

Indy **Food Not Bombs** stands against patriarchy, homophobia, racism, and all other forms of bigotry and fascism.

## **The Bible, Patriarchy, and Homophobia:**

The Bible is clear: God is a homophobic, racist, genocide-supporting, woman-hating, pro-slavery, liar that wants you to kill your children if they are disobedient.

(Cf. Leviticus 20:13; Deuteronomy 7:1-6, 20:10-11, 20:16-17, 21:18-21, 22:28-29; 1 Timothy 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

Sane Christians don't worship the biblical God. Instead, they worship the emotive *christic* God of the Apostle John, who wrote:

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." (1 John 4:7-12)

Rational people realize that the Bible is an archaic and backwards book. It may contain inspirational stories and even good ethical insights at times, but it is riddled with garbage. No one actually believes the ethical teachings of the Bible. For instance, the Bible says that if a virgin is raped, she should be forced to marry her rapist. (Deuteronomy 22:28-29) The Bible teaches that women are property to be ruled over by men. (Cf. Genesis 3:16; Exodus 20:17) In fact, it is legal to sell your daughter according to biblical law. (Exodus 21:17) If a man sleeps with an unwed woman, he has to buy her from her father. (Exodus 22:16-17) It's also perfectly legal, according to biblical law, to take female captives during war as sex-slave wives. (Deuteronomy 21:10-13) This is even repeated in the New Testament, where St. Paul confirms that women are

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property. He says, "Wives, submit to your husbands...Slaves, obey your earthly master."(Colossians 3:18, 22) Thus, women "must be in submission" and are forbidden to teach men or speak in public. (Cf. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:12) According to biblical law and the Judeo-Christian tradition, women are property. Since they are property, it follows that you can beat them and abuse them just like you are permitted to beat your other servants, "since the slave is [your] property." (Cf. Exodus 21:20-21) The Bible supports the institution of slavery and regards women as somewhat less than human. But modern Christians have learned to reject many of these objectionable parts of their scriptures.

The Christian Church must accept homosexuals and gay marriage for the same reason it has denounced slavery and embraced women's rights. Homosexuality is condemned in Scripture, just as female teachers are condemned in Scripture. The Bible defends slavery, genital mutilation, animal sacrifice, and even genocide. Christians reject these things not because the Bible tells them to, but in spite of what the Bible says. The Bible is a terrible moral compass. Insofar as the Christian seeks to be Christ-oriented, they must to that extent be unbiblically-oriented.

The Christian fundamentalist case for heterosexual monogamous marriage is based on a historical account in the Bible that is objectively false. It has been scientifically disproven. The biblical case goes: "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh."(Mark 10:6-8, citing Genesis 1:27 and 2:24) This is objectively false, in more ways than one. In reality, the gender binary of male/female is a myth. About 1.7% of individuals are born intersex, meaning that they are born with genitals that don't conform to the gender binary. That means that the statistically probable number of intersex individuals at the high school that I attended would have been around 100. Furthermore, biologists now know that humans evolved over

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time. If you trace the human lineage back far enough, you come to some ancestors that were asexual. If there is a God, apparently the gender binary was not originally part of his plan. Furthermore, he seems to mess up a lot.

The reason that Christians feel the need to cling to this outdated and scientifically disproven narrative and the gender binary associated with it is because this narrative is essential to the biblical narrative regarding the fall and redemption. St. Paul espouses the gospel with a narrative of original sin and redemption: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."(Romans 5:12) "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."(1 Corinthians 15:21-22) Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden brought death into the world, and Christ's righteousness and sacrifice on the cross makes immortality possible. The redemption of Christ and the biblical narrative of salvation is predicated on the notion that death came into being as the result of Adam's sin. Consequently, a Christian must accept the literal truth of the genesis narrative or else he has to call into question the gospel and its narrative of redemption. This is the primary reason that Christians feel a need to affirm the gender binary and monogamous model that seems to follow from the genesis narrative, in spite of the fact that the narrative told in Genesis is historically false and scientifically falsifiable.

