



The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason

By Victor J. Stenger

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In recent years a number of bestselling books have forcefully argued that belief in God can no longer be defended on rational or empirical grounds, and that the scientific worldview has rendered obsolete the traditional beliefs held by Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The authors of these books—Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, and Victor J. Stenger—have come to be known as the "New Atheists." Predictably, their works have been controversial and attracted a good deal of critical reaction.

In this new book, Victor J. Stenger, whose *God: The Failed Hypothesis* was on the New York Times bestseller list in 2007, reviews and expands upon the principles of New Atheism and answers many of its critics. He demonstrates in detail that naturalism—the view that all of reality is reducible to matter and nothing else—is sufficient to explain everything we observe in the universe, from the most distant galaxies to the inner workings of the brain that result in the phenomenon of mind.

Stenger disputes the claim of many critics that the question of whether God exists is beyond the ken of science. On the contrary, he argues that absence of evidence for God is, indeed, evidence of absence when the evidence should be there and is not.

Turning from scientific to historical evidence, Stenger then points out the many examples of evil perpetrated in the name of religion. He also notes that the Bible, which is still taken to be divine revelation by millions, fails as a basis for morality and is unable to account for the problem of unnecessary suffering throughout the world.

Finally, he discusses the teachings of ancient nontheist sages such as Buddha, Lao Tzu, and Confucius, whose guidelines for coping with the problems of life and death did not depend upon a supernatural metaphysics. Stenger argues that this "way of nature" is far superior to the traditional supernatural monotheisms, which history shows can lead to a host of evils.

The New Atheism is a well-argued defense of the atheist position and a strong rebuttal of its critics.

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Editorial Review

Review

"One of the most forlorn ways of defending religion is to misconstrue, distort, or ignore the best arguments put forward against it. Unfortunately, this spirit of obscurantism now animates even secular critics of the 'new atheism.' Victor Stenger dispels the resultant blizzard of lies and half-truths with great skill in this timely and accessible book. We are all in his debt." --**Sam Harris** is the author of the *New York Times* best sellers, *The End of Faith* and *Letter to a Christian Nation*

"There is nothing new - and everything new - about the New Atheism. Victor Stenger (one of the New Atheists himself) eloquently reminds us that although the persuasive arguments against religious belief have existed for millennia, they are now strengthened and confirmed with the insights of modern physics and philosophy to such a degree that we are brought to a tipping point. We have surpassed the critical mass of evidence and reasoning where the time has come for atheists to step forward - and they are indeed stepping forward confidently - to occupy the intellectual and moral high ground that is their rightful place. What is truly 'new' about atheism is that the world, after too many centuries of giving religion a free rein, is now prepared to see and embrace the positive wisdom of doubt. A freethinker like Stenger is no longer perceived as the lone, angry 'village atheist' living on the desperate fringe of society. The religious right can no longer smear atheists as 'strident, angry, aggressive, and negative.' Victor Stenger, with his affirming, incisive and illuminating observations, shows us that there is truly grandeur in taking a stand ,for something precious: science and reason." --**Dan Barker**, author of *Godless: How An Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists*. Co-president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation

"The new atheism is not just another dogmatic belief system to be accepted on faith, nor does it make people immoral and miserable. Stenger's thorough review should make both believers and atheists take seriously the harm religions can do." --**Susan Blackmore**, visiting Professor in Psychology at the University of Plymouth, and author of *Ten Zen Questions*; *The Meme Machine*; and *Consciousness: An Introduction*.

"Victor Stenger's combined expertise in physics and philosophy prove fatal to any pretense that theism is defensible or rational. *The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason* is a clear and potent explanation of why the old theism is no match for the new atheism." --**Dr. Hector Avalos**, author of *The End of Biblical Studies* (2007) and Professor of Religious Studies, Iowa State University

About the Author

Victor J. Stenger (1935 - 2014) was an adjunct professor of philosophy at the University of Colorado and emeritus professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Hawaii. He was the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *God: The Failed Hypothesis*, *God and the Atom*, *God and the Folly of Faith*, *The Comprehensible Cosmos*, and many other books.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

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Eleanor Bender:

The book *The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason* make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem using your subject. If you can make studying a book *The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason* to be your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You could know everything if you like open up and read a book *The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason*. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this guide?

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