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A Positive Voice for Atheism

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# A Letter From The President

Gail Miller

At AAI, we are taking a new direction. Our focus is now helping affiliates and non-believers around the world to normalize atheism. We've done this in the past but now we want to pursue this more aggressively. And we already have. Last July we funded a billboard campaign in Guatemala. The billboards were up for a month and had a simple message – you can be a good person without religion and you are not alone. The campaign was a huge success. This is the type of work we want to do all around the world. We also want to help atheists organize groups, sign up new members and change policies that discriminate against non-believers.

AAI's Board members are reviewing all operations to ensure the organization is running smoothly and efficiently. A priority is creating a new website that will be easy to navigate and attract new members. We're reducing costs by revising our membership system and making Secular World magazine available electronically.

Our new Vision and Mission statements clearly reflect the important work we've started and will carry on in the future. Please continue to support AAI and watch for exciting things to happen! 



## Oppression against nontheists? Atheist Alliance International

The Freedom of Thought Report

A Global Report on Discrimination Against Humanists, Atheists and the Nonreligious



[www.FreeThoughtReport.com](http://www.FreeThoughtReport.com)

# A Letter From The Editor

Rustam Singh

It's Diwali season in India – which is essentially what I assume The Holidays feel like in western nations. For those of you that don't know, Diwali is celebrated because Lord Rama returned to his throne after spending 14 years chilling in the forest like a hippie and fighting a ten headed giant named Ravana along with an army of half monkey and half human hybrids with thermonuclear devices (as Hindu scholars call them) on flying chariots. There's a part where the good guy can't trust his wife that the bad guy might have raped his wife or she might have consented to sleep with the bad guy during the abduction phase, so being the alpha douchebag that he is, he rejects her and she has to “prove her purity” – and on “passing” is angry why he tried to “test her purity” in the first place and kills herself/returns to the ground.

So fast forward thousands of years ahead, religious people put earthen oil lamps or LED lights on their house to welcome Lord Rama's return from the forest defeating the bad guys. It's the good old season to choke our streets with cancerous smoke from tons of fireworks, being stuck for an hour to travel about five miles in traffic, meeting relatives and family friends who you never got along with, remind yourself what classism is by trying to match the mandatory gifts exchanged between colleagues and relatives and to drink like you hate yourself. Amidst this vibrant season, I have been thinking a lot on the normalization of religion in society today. Can we be confused with bigots if we oppose religious structures and

traditions? Is complete objective rationality always possible, and is it inherently depressing and alienating? Can you be an atheist without any intention of being a humanist?

While our legal definitions across the world may differ just like our cultural connotations, one thing is for sure - we have accepted religious festivals as a part of our culture all around the world today. That makes sense – religious festivals are important landmarks for a variety of reasons apart from being paid national holidays, some people get bonuses, some plan a distant vacation, some need this to meet relatives, while others utilize the great seasonal discounts to purchase something for their families or themselves. As I get older, I feel more alienated by this association of religious holidays, symbolism, days and greetings with what compromises my culture. Undoubtedly, the exact same things can be done virtually any other day as well if one really wishes. But would it *feel* the same? I can compare this thought process to a hot debate in USA right now – should figures and representations of slave masters, genocide inducing historic figures remain as they are currently in the form of celebrating national days, monuments, and traditional association? One side believes allowing them to exist as the glorified figures they are currently is insulting those communities they insulted/killed years ago. Others believe that while we are more aware of the right and the wrong, they are now for better or worse, already a part of a system of celebrations and important days – and those negative aspects can be ignored now since



nobody is following these figures/festivals associating the negative sides anymore. If these events and monuments must exist as just history, then we must know the difference between glorifying something and just remembering history. History should stay in our books and museums, not named as streets, landmarks, holidays and monuments. Then of course, the most powerful man in the world claims to appease both sides to the argument. The way I see it, glorifications of any new identities, traditions or figures with a known history of being a bigot should definitely not be allowed to happen in a rational society. But what about those thousands of already existing religious festivals and special days? As atheists, we must understand what our



attendance in religious festivals entails. It is not uncommon for atheists to justify any of the following excuses for their attendance or participation in religious festivals/holidays:

- 1) Satisfying curiosity to experience a festival first hand (common while travelling),
- 2) Calling the festival traditional/ cultural or associating it with a regional/ caste/family/national ceremony rather than the religion itself,
- 3) Finding the festival the only possible way to meet distant relatives, friends and family,
- 4) Saying they only attend out of boredom, see the crowd, check out the food, or -
- 5) Justifying that a “secular” celebration can happen without rituals

While there are no right and wrong answers for this complex situation, in my perspective, as atheists we have no business attending religious festivals in public. Our mere attendance in a Church, whether we are holding our hands together to pray or not, our attendance for the Hindu festival whether we burst fireworks or not; our existence as a part of the crowd does damage to our collective goal. By increasing the size of the crowd in attendance, we encourage

those that believe in faith to perpetuate their cycle of irrationality and clearly harmful beliefs. Even the simple act of going to Church just for the Carols or checking out the lights and festivities makes the event look more crowded – with one additional person at a time. It normalizes the existence of something as toxic and barbaric as religion in society. Our attendance encourages religious people to continue believing what they believe in, encourages the crazy religious guy to act possessed/ do self-harm, or restrict their own freedom voluntarily to appease their gods. I am confident not even the most conservative religious people would participate in bizarre ceremonies if there isn't an audience to watch them or a camera rolling to capture them doing so. As adults of a functional society, we can easily resist the urge to attend these festivities, at least in their religious place. For example – a 'secular' Christmas celebration can easily be done in your own home or someone else's, or even at your nearest bar – anything except the Church itself. We can have our eggnog and our wines with our turkey at home, skip saying grace or having a Christmas tree, and wearing red is just fine. The addiction of traditions that most of us who grew up religious is so embedded in our subconscious even now as atheists

they can be really difficult to let go. However, just like addictions of any other kind, we have to slowly and gradually wean off them for our own good.

I believe that while stopping religious people to use public spaces to express their religious beliefs would be illegal in some nations and be counted as bigotry in others, it should in no way be allowed to exist without an active voice of dissent and irrationality. In India, I am restricted by extremely conservative laws that prohibit free speech to debate religion, traditions, criticize the fascist Hindu totalitarian government in power or even express my displeasure of things considered as normal here. I have been fascinated by western standards of acceptance of free speech and the right to protest. Images of LGBT individuals kissing right in front of a Westboro Baptist Church protest, atheists dressing up as Jesus saying “it's fine” to Christian protests saying we would go to hell, or even the confidence with which atheists can talk about how stupid religious texts are on Facebook have set the bar for me of what should exist in a progressive society.

On the other hand, issues like rabid nationalism, the KKK resurfacing with the Confederate flag, Black lives Matter

protesters being associated with gang members, Nazis or the casual common occurrence of racism and sexism and violent attempts to silence these peaceful protests brings my hopes down. The moment free speech restricts any section of society from enjoying their human rights equally, that's the tipping point of it becoming hate speech. There are no both sides for Nazis – there can be no justification for saying some sections of society must die or be denied equal human rights.

One quick glance to India should serve as a good reminder on what happens when you try to never offend anyone or speak out against something wrong. Peaceful female students are beaten by the police for protesting sexist laws that stop them from exiting the hostel they paid for when they feel like it, yet another journalist is shot down in her own home for opposing the totalitarian government, the government justifies that martial rape doesn't exist in India because that would breakdown the social construct of a traditional Indian

family, peaceful protesters and sarcastic bloggers are arrested, threatened or just beaten by an angry mob all the time. Every argument ends with name calling, which is annoying but acceptable, but if you're female be prepared to have your inbox and social life bombarded with sexist rape and murder threats. If you happen to be Muslim then possibly fear for your life. Forget taking a knee during the football match – by the Supreme Court's guidelines, every movie played in a theatre in India would start with mandatory standing for the national anthem that plays first. Now that it's become a law, rabid nationalists have reportedly beaten individuals just out for a movie that didn't stand in a dark theatre.

