

Welcome to your Atheist guide! Most of the below is written by Steve, with some additions from Edd. Please contact me on Discord by DM (ID: EddGabriel#1003) or in the unofficial server in the #expansion-chat channel if you have further questions or issues.

Atheist (Townfolk)

Ability: The Storyteller can break the game rules & if executed, good wins, even if you are dead. [No evil characters]

How to run

Reminder: Atheist is absolutely an experienced-players-only character and, massively more so, an experienced-ST-only character. Treat with extreme caution.

During setup, if the Atheist will be in play, do not add any evil characters, instead add any combination of Townfolk or Outsiders to match the player count. Don't add evil characters anyway, under the argument that you're just using the Atheist to break the "no evil characters" rule, that's literally the opposite of the point of the Atheist.

If the Atheist is in play and the Storyteller is executed, good wins. Any living player may nominate the Storyteller and normal execution rules apply in terms of vote count requirements. If the Atheist is not in play and the Storyteller is executed, evil wins. Good loses if there are just two players alive, even if the Atheist is dead. If it is not possible for an Atheist to be in play, the Storyteller cannot be nominated.

Once the characters are out, it very much depends what else is on the script as to how to proceed. In a broad sense, you may now break any game rules as you see fit in order to maintain the illusion of it being a normal game. This should generally take the form of deciding what Demon/Minions you want to simulate being in play and making choices accordingly (you probably want the relevant evil team reminder tokens available to allow you to track your choices).

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The major priority in an Atheist game is that the whole point is for the players to have fun, which they will not do if you're just breaking rules because you want to. You should be making choices that are designed to be a puzzle for your players to solve, not a sandbox where you manipulate them for your own entertainment. Therefore, you should only break the game rules to give false information or to simulate the actions of evil characters that could be in play but aren't. Avoid creating arbitrary rules or changing the win conditions. The players need to know how they can win the game with an Atheist in order to enjoy it.

Much more info on what sort of rule-breaking/choices you could/should be making is below.

If the Atheist is the Drunk, you would have to have decided this before putting tokens in the bag, as you will have needed to put evil characters into the bag. From that point on, ignore all effects of the Atheist ability as it is not in play – evil wins if the ST is executed, the ST may not break game rules etc.

Interesting interactions

Boomdandy: It is possible, in an Atheist game, for the Storyteller to decide that a certain player is going to have the Boomdandy ability and for all but 3 players will die if they are executed. If you are likely to do this, you should confirm to your players that if they think it is an Atheist game, they can point to you, the Storyteller, as part of the Boomdandy pointing and win the game if you are “killed” as a result.

Courtier/Innkeeper/Minstrel/Puzzlemaster/Sailor/Sweetheart: An Atheist who is successfully poisoned or made drunk will (usually) immediately end the game, due to no Demons being alive and the ST no longer being able to break the rules in order to stop this rule ending the game. I would advise using your Storyteller powers to avoid this, as it's likely to be an unsatisfying end.

Lunatic: If you are putting a Lunatic in play, you would put one Demon token in the bag. They would, however, have to be the Lunatic and not the Demon, even though they drew a red token.

Marionette: If you want to make the Atheist a Marionette, you will need to use method 2 under the Marionette setup above and set the Demon to be the neighbour of the Atheist in order to make them the Marionette.

Philosopher/Pit-Hag: If an Atheist ability comes into play partway through a game, the Storyteller may start breaking the rules and, if executed, good wins. This does not remove the evil characters/players from play.

Politician: If the Politician is most responsible for their team losing in an Atheist game, they can then turn evil and win.

Riot: if the Storyteller is nominated due to an Atheist being on the script, players vote as normal. If the vote puts the Storyteller on the block, the game ends with the relevant team winning depending on if there is an Atheist in play or not. If the vote fails, the Storyteller may nominate a player, who dies due to the Riot ability.

So... how do I run Atheist well?

That is the really big question. There are a number of ways to run Atheist well. But mostly, it's about adhering to principles as opposed to knowing particular strategies. You *can* do anything. But what *should* you do? That's the difference.

