

The Problem Of Evil

God and the Problem of Evil brings together influential essays on the question of whether the amount of seemingly pointless malice and suffering in our world counts against the rationality of belief in God, a being who is said to be all-powerful, all-knowing, and perfectly good.

This concise, well-structured survey examines the problem of evil in the context of the philosophy of religion. The main problem of evil consists in reconciling belief in a just and loving God with the evil and suffering in the world. Michael Peterson frames this issue by working through questions such as the following: What is the relation of rational belief to religious faith? What different conceptual moves are possible on either side of the issue? What responses have important thinkers advanced and which seem most promising? Is it possible to maintain religious commitment in light of evil? The author relies on the helpful distinction between moral and natural evil to clarify our understanding of the different aspects of the problem as well as avenues for response. Thus, the reader of this book gains not only an intellectual grasp of the debate over God and evil in professional philosophy but also the personal benefit of thinking through one of the most important issues in human life. } This concise, well-structured survey examines the problem of evil in the context of the philosophy of religion. One of the core topics in that field, the problem of evil is an enduring challenge that Western philosophers have pondered for almost two thousand years. The main problem of evil consists in reconciling belief in a just and loving God with the evil and suffering in the world. Michael Peterson frames this issue by working through questions such as the following: What is the relation of rational belief to religious faith? What different conceptual moves are possible on either side of the issue? What responses have important thinkers advanced and which seem most promising? Is it possible to maintain religious commitment in light of evil? Peterson relies on the helpful distinction between moral and natural evil to clarify our understanding of the different aspects of the problem as well as avenues for response. The overall format of the text rests on classifying various types of argument from evil: the logical, the probabilistic, the evidential, and the existential arguments. Each type of argument has its own strategy which both theists and nontheists must recognize and develop. Giving both theistic and nontheistic perspectives fair representation, the text works through the issues of whether evil shows theistic belief to be inconsistent, improbable, discredited by the evidence, or threatened by personal crisis. Peterson explains how defensive strategies are particularly geared for responding to the logical and probabilistic arguments from evil while theodicy is an appropriate response to the evidential argument. Theodicy has traditionally been understood as the attempt to justify belief in a God who is all-powerful and all-good in light of evil. The text discusses the theodicies of Augustine, Leibniz, Hick, and Whitehead as enlightening examples of theodicy. This discussion allows Peterson to identify and evaluate a rather dominant theme in most theodicies: that evil can be justified by designating a greater good. In the end, Peterson even explores how certain types of theodicy, based on specifically Christian renditions of theism, might provide a basis for addressing the existential problem of evil. The reader of this book gains not only an intellectual grasp of the debate over God and evil in professional philosophy but also the personal benefit of thinking through one of the most important issues in human life. }

This account of evil takes the Book of Job as its guide. The Book of Job considers physical pain, social bereavement, the origin of evil, theodicy, justice, divine violence, and reward. Such problems are explored by consulting ancient and modern accounts from the fields of theology and philosophy, broadly conceived. Some of the literature on evil - especially the philosophical literature - is inclined toward the abstract treatment of such problems. Bringing along the suffering Job will serve as a reminder of the concrete, lived experience in which the problem of evil has its roots.

Where does evil come from? If there is a sovereign creator God, as Christian faith holds, is this God ultimately responsible for evil? Does God's sovereignty mean that God causes each instance of sin and suffering? How do Satan, his demons and hell fit into God's providential oversight of all creation and history? How does God interact with human intention and action? If people act freely, does God know in particular every human decision before the choice is made? In this important book Gregory A. Boyd mounts a thorough response to these ages-old questions, which remain both crucial and contentious, both practical and complex. In this work Boyd defends his scripturally grounded trinitarian warfare theodicy (presented in *God at War*) with rigorous philosophical reflection and insights from human experience and scientific discovery. Critiquing the classical Calvinist solution to the problem of evil, he advocates an alternative understanding of the sovereignty of the trinitarian God and of the reality of Satan that sheds light on our fallen human condition. While all may not agree with Boyd's conclusions, *Satan and the Problem of Evil* promises to advance the church's discussion of these critical issues.

