Scathing Atheist 622:

The “GAW” Edition

Players:
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Sponsor:

This week’s episode of the Scathing Atheist is brought to you by ... Factor, Adam and Eve ... And by ... weed. Lots of weed. Even more than usual these days, actually.

And now, the Scathing Atheist.

Intro:

It's Thursday!

It’s January 30th,

And it's National Inane Answering Message Day!

Do kids these days even know they have those?

Probably not. I’m Noah Lugeons,

I’m Eli Bosnick,

I'm Heath Enwright, and from Jared Kushner's New Jersey; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Waycross, Georgia ... this is the Scathing Atheist.

On this week’s episode,

- The church begs for mercy too liberally,
- God maintains the streak of perfect inattendance,
- And we’ll see what the other side of the aisle has to offer us.

But first, the Diatribe...

Diatribe

How do you talk with kids about death? Even worse, how do you talk to other people's kids about death? Other wrong people who are telling their kids religious bullshit and will get mad at you if you don't go along with that bullshit?

That's the question I'm wrestling with this week. Last weekend, my niece's mother-in-law passed away. I didn't really know her, but the family is devastated, of course, especially her kids. That granny was the one that watched them after school until mom got off work, so it's the kind of tragedy that's going to be omnipresent for them. They'll notice her missing every single day.

Of course, the family is Christian and so the kids are hearing stories of a Heaven they'll get to visit her in one day. And if they ask me, I'm expected to toe the line, to tell them the same comforting lies, or at least not to undermine them. That's complicated a little bit in my case because the kids know I'm an atheist. One of them does, at least. The other is too young to really understand that, but when your job is "atheist," your niblings can't get all that old before somebody has to tell them what that word means.

So she's eleven years old, she's smart as a whip, and I'm her "knowing shit" uncle. I'm the one she comes to when she has questions about science and philosophy and history. And she knows that I don't believe in gods. So I've been sort of wrestling with this very real possibility that she's gonna come to me and ask me what I believe happens when we die; where do I think her grandma is? And I'm gonna have to answer that in a way that (a) comforts her, (b) doesn't piss off her Christian parents, and (c) isn't a lie. And that's a tall order, so I've been giving it some thought.

Here's what I came up with so far. And let me say up front that it's not *entirely* honest. For the sake of the parents, I play up doubts and ignorance a lot more than I think is philosophically sound. But keep in mind that for the purposes of this hypothetical, I'm talking to an eleven year old.

So she's says "what do you think happens when you die?" That's the prompt. And I say…

"I don't know. None of us do. A lot of people think a lot of different things so what I think is just one of the possibilities. But there are a few things that I *do* know. Like, I know, for example, that we don't know. So if there is a God and there is a Heaven, God doesn't want us to know about it for sure. If he did, he'd show it to us like he does with bats and icicles. So he wants us to have at least some doubt; he wants us to live in a world where we believe that death at least *might* be final. And you have to ask yourself, why would God do that?

"But I have a theory. See, if we knew for sure that all the people we lost were in Heaven, we wouldn't think much about them. We'd tell ourselves 'I'll see her in sixty or seventy years and I'll think about her again then. But between now and then I won't, because it makes me so sad.'

“But if we *don’t* know for sure, we have to make room for them now. See, who I am doesn’t just live inside of me. The part of me that you know lives inside of you. Some little chunk of your brain is dedicated to me and every time you think about me or remember something I taught you, it gets a little bigger and a little stronger. That’s how brains work. And when you think about all the people who I’ve met in my life, and you add up all the chunks of all their brains where I live, I bet it would weigh more than my own brain — even before you subtract out all the parts that are dedicated to you and your Aunt Lucinda and your mom and your dad and all the other people I’ve met.

“All of that is ‘me.’ Everybody’s memories and perceptions of me are just as much me as I ever was. So when I die, most of me stays here on Earth, tucked away in all the brains of all the people who ever loved me.

“And maybe that’s why God hides Heaven. Maybe he wants to make sure that we make plenty of room in our brains for the people we’ve lost, just in case that’s the only place they have left.”

Headlines

Joining me for headlines tonight are the Han and Chewie of this podcast, Heath Enwright and Eli Bosnick. Fellas, you got a few parsecs to spare for the headlines?

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noise

_____ a word from this week’s first sponsor, Factor.

And now, back to the headlines.

In our lead story tonight, in "Preaching Across the Haisle" news ... The Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde, in her capacity as the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, gave a sermon the day after the inauguration a very stupid event that we apparently have called the "Service of Prayer for the Nation." Donald Trump was in attendance, and Reverend Budde told him to stop being evil toward trans people and immigrants. Because that's NOT what Jesus would do. That's right...a Christian person got morality right...wrongly. But she landed on ethical, so I'm gonna give some credit. The rest of the Christian community however?...not so much with the credit. At best, they landed in the same place as the reverend...because of a magic book. At worst, they had a meltdown of cognitive dissonance, and denounced the sermon for its flagrant use of the bible to criticize the behavior of bible-believing people in power. Anna?... [*Christian Freakout*] That's right, one Christian leader said a good thing and it's a Christian freakout.

