



Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization

By Reza Aslan

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“A very persuasive argument for the best way to counter jihadism” (*The Washington Post*) from the bestselling author of *Zealot* and host of *Believer*

The wars in the Middle East have become religious wars in which God is believed to be directly engaged on behalf of one side against the other. The hijackers who attacked America on September 11, 2001, thought they were fighting in the name of God. According to award-winning writer and scholar of religions Reza Aslan, the United States, by infusing the War on Terror with its own religiously polarizing rhetoric, is fighting a similar war—a war that can’t be won.

Beyond Fundamentalism is both an in-depth study of the ideology fueling militants throughout the Muslim world and an exploration of religious violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. At a time when religion and politics increasingly share the same vocabulary and function in the same sphere, Aslan writes that we must strip the conflicts of our world of their religious connotations and address the earthly grievances that always lie at its root.

How do you win a religious war? By refusing to fight in one.

Featuring new content and updated analysis • Originally published as *How to Win a Cosmic War*

“[A] thoughtful analysis of America’s War on Terror.” —*The New Yorker*

“Offers a very persuasive argument for the best way to counter jihadism.” —*The Washington Post*

“[Reza] Aslan dissects a complex subject (terrorism and globalization) and distills it with a mix of narrative writing, personal anecdotes, reportage and historical analysis.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Aslan is not only a perspicuous, thoughtful interpreter of the Muslim world but also a subtle psychologist of the call to jihad.”—*Los Angeles Times*

“[A] meaty analysis of the rise of Jihadism . . . dispels common misconceptions of the War on Terror age.”—*San Jose Mercury News*

“It is Aslan’s great gift to see things clearly, and to say them clearly, and in this important new work he offers us a way forward. He is prescriptive and passionate, and his book will make you think.”—**Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *American Lion***

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

This book offers an informed critique of good-and-evil dualisms on both sides in the war on terror. Terrorists and their opponents share an "us against them" conception of reality that vilifies the enemy as irredeemable and suited only for destruction. Political estrangement and isolation nurture the cosmic dualism inherent in violent jihadist ideologies, argues Aslan (creative writing, Univ. of California at Riverside; *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*). But a similar dualism lies behind ill-founded American responses to terrorism. In quick, informative surveys, Aslan takes readers through the origins of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, zealotry in ancient Jewish and contemporary (evangelical Christian and Zionist) forms, the history of Islamic jihadist distortions of Islamic teaching, and the repressive postcolonial governments that nurture such radical ideologs. But Aslan is hopeful: radical groups moderate their ideologies when they are drawn into the political process, and a new U.S. administration may adopt a more enlightened foreign policy. Aslan's suggestions are simple but not simplistic. Recommended for all readers interested in viewing the war on terror from this alternative perspective.—Steve Young, McHenry Cty. Coll., Crystal Lake, IL

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From [The New Yorker](#)

Aslan's thoughtful analysis of America's war on terror argues that the nation's jihadist enemies believe the conflict is taking place on a spiritual, "cosmic" plane and thus cannot be lost. Only by denying the terrorists their good-versus-evil religious narrative can the United States keep the war grounded and winnable. Certainly this is good advice, although, given President Obama's abandonment of his predecessor's Manichaean foreign policy, it may have been overtaken by recent events. Far more interesting is Aslan's agreement with Bush on the question of democracy. He distinguishes Islamist nationalist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah from global jihadist groups such as Al Qaeda, and contends that recognizing the former as legitimate participants in the democratic process will undermine support for unyielding war. It's an appealing, if unproved, claim.

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Review

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Users Review

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Mitchell Boone:

Exactly why? Because this Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such wonderful way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book get such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I were you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

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Irma Cook:

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