Belief in God in the face of suffering is one of the most intractable problems of Christian theology. Many respond to the spiritual challenge of evil by ignoring it, blaming God, or insisting on the inherent meaninglessness of life. In this book, William Greenway contends that we don't have to deny our moral selves by either ignoring evil or abandoning our moral sensibilities toward it. We can open our eyes fully to suffering and evil, and our own complicity in them. We can do so because it is only in this full acceptance of the world's guilt and our own that we make ourselves fully open to agape, to being seized by love of others and God. Inspired by the Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas and the Christian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Challenge of Evil* lovingly explains how we can look squarely at the overwhelming suffering in the world and still, by grace, have faith in a good and loving God.

Why do bad things happen, even to good people? If there is a God, why aren't God's existence and God's will for humans more apparent? And if God really does miracles for some people, why not for others? This book examines these three problems of evil – suffering, divine hiddenness, and unfairness if miracles happen as believers claim – to explore how different ideas of God's power relate to the problem of evil. Keller argues that as long as God is believed to be all-powerful, there are no adequate answers to these problems, nor is it enough for theists simply to claim that human ignorance makes these problems insoluble. Arguing that there are no good grounds for the belief that God is all-powerful, Keller instead defends the understanding of God and God's power found in process theism and shows how it makes possible an adequate solution to the problems of evil while providing a concept of God that is religiously adequate.

An important new book on how we can still believe in a God of love and confront the problem of evil in the world. Probably the most important book on the subject since John Hick's book *Evil and the God of Love*. & Evil is a strong word that people now employ fairly rarely. Many people believe these days that God is omnipotent, omniscient and good and that what we deem to be bad or evil in the world is no reason for abandoning belief in God. It is an intellectual or theoretical problem not one where the focus is on how one might bring about some desirable goal (a practical matter). & Professor Davies says we should tackle this

problem by attending to the basics, by asking whether there is a God and then What is God? he starts by summarizing the arguments so far (from Seneca to the present day). He then moves to what he describes as the basics (see above) and demonstrates that much of what has been written about on the topic of evil is in fact irrelevant or just plain wrong. & Finally, though many theologians argue that evil is a mystery, Davies argues that this too is wrong and a cop out. We should rather be concerned with the problem (or mystery) of good. The real issue is ` Why is there not more good than there is`. From the discussion Aquinas emerges as a hero (as filtered through analytical philosophy) but many moderns thinkers do not emerge so well. Davies effectively picks holes into the arguments of Peter Geach, Paul Helm, Richard Swinburne and even Mary Baker Eddy. & This is a lively book on a tricky subject, written at all times with humour and much practical example.

The Blackwell Companion to the Problem of Evil presents a collection of original essays providing both overview and insight, clarifying and evaluating the philosophical and theological "problem of evil" in its various contexts and manifestations. Features all original essays that explore the various forms of the problems of evil, offering theistic responses that attempt to explain evil as well as discussion of the challenges facing such explanations Includes section introductions with a historical essay that traces the developments of the issues explored Acknowledges the fact that there are many problems of evil, some of which apply only to those who believe in concepts such as hell and some of which apply to non-theists Represents views from the various religious traditions, including Hindu, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim

Suffering that is not coupled with any redeeming good is one of our world's more troubling, apparent glitches. It is particularly vexing for any theist who believes that the world was created by a supremely morally good, knowledgeable, and powerful god. *Gratuitous Suffering and the Problem of Evil: A Comprehensive Introduction* is among the first book-length discussions of theistic approaches to this issue. Bryan Frances's lucid and jargon-free analyses of a variety of possible responses to the problem of gratuitous suffering will provide serious students or general readers much material with which to begin an extended contemplation of this ancient and contemporary concern. The perfect size and scope for an introductory philosophy class's discussion of the problem of evil and suffering, and deliberately crafted to be approachable by all interested readers, *Gratuitous Suffering and the Problem of Evil* is philosophy doing what it does best: serious, engaged, rigorous explorations of even the darkest truths. The book offers many useful pedagogical features, including chapter overviews and summaries, annotated suggested readings, and eight-eight discussion questions.

