

Religion In Human Evolution From The Paleolithic To Axial Age Robert N Bellah

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When Did Sin Begin? Monarch Books
"This amazing book takes into account all of the leading premises of the modern concept of biocultural evolution and builds a bridge to religious theory. Its value lies in its ability to pose the major questions and sketch proposals for dealing with them. To my knowledge it is the first work to make such an attempt." --Solomon H. Katz University of Pennsylvania "Hefner's book is a major breakthrough in doing constructive theology. His view of human beings as created co-creators is filled with balanced insight regarding how humans are united with the rest of creation, while having a special place because of their brains and culture." --Karl E. Peters Coeditor, Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science Evolutionary Processes in the Natural History of Religion University of Notre Dame Press A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice An ABC Australia Best Book on Religion and Ethics of the Year Distinguished Book Award, Sociology of Religion Section of the American Sociological Association Religion in Human Evolution is a work of extraordinary ambition—a wide-ranging, nuanced probing of our biological past to discover the kinds of lives that human beings have most often imagined were worth living. It offers what is frequently seen as a forbidden theory of the origin of religion that goes deep into evolution, especially but not exclusively cultural evolution. “Of Bellah’s brilliance there can be no doubt. The sheer amount this man knows about religion is otherworldly...Bellah stands in the tradition of such stalwarts of the sociological imagination as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. Only one word is appropriate to characterize this book’s subject as well as its substance, and that is ‘magisterial.’” —Alan Wolfe, New York Times Book Review “Religion in Human Evolution is a magnum opus founded on careful research and immersed in the ‘reflective judgment’ of one of our best thinkers and writers.” —Richard L. Wood, Commonweal How I Changed My Mind About Evolution Prentice Hall They mastermind our lives, shaping our features, our health, and our behavior, even in the sacrosanct realms of love and sex, religion, aging, and death. Yet we are the ones who house, perpetuate, and give the promise of immortality to these biological agents, our genetic gods. The link between genes and gods is hardly arbitrary, as the distinguished evolutionary geneticist John Avise reveals in this compelling book. In clear, straightforward terms, Avise reviews recent discoveries in molecular biology, evolutionary genetics, and human genetic engineering, and discusses the relevance of these findings to issues of ultimate concern traditionally reserved for mythology, theology, and religious faith. The book explains how the genetic gods figure in our development--not just our metabolism and physiology, but even our emotional disposition, personality, ethical leanings, and, indeed, religiosity. Yet genes are physical rather than metaphysical entities. Having arisen via an amoral evolutionary process--natural selection--genes have no consciousness, no sentient code of conduct, no reflective concern about the consequences of their actions. It is Avise's contention that current genetic knowledge can inform our attempts to answer typically religious questions--about origins, fate, and meaning. The Genetic Gods challenges us to make the necessary connection between what we know, what we believe, and what we embody. Table of Contents: Preface Prologue 1. The Doctrines of Biological Science 2. Geneses 3. Genetic Maladies 4. Genetic Beneficence 5. Strategies of the Genes 6. Genetic Sovereignty 7. New Lords of Our Genes? 8. Meaning Epilogue Notes Glossary Index Reviews of this book: Our genes, [Avise] says, are responsible not only for how we got here and exist day to day, but also for the core of our being--our personalities and morals. It is our genetic make-up that allows for and formulates our religious belief systems, he argues. Avise does not eschew spirituality but seeks a more informed, less confrontational approach between science and the pulpit. --Science News Reviews of this book: For the general scientific reader, the book is an excellent distillation of a broad and increasingly important field, a course of causation that cannot be ignored. From advising expectant parents to getting innocent people off death row, genetics increasingly dominates our lives. The sections on genetics are expertly written, particularly for those readers without in-depth knowledge. The author explains slowly and carefully just how genetics operates, using multiple metaphors. His genetic discourse proceeds in a neighborly fashion, as one might tell stories while sitting in a rocking chair at a country store. He seems to be invigorated by genes and just can't wait to tell about them. --David W. Hodo, Journal of the American Medical Association Reviews of this book: As a whole, this book is quite informative and stimulating, and sections of it are beautifully

