

The Neuroscience Of Religious Experience

Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology
The New Frontier of Religion and Science
Religion and the Body
The Mind of God
Religion, Neuroscience and the Self
Neuroscience, Selflessness, and Religious Experience
The Spiritual Doorway in the Brain
Contradictions
The Varieties of Religious Experience
Principles of Neurotheology
The Biology of Religious Behavior
Religion Explained
Spirit, Mind, & Brain
An Ethology of Religion and Art
Mystical Mind
NeuroTheology
Sacred Knowledge
Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare
The Evidential Force of Religious Experience
The Emergence of Religion in Human Evolution
How God Changes Your Brain
Religion and Critical Psychology
Explorations in Neuroscience, Psychology and Religion
The Significance of Religious Experience
Philosophy, Science and Religion for Everyone
The Truth about Science and Religion
The Neuroscience of Religious Experience
Medjugorje and the Supernatural
Religious Experience Reconsidered
A New Science of Religion
The Cognitive Science of Religion
God's Brain
Neurotheology - How Science Can Enlighten Us about Spirituality
Attachment in Religion and Spirituality
The Neurology of Religion
The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science
Religious and Spiritual Experiences
The Neuroscience of Religious Experience
The Routledge Companion to Religion and Science
Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion

Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology

Religion has been a major influence on the development of science over the past two millennia. The Truth about Science and Religion tells the story of their interaction, examining fundamental topics such as the origin of the universe, evolutionary processes, Christian beliefs, the history of science, and what being human really means from both a scientific and a religious perspective. The Truth about Science and Religion aims to help explore personal views on science and religion, offering questions for discussion at the end of each chapter. The book provides the historical and scientific background as well as the philosophical insight needed to think through issues of science and religion and their influence on personal beliefs. Metaphors, comparisons and analogies are used to simplify complex topics such that any reader can engage with the thoughts and questions posed. Unlike other books in this field, The Truth about Science and Religion follows a chronological scheme, beginning with the origin of the universe and life itself before discussing matters of the human condition, the life of Jesus, and stories of several great scientists to regain a unified view of science and religion in today's world.

The New Frontier of Religion and Science

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.

Religion and the Body

The field of 'science and religion' is exploding in popularity among both academics and the reading public. This is a comprehensive and authoritative introduction to the debate, written by the leading experts yet accessible to the general reader.

The Mind of God

In this volume of essays, Howard Wettstein explores the foundations of religious commitment. His orientation is broadly naturalistic, but not in the mode of reductionism or eliminativism. This collection explores questions of broad religious interest, but does so through a focus on the author's religious tradition, Judaism. Among the issues explored

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are the nature and role of awe, ritual, doctrine, religious experience; the distinction between belief and faith; problems of evil and suffering with special attention to the Book of Job and to the Akedah, the biblical story of the binding of Isaac; the virtue of forgiveness. One of the book's highlights is its literary (as opposed to philosophical) approach to theology that at the same time makes room for philosophical exploration of religion. Another is Wettstein's rejection of the usual picture that sees religious life as sitting atop a distinctive metaphysical foundation, one that stands in need of epistemological justification.

Religion, Neuroscience and the Self

Offers a fresh and detailed take on the evolution of religious behavior from a biobehavioral perspective, promoting a new understanding that may help build bridges across the religious divide.

Neuroscience, Selflessness, and Religious Experience

The Neuroscience of Selflessness and Spiritual Transcendence conveys the manner by which selflessness serves as a neuropsychological and

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religious foundation for spiritually transcendent experiences. The book combines neurological case studies and neuroscience research with religious accounts of transcendence experiences from the perspective of both the neurosciences and the history of religions. Chapters cover the subjective experience of transcendence, an historical summary of different philosophical and religious perspectives, a review of the neuroscience research that describes the manner by which the brain processes and creates a self, and more. The book presents a model that bridges the divide between neuroscience and religion, presenting a resource that will be critical reading for advanced students and researchers in both fields. Creates a common focus on selflessness as a reliable construct for use by all disciplines interested in the basis of spiritual experience Links neuroanatomical data with religious texts from multiple faith traditions to describe the necessity of selflessness for spiritual experience and transformation Highlights disorders in neurological functioning that result in disorders of the self

The Spiritual Doorway in the Brain

Andrew Newberg explores the latest findings of neurotheology, the multidisciplinary field linking neuroscience with religious and

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spiritual phenomena. He investigates some of the most controversial--and potentially transformative--implications of a neurotheological approach.

