JANUARY 31, 2010 THESKEPTICARENA.COM

ATHEISTS: NO GOD, NO REASON, JUST WHINING

SUPERSTAR ATHEISTS ARE MOTIVATED BY ANGER -- AND BOOHOO VICTIMHOOD

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I CAN'T STAND ATHEISTS -- BUT IT'S NOT BECAUSE THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD. IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE CRASHING BORES.

(CHARLOTTE: RIGHT OFF THE BAT, YOU PROVE THAT HONESTY IS NOT A PART OF YOUR REPERTOIRE. BUT THEN AGAIN, THAT MAKES YOU PRETTY MUCH THE SAME AS ALL OTHER GOD WORSHIPPERS).

OTHER PEOPLE, MOST RECENTLY THE BRITISH CULTURAL CRITIC TERRY EAGLETON IN HIS NEW BOOK, "FAITH, REASON, AND REVOLUTION," TAKE TO TASK SUCH SUPERSTAR NONBELIEVERS AS OXFORD BIOLOGIST RICHARD DAWKINS ("THE GOD DELUSION") AND POLITICAL JOURNALIST CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS ("GOD IS NOT GREAT") FOR INDULGING IN A PHILOSOPHICALLY PRIMITIVE OPPOSITION OF FAITH AND REASON THAT ASSUMES THAT IF SCIENCE CAN'T PROVE SOMETHING, IT DOESN'T EXIST.

(CHARLOTTE: DAWKINS AND HITCHENS, NOR SCIENCE, CLAIMS THAT SOMETHING DOES NOT EXIST BECAUSE IT HAS NOT YET BEEN PROVEN. DAWKINS, HITCHENS, AND SCIENCE, ALL STATE THAT THEY WILL BELIEVE SOMETHING EXISTS WHEN IT CAN BE PROVEN TO EXIST - THAT IS NOT THE SAME THING.

EAGLETON HAS CONSTRUCTED A STRAW MAN ARGUMENT. THIS IS ALWAYS DONE WHEN SOMEONE CANNOT COMPETE AGAINST AN OPPOSING IDEA WITH FACTS. THE ONLY ONE WHO IS EXHIBITING "PHILOSOPHICALLY PRIMITIVE" THINKING, IS - EAGLETON).

MY PROBLEM WITH ATHEISTS IS THEIR TIRESOME -- AND WAY OLD -- INSISTENCE THAT THEY ARE BEING OPPRESSED AND THEIR FIXATION WITH THE FINE POINTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

(CHARLOTTE: IT IS A FACT THAT ATHEISTS ARE OPPRESSED. IF THAT TIRES YOU OUT SO MUCH - MAYBE YOU BELIEVERS SHOULD QUIT OPPRESSING MINORITIES; THEN YOU WOULDN'T HEAR ANY MORE COMPLAINTS.

THE FIXATION ON THE "FINE POINTS OF CHRISTIANITY" WOULD BE THOSE QUESTIONS THAT YOU CANNOT ANSWER. THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE REALLY TIRED OF - YOUR OWN INABILITY TO FIND ANSWERS TO, OR EVIDENCE FOR, ANY OF YOUR BELIEFS).

WHAT -- DID THEIR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS FLOG THEIR BEHINDS WITH A BIBLE WHEN THEY WERE KIDS?

(CHARLOTTE: YOUR CHILDISH ATTACK SHOWS THAT YOU DO KNOW THAT MOST ATHEISTS CAME FROM A CHRISTIAN BACKGROUND. AN ATHEIST IS SIMPLY A CHRISTIAN - WHO HAS ACTUALLY READ HER BIBLE).

READ DAWKINS, OR HITCHENS, OR THE WORKS OF FELLOW ATHEISTS SAM HARRIS ("THE END OF FAITH") AND DANIEL DENNETT ("BREAKING THE SPELL"), OR VISIT AN ATHEIST WEBSITE OR BLOG (THERE ARE ZILLIONS OF THEM, BEARING SUCH TITLES AS "GOD IS FOR SUCKERS," "GOD IS IMAGINARY" AND "GOD IS PRETEND"), AND YOUR EYES WILL GLAZE OVER AS YOU PERUSE -- AGAIN AND AGAIN -- THE OBSESSIVELY TINY RANGE OF TOPICS AROUND WHICH ATHEISTS CIRCLE LIKE WATER IN A DRAIN.

