

Welcome to DSM Hoover's May Mini: Big Questions!

We're hosting a "mini" tournament -- one day, after school, for a few hours to celebrate the year's end. We hope you'll join us in exploring this event that is new to us.

Additionally, our May Mini allows a competition space for National Qualifiers in multiple events to use the Big Questions format to get a bit of practice with less than a month before Louisville.

Big Questions is a great opportunity for speakers of all debate events to hone their skills as it combines the philosophy-based topics of Lincoln-Douglas, a format similar to Public Forum, and questioning periods like Congress. Whatever your regular event may be, Big Questions meets you there.

This is a FREE tournament sponsored by a NSDA grant -- the only charges will be *penalties of \$75 per missing judge and nuisance fees of \$10 for late drops or no-shows.*

Recent district computer restrictions that disallow Chrome browsers -- and therefore competition via NSDA platforms -- force us to use **Microsoft Teams as the platform** for this event as a point of equity. We are very sorry for this disruption.

Competition will be three rounds of 45 minutes per round with no elimination round; judges are expected to enter points ASAP after round is complete to facilitate the tight turn-around.

Competition Schedule:

Round 1: 4-4:45

Round 2: 5-5:45

Round 3: 6-6:45

Plaques will be awarded to Top 3 speakers based on total points and sent to schools Thursday, May 19.

Preparation & Resources

~~We will be using the 21-22 topic -- **Resolved: On balance, societies benefit from religious belief and practice.**~~

Debate is solo or in pairs – solo (“maverick”) competitors get double speaking points since they are essentially speaking both roles.

A variety of preparation materials on this topic are available from NSDA and are uploaded to this site (on the right, under "Tournament Pages and Forms") and included in the invitation packet. We suggest using the resources in this order; this is how they will list in this packet:

- 1) Format Manual and Topic Primer, then moving on to the
- 2) Evidence Packet,
- 3) Sample Aff & Neg
- 4) Review Lessons for Constructing and Refuting Arguments, as needed.

Format:

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|--|
| Affirmative Constructive | 5 minutes | Present case |
| Negative Constructive | 5 minutes | Present case |
| Question Segment | 3 minutes | Alternate asking and answering questions |
| Affirmative Rebuttal | 4 minutes | Refute the opposing side's arguments |
| Negative Rebuttal | 4 minutes | Refute the opposing side's arguments |
| Question Segment | 3 minutes | Alternate asking and answering questions |
| Affirmative Consolidation | 3 minutes | Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round |
| Negative Consolidation | 3 minutes | Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round |
| Affirmative Rationale | 3 minutes | Explain reasons that you win the round |
| Negative Rationale | 3 minutes | Explain reasons that you win the round |

*Each team is entitled to three minutes of prep time during the round.

Hope to host you!

- Aymi

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Student Format Manual

Big Questions debating format involves opposing contestants debating a topic concerning the intersection of science, philosophy, and religion. Students can compete as individuals or as a team, this means rounds can be 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, or 1 vs. 2. Topics will address deeply held beliefs that often go unexamined. Students are assigned a side of the topic before each round and present cases, engage in rebuttal and refutation, and participate in a question period. Often, average members of the public are recruited to judge and observe this event.

Considerations for Big Questions Debates

Big Questions debating format is supported by the John Templeton Foundation. Students, judges, and audience members will be asked to submit a brief, post-tournament survey to help the Association demonstrate and quantify the positive impact of switch-side debate. Because of the research design, there are more competitive limits than debaters may be familiar with in other debating formats, particularly on the negative.

Structure of the Debate

Each debater will make an opening presentation, laying out the arguments and reasons to prefer their side of the resolution. These are called the Constructive speeches, and they are five minutes long. The Affirmative side will always speak first. Following these speeches, there is a three-minute question segment. During the questioning segment, the Affirmative side will ask the first question. Following the first question, the questioning period is a free-flowing question and answer period where both speakers may ask each other questions.

Affirmative Constructive – 5 minutes

Negative Constructive – 5 minutes

Question Segment – 3 minutes

Following the Constructive speeches and the first question segment, each debater will deliver a speech addressing the key claims and contentions of their opponents. This speech will address where there are weaknesses or opposing evidence, identify main areas of clash and how arguments interact with one another, rebuild their own contentions, and offer additional evidence for their position. These speeches are known as the Rebuttal speeches, though their content may not be entirely made up of rebuttal. The Rebuttal speeches are four minutes long and followed by a second question segment, which is identical in form to the first.



Affirmative Rebuttal – 4 minutes

Negative Rebuttal – 4 minutes

Question Segment – 3 minutes

The Rebuttals and question segment is followed by the Consolidation speeches. These speeches are three minutes long and serve to reduce the debate to its core elements. Debaters will focus on identifying the areas they are garnering the best advantage and strengthening the analysis and argumentation in those areas; the form will not resemble a strict “line-by-line” treatment of the debate. Additional evidence or analysis on existing points of contention will be given, but new arguments are discouraged.

Affirmative Consolidation – 3 minutes

Negative Consolidation – 3 minutes

Debaters will give a Rationale speech – a three-minute summation of the central argument(s) that prove their side and the reasons they have proven them in this debate. No new arguments are offered in the Rationale speech; the speeches focus entirely on the activity that has taken place earlier in the debate.

Affirmative Rationale – 3 minutes

Negative Rationale – 3 minutes

Both teams will receive a three minute period of prep time to be used at any time (excepting in the middle of a speech which has begun) to prepare their speeches.

Prep Time – 3 minutes / side

The Negative and the Inverse Resolution

Big Questions is designed to pit opposing worldviews against each other in an effort to lead students to explore levels of argumentation that are rarely reached in other debate formats. For that reason, the Negative is expected to present arguments that the resolution is actively false. Negative speaker(s) should view themselves as the Affirmative on the inverse resolution – *exemplum gratia*, the Negative on “Resolved: Socrates is a man” should view themselves as the affirmative on “Resolved: Socrates is not a man.” Any *prima facie* burdens on the Affirmative debater(s) apply equally to the Negative debater(s). Negatives must do more than refute the Affirmative case.



Argumentation

First, a debater must clearly establish a claim. This is generally a declarative statement establishing the point they are setting out to justify. Second, a debater must clearly establish why their argument is true or based in fact and logic. This is known as the warrant for an argument. Debaters need to go beyond asserting their claims and back them up with analysis explaining why the argument is valid. The warrant can come in many forms, but it is necessary for the development of the argument. Debaters may use logic or research to back up their claims. It is important to note that having an author make an assertion about a topic is not a warrant on its own. Third, a debater must provide an impact for their argument. This means the debater establishes why the argument is significant in the round.

Topicality

Students' arguments must stick to the specific topic of the debate. The current topic has been designed with input from our pilot debate expert panel to ensure that the debate is timely, relevant, and engaging. Regardless of personal judging preferences, judges are instructed not to evaluate any arguments that are outside of the topic, and tab will automatically forfeit any debater that runs a position that is not about the topic. This rule will be strictly enforced by judges and tournament staff.

Cases

After students have brainstormed topic-specific arguments, it is time to construct cases. While there is no rule requiring a specific structure, there is a traditional approach to constructing a case. Often, a case starts with a well thought out thesis statement as an introductory lead-in to the position. Next, the case would define key terms and discuss the burdens and other metrics for successfully evaluating a round (sometimes called "framework" or "weighing mechanisms"). Following this introduction, the debater would offer contentions, or main arguments. Contentions may include quotes from qualified authors, scientific studies, or students' own analysis. Given the five-minute time limit, debaters will prefer a two-point case with substantial depth of argumentation. Because of the more complex philosophical and science topics at hand, community judges may require considerable time with a concept to feel comfortable assigning it weight in the round.



Refutation

After presenting cases, students engage in refuting each other's arguments. Students commonly refute cases by denying the validity of the argument. Additional strategies include, but are not limited to, justifying the reverse of the argument, showing the opponent's arguments do not carry as much weight as their arguments, or taking out the link between the opponent's argument and the priority they establish in the round. Students can pre-write their answers to arguments they expect their opponents to make. These are commonly known as "blocks." Debaters will be expected to cover important arguments and questions in refutation; however, with community judges, a strict "burden of rejoinder" – the assumption that every argument must be explicitly refuted or deemed to be conceded and true – is unlikely to be enforced. A common-person understanding of which arguments are important and which are not is a better method to evaluate what must be refuted.

Flowing

It is important for debaters to learn how to keep track of arguments in the round. Typically, debaters "flow" the debate round—making note of the arguments presented and refuted in the round. This note-taking approach requires students to abbreviate terms, phrases, and ideas so that they can get as much of the debate notated as possible. Here are some tips:

- A-4 size paper. Constructives and Rebuttals are longer speeches. Keeping related notes together increases the chances debaters will remember to respond to important arguments and stay in the central clash of the debate.
- A sheet of paper per contention, plus one for framework. Don't try to flow a whole case on one sheet – argumentation is too deep and specific for that. Keep track of the different contentions on different sheets of paper.
- At least one pen, but we recommend two, in different colors.
- If the opponent is speaking, write (don't try to determine what's important at the outset—just write as much as you can).
- Orient pieces of paper vertically, like a book. Note that columns will be narrow, which will increase the need for accurate/efficient abbreviations.



Presentation

A well-delivered argument with good use of the performative aspects of speech is ultimately more persuasive than the same argument delivered poorly. Debaters will want to develop good communication habits, including eye contact, a conversational speaking speed and tone, road-mapping (or previewing and reviewing arguments in order they will be/have been addressed),

use of space, and rhetorical devices. While reading specific text from authors as evidence is expected, fast-paced recitation of evidence is not what this style is designed to present. Rather, the students' analysis and discussion of evidence will also be necessary. Because community judges will likely judge many rounds, the speed of delivery should be tailored for their comprehension.

Judges

Big Questions rounds are judged by coaches, community adjudicators, and volunteers who believe in the importance of debate and the mission of the National Speech and Debate Association in its Big Questions project. Judges are asked at the end of their ballot to decide "Who did the better debating?". Each judge has discretion to decide what better debating looks like; judges should consider argumentative aspects (important arguments won, number of arguments won, etc.) and may to a reasonable degree also evaluate performative aspects (tone, vocal quality, pace of delivery, rhetorical devices, etc.).

Because of the nature of the debates, judges will undergo a number of de-biasing techniques. Judges will be given instructions that stress the nature of leaving personal preconceptions outside the round. Additionally, judges will be asked to identify their initial inclination on the topic at the top of the judge primer. By making judges aware of their bias, we anticipate judges will evaluate the debate in the more rigorous, central processing method rather than the quicker peripheral processing method.

The ballot will also ask judges to write reasons why each side may have won the debate. By forcing judges to counter-argue their own decision and to make the strongest possible case for the opposite side, judges will reprocess information and may recognize the interaction of bias in their decision.

After these steps, judges will indicate which debater did the better debating and has won the round. While this method does not completely eliminate the issue of bias, the affirmative steps taken by the ballot and primer mitigate the impact of bias on the competitive fairness of the tournament.



NSDA Topic Primer

“On balance, societies benefit from religious belief and practice.”

This topic asks us to analyze the effects of religion throughout various societies and weigh the positives and negatives to come to a *general* conclusion. A key feature of this topic will be providing a mechanism with which to weigh both material and immaterial effects of an ideology or practice.

For the affirmative, the benefits one can focus on are numerous. Many authors write about the strong correlation between charitable giving and religious practice, regardless of the particular denomination. This goes together with many others who write about the ability for religious practice to be linked to poverty reduction in the form of charitable giving, the ability to help people navigate day-to-day struggles, and providing harm reduction in areas like addiction or personal counseling.

Affirmatives may also focus on the benefits of religious practice such as stronger test scores and the benefits on the family structure as well. Many authors write about the connection between regular religious practice and higher academic achievement and stronger familial ties. These outcomes may create more grounded and successful individuals, which are a necessary component of societies throughout history. Additionally, some bolder affirmatives could provide a broader definition of benefits and discuss cultural and historical contributions such as artwork and philosophy that have resulted from religion as continuous benefits to society.

For the negative, arguments about the potential exclusionary aspects of religion will be a large focus. While the affirmative may focus on charitable giving, the negative can point out the large barriers that religious labels can put between different groups and the isolating effect it has. For example, while some may give charitably, that giving may be conditional upon engagement with that religious community, which isolates others. Many authors note that the lines that determine this exclusion tend to follow societal norms for discrimination and end up affecting already-marginalized groups. For example, some note that charitable giving sounds good on face, but if funds are being used to continue exclusionary practices or harm marginalized people, the potential gain to society is considerably lessened.

Negatives may argue that some religious groups oppose different forms of scientific research that would greatly benefit society because it may conflict with their religious teachings. Impediments to medical science, for example, may be something that costs countless future lives. Even if religious texts or ideals do not necessarily lead to discrimination or anti-scientific sentiment, the glorification of religious leaders can create institutions that may be ripe for abuse.

VSDA EVIDENCE
PACKET

Big Questions Starter File 2021-2022

**On balance, societies benefit from religious belief
and practice.**

Topic Brief

“On balance, societies benefit from religious belief and practice.”

Religion, depending on the definition used, is believed to have been around since the 15th century BCE with the creation of Hinduism. Since that time, many religions have been formed and collapsed throughout the ages teaching cultural and moral lessons, providing origin stories, and trying to make sense of the world. The topic asks us to weigh the effects of religious beliefs and practices and determine whether they've had an overall negative or positive outcome. In essence, this is one of the biggest questions one could ask, so it's well-suited for this debate format.

In modern times, this issue has become fairly contested with thousands of pages of research being created to attempt to build a case either way. However, it's also important to note that for many societies for a large portion of history, the question wasn't even being asked. Religious practices and beliefs were some that were so widespread that questioning them would have seemed odd or unnecessary as they contributed to the daily function on life. Whether that be one's participation in Saturnalia in ancient Rome or the still-practiced Shichi-go-san rite of passage in Japan under Shinto, these religious practices and beliefs are often ingrained in society to such an extent, it isn't always obvious to the casual observer unless they take an outsider's perspective on their culture.

These may seem like trite examples or unimportant, but they truly strike at the heart of the question that the topic asks: what are the long-lasting effects of religion and what mechanism or lens should we use to view them? When we think of the phrase “religious beliefs and practices,” we often jump immediately to the major tenets of any religion like a belief in a supreme omniscient deity, a worship of nature, or standardized ways to practice like praying or meditating at particular times. These are of course valuable to understand, but the topic includes much more and can be used to analyze lingering unquestioned assumptions that remain even after one's religiosity has faded. For example, while the U.S. is reporting that fewer people associate themselves with a particular religion, they often still have beliefs that linger from previous religious practice about social or cultural issues like drinking, child raising, and appropriate topics for classroom discussions.

With the understanding that religion is deeply embedded in society, we can begin to make sense of the more apparent and readily discussed consequences and see more of their secondary effects or other assumptions they may inadvertently bolster. This will be crucial for both teams to properly weigh benefits or disadvantages for their judge. Additionally, teams that successfully execute this kind of vision will have a more holistic approach to the topic and will truly answer the question about religious practice and benefit broadly rather than about how it functions in only one.

This gets into the first aspect of writing any persuasive case: the weighing. Both teams are asked to weigh everything on balance which means taking everything into account. That's quite the undertaking for a short speech, but providing adequate judge instructions will shore up any confusion and make your case immediately more appealing. Regardless of the side, having some sort of lens for the judge to use to determine what is valuable or more valuable than something else will be pivotal. This helps put your thumb on the scale a bit and will make the end-goal for both yourself and the judge clearer. For example, if you are the affirmative and want to say that religion promotes a more harmonious society despite periods of conflict, then you may want to take a longer view of history or provide an argument for why that harmonious society should be valued above any conflicts the negative may point to. On the other hand, if you are the negative, you may want to argue that those conflicts should be valued above all else because they can cause the loss of human life which should come before citizens being more law-abiding.

Having a clear understanding of what the judge should consider a "benefit" or what it means "to benefit" will be crucial. Although seemingly intuitive, the types of benefits and whether or not they are truly a net-good are ripe with controversy and debate. For example, if an affirmative team wanted to say that religion has prompted philosophical and moral discussions throughout time, they may want the judge to take a different view of benefit than a negative team who wants to say that many religions have clashed with forms of scientific research in the past.

Even bolder teams may look to the tense of the resolution to attempt to narrow the discussion. The topic uses "benefit" and not "benefitted" or "has benefitted," which may mean we should only consider modern societies and beliefs and

practices still observed instead of taking a full sweeping historical view. While this provides a practical limit, it may remove some of the most compelling extreme examples for the negative to use if issues like division, isolation, or big conflicts are the main points in their case.

Moreover, the topic uses “societies” as a plural form which means that while specific examples are useful to demonstrate a concept, teams should avoid relying on arguments that only apply to one particular society. Having multiple examples of any major point will be a must to avoid falling into this trap. The same can be said for being able to apply that point to multiple religions. As a general noun, a lot of different practices and beliefs can fall under it, so teams should try to focus on commonalities that they find in reading to make the most compelling case.

Keep in mind that the scope of the topic on its face is massive which means it’s a large undertaking, but it also provides the most flexibility for case construction. Although there are some ambiguities present, the topic is fairly difficult to fall outside of, so there is a large incentive for teams to really think their case and think of creative ways to answer some of the core points the topic asks us to cover.

Definitions

On Balance

On balance means to take all matters into consideration

Dictionary.com ND (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/on--balance>)

on balance Taking everything into consideration, as in On balance I think we've had a very good year.

This expression, which in effect means "balancing all the factors involved," was first recorded in 1719.

