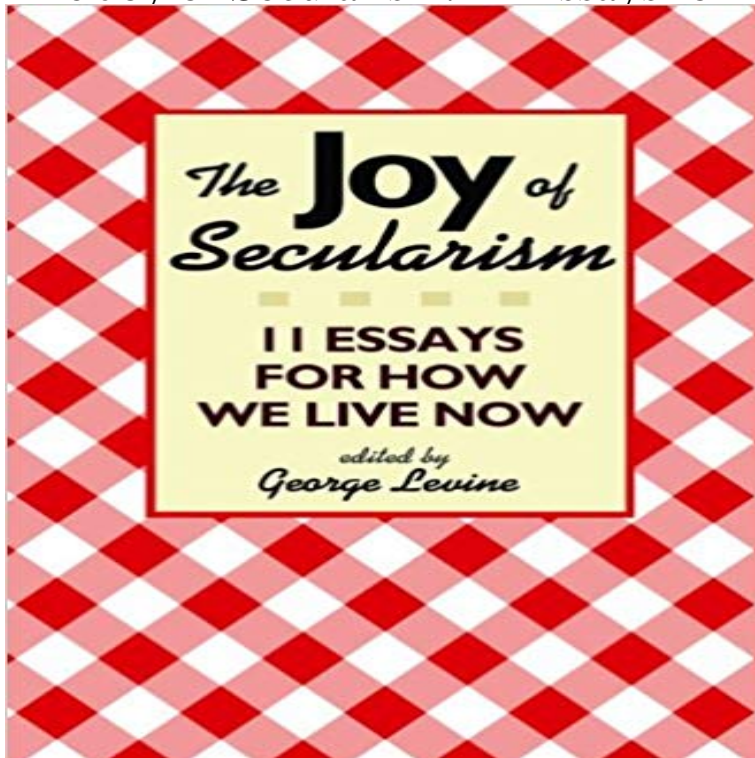


The Joy of Secularism: 11 Essays for How We Live Now



Can secularism offer us moral, aesthetic, and spiritual satisfaction? Or does the secular view simply affirm a dog-eat-dog universe? At a time when the issues of religion, evolution, atheism, fundamentalism, Darwin, and science fill headlines and invoke controversy, *The Joy of Secularism* provides a balanced and thoughtful approach for understanding an enlightened, sympathetic, and relevant secularism for our lives today. Bringing together distinguished historians, philosophers, scientists, and writers, this book shows that secularism is not a mere denial of religion. Rather, this positive and necessary condition presents a vision of a natural and difficult world--without miracles or supernatural interventions--that is far richer and more satisfying than the religious one beyond. From various perspectives--philosophy, evolutionary biology, primate study, Darwinian thinking, poetry, and even bird-watching--the essays in this collection examine the wealth of possibilities that secularism offers for achieving a condition of fullness. Factoring in historical contexts, and ethical and emotional challenges, the contributors make an honest and heartfelt yet rigorous case for the secular view by focusing attention on aspects of ordinary life normally associated with religion, such as the desire for meaning, justice, spirituality, and wonder. Demonstrating that a world of secular enchantment is a place worth living in, *The Joy of Secularism* takes a new and liberating look at a valuable and complex subject. The contributors are William Connolly, Paolo Costa, Frans de Waal, Philip Kitcher, George Levine, Adam Phillips, Robert Richards, Bruce Robbins, Rebecca Stott, Charles Taylor, and David Sloan Wilson.

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