Traditions, cultures, ceremonies, festivals and beliefs are fuelled by own biases. We allow them to be normalized and we are the ones that assume that simply us personally not following them makes the world just a tiny bit more rational. The kids who get circumcised

on birth because that's their family's tradition don't get a choice. The women who grew up understanding showing their ankles is called *slutty* behaviour would take years to reprogram her brain, if they are lucky to get the opportunity to do so. We are the ones that allowed the Durga Pooja celebrations to go on the streets because it was just harmless music, ignoring how many died and polluted our rivers and choked our traffic by everyone taking part in all the traditions. We are the ones that thought lighting a harmless clay oil lamp on Diwali would not continue to clench capitalistic fangs into our classist society to obligate increasingly expensive ways to celebrate social bonding for all kids watching us.

So for these holidays, let us attempt to remove our participation in some traditions, or at least vow to keep them outside public spaces, no matter how much we associate it with traditions or culture. I hope you enjoy this edition of Secular World magazine and apologies for the delay. 

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# Advocating for Secular Humanism in Guatemala

**Óscar Pineda and Ana Raquel**

Guatemala is a deeply religious country. According to the most recent poll on religious beliefs in Latin America conducted by Corporación Latinobarómetro, nearly [87% of Guatemalans](#) identify as either Catholics or as members of one of several different Protestant denominations. Contrary to what appears to be happening in the rest of the continent, where new generations are slowly but surely moving away from religion, Guatemala's youth is getting more religious. According to the latest government youth census, [conducted in 2011](#), 98.9% of people ages 15-29 believe in something called "God."

95.4% believe in the divinity of Jesus. Almost 87% believe in miracles and over 57% believe in hell. Nearly 40% believe in "The Devil."

## THE CAMPAIGN

A few months ago, we had the opportunity to do something daring: AAI had offered a grant for a project they had in mind involving setting up an "atheist billboard." We thought about it for a while, and we came up with an idea for a complete large-scale media campaign. We would put up 3 billboards in 3 different spots within

Guatemala City and we would produce a couple of short videos for our social media, explaining basic Humanist values. Both of them, by inviting people to question religious dogma and presenting a secular alternative, would be highly transgressive in a deeply conservative and deeply religious society. And that presented a challenge: transgressiveness, by its very nature of going against the current,



**Atheist Alliance International funds a billboard in Guatemala which states:**  
**English translation: You don't need God or religion to be a good person**  
**You are not alone.**

appeals only to a very few. We value the idea and understand the importance of being transgressive in profoundly conservative societies; we want to be transgressive, but we also want to reach out to people; and we surely don't want to alienate people who would probably agree with us on most things but have a God, a Goddess or some sort of Creator as an important part of their worldviews.

So, with that in mind, and gathering some concepts and ideas from Haidt's research

on the moral foundations of belief, we designed a campaign aimed at both non-believers and people who usually think about themselves as "spiritual but not religious." People who have not realised how much they have in common with Humanism, and would gladly support most of our causes. Our billboards read: "You don't need a god or a religion to be a good person. If you know this, you're not

alone." Our videos, which can be seen [here](#) and [here](#), explained what Humanists believe about ethics, morality, science, LGBTIQ rights, reproductive rights, and the separation of Church and State.

Our approach focused on communicating factual statements about Humanism that many open-minded

people can relate to (rather than indulge into criticism of religious beliefs themselves), worked very well: The first billboard lasted less than 3 days. It went up on a Friday morning and it was down by Monday. By nothing more than pure chance, the billboard was located inside a lot owned by a Catholic church, and they didn't appreciate our inviting people to view things from a different perspective. They complained to the ad agency and asked them to remove our message from their premises. They explained the

situation to us and offered us several possible solutions. We chose the one we thought would be the best: move the billboard to another location. It was only out of sight for less than 3 hours.

In trying to censor us they only brought us more exposure. After that incident, our campaign got massive media coverage. A few radio and television talk-shows dedicated some of their shows to discussing the matter. Some of them, even invited us over to have long discussions about our organization, or goals and our ideas. We appeared in newspapers, both printed and online. We received hundreds of e-mails, private Facebook messages and phone calls, from people who saw our billboard or one of our videos, and wanted to know how they could join us or help us. A large portion of those messages were from people who claimed to be religious believers, who wanted to express their support and admiration for our standing up against religious fundamentalism and their agreement with the core message: they also believed that people can (and should) be good without religion, and that religion and politics should not mix. All of them wanted us to know that we are not alone. Encouraging thoughts, indeed, that give us the strength needed to keep going.

Not surprisingly, Guatemalans are also deeply conservative and afraid of people who are different. There are so many issues that stem from this, ranging from

intolerance towards any type of diversity or anything that resembles a departure from the status quo, to overt religious extremism that seeks to impose "Christian values" everywhere. Religious leaders and public officials do not respect the principle of separation of Church and State, and are often attempting to pass discriminatory laws based on the Bible and "Christian values." Just in the last two years, members of Congress tried to force Bible lessons into every private and public school in the country, to forbid evidence based sex-ed, to make every single instance of abortion a criminal offence,



and to make sure that the LGBT community is never granted equal rights<sup>1</sup>.

Furthermore, many people who are open about their lack of belief in God are often shunned and told that they cannot be ethical or moral, and as a result many choose to lie about their convictions. The

prejudice against being a non-believer, which was recently confirmed by a [paper in Nature](#), is big and in Guatemala it has resulted in a State that privileges "Christian values" in the public sphere, deeply imprinting that ethos into the cultural landscape.

If you're a non-believer in Guatemala, or you simply understand the effects that fanatical religious beliefs have in shaping local politics and curtailing basic human rights and civil liberties, these numbers and ideas are pretty depressing. They don't point to a promising future, and as Carl Sagan put it in his magnificent *Pale Blue Dot*, "there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves."<sup>2</sup> Things need to change quickly, and thoughts and prayers are not the way to make them happen.

#### GETTING STARTED

It is in this spirit that a small group of friends and recent acquaintances, coming from many different backgrounds and areas of interest, decided to start a pretty ambitious project: a legally-registered organization of non-believers, with the purpose of articulating secular humanist values, promoting skepticism and critical thinking, and defending the rights of all those affected by the intrusion of religion into politics and life in general. It took us around 3 years to make it happen and in 2014, with moral and financial support from Atheist Alliance International, the International Humanist and Ethical Union, and Freedom From Religion Foundation<sup>3</sup>, among others, we became the first openly secular humanist organization in

<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, though hard work alongside allied organizations, we have been able to repeal all of those initiatives and amendment proposals. News of our most recent collective victory, involving the transformation of a law proposal that would enshrine discrimination against the LGBTIQ community and criminalize every single instance of abortion, came as this article was being written.

<sup>2</sup> Carl Sagan, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (New York: Random House, 1994) p.9

<sup>3</sup> Dan Barker was the main speaker at our launching event. He provided a very memorable talk in Spanish about his experiences with skepticism and letting go of deeply held religious beliefs, as a former evangelical pastor, available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDq1PE6U6Jo>

the country: Asociación Guatemalteca de Humanistas Seculares (AGHS). Still not sure of what to expect; but fully convinced of the importance of —at least— starting a conversation about religion and the ways it affects everyone. Especially those of us who do not have faith in the Christian God, or in any other sort of divinity that intervenes in our lives.

The positions we have and the actions we take are not only for our own benefit as non-followers of a traditional religious faith. We try to reach out to people who, even though they wouldn't call themselves atheists or non-believers, do agree with a lot of Humanist ideas, principles, concepts or values.

That is why, although Humanist philosophy naturally attracts non-theist and non-religious people, we are always ready to work with friends and allies on issues of common interest.

Aside from allying ourselves with several local organizations that defend the principle of separation of Church and State, that advocate for sexual and reproductive rights, and that defend the rights of women and the LGBTIQ community, [Humanistas Guatemala](http://www.humanistasguatemala.org) is one of four Latin American members of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), and a member of Atheist Alliance International.