If the theory of evolution is true, then Christianity in its traditional form cannot possibly be true. Traditional Christianity explains death as being the result of sin. The first man, Adam, sinned. Consequently, death came into the world as a result of this original sin. The basic redemptive scheme of Christianity hinges upon the assumption that death is a consequence of sin. If evolution is true, and man evolved from a process of natural selection, then millions of species died off prior to the origin of mankind—death preceded the original sin. If death preceded the original sin, then the unrighteousness of the first man, Adam, cannot be viewed as

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the cause of death and corruption. It follows from this, that if the unrighteousness of Adam does not actually account for the origin of death, then the righteousness of the second man, Christ, cannot possibly counteract the death-causing effects of original sin and lead to the abolition of death. The faulty conception of the origin of species in the Book of Genesis, and the faulty conception of the origin of death, which is based upon it, is undermined by the new evidence that has been produced by Darwin and modern science. This faulty conception, derived from the Book of Genesis, leads to erroneous beliefs about a number of facts. Since they lead to erroneous beliefs about facts, they also lead to erroneous beliefs in the field of ethics. Value is not independent of facts. An example of a mistaken value-judgment, caused by a misunderstanding of facts on the part of Christians, is their condemnation of homosexuality, a position that seems less and less tenable as time passes.

Binary gender categories have been forced upon us by an archaic Platonist worldview. Christianity and Western philosophy have historically presupposed a fixed set of forms. Plato taught the existence of universal forms, which exist in the world of ideals, and to which particular things in this world correspond. This was his solution to *the one-many problem*. The particular things that we see in this world are classified according to a category that corresponds with an ideal form that exists somewhere outside of this world. St. Augustine argued that the world of ideals is actually in the mind of God. The ideal forms, which form the basis of our categories for classifying things, exist in the mind of God. And in the Book of Genesis, in the Bible, it is said that God created everything "according to their kind." (Genesis 1:11) Christianity was basically a fusion of Neo-Platonism and Judaism, so the notion of Platonic forms and the biblical notion of *creation according to kind* combined to create a rigid epistemological dogma. There are dogs, then there are cats. There are males, then there are females. There cannot be anything in between. Everything must fit into one category or the other. Yet, this

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view has been disproven by modern science. We know that the “kinds” of species are not fixed forms. Species can, and various species have, transitioned into other distinct species. Just as the categories of species are not actually fixed and permanent, so too gender categories are not as fixed as most people think. We evolved from various species that were not sexually reproducing—at some point, in ancient times, some ancestors of humankind were genderless, neither male nor female. The genetic information that codes for male and female body types is actually present in the DNA of all humans, both male and female. This is demonstrated by atavisms and “abnormalities” like “hermaphroditism,” where the physiology of a person does not develop so as to fit into either of the typical binary gender categories. There are other instances where individuals are assigned one gender according to their chromosomes, yet they naturally develop physiologically into the opposite gender. About one out of every one hundred infants is born with genitalia that “differs from standard male or female.”<sup>1</sup> Additionally, there are a multitude of different types of intersexuality that are not apparent at birth but become noticeable as the child reaches puberty. Gender identity and sexuality are influenced by physiology, but they are not determined by it. Psychology, chemistry, and culture play a crucial role in the formation of gender identity and sexuality. Then there is the phenomenon of transgenderism, when a person consciously identifies with the opposite gender.<sup>2</sup> The question of homosexuality isn’t so “black and white.” What about “hermaphroditism,” intersexuality, and transgender individuals? Christianity has no place for them. And the whole issue raised here about ideal forms, kinds, and gender makes

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <http://www.isna.org/faq/frequency>

<sup>2</sup> Curiously, individuals who develop into the opposite gender from that assigned by their chromosomes do not usually develop transgender dysphoria; they are generally able to identify with their physiological gender and live normal lives. Modern science has determined that chromosomes don’t determine gender after all.