Benefit

Benefit is a good or helpful result

Merriam Webster ND ("benefit" <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/benefit> 8/20)

benefit noun ben·e·fit | \ 'be-nə-,fit \ Definition of benefit (Entry 1 of 2) 1a: something that produces good or helpful results or effects or that promotes well-being : **ADVANTAGE** discounted prices and other benefits of a museum membership **The benefits outweigh the risks of taking the drug.** reaping the benefits of their hard work changes that will be to your benefit b: useful aid : **HELP** without the benefit of a lawyer

Religious Belief and Practice

Religion is itself a vague word because it covers a multitude of diverse practices and beliefs

Frost 5 (J William, Senior Research Scholar, Swarthmore College, "Why Religions Facilitate War and How Religions Facilitate Peace," <https://www.swarthmore.edu/friends-historical-library/why-religions-facilitate-war-and-how-religions-facilitate-peace> 8/22)

What we think of as religions have long and complex histories enduring over centuries in all kinds of political and economic systems – sanctifying, criticizing, ignoring and escaping from them. So, just to look at Christianity, does one define it as a transnational body aiming at universal institution but with state forms– Roman Catholicism, or as state sponsored forms – Church of England, Russian Orthodoxy, or as a denomination – like Methodists and Disciples, or in a sectarian way – Jehovah's Witnesses or Quakers. Or is there some essence of Christianity as a religion that allows us to ignore its diversity in belief, ritual, and practice? Is Christianity's impact on war best defined by the practices of the higher clergy, men or women, educated or un-educated, devout or fellow travelers? What should one conclude about the public piety of politicians – none of whom rule on a platform of fostering evil and most of whom pay lip service to morality and piety? Or should one use a Gallup poll of religious attitudes – as in America where a majority of the people say they do not want clergy discussing politics but want religious politicians. Religious rhetoric and feelings can be easily manipulated by spiritual elites or secular politicians and there is no verifiable test for religious sincerity. So during the rest of this paper, which is about religion and war, beware of the vagueness of the concepts. Our focus is upon the basic documents and functions of religious traditions that have been and continue to facilitate war, rather than specific examples from history.

Aff

Social

Civil Society

Active religious participation strongly correlates with civic engagement

Hackett et al 19 (Conrad, Associate Director of Research and Senior Demographer, Joey Marshall, Research Associate, Anna Schiller, Communications Manager, Pew Research Center, "Religion's Relationship to Happiness, Civic Engagement and Health Around the World," <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/01/31/religions-relationship-to-happiness-civic-engagement-and-health-around-the-world/> 8/20)

When it comes to measuring civic participation, the results again follow a pattern: On balance, people who are actively religious are also more likely to be active in voluntary and community groups. This dovetails with previous studies in the United States.6 In the U.S., 58% of actively religious adults say they are also active in at least one other (nonreligious) kind of voluntary organization, including charity groups, sports clubs or labor unions. Only about half of all inactively religious adults (51%) and fewer than half of the unaffiliated (39%) say the same.7 A similar pattern appears in many other countries for which data are available: Actively religious adults tend to be more involved in voluntary organizations. In 11 out of 25 countries analyzed outside of the U.S., actives are more likely than inactives to join community groups. And in seven of the countries, actively religious adults are more likely than those who are religiously unaffiliated to belong to voluntary organizations. In addition, a higher percentage of actively religious adults in the United States (69%) say they always vote in national elections than do either inactives (59%) or the unaffiliated (48%). Outside of the U.S., actively religious adults are more likely than "nones" to report voting in national elections in half the countries (12 out of 24) for which data on this measure are available; in the remaining countries, there is not much of a difference. Actives also are more likely than their inactive compatriots to say they vote in nine out of 24 countries, while the opposite is not true in any country for which data are available.8

Even when accounting for other controlling factors, the data still leans aff

Hackett et al 19 (Conrad, Associate Director of Research and Senior Demographer, Joey Marshall, Research Associate, Anna Schiller, Communications Manager, Pew Research Center, "Religion's Relationship to Happiness, Civic Engagement and Health Around the World," <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/01/31/religions-relationship-to-happiness-civic-engagement-and-health-around-the-world/> 8/20)

Compared with their less religious counterparts, the actively religious tend to be older, slightly less educated, and more likely to be female and married. Such differences raise the question: Are people happier, more civically engaged, or less likely to smoke and drink because of their religious activity, or because of these other demographic traits? To test for the independent effect of religion, Pew Research Center analysts constructed statistical models that evaluate the association of religious activity with eight measures of individual and societal well-being after controlling for age, gender, education, income and marital status (see Methodology for details). The table below shows the predicted effects of each factor in a pooled analysis of all countries in the datasets (26 countries for the World Values Survey measures and 19 countries for the items measured in the ISSP).51 In general,

across all the countries analyzed, being actively religious is associated with a greater likelihood of being very happy, belonging to a nonreligious organization, always voting, drinking infrequently and not smoking. In this pooled analysis, the actively religious are not more likely to report very good health, nor do they have better outcomes with regard to obesity and exercise. These findings are broadly in line with results presented earlier in the report.

Religious beliefs and practice benefit society overall – err aff, the evidence is comparative and covers a wide array of issues

Fagan 6 (Patrick, William H. G. FitzGerald Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, The Heritage Foundation, "Why Religion Matters Even More: The Impact of Religious Practice on Social Stability," <https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/why-religion-matters-even-more-the-impact-religious-practice-social-stability> 8/15)

A steadily increasing body of evidence from the social sciences demonstrates that regular religious practice benefits individuals, families, and communities, and thus the nation as a whole. The practice of Religion improves health, academic achievement, and economic well-being and fosters self-control, self-esteem, empathy, and compassion. Religious belief and practice can address many of the nation's most pressing social problems, some of which have reached serious levels (e.g., out-of-wedlock births and family dissolution). Research has linked the practice of Religion to reductions in the incidence of divorce, crime, delinquency, drug and alcohol addiction, out-of-wedlock births, health problems, anxiety, and prejudice. Faith-based outreach has been uniquely effective in drug addiction rehabilitation and societal re-entry programs for prisoners. Furthermore, the effects of religious belief and practice are intergenerational and cumulative. In a sense, they "compound the interest" of our social capital. Allan Bergin, a research psychologist who received the American Psychological Association's top award in 1990, summed up the impact of Religion in his acceptance address: "Some religious influences have a modest impact whereas another portion seems like the mental equivalent of nuclear energy."[136]

Regular religious practice promotes a harmonious civil society

Fagan 6 (Patrick, William H. G. FitzGerald Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, The Heritage Foundation, "Why Religion Matters Even More: The Impact of Religious Practice on Social Stability," <https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/why-religion-matters-even-more-the-impact-religious-practice-social-stability> 8/15)

Over the past decade, **considerable research has emerged that demonstrates the benefits of religious practice** within society.[1] Religious practice promotes the well-being of individuals, families, and the community. **Of particular note are the studies that indicate the benefits of Religion to the poor.**[2] **Regular attendance at religious services is linked to healthy, stable family life, strong marriages, and well-behaved children.** The **practice of Religion also leads to a reduction in the incidence of domestic abuse, crime, substance abuse, and addiction.** In addition, **religious practice leads to an increase in physical and mental health, longevity, and education attainment.** Moreover, these **effects are intergenerational**, as **grandparents and parents pass on the benefits to the next generations.** America's Founding Fathers understood the vital role that Religion plays in a free society.[3] Far from shielding the American people from religious influence, the Founders promoted the freedom of religion and praised the benefits that it brings to society. George Washington articulated this in his farewell address to the nation: **Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports.** In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism who should labor to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.[4] **Given the extent to which religious practice promotes civil society, understanding religion's contribution to America's constitutional order is fundamental to the nation's continued prosperity. The practice of Religion is a powerful antidote to many of our nation's pressing social problems, many of which have reached historically high proportions.** Yet, despite the societal benefits of Religion, the expression of faith in the public square has faced many challenges. Therefore, legislators should seek constitutionally appropriate ways to explore the impact of religious practice on society and, where appropriate, recognize its role and importance.

Religion is also strongly correlated with a happier, more law-abiding society

Fagan 6 (Patrick, William H. G. FitzGerald Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, The Heritage Foundation, "Why Religion Matters Even More: The Impact of Religious Practice on Social Stability," <https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/why-religion-matters-even-more-the-impact-religious-practice-social-stability> 8/15)

Religion and Mental Health In a review of mental health research that referenced decades of social science studies, **81 percent of the 99 studies reviewed found "some positive association...between religious involvement and greater happiness, life satisfaction, morale, positive affect, or some other measure of well-being."** This analysis included a wide diversity among ages, races, and denominations.[73] Happiness and Well-Being. **Happy people tend to be productive and law-abiding and also tend to learn well, thus having a positive impact on society. A review of the research shows that Religion significantly affects the level of an individual's happiness and overall sense of well-being.** In the vast majority of the studies reviewed, an increase in religious practice was associated with having greater hope and a greater sense of purpose in life.[74] Stress, Self-Esteem, and Coping Skills. **More**

frequent attendance at religious services predicts less distress, even when controlling for the normal sociodemographic predictors of this condition.[75] **Similar findings hold for high-school students.**[76] For adults, **a strong belief in eternal life also predicts less harmful stress from work-related problems.**[77] **A survey of African-American men and women found that respondents who were more religious reported a greater sense of control than less religious respondents. This greater sense of control was, in turn, correlated with decreased distress.**[78] Of the studies cited in Byron Johnson's extensive literature review, **65 percent concluded that religious commitment and practice lead to increased self-esteem, while more than 80 percent indicated that religious practice correlates with increased social support.**[79] **Membership in a religious community can enhance coping skills. One study found that people were much more inclined to use positive coping responses when they received spiritual support from fellow church members.**[80] When like-minded individuals and families joined together in prayer, mutual support, or religious practice, they viewed their circumstances with spiritual significance: not only mundane daily affairs, but also major life traumas.[81] In a study of high-school students from West Virginia, the "ego strengths of hope, will, purpose, fidelity, love, and care" increased as the students lived out their religious beliefs more intently.[82] Thus, **involvement in religious practice, religious organizations, and religious communities tends to lead to favorable self-image and to foster the development of faith, hope, benevolence, and a belief in divine grace as personal spiritual resources.**[83] **Depression and Suicide. Both public and private religious practice protect against depression. People who are frequently involved in religious activities and highly value their religious faith are at a reduced risk for depression, according to a review of more than 100 studies.** This review also found that 87 percent of the studies surveyed concluded that religious practice correlates with reduced incidence of suicide.[84] Levels of depression were also lower for those who participated in religious services than they were for those who only prayed on their own.[85] **Studies have found that adolescents who frequently attend religious services and have a high level of spiritual support from others in their community have the lowest levels of depression.**[86] Conversely, a lack of religious affiliation correlates with an increased risk of suicide.[87] Immigrant youth likewise enjoy the benefits of a higher level of general well-being when they attend religious services frequently.[88]

Integration

Religious practice provides a community for immigrants which facilitates integration and reduces risk of negative outcomes

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Immigrant Assimilation. Religion plays a role in helping immigrants to adjust to their new homeland. In research on the role of the ethnic church in the social adjustment of Vietnamese adolescents, including their educational success, regular religious attendance was found to increase the likelihood that youth would attend after-school classes, as well as the likelihood that they would retain their ethnic cohesion. Even after controlling for other variables, these activities and religious service attendance correlated with better grades, avoidance of substance abuse, and the importance attached to attending college—all of which aided their successful integration into American society.[114] Thus, religious practice was a significant bridge from their culture of origin to success in their new homeland.

Violent Crime

Religious people are less likely to commit a violent crime

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Violent crime. Just as the stable marriage of parents is powerful in preventing crime,[111] so too is the practice of religion. A review of the literature on Religion and crime suggests that, compared with less religious counterparts, **religiously involved individuals are less likely to carry or use weapons, fight, or exhibit violent behavior.** At the metropolitan level of analysis, **areas with high rates of congregational Membership and areas with high levels of religious homogeneity tend to have lower homicide and suicide rates than other metropolitan areas.**[112] Similarly, at the state level of analysis, **states with more religious populations tend to have fewer homicides and fewer suicides.**[113]

Marriage/Family

Religion also supports and stabilizes marriages which passes on numerous benefits to children – prefer our evidence it cites several comprehensive studies

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Religion and marriage There are many indications that the combination of religious practice and stable marital relationships contributes to a strong and successful next generation. We already know that stable marriage is associated with improved physical, intellectual, mental, and emotional health of men, women, and children, as well as equipping them with the values and habits that promote prosperous economic activity.[5] Religious practice is also related to positive outcomes for the stability and quality of marriage. **Marriage**. Numerous sociological studies have shown that valuing Religion and regularly practicing it are associated with greater marital stability, higher levels of marital satisfaction, and an increased likelihood that an individual will be inclined to marry.[6] Christopher Ellison of the University of Texas at Austin and his colleagues found that couples who acknowledged a divine purpose in their marriage were more likely to collaborate, to have greater marital adjustment, and to perceive more benefits from marriage and were less likely to use aggression or to come to a stalemate in their disagreements.[7] Earlier research found that couples whose marriages lasted 30 years or more reported that their faith helped them to deal with difficult times, was a source of moral guidance in making decisions and dealing with conflict, and encouraged them to maintain their commitment to their marriages.[8] **Divorce**. Four of every 10 children experience parental divorce,[9] but a link between religious practice and a decreased likelihood of divorce has been established in numerous studies. Women who are more religious are less likely to experience divorce or separation than their less religious peers.[10] Marriages in which both spouses attend religious services frequently are 2.4 times less likely to end in divorce than marriages in which neither spouse worships.[11] Those who view their religious beliefs as "very important" are 22 percent less likely to divorce than those for whom religious beliefs are only "somewhat important." [12] The sociological literature reviews by the late David Larson of the Duke University Medical School and his colleagues indicated that religious attendance is the most important predictor of marital stability,[13] confirming studies conducted as far back as 50 years ago.[14] The likelihood of divorce is even further reduced when husbands and wives share the same religious commitment. Such couples report having a greater sense of well-being and more satisfaction with their marital relationship,[15] and they are less likely to commit acts of domestic violence.[16] A study of couples with divergent theological views showed that they were more likely to argue, especially about financial matters.[17] Inter-marriage across major faith groups is also linked with greater marital instability.[18] Furthermore, couples who share the same faith are more likely to reunite if they separate than are couples who do not share the same religious affiliation. In one study, one-third of the separated spouses who had the same religious affiliation reconciled, compared with less than one-fifth of those with different affiliations.[19] During the 1980s and 1990s, when religious practice decreased overall,[20] the association between regular religious attendance and marital stability became even more apparent. Those who had ceased religious practice divorced 2.5 times more

frequently than those who continued to attend religious services.[21] Paul Amato, **a leading authority on the sociology of divorce** from Pennsylvania State University, **concluded that a possible increase in religious practice among some already existing marriages might have offset the negative effects of the overall decrease in religious practice** among many other Americans. **The rise in religious practice** in this newly worshipping sector between 1980 and 2000 **brought about increased support for lifelong marriage** and counterbalanced, at the national aggregate level, two other trends: the increased incidence of premarital cohabitation and the increased work hours of married women, both of which are associated with decreased marital satisfaction and a greater likelihood of divorce. Amato concluded that this increase in religious worship in one subgroup was one of the main factors in preventing growth in overall levels of marital unhappiness and proneness to divorce. As a result, the divorce rate in 2000 was nearly identical to the rate in 1980.[22] Marital Harmony and Satisfaction. The practice of **Religion** not only stabilizes marriage, but **also improves its quality**. Brad Wilcox of the University of Virginia **found that the more frequently husbands attended religious services, the happier their wives said they were with the level of affection and understanding that they received** and the amount of time that their husbands spent with them.[23] Earlier research had shown that **the more frequently couples engage in religious practice, the more they were satisfied with their marriages**: 60 percent who attended religious services at least monthly perceived their marriages as "very satisfactory," compared with only 43 percent of those who attended religious services less often.[24] A 1977 study indicated a link between religious practice and marital sexuality: Very religious women had greater satisfaction in sexual intercourse with their husbands than did moderately religious or non-religious women.[25]

Parents who regularly attend religious services have better relationships with their children and have less violent families overall

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In general, **religious participation appears to foster an authoritative, warm, active, and expressive style of parenting**. In addition, **parents who attend religious services are more likely to enjoy a better relationship with their children**[31] **and are more likely to be involved with their children's education**. [32] Moreover, **the greater a child's religious involvement, the more likely both the child and parent will agree about the quality of their relationship**, [33] **the more similar their values will be, and the greater their emotional closeness will be**. [34] However, some of the same research also shows that religious differences within families can detract from the parent-child relationship. Mother-Child Relationship. Compared with mothers who did not consider Religion important, those who deemed Religion to be very important rated their relationship with their child significantly higher, according to a 1999 study. **When mothers and their children share the same level of religious practice, they experience better relationships with one another**. For instance, when 18-year-olds attended religious services with approximately the same frequency as their mothers, the mothers reported significantly better relationships with them, even many years later, indicating that the effects of similar religious practice endures. Moreover, **mothers who became more religious throughout the first 18 years of their child's life reported a better relationship with that child, regardless of the level of their religious practice before the child was born. Mothers who attended religious services less often over time**

reported a lower-quality relationship with their adult child.^[35] Grandmothers' religious practice illustrates an intergenerational influence. The more religious a mother's mother is, the more likely the mother has a good relationship with her own child.^[36] Father-Child Relationship. Greater religious practice of fathers is associated with better relationships with their children, higher expectations for good relationships in the future, a greater investment in their relationships with their children, a greater sense of obligation to stay in regular contact with their children, and a greater likelihood of supporting their children and grandchildren.^[37] Wilcox found that fathers' religious affiliations and religious attendance were positively associated with their involvement in activities with their children, such as one-on-one interaction, having dinner with their families, and volunteering for youth-related activities. Compared with fathers who had no religious affiliation, those who attended religious services frequently were more likely to monitor their children, praise and hug their children, and spend time with their children. In fact, fathers' frequency of religious attendance was a stronger predictor of paternal involvement in one-on-one activities with children than were employment and income-the factors most frequently cited in the academic literature on fatherhood.^[38] Wilcox also traced the "pathways" through which Religion affects fathers' relationships with their children and concluded that religious affiliation and especially religious attendance have unique effects that are independent of conventional habits of civic engagement. The emphasis that Religion typically places on family life, along with churches' family-focused social networks of support and psychological support of fatherhood, helps to explain why religiously active fathers are more involved in youth-related activities.^[39] Domestic Violence. A small but growing body of research has focused on the links between religious practice and decreased family violence. For example, men who attended religious services at least weekly were more than 50 percent less likely to commit an act of violence against their partners than were peers who attended only once a year or less.^[40] No matter how the data were analyzed, regular attendance at religious services had a strong and statistically significant inverse association with the incidence of domestic abuse.^[41] Similarly, after controlling for all other factors, Wilcox found that of all groups studied (unaffiliated, active conservative Protestant, active mainline Protestant, nominal conservative Protestant, and nominal mainline Protestants), religiously active conservative Protestant men were least likely to engage in domestic violence.^[42]

At-Risk Youth

At-risk youth are particularly benefitted by religious practice – encourages better school performance and is strongly correlated with avoiding deviant behavior like substance abuse