## OUR APPROACH

Recently, we decided to revise our areas of interest and redefine our goals. After long conversations, discussions, proposals, rebuttals, arguments and counter-arguments, we changed our name and image to Humanistas Guatemala, and defined a new strategic plan centered around 4 main points: promoting secular humanism as an alternative to religion, promoting scientific knowledge and critical thinking as a way of knowing what is true about

religious is very hard. One is often met with outright hostility and all sorts of accusations that prevent the arguments from getting through.

Nobody wants to hear that they've spent their lives believing a very big lie, and that's what many prominent atheist individuals and organizations have been telling people for a long time. We have a different approach: we prefer to engage the public by focusing on the negative aspects of religion and talking about the positive elements that secular humanism has to offer. People are much more receptive this way.



the world, defending the separation of Church and State, and defending sexual and reproductive rights — especially, the rights of the LGBT community and women who are often bullied and discriminated against because of fundamentalist religion.

It's not a secret that criticizing religion and presenting secular alternatives like Humanism in a country that is deeply

an afterlife, because of a long list of scientific reasons, you will probably only offend them and maybe even reinforce their beliefs.

If, instead, you take an empathetic approach, admit that everyone can be fooled into believing weird things, and show people that there are real negative consequences caused by those beliefs, you have a much higher chance of

changing their mind. In this regard, Jonathan Haidt's [theory of moral foundations](#) is quite insightful <sup>4</sup>. It has come to be a very useful model to keep in mind when we think about our communication and advocacy strategies.


### WHAT'S NEXT

Our plan for the near future is to focus on the aftermath of our billboard and social media campaign. We don't want to become victims of our own growth. Lots of people have contacted us to express their gratitude and their support, and in the next months we will work hard to provide the things they've been looking for, community-wise, in an organization like ours.

<sup>4</sup> Explained thoroughly in Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2012)

We have also set ourselves a new challenge. Over the last 5 or 6 years being involved with Humanistas Guatemala, we noticed that one of the things that could really aid the cause of any Humanist organisation working in Latin America, is to have a well connected network of people all over the region. Our histories and cultures are very similar. We also know that there are many writers, entertainers, intellectuals, artists and other public figures in the region who share humanist values; as well as individual activists and small organisations that advocate for humanist causes in their countries. We made it one of our long-term goals to host a well-thought out and well-organised gathering of Latin American

humanists, in order to get to know each other in person, talk about our common interests, and share our experiences. It always seemed like a very distant goal, but one worth the time and the effort. We still do not have all the resources we need to make it happen, but thanks to a financial grant awarded by IHEU and the support of groups like AAI, we are one step closer towards that goal.

As difficult as things may seem, and as Utopian as some of our hopes for the future may be, we believe, with Oscar Wilde, that a map of the World that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at. We may never get there, but in the journey, much progress towards it can be made. 



Ana Raquel Aquino Smith is a 25-year-old attorney at law with a bachelor in legal and social sciences. The topic of her thesis was a historical and legal analysis of the human right to freedom of conscience in Guatemala and its current situation. She is interested in human rights, political advocacy and writing. She works as project coordinator in Humanistas Guatemala. She is in love with astronomy.



Oscar Gabriel Pineda is a bipedal mammal with a deep interest in philosophy and the many ways it can help us think more clearly and critically about the human experience. He has written about these topics, as well as atheism, secularism and the naturalistic form of spirituality that arises from learning and contemplating the natural world in several online publications. He is the vice-president of Humanistas Guatemala. He is either a cheery pessimist or a gloomy optimist.

# To The Women in Church: You Don't Have to Go Home, But You Can't Stay Here

Katilyn Pulcher

Studies have shown that more men are “out and proud” atheists than women and that more women identify as being “a religious person” than men. This is both surprising and unsurprising, from a woman's perspective. It's surprising because the gods understood by organized religions do not like women and treat them as such.

It's unsurprising because religions are sets of rules and women can't get away with breaking any rules in this world without being punished. Most of them would rather follow the rules than risk getting caught. When a girl breaks a rule, be it a law enforced by police or one of the ten commandments, her transgression will not be excused by a flippant, “girls will be girls”, remark. Not only will she be punished, she may even be publicly shamed in the front-page news. Thus, for her to break a rule, she needs to have both

a strong motivation to do so and a getaway car. One of the biggest rules upheld by society has been that good girls believe in a god and follow his directives. Therefore, most of those girls are not going to break that rule and become atheists, because atheism is, by its nature, the absence of a getaway car.

I concur with male atheists that it makes no sense for women to be Christians and that they need to leave the church. However, I disagree with many of them about what those women need to do and where they need to go once they leave. Some male atheists would argue that when women leave the church they should simultaneously declare

whatever one wants to call something “greater than ourselves” is not causing problems in our world, in and of itself. Rather, the pervasive problems, such as sexism, domestic violence, and bigotry, arose from the teachings (religious traditions, or habits) that allegedly came from those gods. Said another way, the problem is what people think god said, not what he is. Thus, religious traditions and habits are what need to be dropped. I believe it is more important for people to become areligious than to become atheistic. It is also significantly more difficult to become atheistic than it is to become areligious, so perhaps the latter is a more readily achievable goal. The reasons for that lie both in the depth to which a habit has been ingrained and in the types of circumstances under which most people cling to their religion.



themselves an atheist, denounce a belief in any type of god, join an atheist group, and claim evolution as absolute fact. But from my perspective, none of those things matter as much as them not going back to church. I don't care where they go next, as long as they don't go back.

Beliefs in a universal force, a god, or

Giving up habits that are bad for us is a difficult task for anyone, regardless of the type of habit. Once the habit has successfully been stopped, it is still difficult, and sometimes impossible, to stop the urge to repeat the habit. For example, people who are trying to quit smoking often replace cigarettes with sticks of gum or

hard candies to ease the transition. Even after they successfully stop smoking, they still may crave a cigarette at times, especially stressful ones. That craving may never go away, and most people accept that fact. We should expect similar behaviour from people who are trying to quit their religion. It's difficult to give up religious habits without replacing them with new ones, but atheism, by nature, does not have traditions with which to replace them. Even after someone who was originally a theist successfully stops practicing her religion, she still may believe a god exists at times. Similar to the desire for cigarettes, those times will typically be stressful. Perhaps she will hope there is a god during terrifying turbulence in an

airplane, and she can't help that. If the temporary belief in a god of her understanding grants her peace during that turbulent time, that's a good thing, and we should let it be.

As religious females grow older, they tend to lean on their religion in situations that humans have little to no control over, such as cancer going into remission or not. If a woman's religion was the last rope of hope she could clutch during that tumultuous time, she will not let it go easily, especially if she does not have a new rope to hang onto. Atheism does not offer her a new rope, so she may view it as an unattractive option. If the hardship resolves and she comes out

okay (maybe her cancer goes into remission), the experience may also have further strengthened her imagined relationship with a god, making her even less likely to abandon it.

Relationships deepen when they are stressed. In general, the more times relationships have been stressed and remained intact, the less likely they are to end. Since humans are creatures of habit, their relationships with imaginary deities are treated no differently than their relationships with other humans. The more times a human has felt that she relied on a god in a stressful time and everything worked out, the stronger her attachment will be to the god of her understanding. What I'm getting at is



## Atheist Society of Nigeria National Convention 2017

Saturday 11th November  
Conference Center, Unilag, Akoka, Lagos.

# THE ROAD TO REASON



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that some people have been through so many hardships, they may not ever be able to let go of belief in a god. In my opinion, this is neither a fortunate nor unfortunate fact, because that prevailing belief is not a problem. What is problematic is the way a person interacts with their god and others (praying, preaching, evangelizing, judging, tithing, etc.). So, I believe atheists should focus on helping people let go of their religious habits, rather than trying to force people to let go of their belief in anything greater than themselves. Atheists cannot disprove the existence of all gods to theists, but they can prove that religious doctrines came from humans, rather than a god. Once theists see that the religious rules according to which they've been living their lives simply reflect the desires of a few long-since deceased men, they'll be less inclined to follow them because those men are not around to enforce them.


