Very Short Introductions online

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Angels: A Very Short Introduction
David Albert Jones

Print Publication Year: 2011 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199547302.001.0001

Angels: A Very Short Introduction outlines prominent stories and speculations about angels in Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and post-Christian spiritualties. What are angels? Where were they first encountered? Can we distinguish angels from gods, fairies, ghosts, and aliens? And why do they remain so popular? Angels have been portrayed in art as young men in the Hebrew Scriptures, androgynous winged creatures of the pre-Raphaelites, and as the masculine statue of the Angel of the North. Examples are provided of angels in films such as Wings of Desire, and It's a Wonderful Life, as well as angels in literature.

The Devil: A Very Short Introduction
Darren Oldridge

Print Publication Year: 2012 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199580996.001.0001

Focussing specifically on the Christian Devil, The Devil: A Very Short Introduction explores the many guises and roles he played in the Bible. He has fascinated writers and theologians since New Testament times, and inspired many dramatic and haunting works of art. Today he remains a potent image in popular culture. According to the principle of ‘demonic inversion’, the Devil represents the mirror image of goodness. While belief in him has declined, the idea of an abstract force of evil is still remarkably strong. Today we are more likely to speak about ‘demonological’ ways of thinking, including allegations of ‘satanic ritual abuse’ and the on-going ‘war on terror’.