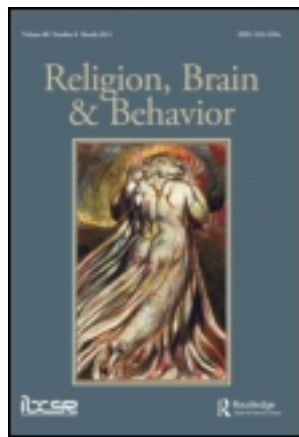


This article was downloaded by: [96.233.91.187]

On: 29 October 2012, At: 13:37

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Religion, Brain & Behavior

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rrbb20>

A New Format: The Book Symposium

Richard Sosis, Wesley J. Wildman & Patrick McNamara

Version of record first published: 11 Sep 2012.

To cite this article: Richard Sosis, Wesley J. Wildman & Patrick McNamara (2012): A New Format: The Book Symposium, Religion, Brain & Behavior, 2:3, 181-181

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2012.719809>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

A New Format: The Book Symposium

This issue concludes the second year of publication of *Religion, Brain & Behavior* (RBB). From its outset, RBB has sought to publish cutting-edge biological research that advances our understanding of religion, and like all refereed journals we have published original research articles. But we also recognized that the neuroscientists, cognitive scientists, evolutionary biologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and the many other scientists who constitute our emerging field, are entering into a well-established domain of scholarship, namely religious studies, that has a long and venerable independent history, with significant advances to boast and much to teach the scientists who recently arrived on the scene. Therefore, we also envisioned RBB as a venue that could provide a meeting ground for scientists and humanities scholars interested in the study of religion, to foster mutual respect and shared learning. Toward that aim we have regularly published target articles—articles that advance new theoretical positions—and invited scholars from across the sciences and humanities to comment on them. These target articles have stimulated interdisciplinary conversation and debate.

We also recognize that many empirical results and theoretical developments are advanced in books. While we have published book reviews, we believe that some of these cutting-edge books also merit special discussion. Thus, with this issue we inaugurate the book symposium, an additional format that facilitates interdisciplinary dialogue around important new books. In this new format we will publish invited commentaries on a recent book from a diverse group of scholars together with a response from the author.

We are very fortunate to initiate our book symposium format with Robert Bellah's *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age*. In subsequent issues, we have organized book symposia on recent books by Robert McCauley, Tanya Luhrmann, and Terrence Deacon.

In this issue we also offer a target article by Harvey Whitehouse, Ken Kahn, Michael E. Hochberg, and Joanna J. Bryson that extends our commentary format in a different direction. This article is our first publication that employs computer simulation using agent-based models, which is an important emerging approach in the scientific study of religion, and indeed in a vast number of scientific fields. In all our target articles we invite into the conversation scholars studying religion, both scientists and humanists. In this target article, we also reached out to a number of scientists who do not normally think about religion but are knowledgeable about the tools and methods under discussion, and invited them to contribute commentaries. We think computer simulation, especially in the form of agent based models that yield artificial societies with surprising emergent properties, holds great promise for understanding the complex dynamics of religious systems.

Richard Sosis
Wesley J. Wildman
Patrick McNamara