Your goal is to create a fun game. As always, your number one goal is to facilitate the fun of others. Always have the question "Is this fun for the player?" in mind when making a decision. Players have fun by taking risks, learning things, and solving mysteries, or seeing something that they've never seen happen before.

If the question "Is this fun for the player?" is too vague, use the question "Is this interesting for the player?" instead. If you are doing interesting things, the players will make their own fun amongst themselves.

The big thing to remember is fairness. The Atheist is unfair for the players because they are at your mercy. The Atheist is unfair for the Storyteller because the Storyteller only "wins" when the players win too... so the Storyteller always loses in one respect. A little bit of artful unfairness goes with the character. However, if you ever have that doubt in your mind that what you are doing is reaaally unfair, and not in the spirit of the character, err on the side of caution and do the fair thing instead. You can be much more unfair in the early game, because the players have several days to figure things out. But don't be too unfair on the final day. If you lose, you lose. If you make the game as unfair as it can be, but always leave a chance for good to win, and then they do (or come close!), then that's a fun game for everyone.

Your goal is to "win" by convincing the good team that the Atheist is lying. So, within the bounds of the game rules and a vague sense of fairness, do absolutely everything you can do to get the good team to distrust the Atheist! Do everything you can to get the good team to mistrust each other and execute each other! Create conflicting information. Kill players with their own abilities. Cause multiple deaths at night if there is a Demon on the script that can do it. Do whatever you can! The Atheist should always look as evil as possible though. They know exactly what you are doing! Make evil detecting characters see the Atheist as evil. If the group overwhelmingly thinks one player is evil, that player can see the Atheist as good! They'll both look evil! Do whatever you can to sow discord and mistrust - because when there are only three players alive, they need to be suspicious of each other. Throw all concepts of "game balance" out the window until the final day, and cause as much confusion and distrust as possible.

Keep the most suspicious players alive. When it comes time to kill players at night, kill as a real Demon would. Real Demons kill very trusted players and keep suspicious looking players alive, so that someone other than them gets executed. The exception to this rule is that you may want to keep players alive so that they can use their ability and have it grant false information. eg. keep a Fortune Teller alive until their information seems useful to them. Keep a Virgin alive until they use their ability. There is no need to kill the most powerful player each night. Imagine that the Demon could kill a player but also poison a player and also saw the Grimoire each night. What would they do? Imitate that.

Simulate in-play Minion abilities. It may seem cunning or outrageous to make up abilities or game rules, but act in a simulation of the evil characters that are on the script wherever possible. If a Witch is on the script, feel free to kill a player when they nominate. If a Pit-Hag is on the script, feel free to change players into different characters. But if you do these

things when there is no Witch or Pit-Hag on the Script, the players will quickly figure out that the only way this could happen is if the Storyteller is cheating (which you are!) because of the Atheist. You don't need to pretend that you are a Minion that is acting in a particular way, you just need to make it look like there are Minions and a Demon in the game, and that they are having a real effect. For example, you don't need to "choose one player" when pretending to be the Witch and hope that player nominates. You can kill any player that nominates, deciding in the moment! If you artfully break the rules to make it look like the Minions and Demon are in play, make a mental note of which Minions and Demon that you are simulating, so that you don't accidentally simulate too many Minions or Demons!

Give false information to create conflict. Give whatever information that you think will create conflict between players. Even if there is no drunkenness or poisoning in play. If all the good players believe that all others are good, there is no challenge to overcome. Maybe do this "all players are good" type information if the players are new, or if it is the last thing that the players are expecting. Having them say "there is no way that this is an Atheist game - all our information says that we are all good!" is pretty funny, and a unique challenge for the right group at the right time. Generally though, having several pieces of information that are in conflict with each other creates a puzzle that can only be solved by coming to the conclusion that the puzzle is too difficult to solve - a Gordian knot – and therefore an Atheist game.

Give false information to create a consistent worldview. Pretend that an appropriate number of players are Minions and Demon, and give information that leads the good players to come to this conclusion. This can work really well, but my personal preference is to take the "this information doesn't add up" approach as opposed to the "all information points to Dave and Jill as evil" approach. Whatever works for you. If you do take this approach, maybe make a note in the Grimoire as to what characters you are making Dave and Jill appear to be, so that all your misinformation is consistent.