written. Indeed, Professor Avise has a real gift for prose and scientific expositions, and I would suspect that he must be a formidable lecturer...At its core, [The Genetic Gods] is a survey, and a very nice one at that, of evolutionary genetics, the field of the author's major research interests. There is a strong sociobiological cast to the arguments, and the work and ideas of E. O. Wilson figure prominently. The presentation of evolutionary genetics is imbedded in a more general discussion of modern human and molecular genetics...However, this book is, most of all, a philosophical treatise that attempts, admittedly with the bias of a biologist, to examine the intersection of the fundamental premises of evolution and religion. Professor Avise has given us plenty to think about in this book [and]...it was a real pleasure to wrestle with the ideas he was presenting. I would suggest that other readers give it a try. --Charles J. Epstein, Trends in Genetics Reviews of this book: [Avise's] account of the role genes play in shaping the human condition is wholly involving, paying particular attention to issues of reproduction, aging and death. In addition to presenting ample biological information in a form accessible to the nonspecialist, Avise does a superb job of discussing many of the ethical implications that have arisen from our growing knowledge of human genetics. Just a few of the topics covered are genetic engineering, the patenting of life, genetic screening, abortion, human cloning, gene therapy and insurance-related controversies. --Publishers Weekly Reviews of this book: Avise explains thoroughly how evolution operates on a genetic level. His goal is to show that humans can look to this information as a way to answer fundamental questions of life instead of looking to traditional religious beliefs...Avise includes some very interesting discussions of ethical concerns related to genetic issues. --Eric D. Albright, Library Journal This is a splendid account of a subject that affects us all: the breathtaking increase in understanding of human genetics and the insight it provides into human evolution. John Avise speaks with authority of molecular evolutionary genetics and with affecting compassion of what it might mean. --Douglas J. Futuyma, State University of New York at Stony Brook The Genetic Gods is many things. It is a wonderful introduction to modern molecular biology, by a man who knows his subject backwards. It is a stimulating account of the ways in which genetics impinges on human nature--our thinking and our behavior. It is a remarkably level-headed and sympathetic account of the implications of our new findings for traditional and not-so-traditional issues in philosophy and religion. In an age of genetic counseling, cloning, construction of new life forms, the book is worth its weight in gold for this alone. But most of all, it is a huge amount of fun to read--you want to applaud or argue with the author on nigh every page. Highly recommended! --Michael Ruse, University of Guelph The Genetic Gods makes a valuable contribution to the on-going task of sorting out the implications of evolutionary biology and genetics for human self-understanding. Avise addresses, with authority and grace, the most consequential intellectual issues of our time. A challenging and insightful book. --Loyal Rue, Harvard University A wonderfully informative and engaging book. Avise offers a lucid, accessible primer on our genes, angelic and demonic, and examines religious and ethical issues, all too human, now confronted by genetic science. He makes a compelling case that anyone seeking to 'Know Thyself' should study the DNA molecular scriptures, our most ancient and universal legacy. --Dudley Herschbach, Harvard University, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry How Religion Evolved Harvard University Press The Reverend John Augustine Zahm, CSC, (1851--1921) was a Holy Cross priest, an author, a South American explorer, and a science professor and vice president at the University of Notre Dame, the latter at the age of twenty-five. Through his scientific writings, Zahm argued that Roman Catholicism was fully compatible with an evolutionary view of biological systems. Ultimately Zahm’s ideas were not accepted in his lifetime and he was prohibited from discussing evolution and Catholicism, although he remained an active priest for more than two decades after his censure. In Faith and Science at Notre Dame: John Zahm, Evolution, and the Catholic Church, John Slattery charts the rise and fall of Zahm, examining his ascension to international fame in bridging evolution and Catholicism and shedding new light on his ultimate downfall via censure by the Congregation of the Index of Prohibited Books. Slattery presents previously unknown archival letters and reports that allow Zahm’s censure to be fully understood in the light of broader scientific, theological, and philosophical movements within the Catholic Church and around the world. Faith and Science at Notre Dame weaves together a vast array of threads to tell a compelling new story of the late nineteenth century. The result is a complex and thrilling tale of Neo-Scholasticism, Notre Dame, empirical science, and the simple faith of an Indiana priest. The book, which includes a new translation of the 1864 Syllabus of Errors, will appeal to those interested in Notre Dame and Catholic history, scholars of science and religion, and general readers seeking to understand the relationship between faith and science.

