Satan’s Bookshelf
The Worst Books Ever Written...
and Why Christians Should Know Them!

The God Delusion
by Richard Dawkins

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Who Is Richard Dawkins and Why Is He Saying All Those Bad Things About Us?

Richard Dawkins
Former Charles Simonyi Professor of Public Understanding of Science, Oxford University
Author of The Ancestor’s Tale; The Selfish Gene; The Blind Watchmaker; Climbing Mount Improbable; Unweaving the Rainbow; A Devil's Chaplain; and The God Delusion
Richard Dawkins and the New Atheism

Its Focus          Its Grounding
Its Audience       Its Aim
Its Tone           Its Ignorance

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

[The God Delusion, p. 5.]

"Fundamentalists know they are right because they have read the truth in a holy book and they know, in advance, that nothing will budge them from their belief. The truth of the holy book is an axiom, not the end product of a process of reasoning."

[The God Delusion, 282.]
My Response

First principles of metaphysics
Foundational elements of thought and reason
The nature of meaning and language
What it means for a statement to be true
How truth is known

Foundation
"There is an answer to every such question [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[The God Delusion, 59.]

• **Should scientific methods be used only for certain questions or for every question?**
• **Is this statement here provable by “entirely scientific methods”?**
• **If not, what kind of method should be used?**
• **Why can’t that method be used for questions about miracles?**
My Response

Premise A: The Bible is a basically reliable and trustworthy document.

Premise B: On the basis of this we have sufficient evidence to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Premise C: Jesus Christ teaches that the Bible is the Word of God.

Conclusion: Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God and Christianity is true.

On the So-Called "War" Between Science and Religion
"As a scientist, I am hostile to fundamentalist religion because it actively debauches the scientific enterprise. It teaches us not to change our minds, and not to want to know exciting things that are available to be known. It subverts science and saps the intellect. ... Fundamentalist religion is hell-bent on ruining the scientific education for countless thousands of innocent, well-meaning, eager young minds."

[The God Delusion, pp. 284, 286]
On the So-Called "War" Between Science and Religion
"The greatest myth in the history of science and religion holds that they have been in a state of constant conflict. No one bears more responsibility for promoting this notion than two nineteenth-century American polemicists: Andrew Dickson White (1832-1918) and John William Draper (1811-1882)."

[Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 1-2]

"One of the greatest tragedies of our time is this impression that has been created that science and religion have to be at war."

— Francis Collins
My Response

- The medieval Roman Catholic Church gave more financial and social support to the study of astronomy for over six centuries than any other, and probably all other, institutions.

My Response

- The medieval period gave birth to the university which developed with the support of the papacy. (By 1500 there were about 60 universities across Europe educating a cumulative total of several hundred thousands students.)
About 30% of the curriculum covered subjects and texts concerned with the natural world.

“Between 1150 and 1500, more literate Europeans had had access to scientific materials than any of their predecessors in earlier cultures, thanks largely to the emergence, rapid growth, and naturalistic arts curricula of medieval universities.”

Michael H. Shank
Professor of Early Science
University of Wisconsin

My Response

“If the medieval church had intended to suppress the inquiry into nature, it must have been completely powerless, for it utterly failed to reach its goal.”

[Shank, p. 27]

Michael H. Shank
Professor of Early Science
University of Wisconsin

My Response

Galileo Galilei
1564-1642
Summation

1. There can be no doubt that Galileo's embracing the Copernican system got him into serious trouble with the Church officials.

2. But it must be remembered that his views were just as much in conflict with the reigning scientific views of the universities as they were with the reigning theological views of the Church.
My Response

Summation

3. Thus, the Galileo affair is just as much a commentary on the conflict between *science* and *science* as it is a commentary on any conflict between *science* and *religion*.

Galileo Galilei
1564-1642
My Response

BEHIND THE SCENES AT GALILEO’S TRIAL
Including the First English Translation
of Melchior Loriches’s Tractatus syllogismus

My Response

THE GALILEO AFFAIR
A Documentary History
Maurice A. Finocchiaro
Is Evolution a Fact?
Charles Darwin

"If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down."

"We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged."
"Unlike some of his theological colleagues, Bishop Montefiore is not afraid to state that the question of whether God exists is a definite question of fact." [The Blind Watchmaker, 37-38]

"The presence or absence of a creative super-intelligence is unequivocally a scientific question, even if it is not in practice—or not yet—a decided one." [The God Delusion, 59-60]
"These arguments rely upon the idea of a regress and invoke God to terminate it. They make the entirely unwarranted assumption that God himself is immune to the regress."

[The God Delusion, 77]

"Even if we allow the dubious luxury of arbitrarily conjuring up a terminator to an infinite regress and giving it a name, simply because we need one, there is absolutely no reason to endow that terminator with any of the properties normally ascribed to God."

[The God Delusion, 77]
Dawkins makes three fatal mistakes in his speculation regarding the existence of God.
My Response

1. Dawkins does not recognize when a question is philosophical rather than scientific. Indeed, he seems altogether incapable of even understanding the difference.

My Response

2. Dawkins is entirely ignorant of the two types of infinites in the different arguments for God's existence. In his defense, some might say that most people are unaware of this. But at least most people don't write books flaunting what they don't know.
3. Dawkins, in treating of Aquinas's arguments, fails to realize the philosophical reasons why (in Aquinas's estimation) God possesses all the attributes He does.