(CHARLOTTE: ATHEISTS ARE A TINY MINORITY IN OUR SOCIETY. THE "ZILLIONS" OF WEBSITES AND BLOGS YOU REFER TO, WOULD MORE LIKELY BE CHRISTIAN SITES. AND YES, WE AGREE THAT THEY DO RESTRICT THEMSELVES TO A TINY RANGE OF TOPICS, CAREFULLY AVOIDING ALL THE STORIES OF GOD MURDERING, RAPING, AND PILLAGING HELPLESS HUMANS; DEMANDING ANIMAL AND HUMAN SACRIFICE; AND A MULTITUDE OF OTHER WONDERFUL ACTIVITIES THAT OCCUPIES HIS TIME).

FIRST OFF, THERE'S ATHEIST VICTIMOLOGY: BOOHOO, EVERYBODY HATES US 'CUZ WE DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD.

(CHARLOTTE: YOU WRITE LIKE A FRUSTRATED TEENAGER - WHICH I HOPE YOU ARE. THE THOUGHT THAT YOU MAY HAVE REACHED ADULTHOOD, AND STILL RETAINED THIS WRITING STYLE IS DEPRESSING.

EVERYBODY DOESN'T HATE US - ONLY YOU CHRISTIANS DO - BECAUSE WE WON'T BELIEVE IN YOUR INVISIBLE GHOST. YOU REFER TO HIM AS "GOD" BECAUSE THAT SOUNDS A LOT BETTER THAN CALLING HIM WHAT HE REALLY IS).

ALTHOUGH A RECENT PEW FORUM SURVEY ON RELIGION FOUND THAT 16% OF AMERICANS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS RELIGIOUSLY UNAFFILIATED, ONLY 1.6% CALL THEMSELVES ATHEISTS, WITH ANOTHER 2.4% WEIGHING IN AS AGNOSTICS (A GROUP DESPISED AS WISHY-WASHY BY ATHEISTS).

(NO CHARLOTTE: AGNOSTICS ARE NOT DESPISED BY ATHEISTS. NOR IS IT "WISHY-WASHY" TO BE AN AGNOSTIC. I THINK YOU ARE PROJECTING YOUR OPINIONS ON TO ATHEISTS. I THINK YOU ARE THE ONE WHO CONSIDERS THEM "WISHY-WASHY").

YOU OR I MIGHT ATTRIBUTE THE LOW NUMBERS TO ATHEISTS' FAILURE TO WIN CONVERTS TO THEIR UNBELIEF, BUT ATHEISTS SAY THE PROBLEM IS PERSECUTION SO RELENTLESS THAT IT DRIVES TENS OF MILLIONS OF GOD-DENIERS INTO A CLOSET OF FEIGNED FAITH, LIKE GAYS BEFORE STONEWALL.

(CHARLOTTE: THE REASON FOR THE LOW NUMBERS OF ATHEISTS IS BECAUSE MOST PEOPLE, LIKE YOU, ARE TERRIFIED OF INVISIBLE GHOSTS. IF YOU KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT HISTORY (CRUSADES, INQUISTITIONS, WITCH BURNINGS, LAWS AGAINST ATHEISTS HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICE, ETC.) YOU WOULD SEE THAT CHRISTIANS HAVE GIVEN ATHEISTS GOOD REASON TO "HIDE IN THE CLOSET").

IN HIS ONLINE "ATHEIST MANIFESTO," HARRIS WRITES THAT "NO PERSON, WHATEVER HIS OR HER QUALIFICATIONS, CAN SEEK PUBLIC OFFICE IN THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT PRETENDING TO BE CERTAIN THAT ... GOD EXISTS." THE EVIDENCE? ANTIQUE CLAUSES IN THE CONSTITUTIONS OF SIX -- COUNT 'EM -- STATES BARRING ATHEISTS FROM OFFICE.

