

Selected Readings from the Cognitive Science of Religion

Prepared by Justin L. Barrett 3/2002

(Not meant to be exhaustive. My apologies for omissions and oversights.)

Recommended General Introductions to the Area:

For a brief review:

Barrett, Justin L. 2000. Exploring the Natural Foundations of Religion. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 4: 29-34.

For a more comprehensive overview written for a general audience:

Boyer, Pascal. 2001 *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*. New York: Basic Books.

Important Recent Books in the Cognitive Science of Religion:

Andresen, J. (Ed.). 2000. *Religion in Mind: Cognitive Perspectives on Religious Belief, Ritual and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Atran, Scott. 2002. In Gods We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion. Oxford University Press.

Boyer, Pascal. 2001 *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*. New York: Basic Books.

McCauley, Robert N. & Lawson, E. Thomas 2002. *Bringing Ritual to Mind: Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms*. Cambridge University Press.

Pyysiäinen, Ilkka. 2001. How Religion Works: Towards a New Cognitive Science of Religion.

Pyysiäinen, I. & Anttonen, V. (Eds.). 2002. *Current approaches in the Cognitive Science of Religion*. London: Continuum.

Whitehouse, Harvey. 2000. *Arguments and Icons: The Cognitive, Social, and Historical Implications of Divergent Modes of Religiosity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Additional Readings related to the Cognitive Science of Religion:

Andresen, J. (ed.). 2000. *Religion in Mind: Cognitive Perspectives on Religious Belief, Ritual and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barrett, J.L. 1998. Theological correctness: Cognitive constraint and the study of religion. *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, 11: 325-339.

2000. Exploring the Natural Foundations of Religion. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 4: 29-34.

2001. How Ordinary Cognition Informs Petitionary Prayer. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 259-69.

Barrett, J. L. & Keil, F. C. 1996. Anthropomorphism and God concepts: Conceptualizing a non-natural entity. *Cognitive Psychology*, 31, 219-247.

- Barrett, J. L. & E. T. Lawson. 2001. Ritual Intuitions: Cognitive Contributions to Judgements of Ritual Efficacy. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 183-201.
- Barrett, J. L. & Nyhof, M. A. 2001. Spreading Non-natural Concepts: The Role of Intuitive Conceptual Structures in Memory and Transmission of Cultural Materials. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 69-100.
- Barrett, J. L., R. Richert, & A. Driesenga, 2001. God's beliefs versus mother's: The development of nonhuman agent concepts. *Child Development* 72, 50-65.
- Barrett, J. L. & VanOrman, B. 1996. The effects of image use in worship on God concepts. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 15, 38-45.
- Boyer, P. 1993. "Cognitive aspects of religious symbolism". In *Cognitive Aspects of Religious Symbolism*, edited by P. Boyer, 4-47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
1994. *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas. A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. Berkeley & Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.
1995. "Causal understandings in cultural representations: Cognitive constraints on inferences from cultural input. In D. Sperber, D. Premack and A.J. Premack (Eds.), *Causal Cognition: A multidisciplinary debate*.
1996. What makes anthropomorphism natural: Intuitive ontology and cultural representations. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 2: 83-97.
1998. Cognitive tracks of cultural inheritance: How evolved intuitive ontology governs cultural transmission. *American Anthropologist*, 100: 876-889.
2000. "Evolution of a modern mind and the origins of culture: religious concepts as a limiting case." In P. Carruthers and A. Chamberlain (Eds.), *Evolution and the Human Mind: Modularity, Language and Meta-cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2001 *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- Boyer, P., & Ramble, C. 2001. Cognitive templates for religious concepts: Cross-cultural evidence for recall of counter-intuitive representations. *Cognitive Science*, 25.
- Boyer, P., & Walker, S. 2000. Intuitive ontology and cultural input in the acquisition of religious concepts. In K. S. Rosengren, C. N. Johnson, & P. L. Harris (Eds.), *Imagining the impossible: Magical, scientific, and religious thinking in children*. (pp. 130-156). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bering, J. M. 2001a. Theistic Percepts in Other Species. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 107-37.
- 2001b. God is Not in the Mirror. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 207-11.

- Evans, E. M. 2001. Cognitive and contextual factors in the emergence of diverse belief systems: Creation versus evolution. *Cognitive Psychology*, 42, 217-266.
- Gallup, G. G., & Maser, J. D. 2001. Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who's the Most Theistic of Them All? *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 203-6.
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- McCauley, R. N. 1999. Bringing Ritual to Mind. In E. Winograd, R. Fivush, and W. Hirst, (Eds.), *Ecological Approaches to Cognition: Essays in Honor of Ulric Neisser*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
2000. The Naturalness of Religion and the Unnaturalness of Science. In F. Keil and R. Wilson (Eds.), *Explanation and Cognition* (pp. 61-85). Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
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2002. *Bringing Ritual to Mind: Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Petrovich, O. 1997. Understanding of Non-natural Causality in Children and Adults: A Case Against Artificialism. *Psyche en Geloof* 8, 151-165.
1999. Preschool Children's Understanding of the Dichotomy Between the Natural and the Artificial. *Psychological Reports*, 1999, 84, 3-27.

- Pyysiäinen, I. 1999. 'God' as Ultimate Reality in religion and in science. *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 22: 106-123.
2001. *How Religion Works: Towards a New Cognitive Science of Religion*. Leiden: Brill.
- Rosengren, K. S., Johnson, C. N., & Harris, P. L. 2000. *Imagining the Impossible: Magical, scientific, and religious thinking in children*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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2000. *Arguments and Icons: The Cognitive, Social, and Historical Implications of Divergent Modes of Religiosity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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- 2001b. Transmissive Frequency, Ritual, and Exegesis. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 167-81.
- 2002a. Religious Reflexivity and Transmissive Frequency, *Social Anthropology*, 10: 91-103.
- 2002b. Modes of Religiosity: a cognitive explanation of the sociopolitical dynamics of religion. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 14.
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- Woolley, J. D. & Phelps, K. 2001. The Development of Children's Beliefs about Prayer. *Journal of Cognition & Culture*, 1: 139-66.