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Religion and At-Risk Youth Even against the odds, in neighborhoods of disorder and poverty, **religious practice serves as a significant buffer against drug abuse and juvenile delinquency. A study of 2,358 young black males from impoverished inner-city Chicago and Philadelphia found that a high level of religious attendance was associated with a 46 percent reduction in the likelihood of using drugs, a 57 percent reduction in the probability of dealing drugs, and a 39 percent decrease in the likelihood of committing a crime that was not drug-related.** Thus, **religious attendance was associated with direct decreases in both minor and major forms of crime and deviance** to an extent unrivalled by government welfare programs.[115] The effect of Religion is not solely a matter of external controls that curb adolescents' risky behavior. Rather, **religious attendance also promotes self-control, a positive allocation of time, attendance at school, and engagement in work.**[116] In addition, **youth religious practice is linked to a decreased likelihood of associating with delinquent peers—a significant factor in youth crime.**[117] Drug Use in Inner-City Neighborhoods. While **religious practice appears to have a general restraining effect on the likelihood of using drugs, this effect appears to be especially strong for adolescents living in higher-risk neighborhoods,** where increased religious practice coincides with substantially decreased drug use.[118] **African-American youth living in impoverished urban neighborhoods who attended religious services at least weekly were half as likely to use illicit drugs as those who never attended.**[119] Furthermore, **an analysis of national longitudinal data indicates that religious youth from low-income neighborhoods are not only less likely than non-religious neighborhood peers to use illegal drugs,** but also less likely than peers in "good" neighborhoods who have low levels of religious commitment.[120] **In preventing drug abuse, religious practice trumps socioeconomic disadvantage.** Juvenile Delinquency. **In at-risk, destabilized communities, religious practice was found to be a buffer against youth crime in the same way that it reduced the likelihood of substance abuse among adolescents. Even in communities where there are no strong social controls against delinquent behavior, religious commitment and involvement protects youth from antisocial behavior—both minor and serious.** In the Add Health Survey, a major national survey of adolescents, a 6 percent reduction in delinquency was associated with a one-point increase on an index that combined adolescents' frequency of religious service with their rating of the importance of religion.[121]

Education

Churches provide a community which fosters educational achievement and uniquely helps at-risk youth

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Religion and Educational Attainment Because education is important for all citizens and the government invests heavily in public schooling, any factor that promotes academic achievement is important to the common good. Academic expectations, level of education attained, school attendance, and academic performance are all positively affected by religious practice. In two literature reviews conducted by Mark Regnerus of the University of Texas at Austin, educational attainment aspirations[97] and math and reading scores[98] correlated positively with more frequent religious practice. Parents' religious practice also counts. The greater the parents' religious involvement, the more likely they will have higher educational expectations of their children and will communicate with their children regarding schooling. Their children will be more likely to pursue advanced courses, spend more time on homework, establish friendships with academically oriented peers, avoid cutting classes, and successfully complete their degrees. [99] Students in religiously affiliated schools tend to exhibit a higher level of academic achievement than their peers in secular schools, particularly in low-income urban neighborhoods. For example, studies continue to find that inner-city students in public schools lag behind in educational achievement, compared with students in Catholic schools.[100] The cultural values of a religious community are also a significant pathway to academic success for adolescents. For example, to earn a high school diploma or take advanced math courses, children must plan for the future and structure their activities accordingly. Religious communities typically invest in forming an ethic of such discipline and persistence. A recent study confirms both this indirect contribution of religious community values and the direct influence of the students' own religious activities in promoting academic achievement.[101] Earlier studies found this same relationship between religious practice and academic discipline. For example, in 1985, the groundbreaking work of Richard Freeman of Harvard University revealed that attendance at religious services and activities positively affected inner-city youth school attendance, work activity, and allocation of time—all of which were further linked to a decreased likelihood of engaging in deviant activities.[102] For instance, youth who frequently attended religious services were five times less likely to skip school, compared with peers who seldom or never attended.[103] education and Disadvantaged Youth. For youth in impoverished neighborhoods, religious attendance made the greatest difference in academic achievement prospects, according to research in 2001 by Regnerus. As rates of unemployment, poverty, and female-headed households grew in a neighborhood, the impact of a student's level of religious practice on academic progress became even stronger. Regnerus posits that churches uniquely provide "functional communities" for the poor that reinforce parental support networks, control, and norms in environments of disadvantage and dysfunction. In these neighborhoods, families are most likely to build pathways to success for their children when they

closely monitor them and when they develop ties to local churches that expose their children to positive role models. Youth in high-risk neighborhoods who regularly attend religious services progress at least as satisfactorily as their peers in low-risk, middle-class neighborhoods: Religious attendance was found to serve as a protective mechanism in high-risk communities in a way that it does not in low-risk ones, stimulating educational resilience in the lives of at-risk youth. We argue that adolescents' participation in religious communities-which often constitute the key sources of neighborhood developmental resources-reinforces messages about working hard and staying out of trouble, orients them toward a positive future, and builds a transferable skill set of commitments and routines.[104] Regnerus goes on to suggest that religious affiliation had a positive impact on educational attainment for African-Americans residing in a high-risk neighborhood, even when controlling for family structure, although its effect was strongest for youth living in two-parent families.[105] The role of Religion in building relationships and habits of hard work "reinforces a conventional (as opposed to alternate or illegal) orientation to success and achievement." Youth religious affiliation in combination with religious families and friends serves to integrate youth into the broader society and shapes their aspirations for education and achievement.[106]

Health

Health/Well-being

Global data shows that active participation in religion is associated with better reported health and higher civic engagement

Hackett et al 19 (Conrad, Associate Director of Research and Senior Demographer, Joey Marshall, Research Associate, Anna Schiller, Communications Manager, Pew Research Center, "Religion's Relationship to Happiness, Civic Engagement and Health Around the World," <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/01/31/religions-relationship-to-happiness-civic-engagement-and-health-around-the-world/> 8/20)

Many previous studies have found positive associations between religion and health in the United States. Researchers have shown, for example, that Americans who regularly attend religious services tend to live longer.¹ Other studies have focused on narrower health benefits, such as how religion may help breast cancer patients cope with stress. On the other hand, there are also studies that have not found a robust relationship between religion and better health in the U.S., and even some studies that have shown negative relationships, such as higher rates of obesity among highly religious Americans. (For more on previous studies of religion and health, see this sidebar.) Taking a broad, international approach to this complicated topic, Pew Research Center researchers set out to determine whether religion has clearly positive, negative or mixed associations with eight different indicators of individual and societal well-being available from international surveys conducted over the past decade. Specifically, this report examines survey respondents' self-assessed levels of happiness, as well as five measures of individual health and two measures of civic participation.² By dividing people into three categories, the study also seeks to isolate whether religious affiliation or religious participation – or both, or neither – is associated with happiness, health and civic engagement. The three categories are: "Actively religious," made up of people who identify with a religious group and say they attend services at least once a month (sometimes called "actives"); "inactively religious," defined as those who claim a religious identity but attend services less often (also called "inactives"); and "religiously unaffiliated," people who do not identify with any organized religion (sometimes called "nones").³ This analysis finds that in the U.S. and many other countries around the world, regular participation in a religious community clearly is linked with higher levels of happiness and civic engagement (specifically, voting in elections and joining community groups or other voluntary organizations). This may suggest that societies with declining levels of religious engagement, like the U.S., could be at risk for declines in personal and societal well-being. But the analysis finds comparatively little evidence that religious affiliation, by itself, is associated with a greater likelihood of personal happiness or civic involvement.

Longevity

Religion extends one's longevity – the gap between religious and non-religious people is the same as between smokers and non-smokers

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Religion and Physical Health **Greater longevity is consistently and significantly related to higher levels of religious practice and involvement, regardless of the sex, race, education, or health history of those studied.**[89] For example, **those who are religiously involved live an average of seven years longer than those who are not. This gap is as great as that between non-smokers and those who smoke a pack of cigarettes a day.** Predicting the life spans of 20-year-olds who are religiously involved compared with those who are not yields differences in life span as great as those between women and men and between whites and blacks.[90] **Among African-Americans, the longevity benefit is still greater.** The average life span of religious blacks is 14 years longer than that of their nonreligious peers.[91] Studies on the effects of religious practice on annual death rates of various populations found that, after controlling for variables such as race, death rates for an age cohort (e.g., men age 59 or women age 71) were reduced by 28 percent to 46 percent (e.g., from 100 deaths per year to 72 deaths to 54 deaths) for that age group.[92] **An earlier review of 250 epidemiological health research studies found a reduced risk of colitis, different types of cancer, and untimely death among people with higher levels of religious commitment.**[93] Conversely, at any age, **those who did not attend religious services had higher risks of dying from cirrhosis of the liver, emphysema, arteriosclerosis, and other cardiovascular diseases and were more likely to commit suicide, according to an even earlier review by faculty of the John Hopkins University School of Public Health.**[94] The most significant pathway by which religious practice delivers these longevity benefits is a lifestyle that reduces the risk of mortality from infectious diseases and diabetes by encouraging a support network among family and friends that helps to maintain a pattern of regimented care.[95] Not only a person's own religious practice, but also parents' religious practice affects personal health. Adolescents whose mothers attended religious services at least weekly displayed better health, greater problem-solving skills, and higher overall satisfaction with their lives, regardless of race, gender, income, or family structure, according to a study of public school children in Baltimore.[96]

Substance Abuse

There's a strong relationship between religious practice and reduced drug use and treating substance addiction

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Religion and the Abuse of Alcohol and drugs Numerous studies demonstrate a significant association between religious practice and healthy behavioral habits relating to cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs. Individuals with higher levels of religious involvement have lower rates of abuse and addiction and are more likely to find long-lasting success if they ever struggled with any of these behaviors. Cigarette Use. Harold Koenig and colleagues at Duke University found that religious activity was inversely related to cigarette consumption among the elderly.[57] The late Feroz Ahmed and colleagues at Howard University found the same for African-American women of childbearing age.[58] Alcohol Abuse. Decades of research indicate that a higher level of religious involvement is associated with a reduced likelihood of abusing alcohol[59] or drugs.[60] The relationship between religious practice and the avoidance or moderate use of alcohol is well documented, whether or not denominational tenets specifically prohibit the use of alcohol.[61] Adolescents,[62] psychiatric patients,[63] and recovering addicts[64] all show lower rates of alcohol abuse the more frequently they engage in religious activities. For adolescents, higher levels of religious practice by their mothers are related to significantly lower rates of alcohol abuse, even after controlling for religious denomination and the adolescents' peer associations-two factors that also influence the level of drinking.[65] Drug Abuse. Just as with alcohol, religious practice has for some time predicted significant reduction of substance abuse.[66] In a comprehensive review of the academic literature on Religion and substance abuse, Byron Johnson of Baylor University and his colleagues reported that, in the vast majority of studies, participation in religious activities was associated with less drug abuse. Even in cases in which individuals used drugs, the more religious were less likely to develop long-term problems.[67] All of the factors related to a decrease in drug use-good family relations, doing well in school, having friends who do not use drugs, and having anti-drug attitudes-had an even more powerful deterrent effect when teenagers were also religious.[68] The more dangerous the drug, the more religious practice deterred its use.[69] Just as religious practice and belief deter drug abuse, Religion also has a positive effect in the treatment of drug addiction. In 1994, a seven-year follow-up study of Teen Challenge, a faith-based drug addiction program, found that the program's graduates had significantly changed their behavior, in contrast to those who had dropped out.[70] A Northwestern University study[71] also found that Teen Challenge participants were more likely to remain sober and to maintain employment than were peers in control groups.[72]

Charity

More Likely

Religious individuals are much more likely to give charitably than non-religious people and the impact of their donations is significant

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Religion and Community Religious practice benefits not only individuals, but also communities. Religiously active men and women are often more sensitive to others, more likely to serve and give to those in need, and more likely to be productive members of their communities. Compassion and Charity. Religious practice is linked to greater generosity in charitable giving. In extensive research documenting the relationship between Religion and philanthropy, Arthur Brooks of Syracuse University demonstrated that religious practice correlates with a higher rate of care and concern for others. Compared with peers with no religious affiliation, religious respondents were 15 percent more likely to report having tender, concerned feelings for the disadvantaged. This gap was reduced by only 2 percent when the effects of education, income, marital status, sex, race, and age were taken into account. The correlation between Religion and increased charitable giving crosses ideological boundaries. When Brooks divided the survey population into quadrants of politically conservative, liberal, secular, and religious respondents, he found that the impact of Religion on compassion applied regardless of the political perspective. Religious conservatives were 6 percent more likely to be concerned about the disadvantaged than were secular liberals, while religious liberals were 24 percentage points more likely to express such feelings of compassion than were secular conservatives. Among the general survey population, religious individuals were 40 percent more likely than their secular counterparts to give money to charities and more than twice as likely to volunteer. Among those who felt compassion for the disadvantaged, religious respondents were 23 percentage points more likely to donate to charities at least yearly and 32 percentage points more likely to donate monthly than were their secular counterparts. They were 34 percentage points more likely to volunteer at least yearly and 22 percentage points more likely to volunteer monthly.[107] Regnerus and his colleagues found similar correlations between religious adherents and charitable giving in an analysis of the 1996 Pew survey on religious identity and influence. Individuals with a religious affiliation were 30 percent more likely to donate to organizations assisting the poor when compared with their secular counterparts.[108] The impact of religious practice on formal charity had additional significance for community cohesion. Individuals who gave to charitable organizations were 21 percentage points more likely to give informally (e.g., to family and friends).[109] Ram Cnaan of the University of Pennsylvania found that congregations as communities were almost universally involved in collective charitable outreach. In an extensive survey of religious institutions in Philadelphia, Cnaan found that 91 percent of the congregations surveyed had at least one community program that supplied goods and services to those in need, including food pantries, prison ministries, summer camps, and substance abuse prevention programs. He estimated the replacement value of the services provided by congregations in Philadelphia to be \$228 million a year in the late 1990s.[110]

The largest religions in the US all promote charitable giving – data supports practitioners follow through

Levy 12 (Darlene, MPA Licensed Clinical Social Work Practitioner with an extensive background in individual, family counseling and EAP, Purdue University, "Helping Those in Need Around the Holidays," <https://www.purdueglobal.edu/blog/human-services/helping-those-in-need/> 8/20)

A cultural phenomenon takes place annually in the United States that is often overlooked when discussing some of the commonalities of American culture, such as baseball, apple pie, freedom, and the rights of the individual. **In early November the awareness of the poor and needy moves from the back of most American minds to a central focus** during what is commonly referred to as the Season of Giving. **The recognition of poverty among the midst of plenty calls attention to the responsibility of the community to assist those who are without or have fallen on hard times.** We might ask where this all comes from—**how is it that we are moved to give and share during this time? What compels us to reach out to the poor** in a country with an underlying philosophy of “work hard and the rewards will follow”? In reflecting on this quandary, **it comes to mind that religion and religious philosophy foster this notice of others who are in need.** The spirit of giving, whether of time, money, or resources, becomes a focal point of activity during the holiday season. **Taking a brief look at some of the major religions practiced in the United States, we see a common thread of recognition for those in need and how to morally and effectively address the issues of poverty, isolation, loneliness, and oppression.** One way to effectively do so is through monetary giving. According to a 2010 report by the Center of Philanthropy at Indiana University, charitable giving in the United States in 2009 was \$303.75 billion, down from the previous year of \$315.08 billion. Despite the downturn, these sums continue to be substantial. What do some religions say about charity? Buddhism: **The Buddhists have a required action called Dana. This concept includes giving, sharing, and selfless giving without anticipation of return or benefit to the giver. There is also sweat Dana, where the giver can donate time and effort such as working in a soup kitchen** or on a construction project. (www.manitobabuddhistchurch.org/dana.html) Christianity: **Christian giving originates from the beginnings of Christianity where early Christians shared with each other and the larger community. Other concepts of charity are based on Judaism through the teachings of the Old Testament and through the life of Jesus** based on the teachings in the New Testament. **Christianity historically developed charitable institutions such as schools, hospitals, and social service agencies** that remain strong pillars in today’s communities. (<http://www.alliancemagazine.org/en/content/traditions-giving-christianity>) Islam: **Zakat is the third pillar of Islam, compulsory giving for those Muslims whose incomes are at a particular level: it is considered a purifying tax. The concept becomes much broader as zakat can only be spent on eight specified categories** according to Surah 9:60: (1) the **people who do not have anything**, so they are in need of asking others for food, clothing, health services and shelter; (2) **the poor who may have money, but it is not sufficient** for their basic needs; (3) **zakat collectors** (which can include Islamic charities in absence of a Caliph); (4) **for God’s cause** (which includes every kind of struggle for a righteous cause); (5) **debtors**; (6) **wayfarers** (or travelers); (7) **freeing captives**; (8) **reconciling hearts**. If a person does not fall into any of the listed categories, then they are prohibited from receiving zakat, though they may be eligible to receive other sources of charity. (<http://www.islamic-relief.com>) Judaism: **Jews have an obligation to perform charitable works known as tzedakah. Maimonides, a great rabbi, organized the levels of charity from least to most meritorious: Giving begrudgingly Giving less than you should, but giving it cheerfully Giving after being asked Giving before being asked Giving when you do not know**

the recipient's identity, but the recipient knows your identity Giving when you know the recipient's identity, but the recipient doesn't know your identity Giving when neither party knows the other's identity Enabling the recipient to become self-reliant (www.jewfaq.org/tzedakah.htm) We could conclude that the strong impulse to give in the United States may be based in part on strong pluralistic religious teachings that either command or encourage the act of giving with an understanding that giving may occur in several forms.

Virtuous Cycle

Faith often induces a virtuous cycle of charitable giving and volunteering

King 17 (David, Assistant Professor of Philanthropic Studies, "How religion motivates people to give and serve," <https://theconversation.com/how-religion-motivates-people-to-give-and-serve-81662>, 8/20)

Religious traditions are clear that the value of giving does not simply rest with those receiving the gift. Givers themselves benefit. As sociologist Christian Smith makes clear, there is a paradox to generosity – in giving we receive and in grasping we lose. At the same time, the goal of religious giving is not just about what it brings to individuals. Rather, it is more a focus on human interaction and a vision of community. Perhaps most famously, the 12th-century Rabbi Maimonides outlined eight levels of giving – the lowest being giving grudgingly and the highest to sustain, but also to empower a person to no longer need charity. Maimonides made clear it is not so much the amount of giving but how one gives that is important in establishing a relationship between the giver and the recipient. Giving should avoid humiliation, superiority and dependence. With the majority of global citizens belonging to a religious tradition, it should be no surprise that religion often becomes the greatest asset in humanitarian work. Whether fighting AIDS, malaria or poverty, the development community has realized that the success of local programs so often turns on the support of the local faith community. The engagement of the local imam or priest is essential. Just a few years ago, the humanitarian industry was convinced of the truth of this view when they found that a majority of the health care workers left on the ground in the midst of the Ebola crises were missionaries. Faith was the chief motivator for those both funding and serving in some of the most difficult parts of the world.

