Review Essay: Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and Atheist Fundamentalism

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In his 2006 bestseller, *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins, the Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University, presents an argument against "God" that mirrors the rhetoric used by the religious fundamentalists he sets out to criticize. Anticipating the accusation of "fundamentalism," Dawkins argues that he is not a fundamentalist because he does not prescribe violence against his opponents (282). Yet he believes ridicule is a valid form of discourse and uses disease imagery to describe the religious (34, 176, 186, 188, 193-4). His language is therefore divisive, painting the world in hues of black and white, good or evil. As opposed to "irrational" religion, which is a "vice" and a "poison" (its followers delusional if not insane), science and reason are unlimited in their potential to discern the truth and set the human race in a moral direction (5, 6, 20, 23, 374, 262-272). Using such rhetoric, *The God Delusion* resembles a religious tract in its intent to convert its reader to atheism: "If this book works as I intend, religious readers who open it will be atheists when they put it down" (6). Dawkins also argues that he is not a fundamentalist because he does not base his beliefs on a literal interpretation of a holy book; rather, he grounds his conclusions in "mutually buttressed evidence" (282). But like the Christian fundamentalist who misrepresents and oversimplifies Darwinian evolutionary science, Dawkins presents a monolithic and oversimplified straw man of "religion," which he belittles and denigrates. Generalizing from religious extremism and fundamentalism to *all* religion, Dawkins demonstrates a deafness to the religious other and an inability to step outside his Darwinian "Theory of Everything," the parameters of which are limited to the empirical declarative (144).

The term "fundamentalism" emerged in early twentieth century American Protestantism after the publication of a series of twelve mass-produced booklets called *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915) (Numbers 33). Organized by Reverend A. C. Dixon, these booklets presented the conservative stand of an influential group of British, American, and Canadian writers against the ever-growing influence of continental European theologians such as Albrecht

Ritschl, Martin Rade, and Adolf von Harnack. They contained extensive reference to evolution and included one contribution with the characteristic title “The Decadence of Darwinism.” Approximately three million copies were distributed to pastors, evangelists, missionaries, theology students, and active laypeople throughout the English-speaking world. The five fundamentals professed in these volumes were the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth, the atonement, the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ (Schwarz 227).

Martin Riesebrodt, a professor of the sociology of religion at the University of Chicago, notes that “fundamentalism” has become a term which nowadays is also used to refer to religious revival movements outside the Protestant tradition, in Islam and Judaism, in Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and even Confucianism. He notes, however, that it has also become a catchword used to label and delegitimize religious movements. Nevertheless, because of the empirical widening and political instrumentalization of the concept, Riesebrodt proposes transforming it into a sociological category with potentially universal applicability (270):

Since all concepts originate in a particularistic historical setting and language from which they are abstracted, the concept of “fundamentalism” is not necessarily “tainted” or impregnated by its Protestant origin, although we do have to take pains to consciously eliminate Christian particularities in order to transform it into a universally applicable sociological concept. (271)

Riesebrodt recognizes that fundamentalisms share much in common, which points, he argues, to the possibility that such movements emerge under the impact of similar processes of social transformation (270). He conceptualizes fundamentalism, then, as a specific type of religious revival movement, responding to those social changes which the fundamentalist perceives as being crises: “In such movements people attempt to restructure their life-worlds cognitively, emotionally, and practically, reinvent their social identities, and regain a sense of dignity, honor, and respect” (271).

If Christian fundamentalism can be understood as a reaction to liberal secularism, Dawkins’s aggressive stance against anything religious, including God, might be seen as a reaction to the growing influence of the religious right. Ronald Numbers, Hilldale Professor of the History of Science and Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, mentions a 2005 Gallup poll which found that 53 percent of Americans affirmed that “God created human beings in their present form exactly the way the Bible describes it.” Nearly two thirds (65.5%) of those polled regarded “creationism” as definitely or probably true (1). Also in 2005, the Pew Research Center found that “nearly two-thirds of Americans say that creationism should be taught alongside evolution in public schools” (Numbers 1; Goodstein A7). Numbers was most surprised by the discovery that many high school biology teachers–from 30% in Illinois and 38% in Ohio to a whopping 69% in Kentucky–supported

the teaching of creationism (Numbers 1; Moore 40). Donald Kennedy, editor-in-chief of the magazine, *Science*, wrote an editorial in April 2005 noting that alternatives to the teaching of biological evolution were being debated in no fewer than 40 states, and that in several school districts geology materials were being rewritten to agree with the understanding of a young creation found in scripture. Writes Kennedy:

