach to religious plurality shaped by openness towards the religious other and resistance against making all traditions the same, this book analyses interreligious topics from an angle inspired by pragmatism.

From the 1830s to the Civil War, Americans could be found putting each other into trances for fun and profit in parlors, on stage, and in medical consulting rooms. They were performing mesmerism. Surprisingly central to literature and culture of the period, mesmerism embraced a variety of phenomena, including mind control, spirit travel, and clairvoyance. Although it had been debunked by Benjamin Franklin in late eighteenth-century France, the practice nonetheless enjoyed a decades-long resurgence in the United States. Emily Ogden here offers the first comprehensive account of those boom years. Credulity tells the fascinating story of mesmerism's spread from the plantations of the French Antilles to the textile factory cities of 1830s New England. As it proliferated along the Eastern seaboard, this occult movement attracted attention from Ralph Waldo Emerson's circle and ignited the nineteenth-century equivalent of flame wars in the major newspapers. But mesmerism was not simply the last gasp of magic in modern times. Far from being magicians themselves, mesmerists claimed to provide the first rational means of manipulating the credulous human tendencies that had underwritten past

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superstitions. Now, rather than propping up the powers of oracles and false gods, these tendencies served modern ends such as labor supervision, education, and mediated communication. Neither an atavistic throwback nor a radical alternative, mesmerism was part and parcel of the modern. Credulity offers us a new way of understanding the place of enchantment in secularizing America.

Effective science teaching requires creativity, imagination, and innovation. In light of concerns about American science literacy, scientists and educators have struggled to teach this discipline more effectively.

Science Teaching Reconsidered provides undergraduate science educators with a path to understanding students, accommodating their individual differences, and helping them grasp the methods--and the wonder--of science.

What impact does teaching style have? How do I plan a course curriculum? How do I make lectures, classes, and laboratories more effective? How can I tell what students are thinking? Why don't they understand? This handbook provides productive approaches to these and other questions. Written by scientists who are also educators, the handbook offers suggestions for having a greater impact in the classroom and provides resources for further research.

A dramatic rise in "nones"—individuals without religious affiliation—has taken place in less than two decades. Many of these people are seekers who self-identify as "spiritual but not religious (SBNR)." In *Belief without Borders*, theologian Linda Mercadante, once an SBNR herself, sets out to find them and let them speak for

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Religion, Welfare, and Social Service Provision:

Common Ground delves deeply into the partnerships forged between religious communities, government agencies and nonprofits to deliver social services to the needy. These pages offer a considered examination of how local faith entities have served those in their midst, and how the provision of those services has been impacted by evolving social policies. This foundational volume brings together the work of more than two dozen leading researchers, each providing long overdue scholarly inquiry into religiously affiliated helping and the many possibilities that it holds for effective cooperation. A leading scholar sheds critical light on the seemingly revelatory events behind new religions and spiritual movements Unseen presences. Apparitions. Hearing voices. Although some people would find such experiences to be distressing and seek clinical help, others perceive them as transformative. Occasionally, these unusual phenomena give rise to new spiritual paths or religious movements. Revelatory Events provides fresh insights into what is perhaps the bedrock of all religious belief—the claim that otherworldly powers are active in human affairs. Ann Taves looks at Mormonism, Alcoholics Anonymous, and A Course in Miracles—three cases in which insiders claimed that a spiritual presence guided the emergence of a new spiritual path. In the 1820s, Joseph Smith, Jr., reportedly translated the Book of Mormon from ancient gold plates unearthed with the help of an angel. Bill Wilson cofounded AA after having an ecstatic experience while

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hospitalized for alcoholism in 1934. Helen Schucman scribed the words of an inner voice that she attributed to Jesus, which formed the basis of her 1976 best-selling self-study course. In each case, Taves argues, the sense of a guiding presence emerged through a complex, creative interaction between a founding figure with unusual mental abilities and an initial set of collaborators who were drawn into the process by diverse motives of their own. A major work of scholarship, this compelling and accessible book traces the very human processes behind such events.

Annotation Ann Taves addresses the subject of religious experience directly and the problems of reductionism and humanistic fears of the sciences indirectly and by example. The orientation of this book is practical more than philosophical.

