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Why Religion Is Natural And

Why Religion Is Natural and Science Is Not: A naturalist examines the cognitive and cultural foundations of religion, science, and more, by Robert N. McCauley, Ph.D.

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Religion is natural because it is a extension and expression of the way we already, naturally think about the world. Science, however, is an unnatural activity, because science requires us to deeply and critically reflect on things and contemplate radically counterintuitive ideas, such as quantum physics.

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In Why Religion is Natural and Science Is Not, Robert N. McCauley, one of the founding fathers of the cognitive science of religion, argues that our minds are better suited to religious belief than to scientific inquiry. Drawing on the latest research and illustrating his argument with commonsense examples, McCauley argues that religion has existed for many thousands of years in every society because the kinds of explanations it provides are precisely the kinds that come naturally to human ...

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Religion is natural, McCauley argues, because, like other maturationally universal systems such as language and face recognition, it relies on cognitive processes that are automatic, unconscious, unreflective, subject to illusions and not dependent on culture. The causal agents/gods of religion are easy to picture and understand as beings that conform to theory of mind, and they have only one, or at most two, counter-intuitive features (such as the ability to move through walls).

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[Why Religion Is Natural and Science Is Not — Robert McCauley](#)

Why Religion Is Natural and Science Is Not. The Weirdest Minds in the World People in open, wealthy, technologically advanced societies have atypical minds. Posted Sep 27, 2020

[The Weirdest Minds in the World | Psychology Today](#)

First, science poses no serious threat to the persistence of religion, for religious representations will naturally erupt as normal variations on natural cognition and will possess a ready appeal. Second, it is science, its current cultural prestige notwithstanding, which is fragile, since its ideas and forms of thought are difficult to produce and learn.

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Over the course of the past two decades, scholars have employed insights gleaned from cognitive science, evolutionary biology, and related disciplines to illuminate the study of religion. In Why Religion is Natural and Science Is Not, Robert N. McCauley, one of the founding fathers of the cognitive science of religion, argues that our minds are better suited to religious belief than to scientific inquiry.

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Abstract. Previous critics have argued that Robert McCauley defines religion and science selectively and arbitrarily, cutting them to fit his model in Why Religion Is Natural and Science Is Not . McCauley has responded that final definitions are “overrated” and that artificial distinctions can serve an important role in naturalistic investigation. I agree with this position but argue that a genealogy of the category of religion is crucial to the methodology that McCauley describes.

[DEFINING “RELIGION” AS NATURAL: A CRITICAL INVITATION TO ...](#)

T o explain the issue, McCauley shows that religion —or, more precisely, “popular religion” — relies on cognitive processes that are maturationally natural to humans, i.e. either innate to our...

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In Why Religion is Natural and Science Is Not, Robert N. McCauley, one of the founding fathers of the cognitive science of religion, argues that our minds are better suited to religious belief than to scientific inquiry. Drawing on the latest research and illustrating his argument with commonsense examples, McCauley argues that religion has existed for many thousands of years in every society because the kinds of explanations it provides are precisely the kinds that come naturally to human ...

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INTRODUCTION : #1 Why Religion Is Natural And Publish By Erie Stanley Gardner, Why Religion Is Natural And Science Is Not Amazonde in why religion is natural and science is not robert n mccauley one of the founding fathers of the cognitive science of religion argues that our minds are better suited to religious belief than to scientific

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why religion is natural and science is not Aug 29, 2020 Posted By Denise Robins Media TEXT ID a4223091 Online PDF Ebook Epub Library dedicated to the investigation of secularism and nonreligion in all forms articles are published on a continuous basis ensuring publication as soon as submissions are

A comparison of the cognitive foundations of religion and science and an argument that religion is cognitively natural and that science is cognitively unnatural.

A comparison of the cognitive foundations of religion and science and an argument that religion is cognitively natural and that science is cognitively unnatural.

The battle between religion and science, competing methods of knowing ourselves and our world, has been raging for many centuries. Now scientists themselves are looking at cognitive foundations of religion--and arriving at some surprising conclusions. Over the course of the past two decades, scholars have employed insights gleaned from cognitive science, evolutionary biology, and related disciplines to illuminate the study of religion. In Why Religion is Natural and Science Is Not, Robert N. McCauley, one of the founding fathers of the cognitive science of religion, argues that our minds are better suited to religious belief than to scientific inquiry. Drawing on the latest research and illustrating his argument with commonsense examples, McCauley argues that religion has existed for many thousands of years in every society because the kinds of explanations it provides are precisely the kinds that come naturally to human minds. Science, on the other hand, is a much more recent and rare development because it reaches radical conclusions and requires a kind of abstract thinking that only arises consistently

under very specific social conditions. Religion makes intuitive sense to us, while science requires a lot of work. McCauley then draws out the larger implications of these findings. The naturalness of religion, he suggests, means that science poses no real threat to it, while the unnaturalness of science puts it in a surprisingly precarious position. Rigorously argued and elegantly written, this provocative book will appeal to anyone interested in the ongoing debate between religion and science, and in the nature and workings of the human mind.

