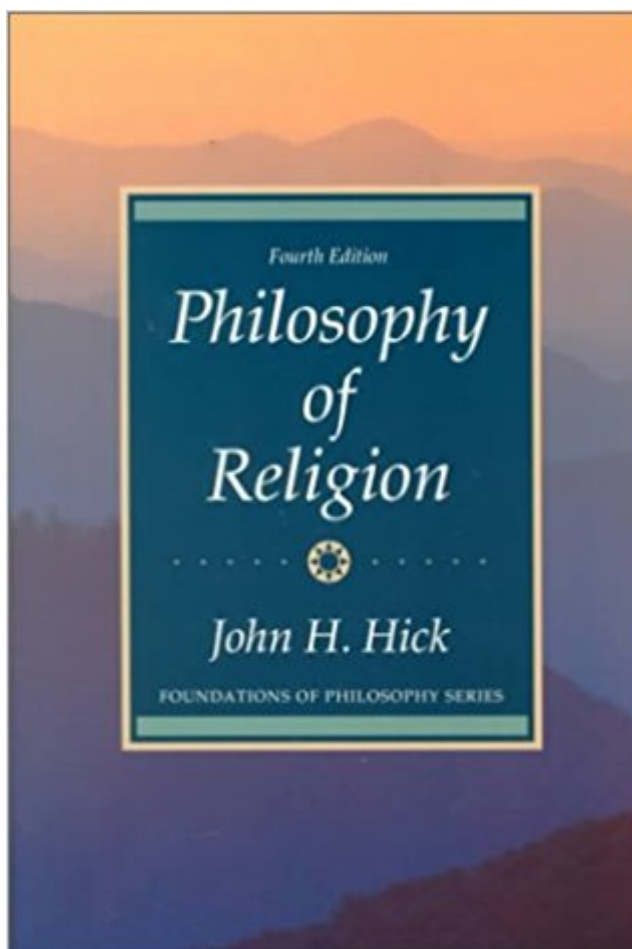


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Philosophy Of Religion (4th Edition)



Synopsis

Revision features an updated discussion on the main topics in the philosophy of religion: the concept of God - grounds for belief in God - ground for disbelief in God - the problem of evil - revelation and faith - problems of religious language - the conflicting falsifiability of religious assertions - the conflicting truth-claims of different religions - human destiny and more.

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Customer Reviews

A contemporary introduction to the main topics in the philosophy of religion -- written by a world-renowned philosopher.

Revision features an updated discussion on the main topics in the philosophy of religion: the concept of God - grounds for belief in God - ground for disbelief in God - the problem of evil - revelation and faith - problems of religious language - the conflicting falsifiability of religious assertions - the conflicting truth-claims of different religions - human destiny and more.

Arrived in nice order, a little bit of writing in it but not bad.. I mean you can't go wrong for \$4.99!

Actually I haven't gotten to far into it yet. Looks interesting.

Although this was required for my class it was actually a good read. Affordable, came on time, and was very happy with the condition.

It came in a different cover than what is pictured which was not mentioned when purchasing. I'm not sure what the difference is, but I'm the only person in my class of 40 with the cover that I got. It is in good condition though and so far I haven't noticed any differences. I'm not too keen on the material. It's a little boring compared to my other texts for this class.

John Harwood Hick (1922-2012) was a philosopher of religion and theologian who taught at a number of universities, and wrote/edited many other books such as *Evil and the God of Love*, *The Existence of God*, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, etc. (NOTE: I am here reviewing the 1973 Second edition of this book.) He said in the Introduction, "A complete treatise on the philosophy of religion would have to investigate the nature of religion in general and would deal with all the main ideas of the many different religions. It is not possible in this short book to undertake either of these tasks... We shall accordingly be considering the philosophical questions provoked by the religious ideas that lie behind our western Atlantic civilization and that still form the main religious options within our culture." (Pg. 3) He observes, "As David Hume points out in his discussion of analogical reasoning, the fact that there is only one universe precludes our making probable judgments about it. If---impossibly---we knew that there were a number of universes (for example, ten) and if in addition we knew that (say) half of them were God-produced and half not, we could deduce that the probability of our own universe being God-produced would be one in two. However... clearly no reasoning based upon the frequency theory of probability is possible concerning its character." (Pg. 27) He observes, "A number of philosophers have pointed out the logical difficulty involved in any claim to have encountered God. How could one know that it was GOD whom one had encountered? ... One can recognize that a being whom one encounters has a given finite degree of power, but how does one recognize that he has unlimited power? How does one perceive that his goodness and love... are actually infinite? Such qualities cannot be given in human experience. One might claim to have encountered a Being whom one presumes, or trusts, or hopes to be God; but one cannot claim to have encountered a Being whom one RECOGNIZED to be the infinite, almighty, eternal Creator." (Pg. 94) He concludes the book while asking about "theists ('those who sincerely seek God') who have had no contact with the Christian gospel. But what of the nontheistic Buddhists and nontheistic Hindus? And what of those Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Parsees, etc., both theists and nontheists, who have heard the Christian gospel but have preferred to adhere to the faith of their fathers?" (Pg. 129) This is an excellent "textbook-style" overview of the philosophy of religion, and will be of interest to anyone studying that subject.

John Hick's *Philosophy of Religion* first published in the early 1960s remains a classic introduction to the philosophy of religion. I offer the following thoughts for potential readers. In this small work (approx 140 pages), Hick effectively touches on most of the leading issues within the field. Although the author has some well-known, and at times provocative, views, in this work he employs an agnostic position that is well suited to an introductory text. The approach is clearly centred on the Christian view of God, however, it does include a brief discussion of related topics such as parapsychology and religious pluralism (readers interested in the latter can see some of Hick's later work). Though I do not share all of Hick's more speculative views (expressed in other writings) - this is an outstanding starting point for readers interested in the philosophy of religion. It is clear, concise and tightly edited with good recommendations for further reading. Overall, this is an outstanding overview from one of the best communicators in the field.

In this discipline you need an erudite but also readable guide - there are few that compare to Professor Hick in this regard. His style is a model for any student to emulate, and this third edition of his standard intro is both readably brief while technically on the mark as ever. I recommend it heartily to any student seeking a learned guide.

Hick's *Philosophy of Religion*, a thin volume of analytic philosophy, actually changed my life. Having been staunchly raised as a naive but bright member of a General Association of Regular Baptist church, I picked up Hick's *Philosophy of Religion* in a used bookstore (Bookseller's Row) in Chicago in 1990. Its rational, deliberative approach combined with a seemingly wild open-mindedness towards religious doctrine was what cracked open the worlds of religion, philosophy, history, and literature to an impressionable college student. Later that year, I would echo one of Hick's arguments in a question to philosopher Richard Swinburne, whose predictable Oxfordian condescension did the opposite of discouraging me.

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