How is religious experience to be identified, described, analyzed and explained? Is it independent of concepts, beliefs, and practices? How can we account for its authority? Under what conditions might a person identify his or her experience as religious? Wayne Proudfoot shows that concepts, beliefs, and linguistic practices are presupposed by the rules governing this identification of an experience as religious. Some of these characteristics can be understood by attending to the conditions of experience, among which are beliefs about how experience is to be explained.

Technical advances in the life and medical sciences have revolutionised our understanding of the brain, while the emerging disciplines of social, cognitive, and affective neuroscience continue to reveal the

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connections of the higher cognitive functions and emotional states associated with religious experience to underlying brain states. At the same time, a host of developing theories in psychology and anthropology posit evolutionary explanations for the ubiquity and persistence of religious beliefs and the reports of religious experiences across human cultures, while gesturing toward physical bases for these behaviours. What is missing from this literature is a strong voice speaking to these behavioural and social scientists - as well as to the intellectually curious in the religious studies community - from the perspective of a brain scientist. Florescano traces the spread of the worship of the Plumed Serpent, and the multiplicity of interpretations that surround the god, by comparing the Palenque inscriptions, the Vienna Codex, the Historia de los Mexicanos, the Popul Vuh, and numerous other texts. Do you have a real relationship with God, or do you just have a religion? Do you know God, or do you just know about God? In *How Big Is Your God?* Paul Coutinho, SJ, challenges us to grow stronger and deeper in our faith and in our relationship with God—a God whose love knows no bounds. To help us on our way, Coutinho introduces us to people in various world religions—from Hindu friends to Buddhist teachers to St. Ignatius of Loyola—who have shaped his spiritual life and made possible his deep, personal relationship with God. In a study of religious and spiritual tradition, the author of *Ayythia* and *By the Grace of Guile* contends that religion is a series of strategies to influence human nature so that people may think, feel, and act in ways that are good for them, both

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individually and collectively.

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Bruce Lincoln is one of the most prominent advocates within religious studies for an uncompromisingly critical approach to the phenomenon of religion—historians of religions, he believes, should resist the preferred narratives and self-understanding of religions themselves, especially when their stories are endowed with sacred origins and authority. In *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars*, Lincoln assembles a collection of essays that both illustrates and reveals the benefits of his methodology, making a case for a critical religious studies that starts with skepticism but is neither cynical nor crude. The book begins with Lincoln's "Theses on Method" and ends with "The (Un)discipline of Religious Studies," in which he unsparingly considers the failings of uncritical and nonhistorical approaches to the study of religions. In between, Lincoln presents new examinations of problems in ancient religions and relates these cases to larger comparative themes. While bringing to light important features of the formation of pantheons and the constructions of demons, chaos, and the dead, Lincoln demonstrates that historians of religions should take religious things—inspired scriptures, sacred centers, salvific rites, communities graced by divine favor—as the theories of interested humans that shape perception, community, and experiences. As he shows, it is for their terrestrial influence, and not their sacred origins, that religious phenomena merit consideration by the historian. Tackling many questions central to religious study, *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars* will be a touchstone for the history of religions in the twenty-first century.

For nearly thirty years, a scientific revolution has taken place in the religious studies departments of several North American and British universities--and the results are considerable, obliging us to envisage new ways of conceiving of this academic field. While the History of Religions tended to

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rest in the shade and guardianship of past authorities, this critical current has re-examined the discipline's a priori positions, its favourite arguments, its long prehistory within Euro/Christian culture, but also its numerous ethnocentric prejudices. The first part of the volume considers anew the origins and Christian history of the notion of religion. This starting point then allows us to identify dead ends and contradictions within the traditional History of Religions approach. The second part is dedicated to the synthetic presentation of the concepts, methods, and controversies, which distinguish this current. Following this are two related contributions devoted to two major case studies: "Colonialism and Cultural Imperialism" and "The Invention of Hinduism and Shintoism". Finally, in the third and last part of the book, this trend itself is critically examined. The author identifies some of the paradoxes, gaps, and aporias that this approach has already gathered during its short existence.

Analyzes the American evangelical experience, drawing on intimate interviews with members of the Vineyard church while explaining the scientific aspects of intensely practiced prayer and collective supernatural experiences.

