

THE SECULAR ASSOCIATION OF NSW

Secular Matters

WINTER 2022

THE OPENING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY YEAR 2021: WHY ARE LEADERS OF THIS SUPPOSEDLY
SECULAR NATION PREACHING FROM A PULPIT?



The principle of separation of government and religion was mocked again, as it is every year, when the 2021 Parliamentary Year opened with a service in St Christopher's Catholic Cathedral, Canberra, with the Governor-General, General David Hurley, prime minister, Scott Morrison, leader of the opposition, Anthony Albanese, reading lessons from the Bible.

Previously, Scott Morrison: 'I've always been a firm believer in the separation of church and state, and the main reason for that is it protects the church, and I think the church's institutions *do* need to be protected' [Ray Hadley program 2GB, 1 June 2015]; Anthony Albanese: 'for me faith is a personal matter. I respect people's own beliefs but it is also important we have a separation here between church and state' [cited in *The Guardian*, 21 April 2021]. If they support the principle of separation of church and state, what were they doing in Christian churches giving sermons from the Bible? Why do they feel obliged to do this when it is not required under the Constitution? On 8 February 2022 the service was held in St Gregory's Greek Orthodox Church in Canberra.

David Tribe

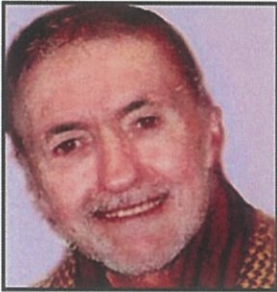
(1931 – 2017)

Secular Matters is dedicated to the memory of our former member David Tribe. He was born in Sydney, grew up in Brisbane, and lived in the UK from the 1950s until the 1970s, when he returned to Australia to care for his ageing mother.

Raised in a religious family, he said, "after a period in the ideological wilderness, I entered the infidel movement".

He studied medicine at the University of Queensland, but chose not to qualify, leaving Australia for Britain to pursue a literary career and lecture in Arts.

David became chair of Humanist Group Action, President of the National Secular Society, and editor of *Freethinker*. He published many books and articles.



Returning to Australia, he continued to work for secular movements and wrote extensively for Fairfax Media as a

financial journalist. David's interest in art, antiques and collectables led him to establish the column 'Bower Bird' for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. The University of Sydney's David Harold Tribe Awards in fiction, poetry, philosophy, sculpture, and symphony were established in 2005 after he funded a foundation for the awards.

Until his death in 2017 he lived in an apartment at Neutral Bay near the ferry terminal from where he crossed the harbour to attend meetings. We celebrated his 80th birthday at a restaurant in Lavender Bay where he cut the cake and sang bawdy songs. His old manual typewriter, still working, took pride of place on his dining room table. Perhaps alone, he declined to own a computer.

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info@secular-nsw.com.au.

VALE Terry Sanderson

Our association acknowledges with regret the passing away of the former President of the National Secular Society in London, Terry Sanderson, aged 75. This knowledgeable champion of gay rights and the secular cause in the UK helped put in place important stepping stones citizens have used to advance rights and values taken for granted today.

Gone too soon but not forgotten.

QUESTION ON NOTICE ABOUT HOLY SEE 2021

Question On Notice no. 3546 Senator Kimberley Kitching* asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 21 April 2021:

With reference to the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See's aims at the Vatican – 'Changing the narrative' in an interview in the *Catholic Health Australia Newsletter*, dated 16 September 2020, Australia's Ambassador to the Holy See, Ms Chiara Porro, stated

"You know whenever people [in the Vatican] think about Australia, they think immediately about Cardinal Pell^Y and the Royal Commission," then added, "My aim here [in the Vatican] is to change that narrative."

A: Does Ambassador Porro's aim to change the narrative away from Cardinal Pell and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse represent the position of the Australian Government?ⁱ

B. Prior to presenting her credentials, or subsequently, did the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade brief Ambassador Porro that her aim, on arrival at the Vatican, was "to change that narrative" away from Cardinal Pell and the Royal Commission issues?

C. Prior to presenting her credentials, or subsequently, did the Minister for Foreign Affairs brief Ambassador Porro that her aim, on arrival at the Vatican, was "to change that narrative" away from Cardinal Pell and the Royal Commission issues?