(CHARLOTTE, YOUR DISHONESTY IS SHOWING AGAIN. EVEN WITHOUT THOSE STATUTES (WHICH BACK UP MY LAST STATEMENT), RECENT POLLS PROVE THAT ATHEISTS ARE UNELECTABLE IN THE UNITED STATES).

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT RULED SUCH PROVISIONS UNENFORCEABLE NEARLY 50 YEARS AGO,

(THAT'S RIGHT CHARLOTTE. YET A MONTH AGO, IN NORTH CAROLINA, YOU CHRISTIANS TOOK AN ATHEIST TO COURT CLAIMING THAT THIS "ANTIQUE CLAUSE" WAS STILL VALID.

IT MUST BE AMAZING TO BE ABLE TO CONTRADICT YOURSELF - AND NOT EVEN BE AWARE OF IT).

BUT THAT DOESN'T STOP ATHEISTS FROM BEWAILING THAT THEY HAVE TO HIDE THEIR GODLESSNESS FROM FRIENDS, RELATIVES, EMPLOYERS AND POTENTIAL DATES.

(CHARLOTTE: THAT IS WHAT YOUR RELIGION DOES TO THOSE WHO WILL NOT SUBMIT TO YOUR INVISIBLE GHOST. THEY ARE OUTCAST - OR WORSE. I CAN THINK OF MANY GENTLE RELIGIONS - YOURS IS NOT ONE OF THEM).

ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PITY-POOR-ME SCHOOL OF ATHEISM, KATHLEEN GOODMAN, WRITING IN JANUARY FOR THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, WENT SO FAR AS TO PROMOTE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR ATHEISTS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: SPECIALLY DESIGNATED, COLLEGE-SUBSIDIZED "SAFE SPACES" FOR THEM TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS.

(CHARLOTTE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAND FOR THAT! GET OUT YOUR SHEEP AND DO WHAT YOU PEOPLE DO BEST: PROTEST AGAINST OTHERS WHO ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN THE SAME RIGHTS THAT YOU DEMAND FOR YOURSELVES).

MAYBE ATHEISTS WOULDN'T BE SO UNPOPULAR IF THEY STOPPED BEATING THE DRUM UNTIL THE HIDE SPLITS ON THEIR SECOND-FAVORITE TOPIC: HOW STUPID PEOPLE ARE WHO BELIEVE IN GOD.

(CHARLOTTE: WE ARE UNPOPULAR BECAUSE OUR BELIEFS, SUPPORTABLE BY PROVABLE SCIENTIFIC FACT, PROVE THAT YOUR BELIEFS ARE FAIRY TALES. IF THAT MAKES YOU FEEL STUPID - WELL THEN - IT SHOULD).

THIS IS A FAVORITE DAWKINS THEME. IN A RECENT INTERVIEW WITH TRINA HOAKS, THE ATHEIST BLOGGER FOR THE EXAMINER.COM WEBSITE, DAWKINS DESCRIBED RELIGIOUS BELIEVERS AS FOLLOWS: "THEY FEEL UNEDUCATED, WHICH THEY ARE; OFTEN RATHER STUPID, WHICH THEY ARE; INFERIOR, WHICH THEY ARE; AND PARANOID ABOUT POINTY-HEADED INTELLECTUALS FROM THE EAST COAST LOOKING DOWN ON THEM, WHICH, WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION, THEY DO." THANKS, RICHARD!

DENNETT LIKES TO CALL ATHEISTS "THE BRIGHTS," IN CONTRAST TO EVERYBODY ELSE, WHO OBVIOUSLY AREN'T SO BRIGHT. IN A 2006 ESSAY DESCRIBING HIS BRUSH WITH DEATH AFTER A HEART OPERATION, DENNETT WROTE THESE THOUGHTS ABOUT HIS RELIGIOUS FRIENDS WHO TOLD HIM THEY WERE PRAYING FOR HIS RECOVERY: "THANKS, I APPRECIATE IT, BUT DID YOU ALSO SACRIFICE A GOAT?" WITH FRIENDS LIKE DANIEL DENNETT, YOU DON'T NEED ENEMIES.