Contradictions

"Contradictions" is a general interest book that exposes the incompatibility between popular religious beliefs and the scientific view of human nature. It begins with a survey of the evolution of religions and their continuing, often irrational, influences in modern society. Then, based on his long experience in neuroscience, the author takes issue with Descartes about the duality of body and soul. He presents case studies of patients with brain diseases and from these deduces that the soul, far from being separate and supernatural, is no more or less than our way of experiencing our brains and which correspondingly disintegrates when they do. Convincing clinical findings and powerful arguments about the universality of truth make this book a bold contribution to the debate about belief and religion in the modern world.

The Varieties of Religious Experience

What is the value of religious and spiritual experiences within human life? Are we evolutionarily programmed to have such experiences? How will emerging technologies change such experiences in the future? Wesley Wildman addresses these key intellectual questions and more, offering a spiritually evocative naturalist interpretation of the diverse variety of religious and spiritual experiences. He describes these experiences, from the common to the exceptional, and offers innovative classifications for them based on their neurological features and internal qualities. His account avoids reductionistic oversimplifications and instead synthesizes perspectives from many disciplines, including philosophy and natural sciences, into a compelling account of the meaning and value of religious and spiritual experiences in human life. The resulting interpretation does not assume a supernatural worldview but incorporates religious and spiritual experiences into a positive affirmation of this-worldly existence.

Principles of Neurotheology

How does the mind experience the sacred? What biological mechanisms are involved in mystical states and trances? Is there a neurological basis for patterns in comparative religions? Does religion have an

evolutionary function? This pathbreaking work by two leading medical researchers explores the neurophysiology of religious experience. Building on an explanation of the basic structure of the brain, the authors focus on parts most relevant to human experience, emotion, and cognition. On this basis, they plot how the brain is involved in mystical experiences. Successive chapters apply this scheme to mythmaking, ritual and liturgy, meditation, near-death experiences, and theology itself. Anchored in such research, the authors also sketch the implications of their work for philosophy, science, theology, and the future of religion.

The Biology of Religious Behavior

Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology is the eighth title published in the Templeton Science and Religion Series, in which scientists from a wide range of fields distill their experience and knowledge into brief tours of their respective specialties. In this volume, well-known cognitive scientist Justin L. Barrett offers an accessible overview of this interdisciplinary field, reviews key findings in this area, and discusses the implications of these findings for religious thought and practice. Cognitive science is the interdisciplinary study of minds and mental activity, and as such, it

addresses a fundamental feature of what it is to be human. Further, in so far as religious traditions concern ideas and beliefs about the nature of humans, the nature of the world, and the nature of the divine, cognitive science can contribute both directly and indirectly to these theological concerns. Barrett shows how direct contributions come from the growing area called cognitive science of religion (CSR), which investigates how human cognitive systems inform and constrain religious thought, experience, and expression. CSR attempts to provide answers to questions such as: Why it is that humans tend to be religious? And why are certain ideas (e.g. the possibility of an afterlife) so cross-culturally recurrent? Barrett also covers the indirect implications that cognitive science has for theology, such as human similarities and differences with the animal world, freedom and determinism, and the relationship between minds and bodies. *Cognitive Science, Religion, and Theology* critically reviews the research on these fascinating questions and discusses the many implications that arise from them. In addition, this short volume also offers suggestions for future research, making it ideal not only for those looking for an overview of the field thus far, but also for those seeking a glimpse of where the field might be going in the future.

