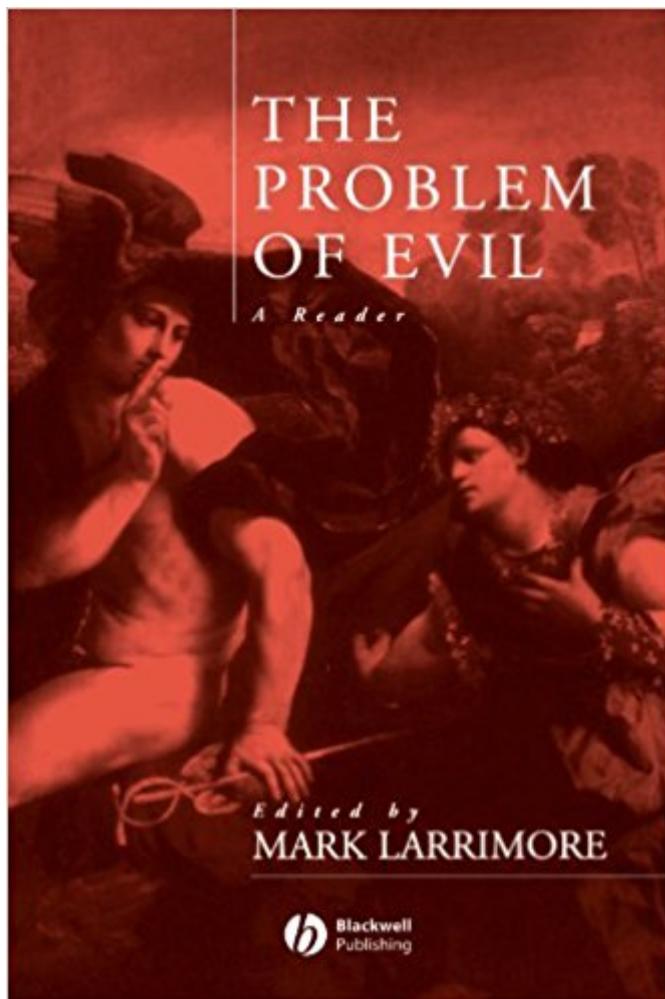


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The Problem Of Evil: A Reader



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition (November 2, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0631220143

ISBN-13: 978-0631220145

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #77,933 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #33 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Good & Evil #56 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Systematic #160 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Religious

Customer Reviews

"The greatest strength of the reader, apart from the sheer number of selections, is the impressive variety of approaches. This richness of variety lends a particular grace to the volume, making for lively and engaging reading. The volume will prove a valuable reference tool for both student and specialist, and its usefulness is significantly enhanced by the detailed Person, Subject and Scripture indices." The Reformed Theological Review "Mark Larrimore of the Centre for Human Values at Princeton University has chosen the extracts judiciously and imaginatively and provided short introductions to each of them together with suggestions for further reading. Those students who work carefully through this reader should gain a much more nuanced understanding of this ancient dilemma." Theological Book Review

The 'problem of evil' is a subject of perennial interest to philosophers of religion and theologians, but research has barely scratched the surface of the complex history of western responses to the

challenge of 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. Uncovering forgotten but still powerful arguments and approaches, this Reader provides both an historical and contemporary examination of the practical and theoretical challenges that evil poses to faith, reason, and practice. This fresh, lively, and much-needed new approach to the 'problem of evil' transcends the narrow approach to the philosophy of religion as currently practised, and will change the way the subject is taught, received and understood.

The so-called problem of evil has been called the "rock of atheism" which threatens to shatter the hull of religious faith. This is more than appropriate. If you're an atheist, bad things happening to good people is tragic but not mysterious. The physical universe is indifferent to individual humans, and all of us are equally susceptible to germs, viruses, natural disasters, and the malevolence of our fellows. But if you're a theist, someone who believes in an all-loving, all-knowing, and all-powerful God, bad things happening to good people is both tragic and mysterious--bewildering and deeply disturbing, actually. It not only violates one's sense of fairness or justice, it also calls into question God's love, or God's omnipotence, or God's omniscience--or all three. This is the "problem of evil." Mark Larrimore has provided us with an excellent collection of primary sources that speak to the problem of evil. The readings are culled from philosophers, theologians, mystics, poets, psychologists, and biologists, and they span 2500 years of Western thought, from Plato to contemporary thinkers. His section entitled "The Rise of Theodicy" is especially interesting for readers who want to explore the traditional ways in which philosophers and theologians have tried to "justify God" in the face of innocent suffering. But I personally most enjoyed the section on "The Twentieth Century." Collected there, *inter alia*, is C.S. Lewis' rather cold-hearted (and pre-Joy Davidman) reflection on the inevitability of pain, John Hick's revival of the old Irenaean claim that suffering helps us to grow a soul, and the Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas' poignant post-Holocaust thoughts on "useless suffering." Two caveats, only one of which touch Larrimore directly. First, like all Blackwell books, this one is horribly overpriced. Second, it's a bit surprising that Larrimore decided not to include any sources from the Hebrew Bible. Parts of Job and some of the Psalms immediately come to mind when one thinks of the problem of evil. On the other hand, to be fair, many of the theological selections Larrimore does include refer to these scriptural texts.

This book is an excellent resource. It contains selections from the ancient Greeks, early church,

medieval era, reformation, scientific revolution, enlightenment, early-modern era, modern era, and post-modern era. An introductory page gives background information on each writer, and is followed a brief selection that encapsulates his or her thought. By reading this book, one will see the different approaches across the ages --- without reading a library of books. I would highly recommend purchasing this book for that reason. In addition to that, it has an excellent introductory essay. It would be an excellent reading to incorporate into a college course.

Knew what the contents and writings were before purchase as it was recommended to me, collection so it is great for when you want to read something short.

One of the previous reviewers said that this book is overpriced. I full-heartedly disagree. I would pay 3 times as much for this book. To have so many of the most brilliant and powerful minds speaking on behalf of the subject that I am so intimately and existentially familiar with is psychologically validating. I think that those who don't appreciate the problem of evil, don't appreciate life itself; as evil is integrated into it whether we like it or not. I'm a Christian and feel like many Christians (though not all) don't appreciate this issue and so, in a sense I feel like my life experiences in some ways have been denied or invalidated. Not anymore. Here you will find some of the greatest atheists and agnostics, deists and theists, philosophers and mystics, psychologists and playwrights, cynics and saints all (amongst others) at one table; appreciating from many angles and depths, something that I'm 'not-over'; the problem of evil. Buy this and you won't regret it.

Good quality, fast delivery, good price.

Provides collections of short readings with interesting perspectives on numerous aspects of the concept of evil.

Helped with my research.

This text was used for my religion course and I do not recommend it for any student or professor.

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