



WHY I'M NOT...



**WHY I'M NOT  
AN ATHEIST**



A foot in  
two worlds



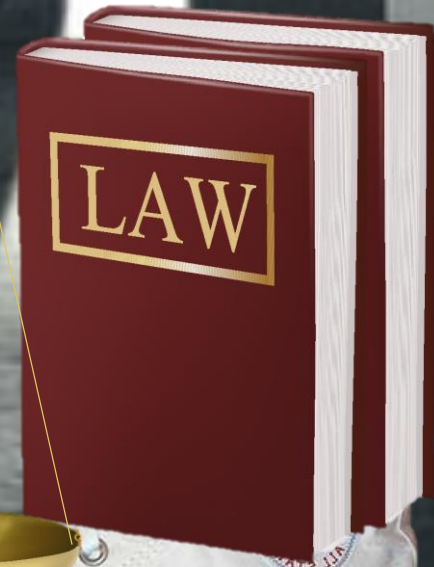


**A foot in  
two worlds**

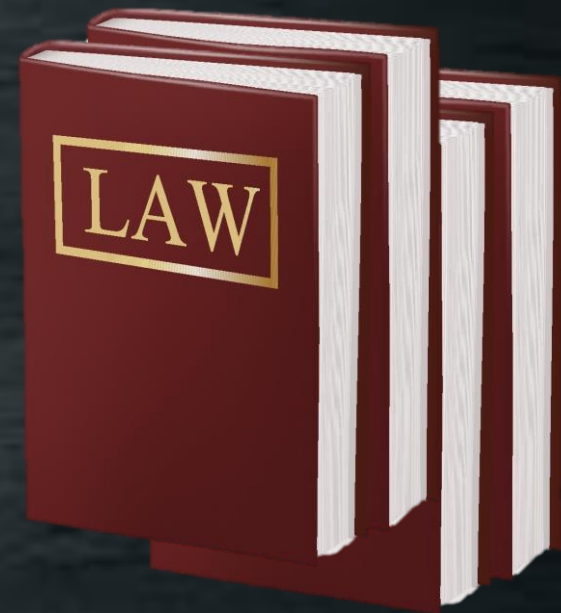
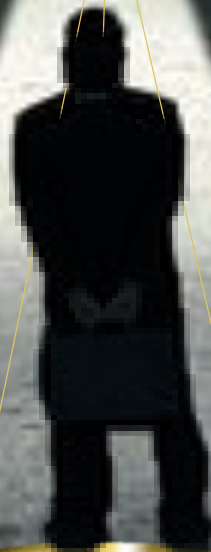




# FAITH

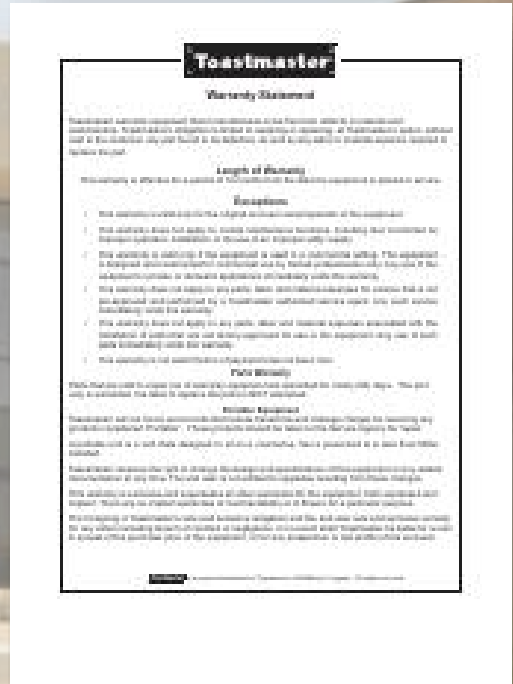


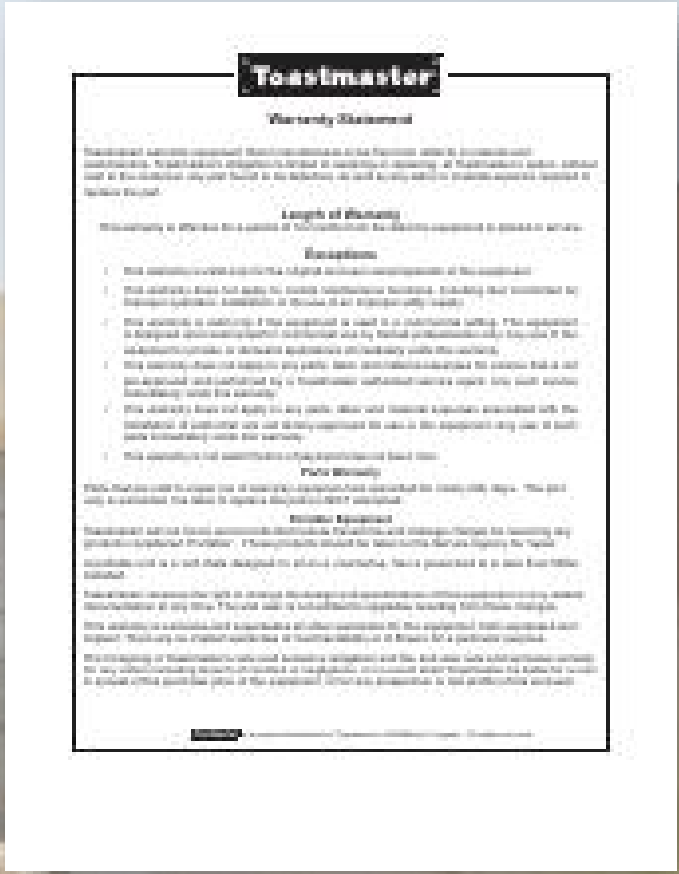
FAITH

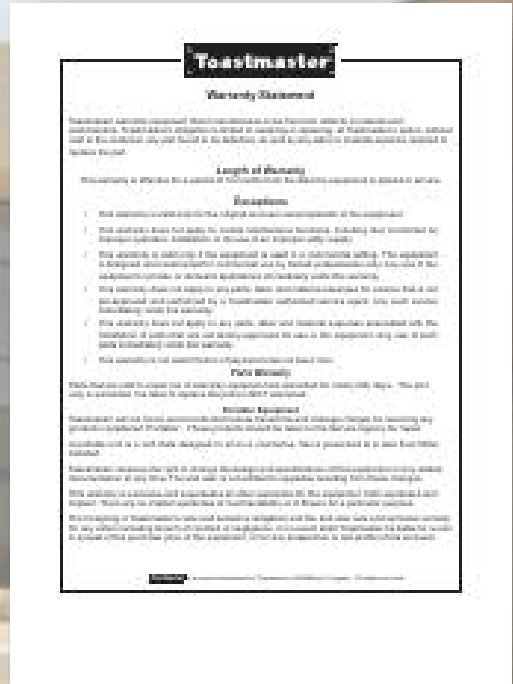














# Law school drives critical thinking



**Law school drives critical thinking  
and precision of thought**



**FEDERAL RULES  
OF EVIDENCE**

2011-2012 Edition  
Prepared by Professor Daniel J. Capra

*also including*  
CALIFORNIA EVIDENCE CODE  
*(with selected comments)*  
UNIFORM RULES OF EVIDENCE  
REPORT ON CASLAW DIVERGENCE FROM FRE

**WEST.**

**The Rules of  
Evidence are  
based on logic and  
argumentation  
theory**

**Direct Evidence**

**Circumstantial  
Evidence**



# Direct Evidence

# Circumstantial Evidence

**RAN A  
RED LIGHT**



# Direct Evidence



# Circumstantial Evidence



# Direct Evidence



# Circumstantial Evidence



# Direct Evidence



# Circumstantial Evidence

Motive



# Direct Evidence



# Circumstantial Evidence

Motive  
opportunity



# Direct Evidence



# Circumstantial Evidence

Motive  
opportunity

Consistent  
action



Credibility



# CREDIBILITY





# CREDIBILITY



# The “Burden of Proof”



# The Burden of Proof

**The person making the claim bears the burden**



**If you're going to claim that scientists are lying, doctors are being paid off, there is a global conspiracy, etc. the burden is on you to prove your claim.**

[thelogicofscience.com](http://thelogicofscience.com)



