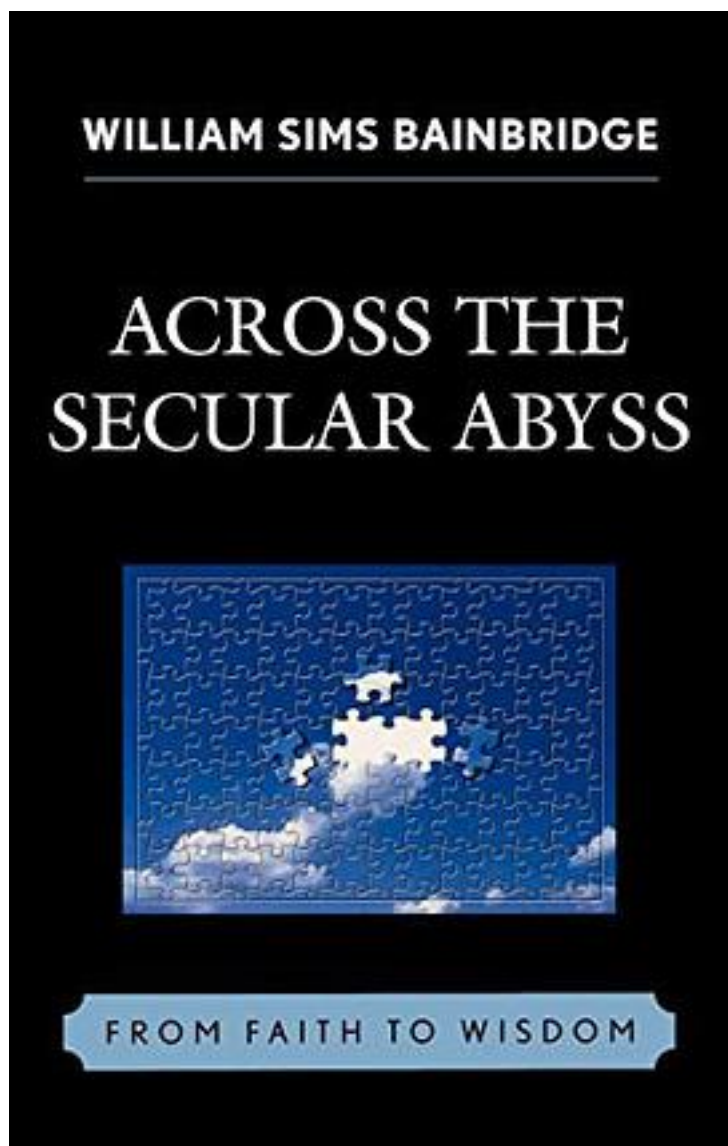


Across the Secular Abyss



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Across the Secular Abyss explains the cultural chasm we currently face, with a traditional religion-based society behind us, and an as-yet unknown secular society ahead. For over a century, scholars, social scientists, and policy makers have debated the apparent erosion of religious faith and wondered whether Western Civilization was turning its back on religion. Today, the issue has reached a crisis point. In the U.S., a new battle between faith and science has erupted within educational institutions, as political polarization progressively divides the country along religious lines. After a century-long truce in which religion and science implicitly agreed to leave each other alone, science is again invading the territory of religion, most obviously in cognitive science that is debunking religious notions of the human soul, and in the broad convergence of many branches of science into one that leaves few gaps where supernatural beliefs could survive. Religion, for its part, is resisting a range of emerging technologies that could transform human nature, namely human reproductive cloning and the kinds of transformative technologies advocated by the Transhumanist movement. Although pure Atheism has little to offer people, and Atheists tend to be people lacking in social obligations, entirely new possibilities are offered by emerging technologies such as computer emulation of human personalities.

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