THEN THERE'S P.Z. MYERS, BIOLOGY PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA'S MORRIS CAMPUS, WHOSE BLOG, PHARYNGULA, IS SUPPOSEDLY ABOUT MYERS' FIELD, EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY, BUT IS ACTUALLY ABOUT HIS FANATICAL PROPENSITY TO LABEL RELIGIOUS BELIEVERS AS "IDIOTS," "MORONS," "LOONY" OR "IMBECILIC" IN NEARLY EVERY POST. THE UNIVERSITY DEACTIVATED ITS LINK TO MYERS' BLOG IN JULY AFTER HE POSTED A PHOTO OF A CONSECRATED HOST FROM A MASS THAT HE HAD PIERCED WITH A RUSTY NAIL AND THROWN INTO THE GARBAGE ("I HOPE JESUS' TETANUS SHOTS ARE UP TO DATE") IN AN EFFORT TO PROVE THAT CATHOLICISM IS BUNK -- OR SOMETHING.

MYERS' BLOG EXEMPLIFIES ATHEISTS' FRENZIED FASCINATION WITH CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIBLE.

(CHARLOTTE: OUR FASCINATION WITH CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIBLE, IS NO DIFFERENT THAN THE FRENZIED FASCINATION THAT THE JEWS HAD FOR THE NAZIS).

ATHEIST WEBSITE AFTER ATHEIST WEBSITE INSISTS THAT JESUS EITHER DIDN'T EXIST OR "WAS A JERK" (IN THE WORDS OF ONE BLOGGER) BECAUSE HE DIDN'T ELIMINATE SMALLPOX OR WORLD POVERTY.

(CHARLOTTE: I CAN THINK OF LOTS OF OTHER REASONS WHY THAT LABEL MIGHT APPLY).

AT THE AMERICAN ATHEISTS WEBSITE, A WRITER COMPLAINS THAT GOD "SET UP" ADAM AND EVE, KNOWING IN ADVANCE THAT THEY WOULD EAT THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT. A BLOGGER ON "A IS FOR ATHEIST" HAS BEEN GOING THROUGH THE BIBLE CHAPTER BY CHAPTER AND VERSE BY VERSE IN ORDER TO PROVE ITS "INSANITY" (HE OR SHE HAD GOTTEN UP TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA WHEN I LAST LOOKED).

ANOTHER TOPIC THAT ATHEISTS BEAT LIKE THE HAMMER ON THE ANVIL IN THE OLD ANACIN COMMERCIALS IS DARWINISM VERSUS CREATIONISM. MAYBE DARWIN-O-MANIA STEMS FROM THE FACT THAT THIS YEAR MARKS THE BICENTENNIAL OF CHARLES DARWIN'S BIRTH IN 1809, BUT HAVEN'T ATHEISTS HEARD THAT MANY RELIGIOUS PEOPLE (INCLUDING THE LATE POPE JOHN PAUL II) DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH EVOLUTION BUT, RATHER, REGARD IT AS GOD'S WAY OF LETTING HIS LIVING CREATION UNFOLD? FURTHERMORE, EVEN IF HUMAN NATURE AS WE KNOW IT IS A MATTER OF LUCKY ADAPTATIONS, HOW EXACTLY DOES THAT DISPROVE THE EXISTENCE OF GOD?

(CHARLOTTE: NO ONE EVER SAID IT DID).

AND THEN THERE'S THE QUESTION OF WHY ATHEISTS ARE SO INTENT ON TRYING TO PROVE THAT GOD NOT ONLY DOESN'T EXIST BUT IS EVIL TO BOOT.

(CHARLOTTE: ATHEISTS ARE NOT INTENT ON TRYING TO PROVE THAT GOD DOESN'T EXIST, BECAUSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PROVE THE NONEXISTENCE OF ANYTHING. ATHEISTS ARE INTENT ON LISTENING TO YOUR ANSWER TO OUR QUESTION: WHERE IS YOUR PROOF FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD? PERHAPS IF YOU HAD AN ANWER - THE QUESTION WOULDN'T ANNOY YOU SO MUCH.