And a big thanks to Jason for sending the link to ScathingNews@gmail.com. If Jason ever meets Eli in person, Jason has the option of handing Eli one object...no larger than a very large breadbox...that Eli has to carry around for the rest of that day.

Can I put it up my butt?

...TBD...we'll see how limber you are.

In other words, Jason, don't bring a ferret if you're overly fond of it.

So here's what happened at the stupid prayer thing. Quick piece of context: In order to get Trump to provide FEMA relief to certain disaster areas in California during his first term, Trump's advisors had to show him election stats to prove that he'd be helping REPUBLICANS too. So with that in mind, Reverend Budde directly addressed Donald Trump and said: (quote) "In the Name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now. There are gay, lesbian, and transgender children in Democratic, Republican, and independent families. Some who fear for their lives."

Hey if you have to tell someone that their side is ALSO afraid you'll facistically murder them in order to elicit some empathy maybe you should not invite them to your special god party

Also, if you're trying to elicit empathy from a guy who threw paper towels at hurricane survivors and stole children to punish their parents for misdemeanors, maybe wishing to an imaginary being *is* the job for you.

From there, Reverend Budde made a similar plea regarding immigrants, asking for mercy and compassion for kids who fear their parents being taken away, and for refugees seeking asylum from persecution. Again...heart is in the right place...good stuff. But the larger context is a humble cleric beseaching his highness for a shred of mercy if his noble heart has an extra minute. At a state-sponosored explicitly Christian service in 2025.

Yeah I mean if she really cared she's got a super clear shot from up there. Money where your mouth is marian

I like to think she was at least praying for a heart attack in the back of her head the whole time.

So here's what we got in terms of responses to the sermon. Like I said, a handful of liberal Christian leaders gave support, but that support was based on the idea that good behavior needs to be "Christ-like." But those people didn't write Project 2025, and they're not part of Trump's inner circle. People like Tony Perkins, on the other hand, ARE in that circle. Perkins is the president of the Family Research Council, a Christian hate group and theocracy activism squad that was intimately involved with Donald Trump while he attempted to overturn the 2020 election. And according to Perkins: "What we heard today [from Reverend Budde] was not a prophetic voice from the church, but rather pathetic." A few days later, he was still in a big snit,

and he added: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state [...] We cannot speak prophetically to those to whom we're seeking approval. We do not need the approval of government. We are called as a prophetic voice of God."

Okay but wouldn't that make it MORE important that you give politicians advice? Or are you going for more of a cassandra form of prophesy ther?

Yeah, to the extent that those words mean anything (which is a very minor extent, admittedly), they support Budde, even if you disagree with her.

We also got a prominent Christian leader who focused more on the science. According to William Wolfe, executive director at the Center for Baptist Leadership (and former Trump administration staff member), it's about an important branch of biology called GNOSTIC biology. Quote: "Mass immigration and transgenderism are fundamentally gnostic heresies. They both deny the reality and the goodness of the physical world — nations on one hand, and our God-given bodies on the other."

Man nothing gives away your argument faster than your reliance of an internet meme's misunderstanding of the definition of a word huh?

Although the conflation of transness and immigration status is horrifically intriguing. You have to wonder if he's foreshadowing banning Mexicans from using public restrooms or attempts to deport trans chicks to, like, Transylvania. Could go either way.

And that brings us to the church of the Daily Wire...Ben Shapiro's news and media group. It might sound like I was joking...but the Daily Wire's entire mission is religious conservative anti-wokeism...and that's one of the most pervasive versions of religion in the country right now. So naturally, they hated hearing a reverend dismantle their hypocrisy. That led to Daily Wire reporter Megan Basham making a statement. She's also the author of *Shepherds for Sale*, which tells the gripping story of America's religious institutions getting secretly co-opted by Barack Obama, and the founder of Ebay, and of course George Soros. So THAT LADY...who wrote THAT book...said the following: "The left-wing infiltration into churches has for decades been organized & well funded by secular foundations intent on hollowing out their spiritual doctrines & replacing them with political programs. This is the fruit."

God can you imagine how awful it would be for one political party to completely take over the church to accomplish its religious goals? Perish the thought!

"Also, they're Megan Basham, author of *Shepherd for Sale*… shit. Went too far again."

Lots of bad news in there...kinda the standard these days...but at least we got a bit of a silver lining. Turns out our long con is working. Our team of secular moles WAS able to infiltrate

America's churches over the decades and make em all beta-cucks. OR...that's insane but they're worried about it. Either way, I'll take it.

Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde rebukes Trump at "Service of Prayer for the Nation" in DC:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EShelISWy4
Christians get their responses wrong from every angle:
https://www.christianpost.com/news/5-christians-react-to-bishops-sermon-rebuking-trump.html

And in "Rab-Bias" news ... As the podcast's token person born jewish, I answer a lot of impotant questions. Is it too hot in here? Is it too early for a little dinner? And is it antisemitic to require jewish schools teach literally fucking anything to call themselves a school? Well this week I'm proud to announce that the answers are definition yes, no, and of course fucking not. So we're gonna talk about it.