God is great—for your mental, physical, and spiritual health. Based on new evidence culled from brain-scan studies, a wide-reaching survey of people's religious and spiritual experiences, and the authors' analyses of adult drawings of God, neuroscientist Andrew Newberg and therapist Mark Robert Waldman offer the following breakthrough discoveries:

- Not only do prayer and spiritual practice reduce stress, but just twelve minutes of meditation per day may slow down the aging process.
- Contemplating a loving God rather than a punitive God reduces anxiety and depression and increases feelings of security, compassion, and love.
- Fundamentalism, in and of itself, can be personally beneficial, but the prejudice generated by extreme beliefs can permanently damage your brain.
- Intense prayer and meditation permanently change numerous structures and functions in the brain, altering your values and the way you perceive reality.

Both a revelatory work of modern science and a practical guide for readers to enhance their physical and emotional health, *How God Changes Your Brain* is a first-of-a-kind book about faith that is as credible as it is inspiring.

Spirit, Mind, & Brain

"Neurotheology" has garnered substantial attention in the academic and lay communities in recent years. Several books have been written addressing the relationship between the brain and religious experience and numerous scholarly articles have been published on the topic, some in the popular press. The scientific and religious communities have been very interested in obtaining more information regarding neurotheology, how to approach this topic, and how science and religion can be integrated in some manner that preserves both. If neurotheology is to be considered a viable field going forward, it requires a set of clear principles that can be generally agreed upon and supported by both the theological or religious perspective and the scientific one as well. Principles of Neurotheology sets out the necessary principles of neurotheology which can be used as a foundation for future neurotheological discourse. Laying the groundwork for a new synthesis of scientific and theological dialogue, this book proposes that neurotheology, a term fraught with potential problems, is a highly useful and important voice in the greater study of religious and theological ideas and their intersection with science.

An Ethology of Religion and Art

"This book uses neuroscience discoveries concerning religious experiences, the Self and personhood to deepen, enhance and interrogate the theological and philosophical set of ideas known as Personalism. McNamara proposes a new eschatological form of personalism that is consistent with current neuroscience models of relevant brain functions concerning the self and personhood and that can meet the catastrophic challenges of the 21st century. Eschatological Personalism, rooted in the philosophical tradition of "Boston Personalism", takes as its starting point the personalist claim that the significance of a self and personality is not fully revealed until it has reached its endpoint, but theologically that endpoint can only occur within the eschatological realm. That realm is explored in the book along with implications for personalist theory and ethics. Topics covered include the agent intellect, dreams and the imagination, future-orientation and eschatology, phenomenology of Time, social ethics, Love, the challenge of AI, privacy and solitude and the individual ethic of autarchy. This book is an innovative combination of the neuroscientific and theological insights provided by a Personalist viewpoint. As such, it will be of great interest to scholars of Cognitive Science, Theology, Religious Studies and the philosophy of the mind"--

Mystical Mind

The Cognitive Science of Religion introduces students to key empirical studies conducted over the past 25 years in this new and rapidly expanding field. In these studies, cognitive scientists of religion have applied the theories, findings and research tools of the cognitive sciences to understanding religious thought, behaviour and social dynamics. Each chapter is written by a leading international scholar, and summarizes in non-technical language the original empirical study conducted by the scholar. No prior or statistical knowledge is presumed, and studies included range from the classic to the more recent and innovative cases. Students will learn about the theories that cognitive scientists have employed to explain recurrent features of religiosity across cultures and historical eras, how scholars have tested those theories, and what the results of those tests have revealed and suggest. Written to be accessible to undergraduates, this provides a much-needed survey of empirical studies in the cognitive science of religion.

NeuroTheology

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This intriguing and innovative book examines what can be learnt about the brain mechanisms underlying religious practice from studying people with neurological disorders, such as strokes, epilepsy, and Parkinson's disease. Using a clinical case-study approach, the book analyses the interaction of social influences, religious upbringing, and neurological disorders on beliefs in a number of different religions. The interdisciplinary angle of the book ensures a variety of perspectives to help understand how religious beliefs are affected when cognitive function is impaired. Real examples are used throughout the book, enabling readers to view people's religious experience in context as opposed to simulated scenarios. Examples include people whose beliefs change due to neurological conditions, as well as how faith can help people in coping with these disorders.