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it really difficult to accept the historical Christian position on homosexuality.

“...evolution excludes creation and all other kinds of supernatural intervention.”(Thomas Huxley, “Evolution and Ethics”)

While admitting that such a “creator” as the “first cause” of Aristotle or a vague deist conception of God doesn’t necessarily contradict evolution, Huxley points out that “guided evolution” or “intelligent design” is incompatible with Darwinism. I think he is right.

The whole idea of “natural selection” through “survival of the fittest” excludes any sort of intentionality. The survival of certain specimens over others is an accidental consequence of changing historical circumstances. The changing climate and environmental conditions that lead to the extinction or survival of variants can be seen as the result of natural processes, understood in terms of physics and chemistry. Hurricanes, volcanoes, and meteor showers are controlled by natural law, the inevitable consequences of natural law, not events brought on by God’s changing moods. Given the natural laws of this universe, the catastrophe that wiped out the dinosaurs was inevitable. If God caused it, then he did it very indirectly, as a “prime mover” or “first cause” and NOT as an interventionist deity.

When it comes down to it, you cannot consistently believe in evolution and traditional/fundamentalist Christianity. If Darwin was right, then Genesis was wrong. If Genesis was wrong, then the redemptive scheme of St. Paul, which was predicated on the supposed truth of Genesis, is also false. If death did not enter the world through one man’s sin, then one man’s righteousness cannot counteract it. If dinosaurs and countless other species died before mankind popped up on this planet, then Adam is not the point of origin of death. The whole foundation of the biblical story of redemption has crumbled and washed away.

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The theory of evolution breaks the historic epistemology of Platonism and of Genesis—there is no creation “according to kind” and there are no “fixed forms.” The line between species is blurred. A tree, a dog, and a man are merely different points on a spectrum, NOT copies of Ideal Forms. The classical metaphysics of philosophical and religious epistemology is eradicated by Darwinism.

Meta-ethics also comes under fire. Our ethical ideas and basic human values can be explained in evolutionary terms. The tendency towards monogamy is a trait derived from a genetic mutation, an evolutionary accident historically, but one that can be replicated in a laboratory to make rodents that value lasting relationships over switching between multiple partners. All of our values are determined by human nature, which is an emergent phenomenon that resulted from natural evolutionary processes. The notion that God created us in His image and wrote these “natural laws” of ethics on our hearts is no longer tenable. It was “natural selection” through “survival of the fittest” that instilled us with these values. This is a demonstrable fact. And it excludes the possibility of intentionality on the part of any deity.

Darwinism destroys the foundation of classical Platonist/Christian epistemology and ethics. At the same time, Darwinism lays the foundation of a scientific epistemology and a scientific theory of ethics.

In a world plagued by scarcity and over-population, where people are left homeless or hungry, reproduction might seriously be regarded as unethical. Homosexuality and the use of contraception may actually be ethically superior to the Christian model of monogamy and the patriarchal family. It appears that homosexuals might even be able to claim a little bit of the moral high ground, as their activities are not contributing to over-population and worsening the problem of scarcity.

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If you want to understand ethics, pick up a book by Peter Kropotkin, Sam Harris, or Hilary Putnam and throw your Bible in the trash. If you still feel the need to cling to your Bible, at least recognize that it is historically inaccurate and cannot serve as a decent moral guide—follow the law written in your heart, not the nonsense written in your book. Please recognize that human ethics is based on human nature and humankind's natural inclination to sympathize with the suffering of others. To develop a theory of ethics on a scientific and objective basis, all you have to do is start with your own human nature and your natural human sympathy. You just need to recognize that suffering is bad and do your best to reduce suffering. Use your head to determine what conduct is most likely to reduce suffering overall, and follow it through into action.

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Come Join Us, Have A **Free Meal**, & Hang out!

**Every Sunday At 3:30pm**, Across from the

Central Library - On the American Legion Lawn

E. St. Clair st. & N Pennsylvania st.

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