**WHY I'M NOT  
AN ATHEIST**

**"ATHEIST"**

**"AGNOSTIC"**

**"ATHEIST"**

**"AGNOSTIC"**

**SCALES OF JUSTICE**

Weighing the Evidence



**"ATHEIST"**

**"AGNOSTIC"**

**SCALES OF JUSTICE**

**Place all the credible evidence there is no God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence**

**Weighing the Evidence**



**"ATHEIST"**

**"AGNOSTIC"**

**SCALES OF JUSTICE**

**Place all the credible evidence there is no God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence**

**Weighing the Evidence**

**Evidence for  
atheism**





**"ATHEIST"**

**"AGNOSTIC"**

**SCALES OF JUSTICE**

Place all the credible evidence there is no God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence

Weighing the Evidence

Place all the credible evidence there is a God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence

Evidence for  
atheism



# "ATHEIST"

# "AGNOSTIC"

## SCALES OF JUSTICE

Place all the credible evidence there is no God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence

Weighing the Evidence

Place all the credible evidence there is a God on one side of the scales and argue from that evidence

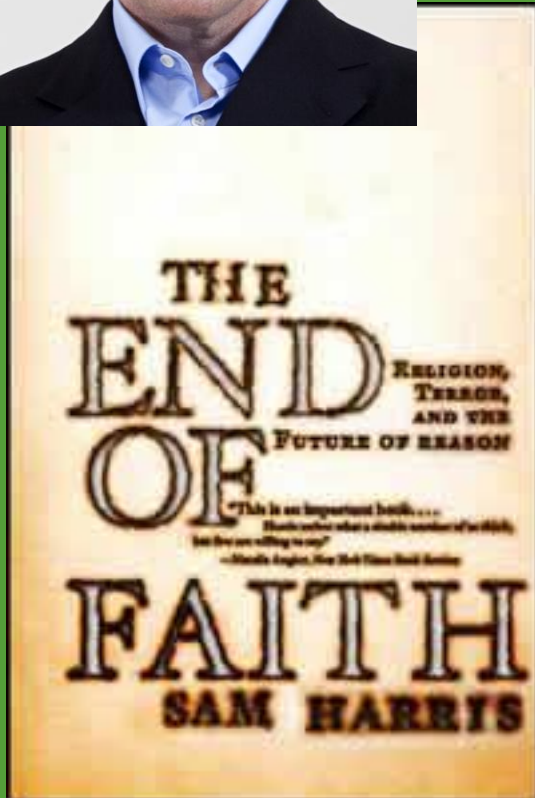
Evidence for  
atheism

Evidence  
against

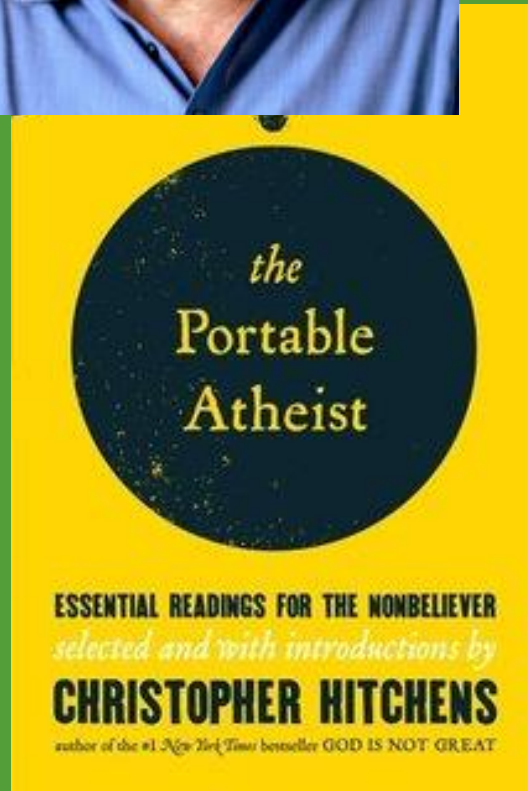
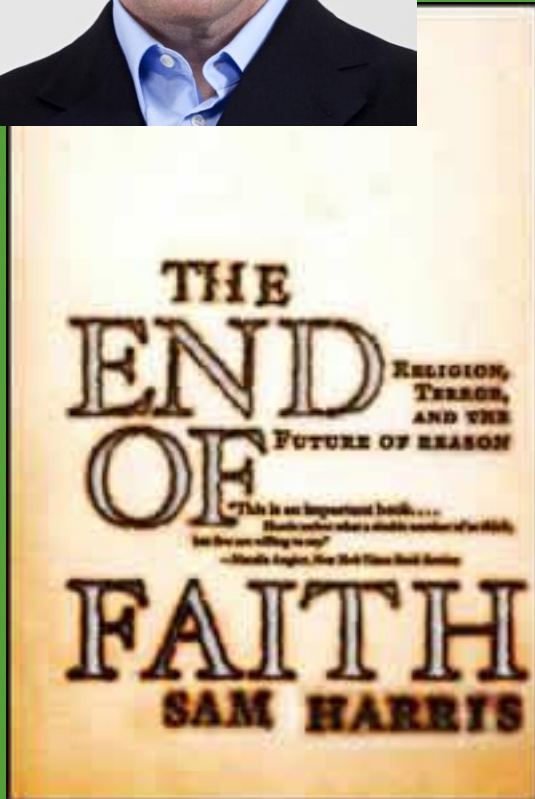