C. S. Lewis was concerned about an aspect of the problem of evil he called subjectivism: the tendency of one's perspective to move towards self-referentialism and utilitarianism. In *C. S. Lewis and a Problem of Evil*, Jerry Root provides a holistic reading of Lewis by walking the reader through all of Lewis's published work as he argues Lewis's case against subjectivism. Furthermore, the book reveals that Lewis consistently employed fiction to make his case, as virtually all of his villains are portrayed as subjectivists. Lewis's warnings are prophetic; this book is not merely an exposition of Lewis, it is also a timely investigation into the problem of evil.

The most forceful philosophical objections to belief in God arise from the existence of evil. Bad things happen in the world and it is not clear how this is compatible with the existence of an all-powerful and perfectly loving being. Unsurprisingly then, philosophers have formulated powerful arguments for atheism based on the existence of apparently unjustified suffering. These arguments give expression to what we call the problem of evil. This volume is an engaging introduction to the philosophical problem of evil. Daniel Speak provides a clear overview of the main lines of reasoning in this debate and argues for the defensibility of theistic belief in the face of evil. He fleshes out the distinction between theodicy and defense and guides the reader through the logical, evidential, and hiddenness versions of the problem. In an accessible and beautifully written account, Speak describes the central issues surrounding the problem of evil in a way that clarifies both the complex reasoning and specialised terminology of the topic. *The Problem of Evil* is an ideal introduction to contemporary debates over one of the most gripping perennial questions. Read either on its own or alongside the primary materials it deftly covers, students and scholars will find this volume a terrific resource for understanding the challenges to religious belief raised by evil.

Providence and the Problem of Evil Oxford University Press on Demand

If God is all powerful and entirely good and loving, why is there so much evil in the world? Based on a close canonical reading of Scripture, this book offers a new approach to the challenge of reconciling the Christian confession of a loving God with the realities of suffering and evil. John Peckham offers a constructive proposal for a theodicy of love that upholds both the sovereignty of God and human freedom, showing that Scripture points toward a framework for thinking about God's love in relation to the world.

Is evil evidence against the existence of God? A collection of essays by philosophers, theologians, and other scholars. Even if God and evil are compatible, it remains hotly contested whether evil renders belief in God unreasonable. *The Evidential Argument from Evil* presents five classic statements on this issue by eminent philosophers and theologians, and places them in dialogue with eleven original essays reflecting new thinking by these and other scholars. The volume focuses on two versions of the argument. The first affirms that there is no reason for God to permit either certain specific horrors or the variety and profusion of undeserved suffering. The second asserts that pleasure and pain, given their biological role, are better explained by hypotheses other than theism. Contributors include William P. Alston, Paul Draper, Richard M. Gale, Daniel Howard-Snyder, Alvin Plantinga, William L. Rowe, Bruce Russell, Eleonore Stump, Richard G. Swinburne, Peter van Inwagen, and Stephen John Wykstra.

C.S. Lewis was concerned about an aspect of the problem of evil he called subjectivism: the tendency of one's perspective to move towards self-referentialism and utilitarianism. In *C.S. Lewis and a Problem of Evil*, Jerry Root provides a holistic reading of Lewis by walking the reader through all of Lewis's published work as he argues Lewis's case against subjectivism. Furthermore, the book reveals that Lewis consistently employed fiction to make his case, as virtually all of his villains are portrayed as subjectivists. Lewis's warnings are prophetic; this book is not merely an

