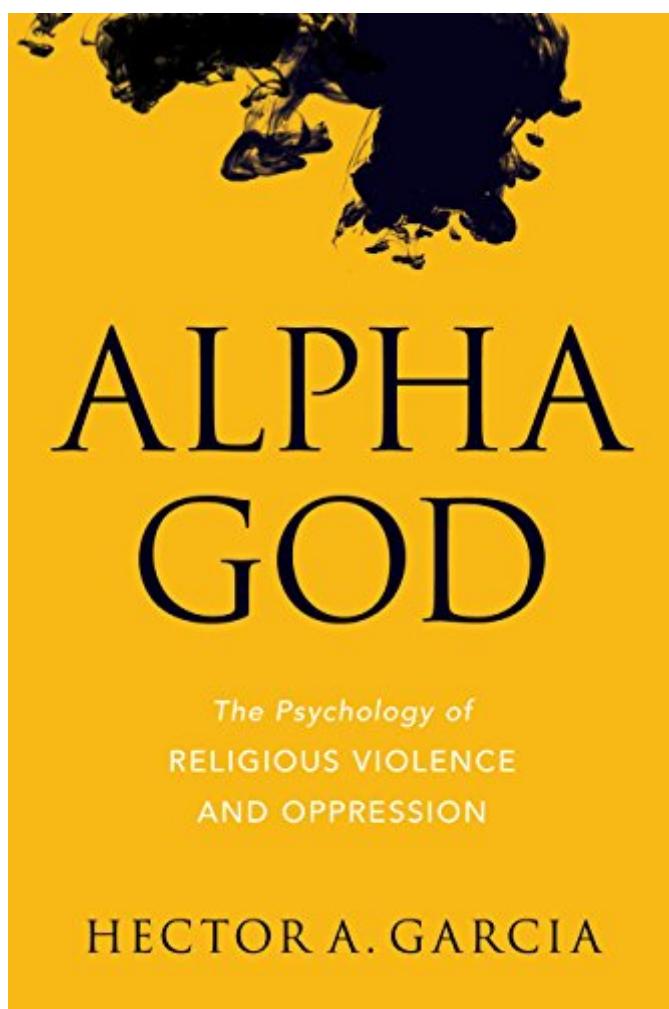


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# Alpha God: The Psychology Of Religious Violence And Oppression



## Synopsis

This book uses evolutionary psychology as a lens to explain religious violence and oppression. The author, a clinical psychologist, examines religious scriptures, rituals, and canon law, highlighting the many ways in which our evolutionary legacy has shaped the development of religion and continues to profoundly influence its expression. The book focuses on the image of God as the dominant male in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This traditional God concept is seen as a reflection of the “dominant ape” paradigm so evident in the hierarchical social structures of primates, with whom we have a strong genetic connection. The author describes the main features of male-dominated primate social hierarchies • specifically, the role of the alpha male as the protector of the group; his sexual dominance and use of violence and oppression to attain food, females, and territory; in-group altruism vs. out-group hostility (us vs. them); and displays of dominance and submission to establish roles within the social hierarchy. The parallels between these features of primate society and human religious rituals and concepts make it clear that religion, especially its oppressive and violent tendencies, is rooted in the deep evolutionary past. This incisive analysis goes a long way toward explaining the historic and ongoing violence committed in the name of religion. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## Book Information

File Size: 1357 KB

Print Length: 290 pages

Publisher: Prometheus Books (March 10, 2015)

Publication Date: March 10, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00N6PCQB2

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #472,861 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #111

in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Evolutionary Psychology

## Customer Reviews

I found out about this book reading a blog I follow. I was immediately interested. I am a biologist and an atheist, but I had never considered that the fact that us being primates influenced the way we "designed" our idea of god. This book made me understand the origin of the traits we attribute to our favorite imaginary friend. Humans have made a god, not in our image, but in the image of an alpha primate. The book is beautifully written and amazingly easy to understand, even to non biologists. It will not only help you understand why the god of the Bible and the Coran is the way it's described on the "holy books", but also the history of the church, the colonization of the new world and even our infatuation with characters that possess alpha primate traits. It will even make you understand the phenomenon of Donald Trump and why he is adored by so many people despite his misogyny and racism. I loved this book so much, that had to contact Hector Garcia to have him as a guest in my podcast. I can't wait to see what his new book will be.

One of the best books I've ever read on religious criticism and I've read almost all of them. For others who have as well, you know a lot of these types of books while generally great, do repeat themselves. This book doesn't. It's full of the freshest information on religion and violence.

One of the best books I've ever read. It explained wonderfully, the evolutionary behavior humans have and how those behaviors fit within religion.

Brilliant anthropological view of humanity, Garcia makes many salient points. If you've ever shaken your head in amazement at what your fellow humans do, this might be an explanation.

This should be required reading for everyone. I found it fascinating, a don't want to put down book.

Excellent book. Well documented.

Fascinating study. It all rings true. God did not create man...man created God--in his most aggressive and dangerous image no less.

This is a very logical book and also kind of scary since these traits in humans may be somewhat instinctive.

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