D. On what basis does the narrative need to be changed?

Answer — Minister Payne: *The answer to the Honourable Senator's question is as follows: A. No. B. No. C No. D The role of the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See is to advance Australia's interests with the Holy See across a broad range of issues.*

*Senator Kimberley Kitching died of a heart attack, 10 March 2022, aged 52.

^YCardinal Pell was acquitted in 2020 after the High Court quashed his convictions for child sexual assault related to allegations he molested two choir boys in the late 1990s when he was Archbishop of Melbourne. He served 13 months in prison before being released. The father of one of the choirboys who committed suicide before Pell was charged and later went to prison, has now filed a civil case against the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and Cardinal Pell, suing for damages for nervous shock. It is alleged the man suffered a mental injury after learning of the alleged abuse of his son, and that the Cardinal and the Archdiocese had a duty to prevent this. A directions hearing was listed in the Victorian Supreme Court for 14 July 2022.

'When the Christian affiliation of the population drops below 50 per cent, projected to happen around 2030...'

Anglican Bishop, Professor Tom Frame:
Losing My Religion, UNSW Press, 2009, p.299.

2021 CENSUS: ANGLICAN 9.8 PER CENT/ ALL CHRISTIAN 43.9 PER CENT

'NO RELIGION' 38.9 PER CENT

CITIZENS SPEAK: CENSUS COMMENTS FROM MURDOCH MEDIA CONSUMERS

SALLY: WOE IS US

Once we are a generation removed from the memory of such a society [without Christianity], with all such people dead and gone, and the vast majority living without such values and not even having a memory of parents or grandparents with such values ... our society and way of life will be forgotten, just as people in the Dark Ages forgot Rome. But at least they had Christianity. We will have nothing except for a society of badly educated, gullible people fooled into believing in climate disaster (or whatever will be the emotional fad of the day), ruled by the dictats of politicians, bureaucrats, activists etc. Such authority figures will replace God, winding back thousands of years of progress to the time when Kings and Pharaohs were gods. Anyone who thinks they can eliminate the emotional slot in the human psyche for a God or gods is a fool. It's wired into us. If we don't worship a tested God/live by a tested religion, we will find others, or more likely be manipulated by others into a believing in what they want us to believe for their own advantage.

GRYPHUS: CHRISTIANITY CAN ONLY BLAME ITSELF

Christianity has suffered particularly in recent times due to a number of scandals. Children in care not only in Australia, but the UK, Canada, New Zealand and elsewhere. The stolen generations were

sent to Christian missions where they were "Christianised" and forced to accept English culture and norms. First nation peoples suffered under the arrogance of Christian colonisers, and we must admit they were brutal and relentless. Child abuse in Christian and other school settings have damaged the standing of Christianity and so it should. My grandfather was from one Christian sect and my grandmother, from another. Her grandfather said she must never see the lad again. My grandmother told her grandfather to go to where the angels dare not go, and I am here today. I am glad the traditional powers of traditional Christianity have been eviscerated and I hope any vestiges of hypocrisy and the lies of Christian power continue to decline. We survived Christianity, all of us, and we should rejoice that we are being set free. If you practice Christianity all well and good, though know you will not get away with the abuse, the denigration and the lies that set one against the other in the future. Christian thought, 'Treat others as you would expect to be treated', is all well and good but what about the zealots, the anger, and the brimstone? I will do whatever it takes to make that extinct!

BRIAN: DISCRIMINATION TOO MUCH

To reference the largest Christian denomination, the Catholic Church, as an example, there are 80 Catholic hospitals

across the country and 25,000-plus aged-care beds in Catholic nursing homes, as well as social welfare bodies and charities with a broader Christian inspiration – from the Salvation Army, to the St Vincent de Paul Society, to Anglicare, to Lifeline, and Alcoholics Anonymous – all organisations that are generally thought to be serving Australians well, however discredited the zeitgeist might find the faith which inspires their good works

But, here's the thing Peta [Credlin], all these organizations are taxpayer funded. Second, all of them have special exemptions from Anti-discrimination Acts to discriminate against LGBTI staff in both hiring and retention. Religious prejudice is put before professional competence in both education and health outcomes - despite being taxpayer funded for public purpose. The (thankfully) doomed Religious Discrimination Bill, which you championed, only made this worse - entrenching discrimination against LGBTI teachers and students in taxpayer funded schools. The church constantly asks for special rights and privileges under law, ransacking the public purse, and discriminating against others in the name of 'faith.' It is one of the key reasons people are leaving the church and spurning religion.