AT: Neg

AT: "Bad Eggs"

Citing some bad people who practice religion isn't sufficient – religious practice on the whole provides ample benefits to vote aff

Fagan 6 (Patrick, William H. G. FitzGerald Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, The Heritage Foundation, "Why Religion Matters Even More: The Impact of Religious Practice on Social Stability," <https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/why-religion-matters-even-more-the-impact-religious-practice-social-stability> 8/15)

Negative Outcomes The vast majority of the studies reviewed give evidence of numerous societal benefits of religious belief and practice. However, relatively few studies indicate some unintended negative outcomes. Religion and Sexual Behavior. Although frequent religious attendance is highly correlated with less sexual activity among those who are not married, some religiously observant individuals do become sexually active. These individuals tend to use contraception less and thus do not have the protection of abstinence or barriers to prevent pregnancy or infection.[124] Among adolescent males from divorced families, there are indications of a positive correlation between frequent church attendance and an increased number of sexual partners. This relationship, however, does not appear among female adolescents from divorced families.[125] Motivation for Religious Practice. Researchers cite two types of motivation for religious practice: intrinsic and extrinsic.[126] Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for religious practice seem to result in two very different types of outcomes. Intrinsic motivation is related to moral standards, conscientiousness, discipline, responsibility, and consistency.[127] Those who are intrinsically motivated (intrinsic) are likely to be more sensitive to others and more understanding of their own emotions. They tend to have a greater sense of responsibility, are more self-motivated, and have greater internal control. By contrast, extrinsic motivation relies on secular benefits such as those derived from religious affiliation and is often linked to self-indulgence, indolence, and a lack of dependability. Such individuals (extrinsic) are more likely to be dogmatic, authoritarian, and less responsible. They also tend to have less internal control and are less self-directed.[128] Furthermore, numerous findings link extrinsic religious motivation to similar, self-centered behaviors.[129] For example, studies documenting racial prejudice among church members found that those who are the most racially prejudiced either attend religious services infrequently or are extrinsically motivated and practice Religion simply as a means for fulfilling their own ends (e.g., Membership in a social group) rather than for prayer and worship. In general, extrinsic have more anxiety about life's ups and downs than intrinsic do. Intrinsic' religious beliefs and practices are more integrated and consistent. For instance, they are more likely to attend public religious services and pray privately. By contrast, those who pray only privately and do not attend public religious services tend to have a higher level of general anxiety, a characteristic typical of extrinsic.[130] One set of findings on anxiety about death showed that extrinsic fared worse than intrinsic believers, but also worse than those who do not profess religious belief.[131] All of these findings confirm the conclusion in 1968 of Gordon Allport, then professor of psychology at Harvard University: "I feel equally sure that mental health is facilitated by an intrinsic, but not an extrinsic, religious orientation." [132] Despite some findings indicating the occasional negative outcomes, the vast majority of research studies cite the positive effects of religious practice. Typically, findings of

negative effects are linked to specific circumstances related to particular forms of religious practice, most of which could be described as "malpractice" of religion.

AT: Conflict

Religion is excellent at quelling conflict – can play 6 key roles

Reychler 97 (Luc, PhD in international relations and conflict from Harvard, professor of international relations at KULeuven, launched an interfaculty Master in Conflict and Sustainable Peace program which is part of the European network of expertise in Peace and Conflict, also appointed to the UNESCO chair for Intellectual Solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45037971> 8/21)

Several factors endow religions and religious organizations with a great and under-utilized potential for constructive conflict management. First, **more than two thirds of the world population belongs to a religion.** In 1992, **29.2% of the religious constituency was Christian; 17.9% Muslim; 13% Hindu; 5.7% Buddhist/Shintoist; 0.7% Confucianism/Taoist.** Together, all those religious organizations have a **huge infrastructure with a communication network reaching to all corners of the world.** They have a great responsibility and leadership is expected from them. Second, **religious organizations have the capacity to mobilize people and to cultivate attitudes of forgiveness, conciliation.** They can do a great deal to prevent dehumanization. **They have the capacity to motivate and mobilize people for a more peaceful world.** Religious and humanitarian values are one of the main roots of voluntarism in all countries: **doing something for someone else without expecting to be paid for it.** They are **problem-solvers.** They **do not seek conflict.** But when a need is seen, they want to do something about it. They are a force to be reckoned with (Hoekendijk, 1990). Third, **religious organizations can rely on a set of soft power sources to influence the peace process.** Raven and Rubin (1983) developed a useful taxonomy for understanding the different bases of power. It asserts that six different sources of power exist for influencing another's behavior: **reward, coercion, expertise, legitimacy, reference, and information.** **Reward power is used when the influencer offers some positive benefits (of a tangible or intangible nature) in exchange for compliance.** If reward power relies on the use of **promises,** **coercive power relies on the language of threat.** **Expert power relies for its effectiveness on the influencers' ability to create the impression of being in possession of information or expertise that justifies a particular request.** **Legitimate power requires the influencer to persuade others on the basis of having the right to make a request.** Referent power builds on the relationships that exist between the influencer and recipient. The influencer counts on the fact that the recipient, in some ways, values his or her relationship with the source of influence. Finally, **informational power works because of the content of the information conveyed.** To mediate, **religious organizations can rely on several sources of power.** **There could be the referent power that stems from the mediation position of a large and influential religious family.** **Closely related could be legitimate power or the claim to moral rectitude, the right to assert its views about the appropriateness and acceptability of behavior.** **Religious leaders could refer to their 'spiritual power'** and speak in the name of God. Also important could be the informational power derived through non-governmental channels; groups like the Quakers could use expertise power on the basis of their reputation of fine mediators. Fourth, **religious organizations could also use hard sources of power.** **Some religious organizations have reward power, not only in terms of promising economic aid, but, for example, by granting personal audiences.** Use could also be made of coercive power by mobilizing people to protest certain policies. **Think of Bishop James McHugh, warning President Clinton of an electoral backlash for the administration's support of abortion rights at the United Nations population conference in Cairo.** **Integrative power, or power of 'love' (Boulding, 1990), is based on such relationships as respect, affection, love, community and identity.** Fifth, there is a

growing need for non-governmental peace services. Non-governmental actors can fulfill tasks for which the traditional diplomacy is not well equipped. They would provide information not readily available to traditional diplomats; they could create an environment in which parties could meet without measuring their bargaining positions, without attracting charges of appeasement, without committing themselves, and without making it look as if they were seeking peaceful solutions at the expense of important interests. They could monitor the conflict dynamics, involve the people at all levels, and assess the legitimacy of peace proposals and agreements. Sixth, most can make use of their transnational organization to provide peace services. Finally, there is the fact that religious organizations are in the field and could fulfill several of the above peace services.

Neg evidence is rooted in hyperbole – religion plays a very complicated role in conflict and the positive outweigh the negatives

Smock 6 (David, director of the United States Institute of Peace Religion and Peacemaking Initiative, United States Institute of Peace, "Religious Contributions to Peacemaking," <https://www.usip.org/publications/2006/01/religious-contributions-peacemaking-when-religion-brings-peace-not-war>, 8/30)

The post-September 11 world is seized with the dangers of religious extremism and conflict between religious communities, particularly between two or more of the Abrahamic faiths: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. The threat of religious extremism is real and well documented. The connection between religion and conflict is in the process of being thoroughly explored, however, to the extent that hyperbole and exaggeration are commonplace. In the popular mind, to discuss religion in the context of international affairs automatically raises the specter of religious-based conflict. The many other dimensions and impacts of religion tend to be downplayed or even neglected entirely. The contribution that religion can make to peacemaking--as the flip side of religious conflict--is only beginning to be explored and explicated. All three of the Abrahamic faiths contain strong warrants for peacemaking. There are past cases of mediation and peacemaking by religious leaders and institutions. For example, the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches mediated the short-lived 1972 peace agreement in Sudan. In South Africa, various churches were at the vanguard of the struggle against apartheid and the peaceful transition. The most dramatic and most frequently cited case is the successful mediation the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio achieved to help end the civil war in Mozambique in 1992. Repeatedly citing these cases as the main points of reference distorts the reality of religious peacemaking. Most of the cases of religious or faith-based peacemaking are less dramatic in their outcomes. Also, religious peacemaking is becoming much more common, and the number of cases cited is growing at an increasing pace. The field of religious peacemaking is also maturing. With more sophisticated reflections of its growing experience, a body of knowledge is developing. I made an earlier attempt to reflect on this experience in the book I edited titled Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2002). Some of the leading thinkers and practitioners in the field, including Marc Gopin, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, and David Steele, contributed chapters to that volume. The book contains an analysis of the keys of success in interfaith dialogue as a mechanism for resolving violent conflicts. It lifts up the unique elements of religious peacebuilding, with a particular focus on apology and forgiveness. It also emphasizes the importance of keeping issues of social justice front and center, so that religious peacebuilding does not merely make the participants feel better. There are a number of other important

contributions to this literature. When communal identities, particularly religious identities, are key causal factors in violent conflict, traditional diplomacy may be of little value in seeking peace or conflict management. Douglas Johnston, president of the International Center on Religion and Diplomacy, has identified conditions in several conflict situations that lend themselves to faith-based intervention: religion is a significant factor in the identity of one or both parts to the conflict; religious leaders on both sides of the dispute can be mobilized to facilitate peace; protracted struggles between two major religious traditions transcend national borders, as has been the case over time with Islam and Christianity; and/or forces of realpolitik have led to an extended paralysis of action. Johnston also identifies the attributes that religious leaders and institutions can offer in promoting peace and reconciliation, including: credibility as a trusted institution; a respected set of values; moral warrants for opposing injustice on the part of governments; unique leverage for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties, including an ability to rehumanize situations that have become dehumanized over the course of protracted conflict; a capability to mobilize community, nation, and international support for a peace process; an ability to follow through locally in the wake of a political settlement; and a sense of calling that often inspires perseverance in the face of major, otherwise debilitating, obstacles. By way of example, African peacemaker Hizkias Assefa, emphasizes the commendable role of religious leaders as an asset in peacemaking. Such religious leaders are particularly effective in working together for peace when they are from different faith communities. When the faiths explore and practice common values, such as justice and compassion, in public life, religious leaders can be an inspiration to others. Gerrie ter Haar summarizes Assefa's contention as: "Bringing the spiritual dimension into the peacemaking process can create access to the more deep-seated, affective base of the parties' behavior, enabling them to examine critically their own attitudes and actions. People's conflict behavior is often based on more emotional considerations and thus may not be changed simply by rational negotiation processes and subsequent agreements. Cognitive decisions and commitments, he argues, do not necessarily translate into feelings and actions." Religious resources are contained in the four main elements of which religions consist. Haar identifies these elements as: religious ideas (content of belief), religious practices (ritual behavior), social organization (religious community), and religious--or spiritual--experiences. These dimensions can all be used in the service of peacemaking. Two critical elements in religious life that are centrally important to peacemaking are empathy and compassion, and the value of tapping into these attributes is readily apparent in effective religious peacemaking.

AT: Anti-Science

The conflict between religion and science is exaggerated and is overestimated by non-religious people

Johnson et al 21 (Courtney, research associate, Cary Lynne Thigpen is a research assistant, and Cary Funk directs science research at the Pew Research Center, Pew Trusts, "On the intersection of Science and Religion," <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trend/archive/winter-2021/on-the-intersection-of-science-and-religion> 9/1)

Over the centuries, the relationship between science and religion has ranged from conflict and hostility to harmony and collaboration, while various thinkers have argued that the two concepts are inherently at odds and entirely separate. Pew Research Center surveys have documented those trends over more than a decade in the United States. We found that 56% of Americans say there generally is conflict between science and religion but that this sense of tension is more common among the religiously unaffiliated— those who describe their religion as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular.” The survey showed that just 16% of Christians in the U.S. say their religious beliefs “often” conflict with science; another 3 in 10 say such conflict sometimes occurs. We’ve also examined views on a range of issues in which science and religion might be flashpoints. On evolution, for example, we found that a majority of Catholics believe humans evolved over time, as do a similar number of White mainline Protestants, but far fewer Black Protestants and White evangelicals hold this view.

Neg

Conflict

Wars

Religion creates categories and identities that state actors can mobilize to create conflict

Hashemi 19 (Nader, Director of the Center for Middle East Studies and Associate Professor of Middle East and Islamic Politics at Josef Korbel School of International Studies at University of Denver, ABC, "The politics of sectarianism: What causes sectarian conflict, and can it be undone?" <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/the-middle-east-and-the-politics-of-sectarianism/11613338> 8/31)

This anti-democratic political context is essential for understanding sectarian conflict in Muslim societies today, especially in those societies that contain a mix of Sunni and Shia populations. To paraphrase and adapt from the famous aphorism from the Prussian General Carl Von Clausewitz, about "war being a continuation of politics by other means," in my reading, sectarian conflict in the Middle East today is primarily about the perpetuation of political rule by ruling elites by means of identity mobilisation. In the past, theories of ethnic conflict have generally treated states as passive actors in identity mobilisation. The standard narrative held that competition from within society among contending ethnic groups would inevitably shift to the arena of the state as these sub-state actors vie for control of various state institutions as a means of enhancing their power over rival groups. The intensification of these struggles would eventually lead to the weakening, collapse and failure of the state. But drawing on research from south and southeast Asia, Vali Nasr has argued that "far from being passive victims of identity mobilization," states have a logic of their own and "can be directly instrumental in ... manipulating the protagonists and entrenching identity cleavages." Identity mobilisation here is rooted in the project of power acquisition by state actors, not the behaviour of societal elites or community actors. These state actors do not champion the cause of any one community but see political gain in the conflict between the competing identities. Nasr's insight helps deepen our theoretical understanding of identity mobilisation in that it pushes the conversation beyond primordial differences and manipulation by religious authorities to focus attention on state behaviour and state-society relations. Primordialist explanations of sectarian conflict fail to explain the current disorder in the Middle East. This widely popular view, based on an alleged enduring Sunni-Shia antagonisms with roots in the seventh century, clouds rather than illuminates the complex realities of the politics of the region which are better understood as series of deep and expanding developmental crises (both political and economic) that the region has been facing since the Second World War. The policies of leading Western states toward the Middle East have only exacerbated these political and economic problems. Donald Trump's embrace of Saudi Arabia's deeply sectarian reading of the Middle East is a perfect illustration of this point, but the problem is much deeper and far precedes the Trump presidency. While it is true that religious identities are more salient in the politics of the Middle East than before, it also true that these identities have been deliberately politicised and weaponised by state actors in pursuit of political gain. The politics of authoritarian regimes is the key context for understanding this problem. In other words, there is a symbiotic relationship between pressure from society below, which demands greater inclusion, respect and representation, and the refusal by ruling elites from above to share or relinquish power. This produces a crisis of legitimacy that needs to be carefully managed. The politics of sectarianism or sectarianisation — the deliberate manipulation of religious identities — is a result of this political dynamic. The response of the regimes in Syria and Bahrain to demands for political change during the Arab Spring are case studies of how the process unfolds.

Religion has consistently created conflict between groups – its wars are also unique and distinct from non-religious ones because there often cannot be compromise

Reychler 97 (Luc, PhD in international relations and conflict from Harvard, professor of international relations at KULeuven, launched an interfaculty Master in Conflict and Sustainable Peace program which is part of the European network of expertise in Peace and Conflict, also appointed to the UNESCO chair for Intellectual Solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45037971> 8/21)

Religious Wars Since the awakening of religion, wars have been fought in the name of different gods and goddesses. Still today most violent conflicts contain religious elements linked up with ethno-national, inter-state, economic, territorial, cultural and other issues. Threatening the meaning of life, conflicts based on religion tend to become dogged, tenacious and brutal types of wars. When conflicts are couched in religious terms, they become transformed in value conflicts. Unlike other issues, such as resource conflicts which can be resolved by pragmatic and distributive means, value conflicts have a tendency to become mutually conclusive or zero-sum issues. They entail strong judgments of what is right and wrong, and parties believe that there cannot be a common ground to resolve their differences. "Since the North-South conflicts in the Sudan have been cast in religious terms, they developed the semblance of deep value conflicts which appear unresolvable except by force or separation" (Assefa, 1990). Religious conviction is, as it has ever been, a source of conflict within and between communities. It should, however, be remembered that it was not religion that has made the twentieth the most bloody century. Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao Tse-tung, Pol Pot and their apprentices in Rwanda maimed and murdered millions of people on a unprecedented scale, in the name of a policy which rejected religious or other transcendent reference points for judging its purposes and practices (Weigel, 1991: 39). Those policies were based on an ideology having the same characteristics as a religion. In a world where many governments and international organizations are suffering from a legitimacy deficit, one can expect a growing impact of religious discourses on international politics. Religion is a major source of soft power. It will, to a greater extent, be used or misused by religions and governmental organizations to pursue their interests. It is therefore important to develop a more profound understanding of the basic assumption underlying the different religions and the ways in which people adhering to them see their interests. It would also be very useful to identify elements of communality between the major religions. The major challenge of religious organizations remains to end existing and prevent new religious conflicts. In December 1992, 24 wars were counted with a religious background (adjusted AKUF-Kriege-Datenbank). Most of them were situated in Northern Africa, the Middle East, the ex-USSR and Asia. In Europe there were only two: Yugoslavia and Northern Ireland. No religious wars were registered in the Americas (See Table 2). These wars could be further classified by distinguishing violent conflicts within and between religions and between religious organizations and the central government. In Europe, Bosnian Muslims have, for more than two years, been brutally harried by Serbs who are called Christians. On the border between Europe and Asia, Christian Armenians have thumped Muslim Azeris, and Muslims and Jews still shoot each other in Palestine. WARS WITH A RELIGIOUS DIMENSION 1. Mavanamar/Burma 1948 Buddhists vs. Christians 2. Israel/Palestinian 1968 Jews vs. Arabs)Muslims-Christians) 3. Northern Ireland 1969 Catholic vs. Protestants 4. Philippines (Mindanao) 1970 Muslims vs. Christians (Catholics) 5. Bangladesh 1973 Buddhists vs. Christians 6. Lebanon 1975 Shiites supported by Syria (Amal) vs. Shiites supported by Iran (Hezbollah) 7. Ethiopia (Oromo) 1976 Muslims vs. Central government 8. India (Punjab) 1982 Sikhs vs. Central government 9.

