

36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction (English Edition)

Von Rebecca Newberger Newberger Goldstein
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Von Rebecca Newberger Newberger Goldstein : 36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. If God existed, he would like it. Von Konrad Riegenmann "Atheists, rated below Muslims, recent immigrants, gays and communists" by a large portion of US citizens, seem to be playing "the Pariah role once assigned to Catholics, Jews, and communists", suspicious as they are of harboring every kind of alien and subversive (or no) values and "likely to be criminals, rapists, wild-eyed drug addicts". Cass Seltzer, the "atheist with a soul" has become something like the Pope of this despised group, mainly by his bestselling book "Varieties of Religious Illusion", and more precisely by this book's appendix, which lists and refutes 36 arguments for the existence of God. I suggest to the reader of Rebecca Goldstein's book to start with reading this appendix before entering the first of 36 chapters which might be called the kitchentable-level paraphrases of the 36 philosophic-level arguments. And mind the gaps! Because Rebecca is jumping like an antelope, left and right and forward backward between the epochs of Cass Seltzer's life. In chapter 1 he starts deep in love with his colleague, the tough going, game theory preaching academic philosopher Lucinda Mandelbaum, who later declares that "rational self-interest is always what morality [and love as well?] boils down to". Her contrast figure is Roz Margolis, the Rasta-styled down-to-earth sun-tanned ethnologist who frankly characterizes the machist men of the Omuna tribe with two and a half words: "They're assholes". The academic version of Omuna-man is staged by misogynist, misoscientist and kosher cheeseburgist Professor Jonas Elijah Klapper. What a difference to Azarya Sheiner, the charming pre-school boy who calls the prime numbers his maloychim (angels), replays Euclid's proof of infinite number of prime numbers (God-argument No. 29/30) and learns writing English just by analyzing the state names on a US map Roz sketched for him. This boy's "childish" advanced maths is one big gold nugget of Rebecca Goldstein's book, outdone only by the peak of climax, the public debate showdown between Cass Seltzer and the Nobel awarded economist Felix Fidley (yes, felicity by fidelity). Here, in chapter 34, Fidley first challenges his "atheist" antagonist with the argument that without faith in logic, without believing in your own mattering in this world, even Cass wouldn't be able to live a purposeful life. Thus, "faiths can be compared to financial investments". Does it work for us? Sure, cause "without it, we're flat broke. So it is faith we should keep in our portfolio." Fitness centered Fidley points to another "crucial" (sic) problem of a God-less moral system: "Utterly toothless ... it has no muscle ... no means of enforcement": Without "hell to pay", people would act only in their self-interest, being "in fact little more than brutes". Prudently, Cass doesn't get down to this level but, no worse than Ivan debating with Aliosha Karamasov, calls to mind the child in Belzec concentration camp, who had been pointed to the left side and desperately whispered to his mother, "But I tried to be so good, Mama." Cass points out that Fidley, proposing faith as working investment and God as watching cop, is himself reducing morality to self-interest, while true morality is kind of logic equilibrium: "If we can't live coherently without believing ourselves to matter, then we can't live coherently without extending that same mattering to everyone else." And what about the supreme object of Fidley's faith: God, the giver of law and morale? Once more, finger-crushing Fidley's impetuous attack is used by Judo-master Cass to let the faithful guy fly free. His turnaround grip, which Goldberger contributes to Plato, can be found in Genesis 18 (Abraham rebuking God) some centuries earlier: "Shouldn't Thou, Lord, keep to your own laws?" And (fictive) Sarah: "How can Thou order my husband to sacrifice my boy? Thou crazy?" Finally, Hasidic-born Cass appeals to ethical and religious human development: "We can become moral grown-ups. And if there were a God, surely he would approve." Rebecca Newberger-Goldstein's (partly autobiographical) arguments concerning the existence of gods and graduates, law and love, moral and maloychim is emotionally gripping, mentally nourishing and viewpoints-connecting - thus serving the "rational self-interest" of believers, agnostics and (soulful or not) atheists. (Dr. Konrad Yona Riegenmann, Germany)

KurzbeschreibungPsychologist Cass Seltzer's book, The Variety of Religious Illusion, has become a surprise runaway bestseller. Dubbed 'the atheist with a soul', Cass's sudden celebrity has upended his life and brought back the ghosts of his past. Over the course of one week, Cass's theories about our need to keep faith are borne out in ways he could never have imagined. 36 Arguments for the Existence of God is a stunningly original novel, which explores the varieties of the human religious experience in a story of obsession, consuming love, and divine genius. By turns hilarious, moving and devilishly clever, Goldstein's novel is an exhilarating romance of heart and mind. Pressestimmen'A hilarious novel about people's existential agonies, a page-turner about the intellectual mysteries that obsess them. The characters in 36 Arguments for the Existence of God explore the great moral issues of our day in a novel that is deeply moving and a joy to read.' Jonathan Safran Foer 'Brilliant' Christopher Hitchens 'When a writer is as clever as Goldstein, it does not seem fair that she should also write with charm, humour and emotional acuity - [An] ingenious and heart-warming novel - One of the literary hits of the year.' Mail on Sunday 'Rebecca Goldstein - looks like Rapunzel but thinks like Wittgenstein - 36 Arguments for the Existence of God is a vast rambling fiction - that is frighteningly impressive - To read her is to take a crash course in post-theological debate but also to lose yourself in a cast of dazzlingly bright characters.' The Times 'Hilariously irreverent' Financial Times 'A feast of ideas' TLSPressestimmen'A hilarious novel about people's existential agonies, a page-turner about the intellectual mysteries

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