The present wave of evangelical Christianity, uniquely American in its level of participation, would be nothing to worry about were it a matter restricted to individual conviction and to the expressions of groups gathering to worship. . . . But when the religious/political convergence leads to managing the nation's research agenda, its foreign assistance programs, or the high-school curriculum, that marks a really important change in our national life. Twilight for the Enlightenment? Not yet. But as its beneficiaries, we should also be its stewards. (165)

The God Delusion is written in the context of this religious/political convergence, or perceived social crisis, and echoes the fundamentalism it seeks to undermine.(1)

Aware of the accusation that his hostility to religion marks him out as "a fundamentalist atheist," Dawkins defends himself by delineating an overly simplified and shallow definition of "fundamentalism." He starts by arguing that he is not violent like fundamentalists and that his hostility towards religion is limited to words: "I am not going to bomb anybody, behead them, stone them, burn them at the stake, crucify them, or fly planes into their skyscrapers, just because of a theological disagreement" (281-2). Nevertheless, like the Christian zealot, Dawkins reduces the world to a binary formula of good and evil, his rhetoric governed by the building of divisions (Strozier 42-3). Religion is a "vice," an infection by a "mind virus," while "atheism nearly always indicates a healthy independence of mind and, indeed, a healthy mind" (6, 176, 188, 186, 193-4, 3). Religion is irrational superstition, an insane delusion, while science is rational, evidence-based, and grounded in reality (5, 23, 34, 67). Religion is obscurantist, ignorant and intellectually stagnant, while science is unlimited in its potential to discern truth (34, 117, 355, 374). The religious are indoctrinated, unquestioning, and blind in obedience, while the atheist is an iconoclast, an independent thinker (5-6). Evolution is atheism, religious belief is fundamentalism, and the two are irreconcilable (11-12, 61, 66, 100, 117-118, 355).

This polarization of the religious and non-religious may not explicitly prescribe violence, but it encourages hatred and derision of the religious. Consider Dawkins's use of disease imagery, in which he compares religion to a common cold or "parasite" that manipulates its host "into behaving in such a way as to benefit the transmission of a parasite to its next host" (165). Atheism offers the "cure" (324). But what does Dawkins propose to do with those "dyed-in-the-wool faith-heads" who are not persuaded by his message (5)? He is unclear about how exactly religion might disappear. If a people is "infected" by religion, by the God "meme," and "manipulated" by this "mind virus," yet refuses to be "cured," then

how are the “infected” any different from the meme they are infected with (260, 176, 165)? To stigmatize one is to stigmatize the other.

In *Apocalypse: On the Psychology of Fundamentalism in America*, Charles Strozier encapsulates the attitudes of the *Christian* fundamentalist as follows:

> Those who refuse Jesus are not only dumb but also different, dangerous, and possibly contagious. The believer is obliged to rub up against the taint in the commandment to convert, which implies a conquering of death. But to stay with that death too long can be a dangerous affront to the self. (90)

Replace the word “Jesus” with “the atheism of Dawkins” and this paragraph could very easily apply to *The God Delusion.* According to any kind of fundamentalist, difference is threatening, leads to aggression and must be overcome to *prevent* violence (Thompson 429). Such a perspective contrasts sharply with Eric Gans’s recognition that God as love, available in human interaction, is “significant difference itself” (“God is Love”). God, according to Gans, is that peace-making first gesture that defers violence though a communal exchange of signs. However, the *dialogue de sourds*, or dialogue of the deaf, between religious and atheistic fundamentalisms, pre-empts communication as each party presents their partial understandings as absolute. Thus, the aborted gesture of appropriation (the locus of communication) never takes place as both extremisms lunge for the appetitive central object (ultimate truth), risking the violence of mimetic competition. That is, in their insularity and absolutism, both groups scare each other into existence and are reflections of the enemies they create, their antagonism fed by their mutual fear. Apparent, then, is a certain degree of mimetic tension between Dawkins and the religious fundamentalist he seeks to destroy under the monolithic label, “religion.”

