



In the Name of God: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Ethics and Violence

John Teehan

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Religion is one of the most powerful forces running through human history, and although often presented as a force for good, its impact is frequently violent and divisive. This provocative work brings together cutting-edge research from both evolutionary and cognitive psychology to help readers understand the psychological structure of religious morality and the origins of religious violence.

- Introduces a fundamentally new approach to the analysis of religion in a style accessible to the general reader
- Applies insights from evolutionary and cognitive psychology to both Judaism and Christianity, and their texts, to help understand the origins of religious violence
- Argues that religious violence is grounded in the moral psychology of religion
- Illustrates its controversial argument with reference to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and the response to the attacks from both the terrorists and the President. Suggests strategies for beginning to counter the divisive aspects of religion
- Discusses the role of religion and religious criticism in the contemporary world. Argues for a position sceptical of the moral authority of religion, while also critiquing the excesses of the “new atheists” for failing to appreciate the moral contributions of religion
- Awarded Honourable Mention, 2010 Prose Awards

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