With all the neo-nazis calling Elon Musk's behavior "wacky heiljinks", I wanna be sensitive to claims of antisemitism right now. And I'm done...this one is NOT.

The Heil is okay, Heath. The Anti Defamation League put out a statement that said "First they have to come for the socialists and trade unionists. We've got plenty of time."

Right so first off, big thanks to Stormy Decisis for sending a link to the story to ScathingNews@gmail.com. Stormy, we would never treat you the way we treated Karl last week. As many of you know by now, Karl took his own life in response to our terrible cruel words and we couldn't be more filled with sorrow. We've learned. We've grown. And we wish we hadn't cost a life to do it. ScathingNews@gmail.com

I'm sorry, Karl… who is very much alive.

Yeah so this story comes to us from the jewish news syndicate which, side new , JNS folks, if I may jew to jew. I think maybe we dont call our stuff a syndicate. I know its a correct use of the word I just think its not in our best interest ya know?

It's kinda like "manifesto." It's just a declaration of ideas, but now you're yelling as you're being dragged out of a Yankee Candle store when people read your thing.

Exactly. So if you're not aware, jews have these things called yeshivas which are basically private religious schools. And while some of them deliver what would be considered a relatively normal education, way MORE of them exclusively teach religious stuff to kids as young as elementary school. And by religious stuff, I mean that at some of these schools they don't teach regular books, don't teach classes in English, and don't teach girls…at ALL. So it's way more extreme than your average American religious education.

And we're all well aware of what a huge statement that really is.

I was about to ask if they don't teach girls...the human beings...like those people don't get an equal education...or they don't teach the *concept* of female people, and how that works in reality. But then I realized the answer is YES.

And look...you're allowed to have a fake school that only teaches god stuff. I mean…you shouldn't be…but you are. What you CAN'T have is state certifications and accreditation if you do that stuff…because you're not…teaching real things. And because of these rules, three yeshivas are suing New York State for not calling their schools real schools just because they're…not…real.

You know when a little kid has an imaginary friend...and you fuck up the sketch for a second by bumping into the ghost...and the real kid starts crying? And you know how the kid can't sue you for the bumping tort? The State of New York rests...this was my job today.

Heath is teasing the Geoff Blackwell interview, y'all.

According to the complainant: (quote) "New York categorically refuses to credit any instruction that is a part of their Jewish studies curriculum, despite its academic value and content. It prohibits the yeshivas from teaching required classes with instruction and texts in a foreign language, even though such texts and instruction are central to their heritage and public schools are encouraged to provide foreign language instruction."

"Also, they refuse to let us be a pony."

But that's not all. The state also imposes a (quote) "government-approved reading list on the schools, for the express purpose of exposing their students 'to a range of materials that their parents and schools wouldn't otherwise permit them to read"...and (quote) "It interferes in the process by which the yeshivas hire their faculty, and it refuses to accommodate their values as it relates to the gender profile of their classrooms."

It interferes with NOTHING. They can keep doing all the stupid bigot stuff, just without getting a sticker from New York at the end. They can even make their own sticker.

And to be clear, that last one was a somehow-indignant way of saying "they limit our misogyny." As Heath points out, they *don't*, but even if they were right, that's what they'd be right about.

They conclude: "If they (meaning the students) can't devote sufficient time to Jewish studies with instruction in their original language that utilizes primary texts taught by a faculty hand-picked by them to model behavior in conformity with their values and heritage while maintaining the autonomy and authority to select which material students read in a classroom whose composition reflects their principles, then they are no longer Jewish schools." <yes?...good?> And again, as the cast jew, let me translate: "If we're not allowed to teach

nothing in a dead language to only the boys BY only the boys, it's not judaism." And I speak for the rest of judaism and sanity when I say…absolutely fuckin not.

Jewish groups complain about lack of accreditation for religious schools: https://www.jns.org/four-brooklyn-yeshivahs-file-federal-complaint-against-ny-education-department/

And on that note, we're gonna take a quick break for a word from this week's other sponsor, Adam and Eve.

HEADLINES B:

And in "X-Communication" news ... We have a story about Twitter's AI chatbot and Satan. Twitter recently made their Grok AI chatbot available for free to everyone on the platform, and observant Christians noticed something that might be a sign of pure evil, hiding in plain sight. And sadly, I'm NOT talking about the nazi salute from the company's owner during the inauguration. Or the 2nd nazi salute. No no...the controversy is about the Grok logo, which many are saying resembles an upside-down broken crucifix.



I mean…its an x…but thats all his stupid fuckin logos. The man has no other ideas Christian should RELATE

Imagine all the great reasons to fear a powerful AI in the hands of Elon Musk that you have to swerve around to land on this one.