The New York Times bestseller – a “crystal-clear, constantly engaging” (Jared Diamond) exploration of the role that religious belief plays in our lives and our interactions For all the thousands of books that have been written about religion, few until this one have attempted to examine it scientifically: to ask why—and how—it has shaped so many lives so strongly. Is religion a product of blind evolutionary instinct or rational choice? Is it truly the best way to live a moral life? Ranging through biology, history, and psychology, Daniel C. Dennett charts religion’s evolution from “wild” folk belief to “domesticated” dogma. Not an antireligious screed but an unblinking look beneath the veil of orthodoxy, *Breaking the Spell* will be read and debated by believers and skeptics alike.

How natural is religion? Is it a phenomenon written in our genes or brains, naturally developing with the development of the human race? The book considers the findings of evolutionary psychology from scientific, philosophical and theological perspectives and critically examines the relation between empirical, epistemological and theological notions. Chapters in the book deal with the naturalness of religion and religious experiences as based on genetics, biology and social psychology. Other authors examine the relationship between religion, science and theology with regard to the naturalness of religion from a more general perspective. The last part of the book includes views from a Muslim scholar and a historian.

Over the past decade a strident public debate has arisen about the nature and origin of religions. Controversies include how exactly religion evolved, whether by individual or group selection, if it is adaptive, and if not, whether and how it is a side effect of evolution. This volume focuses on the issue of naturalizing religion: on the ways in which cognitive science and social sciences have treated religion as a natural phenomenon. It questions whether religious behaviour, institutions, and experiences can be explained in natural terms. The editor brings together some of the best published work on the definition of 'religion', intelligent design and the evolution of religion.

There is widespread belief that the world's religions con- tradict each other. It follows that if one religion is true, the others must be false—an assumption that implies, and may actually create, religious strife. In *Natural Religion*, acclaimed poet, critic and essayist Frederick Turner sets out to show that the natural world offers grounds for stating that all religions are, in some respect, true. Through the ages, various ways have been proposed to resolve religious differences. Some argue for the destruction of all religions but one's own. Others substitute an abstract principle for the real ritual and moral practice of religion. Still others doubt all religious truth and, consequently, all truth. Others accept a kind of pluralistic relativism. This book explores syncretism, whereby all religions are seen as grasping the same strange and complex reality, but by very different means and handles. The idea that all religions are true raises a supervening question: if so, what must the real physical universe be like? Turner approaches these questions in terms of scientific inquiry. There is not enough room in space itself to fit in all theologies; but there may be enough room in time if new scientific descriptions of time's nature are to be believed. Turner argues that in the time-models of contemporary cosmological and evolutionary science all times may be connected and time may be infinitely branched and causally looped so that both forward-in-time and backward-in-time factors may be in operation in the same event. Thus, the fundamental substance of the universe may be information rather than matter or energy. The universe is more like a vast living organism than a vast machine. Turner argues that all existing religions can be shown to fit into this model, which in turn points to deeper implications of religious doctrines, languages and practices. There would be plenty of "room" in such a view of time for a tree of different yet linked religious worlds and poetic language may be the most effective tool for describing the divine.

Spanning many different epochs and varieties of religious experience, this book develops a new approach to religion and its role in human history. The authors look across a range of religious phenomena—from ancestor worship to totemism, shamanism, and worldwide modern religions—to offer a new explanation of the evolutionary success of religious behaviors. Their book is more empirical and verifiable than most previous books on evolution and religion because they develop an approach that removes guesswork about beliefs in the supernatural, focusing instead on the behaviors of individuals. The result is a pioneering look at how and why natural selection has favored religious behaviors throughout history.

An examination of the cognitive foundations of intuitions about the existence and attributes of God. Questions about the existence and attributes of God form the subject matter of natural theology, which seeks to gain knowledge of the divine by relying on reason and experience of the world. Arguments in natural theology rely largely on intuitions and inferences that seem natural to us, occurring spontaneously—at the sight of a beautiful landscape, perhaps, or in wonderment at the complexity of the cosmos—even to a nonphilosopher. In this book, Helen De Cruz and Johan De Smedt examine the cognitive origins of arguments in natural theology. They find that although natural theological arguments can be very sophisticated, they are rooted in everyday intuitions about purpose, causation, agency, and morality. Using evidence and theories from disciplines including the cognitive science of religion, evolutionary ethics, evolutionary aesthetics, and the cognitive science of testimony, they show that these intuitions emerge early in development and are a stable part of human cognition. De Cruz and De Smedt analyze the cognitive underpinnings of five well-known arguments for the existence of God: the argument from design, the cosmological argument, the moral argument, the argument from beauty, and the argument from miracles. Finally, they consider whether the cognitive origins of these natural theological arguments should affect their rationality.