ANTHONY: WHAT THEY SAY/WHAT THEY DO

Christianity, or at least the people who profess it, has not always professed what decent people regard as virtuous or good. There are many gross examples from the past: the religious wars, the Spanish Inquisition (and it was far from alone in its cruelty), persecutions for heresy, which often meant no more than a slight

difference in dogma. Today there are still efforts to enforce on others what many decent people regard as prejudices. These are articles of faith and/or supported by difficult or elusive texts or teachings. Culturally, most of these prejudices are backward looking. Religion demands obedience. The word itself comes from the Latin verb *to bind*. It remains yet another authoritarian regime telling people what they cannot do. Each of the US States pressing out their anti-abortion laws is doing so at the insistence of religiously controlled Republicans. All can be decent, caring ethical people without listening to bishops, priests, or pastors. A lot of people who do listen to them are not decent, caring, or ethical.

PETE: MYOPIA

Since when has any religion respected Enlightenment values? Free speech could buy you a cruel, state-sanctioned murder for centuries. It's still impossible for a female to become an ordained priest in the Catholic Church, or the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, for that matter. Believers are forever trying to influence government, either by direct lobbying or seeking election to promote their beliefs, so that doesn't bode well for the separation of the church and state. Churches eschew science, unless it's 'science' that support their core tenets ('creation science'). And don't get me started on reason and rationalism. It's a misconception that Western civilisation is based on Judeo-Christian traditions. Humans had figured out that murder, adultery, stealing, and perjury were bad for society long before Moses came down from the mountain with his tablets of stone. By all means, have your beliefs, cherish them, and live your life according to them. I don't think you're

stupid, or foolish, and I don't seek to challenge your faith. But the fact remains that we in the West have more to thank the ancient Greeks and the thinkers of The Enlightenment than anything we can attribute to religion.

BERNARD: WE FOUND OUT

Come on team – it's simple. The reason none of us go to church anymore and don't identify as Catholics is not that we've abandoned the Christian way of living, it's just that we found out that the Catholic Church let us send our kids to their schools under their protected paedophile teachers for decades, and although most of our families got through unscathed, this criminal behaviour destroyed our belief in Catholicism. And this comes from a guy who was school captain of a Catholic secondary school.

VIRGINIA: ANSWER THE QUESTION

I had a strict Catholic upbringing and as a teenager in the 1980s, questioned one of the nuns. If you committed a mortal sin and didn't go to Confession and happened to die, you went to Hell. When I was a kid, it was a mortal sin to eat meat on Fridays during Lent. Later, that changed to just not eating meat on Good Friday. I said to the nun, *'What happened to all those who had gone to Hell before the rule change, were they now allowed out, risen up into Heaven or Purgatory?'* She told me to *'stop being insolent'*. I said, *'Look around the class, no one is even listening.'* And that was one of the problems, rules made up by men running around in frocks and doing all sorts of horrible things to children in the church. What a pack of hypocrites.

STEPHEN: CENSUS IS BITTERSWEET

Christianity is as much a set of practises as it is a set of beliefs. To that end, the real take away from the Census is that now, and finally now, those with zero interest or involvement in the practises are at least being honest about their beliefs. I for one, as a minister of religion, feel a sweet sense of relief about that.

Comments after *Sky News* interview of former deputy prime minister, John Anderson, who blamed the campaign for citizens to mark 'no religion' for the Census result, together with widespread 'cultural Marxism'.

Errolyn: We abandoned God when we voted for same sex marriage

Stephine: 'God' abandoned us first and we haven't heard anything from his son in over two thousand years

Patrick: Abandoning God? No longer believing in Santa Claus.

Steve: How can you 'abandon' something that does not exist? Religion is just a lever used to control a population

Humble Bee: We are sadly seeing the consequences of an increasingly Godless society unfold. People who do not believe that their every deed will be accounted for can be spurred to commit the most heinous of atrocities. Of course, there will be those who pervert their 'faith' in order to commit atrocities as well, and for such people responsible for turning the hearts of humanity against God, an even harsher penalty awaits them.

