



The Evolution of the Soul

By Richard Swinburne



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This is a revised and updated version of Swinburne's controversial treatment of the eternal philosophical problem of the relation between mind and body. He argues that we can only make sense of the interaction between the mental and the physical in terms of the soul, and that there is no scientific explanation of the evolution of the soul.



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The Evolution of the Soul By Richard Swinburne Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1359990 in eBooks
- Published on: 1997-04-24
- Released on: 1986-07-24
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is useful (indeed 'necessary') for philosophers of religion, especially those interested in natural theology."--*Religious Studies Review*

"I do not know of a better or more persuasive statement of the case for dualist interactionism."--*Nature*

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From the Back Cover

Human beings have evolved from animals, and animals from inanimate matter; but what has evolved is qualitatively different from the inanimate matter from which it began. Both humans and the higher animals have a mental life of sensation, thought, purpose, desire, and belief. Although these mental states in part cause, and are caused by, brain states, they are distinct from them. Richard Swinburne argues that we can only make sense of this interaction by supposing that mental states are states of a soul, a mental substance in interaction with the body. Although both have a rich mental life, human souls, unlike animal souls, are capable of logical thought, have moral beliefs, have free will, and have an internal structure (so that their beliefs and desires are formed largely by other beliefs and desires inhering in the soul). Professor Swinburne concludes that there is no full scientific explanation available for the evolution of the soul, and almost certainly there never will be.

About the Author

Richard Swinburne is Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of Oriel College, since 1985. He was previously Professor of Philosophy at the University of Keele. He is the author of many notable books on the philosophy of religion in general and of the philosophy of Christianity in particular. Most recently, he offered general readers a powerful and lucid defence of religious belief in the modern world, in *Is There a God?* (Oxford University Press, 1996).

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