

Answering the Apostles of the "New" Atheism

The Apostles of the "New" Atheism



Richard Dawkins



Sam Harris

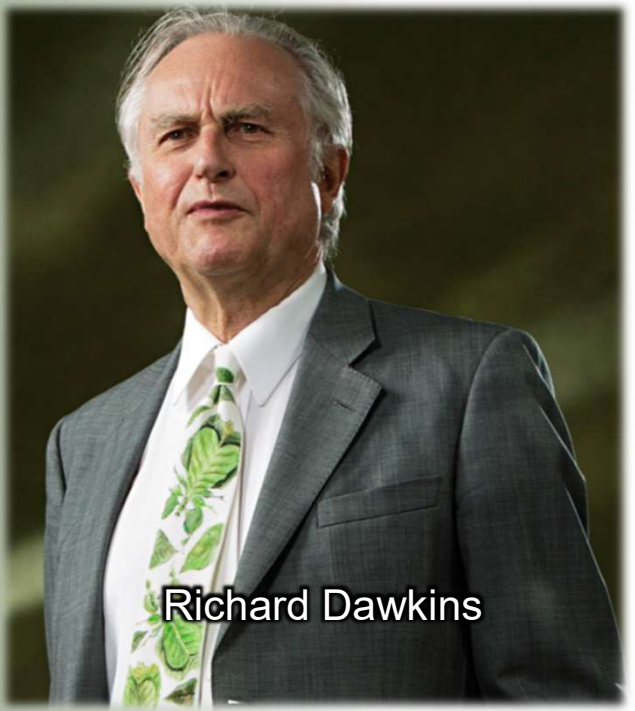


Daniel Dennett



Christopher Hitchens

- ❖ Former Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science, Oxford University
- ❖ Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Royal Society of Literature
- ❖ Author of:
 - The Ancestor's Tale*
 - The Selfish Gene*
 - The Blind Watchmaker*
 - The God Delusion*

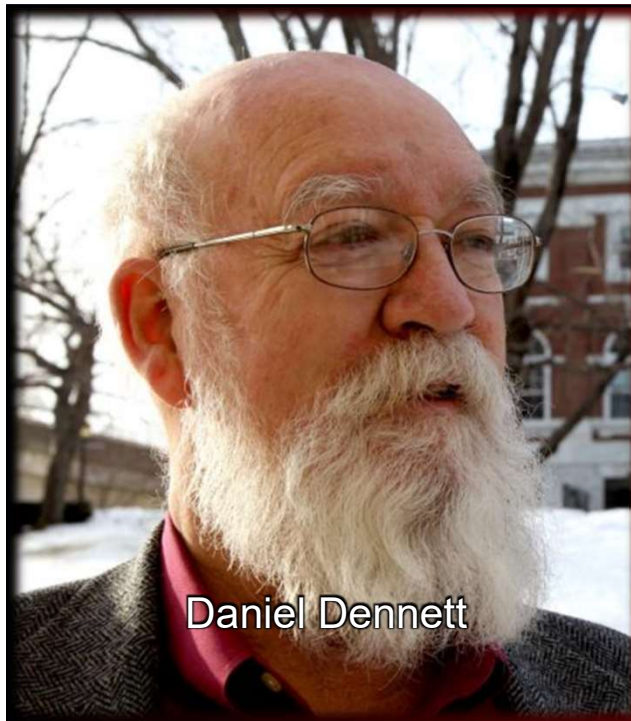


Richard Dawkins



Sam Harris

- ❖ Host of the Making Sense Podcast
- ❖ Philosophy degree from Stanford University and a Ph.D. in neuroscience from UCLA.
- ❖ Author of
 - The End of Faith*
 - Letters to a Christian Nation*
 - The Moral Landscape*
 - Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion*



Daniel Dennett

- ❖ Professor of philosophy and co-director of the Center for Cognitive Studies, Tufts University, Massachusetts
- ❖ Author of:
 - Brainstorms*
 - Elbow Room*
 - Consciousness Explained*
 - Breaking the Spell*
 - Darwin's Dangerous Idea*

- ❖ Author, journalist, columnist, essayist, orator, religious and literary critic
- ❖ Contributed to *New Statesman*, *The Nation*, *The Weekly Standard*, and more
- ❖ Author of:
 - Thomas Jefferson: Author of America*
 - Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man": A Biography*
 - God is Not Good*