Use power abilities in such a way as to create conflict. Power type abilities are cool for an Atheist game, because they have a more visceral effect. They are dramatic when they go off. Whenever a character ability could trigger (whether or not it "works"), consider whether or not you want it to work. If there is a Tea Lady, and one of the neighbors is executed, put some thought into whether or not to make that player survive execution. If they do, they confirm the three players as good. If not, that makes them look evil - but are these the players that you want to look evil? Feel free to make an ability work when it shouldn't, or not work when it should. Do whatever you think will make the Atheist look like they are lying.

Play it mechanically straight. Make the game feel like a normal game. If a false Slayer claims Slayer, they don't slay anyone. If 8 players are getting information on one night, give 1, 2, or 3 of them false information, not all 8. Run the votes the same way as you normally would. Answer the Artist question with a yes or no. Pretend to really be thinking about the Savant information while looking into the Grimoire. Move Juggler tokens in the Grimoire when they are making their guesses. If you do everything as you normally would, and make the game seem like a perfectly ordinary, non-Atheist game, the players will really doubt whether or not to execute you. And that is what you want.

Play it emotionally straight. Keep a straight face. Seem nonplussed when players accuse you of breaking the rules. Just like bluffing when you are a player, be courteous, respectful, nice, and yet still say that they are wrong and that there is no Atheist in this game. Play the game well and have a confident vocal tone and body language. There is no need to feel

embarrassed about "cheating" - the Atheist ability encourages you to do so, and this is what the players actually want: a Storyteller that can't be read and is presenting an interesting puzzle. You don't need to be adamant in your insistence that an Atheist is not in play, and it is usually best if you are not.

Make the ST execution rules clear. Be completely honest with the rules of the game. Especially be honest and clear with the rules around executing the Storyteller. Tell the players that they can nominate you whether or not an Atheist is in play, and that you are executed just like a normal player would be. Tell the players that executing you with an Atheist in play means a good win, and executing you if there is no real Atheist results in good losing. All players need to know these rules so that they can execute you with full knowledge of what they are doing. Additionally, don't break any of the rules around this - if you are nominated, and the players vote to execute you, that's it. You lose. No cheating. No bending the rules. The good team won. Game over.

Leave clues. It is rare that the good team will be so disbelieving of the Atheist that they try to execute in the early game. If this is the case, please put your desire to "win" aside and throw them some clues. Maybe make all the information true for a bit? Or give some clues that the Atheist is good. "Trying to win" is your second goal. "Running a fun and fair game" is always your first goal. Again, think like a RPG Dungeon Master / Referee - you want to provide a challenge and to set up the conditions for fun. Then, once those conditions are set you want to play your best, but if you find that things are a little too unfair, then readjust so that they are a little more fair. It is rare that you need to do this.

Congratulate the good team afterwards. The good team will probably win. This is fine. Celebrate them. You set yourself up as the villain of this story, and the point of the villain is to be beaten. Good triumphed, so celebrate with them. You created a fun game, so congratulate yourself too. If you won, do so graciously. Explain where the points of misinformation were, so that the good team can get a sense of where they went wrong and how they could have won. Avoid saying "you should have done this" and instead let the players know that you had fun, and you hope they did too.

Set up a culture of fear by helping previous Atheist bluffs succeed. If the evil team is bluffing as the Atheist, do everything you can to help them win. In particular, you can dare the players to nominate you! Make the dire consequences known and gleefully request that you would like to be nominated so that evil can win! Encourage good players to vote for you! Dare good players to vote for you! Once the good team has executed the Storyteller a few times due to an evil player claiming Atheist, the good team will be much more hesitant to execute you when a real Atheist is in play. Taunting the good team this way takes a sense of familiarity with the players. If they like the humour, then they will like the game you run. With strangers though, you might come across as a bit of an asshole, so please read the room before doing this kind of thing. The Storyteller is seen not just as the person in charge of the game, but the person in charge of the people playing the game. The social organiser. The players need to be able to trust you as a person, even if they don't trust you as a game participant, and blurring the line can cause some problems. For example, if a player becomes afraid to ask private questions because they think you are "on the other team" and will lie to you, that's not cool.