So what happens when the world's richest man buys one of the biggest social media platforms in existence, buys an election for Donald Trump, becomes the head of a newly-invented government department, goes to the inauguration, and does two very explicit "sieg heil" gestures? Well...that means a very serious journalism team needs to do some digging...into the logo for the chatbot. And that journalism team is *The Christian Post*. And the next question of course is...how do you investigate that? The answer is...you ask the chatbot to tell you about its logo. So they got on Twitter, fired up Grok AI, and asked: "Why does your new logo resemble an upside-down broken cross?" And the response from Grok said it was a "design choice" that symbolizes "non-conformity" and "rebellion against dogma." Grok also added: "In some contexts, a broken cross might be reminiscent of historical or cultural artifacts where crosses are

depicted as broken to signify defeat, change, or transformation. Here, it might imply that Grok aims to transform or evolve the way AI interacts with humans."

Wow just when I thought AI couldn't get more irritating than it already was it added douche bros idea of revolutionary to itself

Yeah, "Why a broken cross?" Because a Che Guevara poster was taken.

So that response made *Christian Post* reporter Ian Giatti VERY suspicious. Especially when Grok started speaking in 3rd person. So Giatti did what any good journalist would do; he asked Grok the same question again...but like...for realsies you have to tell me. This time, Grok completely denied the broken cross allegation, and said the logo is actually (quote) "a stylized representation of a brain, symbolizing intelligence and thought. The lines and curves in the icon are meant to evoke the complexity and connectivity of neural pathways in a brain, rather than any religious symbol."

Quick reminder of how bright AI chatbots are; there are no curves in this logo.

Look. I know I'm not gonna change people's minds about what AI is or isnt but please, I'm begging you, stop asking the bingo ball machine its deepest secrets. I PROMISE it doesn't have them

So now our intrepid journalist is VERY confused. Multiple answers that contradict. How do you proceed from there? Apparently you ask a third time. And after silently weeping with laughter for several minutes, Grok composed itself and said: "The logo's resemblance to a broken cross appears to be coincidental rather than intentional [...] without any explicit reference to Christian or anti-Christian symbolism." So that's when Mr. Giatti reached out to the human beings at Grok for a comment. They have not responded. But Giatti wasn't done with his investigation. He works at the CHRISTIAN POST, goshdarnit! So he googled "Elon Musk" and found some disturbing evidence that might prove a connection to Satan the prince of darkness. In particular, Giatti found a very secret photo from 2022 of Musk wearing satanic armor...taken during the press junket at Heidi Klum's Halloween Party, presented by Prime Video. The armor is often called the "Devil's Champion"...(at costume stores)...and it features a goat's head insignia with an upside-down cross on the chest plate.



I mean if the article takes a hard right turn into “sorry our president is taking orders from THIS guy” I’m ready to join the panic

I guarantee that nobody spoke to him that night without learning how tactically sound the armor design was.

So now Giatti's found a thread, and he keeps pulling. He does some more googling, and he finds an interview that Elon did with Jordan Peterson last year. And during that interview, Elon mentioned that he's working on building a supercomputer in Memphis, Tennessee...which has the same name as the Memphis of ancient Egypt, a place that worshipped a pantheon of gods. Musk added: "Perhaps that's where our new god will come from."

Okay to be fair the christian post didn’t have to do their own freak out for that. Peterson’s response is probably weeping postmodern consignment while dressed at the riddler

This reporter sucks. It would be *so easy* to convince me Elon Musk is a magical goat demon. There is no other human I’m more primed to think that about, and he’s still blowing it.

So now Giatti is in a FULL PANIC...and he finds ANOTHER piece of satanic evidence. So to close out the article, we get one final terrified Christian grievance: Elon's company called Neuralink. They're currently developing an implantable microchip that interfaces between your brain and a computer. And that's exactly like the mark of the beast on your hand or your forehead that gets mandated by the UN Secretary General with a communist accent...secretly the Antichrist...who controls the world in every Christian apocalypse movie. According to Giatti, this has already aroused suspicion from bioethicists AND Christian teachers. And those are both real and important.

The Christian Post is very suspicious of Grok AI having a logo that looks like a broken cross: https://www.christianpost.com/news/we-asked-grok-whether-its-new-logo-is-a-broken-cross.html

And finally tonight, in “Isidore Opening is a door Closing” news, I’ve got a bit of a depressing update to offer you. You remember how last week, when we were talking to Geoffrey Blackwell, Legal Director for American Atheists, and he talked about how they had to be careful *not* to challenge some theocratic laws for fear that the Supreme Court would create a terrifying precedent that further eroded our religious freedoms? And you remember how, on episodes 523, 524, 593, and 601 we talked about the state of Oklahoma trying to publicly fund the St. Isidore Catholic school by calling it a “charter school”? So yeah, last week the Supreme Court agreed to hear the appeal on that one.

Not so much a branch of government anymore...more like HR for Christ-themed grievances.

Does anyone know how we ended theocracy the last time it was in charge. I remember it was in france but the details are foggy…

So if you remember this story for anything, it will probably be Oklahoma Attorney General (and man whose name would be out of place anywhere but foreclosing on the family farm in a dust-bowl era docu-drama) Gentner Drummond. He’s the unlikely secular hero who stood up to this ridiculous effort by reminding Christians that they were creating a precedent that could be used to force them to pay for Muslim schools. And ultimately, the Oklahoma Supreme Court backed him up in a 7-1 decision that read, in part, “fucking duh.”