In Gods We Trust Island Press
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. Evolution, Chance, and God Springer This debut book boldly seeks to argue competitively in the same intellectual field as famous atheists such as RICHARD DAWKINS, CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS, and BERTRAND RUSSELL, and to do so in the spirit and style of such famous Christian apologists as C.S. Lewis and RAVI ZACHARIAS, drawing heavily on basic science, history, physics, psychology, paleontology, anthropology, archeology, neurology, child development and even science fiction. It describes the evolution of the human brain in ancient hominids allowing humans to eventually conceive a non-physical realm (the spirit world), and as the mind evolved intellectually from primitive animism to Christology, God revealed himself gradually as the developing hominid brain became able to comprehend new ideas. For Believers, the author presents a new, intellectually satisfying way to understand and defend the Bible. For both Skeptics and Believers, a worldview is offered that is spiritually meaningful and scientifically sound. Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods Harvard University Press Leading scholars report on current research that demonstrates the central role of cultural evolution in explaining human behavior. Over the past few decades, a growing body of research has emerged from a variety of disciplines to highlight the importance of cultural evolution in understanding human behavior. Wider application of these insights, however, has been hampered by traditional disciplinary boundaries. To remedy this, in this volume leading researchers from theoretical biology, developmental and cognitive psychology, linguistics, anthropology, sociology, religious studies, history, and economics come together to explore the central role of cultural evolution in different aspects of human endeavor. The contributors take as their guiding principle the idea that cultural evolution can provide an important integrating function across the various disciplines of the human sciences, as organic evolution does for biology. The benefits of adopting a cultural evolutionary perspective are demonstrated by contributions on social systems, technology, language, and religion. Topics covered include enforcement of norms in human groups, the neuroscience of technology, language diversity, and prosociality and religion. The contributors evaluate current research on cultural evolution and consider its broader theoretical and practical implications, synthesizing past and ongoing work and sketching a roadmap for future cross-disciplinary efforts. Contributors Quentin D. Atkinson, Andrea Baronchelli, Robert Boyd, Briggs Buchanan, Joseph Bulbulia, Morten H. Christiansen, Emma Cohen, William Croft, Michael Cysouw, Dan Dediu, Nicholas Evans, Emma Flynn, Pieter Fran ç ois, Simon Garrod, Armin W. Geertz, Herbert Gintis, Russell D. Gray, Simon J. Greenhill, Daniel B. M. Haun, Joseph Henrich, Daniel J. Hruschka, Marco A. Janssen, Fiona M. Jordan, Anne Kandler, James A. Kitts, Kevin N. Laland, Laurent Lehmann, Stephen C. Levinson, Elena Lieven, Sarah Mathew, Robert N. McCauley, Alex Mesoudi, Ara Norenzayan, Harriet Over, Jürgen Renn, Victoria Reyes-García, Peter J. Richerson, Stephen Shennan, Edward G. Slingerland, Dietrich Stout, Claudio Tennie, Peter Turchin, Carel van Schaik, Matthijs Van Veelen, Harvey Whitehouse, Thomas Widlok, Polly Wiessner, David Sloan Wilson Evolution and Christian Faith Yale University Press One in the series New Dialogues in Philosophy, edited by Dale Jacquette, Michael Ruse, a leading expert on Charles Darwin, presents a fictional dialogue among characters with sharply contrasting positions regarding the tensions between science and religious belief. Ruse's main characters—an atheist scientist, a skeptical historian and philosopher of science, a relatively liberal female Episcopalian priest, and a Southern Baptist pastor who denies evolution—passionately argue about pressing issues, in a context framed within a television show: 'Science versus God— Who is Winning?' These characters represent the different positions concerning science and religion often held today: evolution versus creation, the implications of Christian beliefs upon technological advances in medicine, and the everlasting debate over free will. The Faith Instinct Harvard University Press This ambitious, interdisciplinary book seeks to explain the origins of religion using our knowledge of the evolution of cognition. A cognitive anthropologist and psychologist, Scott Atran argues that religion is a by-product of human evolution just as the cognitive intervention, cultural selection, and historical survival of religion is an accommodation of certain existential and moral elements that have evolved in the human condition. Faith and Science at Notre Dame Bloomsbury Publishing USA Certain to engage scholars, students, and general readers alike, Evolution and Ethics offers a balanced, levelheaded, constructive approach to an often divisive debate. Evolution as a Religion Oxford University Press A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice An ABC Australia Best Book on Religion and