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One of those rare questions in philosophy that is not only technically recalcitrant but also engages the hearts and minds of the broad community is the so-called 'problem of evil': How can the existence of an absolutely perfect God be reconciled with the existence of suffering and evil? This collection of dialogues between eight philosophers of religion explores new ways of thinking about this longstanding problem, in the process reorienting and reinvigorating the philosophical debate around the relationship between God, goodness and evil: How exactly are these three notions connected, if at all? Is God the cause, or author, of evil and suffering? How is the goodness of God to be understood, and how is divine goodness related to human morality? Does God's perfect goodness entail that God must have reasons for permitting or bringing about suffering, and if so what could his reasons be? These questions are of momentous existential and theoretical interest, and they have exercised the finest intellects across the centuries. The time is ripe for a wholesale reconsideration of the problem of evil. To make progress towards this goal, eight distinct perspectives are placed in mutual dialogue, giving voice to both traditional and relatively unorthodox approaches. What emerges from these critical but friendly exchanges is a diversity of fruitful and innovative ways of thinking about the nature of divinity and its relationship to evil.

One of the most profound problems that theologians are called on to address is the presence of evil and suffering in the world, and how this can be reconciled with the assertion of an omnipotent and morally perfect God. This book begins by showing how the problem of evil has been inextricably bound up with the problematic deity created by the philosophical theism of the Enlightenment and perpetuated ever since, demonstrating how contemporary theodiscists have failed to perceive the historical and cultural determinants which affect their theorizing. Dr. Surin argues that thinking on the problem of evil consists of two fundamental perspectives. He labels these the theoretical and the practical approaches and examines the work of a number of theologians who typify each. Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, the process theologians, and John Hick exemplify the theoretical approach; Dorothee Soelle, Jurgen Moltmann, and P. T. Forsyth the practical. He uses the views of Dostoevsky's character Ivan Karamazov and the protagonists in Elie Wiesel's writing as a paradigm for evaluating the two approaches, and concludes that only the practical approach has the merit of both rooting itself in the realities of human suffering, and grounding itself in the fundamental rule of what he calls an adequate grammar of salvation, namely that God justifies himself by justifying sinners on the cross. Finally, Dr. Surin explores this grammar of the notion of an incarnate salvation with particular reference to the need for a messianic and practical solidarity with those who are afflicted. This thought-provoking book will serve both as an introduction to those new to the ideas of theodicy, and as a stimulating essay for those dissatisfied with conventional studies of theology and the problem of evil.

In "Raging with Compassion", Michael Ramsey prize-winning author John Swinton argues for a practical theodicy, one embodied in the life and practices of the Christian community. This practicality does not seek to provide an explanation for the existence of evil, but rather presents ways in which evil and suffering can be resisted and transformed. This, he insists, will enable Christians to live faithfully with unanswered questions as they await God's redemption of the whole creation. Swinton explores essential practices of redemption - lament, forgiveness, thoughtfulness, hospitality, and friendship - drawing out their implications for the faithful resistance of evil. Enhanced by case studies from current events and by Swinton's own experience as a pastor and mental health nurse, "Raging with Compassion" seeks to inspire fresh Christian responses and modes of practice in our broken, fallen world.

The vast amount of suffering in the world is often held as a particularly powerful reason to deny that God exists. Highly accessible and carefully argued, Peter van Inwagen's book maintains that such reasoning does not hold, and that suffering should not undermine belief in God.

Since antiquity, people have referred to the existence of evil as a 'problem.' Many have tried to undermine or eradicate evil, while some have held it as eternal. Some folks have gone so far as to claim that because evil exists, God therefore does not. After all, if God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good, then how could He allow for evil to exist, such as through suffering, sin, and death? While many religious folks have offered their solutions for this so-called 'problem,' a large segment of the Christian population has used the Free Will Theory as an attempt to thwart it. But the unexpected result was that Christianity was also thwarted with this attempt, playing right into the hands of atheists who use this 'problem' in their preaching and conversions. If evil was removed from Creation, would you then believe in God? Why do you not believe in God if goodness exists? What is the purpose for evil? These questions and others are tackled by author Kevin R. Haughn, whose published works focus on everyday theological concepts that believers and non-believers routinely face. Thanks again for your support of Kevin R. Haughn's work. You can find his other titles here on Amazon

Eight leading philosophers of religion debate 'the problem of evil' - the problem of reconciling the existence of a perfectly good and loving God with the existence of sin and suffering in the world. Their dialogues explore a range of imaginative and innovative approaches to the nature of divinity and its relationship to evil.

