

Freedom from religion foundation Pt. 2

“I’m Secular and I Vote” Campaign

Any religion, by definition, sports its own distinctive vocabulary, sacred symbolism, grand metanarrative, exclusive truth exercised by faith, code of ethics/morality, creed, rituals, evangelism, and discipleship. As is true with any worldview, secularism by nature is a religion. Logically, to discard religion is to separate from the above, but secularism instead exhibits them all. Hence, “freedom from religion” is better understood as switching religion from one brand to another.

In Part 1, we established that judicial acknowledgement, a distinctive vocabulary, grand metanarrative, and vision for the ideal accompany secularism and religion. All inform voters and influence the course of a nation.

The late journalist Christopher Hitchens reasoned, “Since it is obviously inconceivable that all religions can be right, the most reasonable conclusion is that they are all wrong.”[1] Of course, one could counter, “Since it is obviously inconceivable that all secularists (or progressives) can be right, the most reasonable conclusion is that they are all wrong.” But I digress.

Belief Claiming Exclusive Truth

Naturalists reproach biblical apologists for fortifying dogma by inserting “the God of the gaps”; however, in a letter to Dr. Asa Gray, their hero Charles Darwin admitted, “Imagination must fill up very wide blanks.” Despite these blanks, naturalists embrace “settled science” as exclusive truth.

Having studied under the famous scholar, Gamaliel, the Apostle Paul had legitimate claim to knowledge of truth.

Because experience shows God's unfailing strength as perfected in weakness, Paul deemed God's grace to be sufficient and chose wisely to "boast" in his own weaknesses so that "the power of Christ might rest upon him." [2] In Darwin's world, to the contrary, the weakest links are expunged as "maladjusted morons and misfits." [3] In shunning lesser human specimens, secular elitists worship at their own makeshift altar of exclusivity.

- Exclusive Truth: Settled Science

Mind you, Darwin hated his time at school and applied himself minimally. He left Edinburgh without a degree; and, at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he studied theology, he earned what was regarded as an "ordinary" degree. Darwin's body of work was not wholly original, as one might expect. Instead, its borrowed tenets were lifted from a poem written by Charles' grandfather, Dr. Erasmus Darwin. The latter practiced an 18th-century pseudo-science (Galvanism) that involved running electrical currents through corpses of dead animals to bring them back to life.

Both wellborn-and-bred British elitists of their day, forward-thinking cousins Darwin and Galton identified with the dark side of the Enlightenment. Both rejected democratic elements, but some semblance of science suited their common cause. [4] Darwin's legendary treatise, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*, filled the bill nicely. In 1993, a number of intellectually dissatisfied scientists representing a variety of disciplines took a fresh look at Darwinism in light of ever exploding scientific knowledge. Unlike Darwin, well-studied, degreed, and highly decorated scientists found irrefutable evidence for Intelligent Design.

- Accepted by Faith

FFRF professor of ecology and evolution at the University of

Chicago, Jerry Coyne, Ph.D., authored, *Why Evolution is True*. For Darwin's theory to fly, faith in random genetic changes, at every turn, must provide advantage in an organism's struggle to survive. This is not only highly improbable; it's impossible. Even the evolutionary apologist British zoologist Julian Huxley ceded that a mutation signifies abnormality, not evolutionary advancement. Students of Darwinian thought are expected to overlook the fact that distinctive human attributes (i.e., language, posture/gait, moral/religious sensibilities, art/music appreciation) are not explicable by variations—i.e., multiple mutations or genetic shuffling. If it isn't observable, repeatable, and measurable, and as long as scientists ask questions and apply the scientific method, science is not settled. My point? Evolutionary theory is just that: a theory.

Given the Second Law of Thermodynamics, Irreducible Complexity, and Law of Mutation, chance takes even more faith to believe than creation by an Intelligent Designer of an astonishingly ordered universe! Professor Hoyle compared the Darwinian process to the unlikelihood of a tornado's sweeping through a junkyard and thereby producing a Boeing 747 from materials therein! Odds of this ever happening are astronomical.

Positive Impact on Society

Wrongly so, freethinkers credit persons unconstrained by religion with most social and moral progress throughout the history of Western civilization. Marketed to appeal to man's best intentions (the common good, survival, advanced societies), evolutionary thought instead perpetuates a host of societal ills. Whether by abortion, infanticide, forced sterilization, euthanasia, or assisted suicide, "useless eaters" are targeted for extinction; and "the unfit" remain subject to human experimentalism and pharmacological abuse.[5]

Darwin's theory validated his "good old boys" network of

British elitists; and, arguably, it spawned socio-political atrocities of monumental proportion. His flawed line of secularist, elitist thinking is precisely what spawned slavery, segregation, racist immigration laws (to turn away post-war Jewish refugees), the infamous Tuskegee Project, and application of the “one-drop rule” to ensure racial purity/hygiene. Progress? Positive impact on society? I think not.[6]