In the 1960s, Americans combined psychedelics with Buddhist meditation to achieve direct experience through altered states of consciousness. As some practitioners became more committed to Buddhism, they abandoned the use of psychedelics in favor of stricter mental discipline, but others carried on with the experiment, advancing a fascinating alchemy called psychedelic Buddhism. Many think exploration with psychedelics in Buddhism faded with the revolutionary spirit of the sixties, but the underground practice has evolved into a brand of religiosity as eclectic and challenging as the era that created it. Altered States combines interviews with well-known figures in American Buddhism and psychedelic spirituality—including Lama Surya

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Das, Erik Davis, Geoffrey Shugen Arnold Sensei, Rick Strassman, and Charles Tart—and personal stories of everyday practitioners to define a distinctly American religious phenomenon. The nuanced perspective that emerges, grounded in a detailed history of psychedelic religious experience, adds critical depth to debates over the controlled use of psychedelics and drug-induced mysticism. The book also opens new paths of inquiry into such issues as re-enchantment, the limits of rationality, the biochemical and psychosocial basis of altered states of consciousness, and the nature of subjectivity.

Many regard religious experience as the essence of religion, arguing that narratives might be created and rituals invented but that these are always secondary to the original experience itself. However, the concept of "experience" has come under increasing fire from a range of critics and theorists. This Reader presents writings from both those who assume the existence and possible universality of religious experience and those who question the very rhetoric of "experience". Bringing together both classic and contemporary writings, the Reader showcases differing disciplinary approaches to the study of religious experience: philosophy, literary and cultural theory, history, psychology, anthropology; feminist theory; as well as writings from within religious studies. The essays are structured into pairs, with each essay separately introduced with information on its historical and intellectual context. The ultimate aim of the Reader is to enable students to explore religious experience as rhetoric created to authorize social identities. The book will be an invaluable introduction to the key ideas and approaches for students of Religion, as well as Sociology and Anthropology. CONTRIBUTORS: Robert Desjarlais, Diana Eck, William James, Craig Martin, Russell T. McCutcheon, Wayne Proudfoot, Robert Sharf, Ann Taves, Charles Taylor,

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Read Free Religious Experience Reconsidered A Building Block Approach To The Study Of Religion And Other Special Things By Taves Joachim Wach, Joan Wallach Scott, Raymond Williams

In June 1981, six young Croats in the village of Medjugorje, in the former Yugoslavia, reported that the Virgin Mary had appeared to them. The Medjugorje visionaries say that Mary has returned every day since then, bringing them important messages from heaven to convey to the world. Throughout history, people have reported encountering extraordinary religious experiences—apparitions of the Virgin Mary, visions of Jesus Christ, weeping statues and icons, the stigmata, physical healings and miracles, and experiences of the afterlife—and interpreted them as supernatural in origin. Scholars have often tried to reinterpret such experiences, including those described by the great mystics like Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa of Avila, into natural or psychopathological categories, such as hysteria, hallucination, delusion, epileptic seizures, psychosis, the workings of the unconscious mind, or fraud. Are such reductionist explanations valid? Over the past three decades the Medjugorje visionaries have been subjected to extensive medical, psychological, and scientific examination, even while undergoing their visionary experiences. Daniel Klimek argues that the case of Medjugorje affords a rare opportunity to understand a deeper dimension of extraordinary religious phenomena. Presenting and analyzing the scientific studies on the visionaries in juxtaposition with the major scholars and debates surrounding religious experience, Klimek concludes that a multidisciplinary approach grants a more holistic and deeper understanding of such extraordinary religious experiences.

He argues that "religion is a construction of European modernity, a construction that authorizes—for Westerners and non-Westerners alike—particular forms of "history making." Over the past decade, religious, secular, and spiritual

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distinctions have broken down, forcing scholars to rethink secularity and its relationship to society. Since classifying a person, activity, or experience as religious or otherwise is an important act of valuation, one that defines the characteristics of a group and its relation to others, scholars are struggling to recast these concepts in our increasingly ambiguous, pluralistic world. This collection considers religious and secular categories and what they mean to those who seek valuable, ethical lives. As they investigate how individuals and groups determine significance, set goals, and attribute meaning, contributors illustrate the ways in which religious, secular, and spiritual designations serve as markers of value. Reflecting on recent ethnographic and historical research, chapters explore contemporary psychical research and liberal American homeschooling; the work of nineteenth and early-twentieth-century American psychologists and French archaeologists; the role of contemporary humanitarian and volunteer organizations based in Europe and India; and the prevalence of highly mediated and spiritualized publics, from international psy-trance festivals to Ghanaian national political contexts. Contributors particularly focus on the role of ambivalence, attachment, and disaffection in the formation of religious, secular, and spiritual identities, resetting research on secular society and contemporary religious life while illuminating what matters in the lives of ordinary individuals.