What too often is missing from the debate is any sense of humility, any awareness that one’s perspective may be partial, and any acknowledgement that social life is usually too complex to allow for simple solutions (Berg 1568). The utopian dream of a perfect society and a perfect human being, the idea that we are moving toward collective salvation, is one of the most dangerous legacies of the Christian faith and the Enlightenment: “All too often throughout history, those who believed in the possibility of this perfection (variously defined) have called for the silencing or eradication of human beings who are impediments to human progress” (Hedges 2).

Dawkins’s universal ideal has been called “the cult of science” (Hedges 47). His utopia is a “no place” expunged of religion and governed by the totalitarian powers of science and reason, his faith in these Enlightenment values uncompromising and absolute (1, 374). He notes that “the existence of God is a scientific hypothesis like any other”; “Either he exists or he doesn’t. It is a scientific question; one day we may know the answer” (48, 50). Thus,

Dawkins's God is of the empirical declarative, what Gans defines in its most general terms as "a predication about a topic" (*Language* 170). Writes Andrew Bartlett, "such a scientist wants to confine the being of God to the space of the grammatical subject of a proposition that can be falsified, verified, tested, disproved. He wants God to be a 'thing' either on or off the scene of representation" (6). In a sense, Dawkins anticipates this accusation when he gives voice to his hypothetical critic, saying, "'The God that Dawkins doesn't believe in is a God that I don't believe in either. I don't believe in an old man in the sky with a long white beard.'" To this hypothetical critic, Dawkins responds, "That old man is an irrelevant distraction and his beard is as tedious as it is long" (36).

Nevertheless, the "old man with a beard" is exactly the God that Dawkins is reacting to. Imposing biological models onto culture (e.g., the meme [196]), or onto the cosmos (e.g., Lee Smolin's multiverse theory [146]), Dawkins is unable and unwilling to understand God outside of his "Theory of Everything" (144). For Dawkins, God is a delusion because "*any creative intelligence, of sufficient complexity to design anything, comes into existence only as the end product of an extended process of gradual evolution.* Creative intelligences, being evolved, necessarily arrive late in the universe, and therefore cannot be responsible for designing it" (31). Such a Creator, capable of designing our universe to lead to our evolution must be extremely complex and supremely improbable and demand an even larger explanation than the one he is supposed to fulfil (147). One of Dawkins's main arguments against God, then, is that as an explanation God is a "magic spell" which has been rendered redundant and unnecessary by a growing knowledge of the powers of natural selection. Using the terminology of Daniel Dennett, Dawkins argues that gods are "Skyhooks": "They do no *bona fide* explanatory work and demand more explanation than they provide. Cranes are explanatory devices that actually do explain. Natural selection is the champion crane of all time" (73). Therefore, argues Dawkins, "the theist's answer is deeply unsatisfying, because it leaves the existence of God unexplained" (143).

This argument may stand against proponents of Intelligent Design who look to the "irreducible complexity" in the natural world to argue for a divine designer (a designer whose existence must then itself, according to that logic, demand an explanation), but it does not hold against those whose faith in God is informed by evolutionary science and other bodies of knowledge; whose understanding of God is not fixed, static and dependent on a literal understanding of the Bible; and whose God is not a "God of the gaps" but a God in and of the world. For many, God is of course "explanation," but not one which stands over and against natural selection; God as explanation includes, subsumes and builds upon what is revealed by science, but is not delimited by it. God's value and significance, then, is not grounded in God's efficacy as an empirical explanation of the material world. Argues Bartlett, "the being of God cannot be so grasped, as if God were a perceptible entity on the same level with a sasquatch, a unicorn, the ghost of one's grandmother or the angel on one's shoulder. Any truth of faith must be an ostensive truth, and the truth of God's being is that of an invisible intentionality the verification of the existence of which is by definition

inaccessible to 'logic and evidence' alone" (Affirmations 6-7). He further argues that all anthropomorphisms about God must therefore be "delicately and respectfully set aside for a time" (Affirmations 8). That is, both atheist and idolatrous believer must give up their mutual interest in idols and their attachment to the central object as *figure;* whereas the believer seeks the sacred figure for divine contemplation, the atheist seeks the figure for "pleasurable demolition" (Affirmations 9). Generative Anthropology, then, seeks to get beyond the declarative sentence to the ostensive gesture, to that first sign, which designates its referent by showing it (Bartlett, Affirmations 10; Gans, *Science* 5).