AS FOR EVIL, ATHEISTS DON'T HAVE TO PROVE THAT - GOD'S OWN AUTOBIOGRAPHY PRETTY MUCH PROVES THAT BY ITSELF. THE FACT THAT YOU TRY TO DEFEND A MURDEROUS, ENSLAVING GOD AS NOT BEING EVIL, IS EVIDENCE THAT YOU NEED TO GET BACK ON YOUR MEDICATION).

DAWKINS, WRITING IN "THE GOD DELUSION," ACCUSES THE DEITY OF BEING A "PETTY, UNJUST, UNFORGIVING CONTROL FREAK" AS WELL AS A "MISOGYNISTIC, HOMOPHOBIC, RACIST ... BULLY."

(CHARLOTTE, YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE RICHARD - FOR LEAVING OUT SO MANY OTHER WELL-DESERVED NAMES).

IF THERE IS NO GOD -- AND YOU'D BE WAY BEYOND STUPID TO THINK DIFFERENTLY -- WHY DOES IT MATTER WHETHER HE'S GOOD OR EVIL?

(CHARLOTTE: YOU REALLY NEED TO LIE DOWN. NOW YOU'VE COMPLETELY LOST IT. THAT QUESTION DOES NOT EVEN REQUIRE A REPLY.

I THINK I OWE ALL FRUSTRATED TEENAGERS AN APOLOGY).

THE PROBLEM WITH ATHEISTS -- AND WHAT MAKES THEM SUCH EXCRUCIATING SNOOZES -- IS THAT FEW OF THEM ARE INTERESTED IN MAKING SERIOUS METAPHYSICAL OR EPISTEMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST GOD'S EXISTENCE,

(CHARLOTTE: YOU ARE ATTEMPTING TO SHIFT THE BURDEN OF PROOF. IT IS NOT OUR DUTY TO DISPROVE THE EXISTENCE OF YOUR FAIRY WORLD. THE BURDEN LIES WITH YOU TO PROVE IT IS REAL).

OR IN TAKING ON THE SERIOUS ARGUMENTS THAT THEOLOGIANS HAVE MADE ATTEMPTING TO RECONCILE, SAY, GOD'S OMNISCIENCE WITH FREE WILL OR GOD'S GOODNESS WITH HUMAN SUFFERING.

(CHARLOTTE: THERE HAVE BEEN NO SERIOUS ARGUMENTS OFFERED BY THEOLOGIANS REGARDING - ANYTHING. EVERY "ARGUMENT" THEY OFFER ENDS IN A RELIANCE ON FAITH OR A BELIEF IN MAGIC).

ATHEISTS SEEM TO ASSUME THAT THE WHOLE IDEA OF GOD IS A RIDICULOUS ABSURDITY, THE "FLYING SPAGHETTI MONSTER" OF ATHEISTS' TYPICALLY LAME JOKES.

(CHARLOTTE: THE IDEA OF GOD IS NOT A RIDICULOUS ABSURDITY, IF YOU ARE REFERRING TO THE GOD OF OTHER RELIGIONS, SUCH AS UNITARIANS OR DEISTS. HOWEVER, THE IDEA OF GOD AS PRESENTED IN YOUR BIBLE IS BEYOND A RIDICULOUS ABSURDITY. THE FACT THAT YOU REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT, SHOWS JUST HOW POWERFUL THE FEAR OF INVISIBLE, VENGEFUL GHOSTS CAN BE).

THEY THINK THAT LOBBING A FEW GAZA-STYLE ROCKETS ACCUSING GOD OF FAILING TO CREATE A WORLD MORE TO THEIR LIKING ("IF THERE'S A GOD, WHY AREN'T I RICH?" "IF THERE'S A GOD, WHY DIDN'T HE GIVE ME TWO HEADS SO I COULD SLEEP WITH ONE HEAD WHILE I GET SOME WORK DONE WITH THE OTHER?") WILL SUFFICE TO KNOCK DOWN THE ENTIRE EDIFICE OF BELIEF.