Focusing on the crossover between the sacred and the secular, this volume gathers the work of media experts, religious historians, sociologists of religion, and

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authorities on American studies and art history.

An examination of all the relevant passages containing the term "Son of Man" in both Matthew and the Parables of Enoch.

The aim of the book is to provide a short and user-friendly introduction and critical discussion of the "building block" approach to religious studies, developed in recent years by Professor Ann (University of California, Santa Barbara) and Associate Professor Egil Asprem (Stockholm University).

Religious belief is one of the most pervasive and ubiquitous characteristics of human society. Religion has shadowed and illuminated human lives since primitive times, shaping the world views of cultures from isolated tribes to vast empires. Starting from the premise that religion is a concept which can be analysed and compared across time and cultures, What is Religion? brings the most up-to-date scholarship to bear on humankind's most enduring creation. The book opens with a brief history of the idea of religion, then divides the study of religion into four essential topics - types, representations, practices, and institutions – and concludes with a final, eye-opening chapter on religion today. Packed with case studies from a wide range of religions, past and present, What is Religion? offers a very current, comprehensive, yet intellectually challenging overview of the history, theories, practices, and study of religion. Accessible, wide-ranging, engaging, and short, What is Religion? is written primarily for undergraduate students in the study of religion, but it will also be invaluable for students of

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anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, and theology as well as anyone interested in how and why humans came and continue to be religious.

Offers a state-of-the-art contribution by providing critical analyses of and creative insights to the nature of religious experience.

Hinduism in Practice offers a unique understanding of the living tradition. Drawing on eye witness reports of Hinduism on the ground, the book provides a reflective context within which practices can be understood and appreciated.

Fits, trances, visions, speaking in tongues, clairvoyance, out-of-body experiences, possession. Believers have long viewed these and similar involuntary experiences as religious--as manifestations of God, the spirits, or the Christ within. Skeptics, on the other hand, have understood them as symptoms of physical disease, mental disorder, group dynamics, or other natural causes. In this sweeping work of religious and psychological history, Ann Taves explores the myriad ways in which believers and detractors interpreted these complex experiences in Anglo-American culture between the mid-eighteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Taves divides the book into three sections. In the first, ranging from 1740 to 1820, she examines the debate over trances, visions, and other involuntary experiences against the politically charged backdrop of Anglo-American evangelicalism, established churches, Enlightenment thought, and a legacy of religious warfare. In the second part, covering 1820 to 1890, she highlights the interplay between popular psychology--particularly

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the ideas of "animal magnetism" and mesmerism--and movements in popular religion: the disestablishment of churches, the decline of Calvinist orthodoxy, the expansion of Methodism, and the birth of new religious movements. In the third section, Taves traces the emergence of professional psychology between 1890 and 1910 and explores the implications of new ideas about the subconscious mind, hypnosis, hysteria, and dissociation for the understanding of religious experience. Throughout, Taves follows evolving debates about whether fits, trances, and visions are natural (and therefore not religious) or supernatural (and therefore religious). She pays particular attention to a third interpretation, proposed by such "mediators" as William James, according to which these experiences are natural and religious. Taves shows that ordinary people as well as educated elites debated the meaning of these experiences and reveals the importance of interactions between popular and elite culture in accounting for how people experienced religion and explained experience. Combining rich detail with clear and rigorous argument, this is a major contribution to our understanding of Protestant revivalism and the historical interplay between religion and psychology.

Martin Heidegger is the 20th century theology philosopher with the greatest importance to theology. A cradle Catholic originally intended for the priesthood, Heidegger's studies in philosophy led him to turn first to Protestantism and then to an atheistic philosophical method. Nevertheless, his writings remained deeply indebted to theological themes and sources, and the question of the nature of his relationship with theology has been a subject of discussion ever since. This

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book offers theologians and philosophers alike a clear account of the directions and the potential of this debate. It explains Heidegger's key ideas, describes their development and analyses the role of theology in his major writings, including his lectures during the National Socialist era. It reviews the reception of Heidegger's thought both by theologians in his own day (particularly in Barth and his school as well as neo-Scholasticism) and more recently (particularly in French phenomenology), and concludes by offering directions for theology's possible future engagement with Heidegger's work.