# The Four Horsemen of the New Atheism

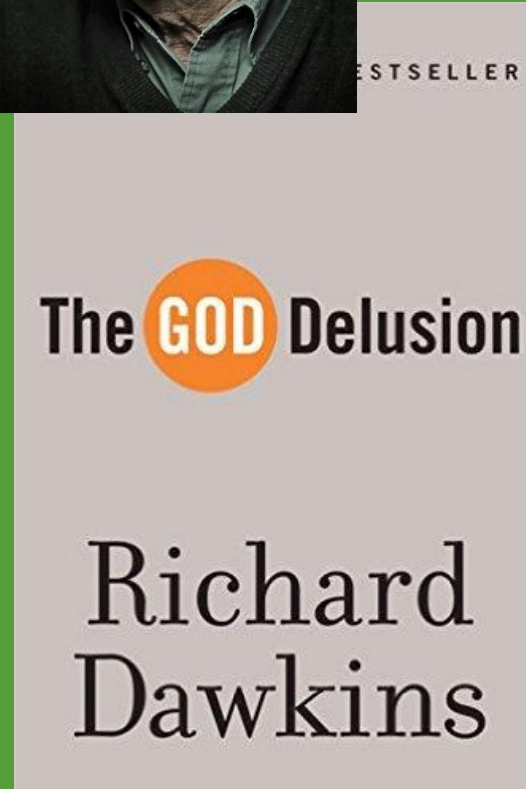
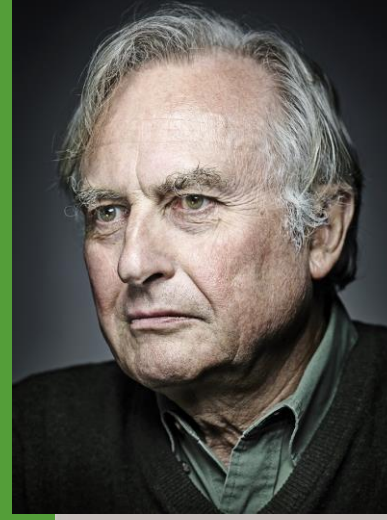
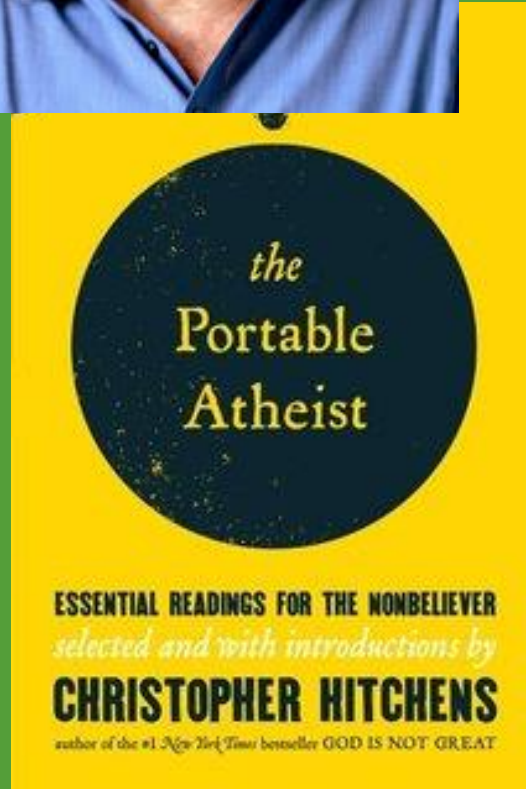
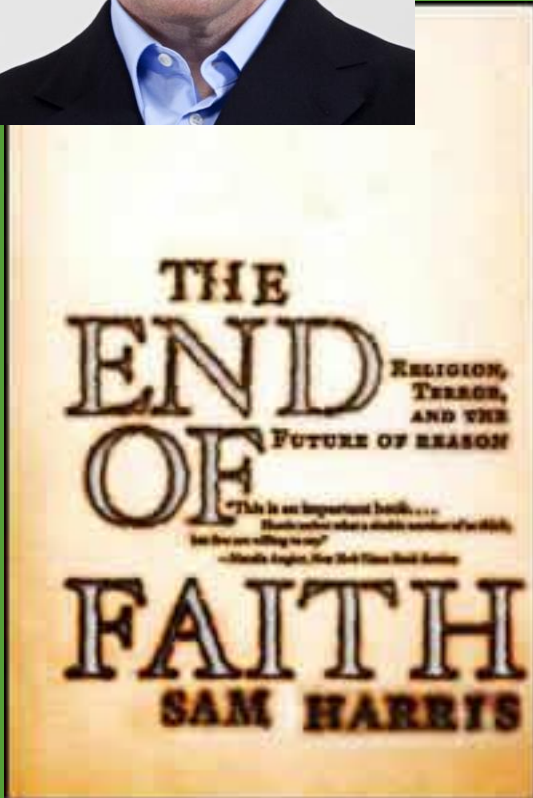
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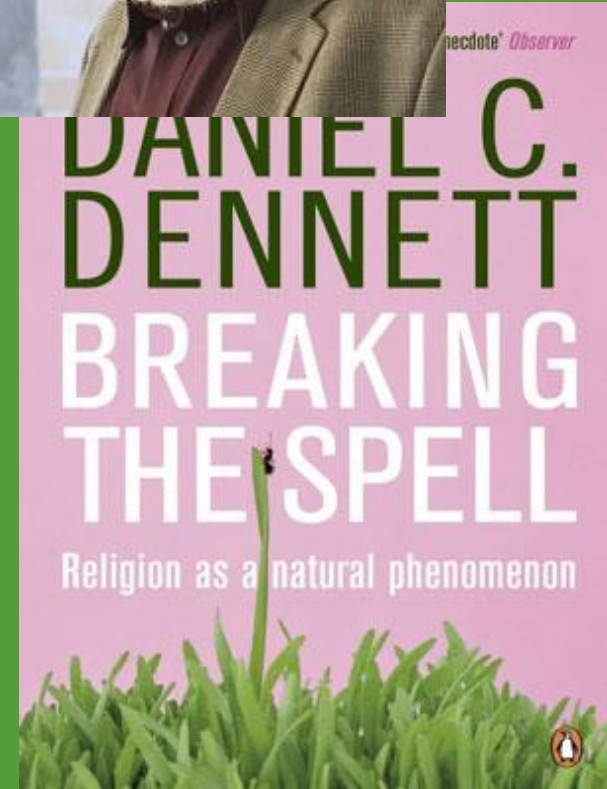
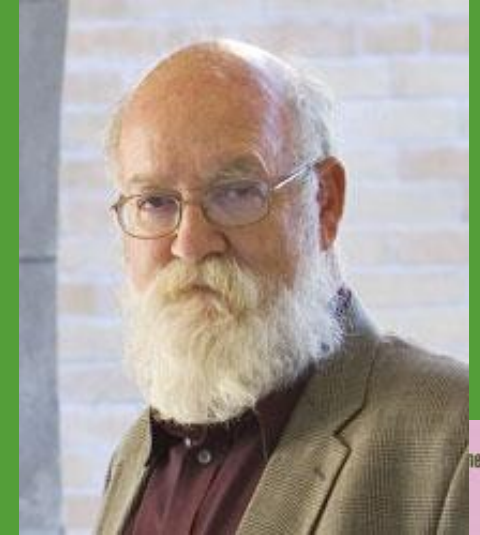
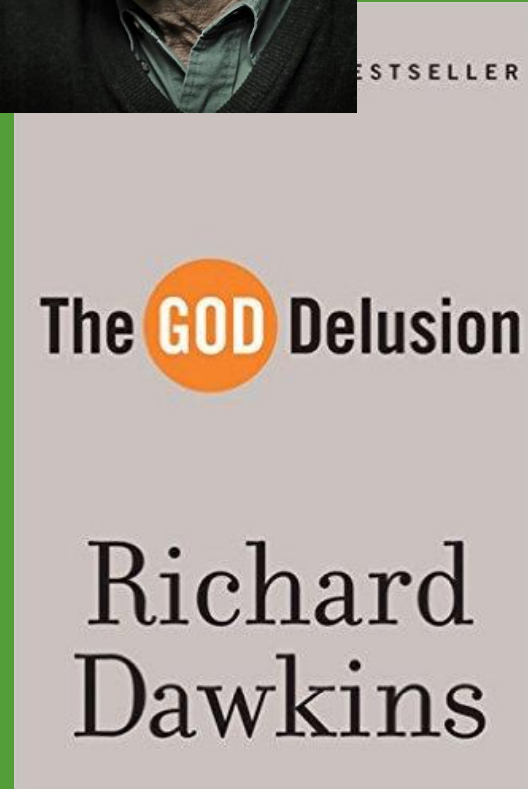
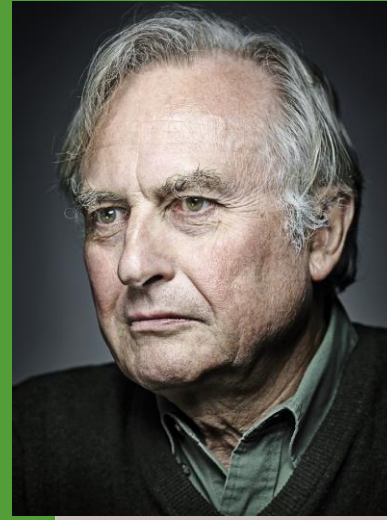
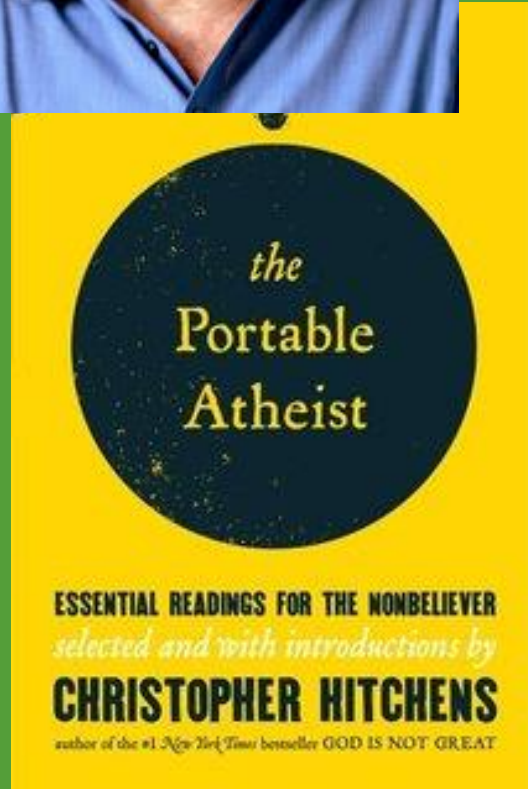
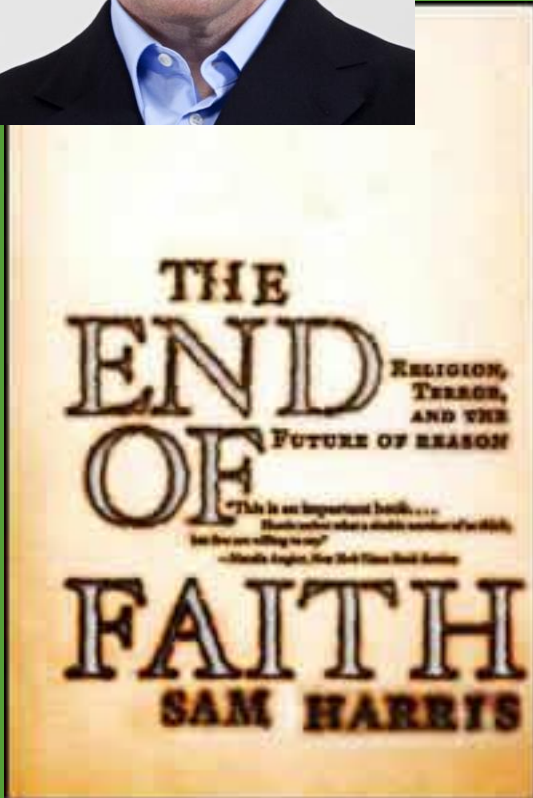
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**Atheism proof or  
sleight of hand?**





# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?