(CHARLOTTE: ARE YOU SNEAKING OFF AGAIN? YOU MADE MORE SENSE EARLIER, WHEN - YOU WEREN'T MAKING SENSE).

WHAT PRIMARILY SEEMS TO MOTIVATE ATHEISTS ISN'T RATIONALISM BUT ANGER --

(CHARLOTTE: YOU ALMOST HAD IT RIGHT. RATIONALISM IS EXACTLY WHAT MOTIVATES ATHEISTS AND THAT IS WHY YOU MUST DENY IT. BUT ANGER ALSO MOTIVATES US BECAUSE WE SEE WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO TO OUR COUNTRY, AND WE HAVE BEGUN THE FIGHT TO KEEP YOU FROM ACHIEVING YOUR DREAM OF TURNING AMERICA INTO A THEOCRACY).

ANGER THAT THE WORLD ISN'T PERFECT, THAT SOMEONE FORCED THEM TO GO TO CHURCH AS CHILDREN, THAT THE BIBLE CONTAINS APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS, THAT HUMAN BEINGS CAN BE HYPOCRITES AND COMMIT CRIMES IN THE NAME OF FAITH.

(CHARLOTTE: THE WORLD WOULD BE A LOT CLOSER TO PERFECT IF WE COULD GET RID OF RELIGION - ESPECIALLY THE DESERT DOGMAS, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM. CHILDREN SHOULD BE FORCED TO GO TO SCHOOL - NOT CHURCH. THE FACT THAT YOU COULD EVEN REFER TO THE CONTRADICTIONS AS "APPARENT" SHOWS HOW DISCONNECTED FROM REALITY YOUR BRAIN HAS BECOME UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS THINKING. AND IF HUMANS ARE HYPOCRITICAL AND COMMITTING CRIMES IN THE NAME OF FAITH, THEN YOU SHOULD BE ANGRY).

THE VITRIOL IS EXTRAORDINARY.

(WE KNOW CHARLOTTE - WE'VE ALL JUST READ YOUR ESSAY).

HITCHENS THINKS THAT "RELIGION SPOILS EVERYTHING."

(WELL CHARLOTTE, I'VE YET TO SEE ANY EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY).

DAWKINS CONTENDS THAT RAISING ONE'S OFFSPRING IN ONE'S RELIGION CONSTITUTES CHILD ABUSE.

(CHARLOTTE: WHEN THAT BELIEF EXTENDS TO HOME-SCHOOLING YOUR CHILDREN IN ORDER TO KEEP THEM FROM LEARNING ABOUT OTHER RELIGIONS AND SCIENCE, THEN DAWKINS IS CORRECT. WHEN THAT BELIEF EXTENDS TO DENYING YOUR CHILDREN LIFE-SAVING MEDICAL ATTENTION, BECAUSE THE BIBLE PROMISES THAT IF YOU PRAY, GOD WILL HEAL THEM, THEN DAWKINS IS CORRECT. WHEN THAT BELIEF EXTENDS TO TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN TO HATE OTHER CHILDREN BECAUSE THEY WORSHIP A DIFFERENT GHOST THAN YOU DO, THEN DAWKINS IS CORRECT.

OTHER THAN THAT - HE IS WAY OFF BASE).

HARRIS ARGUES THAT IT "MAY BE ETHICAL TO KILL PEOPLE" ON THE BASIS OF THEIR BELIEFS.

(CHARLOTTE: IS SATAN INFLUENCING YOU JUST A LITTLE BIT?)

THE PERENNIAL ATHEIST LITIGANT MICHAEL NEWDOW SUED (UNSUCCESSFULLY) TO BAR PRESIDENT OBAMA FROM UTTERING THE WORDS "SO HELP ME GOD" WHEN HE TOOK HIS OATH OF OFFICE.

(CHARLOTTE - REASON TO CHEER - YOU WON ONE!)

WHAT ATHEISTS DON'T SEEM TO REALIZE IS THAT EVEN FOR BELIEVERS, FAITH IS NEVER EASY IN THIS WORLD OF INJUSTICE, PAIN AND DELUSION.