Sudan 1983 Muslims vs. Native religions 10. Mali-Tuareg Nomads 1990 Muslims vs. Central government 11. Azerbaijan 1990 Muslims vs. Christian Armenians 12. India (Kashmir) 1990 Muslims vs. Central government (Hindu) 13. Indonesia (Aceh) 1990 Muslims vs. Central government (Muslim) 14. Iraq 1991 Sunnites vs. Shiites 15. Yugoslavia (Croatia) 1991 Serbian orthodox Christians vs. Roman Catholic Christians 16. Yugoslavia (Bosnia) 1991 Orthodox Christians vs. Catholics vs. Muslims 17. Afghanistan 1992 Fundamentalist Muslims vs. Moderate Muslims 18. Tadjikistan 1992 Muslims vs. Orthodox Christians 19. Egypt 1977 Muslims vs. Central government (Muslim) Muslims vs. Coptic Christians 20. Tunisia 1978 Muslims vs. Central government (Muslim) 21. Algeria 1988 Muslims vs. Central government 22. Uzbekistan 1989 Sunite Uzbeks vs. Shiite Meschetes 23. India (Uttar-Pradesh) 1992 Hindus vs. Muslims 24. Sri Lanka 1983 Hindus vs. Muslims Table 2: Wars with a Religious Dimension <<Object>> Source: Gantzel et al., (1993) Further east, Muslims complain of the Indian army's brutality towards them in Kashmir, and of Indian Hindu's destruction of the Ayodhya mosque in 1992. Islam, as Samuel Huntington has put it, has bloody borders (Huntington, 1993). It was Huntington who recently provided the intellectual framework to pay more attention to the coming clash of civilizations. Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most importantly, religion. He expects more conflicts along the cultural-religious fault lines because (1) those differences have always generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts; (2) because the world is becoming a smaller place, and the increasing interactions will intensify the civilization-consciousness of the people which in turn invigorates differences and animosities stretching or thought to stretch back deep in history; (3) because of the weakening of the nation-state as a source of identity and the desecularisation of the world with the revival of religion as basis of identity and commitment that transcends national boundaries and unites civilizations; (4) because of the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at the peak of its power. At the same time, it is confronted with an increasing desire by elites in other parts of the world to shape the world in non-Western ways; (5) because cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones; (6) finally, because increasing economic regionalism will reinforce civilization-consciousness.

Religious institutions have also historically abstained from intervening at crucial moments in history which facilitates conflict

Reychler 97 (Luc, PhD in international relations and conflict from Harvard, professor of international relations at KULeuven, launched an interfaculty Master in Conflict and Sustainable Peace program which is part of the European network of expertise in Peace and Conflict, also appointed to the UNESCO chair for Intellectual Solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45037971> 8/21)

Religious Bystanders Religious organizations can also influence the conflict dynamics by abstaining from intervention. As most conflicts are 'asymmetrical', this attitude is partial in its consequences. It is implicitly reinforcing the 'might is right' principle. During the Second World War, the Vatican adopted a neutral stand. It didn't publicly disapprove of the German atrocities in Poland or in the concentration camps. To secure its diplomatic interests, Rome opted for this prudence and not for an evangelical disapproval. The role of bystanders, those members of the society who are neither perpetrators nor victims, is very important. Their support, opposition, or indifference based on moral or other grounds, shapes the course of events. An expression of sympathy or antipathy of the head of the Citta del Vaticano, Pius XII, representing approximately 500 million Catholics, could have prevented a great deal

of the violence. The mobilization of the internal and external bystanders, in the face of the mistreatment of individuals or communities, is a major challenge to religious organizations. To realize this, children and adults, in the long run, must develop certain personal characteristics such as a pro-social value orientation and empathy. Religious organizations have a major responsibility in creating a worldview in which individual needs would not be met at the expense of others and genuine conflicts would not be resolved through aggression (Fein, 1992).

Division

Religion provides people with a unique incentive structure in their lives to have conflict with others

McPhillips 18 (Deidre, Data Editor, US News, "Religion Needs a Savior," <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-01-23/tribal-divisions-created-by-religion-most-harmful-in-global-conflict-experts-say> 8/21)

Raised as a conservative, Sunni Muslim girl in Canada, Yasmine Mohammed said she was taught to always be in fight mode. "The first thing Islam teaches you is to not question, but follow," she says. And what she had to follow was a "Muslim supremacy ideology" that called for violence against anyone who fell out of line and full armies prepared to join the fight when the caliphate was to rise. Systematic suppression of critical thinking is what makes Muslims ripe to join groups like the Islamic State group or become suicide bombers without questioning the motives of their directives, she says. As a radical sect of Buddhist nationalists persecute the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict wages on and a film challenging the Orthodox Church spurs violent protests in Russia, it seems that asserting sovereignty is the only thing the world's religions can agree on today. In a recent Best Countries survey of more than 21,000 people from all regions of the world, the majority of respondents identified religion as the "primary source of most global conflict today." Spiritual beliefs create an inherent "us vs. them" scenario, experts say. "When societies shatter, they generally shatter along tribal lines. People are seeing themselves as irretrievably different from their neighbors," says Sam Harris, a neuroscientist and philosopher who has published books on Islam and the conflict between religion and science. The divisions created by religion are deeper and potentially more harmful than those formed through other aspects of identity such as race, nationality or political affiliations because they confront individuals with differing opinions on the ultimate purpose of life, experts say. And more than 80 percent of those surveyed said that religious beliefs guide a person's behavior. "Religion often becomes the master variable," Harris says. "It provides a unique reward structure. If you believe that the thoughts you harbor in this life and the doctrines you adhere to spell the difference between an eternity spent in fire or one spent on the right hand of God, that raises the stakes beyond any other reward structure on earth." Tribal tendencies are natural for humans who need groups and community to survive. But the driving forces behind especially alienating, fundamentalist beliefs are a combination of nature and nurture, experts say. "Any beliefs that concern the sacred are integral to people's identities," says Andrew Tix, a psychology professor at Normandale Community College whose nationally recognized research focuses on religion and spirituality. "People differ in how much they're threatened when the sacred is brought into question." He points to psychology's Big Five theory in which openness to experience is one of five key personality traits that is influenced by genetics and shaped by experiences. Some people have found ways to "hold their beliefs more lightly and with a sense of mystery," he says. They would score high on 'openness,' while fundamentalists who hold their beliefs with heavy conviction would more likely score low. Religious communities teach different ways of responding to criticism of their identity, Tix says, but it comes down to the notion of threatened egotism. The stronger a person's convictions in their identity – of which religion is often a key part – the more likely they are to be violent when their identity is threatened. The Muslim identity surrounding Mohammed in Canada's British Columbia was strong. She was beaten for not memorizing the Koran and married to a member of al-Qaida as a teenager. But

after taking a religion course at college, **Mohammed said the unease she had always felt with what she was told to believe finally started to take shape.** In voicing her newfound convictions to her family, she immediately became part of “them” instead of “us.” The fight turned against her. **She says her family disowned her and threatened to have her killed. She fled to different parts of Canada, changed her and her child’s names and says she feels lucky the death threat has so far only been a threat.**

Terrorism

Even without a full-scale conflict, religion promotes aggression and low-scale violence like political repression and terrorism

Reychler 97 (Luc, PhD in international relations and conflict from Harvard, professor of international relations at KULeuven, launched an interfaculty Master in Conflict and Sustainable Peace program which is part of the European network of expertise in Peace and Conflict, also appointed to the UNESCO chair for Intellectual Solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45037971> 8/21)

2. Low-Intensity Violence To further their interests religious organizations make also use of low-scale violence, political repression and terrorism. Salmon Rushdie or Taslima Nasrin in Bangladesh were forced into hiding from Muslim fundamentalists who want to punish them with death. Each religion has its fanatic religious fundamentalists. The Kach Party, which was led by Rabbi Meir Kahane until his death in November 1990, used tactics of abusing and physically attacking Palestinians. Kahane believed in a perpetual war and preached intolerance against the Arabs. Christian fundamentalists in the US cater a "Manifest Theology", a fundamentally Manichean worldview in which "we" are right, and all civil and aggressive intentions are projected to "them" (Galtung, 1987). "Because 'they' are evil and aggressive forces of chaos in the world, 'we' then have to be strongly armed, but do not perceive ourselves as aggressive even when attacking other countries" (Williamson, 1992: 11). Intolerance is also spawn by a minority of Islamic organizations, like Egypt's Gama'at al-Islamiya, Libanon's Hezbollah or Algeria's Islamic fundamentalists. All pursue a policy of violent confrontation, based on the convention that armed struggle or 'jihad' is a necessary and appropriate response to the enemies of God, despotic rulers and their Western allies.

Authoritarianism

Churches have also sided with authoritarian governments

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3. Structural Violence Several religious organizations also support structural violence by endorsing a centralized and authoritarian decision-making structure and the repression of egalitarian forces. Churches have sympathized with authoritarian government. The concord of the Vatican with Portugal in 1940, the agreement with Franco in 1941, and the support of authoritarian regimes in Latin-America were clear statements. Recently, the Vatican disapproved the candidacy of Aristide for President in Haiti. On the contrary, it recognized the military regime.

Cultural Violence

Myanmar's radical Buddhist actions against Rohingya is a prime example of religious differences perpetuating mass violence

Azad 17 (Ashraful, Assistant professor, international relations University of Chittagong, US News, "Violence Against Myanmar's Muslims Reaches New High," <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-02-06/un-report-finds-violence-against-myanmars-rohingyas-reaches-new-high-8/30>)

Violence against the Rohingyas, an ethnic Muslim minority in Myanmar, has reached a new high according to a report published by the United Nations. Its release followed an investigation that took place on the Bangladeshi border with Myanmar in January, after the UN Human Rights Office team was denied access to the worst-affected areas of northern Rakhine State in Myanmar. Horrific testimonies of brutal killings of adults and children, including babies, as well as gang-rapes and disappearances have been detailed in the document. Concern about Muslim minorities has been rising in this country since U Ko Ni, a prominent human rights lawyer close to Aung Saan Suu Kyi's party, and a Muslim, was shot dead on January 29. As of February 2014, there were 1.33 million Rohingyas in Myanmar, and more than one million living overseas. They are mainly in Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, India and Pakistan. At least 87,000 Rohingyas have been displaced since the military launched a crackdown in western Rakhine state in early October 2016. **In Myanmar, most Rohingyas have been stripped of citizenship, and face serious violations of human rights including restriction of freedom of movement, marriage restriction, exclusion from education and health care, enforced birth control, arbitrary taxation and forced labor. Rohingyas need to apply for travel pass to even visit a neighboring village and are required to obtain permission for marriage by paying high fees and bribes which can take several years to get.** Worse, **they are beaten, tortured, killed and raped; their houses are burnt, and the survivors are forced to leave ancestral home for an uncertain future.** It's no surprise **the Rohingyas are often called the most persecuted people on earth. Several academic studies have established that the persecution on the Rohingyas amounts to genocide. But the Myanmar government keeps denying these claims.** Why are Rohingyas forced out of Myanmar? **The government actually denies the existence of any ethnic group named "Rohingya."** It often **considers this group to be "Bengali," formed of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, despite the fact that Rohingya have lived in the Rakhine State for generations.** Under the 1982 Citizenship Law of Myanmar, **the government created three classes of citizens: full, associate and naturalized, and subsequently provided color-coded "scrutiny cards."** Pink cards were provided to full citizens, blue for associate citizens and green for naturalized. **Most of Rohingyas were not provided a card at all. They are rather considered "Myanmar residents," which means neither citizen nor foreigner.** In 1993, Rohingyas were given "white cards" which allowed them to vote. However, **these cards were revoked because of protests by Buddhist nationalist and monks.** This meant Rohingyas could not vote in the landmark 2015 general election which paved the way for Aung San Suu Kyi and her party to come to power. Many candidates, even sitting MPs, from Rohingya and other Muslim groups were banned from participating by all major political parties and the election commission. **Discrimination and violence against Rohingyas mainly lie in a false fear of Muslim power generated by Buddhist nationalists led by radical monks under the 969 movement and Ma Ba Tha** (the Organization for the Protection of Race and Religion). **Although Buddhist monks are usually portrayed as peace-preachers globally, many in Myanmar are involved in political activism.** Ashin **Wirathu, the charismatic leader** of some of these radical movements, often called "Burmese bin Laden," **openly spreads anti-**

Muslim rumors and hatred. No one dares to challenge Wirathu in fear of retaliation, and major political parties have designed policies considering the likely reaction from Ma Ba Tha. Therefore, not only stateless Rohingyas but also non-Rohingya Muslim groups with Burmese citizenship such as the Kaman people, as well as Muslims in Meiktila and Mandalay, have all faced religious violence. Yanghee Lee, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights for Myanmar was herself labeled as a "whore" by Wirathu when she advocated for human rights of Rohingya in 2015. The radical monks have drafted and successfully pressured the Myanmar government to pass so-called Race and Religion Protection laws such as Religious Conversion Law, Interfaith Marriage Law and Population Control Law that largely target Muslims. Although the Ma Ba Tha has become weaker in recent months following a dispute with the Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, state councilor Aung San Suu Kyi and her party do not dare to challenge the already strong public sentiment against Muslims. The celebrated transition to democracy in Myanmar has only increased populist pressure and majoritarian autocracy, ironically shutting up the voices of previously active human rights advocates.

Religious beliefs help legitimize cultural violence – empirically supported by awarding war criminals

Reychler 97 (Luc, PhD in international relations and conflict from Harvard, professor of international relations at KULeuven, launched an interfaculty Master in Conflict and Sustainable Peace program which is part of the European network of expertise in Peace and Conflict, also appointed to the UNESCO chair for Intellectual Solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45037971> 8/21)

4. Cultural Violence One of the major contributions of Johan Galtung to the understanding of violence is his exposure of cultural violence or the ways and means to approve or legitimize direct and indirect violence. Cultural violence could take the form of distinguishing the chosen from the unchosen, or the upper-classes being closer to God and possessing special rights from the lower classes. John Paul II, opening the Santo Domingo meetings, warned the Latin American bishops to defend the faithful from the "rapacious wolves" of Protestant sects. His language dealt a blow to 20 years of ecumenical efforts (Stewart-Gambino, 1994: 132). Cultural violence declares certain wars as just and others as unjust, as holy or unholy wars. The peace price given to Radovan Karadzic, the Serbian leader in Bosnia, by the Greek Orthodox Church, for his contribution to world peace could easily be labeled as cultural violence. In July 1994, Kurt Waldheim was awarded a papal knighthood of the Ordine Piano for safeguarding human rights when he served with the United Nations. His services in the Balkans for the Nazis were seemingly forgiven. Both were made religious role models.

Education

Science

Religious beliefs create conflicts with science – deters many religious students from pursuing scientific education

Ferguson 14 (Joseph, Doctorial Candidate in Science Education Deakin University, The Conversation, "Is there a place for religion in the science classroom?" <https://theconversation.com/is-there-a-place-for-religion-in-the-science-classroom-26368> 8/31)

While science class isn't the place to teach creation theory, it is the place for discussions about science and religion to happen. A decreasing number of students electing to pursue studies and careers in science has prompted a focus on developing ways to not only improve students' understandings of science, but to foster within students an appreciation of science. Science and religion in conflict Ever since religion and science have coexisted there has been the widespread perception that science and religion are opposites. No two things could possibly be more different than evolutionary biology and the origins of life according to Genesis. According to this perception, religion asserts the existence of an all-powerful God who operates beyond the boundaries of the natural world. Science, in contrast, is concerned only with the natural world and dismisses the supernatural. Following this logic, science rules out the existence of God. And in this way science and religion are seen to be in direct conflict. Science and religion in schools What we see in Australia and worldwide is that adults in their everyday lives experience this conflict between science and religion. Some students in schools share a similar experience, particularly when it comes to studying evolutionary biology. My research (with colleague Barbara Kameniar) suggests that the conflict between science and religion is an important part of the experience of learning evolutionary biology for some students who identify as religious. In particular, this applies to those students who attend government schools in which the highly secular science curriculum clashes with the religious beliefs of the students. These students seem to perceive evolutionary biology as a threat to their religious beliefs. As a consequence they do not fully engage with science. They treat evolutionary biology as something that must simply be memorised for the purposes of fulfilling school exams. This seems to lead to students disengaging with science. It is then unlikely that meaningful learning takes place. These circumstances discourage students from further studying science and pursuing careers in science.

