

2.

Ideology Clash

(Part 1: What Divides Us; Part 2: Ideas to Consider; Part 3: Belief Systems)

This explosive topic stokes volcanic emotionalism. I too am passionate about these issues and have thought-provoking ideas. As a philosopher, I consider “religion” in its widest sense: a way of life or belief based on humanity’s ultimate relation to others, the universe, or a god. I include secular ideas, and disbelief in any higher being whatsoever.

We cannot define every ideology to everyone’s satisfaction; someone will always object because they have their own interpretation of things. Difficulties also arise because some refuse to be categorized with anyone else, and others, contending that many ideologies are basically the same, attempt to forcefully harmonize them. Besides, belief systems evolve.

To be brief, I cannot cover every possible position. I must generalize and strictly deal with major traditional ideas. Books and websites explaining each group reveal much. However, objectionable attributes are often concealed and repackaged to appeal to outsiders. Many philosophical systems have “good” aspects, but also have bad aspects. Some “religions” or philosophies are terrible.

1: What Hopelessly Divides Us

No Sense of Humor: Some people become irate if someone even laughs at them, and consider laughing at someone else’s beliefs almost damnable. Yet isn’t that dangerous and oppressive? It’s normal to find humor in things we’re unfamiliar with, and hence laugh. Let’s not have the thought police stopping people from laughing. Here’s what is wrong: A) Mocking: using a caricature to make fun of someone in a cruel way, and B) Ridicule for the purpose of making fun of someone in a cruel way. Here’s what should be acceptable: C) Ridicule tied to *reductio ad absurdum* in order to quash falsehood. “Nothing but free arguments, raillery, and even ridicule will preserve the purity of religion.”-----Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush; April 21, 1803.(1) This can also apply to politics and all other forms of ideology. Also, D) laughter for comic relief. With humility, we accept laughing, ridicule, and even mocking. Without humility, we have wars and conflicts.

Relativism: Supposedly, most people today don’t believe that absolute truth exists. Hardly. When someone has a strong argument which supports a position that suits their best interests, they press the issue for objective truth. But when their position is indefensible, then “Nobody really knows” or “It’s true for you but not for me.” Yet nobody argues that two and two make five, squares are round, or that Martians snack on moon rocks. Relativists only apply relativism to faith and morals: how we’re supposed to live.

Besides, relativism is a self-contradicting proposition: “It’s true for everybody that nothing is true for everybody.” This separates everyone from everyone else, locking them into their own ego. It invites those with the biggest army and the biggest guns to step into the resulting chaos, and enforce their values on everyone. Instead, we must always legislate morality; all laws reflect someone’s value judgment.

And although we should start out as open-minded, upon discovering truth, our mind should close on it, as our mouths close on food instead of open-mouthed eating. And we don’t accept just anything into our mouth.

Interestingly, theists note that if there is an almighty God, relativism would be knocking him off his throne, by having us create the truth by merely thinking or feeling, instead of that being up to this God.(2) Moreover, as our world has expanded, we’ve become more disharmonious; positions have

become more diverse and extreme: relativism doesn't work. So we must re-embrace old-fashioned logic.

Next door neighbor to relativism is magnifying exceptions to the general rule in order to dismantle the rule. For example, since dangerous illegal drugs can benefit rare individuals, some want such drugs legalized, having everybody making their own decision on whether to take them. Since some mentally handicapped adults have childlike minds, some argue that strange men should be allowed on a children's playground. Some argue that on rare occasions seatbelts trapped accident victims in cars, so seatbelts should be optional, which would greatly increase the number of grievous accidents overall. Because of rare cases where children have gotten sick from vaccinations, some argue against vaccinating children. But without their being vaccinated a gigantic health crisis would ensue. Various people magnify exceptions to attempt to dismantle gender, age, race, and religious distinctions, dismantle all government and other institutions, and dismantle all laws.

We cannot examine each individual case, cannot know the future, and cannot have millions of unqualified people also demanding to forgo the rules. Therefore, many blanket laws and specific codes of conduct must govern societies, whether or not people are adversely affected by them, for the greater overall good.