Like Bartlett, Michael Ruse also recognizes the limitations of reason and logic and the evidence of the senses. He argues that the twentieth century's findings in science and mathematics should produce humility about humanity's capacity to discern ultimate reality. That is, the Darwinian knows that our limitations come from having evolved in certain ways. These are ways appropriate to our station as "midrange primates who came down out of the trees and went into the garbage and offal business" (140). (2) As Ruse notes, we can stretch out from the familiar to the unfamiliar, as demonstrated in modern science, but we are extending ourselves and there is no guarantee that such stretching is capable of infinite extension. A man can run a four-minute mile, for example, but he will never run a two-minute mile. A Darwinian, then, should be dubious that his selection-based powers and attributes, including mental attributes and powers, can provide total insight into ultimate physical reality (141).

Dawkins, however, like the religious fundamentalist who believes that he knows and carries out the will of God, fails to recognize human limitations. With his all-encompassing faith in reason and the declarative, he believes that human beings may "discover that there are no limits" to understanding (374). As a consequence, he derides religion as being entirely "irrational" (23, 184, 186-7, 199, 51). He argues, "Faith is an evil precisely because it requires no justification and brooks no argument"; people who have faith are not "taught to question and think through their beliefs" (308). Yet, according to the classic definition of *Christian* faith, theology is *fides quaerens intellectum*, "faith seeking understanding" (Anselm). It is faith venturing to inquire, daring to ask questions, to fight the inclination to accept things as they are, challenging unexamined assumptions about God, ourselves and our world. Although there is a place for mystery in the recognition of the limitations of being human, there is also a place for reason. According to Daniel Migliore, faith must be distinguished from fideism, which says we reach a point where we must stop our inquiry and simply believe; faith keeps on seeking and asking in dialogue with experience and scripture, a hermeneutical circle. Truth is only ever partially possessed as faith sees only dimly, not face to face (1 Cor. 13:12) (Migliore 2-3). And reason plays a key role in this struggle. Writes Augustine,

I ascended to the power of reasoning to which is to be attributed the power of judging the deliverances of the bodily senses. This power, which in myself I found to be mutable, raised

itself to the level of its own intelligence, and led my thinking out of the ruts of habit. It withdrew itself from the contradictory swarms of imaginative fantasies, so as to discover the light by which it is flooded. (*Confessions* VII.xvii.23)

Augustine "attained to that which is" only through the use of his faculty of reason (*Confessions* VII.xvii.23).

Richard Harries states that the idea of faith and reason being inherently opposed to one another is "mind-boggling in its lack of historical perspective" (19). He notes that all philosophers, ancient and modern, have believed that reasons can be adduced for and against a religious view of life: "Most of them have, in fact, believed in God but all have thought religious belief a matter of rational argument." Religious belief is not a matter of two plus two equals four, but of considered judgement. It involves our aesthetic sense, our moral judgement, our imagination and our intuition. These judgements can be the basis of reasoned discussion, but they also involve the whole person (Harries 19). Thus, religious believers do not necessarily view their sacred text as a source of truth that is absolute, plain and unchanging. They interpret their canon with an eye to competing sources of truth, including modern science and philosophy. Likewise, they consider the changing condition of society for its impact on their religious understandings. Accordingly, many religious believers form and revise their beliefs, constantly striving to maintain an overall belief structure that is logical and coherent. Hardly impervious to persuasion, they are broadly open to rational dialogue, both within and outside their religious community (Conkle 352).