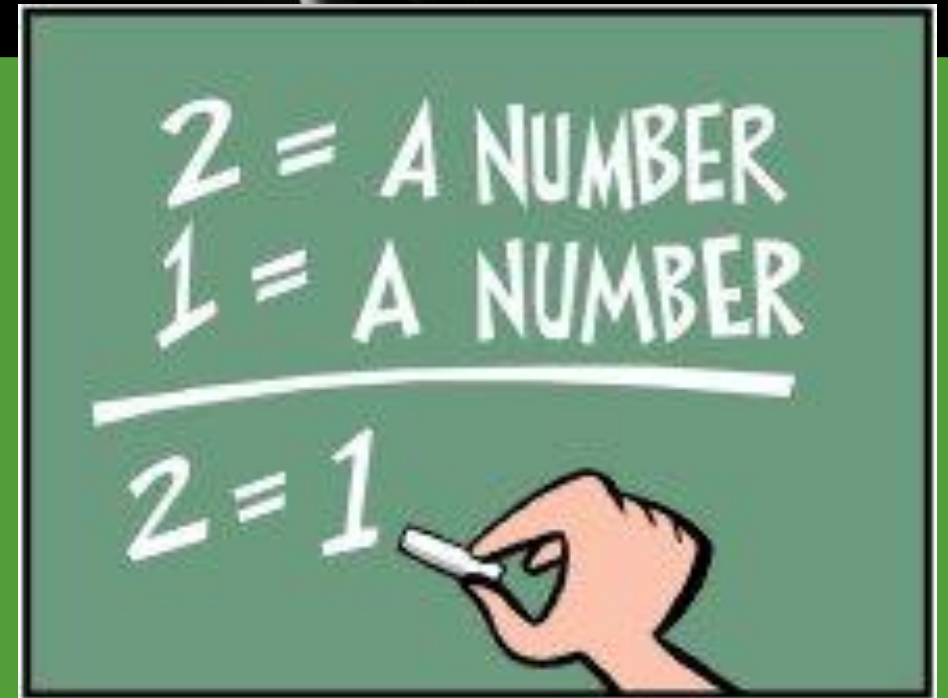


**They shift the  
burden of proof**

# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



They shift the burden of proof



They use logical fallacies and rhetoric tricks

# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



**They shift the  
burden of proof**

# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



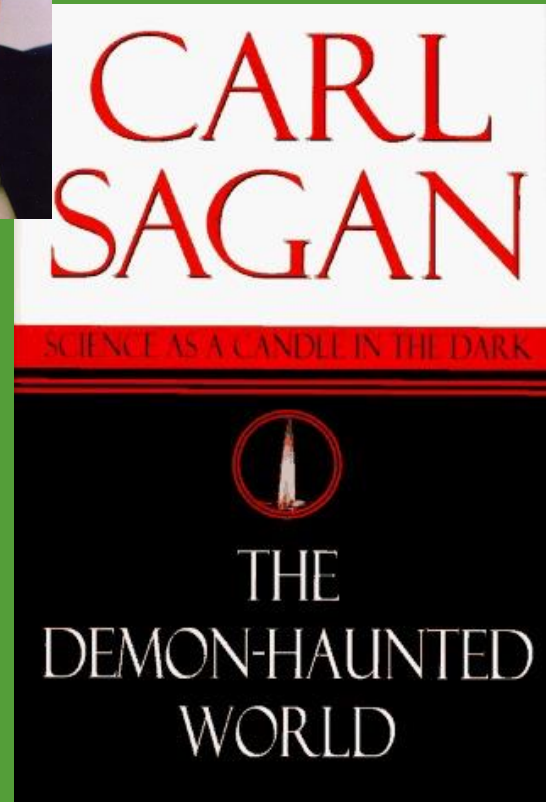
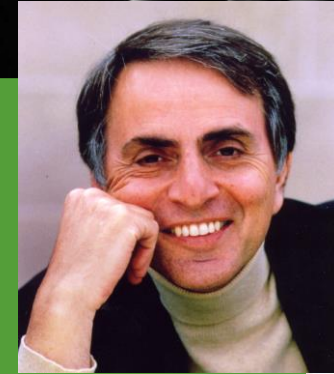
The burden of proof is on whomever is making the assertion

They shift the burden of proof

# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



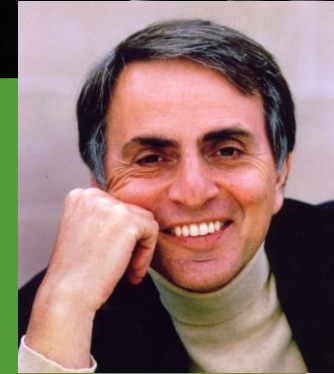
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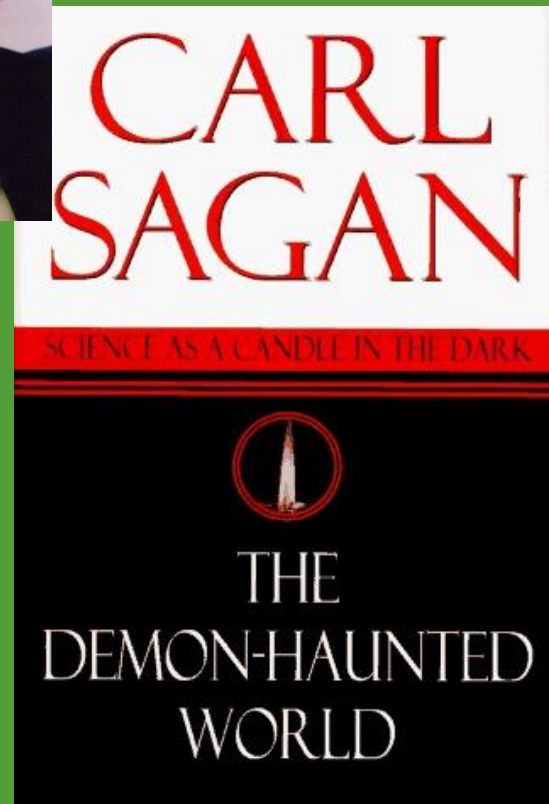
# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



They shift the burden of proof



“The dragon in my garage”



# Atheism sleight of



They shift  
burden of

**A** fire-breathing dragon lives in my garage.”  
Suppose (I’m following a group therapy approach by the psychologist Richard Franklin) I seriously make such an assertion to you. Surely you’d want to check it out, see for yourself. There have been innumerable stories of dragons over the centuries, but no real evidence. What an opportunity!

“Show me,” you say. I lead you to my garage. You look inside and see a ladder, empty paint cans, an old tricycle—but no dragon.

“Where’s the dragon?” you ask.

“Oh, she’s right here,” I reply, waving vaguely. “I neglected to mention that she’s an invisible dragon.”

You propose spreading flour on the floor of the garage to capture the dragon’s footprints.

“Good idea,” I say, “but this dragon floats in the air.”

Then you’ll use an infrared sensor to detect the invisible fire.

“Good idea, but the invisible fire is also heatless.”

You’ll spray-paint the dragon and make her visible.

“Good idea, except she’s an incorporeal dragon and the paint won’t stick.”

And so on. I counter every physical test you propose with a special explanation of why it won’t work.

Now, what’s the difference between an invisible,

incorporeal, floating dragon who spits heatless fire and no dragon at all? If there’s no way to disprove my contention, no conceivable experiment that would count against it, what does it mean to say that my dragon exists? Your inability to invalidate my hypothesis is not at all the same thing as proving it true. Claims that cannot be tested, assertions immune to disproof are veridically worthless, whatever value they may have in inspiring us or in exciting our sense of wonder. What I’m asking you to do comes down to believing, in the absence of evidence, on my say-so.

The only thing you’ve really learned from my insistence that there’s a dragon in my garage is that something funny is going on inside my head. You’d wonder, if no physical tests apply, what convinced me. The possibility that it was a dream or a hallucination would certainly enter your mind. But then why am I taking it so seriously? Maybe I need help. At the least, maybe I’ve seriously underestimated human fallibility.