Given the rights American women could potentially lose in the near future (e.g. legal abortion, free birth control pills, and free pelvic exams), they need to learn that the rules of Christianity came directly from men, rather than indirectly from a god, ASAP. Many of them voted, entirely based on these religious rules, for a man who would like to take these rights away from

them – Donald Trump. They need to leave the church now and never look back. Their physical and emotional health depends on it. But, if a man tells



them to do this, it likely will not work.

Men have already been telling women what to do for so long that most women have started to tune them out. What women need instead is information, presented woman to woman, and the opportunity to arrive at the conclusion

that they should leave the church on their own. If people show respect for women's right to decide for themselves whether they leave church or not, they may start to respect their rights to make other decisions for themselves. Perhaps the women who voted for Trump will, in kind, start to respect their rights to make their own decisions about their bodies. Simply put, we need to empower women to think, rather than tell them what to do. The [book](#) that might successfully do just that is *Status Quon't: A Woman's Perspective On How Christianity Was Never About God*. It ties modern day feminist issues to their origins in religion, so that women can see it is the root of most of the problems they're currently facing. If they successfully crack the foundation, rather than attacking each problem individually, the entire house will crumble at once. In other words, when religion is accepted as a fallacy, all of the laws and sexist ideologies based on it will cease to be binding on anyone. My hope is that after reading the book, women will see that the next women's strike should involve walking out of church, rather than the office, and unlike the "Day Without a Woman" in 2017, they should never return. Mimicking the line bartenders say at closing time, the book effectively communicates to the women who still sit in church: "You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here". 



Katilyn Pulcher grew up in a Baptist family in Missouri and became an atheist in her mid-twenties when a close relative became an alcoholic. No amount of prayer improved the situation, so Katilyn decided no one must be listening to those prayers and, thus, that God didn't exist. Failing to have found peace and the answers to all of life's questions in either the Bible or the twelve-step literature for family members of alcoholics, she wrote her own book that will encourage you to think, rather than tell you what to do.

# Are Religion and Science Compatible?

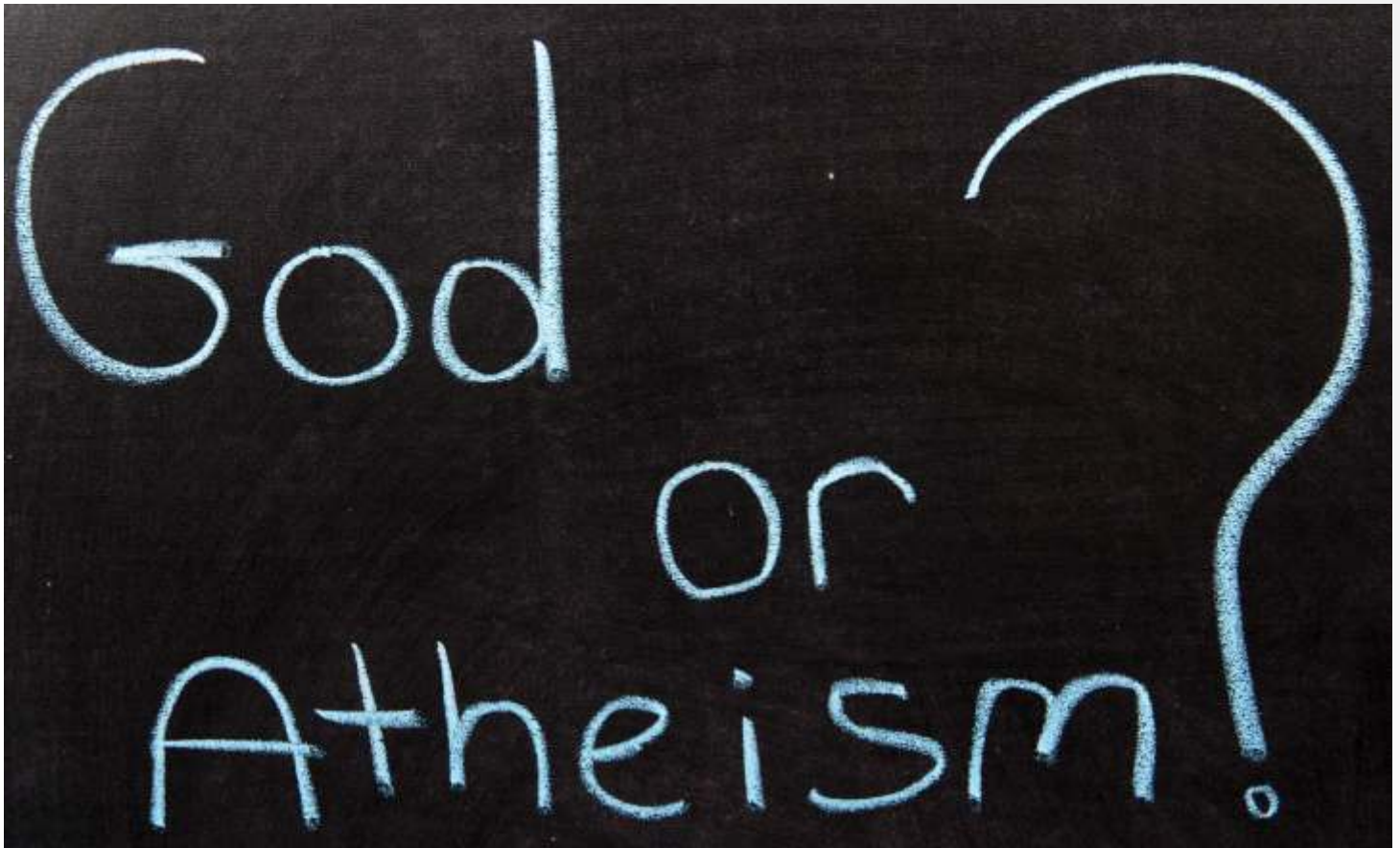
Richard E Wackrow

A perennial claim made by the moderately religious and religious apologists alike is that religion and science are somehow compatible, and that religion need not be an impediment to the advancement of human knowledge and the welfare of mankind. However, try as we might to reach this accommodation, we find that faith and reason are — now more than ever — anything but best friends.

believed in God.

That statement, in fact, had nothing at all to do with religion. It was a metaphorical expression of Einstein's preference for his mathematically ordered universe over the theory of quantum mechanics (and its postulation of the random behavior of subatomic particles). Having been quoted out of context, Einstein later went to some length to refute the idea that he was a believer. For example, in 1954 he [wrote](#):

I could end this column here by rightly noting that our practical day-to-day existence (whether we're religious or not) is governed by the examination of evidence and the application of reason. And I could add that religion draws its conclusions about the world — and how we should behave — from unsubstantiated belief and dogma. For these reasons, science and religion are diametrically incompatible. Unfortunately, this dichotomy is much



In their desperate effort to imply that religion has the same intellectual status as reason and science, believers like to quote Albert Einstein (1879-1955), who said offhandedly, "God does not play dice with the universe." Apparently, the rest of us are to accept this as proof that Einstein (a smart person and a scientist)

*I do not believe in a personal God and I have never denied this but have expressed it clearly. If something is in me which can be called religious then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it.*

more nuanced than that.

Stephen Jay Gould (1941-2002) — paleontologist, evolutionary biologist and writer of numerous popular science articles — made many contributions to the advancement of human knowledge

and science. His doctrine of nonoverlapping magisteria, however, was not one of them.