Thus we come to Dawkins' second rebuttal against the "secular fundamentalist" label:

> 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. . . . [I]f the evidence seems to contradict it, it is the evidence that must be thrown out, not the book. By contrast, what I, as a scientist, believe (for example, evolution) I believe not because of reading a holy book but because I have studied the evidence. Books about evolution are believed not because they are holy. They are believed because they present overwhelming quantities of mutually buttressed evidence. (282)

It could be argued, however, that while religious fundamentalists toss out all evidence that contradicts their holy book, Dawkins overlooks and distorts evidence that does not serve his proselytizing agenda. Consider, for example, his defense of atheism: "What matters is . . . whether atheism systematically *influences* people to do bad things. There is not the smallest evidence that it does"; "Individual atheists may do evil things but they don't do evil things in the name of atheism"; "why would anyone go to war for the sake of an *absence* of belief?" (273). But atheism is not an absence of belief. Atheism is a faith-claim like any other

religious faith-claim in that it cannot be supported with empirical evidence. In this sense, atheism is a *belief* that can facilitate and ground other beliefs, in the name of which violence can be committed. Dawkins argues, "*I do not believe* there is an atheist in the world who would bulldoze Mecca–or Chartres, York Minster, or Notre Dame" (italics mine) (249). In reality, Marxism is an atheist ideology for which Soviet authorities systematically destroyed and eliminated the vast majority of churches and priests during the period 1918 to 1941. This violence and repression was undertaken in pursuit of an atheist agenda–the elimination of religion (Dickinson 327-35, in McGrath 78).

When a society rejects the idea of God, it may transcendentalize alternatives, such as the ideals of liberty or equality or reason. These now become quasi-divine authorities, which none are permitted to challenge. Perhaps the most familiar example dates from the French Revolution, at a time when traditional notions of God were discarded as obsolete and replaced by transcendentalized human values (McGrath 80-1). Reinhold Niebuhr notes that those who

> sigh and hope for the destruction of religion as the only way of emancipating mankind from fanaticism . . . [fail to] understand that they are dealing with a more fundamental problem than anything created by this or that religion; that it is the problem of the relative and the absolute in history . . . that alternative solutions, as they evolved in secular culture, present us either with the abyss of scepticism or with new fanaticisms. (220)

That is, secularism as much as religion can "insinuate . . . new and false ultimates into views of life which are ostensibly merely provisional and pragmatic" (Niebuhr 238; Berg 1603). For these reasons, a Niebuhrian perspective challenges the claim that in a public sphere stripped of religious influences we can substantially achieve dialogue, deliberation, and rational debate. Indeed, Niebuhr worried that the barring of religion creates a public space in moral discussion for perspectives that can be just as dangerous and divisive (Berg 1604). Dangerous because they can be just as delusional and self-serving as the worst that religion has to offer.

Both religious and secular fundamentalists, then, depend on a type of fideism. The faith of religious fundamentalists is the acceptance of truths without regard to competing claims of reason; the faith of comprehensive secular fundamentalists is that without empirical reason, there is nothing. Religious fundamentalists isolate themselves by ignoring claims that might undermine their religious understanding, while secular fundamentalists follow an epistemology that separates them from those who regard religion as at least a potential source of truth (Conkle 349-50). Each group resides in its own epistemology, isolated from the other, and unable to communicate across the divide (Conkle 348).

Consider Dawkins' misrepresentation of the role and nature of scripture in Christian faith. Dawkins states, "Since a principal thesis of this chapter is that we do not, and should not, derive our morals from scripture, Jesus has to be honoured as a model for that very thesis" (250). However, what Dawkins, himself, recognizes is that Christ is the very fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies (97). Christ says, "'scripture must be fulfilled in me'" (Luke 22:37; 24:27; John 19:28, 36; 12:16). According to Bart Ehrman, Matthew presents Jesus as the new Moses, building upon Mark's idea of Christ as the suffering Son of God:

A male child is miraculously born to Jewish parents, but a fierce tyrant in the land (Herod) is set to destroy him. The child is supernaturally protected from harm in Egypt. Then he leaves Egypt and is said to pass through the waters (of baptism). He goes into the wilderness to be tested for a long period. Afterwards he goes up on a mountain, and delivers God's Law to those who have been following him. (88)

The story would have been familiar to many of Matthew's Jewish readers, who would view Jesus' life as a fulfilment of the stories of Moses. Jesus has come to set his people free from their bondage to sin (1:21) and give them a new Law, his teachings (Ehrman 88). Elsewhere in Matthew, Christ is recorded as using the Old Testament for training when he frames Old Testament narratives into question and answer sessions (e.g. 15:4; 19:4-7) (Campbell 4). Scripture, then, was a source of moral guidance for both Christ and his followers. At one point, he admonishes:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-19)

Thus, to argue that Christ is a model for disregarding scripture as an ethical source is not supported by evidence from scripture.

