

CRITICAL PLURALISM:
A NEW APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The world's religions provide a wide range of competing religious claims. The problem of religious diversity is that, while many of these claims are inconsistent with one another, they often seem to rest on roughly equal evidence. For this reason, it is not clear which religion, if any, is true. My dissertation examines the various responses to this problem and proposes a unique solution. While some claim that the wide disagreement on religious matters is reason to discard all religious claims as false, I provide an extensive argument in favor of a particularly religious position I call "Critical Pluralism." Critical Pluralism occupies a middle ground between those who claim that all major religions are somehow equally true and those who claim that one religion alone is true. On my view, religious belief systems often provide inadequate yet partially true accounts of a transcendent reality. Many religions *approximate* the truth to some degree. Some even do so a great deal better than others. Nonetheless, there is not a single religion that exclusively captures the truth.