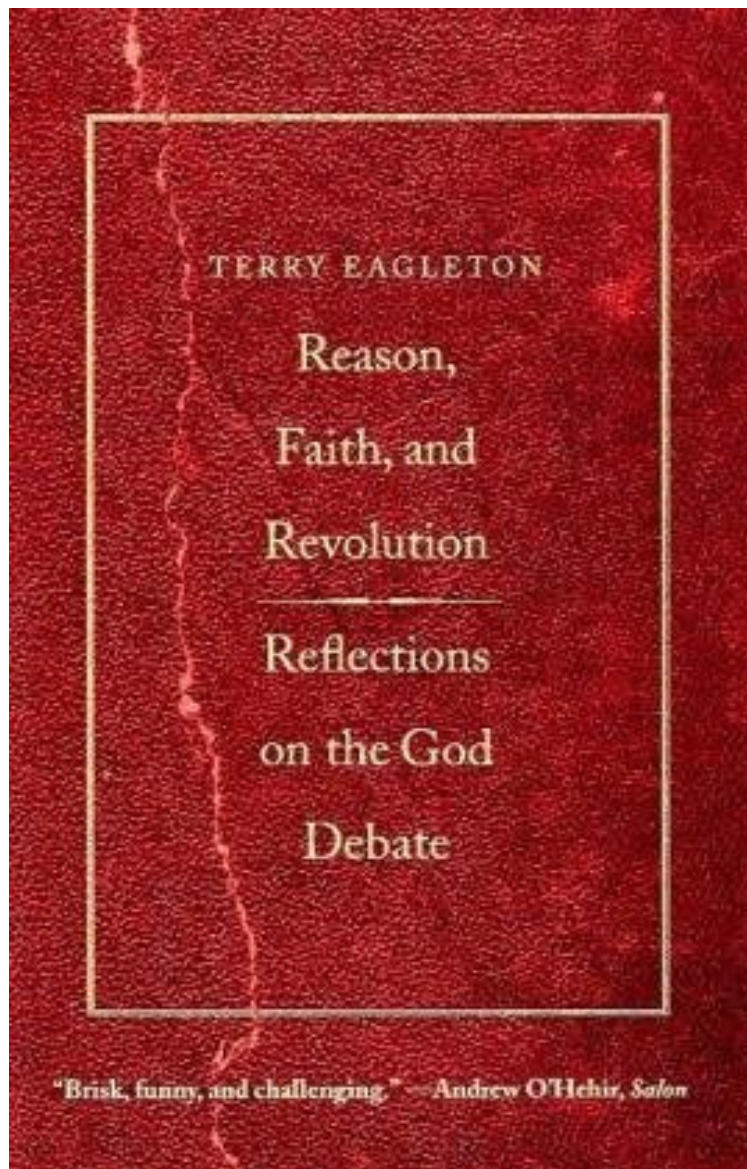


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## Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate (The Terry Lectures Series)

*Terry Eagleton*

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**Terry Eagleton : Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate (The Terry Lectures Series)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate (The Terry Lectures Series):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Rebuttal to Atheist Who Question The Existence of God By CustomerTerry Eagleton is a sharp witted and well read author who has engaged in the God debate with fellow Oxford alums Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Dawkins and Hitchens have called into question the existence of God and the intellectual capabilities of those who continue to believe. In the God Delusion referenced by Eagleton (I have not read the Hitchens book he references), Dawkins theorizes that belief in God and religion is a relic of a by gone era, an era that we as humans started moving away from during the Enlightenment, when science began to lead the way to understanding the world around us. As convincing as Dawkins was, it is just as clear that Eagleton is on the right track when he says that religion, for lack of a better word still is very much in play in the lives of many humans and should not be dismissed so lightly. While science can explain what we see and to some extent how the world works, it does not have the ability to explain how we feel about the world around us, how we determine what is right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly. The framework that Eagleton uses to discuss these differences is religion but it just as easily be called something else. Dawkins points out that religion is responsible for much of the world's misery and that once we accept science and the provable we as humans will be much better off rather than relying on the myth making structure of religion. Science allows for discussion of what is and invites others to question our assertions. Religion on the other hand hinders inquiry, evidenced by the fact that at least in American society one simply does not question another's religious beliefs. Thus, those beliefs continue to fester in the human psyche generation after generation. Eagleton acknowledges that religion has been responsible for a good deal of what has gone wrong in human history. However, he cleverly points out that science has its share of catastrophes as well. Eagleton glibly retorts that he will see religion's holocaust and call science's nuclear and chemical warfare. Thus, even if one is inclined toward atheism, Eagleton makes it clear that there is still a lot to answer for as far as how humans feel about the world. This is something that science simply can not answer. It leaves open the possibility of the necessity of a partnership between science and religion if we are really to get things right. As usual, one is left with more questions than answers after reading this book. However, thanks to the discussion in my book group, I have better appreciation of Eagleton's position.

