



God and the Philosophers

Paul Edwards

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This witty and learned exploration of critical views on the nature and existence of God, as expressed by major philosophers of the Western world from the medieval period to the present day, is the last work of noted philosopher Paul Edwards. In his unique trademark style, laced with erudition and acerbic humor, Edwards addresses how the concept of God has changed over the centuries, in large part due to the analyses of such skeptical thinkers as David Hume, Thomas Paine, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Bertrand Russell.

A longtime critic of theistic arguments, Edwards demonstrates a masterful understanding of the ways in which the scientific revolution of the 17th century, the Enlightenment of the 18th century, the evolutionary materialism of the 19th century, and the rise of analytic and existentialist philosophies in the 20th century prepared the way for the growing role of atheism in the 21st century.

This work is a tour de force – a master storyteller’s idiosyncratic evaluation of the views of dozens of Western thinkers on perennial topics in the philosophy of religion. Though not all of the philosophers discussed were nonbelievers or antireligious, they can be considered to be – like Edwards himself – “freethinkers.” They pursued the cause of knowledge wherever their thinking led them, often to iconoclastic positions.

Editor Timothy Madigan, who gave Edwards thoughtful feedback over the years on various drafts of this work and compiled it for publication after Edwards’s death, has written an appreciative and informative introduction.

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