And the 1 vote against was probably some old white guy thinking: "Ok but we'll just ban Muslim people...don't we already do that? And if not, it goes to Christ HR...we're all good." And the other old white guys were like "Dude you're doing the scam wrong...whatever 7-1 is fine."

But there is no element of religious jurisprudence so settled that the Holy Roman Epistolic iteration of the Supreme Court wouldn’t like to revisit it. So they’re taking up the case — which they’d have no reason to do if they didn’t wanna overturn the motherfucker. And to be clear what we’re talking about here, this is a school that — because of religious exemptions to nondiscrimination rules — would be allowed to fire teachers for being pregnant or gay, would be able to deny students based on their gender identity or sexual orientation, would *not* require teachers to be certified in any way, and would *not* abide by state sponsored curriculum. It’s a thing that shouldn’t even be allowed to exist, and their goal is to force Oklahomans to pay for it.

All to the detriment of their public school system. It's ranked 44th out of 50 though, so they've got a cushion.

Right, the thing to remember is that they're not fighting for their thing that should be illegal to be legal, they're fighting for YOU to pay for it.

Now, ultimately there are two levels of bad here in terms of the outcome. The less bad is that the SCOTUS sides with the school and says that it *isn’t* unconstitutional and that the state *can* fund it. That’s a lie and a disaster, but the *more* bad outcome is that the SCOTUS decided that

denying the school the money is unconstitutional and that the state *must* fund it. Which, based on what we saw in Maine, seems like the more likely outcome. So it's entirely possible that the end result of this case is that *all* religious schools are suddenly publicly funded, at which point all non-discrimination laws and laws about educational standards in schools are moot.

Essentially Christ HR would declare the establishment clause of the 1st Amendment to be canceled because it's a macro-aggression against our lord and savior.

Of course, there is still a narrow path to victory — that is, maintenance of the status quo. Amy Coney Barrett has apparently recused herself from this case; she hasn't officially stated why, but she has a relationship with somebody who's been representing the school, so it's probably that. Regardless, that's a sure vote for theocracy they won't have. That being said, you could probably get "Noah has to love Jesus" through this court with a two vote majority, so I'm certainly not holding out hope.

SCOTUS to hear case of taxpayer-funded religious school in Oklahoma:
https://www.friendlyatheist.com/p/the-supreme-court-will-decide-if

And with apologies that we've apparently exited the era of light, wacky stories to close the headlines, we'll wrap it up there. Heath, Eli; thanks as always.

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And when we come back, Heath will tell us about all those other tabs he has open.

GAWebsites

Being an atheist means believing that zero is the number of gods. And being a GOOD atheist means you're not done. You have to believe in good things and then DO good things. And speaking of doing that wrong, we're gonna talk about the Republican Atheists. A few episodes back, I mentioned their angry email that yelled "THERE ARE DOZENS OF US!" Well...it looks like I was giving em way too much credit with that joke. There seem to be MAYBE dozen. But theoretically, they represent a group of people, and they're allowed to vote. That's the bad news. The GOOD news?...they have a website, and it's so very sad. So today, we're gonna fire up a segment called GAW...*God Awful Websites*.

So Noah has subject permanence, so he's aware that he's been here on the show the whole time. We also have Eli.

What new treats and japes will I bring. Only by summoning me will you learn!

My thing, actually, is that I feel the need to introduce you. So Heath's still here, everybody!

So I'll start with my experience of finding their site. By which I mean...NOT finding their site. I googled "Republican Atheists", and I did NOT get their site at the top. Instead, the top results were mostly surveys about the absurdity of those 2 words...atheist and Republican...going together. Might have something to do with the Republican Party having a platform written by literal Christian dominionist lunatics hoping to appease the god of the bible and therefore prevent weather-based smiting. <Or encourage it, depending on geography.> And of course they wanna oppress anyone who doesn't go along with god's law. All that being said, these atheist Republican people DO exist. According to the numbers I found, approximately 1 in 20 Republicans describe themselves as atheist or agnostic. For Democrats, it's about 1 in 5.

And that's just the ones who admit they want to kill god!

So we'll get to the tragic site of the Republican Atheists in a minute. But first, we're gonna talk about Pew Research, which has better SEO based on the title of the Republican Atheist group. Because Pew Research earned it. In terms of demographic breakdown, Republican atheists have Gen X as their biggest cohort...and the overall group is about 70% male and 84% white. It's similar for atheist Democrats, but we're a bit younger, less male, less white, we make more money, and we have more education. Big picture...the prototype for the average Republican atheist is a mildly-educated middle-aged white guy who's mad about something stupid and whose family doesn't care for him. And I posted an example...which happens to be the headshot for one of their board members.



He looks like if you asked AI to generate “guy who ruins a school board meeting”

I don’t know the context of this photo, but my guess is that this man just got done telling you how racist his supervisor is against white people.