Ethics of the Year Distinguished Book Award, Sociology of Religion Section of the American Sociological Association Religion in Human Evolution is a work of extraordinary ambition—a wide-ranging, nuanced probing of our biological past to discover the kinds of lives that human beings have most often imagined were worth living. It offers what is frequently seen as a forbidden theory of the origin of religion that goes deep into evolution, especially but not exclusively cultural evolution. “ Of Bellah ’ s brilliance there can be no doubt. The sheer amount this man knows about religion is otherworldly...Bellah stands in the tradition of such stalwarts of the sociological imagination as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. Only one word is appropriate to characterize this book ’ s subject as well as its substance, and that is ‘ magisterial. ’ ” —Alan Wolfe, New York Times Book Review “ Religion in Human Evolution is a magnum opus founded on careful research and immersed in the ‘ reflective judgment ’ of one of our best thinkers and writers. ” —Richard L. Wood, Commonweal

[The Evolution of Morality and Religion](#) Oxford University Press For centuries, science and religion have been portrayed as diametrically opposed. In this provocative new book, Steve Fuller examines the apparent clash between science and religion by focusing on the heated debates about evolution and intelligent design theory. In so doing, he claims that science vs. religion is in fact a false dichotomy. For Fuller, supposedly intellectual disputes, such as those between creationist and evolutionist accounts of life, often disguise other institutionally driven conflicts, such as the struggle between State and Church to be the source of legitimate authority in society. Nowadays many conservative anti-science groups support intelligent design theory, but Fuller argues that the theory's theological roots are much more radical, based on the idea that humans were created to fathom the divine plan, perhaps even complete it. He goes on to examine the unique political circumstances in the United States that make the emergence of intelligent design theory so controversial, yet so persistent. Finally, he considers the long-term prognosis, arguing that the future remains very much undecided as society reopens the question of what it means to be human. This book will appeal to all readers intrigued by the debates about creationism, intelligent design and evolution, especially those looking for an intellectually exciting confrontation with the politics and promise of intelligent design theory.

[Supernatural Selection](#) University of Chicago Press The question of the "historical Adam" is a flashpoint for many evangelical readers and churches. Science-and-theology scholar Loren Haarsma--who has studied, written, and spoken on science and faith for decades--shows it is possible both to affirm what science tells us about human evolution and to maintain belief in the doctrine of original sin. Haarsma argues that there are several possible ways of harmonizing evolution and original sin, taking seriously both Scripture and science. He presents a range of approaches without privileging one over the others, examining the strengths and challenges of each.

[Ritual, Play, and Belief in Evolution and Early Human Societies](#) Springer Nature This book makes the bold claim that intellectual sophistication was born worldwide during the middle centuries of the first millennium bce. From Axial Age thinkers we inherited a sense of the world as a place not just to experience but to investigate, envision, and alter. A variety of utopian visions emerged and led to both reform and repression.

