

Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate (The Terry Lectures Series)

By Terry Eagleton

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Terry Eagleton's witty and polemical *Reason, Faith, and Revolution* is bound to cause a stir among scientists, theologians, people of faith and people of no faith, as well as general readers eager to understand the God Debate. On the one hand, Eagleton demolishes what he calls the "superstitious" view of God held by most atheists and agnostics and offers in its place a revolutionary account of the Christian Gospel. On the other hand, he launches a stinging assault on the betrayal of this revolution by institutional Christianity.

There is little joy here, then, either for the anti-God brigade—Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens in particular—nor for many conventional believers. Instead, Eagleton offers his own vibrant account of religion and politics in a book that ranges from the Holy Spirit to the recent history of the Middle East, from Thomas Aquinas to the Twin Towers.

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- Sales Rank: #1111474 in Books
- Published on: 2009-04-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .70" h x 5.80" w x 8.30" l, .82 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 200 pages

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Editorial Review

From Booklist
Starred Review Takes one to know one, they say, and Eagleton knows one of the new atheism's dynamic duo, Christopher Hitchens, rather well, for in Hitchens' socialist days, Eagleton was a comrade. Still a Marxist and, hence, an atheist, Eagleton scores Hitchens along with his biologist sidekick, Richard Dawkins (sometimes as the composite new atheist "Ditchkins"), for unconscionably misrepresenting theology generally and Christianity, in particular, and for adhering to the shallow liberal belief in progress. He does so from a perspective he says is Marxist but that resembles the classical Greek tragic view that human actions inevitably have both good and bad effects. Thus the Enlightenment, seedbed of modern atheism, the liberal state, and economic individualism—virtually all that is progressive—"has always been its own worst enemy." Far better the communitarian, sometimes communal ethic, which Eagleton sees as the orthodox kernel of Christianity and says Ditchkins ignores, than the surveillance state, wars for corporate profit, degenerate entertainment, and managed news that "progress" has brought us. Eagleton is that rarity, a non-ideological Marxist with a keen understanding of and sympathy for the human condition, not to mention an informed as well as sharp sense of humor. Serious Christians may be his most appreciative readers. --Ray Olson

Review

"Brisk, funny, and challenging . . . . One of the most fascinating, most original and prickliest works of philosophy to emerge from the post-9/11 era."—Andrew O'Hehir, *Salon*

(Andrew O'Hehir *Salon* 2009-04-01)

"There are plenty of things in this book to anger all sorts of people, and few will not find something in it with which to disagree strongly. And that's just fine. This is an exceptional contribution to recent debates around faith, religion, and atheism."—Dale B. Martin, Yale University
(Dale B. Martin)

"This is sure to ruffle feathers on both sides of the God debate. Eagleton offers his own polemical chronicle of religion and politics from the Holy Spirit to the Twin Towers. Many will, simply, have to read this." —*The Bookseller*
(*The Bookseller* 2009-01-23)

"Eagleton is that rarity, a non-ideological Marxist with a keen understanding of and sympathy for the human condition, not to mention an informed as well as sharp sense of humor. Serious Christians may be his most appreciative readers."—*Booklist* (starred review)
(*Booklist* 2009-02-01)

"The book is superb. Provocative. And, it's easy to overlook this particular new book among the heaps of mystery novels and other best sellers at bookstores, so grab a copy now."—Readthespirit.com
(*Readthespirit.com* 2009-04-20)

"[B]etter than any previous book of its kind."—James Wood, *The New Yorker*
(James Wood *The New Yorker* 2009-08-31)

"Eagleton's book is a brisk and welcome contribution to the ongoing discussion about the place of religion in the world today. Readers will find plenty to challenge them in this brief snapshot of today's 'God Debate.'"--Blair Dee Hodges, *Association for Mormon Letters*
(Blair Dee Hodges *Association for Mormon Letters*)

About the Author

Terry Eagleton is Distinguished Professor of English Literature at the University of Lancaster, England, and Professor of Cultural Theory at the National University of Ireland, Galway. He is also Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame. Eagleton is also the author of *On Evil*, published by Yale University Press.

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