So... how do I run Atheist poorly? Asking for a friend.

Screw with the players! Set up incredibly convoluted scenarios that the players have no chance of figuring out, then win and declare yourself the smartest person in the room! Give the Savant useless information like the color of sky! Tell the Fisherman to "do better"! If you make winning your only goal, it is so easy to do so at the expense of the players fun.

End the game by Storyteller fiat! Out of the blue, say that good loses! Kill 3 players at night to bring the game to two players alive, robbing the players of their final day! Add an evil judge to a game with a Saint! Declare that because you personally decided that Dave was the "good twin" because he was getting true information, that executing Dave results in an evil win! When you are nominated, don't count the votes against you!

Break rules 1 to 4. Don't answer rules questions correctly. Be unpleasant. Ignore requests for private conversations. Break the rules / advice that make a Storyteller a good storyteller "because you can".

Make rules / abilities work in ways that are obviously wrong. This can happen by accident. It's not the end of the world, but the players will quickly figure out an Atheist in play and win.

Gloat when you win. Did the players lose and are salty about it? Make them feel worse.

(For real - *please don't do these things*. Just because you technically can, doesn't mean you should.)

Wait, wut? The Storyteller can win or lose the game? Isn't that broken?

Now that I've thought about it, I regret phrasing things in terms of the Storyteller "winning". If taken out of context, this kind of thinking will make some Storytellers want to win at any cost, even player fun. Instead, how about thinking of things this way...The Storyteller "wins" if the game gets to the final day. That is the Storyteller's goal, as it always is. Did the players have fun? Great, the Storyteller "wins" too. The Storyteller can and should be doing their best to get the game to the final day, because that is what is most fun for the players, and to do this, the Storyteller is encouraged to cause as much strife, misinformation, mistrust and confusion as possible. To do this, the Storyteller is "playing on behalf of the non-existent evil team" up until the final day, and then they let the good team make their decision on what to do. Something like that? If anyone reading this has a good way to phrase things so that the Storyteller gets to "play the game" like a regular player, whilst also keeping a sense of game fairness in mind, I'm happy to rephrase things in this new way.

Why are there no evil characters in an Atheist game?

There are four reasons that there are no evil characters in an Atheist game.

It isn't very fun for the evil players. In Atheist games, one good player starts knowing who the Demon is, and there are 2 to 5 extra good players (usually Townsfolk). This is an absolutely enormous benefit to the good team. It is huge. Being the single evil player in an Atheist game, you'll feel pretty lonely and helpless. Even if there is another evil player (or two) in the game, the good team still starts the game knowing who the Demon is. That can feel pretty unfair.

It is more fun for the good players to play a game where they need to figure out whether everyone is good, than a game where they need to figure out where one player is lying. If

there were evil players in the game, anyone who appears to be lying (possibly due to false information) might actually be evil. This is business as usual. However, with no evil players allowed, each player has an added challenge - to see each player that appears to be lying as possibly good. This completely flips the usual narrative on it's head - instead of false info=evil, false info=good.

In an Atheist game where evil players are present, good wins when they say "We believe the Atheist. Let's execute the Storyteller and win." In an Atheist game where evil players can not be present, good wins when they say "We believe that we are all good, and the Storyteller is screwing with us. Let's execute the Storyteller and win." The latter is much more fun than the former, because the Storyteller is the bad guy, not the evil players.

It is more ironic and poetic to lose in an Atheist game where all players are good as opposed to a game where evil players are present. In an all-good game, the good players did it to themselves. This is funny. In a mostly-good game, the evil players outplayed the good players. This is not funny. All-good players is unique. This makes the character a special event.

But can I put evil characters/players in an Atheist game?

Please don't. There's some debate as to whether a strict reading of the rules allows this, but that's very much not the intent and I would absolutely not recommend it.

Can the Atheist add characters that create evil players?