(CHARLOTTE: I CAN'T EVEN BELIEVE YOU SAID THAT WITH A STRAIGHT FACE. YOU SHOULD NOT LEGALLY EVEN BE ALLOWED TO USE THE WORD, "DELUSION." THAT'S KIND OF LIKE LISTENING TO O.J. SIMPSON TRYING TO SELL KNIVES).

EVEN FOR BELIEVERS, GOD EXISTS JUST BEYOND THE SCRIM OF THE SENSES.

(VERY WELL PUT CHARLOTTE. THOUGH I'M SURE YOU HAVEN'T A CLUE HOW YOU JUST ANNIHILATED YOURSELF).

SO, ATHEISTS, HOW ABOUT LOSING THE TIRED SARCASM AND BORING SELF-PITY AND ENGAGING BELIEVERS SERIOUSLY?

(CHARLOTTE: WE COULD NO MORE ENGAGE YOU SERIOUSLY, THAN YOU COULD ENGAGE SOMEONE WHO BELIEVED IN THE EASTER BUNNY. HOW DO YOU PROPOSE WE DISCUSS "SERIOUSLY" YOUR BELIEF IN IMPOSSIBLE, MAGICAL STORIES?).

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

NASA: LAST DECADE WARMEST ON RECORD

2009 WAS SECOND WARMEST YEAR SINCE 1880

THE DECADE ENDING IN 2009 WAS THE WARMEST SINCE MODERN RECORD-KEEPING BEGAN IN 1880, ACCORDING TO NEW DATA RELEASED BY NASA. BASED ON SURFACE TEMPERATURE, THE YEAR 2005 WAS THE HOTTEST ON RECORD, FOLLOWED BY 2009. THE DATA SHOWED AN UPWARD TEMPERATURE TREND OF ABOUT 0.36 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT PER DECADE OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS. AVERAGE GLOBAL TEMPERATURES HAVE RISEN BY ABOUT 1.5 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT SINCE 1880.

“WHEN WE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE OVER 5 OR 10 YEARS TO MINIMIZE THAT VARIABILITY,” NASA CLIMATOLOGIST JAMES HANSEN TELLS THE NEW YORK TIMES, “WE FIND GLOBAL WARMING IS CONTINUING UNABATED.” THE TIMES NOTES THAT A SEPARATE ANALYSIS FROM A DIFFERENT NASA OFFICE, BASED ON LAND AND SEA MEASUREMENTS, HAS 2009 TIED WITH 2005 AS THE FIFTH WARMEST YEAR ON RECORD, BUT CONCURS IN FINDING THE LAST DECADE THE WARMEST EVER MEASURED.

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ABROAD

GREAT BRITAIN: "BOOTS" HIT BY MASS HOMEOPATHY 'OVERDOSE'

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE ARE PLANNING TO "OVERDOSE" ON HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES OUTSIDE BOOTS STORES TO PROTEST AGAINST THE CHEMIST SELLING TREATMENTS WHICH CRITICS SAY ARE INEFFECTIVE.

THE PROTESTERS WILL DRINK LARGE QUANTITIES OF HOMEOPATHIC FLUIDS TO ILLUSTRATE THEIR CLAIM THAT THE POTIONS ARE TOO DILUTED TO HAVE ANY IMPACT ON THE BODY.

HOMEOPATHY HAS GROWN FROM AN OBSCURE ALTERNATIVE REMEDY TO BECOME A MULTI-MILLION POUND INDUSTRY IN THE UK, WITH PRINCE CHARLES AMONG ITS HIGH-PROFILE ADVOCATES.

BUT CRITICS SAY THERE IS LITTLE SCIENTIFIC BACKING FOR ITS CLAIMS TO EASE CONDITIONS INCLUDING ASTHMA, MIGRAINE, IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME, ARTHRITIS AND DEPRESSION.

CAMPAIGNERS HAVE ALREADY LOBBIED FOR THE NHS TO REDUCE ITS £4 MILLION ANNUAL SPEND ON HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES AND ARE NOW TARGETING BOOTS FOR PROFITING FROM WHAT THEY CLAIM IS AN "UNSCIENTIFIC AND ABSURD PSEUDOSCIENCE".