But Dawkins is deaf to theology, which he regards as a non-subject (56-57). This deafness is seen in his claim that theology "has not moved on in eighteen centuries," as well as in his attacks on long-dead thinkers like Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury, Teresa of Avila, Martin Luther and Moses Maimonides (34). The number of living professional theologians to which he refers is limited to Arthur Peacocke, Russell Stannard, John Polkinghorne, Keith Ward, Richard Swinburne, and John Shelby Spong (99, 237). But even here there is little to no engagement with their ideas or those of any other twentieth or twenty-first-century theologian, outside of fundamental right-wing pastors like "Pastor Ted" (319). Swinburne is briefly engaged, the Oxford professor "damningly typical of the theological mind," who is ushered out for attack whenever Dawkins represents the ideas of

the “sophisticated theologian” or theist (64, 58, 63, 147). Otherwise, Dawkins constructs a monolithic straw man of theological ideas represented by a hypothetical “theologian” or “religious apologist” whom he belittles and mocks (35-36, 59, 153-54, 136, 359-360). Rarely does he ever refer to the specific arguments of a living theologian or do justice to the diversity of contemporary theological thinking. As seen in his depiction of the “mainstream Christian” (178-179), Dawkins’ understanding of the Christian believer and Christian faith is too narrow, too literal, and not in keeping with much of twentieth- and twenty-first-century theology (he attacks “moderate” religion by citing an example from 1858 [311-313]). In this way, Dawkins echoes the Christian fundamentalist whose arguments against evolution are grounded in obsolete science, overlooking discoveries and developments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Ironically, then, in attacking “religion” and proselytizing for atheism, Dawkins uses the same rhetoric as the religious fundamentalist he seeks to destroy. He speaks in crude binaries, distorts evidence, and oversimplifies complex realities. Preaching disdain and intolerance, he stokes the fear that feeds religious extremism. In this sense, the two fundamentalisms are interdependent, for each cannot exist without the other as its enemy. Richard Harries writes:

the leader of the American creationists has apparently written to Dawkins to say that they daily thank God for him. The reason is simple. Dawkins argues that evolution inevitably implies atheism. That’s what we believe, say the creationists in effect, therefore evolution shouldn’t be taught in schools or, if it is, only with creationism taught as well. Creationism and atheistic fundamentalism prop one another up. Each would collapse without the other. (19)

That is, just as religious fundamentalism is grounded in the perceived threat of secular liberalism, atheistic fundamentalism is grounded in the perceived social/political threat of religious extremism. Mimetic tension develops as each sees the other reaching for the apple of ultimate truth and is driven to impose its own absolute claims. Other members of the circle, surrounding the appetitive object, are overlooked or roughly pushed aside. Those aborting their appropriative gestures in recognition of imminent violence demonstrate restraint and attentive communication in the face of shared conflict. Their self-withdrawal enables an engagement with difference through active listening and respect. But in the conversation between religion and science, atheistic and religious extremisms see only each other.

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Notes

1. Dawkins can be considered to be in the vanguard of a *movement*. He writes:

> Atheists in America are more numerous than most people realize. As I said in the Preface, American atheists far outnumber religious Jews, yet the Jewish lobby is notoriously one of the most formidably influential in Washington. What might American atheists achieve if they organized themselves properly? (44)

To facilitate this goal, he provides an extensive list included in an appendix at the end of the book of "friendly addresses, for individuals needing support in escaping from religion." Included are groups such as American Atheists, Atheist Alliance International, Secular Coalition for America, and the National Secular Society (London, UK). It could be argued, then, that there is an atheist movement, of which Dawkins is a leading proponent. (back)

2. Dawkins even admits as much (367). (back)