Christopher Hitchens
(1949-2011)

The GOD Delusion

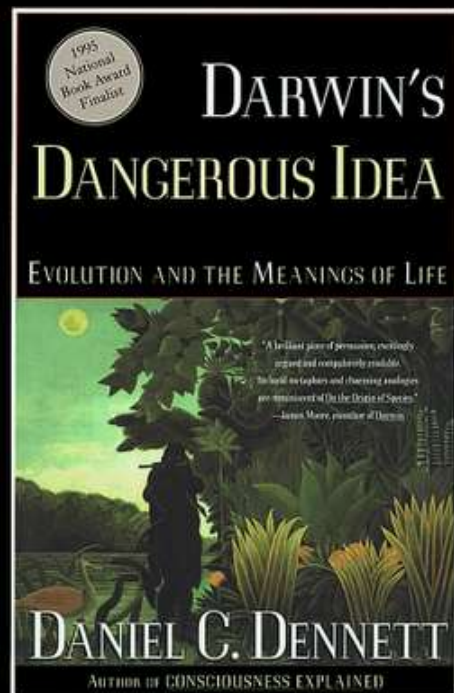
Richard
Dawkins

***"If this book works
as I intend,
religious readers
who open it will be
atheists when they
put it down."***

Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 5.

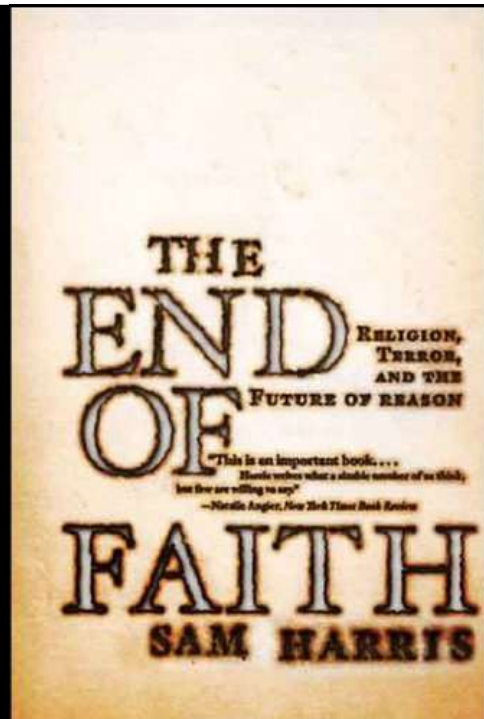
***"The creationists who
oppose the Darwinian
Theory so bitterly are right
about one thing: Darwin's
dangerous idea cuts much
deeper into the fabric of
our most fundamental
beliefs than many of its
sophisticated apologists
have yet admitted, even to
themselves."***

Daniel C. Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea:
Evolution and the Meaning of Life*, p. 18.



"Religious faith represents so uncompromising a misuse of the power of our minds that it forms a kind of perverse, cultural singularity — a vanishing point beyond which rational discourse proves impossible."

Sam Harris, *The End of Faith*, p. 25.



god
is not
Great
How Religion Poisons Everything
Christopher
Hitchens

"As I write these words, and as you read them, people of faith are in their different ways planning your and my destruction, and the destruction of all the hard-won human attainments that I have touched upon. Religion poisons everything."

Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, p. 13, emphasis in original.

✧ 1 Timothy 6:20 ✧

"Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge."



***What's New
about the "New
Atheism"***

Its Focus

Its Grounding

Its Audience

Its Aim

Its Tone

Its Ignorance

Its Focus

Academic atheism focused mainly on the rational case for and against the existence of God.

For academic atheism, Christianity was singled out in as much as it represented the most sophisticated form of theism.

Its Focus

While acknowledging the role Christians have played in certain historical atrocities, academic atheism acknowledges the contribution Christianity has made in recent centuries to the overall well-being of humanity.

Its Focus

In contrast, the "New" Atheism now indicts religion in general or the Christian religion in particular for virtually every thing that is wrong with the world.

Its Focus

Religion in general or Christianity in particular are responsible for many, if not most, of the atrocities of history.

Faith is plunging the world into self-destruction as it allows people to justify the destruction of other people for no reason whatsoever.

Its Focus

Christianity has always been an impediment to science.