[The Emergence of Religion in Human Evolution](#) Harvard University Press Table of contents Darwin's Cathedral Cambridge University Press

Religions and mythologies from around the world teach that God or gods created humans. Atheist, humanist, and materialist critics, meanwhile, have attempted to turn theology on its head, claiming that religion is a human invention. In this book, E. Fuller Torrey draws on cutting-edge neuroscience research to propose a startling answer to the ultimate question. Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods locates the origin of gods within the human brain, arguing that religious belief is a by-product of evolution. Based on an idea originally proposed by Charles Darwin, Torrey marshals evidence that the emergence of gods was an incidental consequence of several evolutionary factors. Using data ranging from ancient skulls and artifacts to brain imaging, primatology, and child development studies, this book traces how new cognitive abilities gave rise to new behaviors. For instance, autobiographical memory, the ability to project ourselves backward and forward in time, gave Homo sapiens a competitive advantage. However, it also led to comprehension of mortality, spurring belief in an alternative to death. Torrey details the neurobiological sequence that explains why the gods appeared when they did, connecting archaeological findings including clothing, art, farming, and urbanization to cognitive developments. This book does not dismiss belief but rather presents religious belief as an inevitable outcome of brain evolution. Providing clear and accessible explanations of evolutionary neuroscience, Evolving Brains, Emerging Gods will shed new light on the mechanics of our deepest mysteries.

Evolution and Religion Rowman & Littlefield "For as long as history has been with us, religion has been a feature of human life. There is no known culture for which we have an ethnographic or an archaeological record that does not have some form of religion. Even in the secular societies that have become more common in the past few centuries, there are people who consider themselves religious and aspire to practise the rituals of their religion. These religions vary in form, style and size from small cults numbering a few hundred people centred around a charismatic leader to worldwide organizations numbering tens, or even hundreds, of millions of adherents with representations in every country. Some, like Buddhism, take an individualistic stance (your salvation is entirely in your own hands), some like the older Abrahamic religions view salvation as more of a collective activity through the performance of appropriate rituals, and a few (Judaism is one) have no formal concept of an afterlife. Some like Christianity and

Islam believe in a single all- powerful God, [Religious Speciation](#) Oxford University Press This volume is offered as an example of the potential for dialogue between science and religion that is possible beyond the more popular convictions that science and religion are mutually exclusive. The papers offer a better appreciation of the complexity of thinking in both scientific and religious traditions on evolution and the fertile common ground that is still in great need of exploration. The essays examine evolution and the science and religion dialogue, evolution on the grand scale, the evolution of life on earth, Darwin and neo-Darwinism, the appearance of "homo sapiens," the evolution of culture, society and religion, the evolution of ethics and morality, and human impact on the evolution of the environment. For those interested in evolutionary and religious theory.

[Human Evolution and Christian Ethics](#) Cambridge University Press 'Darwinism as Religion' argues that the theory of evolution given by Charles Darwin in the 19th-century has always functioned as much as a secular form of religion as anything purely scientific. Through the words of novelists and poets, Michael Ruse argues that Darwin took us from the secure world of Christian faith into a darker, less friendly world of chance and lack of meaning.

[The Human Factor](#) Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Written by leading theorists and empirical researchers, this book presents new ways of addressing the old question: Why did religion first emerge and then continue to evolve in all human societies? The authors of the book—each with a different background across the social sciences and humanities—assimilate conceptual leads and empirical findings from anthropology, evolutionary biology, evolutionary sociology, neurology, primate behavioral studies, explanations of human interaction and group dynamics, and a wide range of religious scholarship to construct a deeper and more powerful explanation of the origins and subsequent evolutionary development of religions than can currently be found in what is now vast literature. While explaining religion has been a central question in many disciplines for a long time, this book draws upon a much wider array of literature to develop a robust and cross-disciplinary analysis of religion. The book remains true to its subtitle by emphasizing an array of both biological and sociocultural forms of selection dynamics that are fundamental to explaining religion as a universal institution in human societies. In addition to Darwinian selection, which can explain the biology and neurology of religion, the book outlines a set of four additional types of sociocultural natural selection that can fill out the explanation of why religion first emerged as an institutional system in human societies, and why it has continued to evolve over the last 300,000 years of societal evolution. These sociocultural forms of natural selection are labeled by the names of the early sociologists who first emphasized them, and they can be seen as a necessary supplement to the type of natural selection theorized by Charles Darwin. Explanations of religion that remain in the shadow cast by Darwin ’ s great insights will, it is argued, remain narrow and incomplete when explaining a robust sociocultural phenomenon like religion.