Yes. The Storyteller can add a Bounty Hunter, a Goon, a Cult Leader etc (and in the latter cases, break the rules to turn them evil on later nights) because the Atheist square brackets only prevent evil characters at setup. Should they do it? Only if you know the group and especially the specific players will be OK with this. A lot of people will not be OK with basically being forced into losing the game because of Storyteller fiat making them evil. In general, ask yourself the questions "Does this lonely evil player have a chance of winning? Will the game be fun for them?" If the answer to both these questions is "no", then I recommend not turning the player evil.

Can the Storyteller tell players they are now evil when they are actually still good?

Yes, it's possible, in an Atheist game, to break the game rule that players know their alignment, but always treat with extreme caution. As always it depends if you think your players are going to enjoy this. If in doubt, err on the side of caution and don't do this unless you're totally sure.

Can I run a whole game without breaking any rules at all?

Sure. If you want. That would make it look like a non-Atheist game, where the evil team isn't causing any havoc. That's fine, if that's what you want.

What am I doing wrong? The Atheist wins games most of the time! 80% or more!

This is fine. The Atheist knows who the Demon is, so it is no surprise that the good team wins the vast majority of the time. Normally, such a character would need to be nerfed, so that it is still fun for the opposing team. With the Atheist, there is no opposing team. Running a game where everyone wins (literally!) is a good thing. Also, Atheist losses tend to be a bit sour. "Oh man, we were all good and we lost." The Storyteller's glee in "winning" can easily be interpreted as the Storyteller having acted unfairly. So keeping Atheist wins to the majority is a good thing.

Why is the Atheist fun?

The Atheist is fun for the Atheist player, because they know everything. They know who the Demon is (the Storyteller), they know that everyone else is good. They know that false information means nothing - it is just the Storyteller's whim. The Atheist's only goal is to convince the majority of the other good players that everyone is good, that they are the Atheist, that there are no evil players and everyone can trust each other. This is a totally unique goal in Clocktower. The Atheist's enemy is the Storyteller, and the Atheist is amongst friends who they need to form into a team. This is pretty interesting.

The Atheist is fun for the good players, because Clocktower is a puzzle game, and this is a unique puzzle. They are being told by the Atheist that everyone is good. Yet, they are being told by their own abilities that certain people are evil. This doesn't add up. The challenge is different to usual. Instead of "find the evil players", the game is "find a possible world where the information that we have makes sense, and if it doesn't, execute the Storyteller!". So, the challenge is not just to find one evil player, but to put the entire puzzle together. Like a jigsaw, you only know if you are missing pieces once you've nearly-completed the puzzle.

The Atheist is fun for the good players because there is a sense of camaraderie in having outsmarted the Storyteller, not the other players. The Storyteller's job is to be as cunning as possible, and the players job is to work together to take the Storyteller down a peg. You can look at this as the players vs the Storyteller, or the players vs the game. Either way, the players have a totally new and unique opponent, and a new sense of camaraderie. That moment where all players realise "I used to believe that player X, Y, and Z were evil, but now I believe we are all good!" is great. Like reverse-Legion.

The Atheist is fun for the Storyteller because it allows them to test their own skill at cunning and misinformation. It truly allows them to be a player. They "play with their friends the way one might play with their food" as the SU&SD review put it. The Storyteller is truly "trying to win" by deceiving as many players as they can that it is not an Atheist game. Also, being able to tell any player any piece of information allows for a great game - it's really fun to watch.

I'm a new Storyteller! Atheist sounded fun, but my players didn't enjoy it. Did I do something wrong, or does Atheist suck?

Probably a bit of both. Any character that gives a lot of power to the Storyteller (Savant, Fisherman etc.) can be tricky for new Storytellers. I generally only recommend these characters for advanced Storytellers. And the Atheist is one of the trickiest. Please get familiar with Trouble Brewing to the point that you can run it in your sleep, then BMR and S&V to the point that you can run it when half asleep, before trying your hand at Atheist. If

you don't know what you are doing, it is easy to accidentally make one side win - and this is not fun for anybody. If you accidentally make good lose, the good team had a bad time because there was nothing they could do. If you accidentally make the good team win, the good team will probably be bored because there was no challenge.

However, even an experienced Storyteller is advised to only run Atheist in an advanced group. You can run Atheist for beginners, but they probably won't appreciate it. This is because the Atheist turns established rules and strategies on their head. Until those rules and strategies become well-established in the minds of the players, breaking them is not a taboo. They need to learn the rules before they break the rules, because otherwise it's not naughty.