In his 1999 book *Rock of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life*, Gould claimed that science and religion address two mutually exclusive questions — those regarding facts and those regarding values — and that these two areas of intellectual authority do not overlap. In doing so, Gould inexplicably ignored the fact that religion makes testable empirical claims, voluntarily landing it in the realm of science and

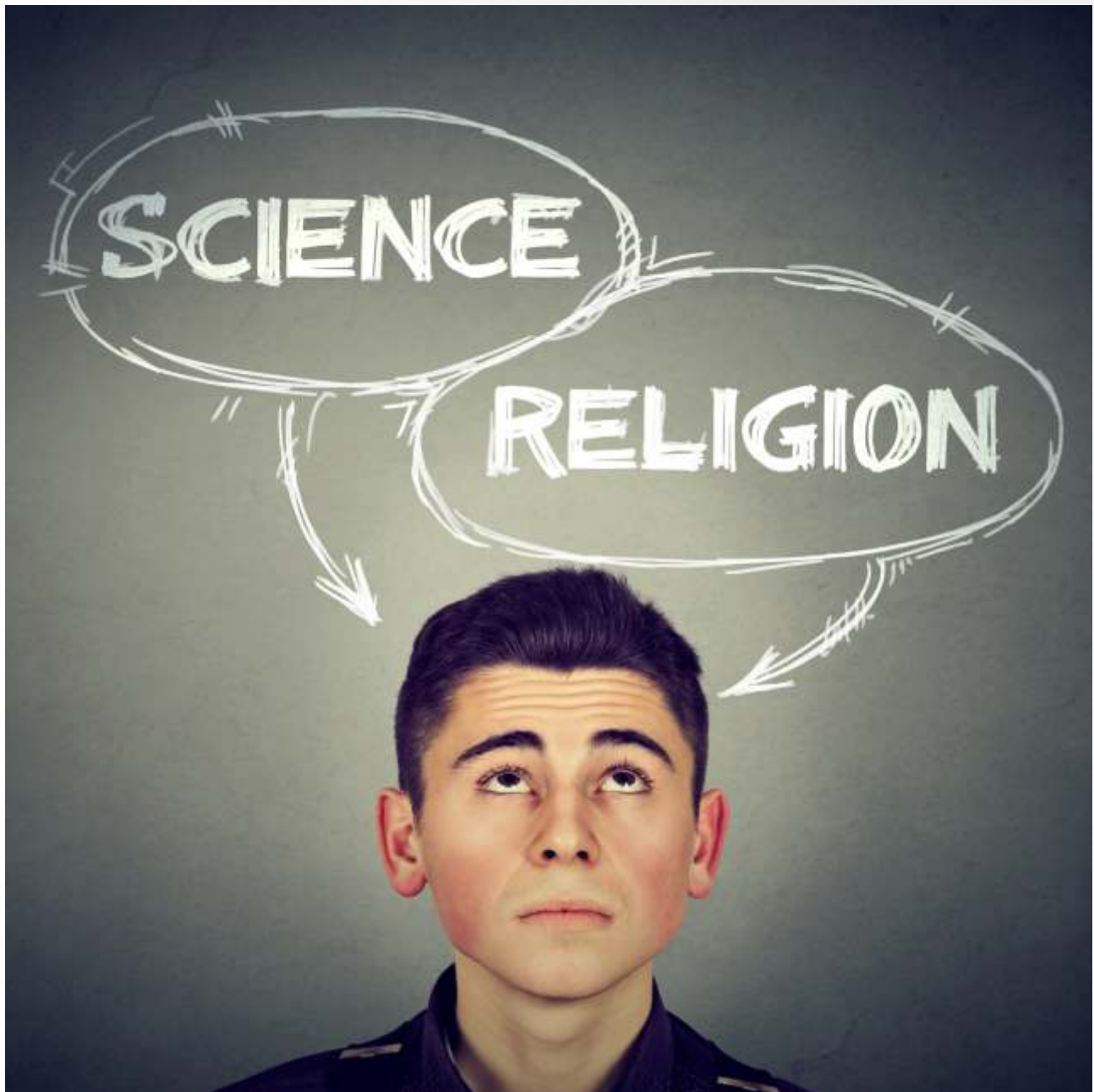
reason.

Reason can expose inconsistencies in the moral precepts of the Bible (let us count the ways!). And science can inform our decisions about real-world ethical questions — such as at what point in its growth a human fetus develops a nervous system, thereby making it susceptible to feeling pain (thus influencing the abortion debate), or when the life of a terminally ill patient should be ended by euthanasia. The theory of evolution also enlightens us as to the connection between species — sentient creatures such as apes, whales and our pets, for example — and how we

should treat them.

Being a pragmatic scientist whose work largely depended on public funding, Gould also pointed out that 80 to 90 percent of Americans were religious — and that his doctrine of nonoverlapping magisteria was, ironically, necessary for the advancement of science. Also in the interest of self-preservation in a hostile political-religious climate, the National Academy of Sciences explained:

Science and religion are based on different aspects of human experience. In science, explanations must be based on evidence drawn from examining the



natural world. Scientifically based observations or experiments that conflict with an explanation eventually must lead to modification or even abandonment of that explanation.


Religious faith, in contrast, does not depend only on empirical evidence, is not necessarily modified in the face of conflicting evidence, and typically involves supernatural forces or entities. Because they are not a part of nature, supernatural entities cannot be investigated by science. In this sense, science and religion are separate and address aspects of human understanding in different ways. Attempts to pit science and religion against each other *create controversy*

*where none needs to exist. (My italics.)* Although somewhat accommodating to religionist sensibilities, this statement comes closer to the point in question by acknowledging that religion does consider empirical evidence — but, paradoxically, that religious dogma isn't necessarily informed by the facts.

Unfortunately, this apparent reconciliation isn't the end of the story. The religiously inspired backlash against science and intellectualism in America has broadened that abyss. (This anti-intellectualism is called *misology*: a hatred of argument, reason or enlightenment.)

Further, this sentiment has cleaved

religious moderates, who can deal realistically with the world and who care about the future of their children, from religious fundamentalists, who cannot and do not. And it has bestowed upon America a vice president who thinks Jesus will return any day now, a secretary of the interior who denies climate change, the gutting of the Environmental Protection Agency, a secretary of education who thinks creationism should be taught in science class, and an adviser to the president on medical issues who is anti-vaccine.

Martin Luther rightly stated that reason is the enemy of faith. I'd like to add that faith — as practiced by the current leaders of the most powerful nation in the world — is the enemy of mankind. 

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Before his retirement in 1996, Richard E. Wackrow was a reporter, editor and columnist for suburban newspapers in several markets, as well as a writer for the Dallas Morning News, Entrepreneur magazine, and other major publications.

In 2011, he came out of retirement to write the book *Who's Winning the War on Terror* (Empiricist Press, 2012), which takes a critical look at the costs of the United States' open-ended war against a tactic. Since the book's publication, he has had articles published in *Skeptical Inquirer* and *Skeptic* magazines.

He is president of the Flathead Area Secular Humanist Association in northwestern Montana, and regularly writes about secular-humanist, atheist and church-state issues.

His personal website is [www.richardwackrow.com](http://www.richardwackrow.com)

# The Atheist Society of Nigeria: From Idea to Fruition

Nigeria is a very religious country. Some statistics put the number of religious people (primarily Christians and Muslims) at about 95%. In official documents where religion is requested for it is typical to see only two options, Christianity and Islam. So if you

advice and empathy from people just like them, and they could try out their “arguments” and debating skills. Next, people started to form small local groups and friendships, meeting for a few beers and a laugh at bars, going for picnics at the beach and having a great time.

and to help protect people from confidence tricksters who masquerade as “men of god” only to acquire wealth from the unsuspecting congregation. The first test of our resolve came in a rejection of the application, we were



considered yourself an atheist, agnostic or freethinker the typical option was to identify with the religion of your family. This in spite of the fact that we have had in the past, prominent atheists like Tai Solarin, the late educator and author. But with the advent of social media, atheists have been able to find people like them, not just in the world at large, but in their own country and local communities. They have been able to form groups and talk about the challenges they face as “sore thumbs” in their workplaces, families and in their social networks. Now they could get

Then there was some talk of having a registered atheist body in the country. As usual with things like this, some were for and some argued against it, mostly for the fear that it would be too difficult to achieve. Alternative names were discussed in order to avoid the “atheist” label and thus the automatic displeasure of the public. Nevertheless 3 people, decided to give it a try and applied to register the “Atheist Society of Nigeria” to put a stop to the wide-ranging discrimination that non-theists have been subjected to for a long time now,


asked to get approval from the head of the commission in charge of registration of bodies in the country. At this point we decided to get a lawyer to help facilitate the process. Also, we expanded the circle to about 8 people. At last the approval was granted and we were allowed to register the association.