Satan's Lovechild: Quick! Find Scomo and Hillsong for redemption.

FIONA PATTEN MLC, VICTORIA,

MEDIA RELEASE

THURSDAY, 30 JUNE 2022

Census data shows the time has come for two of my policies that have previously sparked undue controversy and resistance – freedom of religion in Parliament and ending the exemption of profitable religious operations from taxation.

I have moved a motion to end the mandatory recitation of the Lord’s Prayer at the start of each Parliamentary day, out of respect for the diversity of our community, and am also pushing for the removal of tax exemptions for corporations set up under a dubiously broad definition of ‘religious purpose’.

In response to my Lord’s Prayer motion, the current government earlier indicated it would replace the recitation of this prayer with a moment’s faith reflection and perhaps a secular statement about the pre-eminence of public interest in Parliament.

In the spotlight of the Census data, I call on the government to affirm this commitment to replace the Lord’s Prayer in both house in the early months of the next Victorian Parliament. And I call on the Opposition, as the alternative government, to declare openness to ending this inappropriate and archaic practice should they form government.

The Census was stark. The proportion of people choosing “No religion” increased from 29.6 per cent in 2016 to 38.4 per cent

in 2021, the biggest ever increase. Christianity was the stated religion of as many as nine in 10 of Australians until 1966.

It is the first time the number of Australians declaring a belief in Christianity is less than half.

It’s unsurprising in a nation where half of us have at least one parent born overseas and where one on four of us was born overseas.

No religion should be given special taxation or any other regulatory treatment – or an unduly privileged place in Parliamentary proceedings.

Let us pray. Or not. Everybody has the right to religious faith. Nobody has the right to impose their religious faith. No religion has a spiritual or moral monopoly

Let us pray. Or not. Everybody has the right to religious faith. Nobody has the right to impose their religious

faith. No religion has a spiritual or moral monopoly

Nor a right to special taxation treatment. Research done at my behest by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office found that removing land tax breaks would save taxpayers \$13.7 million across 2021–22 to 2024–25 and as much as \$71.2 million across 2021–22 to 2031–32.

That’s an unholy situation when one considers what else could be done with that money to make thing a bit better and fairer for people.

US SUPREME COURT IMPOSES RELIGIOUS GOVERNMENT

Meg Wallace

As predicted by a leaked draft of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Whole Women's Health Organisation*, a 6–3 ruling has overturned the earlier case of *Roe v. Wade*, a case which had established the right to abortion, giving states the power to force women to give birth against their will.

Eddie Tabash, Board Chair of the Centre of Inquiry said:

Today, the Supreme Court deceptively used constitutional law as a subterfuge to impose religious dogma on the entire nation.

The Court calls the tradition of forbidding abortion “fundamental to our scheme of ordered liberty” and “deeply rooted in this Nation's history and tradition.” Indeed, the Court mentions ‘tradition’ 52 times. Nowhere does it refer to human rights, and state why it was ignoring the constitutional separation of church and state.

Further, in his separate opinion, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote that the Court should reconsider “*all of this Court's substantive due process precedents,*” such as the rights to contraception and for same-sex couples to marry or even have sex.

Facts and science have no bearing on this way of thinking,’ [says Tabash]. This is about allowing one group's religious beliefs to dictate the most intimate decision making for the rest of us, whether we share those beliefs or not. That is something the high court is charged with preventing, and yet today it has relinquished its role, consigning the fundamental rights of women to state lawmakers in the thrall of the religious Right.

Rachel Laser of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said that

Religious freedom demands the right to an abortion and other reproductive health care so that people can make their own deeply personal decisions about their own bodies according to their own beliefs and principles.

This Court continues to corrupt and abuse religious freedom to force all of us to live by the beliefs of far-right Christian extremists.

Christian Nationalists, who agitate for conservative white Christianity in the political and social life of the US, form 20 per cent of Americans according to Andrew Whitehead and Samuel Perry ‘*Taking America back For God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*’:

This mindset of embattled righteousness is applied to the perceived enemies of the state (e.g. liberals, humanists, pluralists, atheists, and various minoritized communities), and true believers are directed to employ any and all means, even undemocratic and violent ones, in order to win political contests.’ Church and State’ 22 June 2022.

The UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner points out that Human rights bodies have provided clear guidance on the need to decriminalize abortion. Ensuring access to these services in accordance with human rights standards is part of State obligations to eliminate discrimination against women and to ensure women’s right to health as well as other fundamental human rights:

Treaty body jurisprudence has indicated that denying women access to abortion can amount to violations of the rights to health privacy and, in certain cases, the right to be free from cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. The Human Rights Committee has confirmed that “although States parties may adopt measures designed to regulate voluntary terminations of pregnancy, such measures must not result in violation of the right to life of a pregnant woman or girl, or her other rights under the Covenant.

The Supreme Court did not refer to its obligation to consider the constitutional separation of religion and state, and why it was reneging from that.

Banning abortions is just the start – the Court has further eroded the constitutional separation of church and state by permitting compulsory prayer in schools and some government funding of religious schools. The rise of militant Christian nationalism means the Court might next outlaw contraception and same-sex relationships predicts Arwa Mahdawi of [The Guardian](#), May 25 2022.

James Madison, father of American Constitutional separation of religion and state was scathing of the dominance of religion:

During almost fifteen centuries has the legal establishment of Christianity been on trial. What has been its fruits? More or less in all cases, pride and indolence in the clergy,

*ignorance and servility the laity, in both, superstition, bigotry, and. persecution.*¹

Rob Boston, of Americans United, writes: In *It Can't Happen Here* [1935], novelist Sinclair Lewis wrote about an American government elected by promoting a return to patriotism and “traditional values”, leading to fascism in the United States. A quote often attributed to Lewis, although there's no proof he said it – “When fascism comes to America, it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross” should serve as fair warning.

¹ Cited by Sean Faircloth, *Attack of the Theocrats!* Pitchstone Publishers Virginia, 2012, p.42.

Rob Boston

As The Supreme Court Redefines ‘Religious Freedom,’ Faith Groups Plan to Push Back

Abridged article from AU Blog 16 June 2022

What happens to the people who believe their religious freedom compels abortion in some cases? The question is not theoretical. As [several commentators have noted](#) recently, Jewish tradition asserts that if a woman’s life is threatened during pregnancy, her right to life supersedes that of a foetus.

Jews are not the only ones who feel this way; [many scholars of Islam also point to the prioritization of the mother’s health](#) and note that there are no clear prohibitions on abortion in Islamic law. Polls show a majority of Muslim support abortion access, as do many liberal Christians and members of non-creedal faiths such as Unitarian Universalism.

In the case of Unitarianism, the faith is guided by principles that address abortion and a host of other issues. [Writing for “Religion Dispatches,”](#) the Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, noted that members of that denomination are compelled to recognize the inherent worth and dignity of all people – and this informs members’ stances on issues like abortion and LGBTQ rights.

In Florida, a synagogue in Boynton Beach is testing this argument in court. Congregation L’Dor Va-Dor has [filed a lawsuit](#) in state court arguing that a new Florida law that bans abortions after 15 weeks violates religious freedom. The lawsuit asserts, “This failure to maintain the separation of church and state, like so many other laws in other lands throughout history, threatens the Jewish family, and thus also threatens the Jewish people by imposing the laws of other religions upon Jews.”

Barry Silver, the rabbi of the congregation, told a Tampa TV station that the new law “would prevent a Jewish woman from being able to practice her religion because it would require her to sacrifice herself for the fetus.”

The U.S. Supreme Court should not believe that it can hand the abortion issue to the states, where it will be neatly resolved. In fact, if the high court continues to grant exemptions to secular laws on the grounds of religious freedom, Christians and non-Christians will go to court to test those boundaries.

Things are about to get very interesting.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS: THE VATICAN, ITS ACTIONS AND ITS APOLOGIES

More than 150,000 indigenous children in Canada were forced to attend government-funded Christian schools from the 19thC until the 1970s where they were forced to assimilate. Many were sexually abused, and many died. In July 2022 Pope Francis visited Canada to apologise. In a debate concerning the Catholic Church in 2009 Christopher Hitchens outlined the history of the Vatican's actions and abuses over centuries, and critiqued the Vatican's self-serving, hollow apologies. He detailed many of them.

