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8E6 - WARREN CAMRYN

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.

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

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.

If you don't understand the reason for unbelief, you don't understand the reason for belief. This book is NOT a how-to guide for winning debates with non-believers, or trying to convince atheists there is a God. I spent a decade as an apologist arguing and debating with thousands of unbelievers. I've witnessed hundreds of formal debates between Christians vs atheists, and the one thing that remained unchanged at the end of the day is atheists were still atheists. Nothing changed. Why? There's a reason atheists aren't convinced. It's not because of a lack of evidence for God as they claim. Trying to convince atheists with evidence only presents them with more of what they reject. When a Christian tries to prove God, or rationalize one out of atheism, they do not understand the underlying reason why atheists don't believe. Are atheists asking questions and confronting Christians because they are seeking God? No! Atheists are seeking justification for unbelief. Christians unknowingly give them justification for unbelief by entering The Courtroom of Atheism and answering atheists on their terms. Trying to prove God to one that doesn't believe in God will ultimately give the non-believer justification for unbelief. In this book you'll discover why Christians should never try to prove God to an unbeliever. Doing so demonstrates the Christian disagrees with scripture. You'll also learn the hidden agenda behind the purpose for interrogating Christians. Most importantly, Christians will learn why debating non-believers, and trying to reason with atheists will not bring them to Christ. Far too often people of faith attempt to argue with atheists in hopes to bring them out of atheism only to end up doubting their faith. Why does this happen? If you are curious, this book is for you.

Part auto-biography and part exposé of Ken Daniels' experience and long time belief in Christianity and the questions and answers he's had to ask about with regard to the validity of Christian theories.

A journey from faith via evidence. Why a university professor gave up religion and became an un-

believer. 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.

William Lobbell's journey of faith—and doubt—may be the most compelling spiritual memoir of our time. Lobbell 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, Lobbell—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: Lobbell 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.

The Handbook of Leaving Religion introduces a neglected field of research with the aim to outline previous and contemporary research, and suggest how the topic of leaving religion should be studied in the future. The handbook consists of three sections: 1) Major debates about leaving religion; 2) Case studies and empirical insights; and 3) Theoretical and methodological approaches. Section one provides the reader with an introduction to key terms, historical developments, major controversies and significant cases. Section two includes case studies that illustrate various processes of leaving religion from different perspectives, and each chapter provides new empirical insights. Section three discusses, presents and encourages new approaches to the study of leaving religion.

The Glass Castle meets Educated When Alice Greczyn's parents felt called by God to exchange worldly employment for heavenly provision, they followed their faith into homelessness with five children and a cat in tow. Homeschooled and avowed never to kiss a man until her wedding day, Alice had plans to escape the instability by becoming a missionary nurse—plans that were put on hold with the opening of an unexpected door: the opportunity to be an actress in Hollywood. What followed was a test of faith unlike any she had prepared for, an arranged betrothal she never saw coming, and a psychological shattering that forced her to learn how to survive without the only framework for life she had ever known. This unique coming-of-age story takes place within a Christian subculture that teaches children to be martyrs and women to be silent. Revelatory, vulnerable, and offering catharsis for your own journey through faith and doubt, Wayward is a deeply intelligent memoir of soul-searching—and finding the courage to live in your own truth.

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 min-

ister, 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!

"...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.

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.

For thousands of years, the faithful have honed proselytizing strategies and talked people into believing the truth of one holy book or another. Indeed, the faithful often view converting others as an obligation of their faith—and are trained from an early age to spread their unique brand of religion. The result is a world broken in large part by unquestioned faith. As an urgently needed counter to this tried-and-true tradition of religious evangelism, A Manual for Creating Atheists offers the first-ever guide not for talking people into faith—but for talking them out of it. Peter Boghossian draws on the tools he has developed and used for more than 20 years as a philosopher and educator to teach how to engage the faithful in conversations that will help them value reason and rationality, cast doubt on their religious beliefs, mistrust their faith, abandon superstition and irrationality, and ultimately embrace reason.

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.