The registration of the association was met with a bit of scepticism from the atheist community. Some people raised doubts about the need for a society for people who don't believe in something. But the reception of the organisation

was more positive than otherwise and we set out to our business of fighting some of the ills of society born and fed directly or indirectly by religion and the dearth of critical thinking. In line with this, the Atheist Society of Nigeria petitioned the Nigeria Medical Association concerning the practice of some doctors who refer their patients to faith healers which is contrary to their scientific training. This act generated a lot of conversation and controversy in social media circles and conveyed the message that the association is serious in carrying out its stated objectives, one of which is to promote science and critical thinking in solving problems. Nevertheless the association never got a formal response from the Medical Association.

In August 2017, the Atheist Society of Nigeria formally opened for registration to members of the public who identify as atheists and who agree with its vision and mission statements. Among the goals of the society are the normalization of atheism in the country, the fight against the discrimination against non-believers and the promotion of critical thinking and problem solving skills among our young. In order to do this we are planning to establish branches in various parts of the country especially in institutions of higher learning.

In order to kick off these activities, we have decided to organize a national conference scheduled to hold later this year, where atheists from different parts of the country are expected to come together and share ideas around achieving the aims of the society. Through this conference we hope to meet enthusiastic members from around the country and plan the establishment of a presence in a number of cities. We have had a lot of help from volunteers, from the design and maintenance of a website and blog, to setting up a growing social media presence on Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn.

Currently our focus is in setting up structures that will guarantee effectiveness in meeting our stated goals, as well as promoting accountability and transparency in all our dealings. And here we are hoping to learn from already established atheist and humanist societies from around the world. 



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# Notes on the Regressive Left

David Rand

The “regressive left” is a recently invented term, apparently coined by British anti-Islamism activist Maajid Nawaz in 2012. Wikipedia defines the terms as:

*a political epithet, used as a pejorative to describe a section of left-wing politics who are accused of paradoxically holding reactionary views by their tolerance of illiberal principles and ideologies, particularly tolerance of Islamism, for the sake of multiculturalism and cultural relativism.*

The expression “regressive left” is imperfect for a variety of reasons:

- Perhaps a more appropriate term would be the “multicultural left” or even better the “communitarian left,” keeping in mind that the word “multiculturalism” sounds much too

positive for what it really means, i.e. an ideology which assigns a higher priority to ethno-religious affiliation (hence the near-synonym “communitarianism”) than it does to individual rights or citizenship. Or how about the “Islamophilic left” or

right.

- This expression is of recent invention, as if the left only recently began making mistakes. But all movements, even the most progressive, are capable of error and there are plenty of examples from the annals of left-wing politics. Just consider all the



various derivatives of Marxism having totalitarian tendencies, in particular Stalinism and its variants. There is no shortage of examples of “regressive” policies in that tortuous history.

- The Wikipedia definition given above is perhaps too narrow. There are, for example, some

the “Islamolatric left”?

- The use of the word “left” is confusing to say the least. The regressive “left” betrays classic left-wing values, and, by doing so, discredits the left and indirectly enables and strengthens the political

political tendencies which reject multiculturalism but adopt nevertheless an overly indulgent attitude towards Islamism. Furthermore, the Wikipedia definition omits the fact that some regressive leftists—in particular self-



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styled “anti-fascists”—regularly misuse and overuse the epithet “fascism” by using it to demonize almost anyone they dislike or disagree with.

So let’s call it the regressive left for now, but with the understanding that the search for a better term should probably continue. (I have a similar attitude towards the word “Islamofascism”—it is not perfect, i.e. probably too modern a term to describe totalitarian political Islam which is in reality more medieval than fascist—but will do for now. At least it has the merit of defying the regressive left’s attempts to monopolize use of the epithet “fascism.”)

The regressive left is not a well-circumscribed sub-movement within

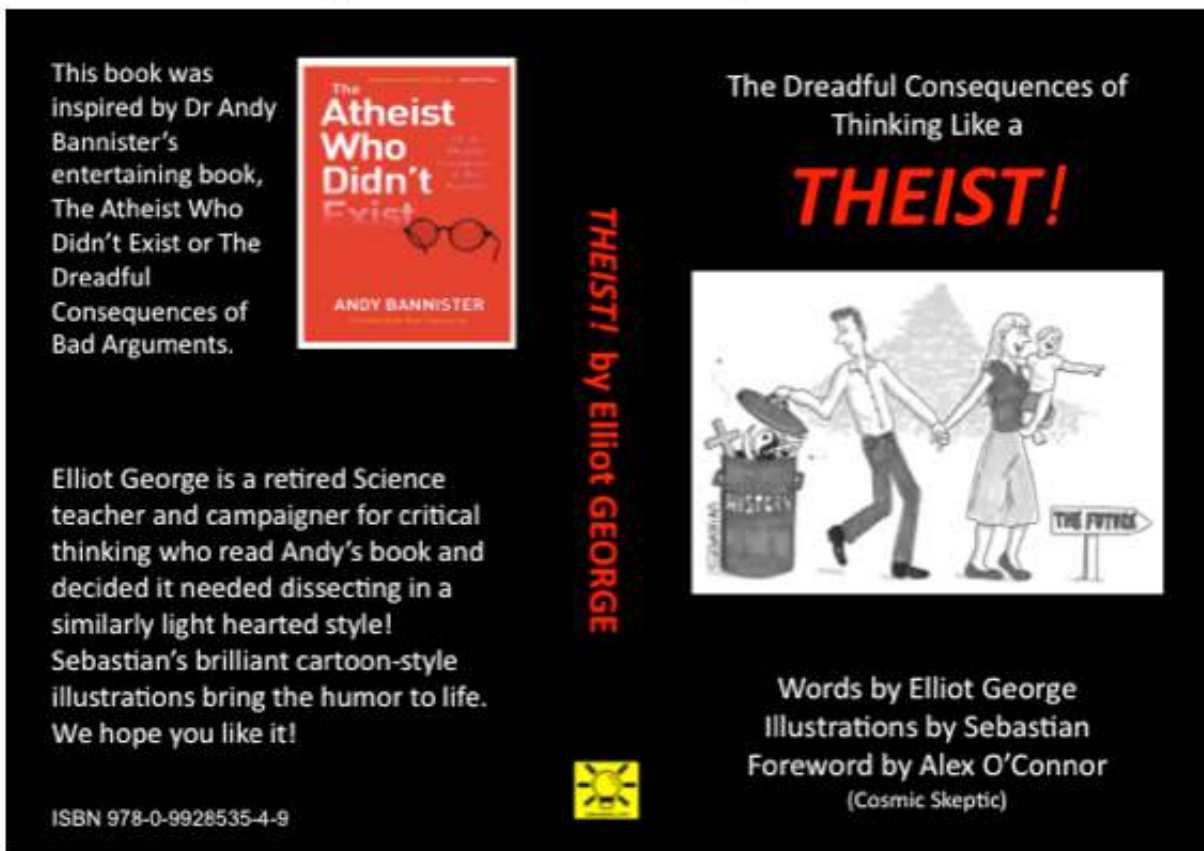
left-wing movements in general. Rather it is a mentality, a collection of attitudes which infects left-wing thought and distorts it in the direction of cultural relativism and tolerance of Islamism.

Whatever term you prefer, it describes a very real phenomenon which regrettably is all too commonplace. Any time a person who criticizes Islam or Islamism (the religion and political ideology) is accused of “Islamophobia” or “xenophobia” or “racism” then the accuser, if not an Islamist himself or herself, is clearly behaving in a regressive leftist manner and as a dupe of Islamofascism. The recent (2015) niqab issue here in Canada is an obvious example. Anyone who supported a ban on face-coverings at citizenship hearings was accused of racism even by leaders of the supposedly left-wing NDP (New

Democratic Party). There are plenty of examples from other countries. Any ostensible leftist who celebrates the wearing of the hijab in the name of so-called “diversity” is a mouthpiece for the regressive left.