Religiosity is negatively correlated with understanding of evolution which is a key predictor of scientific literacy and success in post-secondary science education

Rissler et al 14 (Leslie, Sarah I Duncan, Nicholas M Caruso, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alabama, Evolution: Education and Outreach "The relative importance of religion and education on university students' views of evolution in the Deep South and state science standards across the United States," <https://evolution-outreach.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12052-014-0024-1> 8/31)

There is much opposition to evolution in the public sphere, especially in America. The oft-cited article by **Miller et al. ([2006])** summarized 33 European countries and Japan on people's understanding of evolution, and America ranked lower than every country but one. This poor performance is not reflective of America's general scientific literacy; the United States is about average in science literacy.

though below average in mathematics, according to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which tests 15-year old students across 65 countries in math, science, and other disciplines (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD [2014]). **Why, then, is the subject of evolution so misunderstood**, especially when compared to other theories like the germ theory of disease, atomic theory, or cell theory (e.g., Rutledge and Sadler [2011])? **The strong and negative correlation** ($r = -0.608$, $P = 0.0001$) **between belief in God and acceptance of evolution across the same areas in Miller et al. ([2006]) suggests that religiosity drives some of the resistance to evolution** (Coyne [2012]). **Studies show that religiosity is associated with low scientific literacy in general** (e.g., Heddy and Nadelson [2012]); in fact, **religiosity in the United States is more predictive of scientific literacy than gender, race, or income** (Sherkat [2011]). A recent Gallup Poll ([2014a]) found that **almost equal percentages of Americans believed in a young-earth creationist view of human origins** (i.e., humans were created in their present form within last 10,000 years) (42%) **vs. one where humans evolved from earlier organisms over millions of years** (50%). But of the latter, approximately a third think that evolution happened without a god, while two-thirds believe God must have started the process. These patterns have remained relatively stable for 30 years (Gallup Poll [2014a]). Thus, **the consistent and continued rejection of evolution may be a consequence of the extreme religiosity of Americans** (Coyne [2012]), though Heddy and Nadelson ([2013]) show that across all 50 states, the degree of religiosity ($r = -0.76$; $P < 0.05$) and two measures of education [numbers of bachelor degrees ($r = 0.76$; $P < 0.05$) and advanced degrees ($r = 0.78$; $P < 0.05$) awarded] are about equally correlated with acceptance of evolution. **There is a positive correlation between science literacy and acceptance of evolution at the country** (Heddy and Nadelson [2012]), state (Heddy and Nadelson [2013]), and individual levels (Nadelson and Sinatra [2009]; Sustersic [2007]). **As scientific education increases, religiosity decreases** (Ecklund [2010]; Heddy and Nadelson [2012]; Larson and Witham [1997], [1998]). Roughly 20% of high school students, 52% of college graduates, and 65% of postgraduates accept evolution (Brumfiel [2005]). **Studies on the impact of high school education, in particular, on acceptance of evolution are few, but those that do exist show that early exposure to evolution increases scientific literacy in biology** (Moore et al. [2009], [2011]). **High school biology classes are the single most important arenas for exposure to evolution, and teachers are the most important school-based factor** in student learning (Goldhaber and Anthony [2003]; National Research Council [2001]). For many Americans, high school graduation marks the end of formal education, and for others it is the foundation for higher education at the college and graduate levels. **Unfortunately K-12 science standards vary widely** across the United States (Braden et al. [2000]; Gross [2005]; Lerner [2000]; Swanson [2005]), and **according to a 2009 survey by the National Center for Science Education (NCSE), only 76% of states** (including the District of Columbia) **received a passing grade** (a C or greater) (Mead and Mates [2009]). **Five states** (Alabama, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and West Virginia) **received a failing grade for the quality of their science standards because either the treatment of evolution was absent or made defunct due to inclusion of creationist jargon and/or disclaimers**. In fact, Alabama (the worst state) received an F- because there is an evolution disclaimer in the preface of the standards, no treatment of human evolution, and only limited mention of the “e-word” (Mead and Mates [2009]). Alabama is the only state with an evolution disclaimer (Additional file 1), and since 1996 the Alabama State Board of Education has required that this disclaimer be placed in all high school biology textbooks (http://alex.state.al.us/staticfiles/2005_AL_Science_Course_of_Study.pdf). **Even if high quality science standards are in place, a large percentage** (at least a third) **of biology teachers (K-12)** (see Moore [2002]; Moore et al. [2009]) **in the United States are creationists** (summarized in Moore and Cotner

[2009]). Therefore, students may be exposed to personal religious beliefs or outright hostility toward evolution rather than scientific evidence, regardless of the standards (Aguillard [1999]; Bandoli [2008]; Berkman et al. [2008]; Griffith and Brem [2004]; Moore [2008]; Skoog and Bilica [2002]; Rutledge and Warden [2000]; Trani [2004]). There can also be community pressures placed on the teachers that do try to teach evolution, which can lead them to deemphasize or eliminate the topic altogether (Berkman et al. [2008]; Griffith and Brem [2004]). In the only nationwide survey of high school science teachers (n = 939), Berkman et al. ([2008]) found that at least 17% of biology teachers are young-earth creationists, and about one in eight teach creationism or intelligent design in a positive light. Only 23% of teachers strongly agreed that evolution is the unifying theme of biology, as accepted by the National Academy of Science and the National Research Council. Teachers that had the largest number of college-level courses in biology and life science devoted significantly more time (60%) to evolution than teachers that were less prepared (Berkman et al. [2008]). Therefore, both personal beliefs and the level of scientific literacy of teachers were important when explaining the variance in the number of hours devoted to evolution in high school biology classes (Berkman et al. [2008]; Paz-y-Mino and Espinosa [2009]; Trani [2004]). What does all this mean for the scientific literacy of students that enter college? In the few studies that have been conducted, college students with religious worldviews find it difficult to accept evolutionary concepts (e.g., Chinsamy and Plagányi [2008]; Miller et al. [2006]; Moore et al. [2009]; Sinclair et al. [1997]). According to Astin et al. ([2005]) 26% of freshman at colleges and universities across America are born-again Christians. Several studies (e.g., Alters and Nelson [2002]; Sinclair et al. [1997]) show that “...adults’ views on evolution are remarkably impervious to instruction” (Chinsamy and Plagányi [2008]), and many demonstrate that religious beliefs often lead to a misunderstanding of evolution (Meadows et al. [2000]; Winslow et al. [2011]). Moore and Cotner ([2009]) reported that students with high school courses that included evolution (but not creationism) were significantly more likely to accept evolution than students with classes that included creationism (with or without evolution). Not only acceptance, but also knowledge of evolution, is higher for those students who had been taught evolution (but not creationism) in high school (Moore et al. [2009]). Thus in the few studies that have been done (Moore et al. [2009]; Wagler and Wagler [2013]), college students’ acceptance and knowledge of evolution are correlated with religious views and course work in high school biology classes.

Critical Thinking

Strong religious beliefs trade off with critical analysis inside and outside of the classroom

Sohn 12 (Emily, NBC News, "Belief in God, Critical Thinking Butt Heads," <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna47196216> 8/31)

When pushed to think in a more rational way, people experience a dip in their religious beliefs, found a new study. Simply looking at pictures of Rodin's sculpture "The Thinker," for example, was enough to make people less likely to agree with statements like, "Nothing is as important to me as serving God as best I know how." The effects were subtle, and encouraging critical thought is unlikely to destroy anyone's faith. But the findings suggest that rational analysis interacts with gut instinct in the brain to help distinguish between people who believe fully in God and those who abandon religion. "This could help people take a broader approach to debates about whether religion is true or not, and realize that subtle cognitive differences might be influencing where people end up on that debate," said Will Gervais, a social psychologist at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, who added that understanding why some people are more religious than others doesn't say anything about who's right. Nor is rational thinking the only factor that influences religious belief. "It's not the case that the Pope walked into the lab and Richard Dawkins walked out," he said. "I think this study tells us one factor that is implicated in whether or not people are believers, but it is just one factor out of many." While most of the world's population believes in God or gods, hundreds of millions of people do not. To explain how intelligent people might believe in concepts that lack proof, researchers have previously theorized that our brains have two distinct modes of thought. One uses rational analysis to think things through. The other relies on intuition to form beliefs and gut feelings. With that theory in mind, Gervais and colleague Ara Norenzayan challenged a diverse group of people to answer three questions whose answers were likely to differ depending on whether they reasoned out the answer or went with their gut. For example, one question asked, "A bat and a ball cost \$1.10 in total. The bat costs \$1.00 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?" Without thinking, many people guess 10 cents, even though a little bit of quick math shows that the correct answer is five. People in the experiment who stepped back and thought analytically before answering tended to hold weaker religious beliefs, the researchers report today in the journal Science, suggesting a connection between rational thinking and a lack of faith. But does the tendency to think rationally cause religious doubt, or does it go the other way? To find out, the researchers conducted a series of experiments with hundreds of people that triggered them to think analytically before answering faith-themed questions about things like their belief in God and the role that faith plays in their decision-making. In one experiment, participants looked at artwork portraying either a thinker or a man throwing a discus. In another, in which people rearranged letters and words to form sentences, they saw either thinking-related words or neutral words. Yet another experiment asked people to read the religious-beliefs survey in a font that was either easy or hard to decipher. No matter how the researchers primed the brain to think critically, people's responses were less strongly religious compared to the responses of people who were not put in a rational frame of mind. The findings, Gervais said, suggest that the rational brain is capable of undermining the intuitive brain in slight ways when it comes to faith. Because our minds and bodies are so closely connected, it's not surprising that religious thought is linked with certain kinds of brain activities, said John Hare, a philosophical theologian at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Conn. But discoveries like these say nothing about the existence of God or anything else that is outside of the

mind. "For most people of faith, their faith is not a matter of proof," Hare said. "This is true even though throughout the history of the Abrahamic faiths, some of the brightest thinkers have been people of faith, and have proposed proofs of various kinds. "Probably it is good that there should be a division of labor. Some people can spend their time and efforts reflecting about their faith intellectually. And most people can just live it."

Censorship

Religion is often cited as an excuse to censor information – evolution in Texas example
Schafersman 82 (Steven, NCSE, Creation/Evolution Journal Volume 3 No. 4, "Censorship of Evolution in Texas," <https://ncse.ngo/censorship-evolution-texas> 8/31)

Recent textbook adoptions by the Texas State Textbook Committee continue the state's suppression of the topic of evolution in science textbooks. On September 8, 1982, the Textbook Committee refused to adopt the top-rated world geography textbook Land and People (Scott, Foresman, and Co.), because it contained the following sentence: "Biologists believe that human beings, as members of the animal kingdom, have adjusted to their environment through biological adaptation." The book also contained many passages stating that the earth and its features were millions of years old and that the universe began as stated by the Big Bang theory. These items were heavily criticized by a religious fundamentalist and creationist husband-and-wife team, Mel and Norma Gabler of Longview, Texas, whose sole business is reviewing textbooks. The Gablers are known in education circles throughout the nation as the most effective textbook censors in the country. This couple has been promoting their narrow fundamentalist views for over twenty years by criticizing and influencing the removal of textbooks that contain material opposed to their views. Some of the Gablers' objections to the Scott, Foresman world geography textbook were that "most people do not consider themselves animals," that "many people, including scientists, do not believe the earth is millions of years old," and that "the text is biased in favor of evolution. By not including other theories, the text implies that evolution is the only credible one. . . . Many people, including scientists, believe that the mammals were created, not 'developed.' . . . The text contains evolutionary speculations presented as fact [and] violates [Section] 1.3 of the [Texas Textbook] Proclamation." During the Textbook Committee's discussion, two members spoke against the book, claiming it overemphasized the Big Bang theory and the theory of evolution and violated the proclamation dealing with evolution. Mr. Noon, from Longview, obviously motivated by the criticisms of the Gablers, said that the book was the most "controversial" book on the entire list and that "we will be in trouble all around Texas if we put it on the [adoption] list." Because of the attack by religious fundamentalists, the book failed to be adopted, despite its high quality. Other world geography textbooks, all adopted, were mostly inferior to the Scott, Foresman book, but they did not make the "mistake" of saying something about evolution and the Big Bang theory. - page 31 - Michael Hudson, Texas coordinator of People for the American Way, was present at the Textbook Committee meeting and made the following observation: "It seemed apparent to all in the room—especially the publishers—that the treatment of evolution had condemned an otherwise excellent book to be the sole casualty of the seven books that were bid." The Texas Textbook Proclamation contains the rules that textbooks must follow if they are to be adopted by the state of Texas. Texas is the second largest purchaser of textbooks in the country. Its centralized book-buying policy controls 8 percent of the total school textbook market in America, and it spends \$60 million a year to buy textbooks for Texas's 1,150 school districts. Since only a few titles of each subject are selected at six-year intervals, publishers vie ferociously to get their textbooks on the adoption list, and, since the Texas adoption choices can make or break a publisher, the publishers bend over backwards to comply with the Proclamation. Furthermore, the textbook designed for the lucrative Texas market is used throughout the country, so the enormous economic influence of Texas shapes the contents of America's textbooks. Concerning evolution, the only scientific topic that Texas feels compelled to regulate at present, the Proclamation states the following: 1.3 Textbooks that treat the theory of

evolution should identify it as only one of several explanations of the origins of humankind and avoid limiting young people in their search for meanings of their human existence. (1) Textbooks presented for adoption which treat the subject of evolution substantively in explaining the historical origins of humankind shall be edited, if necessary, to clarify that the treatment is theoretical rather than factually verifiable. Furthermore, each textbook must carry a statement on an introductory page that any material on evolution included in the book is clearly presented as theory rather than fact. (2) Textbooks presented for adoption which do not treat evolution substantively as an instructional topic but make reference to evolution, indirectly or by implication, must be modified, if necessary, to ensure that the reference is clearly to a theory and not a verified fact. These books will not need to carry a statement on the introductory page. (3) The presentation of the theory of evolution should be done in a manner which is not detrimental to other theories of origin. My discussions with some of the state Board of Education members who were responsible for writing and passing Section 1.3 have convinced me that it was promulgated primarily for religious reasons and is hence a violation of the principle of church-state separation. - page 32 - For example, former board member Johnnie Marie Grimes believes that evolution is "a powerful force against the spiritual dimension of man" and that, if we teach it as a demonstrated scientific fact, then our public schools will be a "barrier" to the Christian and Jewish religions. Board member William Kemp calls scientists "narrow-minded and bigoted" for preferring to believe in evolution rather than creationism. He made these remarks to me when I suggested that Section 1.3 was a misrepresentation of science. He then told me, "You will only get something worse if you try to change the current regulation." Board chairperson Joe Kelly Butler says that scientific knowledge consists of just the "opinions" of scientists and that such opinions are "irrelevant" to how the state board should treat the topic of evolution. He maintains that the present policy is "about as good as we can do." Butler was not interested in a statement signed by scientists that protested Section 1.3; he said that the "opinion" of scientists would not change his mind. It is possible, however, that a statement signed by the regents of the University of Texas and Rice University against the Proclamation might cause him to alter his view. Presumably, the other board members share these fundamentalist anti-scientific sentiments. The history of the adoption of Section 1.3 provides the most important evidence for the religious intent behind the Proclamation. Section 1.3 was adopted largely in its present form at the urging of Mel and Norma Gabler. In their letter to the Commissioner of Education, dated August 10, 1973, the Gablers protested the teaching of evolution in the state's schools. They complained that the biology textbooks taught evolution as a fact, not a theory, and omitted any reference to creation. They asserted that: Textbooks completely censor the fact that there is more scientific evidence against than for evolution. This denies students their academic freedom to learn.... Strictly speaking, evolution is not a science because it cannot be proven—it must be accepted on faith as a philosophy or as a religion.... Textbooks include evolutionary dogma with none of the important evidence for special creation. Why? ... At present all evidence and assumptions are directed toward evolution being the only explanation for life. But the theory of special creation is just as scientific and requires equal treatment.... Either include equal space for scientific evidence for special creation or delete all evolutionary dogma! The Gabler letter ironically justified their demand for equal time by asking for "fairness and objectivity" and for teaching "all the facts" about evolution, including "all the bad" facts. This justification directly conflicts with all the well known Gabler demands to remove the "bad" from textbooks dealing with other topics and present only the viewpoint favorable to the desires of the Gablers. Perhaps the most ironic example of this, in their letter is their analogy of the treatment of evolution and the history of the United States. It states:

AT: AFF

AT: Charity

Many religious charities fail to help anyone – Lebanon proves

Moumtaz 20 (Nada, Assistant Professor in the Department for the Study of Religion and in Near and Middle Eastern civilizations at the University of Toronto, University of Chicago School of Divinity, "The Donation Dilemma," <https://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings/articles/donation-dilemma> 8/31)

However, many of the organizations that have been providing such services in Lebanon are affiliated with religious institutions. Most Christian and Islamic organizations operate as non-governmental organizations, which do not need prior authorization from the state, but simply need to give public notice (though sometimes, the Ministry of the Interior brandishes a repealed emergency law requiring authorization to throw roadblocks at organizations that are overtly political, such as those fighting the state's arbitrary detention). Giving to religious charities in Lebanon brings extra complications because of the way religion figures in Lebanese politics and law. Right now, a political system described as consociationalism divides political and administrative offices among the different religious communities, known as sects. Officials, as representatives of particular sects, then use the resources of the state to build their bases by providing them with services. Some religious charities are tied to particular parties and political actors who claim to stand for particular religious communities, and thus use these charities to further their clientelism. While this is surely regrettable, it is the bread and butter of politicians everywhere.

Statistics about charitable giving are distorted to favor religion – they count giving to churches themselves as part of charity

Mehta 13 (Hemant, Friendly Atheist, "Are Religious People Really More Generous Than Atheists? A New Study Puts That Myth to Rest," <https://friendlyatheist.patheos.com/2013/11/28/are-religious-people-really-more-generous-than-atheists-a-new-study-puts-that-myth-to-rest/> 8/31)

Last year a study released by The Chronicle of Philanthropy suggested that the most religious states were also the most charitable: Donors in Southern states, for instance, give roughly 5.2 percent of their discretionary income to charity – both to religious and to secular groups – compared with donors in the Northeast who give 4.0 percent. Before you jump to conclusions that religion and generosity were somehow connected, keep in mind that those numbers included giving “both to religious and secular groups”... In other words, church counted as charity. But when you excluded donations given to churches and religious groups, the map changed dramatically, giving an edge to the least religious states in the country: Of course, that didn't stop the media from using headlines like this: Religious States Donate More To Charity Than Secular States Earlier this week, a new report released by the National Study of American Religious Giving put a rest to that myth that religious people are more charitable than the non-religious. It turns out nearly 75% of charitable giving by all Americans...benefits places of worship and faith-based charities. A lot of the money isn't helping the poor and less fortunate. It's going to the church. Jay Michaelson of Religious Dispatches explains: ...The study found that 65% of religiously-affiliated people donate to congregations or charitable organizations. (More on that statistic later.) 80% of Americans are religiously affiliated. And 65% of 80% is just about...55% of the total. In other words, the religious people who are giving say they're giving because of religion. And they're overwhelmingly giving to religion as well. ... Probably the most notable statistics, though, are those which compare religious and non-religious philanthropy. Religion is supposed to make us better people, which includes, I assume, being more generous. So, is it the case that religious people give more generously than the non-religious? Well, yes and no. Remember that statistic, that 65% of religious people donate to charity?

The non-religious figure is 56% But according to the study, the entire 9% difference is attributed to religious giving to congregations and religious organizations. So , yes, religion causes people to give more – to religion itself. A lot of religious giving, then, is self-serving, in the guise of helping others. Often, the donations benefit their faith.