Sacred Knowledge

In the 1990s great strides were taken in clarifying how the brain is involved in behaviors that, in the past, had seldom been studied by neuroscientists or psychologists. This book explores the progress begun during that momentous decade in understanding why we behave, think and feel the way we do, especially in those areas that interface with religion. What is happening in the brain when we have a religious

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experience? Is the soul a product of the mind which is, in turn, a product of the brain? If so, what are the implications for the Christian belief in an afterlife? If God created humans for the purpose of having a relationship with him, should we expect to find that our spirituality is a biologically evolved human trait? What effect might a disease such as Alzheimer's have on a person's spirituality and relationship with God? Neuroscience and psychology are providing information relevant to each of these questions, and many Christians are worried that their religious beliefs are being threatened by this research. Kevin Seybold attempts to put their concerns to rest by presenting some of the scientific findings coming from these disciplines in a way that is understandable yet non-threatening to Christian belief.

Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare

Taking a perspective rooted in evolutionary biology with a focus on brain science, two distinguished authors radically alter the fractious debate on the existence of God and the nature of religion. Two distinguished authors, renowned anthropologist Lionel Tiger and pioneering neuroscientist Michael McGuire, elucidate the perennial questions about religion: What is its purpose? How did it arise? What

is its source? Why does every known culture have some form of it? Their answer is deceptively simple, yet at the same time highly complex: The brain creates religion and its varied concepts of God, and then in turn feeds on its creation to satisfy innate neurological and associated social needs. Brain science reveals that humans and other primates alike are afflicted by unavoidable sources of stress that the authors describe as "brainpain." To cope with this affliction people seek to "brainsoothe." We humans use religion and its social structures to induce brainsoothing as a relief for innate anxiety. How we do this is the subject of this groundbreaking book. In a concise, lively, accessible, and witty style, the authors combine zoom-lens vignettes of religious practices with discussions of the latest research on religion's neurological effects on the brain. Among other topics, they consider religion's role in providing positive socialization, its seeming obsession with regulating sex, the common biological scaffolding between nonhuman primates and humans and how this affects religion, and evidence that the palliative effects of religion on brain chemistry are not matched by nonreligious remedies. In a new preface to the paperback edition, Lionel Tiger discusses the paradoxical effects of religion--on the one hand, producing masterpieces of art and architecture and, on the other, fueling violence throughout history and into the present. This fascinating

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book provides key insights into the complexities of our brain and the role of religion, perhaps its most remarkable creation.

The Evidential Force of Religious Experience

Sacred Knowledge is the first well-documented, sophisticated account of the effect of psychedelics on biological processes, human consciousness, and revelatory religious experiences. Based on nearly three decades of legal research with volunteers, William A. Richards argues that, if used responsibly and legally, psychedelics have the potential to assuage suffering and constructively affect the quality of human life. Richards's analysis contributes to social and political debates over the responsible integration of psychedelic substances into modern society. His book serves as an invaluable resource for readers who, whether spontaneously or with the facilitation of psychedelics, have encountered meaningful, inspiring, or even disturbing states of consciousness and seek clarity about their experiences. Testing the limits of language and conceptual frameworks, Richards makes the most of experiential phenomena that stretch our understanding of reality, advancing new frontiers in the study of belief, spiritual awakening, psychiatric treatment, and social well-being. His findings enrich humanities and scientific scholarship,

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expanding work in philosophy, anthropology, theology, and religious studies and bringing depth to research in mental health, psychotherapy, and psychopharmacology.

The Emergence of Religion in Human Evolution

The field of religion and science is one of the most exciting and dynamic areas of research today. This Companion brings together an outstanding team of scholars to explore the ways in which science intersects with the major religions of the world and religious naturalism. The collection provides an overview of the field and also indicates ways in which it is developing. Its multicultural breadth and scientific rigor on topics that are and will be compelling issues in the first part of the twenty-first century and beyond will be welcomed by students and scholars alike.