Automatic Assumptions (or Hasty Generalizations): Upon knowing someone's position on one issue, many people presume to know their position on something else. We may quickly assume someone's level of morality, socioeconomic status, orientation, personal opinions which weren't discussed, marital status, or temperament without that person revealing that information, and be dead wrong. Some generalizations are very helpful, while assumptions are often counterproductive. People often assume that information is true without researching the facts.

Wrong Authority

I am about fairness and treating others with kindness, which I extend to the entire animal and plant kingdoms. However, that does not equal blanket equality, which is bad science fiction. False equality in action is democracy. It excludes the personality and replaces it with the majority, who might be characterized by cowardice, ignorance, incompetence, or stupidity. Democracy undermines the importance of the individual, replacing it with the masses. Instead, true genius stands alone to oppose the average person's relative ignorance. Blessing has never resided in the masses, but in society's creative heads who therefore should be seen as humanity's benefactors. It is in our best interest to safeguard their most decisive influence and facilitate their activity. This interest cannot be satisfied nor served by the average person, who either cannot reason properly or is inefficient, but solely by leaders endowed with natural gifts. The majority should never make final decisions, only extraordinarily intelligent persons should.

Democracy can be damaging. Taking part in the political process was never an inherent right, but was always based on class, ability, and accomplishment. Systems of loose democracy have been purposely manipulated, such as when carpetbaggers and scalawags focused their attention on illiterate voters. "Those who haven't learned from history are doomed to repeat it." Consider "10 Reasons Why Democracy Doesn't Work."³

Besides, some who recognize others as extra intelligent act bewildered when these intelligent people have ideas far different than themselves. In other words, average people think they are smarter than smart people: true insanity. Others claim to be highly intelligent themselves. Yet truly smart people need not declare their smartness; it should be self-evident. Declaring others either smart or dumb in roundabout ways happens regularly, such as showcasing someone's education level.

The so-called "intelligentsia" is highly condescending towards anyone who has not been dragged through their obligatory schools and had the expected knowledge pumped into them. They

ignore true abilities, but instead consider how indoctrinated into their rhetoric you are via their obligatory schools. To them, the biggest empty-head, if wrapped in enough diplomas, is worth more than the brightest man who happens to lack these costly envelopes. Rather, only one's manifest ability to analyze pertinent issues and ascertain the truth about them should be considered. See the video "Non-College Educated Does Not Mean Dumb" by political pundit Milo Yiannopoulos.(4) And when considering any subject, the only worthy knowledge is that which applies to the subject at hand.

Thirdly, integrity is paramount. Even if someone is illiterate, yet truthful, what they say has more value than what a neurosurgeon who is a pathological liar says. A common misassumption is that whatever authoritative title someone has, they have the same integrity as the role itself implies. Instead, decisions must not be enforced by or on behalf of people who are merely brilliant, but only those who are conscientious, competent, and responsible.

Ad Hominem Fallacy (Attacking the Person While Ignoring Their Argument)

This is the most common problem in debates. We have simple personal attacks: so and so is labeled mean, arrogant, weird, offensive, et cetera, often without proof. Even with proof, this is irrelevant to their argument. This includes labeling the person's source references as shady, bigoted, anti-Semitic, et cetera. Then we have "poisoning the well": bringing up another person's past in an attempt to discredit them. A reverse ad hominem distortion is appeal to popularity. An appeal to popularity (and circular reasoning) would be "Since Joe Grovel is a New York Times bestselling author, his is a must read."

2: Ideas We Must Consider

Natural verses Unnatural

Arguing about what's natural or unnatural predates organized philosophy. If there is a god, and whatever he created is natural and whatever is foreign to his creative plans is unnatural, then this argument would be paramount. We could logically assume that natural is right and unnatural is wrong. However, many unnatural things are now known as wholesome and beneficial, such as glasses, hearing aids, prosthetic arms and legs, organ transplants, machines, and telephone. Also, natural life forms such as the HIV virus are considered enemies to be attacked, not something that should thrive. So when this postulation comes up, it must be carefully analyzed in every varying circumstance.