THE BOOTS PROTESTS PLANNED FOR LATER THIS MONTH HAVE BEEN ORGANISED BY CAMPAIGN CALLED 10:23, WHICH GREW OUT OF THE MERSEYSIDE SKEPTICS SOCIETY, A GROUP OF RATIONALIST THINKERS.

THEY WILL TAKE PLACE ON HIGH STREETS IN EDINBURGH, MANCHESTER, BRISTOL, LIVERPOOL, GLASGOW, BIRMINGHAM, SOUTHAMPTON AND LONDON, WITH SYMPATHY PROTESTS IN AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

MARTIN ROBBINS, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE SOCIETY, SAID: "THE REMEDIES THEMSELVES MAY NOT BE DIRECTLY HARMFUL, BUT THERE IS A REAL DANGER IN MISLEADING CUSTOMERS INTO THINKING THAT HOMEOPATHY IS SOMEHOW EQUIVALENT TO REAL MEDICINE.

"PATIENTS MAY BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE TREATING THEMSELVES OR THEIR CHILDREN ADEQUATELY, AND DELAY SEEKING APPROPRIATE TREATMENT; OR THEY MAY RECEIVE DANGEROUS ADVICE AFTER CONSULTING WITH HOMEOPATHS RATHER THAN THEIR GPS."

HE ADDED: "THE 'OVERDOSE' IS A DRAMATIC WAY OF DEMONSTRATING TO THE PUBLIC THAT THESE REMEDIES HAVE LITERALLY NOTHING IN THEM. IF EATING AN ENTIRE BOX OF HOMEOPATHIC SLEEPING PILLS FAILS TO SEND ONE PERSON TO SLEEP, THEN HOW ON EARTH CAN THEIR SALE BE JUSTIFIED?"

BOOTS, BRITAIN'S LEADING CHEMIST CHAIN, SAID THAT IT SUPPORTED THE CALL FOR MORE RESEARCH INTO HOMOEOPATHY BUT BELIEVED IN GIVING CONSUMERS A CHOICE.

PAUL BENNETT, PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIRECTOR AT THE CHEMIST, SAID: "HOMEOPATHY IS RECOGNISED BY THE NHS AND MANY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND OUR CUSTOMERS CHOOSE TO USE HOMOEOPATHY.

"BOOTS UK IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING OUR CUSTOMERS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTHCARE PRODUCTS TO SUIT THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, WE KNOW THAT MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE IN THE BENEFITS OF COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINES AND WE AIM TO OFFER THE PRODUCTS WE KNOW OUR CUSTOMERS WANT.

"OUR PHARMACISTS ARE TRAINED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND ARE ON HAND TO OFFER ADVICE ON THE SAFE USE OF COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINES."

CRISTAL SUMNER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE BRITISH HOMEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION, ATTACKED THE OVERDOSE AS A "STUNT" AND SAID CLINICAL TRIALS SHOWED THAT HOMEOPATHY WAS EFFECTIVE.

"HOMEOPATHY ONLY WORKS ON PARTICULAR SYMPTOMS, SO THE IDEA THAT THEY CAN PROVE ANY POINT WITH A FAKE OVERDOSE JUST HIGHLIGHTS THE IGNORANCE OF THE PROTESTERS," SHE SAID.

"THERE'S A GROWING BODY OF EVIDENCE THAT HOMEOPATHY WORKS. THE MAJORITY OF CLINICAL TRIALS HAVE BEEN POSITIVE RATHER THAN NEGATIVE."

THE "OVERDOSES" OUTSIDE BOOTS STORES ARE DUE TO TAKE PLACE AT 10.23AM ON JANUARY 30. THE GROUP EXPECTS AT LEAST 300 PEOPLE TO TAKE PART.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

MIKE HUBEN (NO INFO)

"THE PRIMARY TOOL OF SCIENCE IS SKEPTICISM,

WHOSE LIGHT SHRIVELS UNQUESTIONING FAITH."