How God Changes Your Brain

"The primary aim of this book is to examine the ways in which aspects of religion and spirituality are linked to emotional attachment processes and close relationships. My approach is heavily influenced

by John Bowlby's attachment theory and the enormous amount of research it has generated in developmental, social, and clinical psychology. A major aim of this book is to demonstrate the utility of approaching religion and spirituality from the perspective of a mainstream theory in developmental, social, and clinical psychology. This book will educate readers who are not yet familiar with attachment theory and the attachment-theoretical approach to religion and spirituality"--

Religion and Critical Psychology

Drawing from sources including the ethology of art and the cognitive science of religion this book proposes an improved understanding of both art and religion as behaviors developed in the process of human evolution. Looking at both art and religion as closely related, but not identical, behaviors a more coherent definition of religion can be formed that avoids pitfalls such as the Eurocentric characterization of religion as belief or the dismissal of the category as nothing more than false belief or the product of scholarly invention. The book integrates highly relevant insights from the ethology and anthropology of art, particularly the identification of "the special" by Ellen Dissanayake and art as agency by Alfred Gell, with insights from, among others, Ann Taves, who similarly identified "specialness" as

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characteristic of religion. It integrates these insights into a useful and accurate understanding and explanation of the relationship of art and religion and of religion as a human behavior. This in turn is used to suggest how art can contribute to the development and maintenance of religions. The innovative combination of art, science, and religion in this book makes it a vital resource for scholars of Religion and the Arts, Aesthetics, Religious Studies, Religion and Science and Religious Anthropology.

Explorations in Neuroscience, Psychology and Religion

Aimed at researchers and graduate students, this book describes how brain processes support religious expression and provides a current account of the neuroscience of religion.

The Significance of Religious Experience

Jeremy Carrette argues that the psychology of religion is no longer sustainable without a social critique, and that as William James predicted, the project of the modernist psychology of religion has failed. Controversially he champions greater social and philosophical

analysis within the field to challenge the political naivety and disciplinary illusions of the traditional approaches to psychology of religion. Carrette discusses the relevance of the social and economic factors surrounding the debates of psychology and religion, through three critical examples: psychoanalysis humanistic psychology cognitive neuroscience. A Critical Psychology of Religion provides a new dimension to the debates surrounding religious experience. It will be of interest to students and researchers in the fields of critical psychology, religious experience and the psychology of religion and extends an interdisciplinary challenge to the separation of psychology, sociology, politics, economics and religion.

Philosophy, Science and Religion for Everyone

Many of our questions about religion, says renowned anthropologist Pascal Boyer, are no longer mysteries. We are beginning to know how to answer questions such as "Why do people have religion?" Using findings from anthropology, cognitive science, linguistics, and evolutionary biology, Religion Explained shows how this aspect of human consciousness is increasingly admissible to coherent, naturalistic explanation. This brilliant and controversial book gives readers the first scientific explanation for what religious feeling is really

about, what it consists of, and where it comes from.

The Truth about Science and Religion

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 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.

The Neuroscience of Religious Experience

Religious belief, once in the domain of the humanities, has found a

new home in the sciences. Promising new developments in the study of religion by cognitive scientists and evolutionary theorists put forward empirical hypotheses regarding the origin, spread, and character of religious beliefs. Different theories deal with different aspects of human religiosity - some focus on religious beliefs, while others focus on religious actions, and still others on the origin of religious ideas. While these theories might share a similar focus, there is plenty of disagreement in the explanations they offer. This volume examines the diversity of new scientific theories of religion, by outlining the logical and causal relationships between these enterprises. Are they truly in competition, as their proponents sometimes suggest, or are they complementary and mutually illuminating accounts of religious belief and practice? Cognitive science has gained much from an interdisciplinary focus on mental function, and this volume explores the benefits that can be gained from a similar approach to the scientific study of religion.

Medjugorje and the Supernatural

Includes Internet access card bound inside front matter.