The New York Times–bestselling author’s Whitbread Prize–winning debut—“Winterson has mastered both comedy and tragedy in this rich little novel” (The Washington Post Book World). When it first appeared, Jeanette Winterson’s extraordinary debut novel received unanimous international praise, including the prestigious Whitbread Prize for best first fiction. Winterson went on to fulfill that promise, producing some of the most dazzling fiction and nonfiction of the past decade, including her celebrated memoir *Why Be Happy When You Can Be Normal?*. Now required reading in contemporary literature, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is a funny, poignant exploration of a young girl’s adolescence. Jeanette is a bright and rebellious orphan who is adopted into an evangelical household in the dour, industrial North of England and finds herself embroidering grim religious mottoes and shaking her little tambourine for Jesus. But as this budding missionary comes of age, and comes to terms with her unorthodox sexuality, the peculiar balance of her God-fearing household dissolves. Jeanette’s insistence on listening to truths of her own heart and mind—and on reporting them with wit and passion—makes for an unforgettable chronicle of an eccentric, moving passage into adulthood. “If Flannery O’Connor and Rita Mae Brown had collaborated on the coming-out story of a young British girl in the 1960s, maybe they would have approached the quirky and subtle hilarity of Jeanette Winterson’s autobiographical first novel. . . . Winterson’s voice, with its idiosyncratic wit and sensitivity, is one you’ve never heard before.” —Ms. Magazine

Epistemology has flourished in this millennium, with new ideas and approaches of many kinds: Knowledge, Belief, and God shows how these developments can illuminate the philosophy of religion and analytic theology. And philosophy of religion is shown to be a valuable testing-ground for epistemology.--

Before his mysterious disappearance and probable death in 1971, Oscar Zeta Acosta was famous as a Robin Hood Chicano lawyer and notorious as the real-life model for Hunter S. Thompson's "Dr. Gonzo," a fat, pugnacious attorney with a gargantuan appetite for food, drugs, and life on the edge. Written with uninhibited candor and manic energy, this book is Acosta's own account of coming of age as a Chicano in the psychedelic sixties, of taking on impossible cases while breaking all the rules of courtroom conduct, and of scrambling headlong in search of a personal and cultural identity. It is a landmark of contemporary Hispanic-American literature, at once ribald, surreal, and unmistakably authentic.

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. 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.

Welcome to Your Place in a Worldview Minority In an increasingly secular society, those who have a biblical worldview are now a shrinking minority. As mainstream culture grows more hostile toward the Bible’s truths and those who embrace them, you’ll face mounting pressures—from family, friends, media, academia, and government—to change and even abandon your beliefs. But these challenges also create abundant opportunities to stand strong for Christ and shine light to those hurt by the darkness of our day. In *Faithfully Different*, author and apologist Natasha Crain shares how you can live out your faith with conviction, discernment, and courage. You’ll be equipped to identify and respond to today’s most significant worldview pressures, such as cancel culture, secular social justice, progressive Christianity, deconstruction, virtue signaling, and more engage effectively with a world that ridicules biblical truths defend your faith from misguided influences and live as a bold witness for the Lord As the standards of our day mutate and devolve, *Faithfully Different* will give you the insight and encouragement you need to believe, think, and live biblically no matter what you face in these turbulent times.

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.

It is June 2018 as an unusual group of scholars, professors, lecturers, and students gather in a California hotel. They are all attendees of an Apologetics conference intended to join qualified representatives of Christian, Deist, and Atheist thought for a two-week, no-holds-barred debate and discussion of their respective positions that will ultimately be included in a book published after the conference. Evangelical Christianity is represented by advocates of Evidentialist and Presuppositionalist approaches to Apologetics. Catholicism, liberal Christianity, and Deism are also well-supported. The Atheist perspective is advocated by a polemical author and a college professor notorious for attacking the views of his Christian students. As the participants argue over controversial issues such as cosmology, evolution, The Bible, historical evidence for Jesus, the resurrection, biblical prophecies, and the problem of evil, intellectual fireworks result. But what will result when such a volatile and eclectic group is placed face-to-face for more than two weeks? The *Debaters of this Age* is the tale of what happens inside a California hotel in 2018 when a group of intellectuals gather to vigorously discuss the religious issues of our time.

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. Starting with a vivid narrative account of the life-threatening hike that triggered his own mystical experience, biologist John Wathey takes the reader on a scientific journey to find the sources of religious feeling and the illusion of God’s presence. His 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 illusory 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 relative to men; religious obsessions with sex; the mysterious compulsion to pray; the seemingly irrepressible feminine attributes of God, even in traditionally patriarchal religions; and the strange allure of cults. Finally, Dr. Wathey considers the hypothesis that religion evolved to foster reproductive success, arguing that, in an age of potentially ruinous overpopulation, magical thinking has become a luxury we can no longer afford, one that distracts us from urgent threats to our planet. Deeply researched yet elegantly written in a jargon-free and accessible style, this book presents a compelling interpretation of the evolutionary origins of spirituality and religion.

