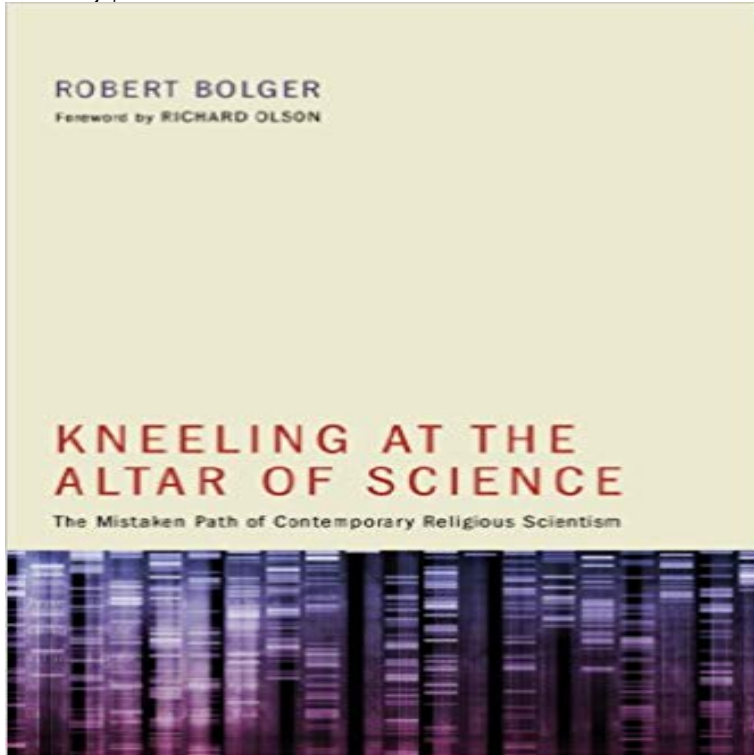


Kneeling at the Altar of Science: The Mistaken Path of Contemporary Religious Scientism



Does religion need to look more like a science? If much of the contemporary work published in science and religion is any indication, the answer appears to be a resounding yes. Yet the current tendency to dress religion up in the language and methods of science does more harm than good. In *Kneeling at the Altar of Science*, Robert Bolger argues that much of the recent writing in science and religion falls prey to the practice of what he calls religious scientism, or the attempt to use science to explain and clarify certain religious concepts. Bolger then shows, with clarity and humor, how religious scientism harms rather than helps, arguing in the end that religious concepts do better when their meaning is found in the context of their religious use. This book promises to be a fresh approach to the ever-popular dialogue between science and religion. This is an impressive new contribution to current debates over the proper relationship between science and religion. Bolger argues convincingly that what he calls religious scientism is a mistake made by both scientific critics of religion, as well as by some misguided theologians. Bolger's careful dissection of where these very different thinkers go wrong gets to the root of many of these issues. Brian L. Keeley, Professor, Pitzer College In clear and jargon-free prose, Bolger offers sophisticated arguments to uncover the intellectual errors of applying claims of science to religion errors made by thinkers from Richard Dawkins to Ian Barbour to Arthur Peacocke. The science and religion debates have neglected a position that deserves the thoughtful hearing Bolger gives it. Brimming with well-informed arguments, *Kneeling at the Altar of Science* is both original and enjoyable. Lynne Rudder Baker, author of *The Metaphysics of Everyday Life* *Kneeling at the Altar of Science* tells it straight. Asserting that God is not the type of thing

that exists doesn't distort religious meaning, but may, in fact, be the best, most religious way to start smashing our idols once and for all. Scott Korb, author of *Life in Year One: What the World Was Like in First-Century Palestine* Bolgers analysis is strong, original, and provocative. His book is worthy of careful reading; his treatment of the topic deserves much further discussion. Willem B. Drees, editor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* Robert Bolger (PhD, Claremont Graduate University) currently lives and teaches near Seattle.

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