

William Harwood: *Catalogue of Publications and Excerpts*

Reviewed by Bernard Katz (*American Rationalist*, date TBA)

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Here is a book that truly lives up to its title—for Harwood is as prolific as a literary Tomcat! There are 93 excerpts in three sections, plus 20 letters, 13 commentaries of some of his books by reviewers, a short autobiography, a list of his fiction and non-fiction books, and a final section listing all of his 651 publications. I believe that this makes Harwood a one-man inspirational library! The surprising result is that each of these excerpts is an intellectual treat, each has nuggets of enlightenment, each is challenging to Jews, Christians and Muslims, and each provides nontheists with devastating ammunition.

Do as I did, dive in anywhere and you'll come up with a golden nugget. In his essay "Muhammad and the Koran," Harwood minces no words in condemnation, writing: "Like the Deuteronomist, Muhammad banned murder. And also like the Deuteronomist, he limited the concept to the capricious killing of a fellow believer: *Do not kill except for a just cause (25:68). He that kills a believer by design shall burn in Hell forever (4:93)*. The killing of non-Muslims was specifically authorized. *Slay the pagans wherever you find them. Make war on the unbelievers and the hypocrites and deal rigorously with them. When you encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads.*"

He treats the same theme in his "Yahweh: A Morally Retarded God," telling us that "The Deuteronomist created a racist god that did not regard the murder of gentiles as immoral. The Priestly author, who wrote between the composition of Deuteronomy in 621 BCE and the fall of Nineveh in 612 BCE, expanded on that concept and described a god so xenophobic that Jews who showed any toleration for gentiles could expect to be exterminated."

In his "Biblical Fairy Tales" he tells us the truth about one of the patriarchs of the Jews, saying: "So Jacob, who even the Torah authors who wrote about him agreed was a liar, a thief, and a thoroughly nasty person, set out to swindle his father-in-law..."

Harwood easily proves his thesis in "Has Religion Been Disproven?" by writing: "Historians [and Harwood is a historian] therefore do not even attempt to prove that gods

do not exist. Instead they settle for proving that no god has ever revealed its existence, by tracing all claims of a divine revelation to demonstrable liars or fantasizers.”

He is convinced that Jesus was a historical person, but of little consequence, in “Was Jesus a Real Person?” Harwood even gives us a physical description of him as provided by four of the early Christian Fathers.

Harwood easily proves his thesis in his "The Pagan Origins of Christianity," writing: "It was the anonymous Greek authors of the Christian gospels who started the process of turning Jesus into more than he had ever claimed to be. The earliest gospeller, Mark, introduced into his pseudo-Jewish mythology elements of pagan worship that, despite centuries of foreign overlordship, had not previously penetrated Judaism. For example, he had Jesus describe himself as a shepherd and his followers as sheep (Mark 14:27), as Zoroaster had done over 600 years earlier. He emulated Zoroaster's biographers in describing his Hero's death as a sacrifice for many (14:24). He gave Jesus a last supper with twelve followers, identical in every way with the last supper of the Persian god Mithra. And he had Jesus' disciples cannibalize their self-proclaimed king's body in the form of bread and wine (14:22-26), as the Egyptian god Osiris had instructed worshippers to do 3,000 years earlier in the *Book of the Dead*.

In his “Has Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* been rebutted?” he boldly states: “The Tanakh, Bible and Koran are the most obscene paeans to evil ever written, with *Mein Kampf* not even a close contender... The character mistranslated as 'God' in English bibles is the most sadistic, evil, mass-murdering psychopath in all fiction. Anyone who does not know that either has never read a bible or is insane.”

In his review of Benjamin Wiker's *10 Books that Screwed up the World*, Harwood blazes forth with his tongue of fire, saying: “Benjamin Wiker is a Senior Fellow with the Discovery Institute, an organization dedicated to repealing the 2nd Millennium and forcing schools to teach that the universe is less than 10,000 years old, and that urine, excrement and menstruation were intelligently designed by a benevolent creator.”

In Harwood's book review of Kendrick Frazier's *Science Under Siege*, he gives us a juicy quote from Ann Druyan: “It's [the Garden of Eden] a horrible place... As Diderot observed, the God of Genesis 'loved his apples more than he did his children.'” His book

review of Dan Agin's *Junk Science: How Politicians, Corporations, and Other Hucksters Betray Us*, takes a swipe at Sociobiology, writing: “Richard Dawkins, whose status as a public figure began with a book stemming from E. O. Wilson's *Sociobiology* masturbation fantasy, has largely backed away from his earlier endorsement of a 'selfish gene'.... But he has yet to denounce 'evolutionary psychology,' as the new pseudoscience...”

Harwood's style is aggressively lively—think of H. L. Mencken as you read him. And there are a few coined phrases you might want to add to your own vocabulary: “incurably godphukt,” “pushers of the god psychosis,” “bovine excrement,” “a victim of god addiction,” and “masturbation fantasy.”

On September 14, 1813, John Adams wrote to his old friend Thomas Jefferson: “Howl, snarl, bite, ye Calvinistic, ye Athanasian divines, if you will! Ye will say I am no Christian! I say Ye are no Christians. And, there the account is balanced! Yet I believe all the honest men among you are Christians in my sense of the word.”

In this collection, Harwood trumps the outspoken Jefferson by declaring that even those who call themselves honest Christians—as Jefferson referred to himself and to those who agreed with him—are actually hypocrites and liars, and even mentally flawed.

These are a few examples of a book that slays the sacred cows of religion and pseudo-science, with every excerpt enlightening and intellectually exciting. It should be part of every nontheist's library.