AT: Health

Religion can have a negative effect on one's mental health

Rettner 15 (Rachael, MA in Journalism New York University & BS Molecular Biology from University of California San Diego, Live Science, "God Help Us? How Religion is Good (And Bad) For Mental Health," <https://www.livescience.com/52197-religion-mental-health-brain.html>, 8/18)

But even those devoted Catholics who aren't in the front row seat for Francis' visit may see benefits to their belief. A slew of research has tied being religious with better well-being and overall mental health. A number of studies have found that devout people have fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety, as well as a better ability to cope with stress. Certain religious practices may even change the brain in a way that boosts mental health, studies suggest. However, religion could also be a double-edged sword: Negative religious beliefs — for example, that God is punishing or abandoning you — have been linked with harmful outcomes, including higher rates of depression and lower quality of life. "If people have a loving, kind perception of God," and feel God is supportive, they seem to experience benefits, said Kenneth Pargament, a professor of psychology and an expert on religion and health at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. But "we know that there's a darker side to spirituality," Pargament said. "If you tend to see God as punitive, threatening or unreliable, then that's not very helpful" to your health, he said. [8 Ways Religion Impacts Your Life]

Faith and belief can harm mental health – turns tragedy into divine punishments

Rettner 15 (Rachael, MA in Journalism New York University & BS Molecular Biology from University of California San Diego, Live Science, "God Help Us? How Religion is Good (And Bad) For Mental Health," <https://www.livescience.com/52197-religion-mental-health-brain.html>, 8/18)

Downsides for the devout However, religion doesn't always have a positive effect on mental health — its impact depends on a person's beliefs, and whether religion is generally accepted by the larger community, experts said. For example, if instead of advocating love and compassion, a religion advocates hate of nonbelievers, these negative beliefs would also become part of the way the brain works, Newberg said. In theory, this would turn on areas of the brain involved in thinking about hate, and could increase stress and stimulate the release of stress hormones, Newberg said. In addition, if some people believe that a health condition — such as addiction — is a punishment from God, they may be less likely to seek treatment, Newberg said. Pargament has also found that when people believe that God has abandoned them, or when they question God's love for them, they tend to experience greater emotional distress, and even face an increased risk of an earlier death. "These kinds of struggles have to do with the aspects of life that you hold sacred," Pargament said. "When you get shaken to that level, then ... it's going to be very distressing."

AT: Substance Abuse

Faith-based treatments for substance abuse aren't effective – their data is self-reported and unverifiable – AA proves

Glaser 15 (Gabrielle, author of *Her Best-Kept Secret: Why Women Drink—And How They Can Regain Control*, *The Atlantic*, "THE IRRATIONALITY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS," <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/04/the-irrationality-of-alcoholics-anonymous/386255/> 8/31)

The debate over the efficacy of 12-step programs has been quietly bubbling for decades among addiction specialists. But it has taken on new urgency with the passage of the Affordable Care Act, which requires all insurers and state Medicaid programs to pay for alcohol- and substance-abuse treatment, extending coverage to 32 million Americans who did not previously have it and providing a higher level of coverage for an additional 30 million. **Nowhere in the field of medicine is treatment less grounded in modern science. A 2012 report by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University compared the current state of addiction medicine to general medicine in the early 1900s, when quacks worked alongside graduates of leading medical schools.** The American Medical Association estimates that **out of nearly 1 million doctors in the United States, only 582 identify themselves as addiction specialists.** (The Columbia report notes that there may be additional doctors who have a subspecialty in addiction.) **Most treatment providers carry the credential of addiction counselor or substance-abuse counselor, for which many states require little more than a high-school diploma or a GED.** Many counselors are in recovery themselves. The report stated: **"The vast majority of people in need of addiction treatment do not receive anything that approximates evidence-based care."** **Alcoholics Anonymous was established in 1935, when knowledge of the brain was in its infancy. It offers a single path to recovery: lifelong abstinence from alcohol. The program instructs members to surrender their ego, accept that they are "powerless" over booze, make amends to those they've wronged, and pray.** Alcoholics Anonymous is famously difficult to study. By necessity, it keeps no records of who attends meetings; members come and go and are, of course, anonymous. **No conclusive data exist on how well it works.** In 2006, **the Cochrane Collaboration, a health-care research group, reviewed studies going back to the 1960s and found that "no experimental studies unequivocally demonstrated the effectiveness of AA or [12-step] approaches for reducing alcohol dependence or problems."** **The Big Book includes an assertion first made in the second edition, which was published in 1955: that AA has worked for 75 percent of people who have gone to meetings and "really tried."** It says that 50 percent got sober right away, and another 25 percent struggled for a while but eventually recovered. According to AA, these figures are based on members' experiences. In his recent book, *The Sober Truth: Debunking the Bad Science Behind 12-Step Programs and the Rehab Industry*, Lance **Dodes, a retired psychiatry professor from Harvard Medical School, looked at Alcoholics Anonymous's retention rates along with studies on sobriety and rates of active involvement (attending meetings regularly and working the program) among AA members. Based on these data, he put AA's actual success rate somewhere between 5 and 8 percent.** That is just a rough estimate, but it's the most precise one I've been able to find. I spent three years researching a book about women and alcohol, *Her Best-Kept Secret: Why Women Drink—And How They Can Regain Control*, which was published in 2013. During that time, I encountered disbelief from doctors and psychiatrists every time I mentioned that the Alcoholics Anonymous success rate appears to hover in the single digits. **We've**

grown so accustomed to testimonials from those who say AA saved their life that we take the program's efficacy as an article of faith. Rarely do we hear from those for whom 12-step treatment doesn't work. But think about it: How many celebrities can you name who bounced in and out of rehab without ever getting better? Why do we assume they failed the program, rather than that the program failed them? When my book came out, dozens of Alcoholics Anonymous members said that because I had challenged AA's claim of a 75 percent success rate, I would hurt or even kill people by discouraging attendance at meetings. A few insisted that I must be an "alcoholic in denial." But **most of the people I heard from were desperate to tell me about their experiences in the American treatment industry.**

Amy Lee Coy, the author of the memoir *From Death Do I Part: How I Freed Myself From Addiction*, told me about her eight trips to rehab, starting at age 13. "It's like getting the same antibiotic for a resistant infection—eight times," she told me. "Does that make sense?" **"I honestly thought AA was the only way anyone could ever get sober, but I learned that I was wrong."** **She and countless others had put their faith in a system they had been led to believe was effective—even though finding treatment centers' success rates is next to impossible: facilities rarely publish their data or even track their patients after discharging them.** **"Many will tell you that those who complete the program have a 'great success rate,' meaning that most are abstaining from drugs and alcohol while enrolled there."** says Bankole Johnson, an alcohol researcher and the chair of the psychiatry department at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. **"Well, no kidding."** Alcoholics Anonymous has more than 2 million members worldwide, and the structure and support it offers have helped many people. But it is not enough for everyone. **The history of AA is the story of how one approach to treatment took root before other options existed, inscribing itself on the national consciousness and crowding out dozens of newer methods that have since been shown to work better.** A meticulous analysis of treatments, published more than a decade ago in *The Handbook of Alcoholism Treatment Approaches* but still considered one of the most comprehensive comparisons, ranks AA 38th out of 48 methods. At the top of the list are brief interventions by a medical professional; motivational enhancement, a form of counseling that aims to help people see the need to change; and acamprosate, a drug that eases cravings. (An oft-cited 1996 study found 12-step facilitation—a form of individual therapy that aims to get the patient to attend AA meetings—as effective as cognitive behavioral therapy and motivational interviewing. But that study, called Project Match, was widely criticized for scientific failings, including the lack of a control group.) As an organization, Alcoholics Anonymous has no real central authority—each AA meeting functions more or less autonomously—and it declines to take positions on issues beyond the scope of the 12 steps. (When I asked to speak with someone from the General Service Office, AA's administrative headquarters, regarding AA's stance on other treatment methods, I received an e-mail stating: "Alcoholics Anonymous neither endorses nor opposes other approaches, and we cooperate widely with the medical profession." The office also declined to comment on whether AA's efficacy has been proved.) But many in AA and the rehab industry insist the 12 steps are the only answer and frown on using the prescription drugs that have been shown to help people reduce their drinking. **People with alcohol problems also suffer from higher-than-normal rates of mental-health issues, and research has shown that treating depression and anxiety with medication can reduce drinking. But AA is not equipped to address these issues—it is a support group whose leaders lack professional training**—and some meetings are more accepting than others of the idea that members may need therapy and/or medication in addition to the group's help. **AA truisms have so infiltrated our culture that many people believe heavy drinkers cannot recover before they "hit bottom."** **Researchers I've talked with say that's akin to offering antidepressants only to those who have attempted suicide, or prescribing**

insulin only after a patient has lapsed into a diabetic coma. “You might as well tell a guy who weighs 250 pounds and has untreated hypertension and cholesterol of 300, ‘Don’t exercise, keep eating fast food, and we’ll give you a triple bypass when you have a heart attack,’ ” Mark Willenbring, a psychiatrist in St. Paul and a former director of treatment and recovery research at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, told me. He threw up his hands. “Absurd.” **Part of the problem is our one-size-fits-all approach. Alcoholics Anonymous was originally intended for chronic, severe drinkers—those who may, indeed, be powerless over alcohol—but its program has since been applied much more broadly.** Today, for instance, judges routinely require people to attend meetings after a DUI arrest; fully 12 percent of AA members are there by court order.

AT: Society/Social Harmony

Religion creates systemic social conflict and has historically caused war and abused children

UMLP 10 (University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, "Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World," <https://open.lib.umn.edu/sociology/front-matter/publisher-information/> 8/29)

Religion, Inequality, and Conflict **Religion** has all of these benefits, but, according to conflict theory, it **can also reinforce and promote social inequality and social conflict**. This view is partly inspired by the work of Karl **Marx**, who **said that religion was the "opiate of the masses"** (Marx, 1964). By this **he meant that religion, like a drug, makes people happy with their existing conditions**. **Marx repeatedly stressed** that **workers** needed to rise up and overthrow the bourgeoisie. To do so, he said, they **needed first to recognize that their poverty stemmed from their oppression** by the bourgeoisie. But **people who are religious**, he said, **tend to view their poverty in religious terms. They think it is God's will** that they are poor, either because he is testing their faith in him or because they have violated his rules. Many people believe that if they endure their suffering, they will be rewarded in the afterlife. Their religious views lead them not to blame the capitalist class for their poverty and thus not to revolt. For these reasons, said Marx, **religion leads the poor to accept their fate and helps maintain the existing system of social inequality**. As Chapter 11 "Gender and Gender Inequality" discussed, religion also promotes gender inequality by presenting negative stereotypes about women and by reinforcing traditional views about their subordination to men (Klassen, 2009). A declaration a decade ago by the Southern Baptist Convention that a wife should "submit herself graciously" to her husband's leadership reflected traditional religious belief (Gundy-Volf, 1998). **As the Puritans' persecution of non-Puritans illustrates, religion can also promote social conflict, and the history of the world shows that individual people and whole communities and nations are quite ready to persecute, kill, and go to war over religious differences**. We see this today and in the recent past in central Europe, the Middle East, and Northern Ireland. Jews and other religious groups have been persecuted and killed since ancient times. Religion can be the source of social unity and cohesion, but over the centuries it also has led to persecution, torture, and wanton bloodshed. **News reports** going back since the 1990s **indicate a final problem that religion can cause, and that is sexual abuse, at least in the Catholic Church. As you undoubtedly have heard, an unknown number of children were sexually abused by Catholic priests and deacons in the United States, Canada, and many other nations going back at least to the 1960s. There is much evidence that the Church hierarchy did little or nothing to stop the abuse or to sanction the offenders who were committing it, and that they did not report it to law enforcement agencies**. Various divisions of the Church have paid tens of millions of dollars to settle lawsuits. **The numbers of priests, deacons, and children involved will almost certainly never be known, but it is estimated that at least 4,400 priests and deacons in the United States, or about 4% of all such officials, have been accused of sexual abuse, although fewer than 2,000 had the allegations against them proven (Terry & Smith, 2006). Given these estimates, the number of children who were abused probably runs into the thousands.**



Sample Affirmative Case

For thousands of years religion has played an integral role in countless societies by providing explanations for the phenomena around us and guiding difficult decisions. It helps simplify the complexities of the universe and establishes a moral compass for those trying to wrap their minds around existence and the baggage that comes with it. Though the differences between religions can be vast, they all provide a lens with which to understand the world and examine truth, therefore I affirm that on balance, societies benefit from religious belief and practice. By first interrogating the question that topic asks and then providing the ample benefits religion affords society, I will demonstrate the clear benefit religious belief and practices bestow on society.

First, we have to clarify the resolution a bit. Oxford Dictionary defines "on balance" to mean "with all things considered". This means that the judge must account for all of the components of the debate and assigning them adequate weight and risk before making a decision. While that seems simple, the affirmative would like to provide a metric with which to weigh potential benefits or harms presented today. We believe that the judge should assess benefits or harms based on known consequences or results verified by data, not hearsay. For example, many will claim to be doing something others consider atrocious in the name of a particular religion. However, considering that to be a true result of genuine religious belief and practice is extraordinarily difficult given the multitude of issues that contribute to conflict like political, economic, and cultural factors. That is why today, we ask that the judge evaluate clear,

unequivocal data or observed and known effects of religion when assessing which side has made the stronger case *overall*.

That leads me to the first major benefit of religious belief and practice: health. Studies have repeatedly shown that religion can extend one's longevity and provides several other health benefits to regular practitioners. In fact, one study by Mark D. Regenerus in 2003 even shows that the gap between those who regularly practice religion and those who do not is as large as smokers and non-smokers¹. Another review of 250 epidemiological health research studies by Levin and Schiller in 1987 found that religious practice can reduce the risk of several diseases such as cancer and colitis². Although it seems fantastical, a study conducted at the Population Research Center in 1999 reported that religion creates a network of support with individuals in their community that encourages a healthier support network and promotes a healthier regular routine which can extend one's lifespan³. Having a healthier populace with a strong support network that encourages positive routines benefits society with healthier, stronger workers who in turn support and courage others within society.

In addition to healthier citizens, religion promotes and encourages people to excel. Mark Regnerus of the University of Austin Texas in two separate literature reviews in 2003 demonstrated that those from religious upbringings and in religious networks were more likely

¹ Mark D. Regnerus, "Religion and Positive Adolescent Outcomes: A Review of Research and Theory," *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (June 2003), pp. 394-413

² Jeffrey S. Levin and Preston L. Schiller, "Is There a Religious Factor in Health?" *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (March 1987), pp. 9-35

³ Hummer *et al.*, "Religious Involvement and U.S. Adult Mortality."

to excel academically. Scores in math, reading, and science were all consistently higher in religious students or students who had parents that regularly attended religious services⁴. This academic achievement didn't only manifest itself in test scores either. Students often had more ambitious academic goals and aspirations if they were from religious backgrounds and felt they had a better chance of achieving them. Richard Freeman from Harvard University in 1985 also showed that this level of achievement is consistent regardless of background. He showed that inner-city youth also showed the same benefits from religious practice while it also decreased the likelihood for deviant behavior. This is because churches can provide a safe and positive community in many different children's lives that encourages growth and discourages short-term rebellious thinking⁵. The benefit from this kind of influence is clear: religious practice in at-risk youth can deter deviant behavior that can stifle growth and create a vicious cycle with the criminal justice system while simultaneously making an environment to create the next generation of ambitious dreamers and workers who will solve the next set of issues or questions facing society.

The final benefit I will present today is that religion teaches many to have a moral compass. Across all religions one thing that remains constant is that it encourages us to think about our actions and reflect upon them to decide if we made the ethical call. Even further, it forces us to ask difficult questions that do not always have a clear-cut answer. It also creates a

⁴ Mark D. Regnerus, "Religion and Positive Adolescent Outcomes: A Review of Research and Theory," *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (June 2003), pp. 394-413

⁵ Richard B. Freeman, "Who Escapes? The Relation of Churchgoing and Other Background Factors to the Socioeconomic Performance of Black Male Youths from Inner-City Tracts," National Bureau of Economic Research *Working Paper* No. 1656, June 1985

formal space with trusted and respected community leaders who can help guide and promote critical thinking upon this difficult subject matter. Even for those who do not delve too deep into these kinds of philosophical pursuits, religions tend to provide a simple floor for moral teachings. For example, the 10 commandments from Christianity give very basic moral absolutes for religious practitioners to follow that benefit everyone in society. Having a clear foundation for moral principles is a key part of the behavior cited previously which deters bad behavior and can even curb crimes like murder.

While these morals can be an important deterrent of bad behavior, they also encourage positive behaviors as well. For example, many religions teach that we must help those in need. This often takes the form of charitable giving. Arthur Brooks from Syracuse University in 2006 shows that religious practice is often linked to higher rates of giving with religious respondents being 40% more likely to give than non-religious people. This was even controlled for factors such as education, income, gender, etc. Religious folks were also twice as likely to volunteer and 22% more likely to volunteer on a monthly basis⁶. An important note about this study as well is that it found that this trend continued regardless of what religion people identified with. This giving and volunteering translates into billions of dollars each year in the US to help the most vulnerable members of society and is sometimes deemed the second safety net by some. It also creates more conscientious citizens who continue to work to help disadvantaged people.

It is for these reasons, both material and immaterial that we strongly urge an affirmative ballot. Regardless of any critique of a particular religion or a particular practice, the data and

⁶ Arthur C. Brooks, "Compassion, Religion, and Politics," *Public Interest*, September 22, 2004, pp. 57-66.

evidence presented by the affirmative today should clearly demonstrate that on balance, religious belief and practice has benefitted society tremendously. Thank you.

AFF-5



Sample Negative Case

German spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle once said “Religions, to a large extent, became divisive rather than unifying forces. Instead of bringing about an ending of violence and hatred through a realization of the fundamental oneness of all life, they brought more violence and hatred, more divisions between people as well as between different religions and even within the same religion.” Although religions may provide an insular community for some, on balance, it provides more harms by creating strong divisions between groups in society and creating dogmatic followers with disproportionate influence. Today, I will present my case for why on balance, societies do not benefit from religious belief and practices. First, we will begin by analyzing what exactly the resolution asks and giving the judge a way to evaluate and compare arguments, then we will discuss why we believe societies do not benefit, and finally we will conclude with a few final points for the judge to consider.

By asking us to evaluate the effect of religion “on balance”, the resolution asks us to weigh all relevant factors. The negative believes this means that we should get a much broader scope of argument than simply small, personal benefits that some practitioners get. This should cover both effects within society and between different societies and how those weigh against any benefit the affirmative may win. Finally, we also believe that when discussing the extremes that religion may cause, discussing intent is futile. We must look to how people are able to use religious beliefs or practices to influence others’ whether that’s for good or bad.

That brings us to our first major contention: conflict. Although many religions build a community for believers, they have claws and fangs bared for those that fall outside of that

community. Religious belief and practice can create personal division and an “us vs. them” mentality. According to Deidre McPhillips from US News in 2018, “The divisions created by religion are deeper and potentially more harmful than those formed through other aspects of identity such as race, nationality or political affiliations because they confront individuals with differing opinions on the ultimate purpose of life.”¹ Those divisions expand beyond personal conflict within communities and can begin creating material conflict across nations. McPhillips continues, “As a radical sect of Buddhist nationalists persecute the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict wages on and a film challenging the Orthodox Church spurs violent protests in Russia, it seems that asserting sovereignty is the only thing the world's religions can agree on today. In a recent Best Countries survey of more than 21,000 people from all regions of the world, the majority of respondents identified religion as the ‘primary source of most global conflict today’.”