When making an Atheist script, what characters does Atheist pair well with?

I think that is not quite the right question. What's more important is that characters are in conflict. Put characters together that will have all sorts of opportunities for clashing information. An Empath's information can clash with an Investigator's. A Tea Lady's "information" can clash with a Devil's Advocate. When selecting characters, it is probably best to add them in pairs, so the players think "If this is an Atheist game, the discrepancy is because of THIS. But if it isn't an Atheist game, the discrepancy is because of THAT." Something like that.

I generally like information, or hidden characters for an Atheist game, and lots of them. This supplies frequent opportunities to lie to players without revealing that there is an Atheist in play. For example, if the Empath, Ravenkeeper, and Oracle all get false information, then nobody knows whether the info is false, or one of the three is lying. However, if I make two players die at night (simulating an Assassin) but I also kill a player for nominating, the players will know that it is an Atheist game if there is only supposed to be one Minion in the game. Giving conflicting information to information-type roles is easiest.

But it can be really fun to combine Atheist with characters that have public effects. Combining an Atheist with a Cerenovus, then actually executing players really convinces some that an Atheist is not in play. Being able to allow the Slayer to slay any player is hilarious! But the slain player knows for certain that it is an Atheist game. Information characters tend to cause confusion. Power characters tend to create more drama, but tell certain players that an Atheist is in play. I had a great game where I woke two players and told them both that the other player was the Evil Twin. I woke them, allowed eye contact, showed one player the Evil Twin token, put the token back in the Grimoire, took the Evil Twin token back out of the Grimoire to show the other player. It worked really well. "Power" characters like this, or Slayer, Golem, Tea Lady and whatnot can be a tonne of fun for the Storyteller, but require a little more attention. Experiment with what works for you.

Do I have to end the game due to game-ending character abilities, like Saint or Mayor?

No. The Storyteller can break any rules. A game can continue after a Saint is executed, or a game can be lost after a no-execution on the final day. However, think about this before doing it. A game where the Saint is saying "I am the Saint! The game should have ended! We should have lost!" is still fun to play. A game where the Mayor is saying "I am the Mayor.

The Storyteller arbitrarily decided to make my ability not work, so we lost." is not fun at all. Generally, I recommend that all game-ending abilities be respected. Unless you've got something special planned out, if the Saint is executed, everyone loses. If the Mayor has a 3-player no-execution, good wins. Since all players are good, they should be sharing their game-ending abilities with other players.

I do not recommend ending the game due to not-in-play characters. Sure, the point of the Atheist is (mostly) to simulate the existence of evil characters. But ending the game due to there being no execution because you were simulating a Vortex, is too far. Similarly, ending the game due to a non-existent Mastermind just because you showed the Investigator that the Mastermind is in play - too far. The players will not like this. And they will be right. Please don't just decide to end the game due to Storyteller choice.

In either case, the players should know well in advance that their actions MIGHT end the game with a loss if they don't believe the Atheist. As long as the players are aware beforehand about the possible consequences of a decision (answer their questions if they ask) then ending the game due to a good character ability is fine.

Can I have duplicate character tokens?

Yes. That's a great idea.

Can I say that a player dies, even if they didn't have enough votes?

Yes. Go for it. I doubt you'll get away with it though, especially online. Just don't end the game this way (not fun). And be aware that if the players catch you, they'll execute you the next day!

Can I say that a player doesn't die, even though they had enough votes and had no protection (Pacifist etc.)?

Yes. If you've got characters on the script that can prevent death, I recommend it! What fun!

Can I do two things that could never happen together in a real game, such as killing a player to simulate a Witch and giving a player false information to simulate a Poisoner (when there is only supposed to be one Minion in play), or poisoning two players (when there is only supposed to be one Minion in play)?

Yes! I insist!

Can I do things that couldn't happen with the script (such as giving players false information when there is no drunkenness or poisoning character on the script at all)?

Yes! Go for it!

Can I make new rules (such as preventing players from nominating if they have long hair)?