Imagine that, despite none of the tests being successful, you wish to be scrupulously open-minded. So you don’t outright reject the notion that there’s a fire-breathing dragon in my garage. You merely put it on hold. Present evidence is strongly against it, but if a new body of data emerge you’re prepared to examine it and see if it convinces you. Surely it’s unfair of me to be



CARL  
AGAN

NOT AS A CANDLE IN THE DARK



THE  
MON-HAUNTED  
WORLD

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ARK

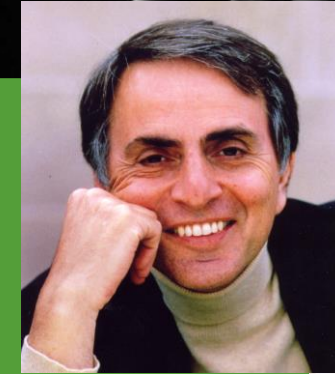
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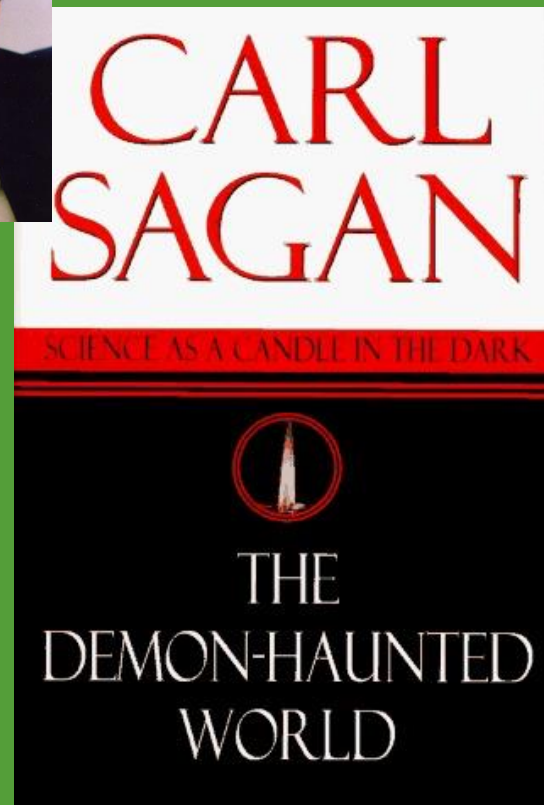
# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



They shift the burden of proof



“The dragon in my garage”

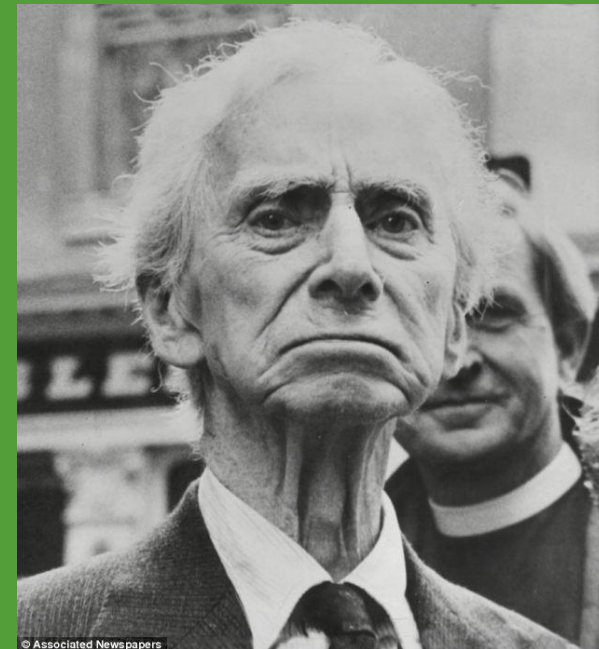


# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



They shift the  
burden of proof

Bertrand  
Russell's  
teapot

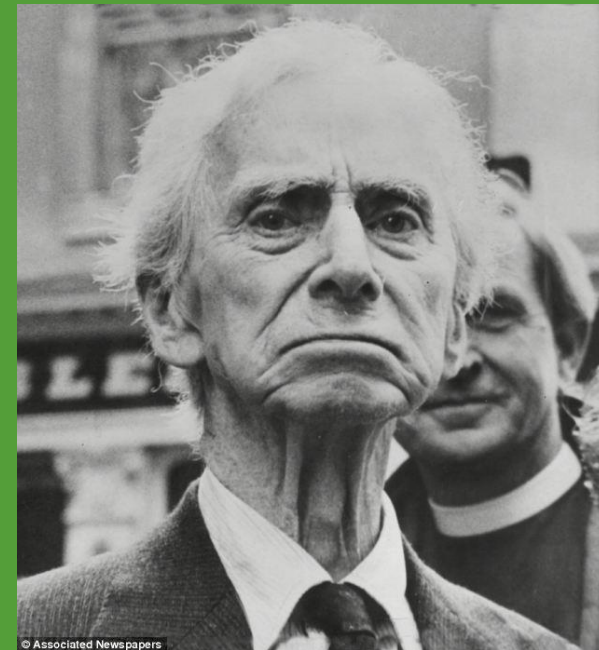


© Associated Newspapers

Many orthodox people speak as though it were the business of sceptics to disprove received dogmas rather than of dogmatists to prove them. This is, of course, a mistake. If I were to suggest that between the Earth and Mars there is a china teapot revolving about the sun in an elliptical orbit, nobody would be able to disprove my assertion provided I were careful to add that the teapot is too small to be revealed even by our most powerful telescopes. But if I were to go on to say that, since my assertion cannot be disproved, it is intolerable presumption on the part of human reason to doubt it, I should rightly be thought to be talking nonsense. If, however, the existence of such a teapot were affirmed in ancient books, taught as the sacred truth every Sunday, and instilled into the minds of children at school, hesitation to believe in its existence would become a mark of eccentricity and entitle the doubter to the attentions of the psychiatrist in an enlightened age or of the Inquisitor in an earlier time.



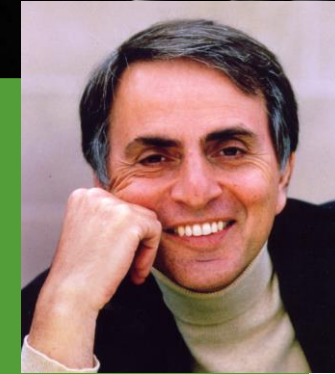
## Bertrand Russell's teapot



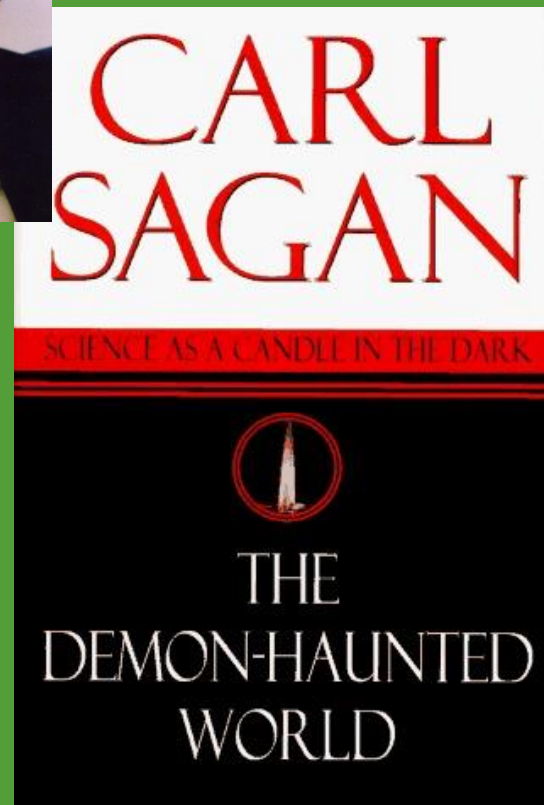
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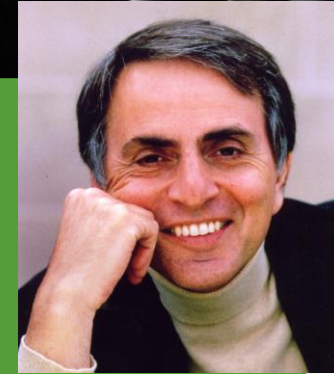
“The dragon in my garage”



# Atheism proof or sleight of hand?



They shift the burden of proof



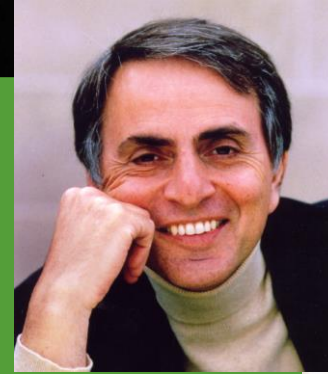
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# Atheism proof or sight of hand?