So I scrolled down past the demographic surveys...and the questions on Reddit and Quora that sounded like nature enthusiasts on NatGeo wondering about this CURIOUS species called "atheistus republicanus" and what it might look like...and one article from *USA Today* entitled "Can you be an atheist and a conservative?...I'm proof you can."

Spoiler for the rest of this segment. The secret is RACISM

Yeah, you know how they say a Libertarian is a conservative with a bong? A Republican Atheist is a Libertarian who doesn’t smoke weed.

And after all that stuff, at result #8...if you don't count Reddit and Quora threads...I found RepublicanAtheists.com. The landing page starts with their ABOUT section, and it says: "Republican Atheists was founded in 2017. This group is for those who identify as Atheist, Agnostic, Secular and related...and are registered Republicans or take interest in the Republican Party. Republican..." End of section.

I get it. You want a list of three. Noah and heath aren't around to check your spelling

Okay, but we "take an interest in the Republican party." We write headlines about them all the time. I feel like we have chapter presidencies in our futures, guys.

Their landing page also has a collection of links to organizations they believe are allied with the idea of atheist conservatism. That includes the Victims of Communism Memorial Foudation, GunSafety.org, and Turning Point USA (or TP-USA). That's the conservative propaganda squad founded by Charlie Kirk that advocates for "more freedom"...which is very often synonymous with "Christian religious freedom to do bigotry." You know...atheist stuff. They also have a link to FriendlyAtheist.com, which is run by friend of the show Hemant Mehta. He is NOT a Republican. I reached out to Hemant, and here's what he had to say about the Republican Atheists: (quote) "It's a group that pretends to represent a quiet but growing demographic...but does absolutely nothing to highlight why atheists should be Republicans, nor do they challenge all the Christian Nationalism in the GOP. I'm not just mad because they're Republican. I'm mad because the group is completely incompetent at doing its ONE JOB."

Yeah, lest it get lost in the discussion, it would actually be really useful to have an effective group of Republican atheists trying to tamp down the theocracy in Republican circles. Instead, we have a group of idiots trying to tamp down the liberalism in atheist circles.

Yeah not great. But if anyone's interested in sponsorship, the Republican Atheists DO have advertising opportunities available. Based on the advertising section of their homepage, it appears they're already working with a company called "ADVERTISE HERE", but I imagine they'd be open to new clients.

When I went to their site, my ad blocker thanked me for the night off and called its girlfriend.

In addition to those helpful links, they also have a dedicated RESOURCES page. And that consists of 5 videos that are "general recommended viewing." The first one is called "Searching for the Elusive Republican Professor on American University Campuses." Turns out I was able to track one down...he was elusive and scrappy...an obscure guy called Samuel Alito. Also every other law professor in every law school that's part of the Federalist Society. There's also a video called "The Swedish Theory of Love"...which was sadly NOT what I was expecting. There's something called "How Quickly We Forget...Terrorism in the 1970s." That video is unavailable. There's a video called "The French Revolution", and the caption from the Republican Atheists tells us: "A time when LEFTIST atheists did very bad things." That video is unavailable. And finally, a video called "Six Minutes on the True Purpose of University

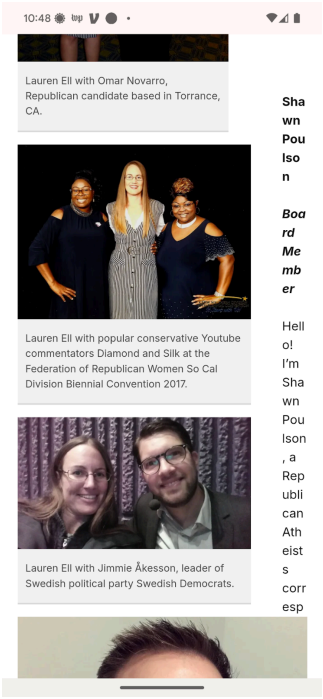
Education"...by JORDAN PETERSON. He's one of those Republican atheists who's also an evangelical Christian apologist and does public debates about it.

Its like if 5 of the 6 testimonials on my website were from my ex girlfriends about why they broke up to

Alright let's meet the leadership team. First up, we have founder and President Lauren Ell. According to her bio: "Ell has identified as Atheist for over a decade and registered as a Republican in 2015. She was born and raised in Southern California and currently lives in Sweden most of the year. Lauren has a history with epilepsy and has been seizure-free for 4 years."

Okay, unless you're worried your arguments will be mistaken for epileptic seizures, I don't see any reason to include that detail.

Next up on the leadership team we have Shawn Poulson. He's listed as a board member and correspondent, but you can't read about that until you scroll through an entire page of his oversized headshot that he didn't know how to resize. <It's even worse on mobile. The opening line of his intro is reduced to a four-character wide column along the right side of the page.>



He's the prototype of the middle-aged white guy whose family doesn't like him from earlier. And here's the bio for Shawn: "Hello! <HI SHAWN> <And yes, on mobile, "Hell" and "O!" are on separate lines.> I'm Shawn Poulson, a Republican Atheists correspondent from Maryland. After committing to atheism 5 years ago, I began my learning on philosophy, theology, and its application in morality and politics. My findings have led me to align with the Republican Party."