The essence of religion was once widely thought to be a unique form of experience that could not be explained in neurological, psychological, or sociological terms. In recent decades scholars have questioned the privileging of the idea of religious experience in the study of religion, an approach that effectively isolated the study of religion from the social and natural sciences. *Religious Experience Reconsidered* lays out a framework for research into religious phenomena that reclaims experience as a central concept while bridging the divide between religious studies and the sciences. Ann Taves shifts the focus from "religious experience," conceived as a fixed and stable thing, to an examination of the processes by which people attribute meaning to their experiences. She proposes a new approach that unites the study of religion with fields as diverse as neuroscience, anthropology, sociology, and psychology to better understand how these processes are incorporated into the broader cultural formations we think of as religious or spiritual. Taves addresses a series of key questions: how can we set up studies without obscuring contestations over meaning and value? What is the relationship between experience and consciousness? How can research into consciousness help us access and interpret the experiences of others? Why do

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people individually or collectively explain their experiences in religious terms? How can we set up studies that allow us to compare experiences across times and cultures? Religious Experience Reconsidered demonstrates how methods from the sciences can be combined with those from the humanities to advance a naturalistic understanding of the experiences that people deem religious.

This is the first comprehensive survey in English of research methods in the field of religious studies. It is designed to enable non-specialists and students at upper undergraduate and graduate levels to understand the variety of research methods used in the field. The aim is to create awareness of the relevant methods currently available and to stimulate an active interest in exploring unfamiliar methods, encouraging their use in research and enabling students and scholars to evaluate academic work with reference to methodological issues. A distinguished team of contributors cover a broad spectrum of topics, from research ethics, hermeneutics and interviewing, to Internet research and video-analysis. Each chapter covers practical issues and challenges, the theoretical basis of the respective method, and the way it has been used in religious studies, illustrated by case studies. This book offers a radical new reading of William James's work on the idea of 'religion.' Moving beyond previous psychological and philosophical interpretations, it uncovers a dynamic, imaginative, and critical use of the category of religion. This work argues that we can only fully understand James's work on religion by returning to the ground of his metaphysics of relations and by incorporating literary and historical themes. Author Jeremy Carette develops original perspectives on the influence of James's father and Calvinism, on the place of the body and sex in James, on the significance of George Eliot's novels, and Herbert Spencer's 'unknown,' revealing a social and political discourse of civil

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religion and republicanism and a poetic imagination at the heart of James's understanding of religion. These diverse themes are brought together through a post-structural sensitivity and a recovery of the importance of the French philosopher Charles Renouvier to James's work. This study pushes new boundaries in Jamesian scholarship by reading James with pluralism and from the French tradition. It will be a benchmark text in the reshaping of James and the nineteenth-century foundations of the modern study of 'religion.'

This ground-breaking study sets out a new understanding of transformations in the interaction between religion and political authority throughout history.

Religious Experience Reconsidered
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Princeton University Press

Mara H. Benjamin contends that the physical and psychological work of caring for children presents theologically fruitful but largely unexplored terrain for feminists. Attending to the constant, concrete, and urgent needs of children, she argues, necessitates engaging with profound questions concerning the responsible use of power in unequal relationships, the transformative influence of love, human fragility and vulnerability, and the embeddedness of self in relationships and obligations. Viewing child-rearing as an embodied practice, Benjamin's theological reflection invites a profound reengagement with Jewish sources from the Talmud to modern Jewish philosophy. Her contemporary feminist stance forges a convergence between Jewish theological anthropology and the demands of parental caregiving.

Widely used as a primer, a text and a provocation to critical thinking, 'Studying Religion' aims to develop students' skills. The book clearly explains the methods and theories employed in the study of religion. Essays are offered on a

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range of topics: from the history and functions of religion to public discourse on religion and the classification of religions. The works of key scholars - from Karl Marx, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Rudolf Otto to Mircea Eliade, James G. Frazer, and Sigmund Freud - are analysed and explored. 'Studying Religion' represents a shift away from the traditional focus of describing the exotic or curious religious 'Other' to an examination of how religious behaviours and institutions are studied. The book will be invaluable to students of religious studies.

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