THE HISTORY

The Crusades; the sack of Constantinople and the massacre of Byzantine Christianity in April 1204 as part of the fourth Crusade; the Inquisition; the antisemitic persecution of the Jewish people; injustice towards women, 'that's half the human race, right there'; the forced conversion of indigenous people; the Vatican's participation in African slave trade; the admission that Galileo was right; legalised and institutionalised torture used during the Counter-Reformation; the burning alive in the main square of Prague of the Czech Protestant, Jan Hus; the anathema on all Eastern Orthodox Christians as heretics; the Treaty with Hitler prior to WWII, the celebration of Hitler's birthday from the pulpit every year until he died; the Treaty with Mussolini; the murder and forced conversion of Serbian Orthodox Christians in the Balkans during WWII; the fact that Father Tiso, head of the Nazi puppet state in Slovakia, was a priest in Holy Orders, and the Croat fascist puppet state, the Ustase state of Ante Pavelic, was also operating under full clerical protection, as was the regime of General Franco of Spain and the dictator Antonio Salazar of Portugal; Rwanda, the most Catholic country in Africa. where priests, nuns, and Bishops, are on trial for inciting from their pulpits, the church's radio stations and newspapers, the genocide of tribal people; the rape and the torture of orphans and other children in church run schools in almost every country on earth, from Ireland to Australia; the moving of Cardinal Bernard Law from Boston to the Vatican to avoid his arrest for the covering up of systematic rape of children in his jurisdiction; the open homophobia against gay and transgender citizens; the cruel doctrine of St Augustine's Limbo, concerning the destination of the souls of unbaptised children.

THE APOLOGIES

'The Mandate': 'The problem in the first place, is the belief, on the part of this church that it *does* possess a truth that we don't have, and it *does* have a God-given right, a warrant, a Mandate of Heaven, to tell other people what to do – not just in their public – but in their private lives;

'In The Service of The Truth': 'From the Encyclicals, it is said of the Crusades, of the complicity with the Holocaust, of the political and diplomatic alliance with fascism, it is said off all of these things, 'well, violence was committed' – but I'll stress this and underline it, and I'll quote directly – all these things were done *'in the service of the truth'*;

'Silently Waiting': 'Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger concerning South American Indians who were massacred in the course of conversion in Brazil. After the apology had been made to them, he said: *'nonetheless it must be remembered that before we came to convert them, they were silently awaiting the arrival of the church'*;

'It's All Relative': 'The rape and torture of children is not something to be *relativised*. Not something to be excused as a few bad priests. Certainly not to be excused by the hideously false claim made by some Catholic conservatives that this wouldn't have happened if queers hadn't been allowed into the church [which leads to the casuistry that] ... **'We Hate the Sin, But We Love the Sinner'**.

HITCHENS CONCLUDES: 'This is disgraceful. It's inhuman. It's obscene. And it comes from a clutch of hysterical, sinister virgins, who have already betrayed their charge in the children of their own church!

(Audience cheers and applauds. Christopher Hitchens died in 2011, aged 62.)

Māori Boy Atheist is a joint project of the New Zealand Association of Rationalists and Humanists and the Secular Association of NSW. It commenced after its author, Eru Hiko-Tahuri, and his atheist colleague, Te Henare, spoke at the Humanist International annual conference in Auckland in 2018. Our associations had commenced an outreach to the Pacific with the first secular conference in Suva, Fiji, in 2017.

Eru's book was a natural fit with our associations' project of arguing for the right for Māori, Pacific Islanders, and others, to express their human right to a belief of their choice. It will be made free for islanders either as a hard copy or as a PDF to their devices.

For two centuries, mainly Christian missionaries have been plying their trade in Polynesia and Melanesia. This book may well be the first book to contest the assumption that islanders are inherently religious, either in terms of indigenous belief or Christian belief, and that becoming an atheist does not mean a citizen foregoes the culture they identify with.

The book is available in Māori, English and French.

Australian readers can have a copy posted to them by (1) depositing \$10 in the SANSW Commonwealth Bank account **06 2003 0080 0555** with surname as reference and (2) by emailing a request for the book to be posted to the purchaser's address: [info @ secular-nsw.com.au](mailto:info@secular-nsw.com.au). All proceeds will be transferred to the author.