Genetic Reasoning (or Origin) verses Genetic Fallacy

Genetic Fallacy is misappropriating any position or phenomenon solely in terms of its origin, and dismissing it summarily. Furthermore, it is fallacious to either endorse or condemn an idea based on past rather than present merits or demerits, unless its past somehow affects its present value. Genetic fallacy occurs whenever an idea is evaluated based upon irrelevant history.

Some examples of fallacious reasoning are: someone is judged upon how they acted at age three, someone's parents taught them this or that, so it must be true, and assuming that a credible source is always true, while un-credible sources are always false.

However, genetic fallacy is only committed when someone dismisses another's position based on its origin alone. Genetic reasoning is not fallacious when evaluating someone's idea based on that person's overall background or the overall background of that idea. Someone's ideas are ALWAYS influenced by others and the outlook of those people. We don't gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles. And fountains do not send forth both fresh water and sewage; neither do apple trees bear oranges. **Therefore, genetic reasoning is an important premise of my book; remember this.**

Compromise Fallacy, Point/Counterpoint, or Persuasive Writing

The compromise fallacy (or golden mean fallacy, grey fallacy, or fallacy of moderation) is the assertion that the most valid conclusion is one that reflects the best compromise between two competing arguments, and “extremes” are always wrong. However, many people who insist that others must compromise refuse to compromise. Secondly, this fallacy allows any position of compromise to be challenged by deceptively presenting another more radical position to oppose the one you disagree with, forcing the middle ground closer to your desired position. Most importantly, sometimes only extremes are acceptable. For example, shooting dope in any quantity is always wrong.

There’s a trend of having two opposing viewpoints presented and explained in a book or chapter to supposedly be fair and honest. However, by presenting both the black and white, we get grey. Now if someone who is undecided on an issue (in the grey zone) reads the book, how can that help them decide instead of just giving more grayness? I see the value in reading a debate book, where two men argue an issue, because one man usually does a better job of arguing his point. But this doesn’t happen when you purposely try to make both sides seem equally viable. So I only discuss the issues I’m passionate about. Using persuasive writing, I make an argument to support a particular viewpoint or position. I present a clear stand and follow up with facts and examples to support it.

Logic

Logic is the criteria for valid conclusions, the principles of reasoning, the science of correct reasoning, rational deduction, and something that convinces or proves. In other words, a complex way of saying common sense. Whereas common sense takes the most basic forms, such as when it’s twenty below zero, we conclude that it won’t rain; logic often takes the form of two premises and a conclusion. For example, if there’s a quarter in my hand, and that hand is in my pocket, concluding that there’s a quarter in my pocket is simple logic. Even with complicated examples of logic, such as the premises of turning a key in a car’s ignition, putting it in drive, stepping on the gas pedal, and the fueled car having all working parts, and concluding that the car will speed down the road, valid premises always have an inescapable conclusion.

Many people, realizing that their position is illogical, claim that “God is greater than logic.” Yet that’s like saying “God is greater than common sense.” If there is a god, the most complex logic would be to him as simple common sense. Say you measure the outside of a door; it’s 2 meters tall. I wouldn’t open the door to measure the other side. Yet someone may say “The other side could be 3 meters tall; with God, all things are possible.” Despite the temptation of wringing the person’s neck, I would simply avoid such unreasonable people. For Christian believers, the Christian god supposedly cannot lie or deceive. If he’s outside of logic, then he would be a crook.

Since the nonreligious cannot use these convoluted arguments, when their position is illogical and they won’t concede, they may change the subject, make personal attacks instead, claim that only science is valid, or cut off dialogue completely.

Regardless, logic must replace the platitude “You never know until you try.” We must not try things that are extremely harmful or that will likely waste our precious time. We must focus on things that are likely to produce positive results; applying logic helps achieve this goal. If we use persuasive argumentation which demonstrates superior logic, others should concede their position and adopt our better one.