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Not run-of-the-mill By victoriaJust a brief review here. Most of the reviewers who rate the book with only one star have an ax to grind, as far as I can tell. Simply reading the review excerpts provided by the publisher will give the potential reader enough information to know that, at the very least, this is a well written and interesting book. If you don't agree with the author, that's something different. If you want a view about anti-theists Dawkins and Hitchens, this is a higher-level and different-than-average approach. Most critiques of the two come from Christians, often evangelistic/protestant. Here you get a view that is from a Catholic influenced Marxist. So sit back with an Irish coffee--and dictionary if your vocabulary is rusty--and enjoy.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of my best books! By CustomerOne of the best books, I have ever read! Terry Eagleton's prose has a pleasantly addictive charm to it! His comprehensive analytic approach is amazingly gripping!

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 brigadeRichard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens in particularnor 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.

From Booklist\*Starred \* Takes one to know one, they say, and Eagleton knows one of the new atheisms 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 individualismvirtually all that is progressivehas 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 "Eagleton...is a powerful and engaging writer, perhaps no more so than when, with bursts of comic vituperation which recall Kenneth Tynan at his best, he is seeing off those he regards as second-rate opponents. But probably more relevant is the sense among many readers and critics that Eagleton is providing a welcome antidote to the rather simple-minded conception of

religion that Dawkins and Hitchens selected for their demolition jobs. He is rather like a wise old schoolmaster explaining to two eager young students that the significance of "Hamlet" is hardly exhausted by describing it as 'a revenge drama'."--Laurie Taylor, "New Humanist Magazine"--Laurie Taylor "New Humanist Magazine" (07/01/2009)"[B]etter than any previous book of its kind."--James Wood, "The New Yorker"--James Wood "The New Yorker" (08/31/2009)"Eagleton writes with lucidity, wit and panache and, though an atheist himself, successfully shreds what the conflated Ditchkins say in their books."--Piers Paul Read "Spectator" (11/14/2009)'A boisterous polemic ... Eagleton yields to none in his denunciation of institutional Christianity and a punitive, vengeful God as a betrayal of Jesus's championing of the poor and rejected.'--Jonathan Benthall "Times Literary Supplement" (12/11/2009)"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" (04/01/2009)"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."--iAssociation for Mormon Letters"--Blair Dee Hodges "Association for Mormon Letters ""Eagleton is one of Britain's leading literary critics and writes with verve and humour." -- Paul Goodliff, Baptist Times--Paul Goodliff "Baptist Times" (06/18/2010)"Eagleton is an unconventional and entertaining thinker. His book is as much about capitalism, politics, and literary criticism as it is about religion." --Kurt Kleiner, "The Globe and Mail"--Kurt Kleiner "The Globe and Mail ""Erudite, but often entertaining volume." --Rich Barlow, "Boston Globe"--Rich Barlow "Boston Globe "Eagleton's book "meets the challenge of the New Atheists with a sense of playfulness (for example, he melds the two leading lights of the movement, Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, into one signifier, "Ditchkins"), and a dogged refusal to let Oxbridge-trained rhetoric stand in for actual reason. The result is a work bathed in wit and punctuated with soaring prose that, while sympathetic to religious truth-claims, ends with a flourish on his Marxist hopes for an embrace of "tragic humanism.""--Lyndon Shakespeare, "Anglican Theological "--Lyndon Shakespeare "Anglican Theological "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.