While non-religious belief began to fully emerge in the nineteenth century, at the same time Christian missionaries invaded the Pacific Islands and effectively replaced indigenous religions with their teachings. Colonization and religion went hand in hand.

In the twentieth century, as secular education and lifestyles became the norm in many nations, non-religious belief became more widespread and continues to grow as the preferred belief.

However, in the Pacific Islands, it is as if time has stood still.

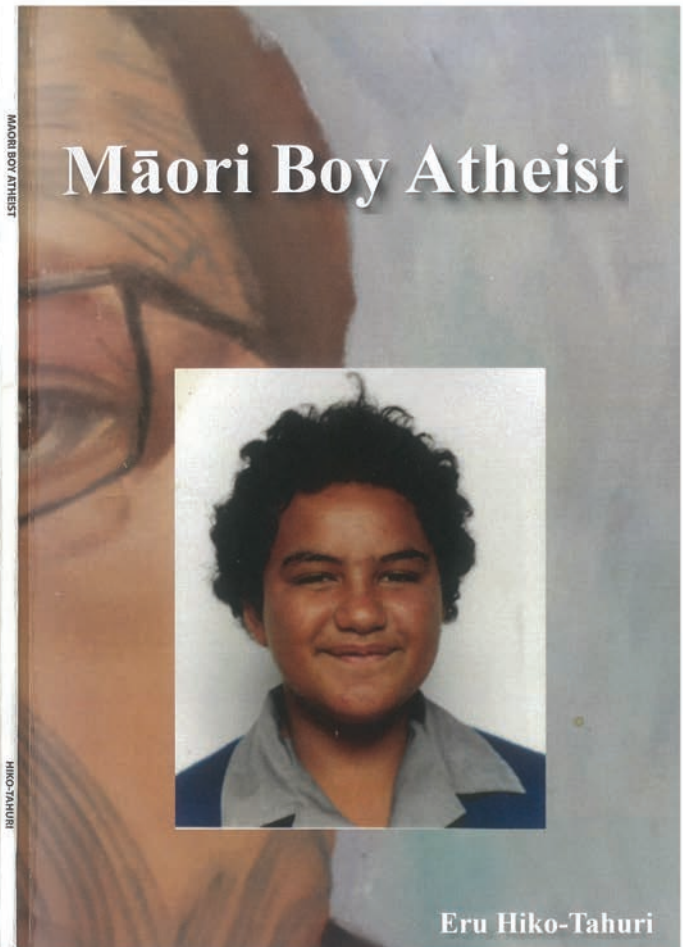
Is there authentic Maori thought, free of both Christian and indigenous belief?

Eru Hiko-Tahuri believes there is. In this book, he sketches his life of being knocked from religious pillar to religious post before finally finding the personal freedom that atheism allows.

He invites his fellow Maori, Pacific Islanders, Melanesians, Aboriginals, and others, to reconsider their position.

It is well past time that the human right to believe what you want and not be penalized for that is recognized in the Pacific.

This book is a lighthouse, welcoming readers to the safe port of free thought and personal individual integrity.



APPLICATION/RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

SECULAR ASSN OF NSW

PO BOX R684 SYDNEY NSW 1225

2021-2022

MEMBERSHIP: \$20 PER ANNUM/ \$10 CONCESSION/\$5 STUDENT

NAME:

ADDRESS.....
.....

POSTCODE.....

PHONE NO.

EMAIL ADDRESS:

I/WE HEREBY APPLY TO BECOME A MEMBER/RENEW MY/OUR MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECULAR ASSN OF NSW

AS A MEMBER, I AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THE RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

SIGNATURE:DATE.....

I/WE ELECT TO DIRECT DEPOSIT TO COMMONWEALTH BANK ACCOUNT

06 2003 0080 0555 USING SURNAME AS A REFERENCE

OR

I/WE PREFER TO SEND CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER

PLEASE SCAN AND EMAIL THIS FORM BACK TO THE SECRETARY AS BELOW **OR** POST TO THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

Members attending the AGM can renew their membership on the day.

info@secular-nsw.com.au. Secretary: 0418 939 539