Ouch. While the Atheist character can technically allow the Storyteller to make or break game rules, making rules that prevent the ST from being executed are pointless. It is like being a Dungeon Master and running your players through a game and then all of a sudden saying "You all die." Sure, you *can* do that. But your players will lose respect for you and never want to play with you again. Also, any rule that you make that is obviously not the result of a character ability will be immediately recognised as being as a result of the Atheist power, and the players will execute the ST immediately. There is no point.

Can I make or break rules that aren't "hard" rules? Such as rule 4 (Play nice with other people)? Or the advice on how to run good games in the rulebook?

You can. But you always could. These are not rules. They are advice on how to make games fun, inclusive, exciting, and rewarding. If you want to break rule #4, and use the Atheist to allow or justify one person being an asshole to another person, then you are saying that you don't want a game that is fun, inclusive, exciting, or rewarding, and instead want a game that is boring, awkward, and unsatisfying. The Atheist is not intended to encourage the breaking of the social rules / advice given in the rulebook, or the social rules / advice that has developed online.

When I give the Atheist as a bluff to the Demon, good always wins. Is the Atheist a poor bluff?

Yes and no. I do not recommend that the Storyteller ever give Atheist as a bluff to the Demon. All evil players already know that there is no Atheist in play. If there was, they wouldn't be a Minion or Demon. Giving the Atheist as a bluff to the Demon is pointless, and merely reduces the number of useful bluffs that they have from 3 down to 2.

All evil players know that they can safely bluff as Atheist at any time, in any game. They don't need to be told that the Atheist isn't in play to do so. This makes the Atheist one of the easiest bluffs in the game.

However, most players are of the opinion that killing an Atheist "just in case that they are evil" is a good idea. I disagree with this strategy as something that should be done every time, but it does make sense if there are no better targets. Atheists tend to die early, and often. This makes bluffing as the Atheist very risky.

The Atheist bluff is also devastating if believed. It literally will win the game, as the good team execute the Storyteller and lose. So, it's weird. The Atheist is a very easy bluff for an evil player, because you know you won't double up with a good player. It wins the game when done convincingly. But the good team will probably kill you in the process.

Even though it is pointless to give the Demon an Atheist bluff, I recommend that you don't do it because a newer player will take the bluff and run with it, then get killed because of it. It's not worth it.

Bluffing as the Atheist works much better for a Minion. They bluff Atheist, die, then win later on in the game. For this reason, I recommend writing scripts with a Minion or two that doesn't mind dying. Baron is good. Legion is also good. When there are characters on the

list whose best option is to claim Atheist and hope for the best, the good team gets really paranoid about believing Atheist claims. And as the Storyteller, that's what you want. A game where players blindly believe all Atheist claims, or blindly disbelieve all Atheist claims, isn't the best. But if every Atheist claim is treated with suspicion? That's much more interesting.

Can I add the wrong number of Outsiders?

Yes. Add more. Or remove some. Or put in the correct number - it's up to you. I recommend keeping things believable though. If you've added two outsiders but there is no Baron on the Script... that might not work. It might. Who knows?

My Atheist players tend to get frustrated. They sit there and tell everyone that they are the Atheist, but few players believe them. Help?

That's great! That's exactly what it is like to be an Atheist surrounded by non-Atheists in the real world. Or a religious person surrounded by non-religious people, for that matter. That's in the spirit of the character - the Atheist knows the truth, but nobody believes them. It wouldn't be much fun if every Atheist game resulted in an early good win as soon as the Atheist confirmed publicly they were the Atheist. The long struggle (and the occasional loss) is where the interesting things happen.

Having said that, if your group is playing Atheist games in such a way that the Atheist is not enjoying themselves, it's time for a social solution, not a mechanical one. Help all your players understand that it's not fun if anyone claiming Atheist is immediately executed and then ostracised until the rest of the town decides what they're willing to believe. Encourage them to talk to the Atheist, get their view on what they think the Storyteller is trying to make you think with the various misinformation, give them a chance to convince you that they're telling the truth and it's time to execute the Storyteller.

Atheist. I don't get it. What's the point?