"All thinking men are atheists," Ernest Hemingway famously wrote. True? Here are quips, quotes, and questions from a distinguished assortment of geniuses and jokers, giving readers a chance to decide for themselves.... When I think of all the harm [the bible] has done, I despair of ever writing anything to equal it. Oscar Wilde SAINT, n. A dead sinner revised and edited. Ambrose Bierce There ain't no answer. There ain't going to be any answer. There never has been an answer. That's the answer. Gertrude Stein Do not let yourself be deceived: great intellects are skeptical. Friedrich Nietzsche Millions long for immortality who don't know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday

afternoon. Susan Ertz God is love, but get it in writing. Gypsy Rose Lee Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of our own mind. Ralph Waldo Emerson The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one. George Bernard Shaw

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.

When her husband left Christianity several years into their marriage, Stina Kielsmeier-Cook was left struggling to live the Christian life on her own. In this memoir, she tells the story of her mixed-faith marriage and how she found unexpected community with an order of Catholic nuns, discovering that she was not "spiritually single" after all—and that no one really is.

#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.

Presents a critique of contemporary Christianity, arguing that it is more concerned with transforming the world instead of offering a way to interpret or escape it.

Does Buddhism require faith? Can an atheist or agnostic follow the Buddha’s teachings without believing in reincarnation or organized religion? This is one man’s confession. In his classic *Buddhism Without Beliefs*, Stephen Batchelor offered a profound, secular approach to the teachings of the

Buddha that struck an emotional chord with Western readers. Now, with the same brilliance and boldness of thought, he paints a groundbreaking portrait of the historical Buddha—told from the author's unique perspective as a former Buddhist monk and modern seeker. Drawing from the original Pali Canon, the seminal collection of Buddhist discourses compiled after the Buddha's death by his followers, Batchelor shows us the Buddha as a flesh-and-blood man who looked at life in a radically new way. Batchelor also reveals the everyday challenges and doubts of his own devotional journey—from meeting the Dalai Lama in India, to training as a Zen monk in Korea, to finding his path as a lay teacher of Buddhism living in France. Both controversial and deeply personal, Stephen Batchelor's refreshingly doctrine-free, life-informed account is essential reading for anyone interested in Buddhism.

Growing up in a strict Muslim community in south-east London, Alom Shaha learnt that religion was not to be questioned. Reciting the Qur'an without understanding what it meant was simply a part of life; so, too, was obeying the imam and enduring beatings when he failed to attend the local mosque. But Alom was more drawn to science and its power to illuminate. As a teen, he lived between two worlds: the home controlled by his authoritarian father, and a school alive with books and ideas. In a charming blend of memoir, philosophy and science, Alom explores the questions about faith and the afterlife that we all ponder. This is a book for anyone who wonders what they should believe and how they should live. It's for those who may need the facts and the ideas, as well as the courage, to break free from inherited beliefs. In this powerful narrative, Alom shows that it is possible to live a compassionate, fulfilling and meaningful life without God.

New ideas about the nature of God and Christianity that will give Dawkins' best friends and worst enemies alike some stimulating food for thought Tackling Hawking, Dawkins, Dennett, Hitchens, and a newcomer in the field?the French philosopher Michel Onfray?John Lennox points out some of the most glaring fallacies in the New Atheist approach in this insightful book. Since the twin towers crashed to the ground on September 11, there has been no end to attacks on religion. Claims abound that religion is dangerous, that it kills, and that it poisons everything. And if religion is the problem with the world, say the New Atheists, the answer is simple?get rid of it. Of course, things aren't quite so straightforward. Arguing that the New Atheists' irrational and unscientific methodology leaves them guilty of the very obstinate foolishness they criticize in dogmatic religious folks, this erudite and wide-ranging guide to religion in the modern age packs some debilitating punches and scores big for religious rationalism.

The Bible is a thick, imposing, often unreadable, damnedly religious book. Most people don't have the time or the patience even to attempt reading it. But everyone knows they're supposed to know what's in the world's most widely quoted book. To whom can you turn? Ken Smith, co-author of the best-selling Roadside America books, goes where traditional Bible authorities fear to tread. Ken's Guide to the Bible takes you directly to the Good Book's naughty parts and wastes no time on the stuff you already know. With hammerhead precision and pig-iron wit, this compact volume lays bare all the sex, gore, and lunacy that the Bible has to offer. Read Ken's Guide to the Bible and you'll know more about the Good Book than most televangelists, Christian rockers, and conservative school-board members put together!