On the other hand, Dr. James Allan Francis eloquently explained, “Today Jesus is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind’s progress. All the armies that have ever marched, all the navies that have ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned—put together—have not affected the life of mankind on earth as powerfully as that one solitary life.”[7]

Sacred Symbolism

FFRF lawyers defend distribution of tracts (called “non-tracts” in the secularist’s lexicon) and activity books on display tables in public schools. Purported advocates of separation between church and state, secularists in Orlando and Denver nonetheless display pamphlets that address sex in the Bible and problems with the Ten Commandments (you know, religion). Foundation co-President Annie Laurie Gaylor assures authorities that the activity book for middle- and high school- students teaches “kindness” and, if only by limiting the satanic theme to symbols in drawings, “the basic morals that we all agree on.”[8]

Occult symbolism gets a pass, but not prayer emojis. Recently, FFRF called on Apple CEO Tim Cook to remove all prayer emojis (symbols of cruel and unusual proselytizing) from iPhones and other devices. The Foundation’s Co-President Dan Barker warns, “Apple may not be afraid of the FBI, but they should be afraid of the millions of secular consumers who can’t stand these emojis.”[9]

Code of Ethics/Morality

Although Paul Kurtz insists that the Humanist Manifesto is committed to reason, science, and democracy, secular humanism is really secular de-humanism. After all, Kurtz's worldview recognizes no mandate to celebrate, facilitate, or protect life. Instead, it advances an individual's right to "die with dignity"—whether by euthanasia or suicide. Because secularists perceive humans as mere products of time and chance, it stands to reason that life is devoid of elevated meaning. Darwinian theory defers to the paramount principle that "ends justify means."

Freethinking poet-historian Jennifer Michael Hecht reasons, "If there is no god – and there isn't – then we [humans] made up morality. And I'm very impressed." Claim to have created from nothing something that all can agree upon is indeed impressive—but only as a feat of fancy (a miracle, if you will). In reality, despite secular claims, basic morals that "we all agree on" don't exist.

Creed (Dogma) and Catechism

Columnist for The Nation, Katha Pollitt regularly and energetically proclaims the atheist's creed, "There is no God." In accordance with this creed, secularists must transcend "inflexible moral and religious ideologies." True to the secular catechism, believers celebrate, practice, and reward "plain speaking" on the shortcomings of religion. Accordingly, at the FFRF 39th annual convention in Pittsburgh (October 2016), theoretical physicist Lawrence Krauss will be awarded the Emperor Has No Clothes Award.[10]

The Humanist Manifesto urges "people of good will" to work together toward "human ends," but notable secularist, Oxford professor emeritus Richard Dawkins, characterizes the God of the Old Testament as "the most unpleasant character in all fiction." While Dawkins claims for himself the right to

freedom from offense, he denies Christians and Jews the same courtesy.

Conclusion

Both worldviews, secularism and religion, hold claim to exclusive truth accepted by faith, a creed (dogma), and sacred symbolism. Exercising an identified code of ethics and morality, each claims to impact society positively. To insist that secularism frees one from religion is incredulous; nonetheless, the Freedom From Religion Foundation accepts the one as truth, the other as fancy.

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Footnotes:

1. (Denton, *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis*, 24) and retrieved 29 January 2013.
2. 2 Corinthians 12:9–“And he said unto me, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee’: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”
3. During the 1960 Presidential campaign, Margaret Sanger referred to Catholics as “black moles invading our buildings of democracy.” Sanger called for the segregation of “morons, misfits, and the maladjusted” and for the sterilization of races that she deemed to be genetically inferior (i.e., blacks).
4. Chuck Morse. *The Monkey Trial: Evolutionary Politics in the Post-Modern Age*. (Boston: City Metro Enterprises, 2013).
5. In 1961, Aldous Huxley, an important evolutionary thinker, lectured at the California Medical School in San Francisco where he stated: “And it seems to me perfectly in the cards that there will be within the next generation or so a pharmacological method of making people love their servitude, and producing a kind of painless concentration camp for entire societies, so that people will in fact have their liberties

taken away from them but will rather enjoy it, because they will be distracted from any desire to rebel by propaganda, brainwashing, or brainwashing enhanced by pharmacological methods. As part of a plan to help pilots, sailors, and infantry troops become capable of superhuman performance, many German soldiers were high on Pervitin (speed) when they went into battle. However, Nazis failed to monitor side effects. (Accessed 29 January 2013).

6. Angelo M. Codevilla. *The Ruling Class: How They Corrupted America and What We Can Do About It* (New York: Beaufort Books, 2010), 26-51.

7. <http://www.changinglives.org.au/solitary-life.html> (Accessed 9 April 2016)

8. Colleen Slevin, Associated Press. "Satanic Book, Bible Sex Tracts Provided at Colorado Schools" (Seattle: The Seattle Times, 2 April 2016). News A5.

9. FFRF calls on Apple to immediately remove prayer emojis from all iPhones. (Accessed 9 April 2016)

10. <http://ffrf.org/outreach/convention> (Accessed 9 April 2016)