

## **Beyond *Atheist Delusions* – some further reading**

*This isn't an exhaustive list, of course, but offers some guidance on where to go next if you want to follow the theme further*

### **New Atheism**

Richard Dawkins *The Blind Watchmaker* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Penguin, 2006) and *The God Delusion* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Black Swan 2007) – key works by Dawkins, the latter very disappointing theologically, but of course hugely popular (981 Amazon reviews, giving an average 4/5 stars).

Sam Harris *Letter to a Christian Nation* (Bantam Press 2007) – a bit of a rant but short! Especially sharp on the idea that religion is violent and is to blame for war and death to a remarkable degree.

Christopher Hitchens *God is Not Great – How Religion Poisons Everything* (Atlantic Books 2007) – Hitchens died recently and his approach is subtly different from others in the same camp – he values imagination and artistic creation much more highly, for example – and he is a great writer. But his arguments become so extreme that they lose touch with reality, as he finds himself arguing that since it is religion that poisons everything, deaths in Stalinist Russia must have been because Stalin's was a religious regime. (Run that by me again, Christopher....)

### **Some Responses**

Tina Beattie *The New Atheism – The Twilight of Reason and the War on Religion* (DLT 2007) – a clear and courteous survey from a Roman Catholic perspective

Melvyn Bragg *The Book of Books* (Hodder & Stoughton 2011) – a celebration of the King James Bible, but with some interesting sideswipes at New Atheism, especially chapter 16.

John Cornwell *Darwin's Angel* (Profile Books, 2008) – a delightfully whimsical but serious riposte to *The God Delusion* by a science writer and journalist who has rediscovered his Roman Catholic faith.

James Hannam *God's Philosophers – How the Medieval World Laid the Foundations of Modern Science* (Icon Books 2009) – nominated for a major science writing prize last year, this book looks at the way in which Christian theological principles of the intelligibility of creation underlay early scientific endeavour, in contrast to the classical world which made very little progress in this direction.

John C. Lennox *Gunning for God – why the new atheists are missing their target* (Lion Hudson 2011) – hard-hitting response to Dawkins by an Oxford Professor of Mathematics.

### **...And Darwin**

*The 2009 Darwin anniversaries led to the publication of several books which help to shed light more broadly on the whole discussion. Here are a few:*

Janet Browne *Darwin's Origin of Species – A Biography* (Atlantic Books 2006) – this sets the *Origin* in its context and examines its legacy too.

Charles Darwin *On the Origin of Species* (various editions) – remains a key book to engage with, especially chapter 3 on the struggle for survival.

Adrian Desmond & James Moore *Darwin's Sacred Cause – Race, Slavery and the Quest for Human Origins* (Penguin 2009) - a brilliant book by the authors of the best Darwin biography around, which considers Darwin's ideological motives in writing the *Origin*.

Randal Keynes *Annie's Box – Charles Darwin, his daughter and human evolution* (Fourth Estate 2001) – a moving account by a descendant of Darwin of the death of Darwin's daughter and the effect his had on his thought and faith. It formed the basis of the film *Creation* (2010) the DVD of which has some discussion material around science and faith issues.

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