The point of the Atheist is that all players are good, and the Storyteller is deceiving them as to this truth. The Storyteller is trying to get the players to execute themselves into oblivion, while the players are trying to figure out whether all players are good (and the Atheist is telling the truth) or the game is a normal game (and there is no Atheist). It really is players vs Storyteller, not players vs players. The point is that the teams are different.

I'm a top bloke who is running Atheist in Trouble Brewing. What are some cool things can I do to show off the character? (some of these only work online)

If there is an Atheist in the game:

- Show the Washerwoman two players that are the Ravenkeeper. Neither player is the Ravenkeeper.

- Show the Librarian that two players are the Saint. Both players are actually the Saint.
- Show the Investigator that a Baron is in play, but include the wrong number of Outsiders for both a Baron and non-Baron game.
- Show the Chef a reasonable-sounding number. Not much you can do here.
- Give the Fortune Teller a "no" response for characters that are acting suspicious. Give the Fortune Teller "yes" responses late in the game, so that they always think one of the last 3 players alive is the Demon.
- If a player that has received false information nominates the Virgin, execute them. If a player that has received correct information nominates the Virgin, do not execute them.
- If there is a Soldier or Monk in the game, have a night or two where there is no death.
- If the Slayer uses their power, they slay a good player.
- Show the Undertaker that the Imp died today when the town executes someone suspicious.
- Kill the Ravenkeeper at night, and if they choose a player that thinks the Atheist is evil, tell the truth. If they choose a player that thinks the Atheist is good, tell a lie. If they choose the Atheist, show a Minion.
- If a Mayor victory happens, let it succeed. But make the Mayor look as suspicious as possible beforehand.
- If the Saint is executed, let the game continue.
- Watch the Butler - they still have to vote according to what their Master does.
- Avoid putting a Recluse in. They already break the rules.
- Avoid putting a Drunk in. In an Atheist game, everyone is the Drunk whenever the Storyteller decides. Having a real Drunk is unnecessary and just confuses things.
- Play by the rules when it comes to voting and execution. Don't cheat. The online crowd is too savvy and has the technical tools available to detect cheating here.
- The Atheist registers as evil, and as a Minion or Demon, to the Fortune Teller, Investigator, Ravenkeeper, Empath, Slayer, Undertaker, Virgin. The Atheist doesn't register as good, or as a Townsfolk or Outsider, to the Washerwoman or Librarian.
- Kill the Atheist at night, early in the game, so that it looks like the Imp was bluffing Atheist and starpassed to a Minion.
- Keep the Atheist alive until the final day for increased tension.
- Put in 2 Empaths. Or 2 Ravenkeepers. Or 2 Saints. Or 2 Recluses. Make sure that only one set of double ups occur (the Demon wouldn't normally double up.). Set the double up characters as common characters that the evil players normally bluff as. (Not Washerwoman or Undertaker, for example). For added fun, have two Virgins but only one of their abilities work. Or two Slayers, but only one can slay.
- Instead of lying all the time, just pretend that one player is poisoned each night.
- At some point in the game, start giving all remaining players correct info. This will make it look like there was false info, but that the Drunk / Poisoner have died.

- Double bluff - tell the Undertaker, Ravenkeeper, or Washerwoman who the Atheist is. The good players will never suspect that you are telling the truth.

If there is no Atheist in the game:

- Don't give Atheist as a bluff as the Demon already knows that the Atheist is not in play.
- Give Atheist as a bluff and add a Scarlet Woman to further encourage the Demon to bluff Atheist! (So that the Imp doesn't mind dying)
- Add a Baron to further encourage the Minions to bluff Atheist! (The Baron doesn't mind dying)
- If you add a Spy, don't add a Washerwoman / Ravenkeeper / Undertaker, so that the Spy has the opportunity to claim one of these characters and confirm another evil player as Atheist.
- If you add a Poisoner, do everything you can to keep them alive as long as possible. The Poisoner makes every game look like an Atheist game due to the continual false info.
- Give the Demon bluffs that normally confirm good players: Undertaker, Empath, Fortune Teller, Washerwoman, Chef, etc. This encourages evil players to confirm the false Atheist as good, as opposed to encouraging evil to confirm good players as evil.