Seth Andrews wasn't an idiot during his thirty years as an evangelical Christian. He wasn't unintelligent, nor did his IQ shift when he ultimately left religion entirely. He considered himself thoughtful, moral, reasonable, and at least as smart as the average person. In other words, he wasn't an idiot. Yet strangely, he often sounded like one. In any other context, Christians would likely smirk, scoff, or recoil at many of their "normal" beliefs and practices: reenacted Easter crucifixions, eating monthly communion "flesh," singing hymns about being washed in blood, and the embrace of a Bible containing scripture verses about golden hemorrhoids, apocalypse dragons, and human sacrifice, So what gives? Are these notions embraced only because they're familiar? Do they make any sense? And do they cause otherwise reasonable people to sound like idiots? Seth Andrews admits that, for himself, the answer was a definite yes. For everyone else? Read the book and decide. Jennifer Knapp's meteoric rise in the Christian music industry ended abruptly when she walked away and came out publicly as a lesbian. This is her story—of coming to Christ, of building a career, of admitting who she is, and of how her faith remained strong through it all. At the top of her career in the Christian music industry, Jennifer Knapp quit. A few years later, she publicly revealed she is gay. A media frenzy ensued, and many of her former fans were angry with what they saw as turning her back on God. But through it all, she held on to the truth that had guided her from the beginning. In this memoir, she finally tells her story: of her troubled childhood, the love of music that pulled her through, her dramatic conversion to Christianity, her rise to stardom, her abrupt departure from Christian Contemporary Music, her years of trying to come to terms with her sexual orientation, and her return to music and Nashville in 2010, when she came out publicly for the first time. She also talks about the importance of her faith, and despite the many who claim she can no longer call herself a believer, she maintains that she is both gay and a Christian. Now an advocate for LGBT issues in the church, Jennifer has witnessed heartbreaking struggles as churches wrestle with issues of homosexuality and faith. This engrossing, inspiring memoir will help people understand her story and to believe in their own stories, whatever they may be.

For anyone who feels caught in the tension between the beauty of God's story and the ugliness of human hypocrisy, *Why I Still Believe* offers a stirring story of hope. Why would anyone be a Christian when there is so much hypocrisy in the church? Mary Jo Sharp shares her journey as a skeptical believer who still holds to a beautiful faith despite wounding experiences in the Christian community. At a time when de-conversion stories have become all too common, this is an earnest response - the compelling conversion of an unlikely believer whose questions ultimately led her to irresistible hope. Sharp addresses her own struggle with the reality that God's people repeatedly give God's story a bad name and takes a careful look at how the current church often inadvertently produces atheists despite its life-giving message. For those who feel the ever-present tension between the beauty of salvation and the dark side of human nature, *Why I Still Believe* is a candid and approachable case for believing in God when you really want to walk away. With fresh and thoughtful insights, this spiritual narrative presents relevant answers to haunting questions like: Isn't there too much pain and suffering to believe? Is it okay to have doubt? What if Jesus' story is a copy of another story? Is there any evidence for Jesus' resurrection? Does atheism explain the human experience better than Christianity can? How can the truth of Christianity matter when the behaviors of Christians are reprehensible? At once logical and loving, Sharp reframes the gospel as it

truly is: the good news of redemption. With firmly grounded truths, *Why I Still Believe* is an affirming reminder that the hypocrisy of Christians can never negate the transforming grace and truth of Christ.

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

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.

During his 2009 inaugural speech, President Obama described the United States as a nation of "Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus--and nonbelievers." It was the first time an American president had acknowledged the existence of this rapidly growing segment of the population in such a public forum. And yet the reasons why more and more people are turning away from religion are still poorly understood. In *Faith No More*, Phil Zuckerman draws on in-depth interviews with people who have left religion to find out what's really behind the process of losing one's faith. According to a 2008 study, so many Americans claim no religion (15%, up from 8% in 1990) that this category now outranks every other religious group except Catholics and Baptists. Exploring the deeper stories within such survey data, Zuckerman shows that leaving one's faith is a highly personal, complex, and drawn-out process. And he finds that, rather than the cliché of the angry, nihilistic atheist, apostates are life-affirming, courageous, highly intelligent and inquisitive, and deeply moral. Zuckerman predicts that this trend toward nonbelief will likely continue and argues that the sooner we recognize that religion is frequently and freely rejected by all sorts of men and women, the sooner our understanding of the human condition will improve. The first book of its kind, *Faith No More* will appeal to anyone interested in the "New Atheism" and indeed to anyone wishing to more fully understand our changing relationship to religious faith.