Christianity is endangering the civilized world by its commitment to eradicate sound scientific reasoning and advances throughout the public and especially the educational spheres.

Its Audience

**Academic atheism took the argument
to the scholars.**

**As such, its arguments were generally
more thoughtful and, understandably,
more technical.**

**Because of this, its books were
hardly best sellers.**

Its Audience

**The "New" Atheism is taking the argument
to the masses.**

**As such, its arguments sometimes can be
more simplistic, even to the point of
overreaction and hysteria.**

Its books are run-away best sellers.

Its Tone

The "New" Atheism is unprecedented in the shrill tone of its rhetoric.

Its harsh, if not hostile, treatment of religion in general and Christianity in particular, has struck a chord with many in our society.

The open hatred of God is seemingly becoming more comfortable for many.

Its Grounding

In his W. H. Griffith-Thomas lectures at Dallas Theological Seminary, Al Mohler noted seven characteristics of the "New Atheism" one of which bears mentioning,



Al Mohler

Its Grounding

viz., that the "New Atheism" seems particularly orientated toward science in a way in which previous intellectual atheism was not.

Al Mohler

Its Grounding

It does this, attempting to ground most of its criticisms of religion on scientific materialism (a.k.a "scientism" or logical positivism).

Al Mohler

Its Aim

The "New" Atheism seeks to eradicate religion from the planet

The qualified demur of Hitchens is noted.

Its Ignorance

The "New" Atheism seemingly has an abject ignorance of the classical theistic arguments.

Its Ignorance

The terrible irony is that:

Dawkins, Harris, Hitchens, and Dennett boast about how reasonable they are and how much their views are grounded in the evidence.

Its Ignorance

The terrible irony is that:

They continuously excoriate religious people for having absolutely no reason or evidence for their religious beliefs.

Its Ignorance

The terrible irony is that:

Yet they themselves often fail to seriously engage the best arguments and evidence that Christians put forth for their positions.

