



**On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic. By way of clarification and supplement to my last book Beyond Good and Evil (Oxford World's Classics)**

*Friedrich Nietzsche, Douglas Smith*

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## **On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic. By way of clarification and supplement to my last book Beyond Good and Evil (Oxford World's Classics) Friedrich Nietzsche, Douglas Smith**

Reason, seriousness, mastery over the emotions, the whole murky affair which goes by the name of thought, all the privileges and showpieces of man: what a high price has been paid for them! How much blood and horror is at the bottom of all "good things!"

On the Genealogy of Morals (1887) is a book about the history of ethics and about interpretation. Nietzsche rewrites the former as a history of cruelty, exposing the central values of the Judaeo-Christian and liberal traditions - compassion, equality, justice - as the product of a brutal process of conditioning designed to domesticate the animal vitality of earlier cultures. The result is a book which raises profoundly disquieting issues about the violence of both ethics and interpretation. Nietzsche questions moral certainties by showing that religion and science have no claim to absolute truth, before turning on his own arguments in order to call their very presuppositions into question.

The Genealogy is the most sustained of Nietzsche's later works and offers one of the fullest expressions of his characteristic concerns. This edition places his ideas within the cultural context of his own time and stresses the relevance of his work for a contemporary audience.

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