They shift the  
burden of proof



“The dragon  
in my  
garage

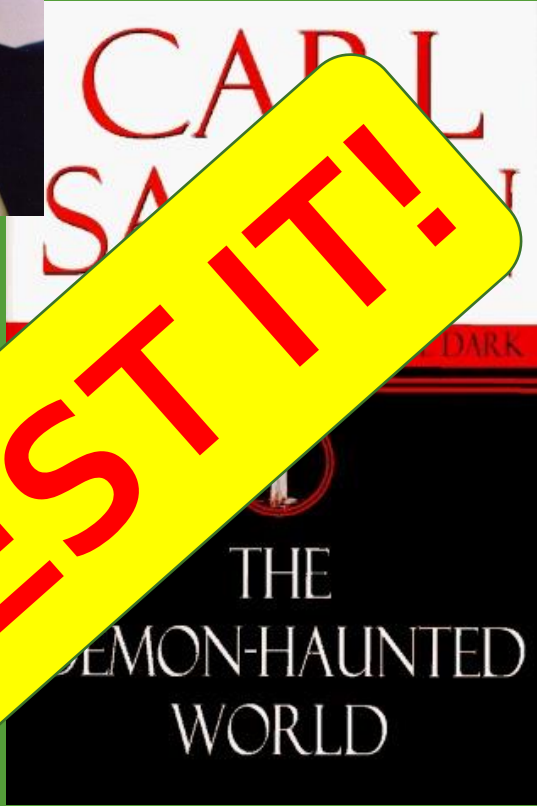
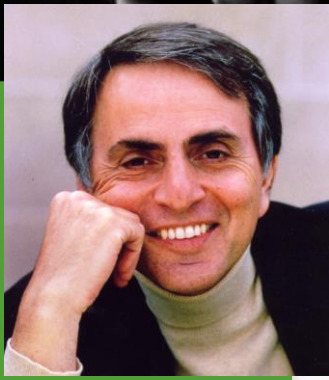


proof of  
of hand?



“The dragon  
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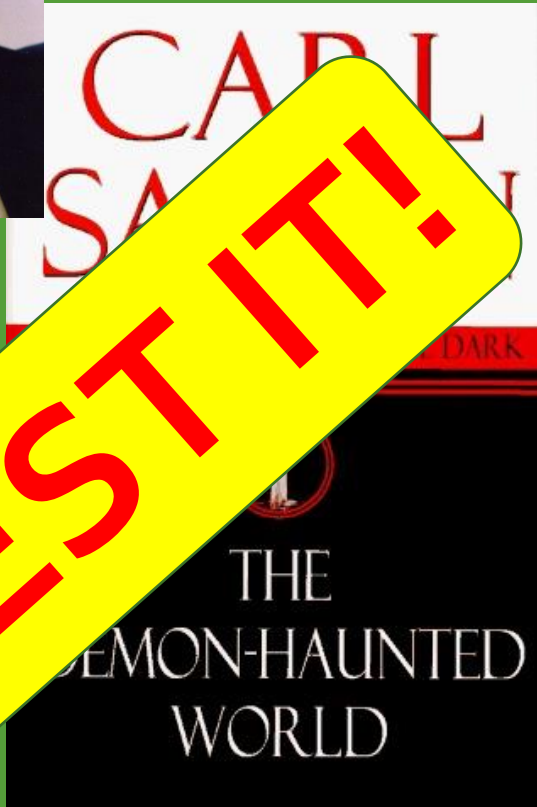
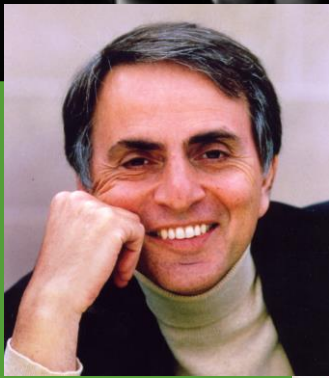
the  
roof



**TEST IT!**

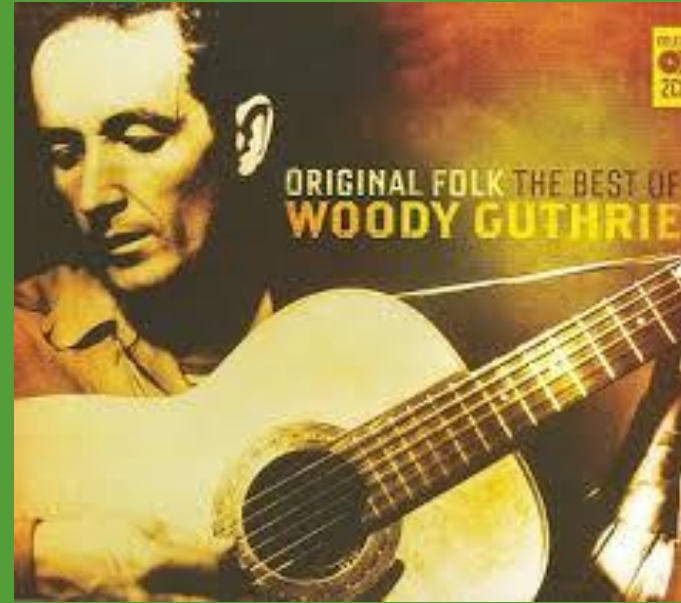
“The dragon  
in my  
garage”

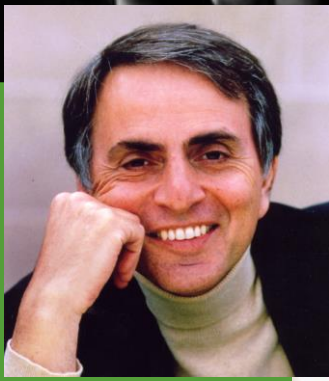




**TEST IT!**

“The dragon  
in my  
garage”





“The dragon  
in my  
garage”



## This Train Is Bound For Glory

New Words and Music Adaptation by Woody Guthrie

This train is bound for glory, this train.  
This train is bound for glory, this train.  
This train is bound for glory,  
Don't carry nothing but the righteous and the holy.  
This train is bound for glory, this train.

This train don't carry no gamblers, this train;  
This train don't carry no gamblers, this train;  
This train don't carry no gamblers,  
Liars, thieves, nor big shot rambler,  
This train is bound for glory, this train.

This train don't carry no liars, this train;  
This train don't carry no liars, this train;  
This train don't carry no liars,  
She's streamlined and a midnight flyer,  
This train don't carry no liars, this train.