The problem of evil has been an extremely active area of study in the philosophy of religion for many years. Until now, most sources have focused on logical, metaphysical, and epistemological issues, leaving moral questions as open territory. With the resources of ethical theory firmly in hand, this volume provides lively insight into this ageless philosophical issue.

Chapter 1 addresses some preliminary issues that it is important to think about in formulating arguments from evil. Chapter 2 is then concerned with the question of how an incompatibility argument from evil is best formulated, and with possible responses to such arguments. Chapter 3 then focuses on skeptical theism, and on the work that skeptical theists need to do if they are to defend their claim of having defeated incompatibility versions of the argument from evil.

Finally, Chapter 4 discusses evidential arguments from evil, and four different kinds of evidential argument are set out and critically examined.

Evil abounds. And so do the attempts to understand God in the face of such evil.

This Reader brings together primary sources from philosophy, theology and literature to chart the many and changing ways evil has been approached and understood, and to examine the diverse implications it has had for belief and unbelief. Will fill a major gap in the publishing market. Provides primary source readings for courses on religion and evil. A key issue in religious thought - this book will change the way the subject is taught. Author is one of the brightest young religious philosophers in America.

Why does God permit evil and suffering? This question, known as the problem of evil in theological and philosophical circles, has perennially vexed Christian theology. Academic studies on the problem of evil, however, have failed to move the conversation forward in recent years. In this volume, designed for students and scholars alike, Mark S. M. Scott traces the major models and motifs in Christian explanations for evil (called theodicies) and argues for a thorough rethinking of the problem of evil and theodicy based on distinctly Christian theological criteria and resources.

Of all the issues in the philosophy of religion, the problem of reconciling belief in God with evil in the world arguably commands more attention than any other. For over two decades, Michael L. Peterson's *The Problem of Evil: Selected Readings* has been the most widely recognized and used anthology on the subject. Peterson's expanded and updated second edition retains the key features of the original and presents the main positions and strategies in the latest philosophical literature on the subject. It will remain the most complete introduction to the subject as well as a resource for advanced study. Peterson organizes his selection of classical and contemporary sources into four parts: important statements addressing the problem of evil from great literature and classical philosophy; debates based on the logical, evidential, and existential versions of the problem; major attempts to square God's justice with the presence of evil, such as Augustinian, Irenaean, process, openness, and *felix culpa* theodicies; and debates on the problem of evil covering such concepts as a best possible world, natural evil and natural laws, gratuitous evil, the skeptical theist defense, and the bearing of biological evolution on the problem. The second edition includes classical excerpts from the book of Job, Voltaire, Dostoevsky, Augustine, Aquinas, Leibniz, and Hume, and twenty-five essays that have shaped the contemporary discussion, by J. L. Mackie, Alvin Plantinga, William Rowe, Marilyn Adams, John Hick, William Hasker, Paul Draper, Michael Bergmann, Eleonore Stump, Peter van Inwagen, and numerous others. Whether a professional philosopher, student, or interested layperson, the reader will be able to work through a number of issues related to how evil in the world affects belief in God.

For many centuries philosophers have been discussing the problem of evil - one of the greatest problems of intellectual history. There are many facets to the problem, and for students and scholars unfamiliar with the vast literature on the subject, grasping the main issues can be a daunting task. This Companion provides a stimulating introduction to the problem of evil. More than an introduction to the subject, it is a state-of-the-art contribution to the field which provides critical analyses of and creative insights on this longstanding problem. Fresh themes in the book include evil and the meaning of life, beauty and evil, evil and cosmic evolution, and anti-theodicy. Evil is discussed from the perspectives of the major monotheistic religions, agnosticism, and atheism. Written by leading scholars in clear and accessible prose, this book is an ideal companion for undergraduate and graduate students, teachers, and scholars across the disciplines. Gathers some of the most meaningful recent reflections on the problem of evil.