Canada is a very easy target for regressive-left ideas, a total pushover in fact. The reason is obvious: Canada is ground-zero for the ideology of multiculturalism, promoted by Pierre-Elliott Trudeau in his heyday and continuing to be very influential, indeed totally dominant, to the point that the federal government even has a [Canadian Multiculturalism Act](#), enacted under one of Trudeau’s successors, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and giving that ideology force of law. This gives the regressive left a stranglehold over politics in Canada and greatly hampers efforts to

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This book was inspired by Dr Andy Bannister’s entertaining book, *The Atheist Who Didn’t Exist or The Dreadful Consequences of Bad Arguments*.

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secularize.

By virtue of its subservience to communitarianism and cultural relativism, the regressive left is resolutely anti-secular and that is clear from the sorry state of Canadian politics. Here are three major examples:

1. During the debate over the Quebec Charter of Secularism in 2013-2014, the major opposition came from a de facto alliance between multiculturalists

(principally of the Quebec Liberal Party and of Québec Solidaire) and Islamists or fundamentalist Muslims, while the Charter was supported by practically all secularists in Quebec (including many secular

Muslims). However, several so-called “secular” organizations in Canada outside Quebec—obviously in thrall to regressive left ideas—issued public statements **against** the Charter. Fortunately, there were also [a few who were more sympathetic to the Charter.](#)

2. During the 2015 niqab debate (mentioned above), the Conservative Party government’s response to the court decision allowing Zunera Ishaq to wear the niqab at her citizenship ceremony was inadequate, merely

appealing the court’s decision, whereas that government should have made legislative changes (such as repealing article 17.1.b of the Citizenship Regulations). On the other hand, the “left” NDP and centrist Liberal Party took an even worse position, a position to the **right** of the government, a position which facilitated the Islamist agenda, praising the court’s decision and celebrating the wearing of the niqab, even at a citizenship ceremony!

3. In early 2017, opposition to Motion M-

presidential campaign, Emmanuel Macron has declared (2016-10-05) that there is no religion which is problematic in France. No problem!? Such complacency can only strengthen his rival Marine Le Pen of the Front National.

This left-right political confusion can be readily observed in Canada in cases (2) and (3) described above. The right-wing Conservative Party offered some resistance to Islamofascist proselytism (the niqab and M-103), while the left-wing NDP and centrist Liberal Party took

very regressive positions, to the **right** of the right-wing Conservatives on this issue, but enthusiastically supporting Islamofascism. This does **not** imply that we should support the Conservative Party! We must instead advance a principled critique of the very regressive position adopted by



103 condemning so-called “Islamophobia” came mainly from the Conservative Party, while the NDP and Liberal party supported it. Since the regressive left is “left” more in name than in reality, adopting as it does a foolishly complacent attitude towards an ideology that is far to the right of even the more far-right parties in most countries, it creates confusion between left-wing and right-wing politics, thus strengthening the right and the far-right. For example, in the current French

the other two parties. Probably the worst blunder of all, the error frequently committed by Canadian pseudo-secularists, an error which is typical of the regressive left, is to oppose a measure because it has become associated with a particular unpopular political tendency, without regard to the merit or demerit of that measure: for example, celebrating the niqab because the Conservatives opposed it, or supporting M-103 because the

the other two parties. Probably the worst blunder of all, the error frequently committed by Canadian pseudo-secularists, an error which is typical of the regressive left, is to oppose a measure because it has become associated with a particular unpopular political tendency, without regard to the merit or demerit of that measure: for example, celebrating the niqab because the Conservatives opposed it, or supporting M-103 because the

Conservatives criticize it. This error is just a variant of the ad hominem logical fallacy or the guilt by association fallacy.

Just because you dislike or oppose the Conservative Party does not mean that everything they say or do is always wrong or that their opponents are always right. If Donald Trump says that an object is black, does that guarantee that it is white? Exaggerated loyalty to one's "tribe" can be very dangerous; if that tribe is one's race or ethnic group, then we have the basis for racism and ethnic bigotry. If that "tribe" is the political left, then such loyalty can easily promote regressive left memes.

To summarize, to criticize the regressive left (or centre) and recognize that it sometimes takes a position even more retrograde, more right-wing than even the parties of the

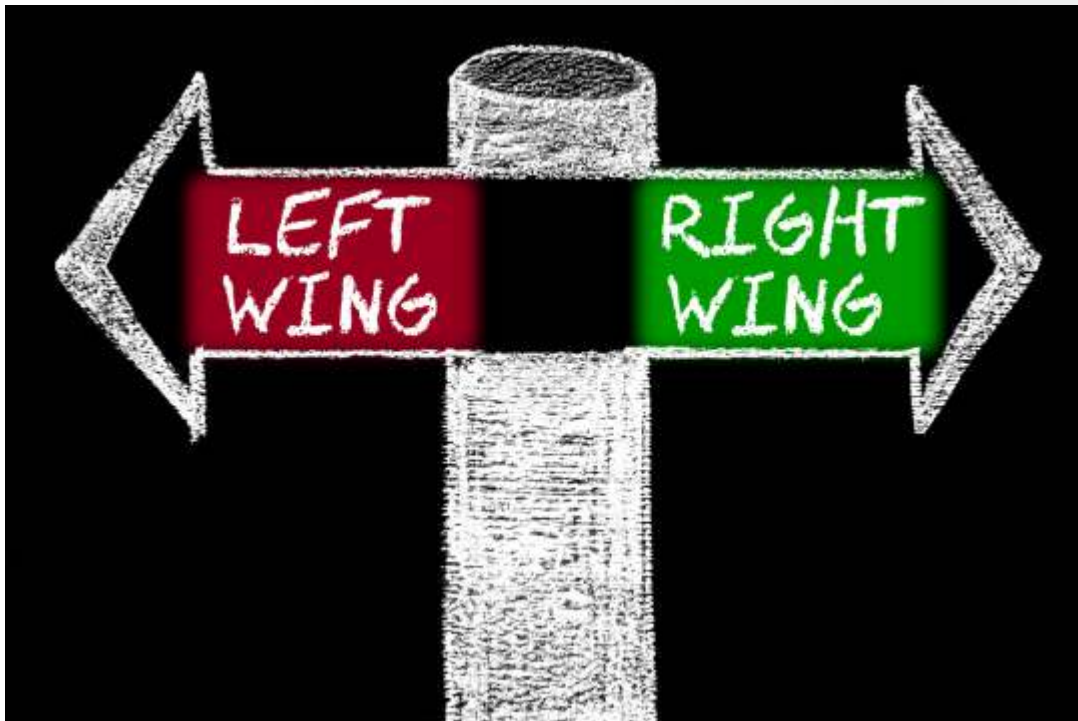
political right does not mean that we should support the latter. Rather, it implies that we must resolutely criticize the regressive left whose foolish actions discredit and weaken the left and ultimately strengthen the right wing. It is only by refuting erroneous ideas and actions on the political left that we can make the left truly progressive.

**ANTIFA: Kangaroo Court Implemented by a Street Mob**

The Antifa hatefully hate "hate." They have all the rationality of a kangaroo

court implemented by a violent street mob. They are like obnoxious children playing at revolution. It is difficult to know exactly what their ideas are, because they are so loosely organized. But we can judge them by their actions.

The Antifa are intellectually sloppy and physically violent, which is a dangerous combination, because they are unable to judge when violence is justified (which should be rarely, basically in self-defense) and they are unable to judge whom should be the target of their opposition. Bad behaviour, badly directed = disaster waiting to happen.



The Antifa are incompetent anarchists, unable to identify clearly whom we should be fighting. Only when the enemy clearly identifies itself (by wearing neo-Nazi symbols or KKK attire, such as in Charlottesville) are they able to judge correctly.