**You don't prove an  
incorporeal reality like  
you do a corporeal  
reality**



**You don't prove an  
incorporeal reality like  
you do a corporeal  
reality**



**You don't prove an incorporeal reality like you do a corporeal reality**



**How much Diet Dr. Pepper is in my Chick-fil-A cup?**



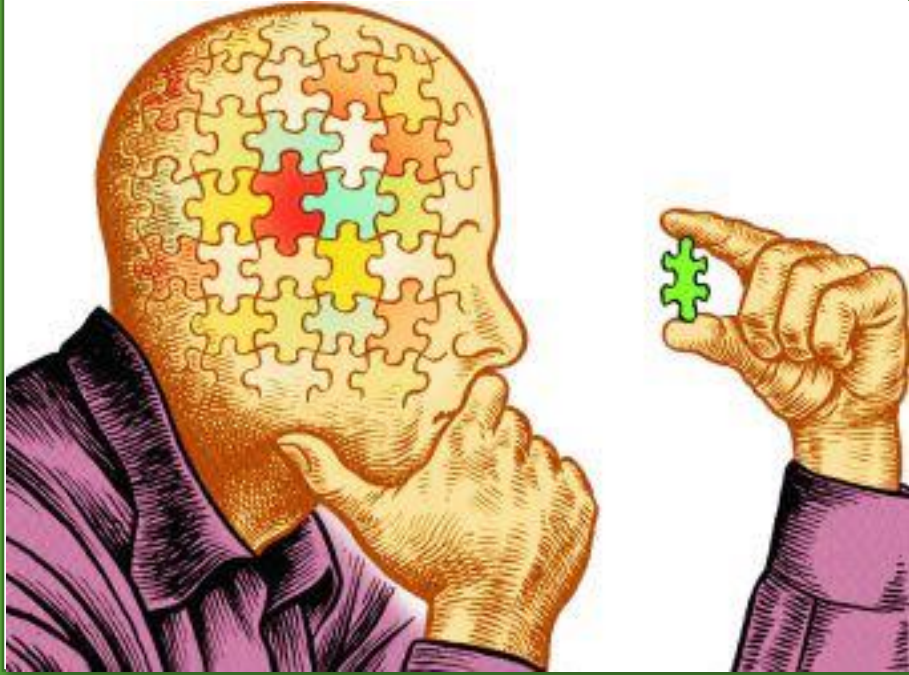
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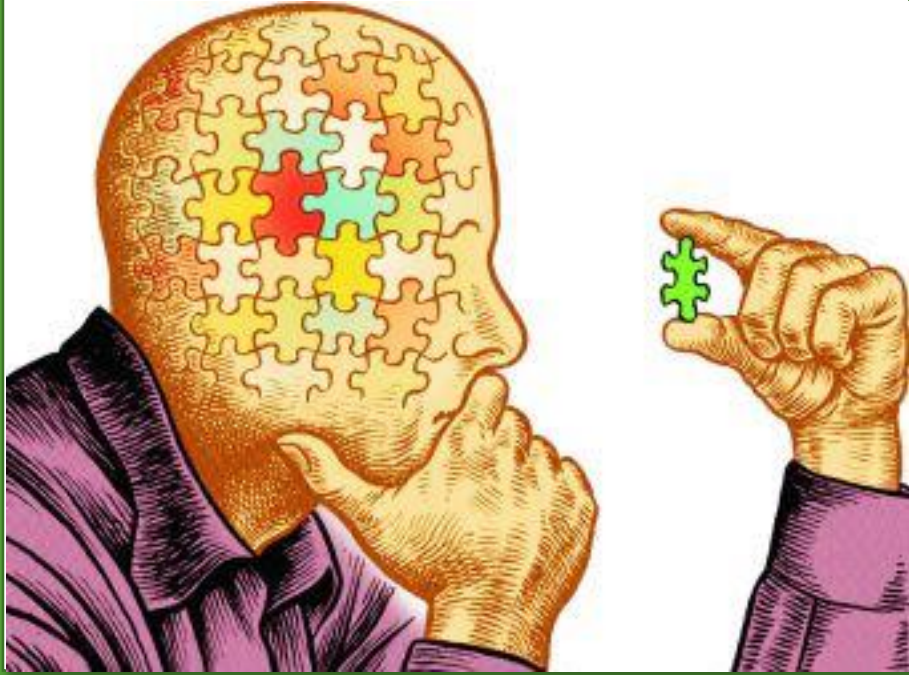
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**You don't answer in Fahrenheit**

# Points for home



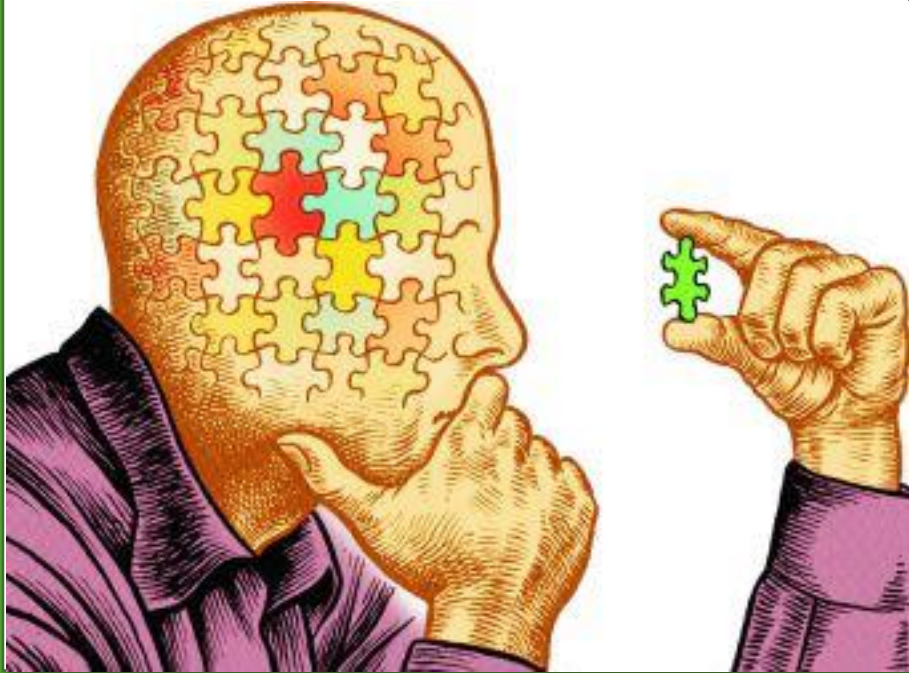
# Points for home



*"What can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them"*  
*(Rom. 1:19)*



# Points for home

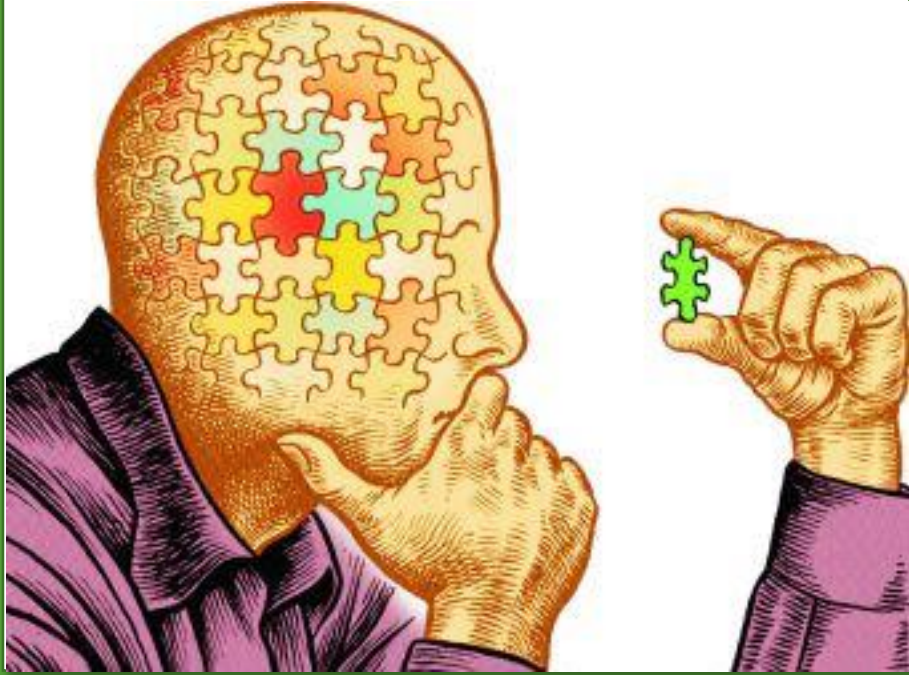


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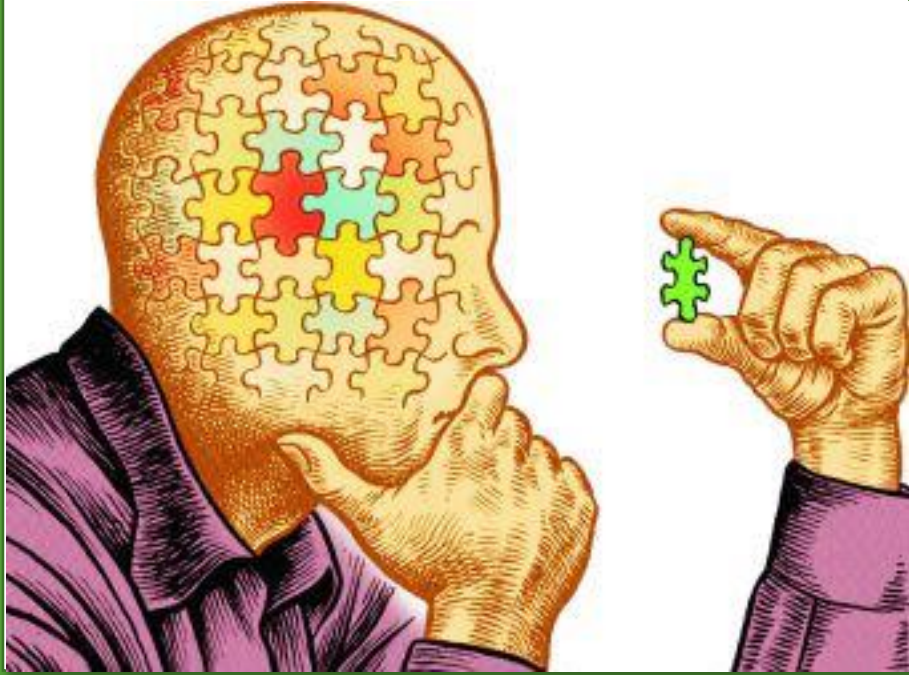
*(Rom. 1:19)*