3: Major Belief Systems

Modern Christianity verses Historical Christianity

There's little difference between today's Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, and "nondenominational" believers. Instead, there's a big difference between original and modern Christianity. Although there are still some conservative believers, Modernism has entranced most of Christendom, creating very liberal groups. I contend that modern Christianity is mixed with secularism, neo-paganism, and anti-religion. For detailed analysis, see 12-13. Clowning Around Parts 1-2.

Historical Christianity taught that God needed to become man (JESUS), live a perfect life, be sacrificially killed, and arise to conquer death so people can attain Heaven. Therefore, Christians cannot accept other religions as equally valid, which would essentially make Jesus a fool by putting himself in the position of being tortured to death for nothing. Besides, Jesus of Nazareth taught that you were either for him or against him; there was no middle position. Also, Christianity was a universal religion free from ethnicity. Modern "Christianity" often fails to reflect the teachings of Christianity's founder Jesus of Nazareth. For detailed analysis, see 14. Revival!

Anti-Religion, Neo-Paganism, and Secularism

Anti-religionists (ranging from atheists to deists) promote rationalism and often speak frankly while religionists often lack rationality and fail to be relevant. However, this trend may change. Although every major creed needs more rationalism, we sometimes assume that others are completely irrational. Some of us are self-described "scientists." However, if we don't work in a laboratory, we should not call ourselves scientists. We must keep the rationalism and lose the self-aggrandizement.

Some anti-religionists contend that all organized religion is an "opium of the masses": superstitions and restrictions that prevent progress and enjoyment. Humanity, possessing the highest known intelligence, are the supreme beings. But although most consider atheism as much a religion as bald is a hair color, there certainly is a group of atheists who consider themselves religious.⁽⁵⁾ And if more highly intelligent life exists on another planet, perhaps one-eyed one-horned flying purple people eaters, perhaps we must consider them de facto "God."

Some anti-religionists say that there are hundreds of belief systems, and they're all different. Others bring up numerous ancient gods which nobody believes in anymore. This makes religious people look bad, as if religion is hopelessly chaotic. These red herrings divert attention away from the real conflict between anti-religion and traditional religion. Microscopic variations among groups and people are inconsequential; there are only about a dozen different belief systems. For example, all the New Age religions serve one purpose: to escape traditional religion.

I group neo-paganism with anti-religion. Despite differences between the groups, the differences are beyond the scope of this book. What stands out is that these groups are united against traditional organized religion, especially Christianity.

Neo-pagans often identify with historic pagans, inaccurately portraying themselves as having ancient roots. Yet ancient pagans were highly concerned about what the gods thought; neo-pagans usually have little relationship with the gods besides acknowledging their existence. Neo-paganism is often agnostic. Also, the ancients believed in the transmigration of souls, meaning that allowing abortion would condone the murder of your ancestors. Neo-pagans are the opposite, promoting abortion. And Wiccans are feminists while ancient pagans were patriarchal. Again, neo-pagans have the same goals as those who oppose traditional beliefs. Atheists in turn are often friends with neo-pagans.

Jewish secularists also oppose Christianity (and Islam). Most of them are atheists although they might adhere to Jewish rituals and attend Synagogue. The religion is tolerated or encouraged as an apparatus to maintain Jewish solidarity (*American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*).⁶

The anti-religious, non-religious, neo-pagans, new agers, and suchlike are united in promoting Secularism. Secularism is defined as strict separation of State and religious institutions. Secularism is about equal access to public services; Secularism promotes democracy. It's also said that Secularism is about fairness, protecting free speech and expression, and making sure the State doesn't interfere in religious affairs. However, that's in theory, not practice. Secularism is often unfair. In Canada and Europe, Secularism now interferes with free speech and expression, punishable by prison and fines.

The State interferes in religious affairs whenever schools promote anti-religious principles, whenever taxpayers must fund anything anti-religious, and whenever it enforces anti-religious laws. Religious people often force their values too; but if the particular religion was divine, that would be good.

Atheists are peaceful if they are a minority. But with atheists in the majority, as in Russia and China, they've tortured and killed Christians. Neo-pagans are generally very peaceful, but have never been a majority, and identify with ancient pagans who were barbarians. Chapter 3 is a complete dissertation on the arguments between anti-religion and faith in God.