Okay I know that its a really annoying lie when christians are like “atheists are just as religious at christians are” but when you say you COMMITTED to atheism your kinda making their point

And rounding out the leadership team, we have a board member named VACANT, another board member named VACANT, the Director of Election Affairs...VACANT, the regional manager for the Northeast...VACANT, the regional manager for the Midwest...VACANT, the regional manager for the South...Shawn Poulson...already met him...and the regional manager for the West...VACANT. In addition to the response from Hemant that you already heard, he also added: "The 'LEADERSHIP' team [leadership in quotes] has more vacancies than members." And the math checks out.

So your saying I have a chance? Because I dont identify as a member of the republican party or interested in it but I might be convinced to be republican…elipses…

Why would you add those positions!? There’s no rule that says your website has to list all the positions you wish you had people for.

But don't worry...they have some more people in the group, including a number of "CORRESPONDENTS." The correspondent for Illinois, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island is a very busy person named VACANT. No other info about that person. But let's meet the rest of my favorite correspondents based on their bios. I'll start with South Carolina Correspondent Jake Goss. According to Jake: "I live in Myrtle Beach and work in the construction industry. I'm a father of 2 children still in school. As far as culture is concerned, I would say I represent the rock and roll extreme sports crowd. I've been a member of, or have followed, most conservative and atheist pages on Facebook."

“As far as personality is concerned, I have a Monster Energy baseball cap.”

I feel like Lauren just messaged everyone on facebook asking everyone to introduce themselves and then just pasted answers onto the wordpress website.

Arizona Correspondent Scott Root: "I've been a registered Republican since 1973 – that’s over 40 YEARS. <Cut to Shawn Poulson double checking on his fingers.> I'm affiliated with a local Republican club, and I've attended numerous conservative events. I've been self-employed since 1983."

“That’s also over 40 YEARS.”

Texas Correspondent Darrel Scott: "I voted for Republican presidents my whole life, and I've voted for Republicans on most occasions for lower office. I became a pronounced atheist in 2012, and I've had skepticism of gods for over 20 years before then."

I’d like to call right now that darrel is like gpt 1.0. He’s the first attempt.

Florida Correspondent Charles Hunter: "I've always been a registered Republican and a conservative in my personal views. I am born and raised in North Florida and I'm an avid outdoors man. <do you mean homeless charles?> 2nd Amendment is very important to me and my family, as are all the other amendments. I've been an Atheist my entire life."

His family is very adamant about not quartering soldiers.

I would like charles to rank the importance of the amendments to him.

Georgia Correspondent Chris Jansen: "I have a degree in molecular biology and I work in IT. <Must be a great molecular biologist, then.> I've been a Republican ever since elementary school, where I wrote fan letters to Ronald Reagan."

Kansas Correspondent Randy Hemm: "I'm a veteran of the Air Force. I've been a Republican most of my life except one time in a moment of weakness when I voted for Jimmy Carter and regretted it ever since. I'm an advocate of the 2nd Amendment and I hold a Concealed Carry Card."

Dear atheist republican lord. Forgive me for falling for jimmy sweet sugary southern tongue. He led me astray lord but never again!

Also, when you brag about having a concealed carry card, you negate it. These nincompoops can't help but saying "I'm hiding a gun on my person!"

Utah Correspondent Ramon Homan: "My origins began thoroughly inculcated in the Christian church. Luckily, I left that bubble and joined the Marine Corps and subsequently the San Diego County Sheriff's Department. How long have I been an atheist? Although I did my best to believe what was taught to me by loved ones, I would align with Pascal's Wager in that, 'I'm so made that I cannot believe.' No matter how much I wanted to believe, I could not."

I guess I'd have to quote my close personal friend reh-nez- dez-kartz…

California Correspondent Roy Latham: "I've been interested in reasoning and debate for 50 years, and active on the Internet since the mid-90s. I have over 200 debates (about 200 wins, 15 loses [sic]) on debate.org, if you would like to see some. [nope...debate.org is shut down...continuing...] I like science topics like climate change. My wife is an immigrant from Taiwan; she has a PhD in mathematics."

She's who I lost the debates to.

Citing your win-loss record against Christians on "Debate dot org" is like putting your estimated IQ from a "how many triangles do you see" meme on your business card.

Missouri Correspondent Max DeVill: <An atheist named “Max Devil? Is this a Christiano brothers production!?> "I was born in St. Joseph, Missouri – Home of the PONY EXPRESS! I perform escape artistry and mentalist effects for audiences under the moniker Doctor Max DeVill."

Literally NO sign of him on the internet but at least I know who I square up on the opposite side of during our rumble

Dibs on the guy who had a job in 1983.