If you want to oppose "fascism" then you must define what that is. The burden of definition of "fascism" falls especially on those who oppose it violently.

When is anti-fascist violence justified? Hint: If your country is being invaded by

Hitler's army (like Poland in 1939) then violence is justified. If an academic threatens to speak about his/her research or his/her book at your university, then violence is NOT justified. The Antifa claim to oppose neoliberalism. But they are anti-nationalists and apparently oppose all borders. Thus they facilitate neoliberalism which has similar goals — against nationalism, against borders — because that allows corporations free reign and prevents the nation-state from adopting measures to improve or protect the quality of life of its citizens — measures such as workers' rights, social

programmes, environmental regulations, corporate regulation, secularism, etc. The use of national boundaries is foolishly denounced by the Antifa and other pseudo-leftists as "xenophobic", "fascist" or worse. One of the consequences of this is that the Antifa

oppose secularism, because secularism requires the state to impose some reasonable constraints on religious expression within the state apparatus.

A few examples of counterproductive Antifa actions:

- Quebec City, 2017-08-20, where [Antifa beat up a man](#) because he was carrying an anti-monarchist flag.
- Toronto Gay Pride, 2017, where a gang identifying itself as [Antifa tried to stop Iranian gay Muslims and ex-Muslims from marching in the](#)

[parade](#), accusing them of “Islamophobia”. At least the Antifa were not violent in this case. They withdrew when the police intervened and the Iranians were then able to march.

- Middlebury College, Vermont, 2017-03-02, where there were violent protests against a speaking engagement by Charles Murray. Hate Murray if you must, but he is not a fascist by any reasonable definition of that term.
- Montreal, 2015, a peaceful demonstration against legislation ([Draft Bill 59](#)) which would have censored criticism of religion by labelling it “hate speech” was met by Antifa counter-protesters chanting anti-fascist and anti-racist slogans. The counter-protesters were apparently too stupid to recognize [the difference between religion and race](#). Police kept the two groups apart and there was apparently no violence. Fortunately the legislation (which the Antifa effectively supported) was withdrawn, because it would have been the equivalent of a new anti-blasphemy law at the

provincial level.


- Numerous incidents in Berkeley, California. A good overview of events there is provided by Raymond Barglow in [Radically Wrong in Berkeley](#).

If you consider yourself a leftist but support the Antifa, then what the hell is wrong with you? You are probably in denial. Loyalty to a cause may be a virtue; but if many ostensible proponents of that cause make major errors which harm the cause and enable its adversaries, then blind loyalty is no longer a virtue, rather it is a vice. One of the most effective ways of undermining a cause is to defend it badly (thanks to François Doyon for this excellent meme); one of the best ways to promote a cause is to criticize its errors. As leftists, we must recognize that the Antifa feed into the extreme right. The Antifa are an extreme manifestation of the fanatical postmodernist nonsense underlying what has become known as the “regressive left” and which has seriously undermined progressive politics.

Suggested reading: [Noam Chomsky](#):

[‘Antifa is Wrong in Principle — a Major Gift to the Militant Right’](#). You will find criticism of the Antifa on many right-wing web sites, and that is only to be expected, because when so-called leftists discredit the left by behaving like assholes, then of course the right loves to talk about it. As Barglow observes:

*Not surprisingly, Berkeley’s intolerance has become a favorite subject on Fox News and other right-wing media. [...] But voices on the left have criticized this intolerance too: veterans of Berkeley’s Free Speech Movement issued a statement in support of Yiannopoulos’ right to speak on campus, explaining that “Banning him just plays into his hands politically.... The best way to battle his bigoted discourse is to critique and refute it.” Violent demonstrations in Berkeley, purporting to “fight fascism,” fuel it instead; [...]*

Our duty is to oppose Antifa and to boycott all Antifa events — i.e. do not join them. Find other, more intelligent and more effective ways (peaceful protest, debate, writing, etc.) to express your opposition to ideas which you consider dangerous or retrograde. 

Article originally published at [www.blog.davidrand.ca](http://www.blog.davidrand.ca), republished with permission



David Rand is president of the Montreal-based AAI-affiliate Libres penseurs athées--Atheist Freethinkers (LPA-AFT) and spokesperson for the International Association of Free Thought (IAFT). He has addressed freethought gatherings in Canada, Lebanon, Argentina, Chile, Poland, Estonia and France. David's writings have appeared in various atheist, freethought and humanist publications, as well as on several web sites.

LPA-AFT participates in a local Quebec coalition which promotes secularism, supported the Charter of Secularism proposed by the Quebec government in 2013-2014, and opposes measures which would threaten freedom of conscience and expression. In particular, LPA-AFT opposes all laws and measures which would censor criticism of religion, including anti-blasphemy laws and measures which would condemn so-called "Islamophobia." The organization also opposes measures which grant impunity to religions, such as the religious exception 319(3)b in Canada's hate propaganda law.

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## **Ireland**

Atheist Ireland

[www.atheist.ie](http://www.atheist.ie)

## **Iran**

Iranian Atheists & Agnostics

[www.facebook.com/Iran.Athei](http://www.facebook.com/Iran.Athei)

[st.agnostic](http://st.agnostic)

## **Iraq**

Atheist Alliance of Iraq

[www.facebook.com/groups/A](http://www.facebook.com/groups/A)

[AI.IRAQ](http://AI.IRAQ)

## **Israel**

Hofesh – Freedom from

Religion NPO

[www.Hofesh.org.il/English/In](http://www.Hofesh.org.il/English/In)

[dex.html](http://dex.html)

## **Lebanon**

Freethought Lebanon

[www.freethoughtlebanon.net](http://www.freethoughtlebanon.net)

## **Netherlands**

Atheistisch Verbond (Atheist

Union)

[www.atheistischverbond.nl](http://www.atheistischverbond.nl)

## **Norway**

The Heathen Society

[www.hedning.no](http://www.hedning.no)

## **Pakistan**

Atheists and Agnostics

Alliance of Pakistan

[www.aaapakistan.org](http://www.aaapakistan.org)

## **Palestine**

Palestinian Atheist-Agnostic

Movement

[www.facebook.com/pages/pal](http://www.facebook.com/pages/pal)

[estinian-atheistagnostic-](http://estinian-atheistagnostic-)

[movement/68463](http://movement/68463)

## **Philippines**

Philippine Atheists &

Agnostics

Society Inc (PATAS)

[www.patas.co](http://www.patas.co)

## **Philippines**

HAPI - The Humanist Alliance

Philippines, International

[www.hapihumanist.org/the-](http://www.hapihumanist.org/the-)

[hapi-founder-corner](http://hapi-founder-corner)

## **Poland**

Front Ateistyczny

[www.facebook.com/Front-](http://www.facebook.com/Front-)

[Ateistyczny-497449670424725](http://Ateistyczny-497449670424725)

## **Puerto Rico**

Secular Humanists of Puerto

Rico

[www.humanistaspr.org](http://www.humanistaspr.org)

## **South Africa**

Free Society Institute

[www.fsi.org.za](http://www.fsi.org.za)

## **Suomi**

Atheist Association of Finland

[www.dlc.fi/~etkirja/Atheist.htm](http://www.dlc.fi/~etkirja/Atheist.htm)

## **Turkey**

Ateizm Dernegi

[www.ateizmdernegi.org.tr](http://www.ateizmdernegi.org.tr)

Ateist Dergi

[www.ateistdergi.com](http://www.ateistdergi.com)

## **Uganda**

Humanist Association for

Leadership, Equity &

Accountability (HALEA)

[www.haleauganda.org](http://www.haleauganda.org)

## **United Kingdom**

Atheism UK

[www.atheismuk.com](http://www.atheismuk.com)

## **United States of America**

Atheist Alliance of America

[www.atheistallianceamerica.org](http://www.atheistallianceamerica.org)

Freedom From Religion

Foundation

[www.ffrf.org](http://www.ffrf.org)

Secular Humanist Society of

New York

[www.shsny.org](http://www.shsny.org)