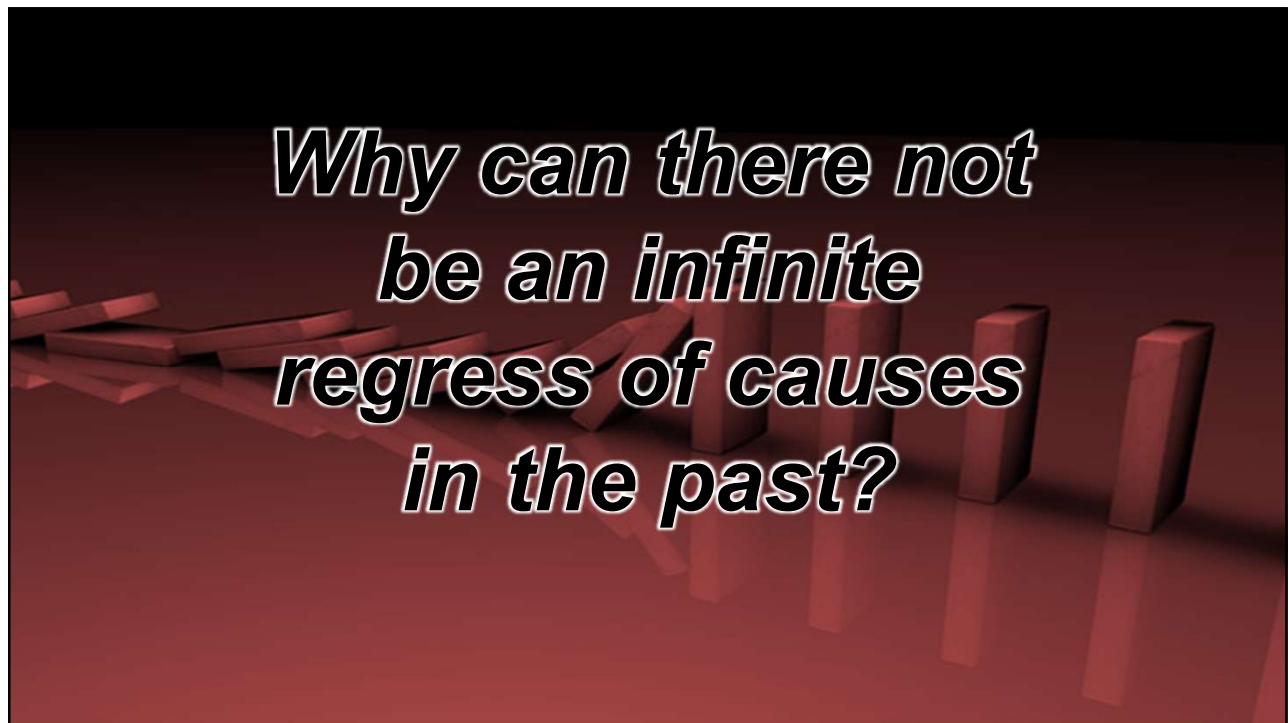
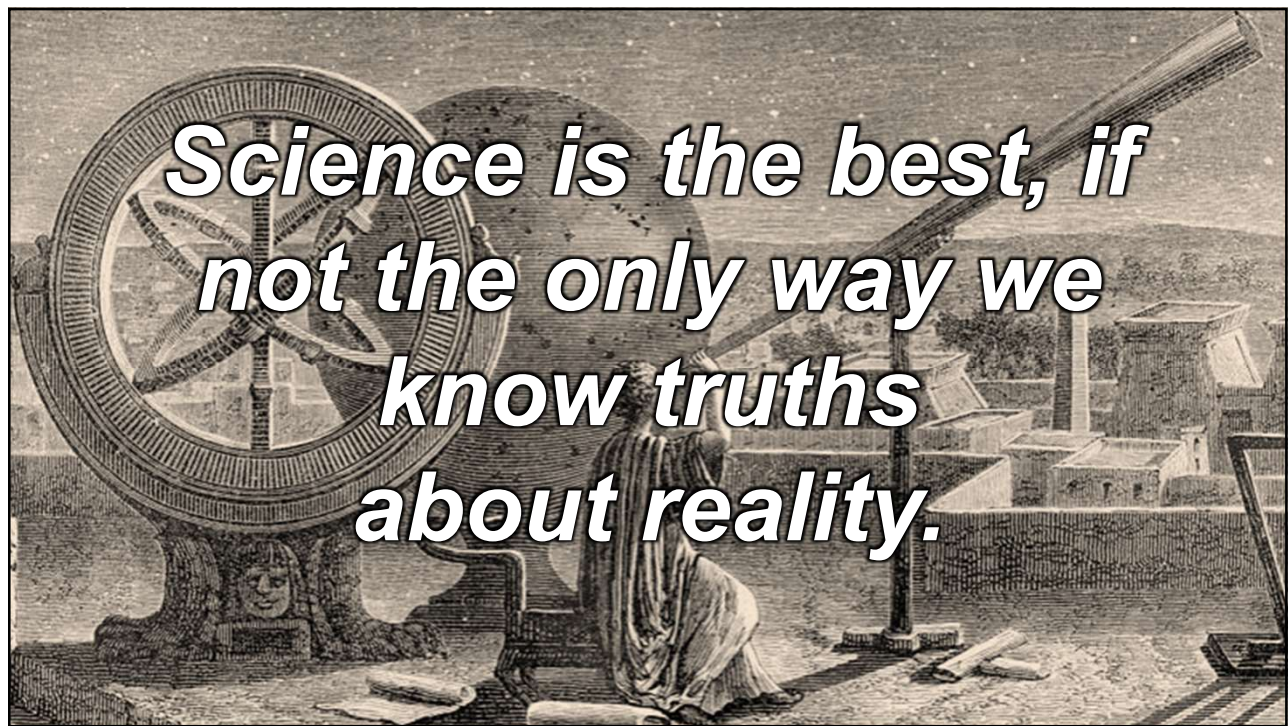
Its Ignorance