Irreligion and Modern Religion Verses Historical Conservative Religion

Again, agnostics, irreligious, neo-pagans, and others, including very liberal Christian believers, support secularism. Most secularists have a moral code, generally condemning murder, robbery, rape, dope dealing, and other obvious offenses. They definitely support gender equality and feminism.

Historical conservatives have also condemned obvious offenses. However, they condemned abortion, interchangeable gender roles, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, pornography, prostitution, promiscuity, multiculturalism, gambling, intemperate alcohol use, modern philosophy, and other things deemed harmful. Most Modernists however, are fine with or support some or all of these things. Also, conservative religionists enforced the patriarchy.

The vast majority of people who consider themselves conservative are actually liberal; this is the degree to where Modernism and Secularism have succeeded. And the only effective way to have society follow your values is to have those values legally enforced. If not yours, someone else will enforce theirs; compromise doesn't work.

Ethnocentric Religion

(Judaism, Hinduism, African and South American Tribal Religions, Et Cetera)

Judaism is based primarily on ethnicity, not belief or practice. It's more of a nationality than a religion, as people without Jewish roots who embrace Judaism are often rejected as not being true Jews, while those with Jewish roots who believe nothing are often considered fully Jewish. It has been documented that Israel's ethnicity is 76.4% Jewish, and Judaism is the religion of 76.4% of Israelites.⁽⁷⁾ Jews do not have the same God as Christians; they either believe that Jesus was either an evil man or a fraud, while Christians believe that Jesus was God. Since Jewish people generally never proselytize, are not open to persuasion unless marrying someone of a different belief, and non-Jews won't consider Judaism unless through marriage, there's no point in discussing these beliefs and practices at length.

As for Hinduism, hardly anyone who is not Indian ever considers it, and adherents already know everything about it. Therefore there's no reason to discuss it at length. Besides, Hinduism has a caste system, including a class of "Untouchables;" whatever state of life someone is born into, society forcibly holds them there. This oppression has never abated. See Institutionalized Cruelty in 11. Religion Fails.

And if you were contemplating being a tribal religionist, you probably wouldn't be reading this, but living in a jungle somewhere (hopefully not munching on somebody's thighbone). The fact that

some tribes have an average murder rate of over thirty percent, practice cannibalism, medicine men harvest Albino children for body parts, families are often extremely unstable, and tribes contribute virtually nothing to societal progression eliminates consideration. These systems are more accurately termed superstitions instead of religions.

Then there are chameleons who hide within every religious, non-religious, and political group. They are sociopaths; people without conscience that just happen to reside in a particular group to hide their true character; no ideological category is immune from harboring them.

Asian Beliefs

(Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism, Confucianism, Et Cetera)

(Many adhere to several systems simultaneously)

Although Asian beliefs are very ethnocentric, I put them into a different category since they have gained popularity in the western world. Asians often surpass westerners as far as peacefulness, unity, and respect to nature. However, the ultimate goal Nirvana is achieved only through natural cause and effect human effort (work salvation). There's no forgiveness of sins or a savior. Rather, adherents seek knowledge to counteract what's undesirable; a metaphysical evolution involving reincarnation. Different systems emphasize different principles. Some emphasize becoming one with the universe. As the Buddhist said to the hotdog vendor "Make me one with everything." Shintoism emphasized emperor worship, while others emphasize ancestor worship, and Buddhism emphasizes the Dali Lama, the alleged reincarnation of the original Buddha. Even within Buddhism there is palpable variance.

Usually, Asian philosophy doesn't involve faith; rather, good and bad works supposedly produce their respective karma, evolving or devolving one towards or away from Enlightenment. Confucianism, blending the religious and secular, formed the cornerstone of Chinese philosophy for over a millennia. Despite that, many modern Asians repudiate "that old curiosity shop." Yet Confucian wisdom lives on in sayings like "Man who run in front of car get tired," "Man who run in back of car get exhausted," and "Wise man never play leapfrog with unicorn." Joking aside, Asian religions are radically different from monotheistic religions.