**I need to understand  
what I am looking for**

# Points for home



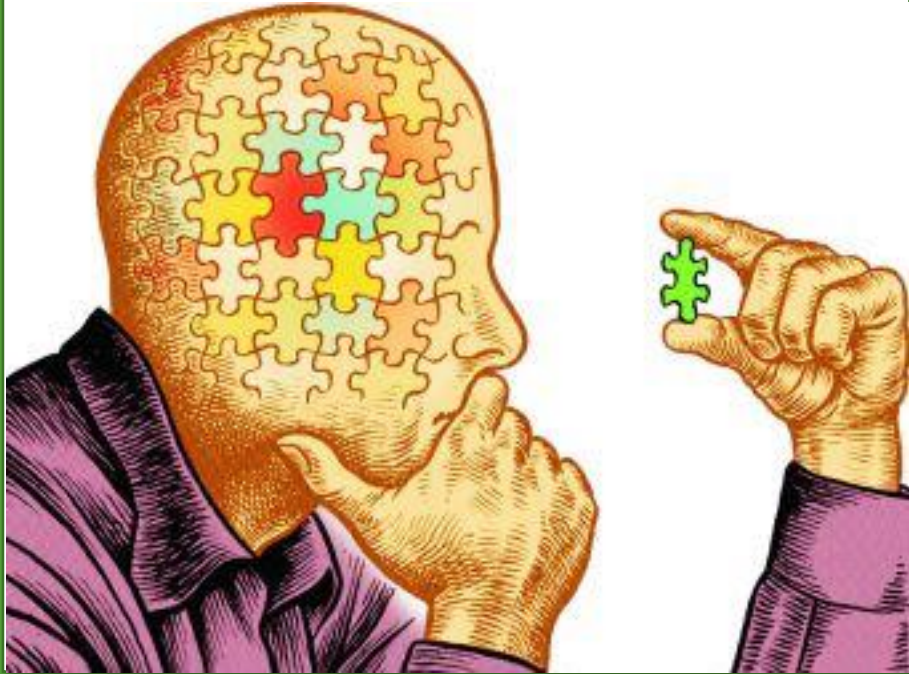
# Points for home



*"For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse"*

*(Rom. 1:20)*

## Points for home

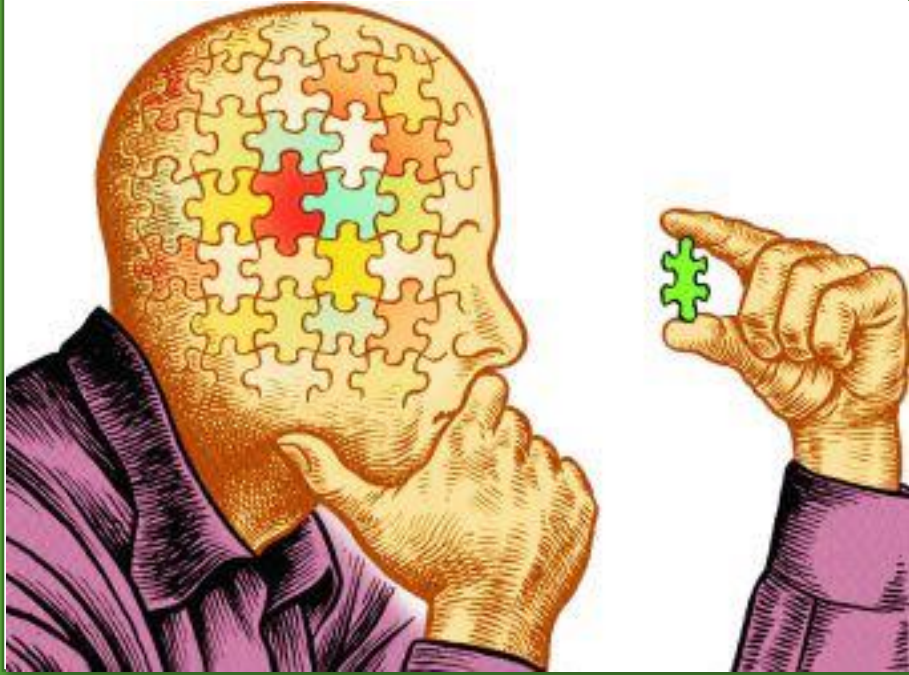


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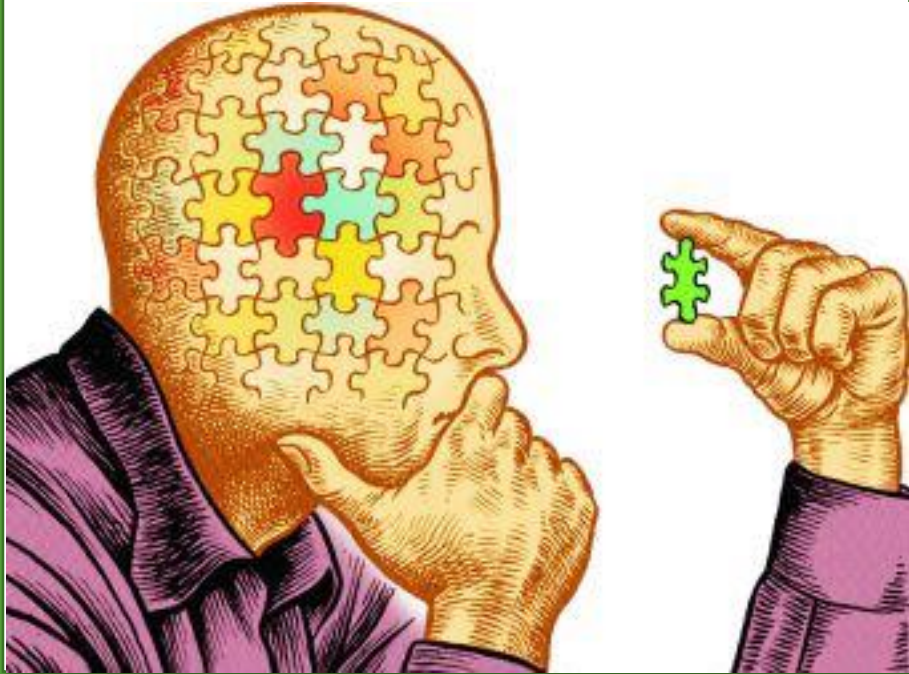
*(Rom. 1:20)*

**I need to recognize  
what I see**

# Points for home

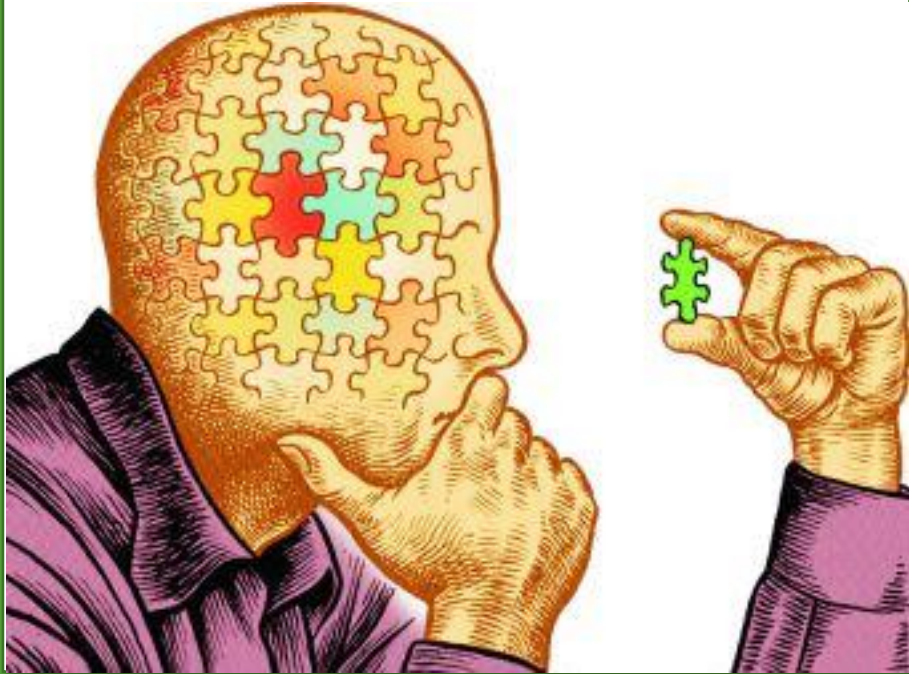


# Points for home



*"Although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools "*  
*(Rom. 1:21-22)*

## Points for home



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(Rom. 1:21-22)

**I need to remember  
humility**



WHY I'M NOT  
AN ATHEIST