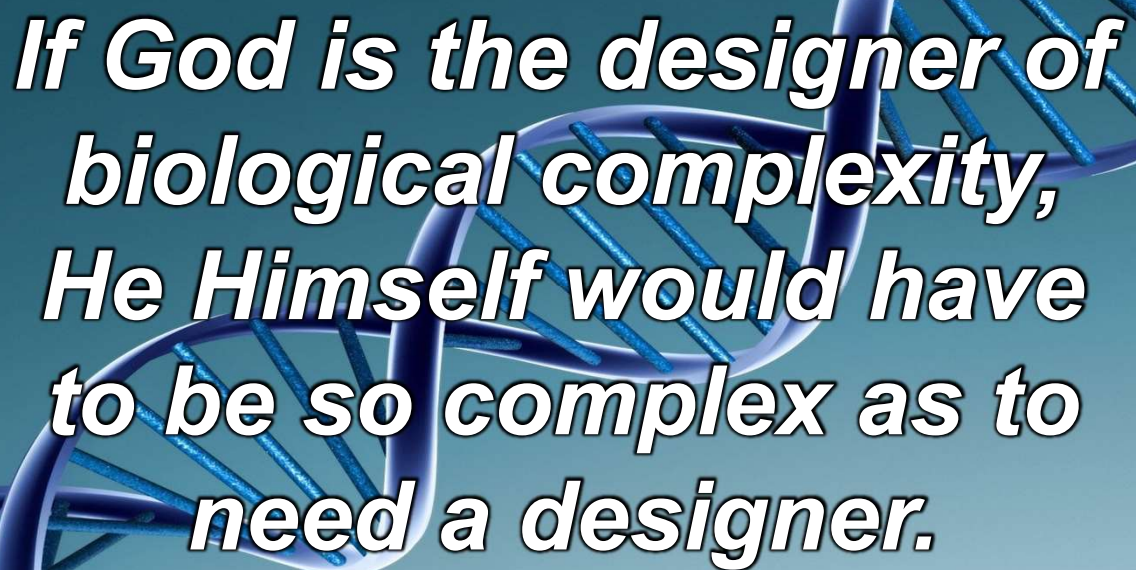
Dawkins, Harris, and Hitchens (sans Dennett) seemingly hope that the hyperbolic level of their criticisms will distract the readers from noticing that they seldom refute the standard arguments or put forth substantive ones of their own.

What Are the Arguments of the "New" Atheism?



***Belief in God requires
faith, which is belief in
spite of the evidence.***





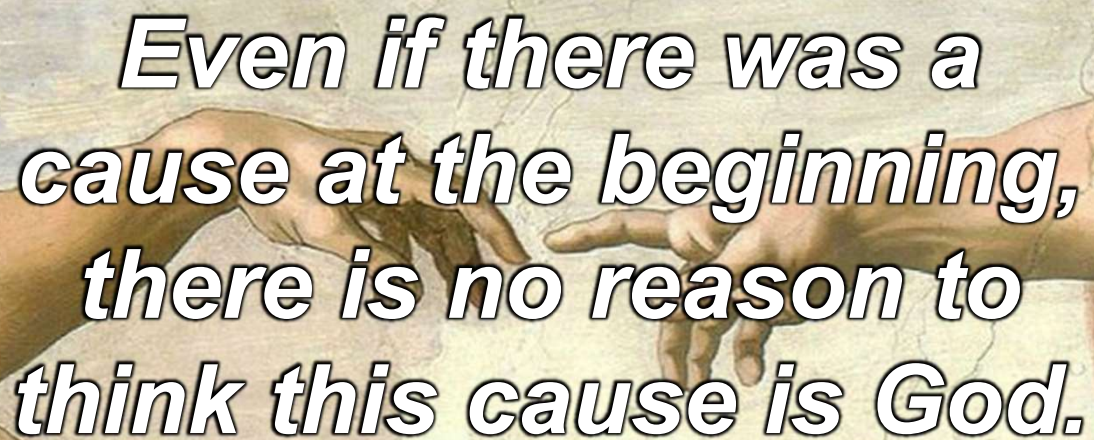
***If God is the designer of
biological complexity,
He Himself would have
to be so complex as to
need a designer.***



***If everything thing
needs a cause, then God
needs a cause.***

A dark blue background with glowing white and light blue lines and dots, resembling a cosmic or abstract pattern. The text is centered in a bold, italicized font with a white outline.

***Some things in the
Universe do not need
a cause.***

A close-up of the central portion of Michelangelo's 'The Creation of Adam' fresco. The image shows the hands of God and Adam reaching toward each other, with a bright light emanating from the gap between them. The text is centered in a bold, italicized font with a white outline.

***Even if there was a
cause at the beginning,
there is no reason to
think this cause is God.***

Please Visit these Web Sites:

Richard G. Howe, Ph.D.
www.richardghowe.com

Southern Evangelical Seminary
www.ses.edu