Religious Experience Reconsidered

Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion is the second title published in the new Templeton Science and Religion Series. In this volume, Malcolm Jeeves and Warren S. Brown provide an overview of the relationship between neuroscience, psychology, and religion that is academically sophisticated, yet accessible to the general reader. The authors introduce key terms; thoroughly chart the histories of both neuroscience and psychology, with a particular focus on how these disciplines have interfaced religion through the ages; and explore contemporary approaches to both fields, reviewing how current science/religion controversies are playing out today. Throughout, they cover issues like consciousness, morality, concepts of the soul, and theories of mind. Their examination of topics like brain imaging research, evolutionary psychology, and primate studies show how recent advances in these areas can blend harmoniously with religious belief, since they offer much to our understanding of humanity's place in the world. Jeeves and Brown conclude their comprehensive and inclusive survey by providing an interdisciplinary model for shaping the ongoing dialogue. Sure to be of interest to both academics and curious intellectuals, Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion addresses important age-old questions and demonstrates how modern scientific

techniques can provide a much more nuanced range of potential answers to those questions.

A New Science of Religion

Religious capacity is a highly elaborate, neurocognitive human trait that has a solid evolutionary foundation. This book uses a multidisciplinary approach to describe millions of years of biological innovations that eventually give rise to the modern trait and its varied expression in humanity's many religions. The authors present a scientific model and a central thesis that the brain organs, networks, and capacities that allowed humans to survive physically also gave our species the ability to create theologies, find sustenance in religious practice, and use religion to support the social group. Yet, the trait of religious capacity remains non-obligatory, like reading and mathematics. The individual can choose not to use it. The approach relies on research findings in nine disciplines, including the work of countless neuroscientists, paleoneurologists, archaeologists, cognitive scientists, and psychologists. This is a cutting-edge examination of the evolutionary origins of humanity's interaction with the supernatural. It will be of keen interest to academics working in Religious Studies, Neuroscience, Cognitive Science, Anthropology,

Evolutionary Biology, and Psychology.

The Cognitive Science of Religion

The world's leading neurologist on out-of-body and near-death experiences shows that spirituality is as much a part of our basic biological makeup as our sex drive or survival instinct. If Buddha had been in an MRI machine and not under the Bodhi tree when he attained enlightenment, what would we have seen on the monitor? Dr. Kevin Nelson offers an answer to that question that is beyond what any scientist has previously encountered on the borderlands of consciousness. In his cutting-edge research, Nelson has discovered that spiritual experiences take place in one of the most primitive areas of the brain. In this eloquent, inspired, and reverent book, he relates the moving stories of patients and research subjects, brain scan analysis, evolutionary biology, and beautiful examples of transcendence from literature to reveal the machinery in our heads that enables us to perceive miracles-whether you are an atheist, Buddhist, or the most devout Catholic. The patients and people Nelson discuss have had an extremely diverse set of spiritual experiences, from arguing with the devil sitting at the foot of their hospital bed to seeing the universe synchronize around the bouncing of the ball in

a pinball machine. However, the bizarre experiences don't make the people seem like freaks; they seem strangely very much like us, in surprising ways. Ultimately Nelson makes clear that spiritual experiences are not the exception in human life, but rather an inescapable and precious part of every one of us.

God's Brain

"The Varieties of Religious Experience is certainly the most notable of all books in the field of the psychology of religion and probably destined to be the most influential [one] written on religion in the twentieth century," said Walter Houston Clark in *Psychology Today*. The book was an immediate bestseller upon its publication in June 1902. Reflecting the pluralistic views of psychologist-turned-philosopher William James, it posits that individual religious experiences, rather than the tenets of organized religions, form the backbone of religious life. James's discussion of conversion, repentance, mysticism, and hope of reward and fears of punishment in the hereafter--as well as his observations on the religious experiences of such diverse thinkers as Voltaire, Whitman, Emerson, Luther, Tolstoy, and others--all support his thesis. "James's characteristic humor, his ability to put down the pretentious and to be unpretentious, and his willingness to

take some risks in his choices of anecdotal data or provocative theories are all apparent in the book," noted Professor Martin E. Marty. "A reader will come away with more reasons to raise new questions than to feel that old ones have been resolved."