The core of Christianity and Islam is one all-important God, while Asiatics can be pantheistic, atheistic, monotheistic, or polytheistic. And adherents often consider the universe a metaphysical entity which metes out rewards and punishments and has a heavy spirituality, while anti-religion recognizes nothing metaphysical, has humanity as the center of all wisdom and intelligence and has no spirituality.

Overall, conservative Asian religion and Christianity are alike in their moral standards. The two major differences are: (1) Their position on God; (2) Their concept of an afterlife. Therefore I limit my discussion to: If there is a god, what would accurately describe his nature, and if there is an afterlife, what would be more feasible: one afterlife and judgment, or reincarnation? I will explain which system of thought best answers these questions.

Islam

Jesus Christ's sublime persona and what he established was radically different from Mohammed and what he established, despite the bloody and sordid history of both traditions. While independent writings chronicling Christ's life and teachings became inextricably linked to an overwhelming majority of objectionable diatribe, Mohammed's Koran was originally one unit. Then came Mohammed's Hadith (more of the same). Despite Christendom becoming intertwined with warring state governments with ulterior motives, Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world." This contrasts with Mohammed's umma, a political body; Mohammed lead a "theocratic" Arab state. Therefore, in reference to Islam, Church and military State (with all its perfidies and malevolence) are often inseparable.

Muslims have irreconcilable differences with others. Dog ownership is considered abominable; if discovered, the animal will be killed, whereas westerners often consider dogs family members. The Koran commends polygamy, while polygamy in Hebrew scripture was merely documented as something that occurred and that became a detriment. In Orthodox Islam, the human form is impermissible in artwork and condemned as idolatrous; their art consists of geometric shapes.

Here are important Christian teachings compared with important Muslim teachings: Christ was a prince of peace while Mohammed was a prince of war. Love towards God and humanity was paramount to original Christianity, whereas love is relatively unimportant in Islam; the Koran primarily focuses on fearing God and antagonism towards enemies. Christianity utterly condemned the worship of anyone other than God, while the Koran's angels worship man. Christianity emphasizes an intimate relationship with God in Heaven, while the Koran only describes physical pleasures. While Christian scripture is considered valid in every language, most Islamic scholars maddeningly reject all non-Arabic Korans. And Muslims and Christians do not have the same God. Muslims believe in one person in God, while Christians believe in three persons, a Trinity. In summary, the difference between Islam and Christianity is great.⁸

More about Ideologies

Since mutually exclusive systems cannot all be right, adults must make well-informed decisions. However, nowhere in history has there been perfect harmony. Therefore, embrace what unites us without compromising our beliefs.

Only caring about immediate problems suggests mental laziness or fear of dealing with the source of the problem. Without being proactive and addressing the source, problems are never resolved. With poison gas seeping in, we can keep fanning or find the gas tube and plug it. With piles of elephant dung we can keep shoveling or find the elephant and send it to the zoo. For those in positions of power to deal with the source of problems, consider this.

Despite arguments about religion, politics, culture, sexual mores, economics, and what-not, these discussions usually solve nothing. Few people are innovative thinkers; only one in a million radically change religion (Buddha), politics (Confucius), culture (the Beatles), sexual mores (Hefner), or philosophy (Aristotle). Few people think independently; their values primarily come from their biology, family influence, and surroundings; they were born into their ideology. Even unexpected differences usually cloak personal conflicts and rebellion against one's culture, instead of reflecting independent thought. After joining a different family through marriage, one's religion, politics, and so forth often go out the window.

Most people rarely discuss religion or politics until it turns violent; rather, two family factions (micro-races), one having tradition A, the other B, fight over territory and economic sanctions. Blacks and Whites don't assemble for philosophical discussions that turn violent; they fight because they are of different races. This goes for the Capulets and Montagues, Hatfields and McCoys, and all other micro-races; blood and herd mentality rule. Again, average people solve nothing and democracy cannot work. We need great leaders.

Despite these facts, I present my solutions; people can change. However, I'm not naïve; people often don't. Therefore, I do two things; I challenge your ideology, and also offer coping strategies for when things remain broken. So be ready to be wowed by truth. Read on!