Early Modern Women and the Problem of Evil examines the concept of theodicy—the attempt to reconcile divine perfection with the existence of evil—through the lens of early modern female scholars. This timely volume knits together the perennial problem of defining evil with current scholarly interest in women's roles in the evolution of religious philosophy. Accessible for those without a background in philosophy or theology, Jill Graper Hernandez's text will be of interest to upper-level undergraduates as well as graduate students and researchers.

How society deals with the problem of evil in a post-9/11 world.

Why does a loving God allow humans to suffer so much? This is one of the most difficult problems of religious belief. Richard Swinburne gives a careful, clear examination of this problem, and offers an answer: it is because God wants more for us than just pleasure or freedom from suffering. Swinburne argues that God wants humans to learn and to love, to make the choices which make great differences for good and evil to each other, to form our characters in the way we choose; above all to be of great use to each other. If we are to have all this, there will inevitably be suffering for the short period of our lives on Earth. But because of the good that God gives to humans in this life, and because he makes it possible for us, through our choice, to share the life of Heaven, he does not wrong us if he allows suffering. *Providence and the Problem of Evil* is the final volume of Richard Swinburne's acclaimed tetralogy on Christian doctrine. It may be read on its own as a self-standing treatment of this eternal philosophical issue. Readers who are interested in a unified study of the philosophical foundations of Christian belief will find it now in the tetralogy and in his trilogy on the philosophy of theism.

Contrary to what many philosophers believe, Calvinism neither makes the problem of evil worse nor is it obviously refuted by the presence of evil and suffering in our world. Or so most of the authors in this book claim. While Calvinism has enjoyed a resurgence in recent years amongst theologians and laypersons, many philosophers have yet to follow suit. The reason seems fairly clear: Calvinism, many think, cannot handle the problem of evil with the same kind of plausibility as other more popular views of the nature of God and the nature of God's relationship with His creation. This book seeks to challenge that untested assumption. With clarity and rigor, this collection of essays seeks to fill a significant hole in the literature on the problem of evil.

The Problem of Evil: New Philosophical Directions brings together a diversity of philosophical views, methods, and

approaches to the much-discussed topic of evil and its bearing on religious belief. Through both general and specific examinations of the problem of evil, this book proposes new directions for philosophical thought.

"This book is D.Z. Phillips' systematic attempt to discuss the problem of evil. He argues that the problem is inextricably linked to our conception of God. In an effort to distinguish between logical and existential problems of evil, that inheritance offers us distorted accounts of God's omnipotence and will. In his interlude, Phillips argues that, as a result, God is ridiculed out of existence, and found unfit to plead before the bar of decency. However, Phillips elucidates a neglected tradition in which we reach a different understanding of God's presence amidst suffering, and addresses the ultimate question of how God can be said to be with those who are crushed by life's afflictions." "An ideal text for students of philosophy, religious studies and theology, but also for anyone who reflects seriously on the danger of adding to human evils by the way in which we write and think about them."--Jacket

This updated edition by one of the world's leading apologists presents a systematic, positive case for Christianity that reflects the latest work in the contemporary hard sciences and humanities. Brilliant and accessible.

Many distinct, controversial issues are to be found within the labyrinthine twists and turns of the problem of evil. For philosophers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, evil presented a challenge to the consistency and rationality of the world-picture disclosed by the new way of ideas. In dealing with this challenge, however, philosophers were also concerned with their positions in the theological debates about original sin, free will, and justification that were the legacy of the Protestant Reformation to European intellectual life. Emerging from a conference on the problem of evil in the early modern period held at the University of Toronto in 1999, the papers in this collection represent some of the best original work being done today on the theodicies of such early modern philosophers as Leibniz, Suarez, Spinoza, Malebranche, and Pierre Bayle.

This collection of important writings fills the need for an anthology that adequately represents recent work on the problem of evil. This is perhaps one of the most discussed topics in the philosophy of religion, and is of perennial interest to philosophers and theologians.

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