Neurotheology - How Science Can Enlighten Us about Spirituality

In June 1981, six young Croatians 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.

Attachment in Religion and Spirituality

This book reflects on the implications of neurobiology and the scientific worldview on aspects of religious experience, belief, and practice, focusing especially on the body and the construction of religious meaning.

The Neurology of Religion

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Caroline Franks Davis provides a clear, sensitive, and carefully argued assessment of the value of religious experiences as evidence for religious beliefs. Much more than an 'argument from religious experience', the inquiry systematically addresses underlying philosophical issues such as the role of interpretation in experience, the function of models and metaphors in religious language, and the way perceptual experiences in general are used as evidence for claims about the world. The author examines several arguments from religious experience and, using contemporary and classic sources from the world religions, gives an account of the different types of experience. To meet sceptical challenges to religious experience, she draws extensively on psychological and sociological as well as philosophical and religious literature, probing deeply into the questions whether religious experiences are merely a matter of interpretation, whether there is irreducible conflict among religious experiences, and whether psychological and other reductionist explanations of religious experience are satisfactory. She concludes that religious experiences, like most experiences, are most effective as evidence within a cumulative style of argument which combines evidence from a wide range of sources.

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This is the first major response to the challenge of neuroscience to religion. It considers eastern forms of religious experience as well as Christian viewpoints and challenges the idea of a mind identical to, or a by-product of, brain activity. It explores religion as inner experience of the Transcendent, and suggests a modern spirituality.

Religious and Spiritual Experiences

With cutting-edge research and provocative case studies, renowned behavioral neurologist provides insights to some of the most curious spiritual questions of mortality. For fans of *When Breath Becomes Air* and the work of Oliver Sacks.

The Neuroscience of Religious Experience

Philosophy, Science and Religion for Everyone brings together these great truth-seeking disciplines, and seeks to understand the ways in which they challenge and inform each other. Key topics and their areas of focus include: • Foundational Issues - why should anyone care about the science-and-religion debate? How do scientific claims relate to the truth? Is evolution compatible with design? • Faith and

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Rationality - can faith ever be rational? Are theism and atheism totally opposed? Is God hidden or does God simply not exist? • Faith and Science - what provides a better explanation for the origin of the universe—science or religion? Faith and physics: can they be reconciled? Does contemporary neuroscience debunk religious belief? Creationism and evolutionary biology - what constitutes science and what constitutes pseudo-science? • Practical Implications - is fundamentalism just a problem for religious people? What are the ethical implications of the science-and-religion debate? Do logic and religion mix? This book is designed to be used in conjunction with the free 'Philosophy, Science and Religion' MOOC (massive open online course) created by the University of Edinburgh, and hosted by the Coursera platform (www.coursera.org). This book is also highly recommended for anyone looking for a concise overview of this fascinating discipline.

The Routledge Companion to Religion and Science

Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion

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Preeminent psychoanalyst Mortimer Ostow believes that early childhood emotional attachments form the cognitive underpinnings of spiritual experience and religious motivation. His hypothesis, which is verifiable, relies on psychological and neurobiological evidence but is respectful of the human need for spiritual value. Ostow begins by classifying the three parts of the spiritual experience: awe, Spirituality proper, and mysticism. After he pinpoints the psychological origins of these feelings in infancy, he discusses the foundations of religious sentiment and practice and the brain processes associated with spiritual experience. He then focuses on spirituality's relationship to mood regulation, and the role of negative spirituality in fostering religious fundamentalism and demonic possession. Ostow concludes with an analysis of an essay by the psychoanalyst Donald M. Marcus, who recounts his own spiritual experience during a Native American-style "vision quest" in the woods. Marcus's account demonstrates the constructive potential of spirituality and the way in which spirituality retrieves and recapitulates feelings of attachment to the mother. Persuasively and brilliantly argued, *Spirit, Mind, and Brain* brings the disciplines of religion, behavioral neuroscience, and philosophy to bear on a groundbreaking new method for understanding religious ritual and belief.

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