So we've met the official squad. But it's also very important that we all know that the Republican Atheists DO have friends as well. I learned about that from their dedicated FRIENDS page. They have 5 friends. And literally one is a Black friend. They have a page about their one Black friend. But the most prominent friend...at least based on her enormous photograph because she, too, is incapable of resizing an image...is Jillian Becker, a British-American commentator who was born in Johannesburg, South Africa. <She does NOT have a black friend.> She's also an author...who's been PUBLISHED...she's listed on the friends page as a "PUBLISHED AUTHOR." <They’d been burned by non-published authors before> And she's the editor-in-chief for TheAtheistConservative.com. It's a blog by her. She's the editor-in-chief of herself on that blog. I checked it out, and here's what I found in the most recent posts...

- There's a post called: "The English Political Hero-Martyr Tommy Robinson." He's the soccer hooligan turned bigotry advocate that Marsh told us about in episode 601.
- We also have "What Trump's Glorious Victory Could Mean."
- Probaby the end of her blog
- And most recently, "President Trump Bestrides the World." And Becker said of his presidency: (quote) "It's gonna be wonderful to watch. Encouraging. Exciting. People...people...[sic] everywhere are rightly in awe of the most powerful man in the world, who is also friendly, dependable though totally unpredictable, proud but with no snobbery in him, and with a glorious sense of humor all his own."
- If we could not write about our preferred presidential candidates like I wrote about edward cullin when I was 13 that would be awesome

Their good friend Jillian Becker...who is 92 years old by the way...also served on a committee within the UK Pariliament that advised Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on terrorist issues. Nailed it...no troubles there. And Becker is best known for a book she wrote called *Hitler's Children* that I'm sure everyone remembers as the Newsweek Book of the Year...for Europe...for 1977.

She also left the honorary board at FFRF but not on purpose a strong wind just blew into the room

Another important section from the site is their shop. That includes a wide variety of books recommended by their good friend Jillian Becker...(the author of *Hitler's Children*). The topics

include conservative politics, free-market economics, and fiction. <It's the same picture.> And each book has an Amazon link that appears as a broken thumbnail.

But most importantly in the shop...is a very exciting section called MISCELLANEOUS. By which they mean..."very sad etsy shop for Trump-themed homemade jewelry created by group president Lauren Ell's friend." Here's what they have available...

- The Trump pendant necklace, stamped with "[heart emoji] TRUMP" on one side and "#KAG" on the other side. ($129)
- The Trump cuff links, stamped with TRUMP. (also $129)
- The Trump bracelet - GIFT IDEA - <Yeah, you'll wanna keep those other ones for yourself.> stamped like the pendant, with TRUMP on the front and #KAG on the back. ($79)
- The Trump necklace, which says "KEEP AMERICA GREAT - TRUMP 20/20." ($99)
- And of course the LOVE TRUMP earrings - stamped...you guessed it..."LOVE TRUMP." ($119)



We should point out that the pictures of these are laid over an American flag, but, like, the star part. So it's REALLY hard to see the contours of the jewelry itself.

So what's the Republican Atheist team been up to these days? Well...aside from selling homemade jewelry for their weird friend...they also do some very serious activism. According to their calendar section, they're especially focused on meet-and-greets. Their most recent event was a meet-and-greet in Riverside, California in September of 2023. <It takes a lot of planning. They're ramping the next one up slowly.> They also had a similar event in Idaho Falls, Idaho that same week. Before that, President Lauren Ell did an interview with The Urban Conservative...that was in June of 2020. And of course they had their first ever meet-and-greet in May of 2019...at the Cheesecake Factory in Phoenix, Arizona. Those are literally the 4 most recent events on their calendar.

Lauren if you want me to show you how to quit your embarrassing blog I can show you…we share a name and a LOVE for silver jewlery

So I'm guessing you're all ready to join up. Well good news...according to their BECOME A MEMBER page: "Republican Atheists is excited to offer — *for the first time to the public* — the opportunity to become a member of the organization." <Where did their members come from before they added 'the public'?> And they only have 2 requirements. (1): You have to identify as an atheist. And (2): you have to be a registered Republican AND/OR align with the Republican Party. <Apparently they've changed their minds on just "Republican dot dot dot."> And membership comes with perks. In addition to having exclusive access to their official private

forum, you also get extra power. It says: "Republican Atheists members' input will be recognized more than input from the general public." It's only $35 dollars a year, and we might have to take them over just for fun. And so we can take over that sterling silver GOLDMINE of a merch store.

Ya'll if were gonna hostile takeover the republican atheist I have some t shirt and slogan ideas RIGHT away

I'll poison the SHIT out of that salad bar.

One other detail that needs to mentioned. In addition to those meet-and-greets I mentioned from the calendar section, they also list a very important media appearance from August of 2017. Group President Lauren Ell did an interview with an excellent show called COGNITIVE DISSONANCE. That appearance did NOT include a link to the episode. Mostly because it went very badly for Lauren Ell. Mere minutes into the interview, she tried to connect liberal protest movements to a conspiracy by George Soros, and here's what happened...

[clip of the hang-up moment]
(ends with Cecil saying "This is the dumbest interview I've ever done in my entire life...we're done.")
[*dial tone*]

Delightful hang-up! Alright, thanks for taking that absurd journey with us through the online world of Republican Atheists and their mangled HTML. God Awful Websites...signing off.