This divisive role that religion can play has historically created many conflicts which has resulted in countless loss of human life. In the 20th century alone, Luc Reyhler in 97, a UNESCO chair for intellectual solidarity and Sustainable Peace Building and PhD in international relations from Harvard University, points to 24 different wars that erupted with religious elements being a core cause. These conflicts involve Buddhists, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Sunnis, Shiites, native religions, and more². This demonstrates that the issue is often more than specific ideologies that religions espouse, but more often it is the very divisions that they create that

¹ Deidre McPhillips 2018, Data Editor, US News, “Religion Needs a Savior,” <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-01-23/tribal-divisions-created-by-religion-most-harmful-in-global-conflict-experts-say>

² Luc, International Journal of Peace Studies Vol 2 No 1 January, "Religion and Conflict," pg. 1-24

fuels conflicts. Some may say that these divisions have very little to do with religion or that conflicts have a political or economic factor, but Nader Hashemi in 19, the Director of the Center for Middle East Studies at Josef Korbel School of International Studies at University of Denver, notes that while conflicts may have more than one contributing factor, religious differences can often provide a unique “mobilization” factor that allows for political leaders to utilize those ideologies and the animosity they generate in order to mobilize a faction toward war³. This means that, even if the political leader may not hold those political beliefs, the beliefs themselves are easily manipulated by bad-faith actors to generate considerable conflict and strife in the world.

Our second contention is education. Many religions attempt to censor or close off large areas of study or inquiry under the guise of morality. For example, there has been substantial public debate in the United States over evolution. In Texas, there is a continuing struggle with allowing science textbooks to discuss evolution without disclaimers or other information attempting to discredit it for the religious students. Steven Schafersman in 1982, member of the National Council for Science Education, describes considerable debate repeatedly over evolution in biology textbooks and even describes members on the school board opting for less quality books or attempting to significantly censor textbooks in order to appease religious parents⁴. Although it may not seem significant, this kind of battle carries significant weight as Texas buys a large share of the nation’s textbooks, and which book they choose will be much

³ Nader Hashemi 19 ABC, "The politics of sectarianism: What causes sectarian conflict, and can it be undone?" <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/the-middle-east-and-the-politics-of-sectarianism/11613338> 8/31

⁴ Steven Schafersman 82 National Council for Science Education, Creation/Evolution Journal Volume 3 No. 4, "Censorship of Evolution in Texas," <https://ncse.ngo/censorship-evolution-texas> 8/31

cheaper than competitors and thus will be more frequent throughout the country. Religion, here, isn't benefitting any students and can hamper evolution education, which has been shown to be a key predictor of scientific literacy in post-secondary education.

These points show that, while the members of a particular religious community may show some benefits from religious practice, society overall is hindered because of the deep divisions that exist between them. These divides also have a compounding factor as each division they create adds additional fractures in society that is already divided among lines like class or ethnic lines. The burden is on the affirmative team to prove that any benefit they have can have a spillover effect that could possibly bridge these divides or provide a benefit that can possibly outweigh the conflicts whether they be physical or intellectual that the negative team has shown are spurred by religion.

Given this immense burden of proof, we urge a negative ballot. We have shown that conflicts and divides in society that occur along religious lines are deep and difficult to compromise in strongly dogmatic areas. Furthermore, we have shown that any benefits that the affirmative will point to are insular and don't span entire societies. This means the benefits that they will point to cannot on balance outweigh the negatives introduced today. For those reasons, we ask you vote negative. Thank you.

NEG. -4



Lesson Plan

Unit Name: Big Questions Debate

Topic: Constructing an Argument

Essential Questions:

1. What are the component parts of a complete, well constructed argument?
2. What is the difference between a claim, warrant, and impact? Why should an argument contain each of these components? What contribution is made to an argument by each of these parts?
3. How can one analyze a given document (a piece of text, something presented as an argument in a debate round, etc.) in order to locate the claim, warrant, and impact structure it contains?

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain the difference between a claim, warrant, and impact, and explain the importance of each one within an argument.
2. Students will be able to “break down” or reformulate a text that provides an argument into the claim, warrant, and impact format.
3. Students will be able to construct and revise their own arguments, so that they contain claims, warrants, and impacts.

Instructional Materials Needed:

One to three passages that each contain at least one complete argument for one side of the Big Questions debate topic. Optional (for homework): one or more articles on the Big Questions debate topic, which you can assign students to read, identify one or more arguments, and rearticulate those arguments in claim, warrant, and impact form.

Overview of Lesson:

This lesson has three main parts: (1) an introduction of the claim, warrant, and impact structure through lecture, example, and large group discussion; (2) a small group activity where student groups work to structure an argument in claim, warrant, and impact form from passages provided to them, followed by a larger group review; (3) individual/small group work time where stands are asked to generate/revise complete arguments on the topic.

Detailed Step-by-Step Lesson:

Introducing the three parts of an argument: claim, warrant, and impact [25 minutes].

Here is the structure you will be introducing to students. You could outline it on the board ahead of time, or lay it out piece by piece as you elicit it in the discussion/activity outlined below. A **claim** is the assertion that you are trying to argue for the truth of or prove. A **warrant** is the reasoning or evidence that you are providing in order to justify, verify, or support the claim. An **impact** is why it matters that your claim is true, why your claim is significant, and/or what (further) conclusions we can draw from your claim being true.

Students might be familiar with rules for formal essay writing that are parallel to the claim, warrant, and impact structure. An essay begins with an introduction that contains a topic sentence or thesis statement, which is the central **claim** they will be advancing and defending in their essay. In the heart of their essay, students provided arguments and evidence in support of their topic sentence/thesis statement—they provide **warrants** for their claim. Finally, an essay ends with a concluding paragraph in which they tie their essay together by explaining what they have demonstrated, the significance of the claim that they have advanced, and/or what else of interest might follow from what they have demonstrated (the **impact** of the essay).

A nice way to introduce students to the structure of an argument is to solicit discussion from them by asking them to generate arguments for an example topic. You can choose any topic, but it can help get the conversation going (and avoided getting bogged down in the substantive details of a topic area) if you choose a somewhat silly and/or familiar topic as your example. For instance, “It is better to eat an apple than a candy bar as an afternoon snack” or (if your school has a uniform) “Our school should maintain its school uniform policy.” The important thing is to choose a topic that you think your students will be able to quickly generate ideas about.

Introduce the example topic and give students a moment to come up with one argument on each side of the topic. You can then call on a student to state their argument. Your goal is to bring out the claim, warrant, and impact structure through discussion of the proposed argument. Often, you will find that a student’s “argument” is primarily only a claim. So, you can introduce this as the first part of an argument: the claim. You can then solicit ideas for *why* that claim might be true. What might be reasons for believing the claim? What types of evidence might one provide to support the claim? This will generate ideas of *warrants* for the student’s claim. You can then use these examples to introduce the second part of an argument: the warrant. Lastly, ask students what conclusions can be drawn from the claim being true? In other words, why does proving the claim true help prove one side of the topic? (Of course, if a student happens to propose a complete argument, you can take what they said, break it up into parts, and use each part to introduce the claim, warrant, and impact structure. You can also reinforce the point by asking for additional warrants/impacts in support of the student’s argument).

You will now have an example argument on display, with each part of the argument (claim, warrant, and impact) identified for the students. It might also be helpful to write out definitions of each of these parts next to that argument.

If students seem to need additional reinforcement, you might work through this process again with another student’s argument, this time asking other students to identify the parts of the argument proposed and/or to supply additional parts to complete the argument.

This group discussion is also a good place to introduce the idea that there might be multiple warrants that could be provided from one claim, that one warrant might provide justification for more than one claim, and that a claim might have multiple impacts.

Partner review, if needed [10 minutes]

Now that students have been introduced to the structure of an argument, they should be able to generate arguments on each side of your example topic. You can have each student do this by partnering students and asking each student to write an argument, review their partner's argument to ensure that it has the complete claim, warrant and impact structure, and then to revise their own argument in light of partner feedback.

Application: identifying arguments in a passage [20-30 minutes]

Break students up into partners or small groups. Provide each group with a passage that makes one or more arguments for one side of the current Big Questions debate topic. You should of course select passages that present a clear argument. Depending on the level of your students, you may pick a passage that advances multiple arguments and/or arguments with multiple examples of each part (e.g. a passage that provides three different kinds of warrants for one claim).

Each individual in a group should read the passage and annotate it with the claim, warrant, and impact structure. Students might find it helpful to read the passage through once, and then go back and re-read it in order to mark out the claim(s), warrant(s), and impact(s) in the passage. Then, as a group, students should compare notes, and construct an argument that is based on the argument in the passage. They can quote the passage where appropriate, but they can also supplement it with their own explanation. Alternatively, you can ask students to rewrite the entire argument, with each of its parts, in their own words.

Once each group has a version of their argument, you can return to the larger group and discuss one or two of the groups' arguments. This larger group discussion could be an opportunity to brainstorm further warrants or impacts for a claim made by a group's argument. It will be helpful for students to see that they can often make the best use of source material if they contextualize it within their own reasoning (amplifying the argument of the passage by adding their own ideas, conclusions, and justifications to it).

Conclusion (or assignment for homework)

Depending on whether your students have already produced arguments on the Big Questions topic, you can now ask students to either *revise* their existing arguments—checking to make sure that they are complete—and/or to write a few new arguments of their own that contain the claim, warrant, and impact structure. To standardize later review, you might provide students with passages or articles from which to construct new arguments, or you could choose to couple this assignment with a research assignment and ask students to find their own source material.

Informal Assessment Strategies:

You should be able to informally assess student understanding through the larger group discussions, monitoring of smaller group discussions, and the arguments and revisions that students produce in small group, partner work, and/or individual work.

Formal Assessment Strategies:

Formal assessment can be done of the homework you assign students' at the end of the lesson. In addition, students will have generated materials at several points during the lesson: the arguments they revised with a partner on the example topic, their annotated passage from group work, and the groups' final arguments. You can ask students to turn in any or all of these materials for your review.

Reflection/Review for Future:

This lesson leads logically into the next lesson on refuting an argument. The structure of an argument itself can be referred back to whenever you discuss or review arguments, assign case writing and revision, or set goals for research assignments.



Lesson Plan

Unit Name: Big Questions Debate

Topic: Refuting an Argument

Essential Questions:

1. How does one map out an argument in order to facilitate refuting that argument?
2. What are the different types of ways that you can refute an argument?
3. What is the difference between an “offensive” response to an argument and a “defensive” response to an argument?

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to break down an argument into not only its parts (claim, warrant, and impact), but also its premises (the steps the argument takes in order to establish a warrant or impact).
2. Students will be able to identify different types of responses to an argument: an “offensive” response vs. a “defensive” response, an indict vs. a “turn,” a response to a warrant vs. a response to an impact, and so on.
3. Students will be able to generate responses (of different types) to an argument.

Instructional Materials Needed:

You will need several example arguments (or source passages) that can be used for premise mapping activities and as example arguments for students to refute. The number of examples you will need will depend on how many times you plan to iterate the activities. You may choose to use some student generated arguments (for example, arguments that students produced during the “constructing an argument” lesson). However, you will also want an example argument that you have selected (or an example passage from which the class will construct an argument), so as to ensure that it is a good example for the lesson activities.

Overview of Lesson:

This lesson has three main parts: (1) students will learn how to break down an argument into its premises; (2) students will brainstorm responses to the argument they have mapped out, and you will use the responses generated by this brainstorm to introduce students systematically to the different types of responses that can be used in order to refute an argument; (3) students will use what they have learned to practice generating responses to arguments.

Detailed Step-by-Step Lesson:

Argument mapping [25 minutes]

The best way to figure out how to refute an argument is to begin by breaking it up into its parts. For this exercise, you will be best served by using an example passage that has an internally complex warrant. In other words, you want an argument that proves its point by going through several (3 or 4) steps. So, you will want to select (or write) a passage that makes an argument in a way that fits this criterion.

Start by giving every student a copy of the passage that contains the example argument. Have each student mark for themselves the area(s) of the passage that contain the claim, warrant, and impact of the argument. (Students will be able to do this if you have previously taught the “constructing an argument” lesson). Briefly discuss to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Now identify the portion(s) of the argument that contain multiple steps. Most likely, the “warrant” part of the argument goes through multiple steps in order to justify the claim being advanced by the argument. You now want to focus on that part of the argument and walk students through breaking it up into its steps, or premises. You can think of each of these premises as advancing an argument of its own, while in combination they work together to provide justification for the claim of the larger argument. The first time through this process, you may want to simply guide them through identifying each of the steps together, creating an outline of the argument on the board. (For extra practice, you may wish to have a second passage that you ask students to map out into claim, warrant, impact, and then premises in partners).

Students will now have one or more arguments mapped out into component parts and premises, and you will have at least one of these outlined on the board. This is an excellent time to introduce the first (and most basic) type of refutation that students can make against an argument: they can argue that the warrant of the argument is simply missing a step, and as a result that it doesn't justify the claim. You can illustrate the point by covering up one of the steps in the argument you have outlined on the board. Ask students: without that step, would the argument justify its claim? You can then ask students to practice writing a response to the argument (the version of it with one of the premises covered up) that explains that the argument does not prove its point because it is missing a step. You will want to emphasize that successfully refuting an argument in this way involves *both* explaining that the argument is missing a step *and* explaining why the argument requires that step in order to justify the claim it is making. You may wish to have students attempt this type of response a few times in order to get the hang of it. (For extra practice, you may wish to partner students and have them give their “no warrant” refutations for each other).

Brainstorming + additional types of responses to an argument [25 minutes]

Once students are able to break down an argument into its premises, and identify when a needed premise is missing, it becomes much easier to generate responses to that argument. You can begin the process of generating additional responses to the example argument with a group brainstorm. Point out to students that an easy way to come up with ideas for responses to an argument is to simply focus on any one of its parts/premises and think of responses that would deny or claim the opposite of that part/premise.

Give students a few minutes to generate ideas either individually or with partners. Then, solicit responses from students and generate a class list of responses. At this point your concern is not so much that student responses are complete arguments (though you may want to point out to them ideas of what might help complete their proposed responses) because your objective is to generate a list from which you can illustrate different *types* of responses.

Once you have a set of arguments brainstormed, point out an example of each of the following types of arguments, explain what that response type is, and solicit suggestions from the students about other responses from your brainstorm that are of the same type. Here are basic types to look for, but you may also have additional ideas:

The most basic distinction between types of responses to an argument is between **offensive** responses and **defensive** responses. A defensive response to an argument claims that that argument, or some specific part of it, is false or unjustified. An offensive response goes further by claiming either that that argument, or some specific part of it, is the *opposite* of the truth, or that it proves the opposite of what it intends to prove. A silly example: suppose you argue that it is better to watch sitcoms than sports because sitcoms are funny. A defensive response might be that sitcoms are not very funny. An offensive response might be that sports are actually funnier than sitcoms.

In debate, offensive arguments are often called “**turns**.” And we can distinguish between **two different types of turns**: those that claim that the opposite of the argument being responded to is true, and those that claim that the argument being responded to proves the opposite of what it intends. Consider our silly example. A turn of the first kind would argue that, in fact, sitcoms are less funny than sports. A turn of the second kind would argue that it is better to watch sports *because* sitcoms are funnier, and for some reason it is better to watch something that is less funny. (You will want to note that it is a bad idea to make both types of turns simultaneously because they would work together to help your opponent’s position rather than your own. For example, if you say both that sports are funnier than sitcoms *and* that it is worse for a show to be funny, then you will have inadvertently provided a reason why sitcoms are better to watch than sports).

Another distinction between types of responses is that some responses are **empirical** and others are **analytical**. Those are fancy names, but the distinction is straightforward. Empirical responses contest a matter of fact, while analytical responses contest a line of reasoning. Often, an empirical response will be a response that is about or depends on a statistic, study, or set of real world examples. In contrast, an analytical response will often be about either a question of values or principles, or about the conclusions that we should draw from a statistic, study, or real world example (rather than any of those items in their own right).

It might be helpful to point out that, when contesting an **empirical** argument, one can choose to indict it in several different ways. For example, you could question whether the empirical claim being made is generalizable (for instance, are they drawing too broad a conclusion from a limited set of examples?). Or, you could question the soundness of its methodology (does it really establish a causal connection rather than a correlation?). You could also question its origins: should we be suspicious of the author/organization that published/performed the underlying study? Of course, you can also go on the offensive by presenting a contrary piece of empirical evidence.

Another way to respond to an argument is to contest the relative weight or importance of its impact. This type of response is often referred to as a **weighing** argument. A weighing argument concedes that there might be some truth to the argument, but minimizes its importance. For example—returning to the sitcoms vs. sports example from above—a weighing argument might say, “it might be true that sitcoms provide more humor than sports, but providing humor is less important than providing thrilling or suspenseful moments, and sports provide more of those.”

Of course, there are also “**no warrant**” responses (discussed above).

Over the course of this discussion, you will be able to create groups of arguments from the brainstorm that fit each type of response. You can use this groups as illustration for the explanation you provide of each of the types of responses.

Additional Practice [Homework or 20 minutes]

Now that students have a set of response types, you can provide them with additional practice by breaking them off into pairs and asking them to map out an argument and come up with at least one response to it of each of the types you have identified. If students have already written some of their own arguments on the Big Questions topic, you could ask pairs to exchange arguments and map out/refute their partner's argument. Alternatively, you could provide each pair with a new argument.

Informal Assessment Strategies:

You will be able to informally assess student understanding in larger group discussions, monitoring of smaller group/partner work, and the refutations that students produce in small group, partner work, and/or individual work.

Formal Assessment Strategies:

At the end of the lesson, you may wish to assign students an argument to map out (dividing it first into claim, warrant, and impact, and then mapping out its premises) and refute. In order to test their understanding, you could ask them to refute the argument by providing at least one response of each of the types that you identified during the lesson. In addition, you could choose to collect any or all of the work produced by students during the course of the lesson: their "no warrant" argument or their practice refutation argument.

Reflection/Review for Future:

You will refer back to mapping out the premises of arguments, as well as to the different types of refutation of arguments whenever you work with students on responding to an opponent's case/arguments.