

# *Anti-Discrimination Support Network*

14-August-2011

To the reader: This list comprises a number of reported discrimination events against non-believers, Atheists, Agnostics and Freethinkers. In no way does this list include all such events. Most events will continue to go unreported as it is the conditioning of many a Freethinker to expect such poor treatment from the religious as a regular course of business. Further, we may never know how many discrimination events are actually known only to the one who discriminated. We may never know how many jobs were lost, how many families were broken, how many lives were ruined by disguised discrimination. Discrimination of any sort is reprehensible.

## **Categories of Discrimination:**

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## Media Related Discrimination

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas  
November 2001

M-0001

NBC affiliate (KYAS Channel 5) journalist promoted hate instead of understanding by giving air time to anti-Atheist bigots who condemned and reviled the Church of Freethought.

New York, New York  
September 29, 2001

M-0002

Long Island Newsday printed an article titled "There are no atheists at Ground Zero" causing undue harm to the Atheist lifestance. Complaints went unanswered. When the editor was taken to task on it, he just hung up. It's apparently OK to slight Atheists.

Virginia  
September, 2001

M-0003

Preacher Jerry Falwell blamed the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on "judges who uphold church-state separation, abortion rights activists, gay people, civil liberties activists and others who are trying to secularize America" during an appearance on Pat Robertson's 700 Club television program. Robertson agreed further stating that "we (Americans) have sinned against God, that the Supreme Court has insulted God over and over, they have allowed rampant pornography and secularism, taken God out of the

schools, taken away the Ten Commandments, and legalized abortion.” Falwell added that “the pagans, abortionists, feminists, gays and lesbians, the ACLU, People for the American Way and all those that tried to secularize America – you (pointing to the camera) helped that happen.”

United States

M-0004

September 17, 2001

Journalist Kathleen Parker publishes a commentary in USA Today “God, country gain fragile new toehold” that declared false assumptions about Atheists (no Atheists in foxholes, none at the World Trade Center on September 11, and no Atheist to be found after the attack).

United States

M-0005

October 2001

Television host of “Win Ben Stein’s money” and former Nixon speechwriter, Ben Stein calls the terrorist attacks of 9-11, “Atheistic evil.”

United States

M-0006

March 8, 2001

Book entitled “Mind Siege: The Battle for Truth in the Millennium” by Tim LaHaye and David Noebel is full of a litany of libelous charges against the nontheist community.

Sacramento, California

M-0007

January 26, 2001

Irrational and unsubstantiated prejudicial essays are commonly printed and distributed through a free newspaper entitled “Community News.”

New York, New York

M-0008

January 2002

Television personality Star Jones declared during a live show that she would never vote for an Atheist, implying that she though Atheists were not capable of exercising good morals. Numerous letters responding to Star and Payless shoes on file.

New York, New York

M-0009

19-December 2001

“No Spin” show host, Bill O’Reilly publicly denounces Atheists: “Now, this might offend some atheists out there, but so what? The arrogance of a person who dismisses the thought of a higher power offends me.” No response from O’Reilly to the letters from Atheists complaining of his bigotry.

Los Angeles, California

M-0010

1999

When radio talk show host Laura Schlessinger was caught in a scandal (posing naked for boyfriend twenty years previously) she claimed that she was an Atheist at the time, implying that her unethical conduct was linked to the nontheist lifescape. Reported by the Freedom from Religion Foundation

United States  
2002

M-0011

American Heritage Dictionary has “Atheism” listed with some descriptions that are prejudicial: “Denial of the existence of God or gods,” as in God exists, atheists just don’t believe it.” And puts “Godlessness” next to “immorality,” or “wickedness.” Other dictionaries, for example – Webster’s or Yahoo Online Dictionary, have similar written injustices.

Las Vegas, NV  
17-Oct-2003

M-0012

Humanist Assoc. of Las Vegas & Southern Nevada ([www.halvason.org](http://www.halvason.org)) was denied the preferential rate offered to other non-profits, particularly religious, to place an ad in the Big Daily. A supervisor said their ad belonged with the whiskey and pawn store ads.

San Antonio, TX  
21-Oct-2003

M-0013

Freethinkers Association of Central Texas in San Antonio is consistently denied a column in the Religious Section for freethinkers. Received letter from M. Parker telling her that she gets a lot of publicity and cited all the letters she’s had in the paper.

California  
20-Oct-2003

M-0014

Co-producer of Atheists United television program reports that for more than 10 yrs they have been constantly sabotaged by unknown persons at the Public Access studios. Over-saturating the color, throwing off the tracking so that the picture is constantly rolling over during transmission, starting the program late then cutting off the ending so that viewer cannot read the contact information, leaving off one of the audio-channels so there is no narration or music, either under or over modulating the sound so that it becomes unintelligible. Time slot is always surrounded by religious programming that never have technical problems. Management just shrugs off complaints. Further from public access studio in Eagle Rock – get a tape back and frequently find it has been deliberately ruined.

Central Texas  
25-October-2003

M-0015

Freethought group announcements ignored by NPR station manager even though they were submitted in time for the free community calendar service. Station claims they didn’t have room/time to announce it. The station always has time for religious organizations announcements, though.

New York, NY  
13-March-2003

M-0016

Tom Brokaw repeated the old and insulting cliché, “There are no atheists in foxholes” on the NBC Evening News. He had previously done so at least one other time, October 8, 2001. Mr. Brokaw has never apologized despite being asked to in numerous venues.

Boston, MA  
19-Jun-2003  
Channel 10 news reporter insults Atheists with a “No atheists in foxholes” slam on the air in relation to a “virgin mary” being seen in a hospital window. M-0017

New York, NY  
17-Jul-2003  
Columnists in various newspapers insult concept of Brights. No matter what Atheists call themselves, they are still treated with derision. M-0018

CBS  
22-Oct-2003  
On Face the Nation with Bob Schieffer, Bob repeated the insulting phrase “No atheists in foxholes.” Later Bob, unlike others, did apologize. M-0019

Wisconsin  
17-Jan-2005  
Atheist denied opportunity to provide decent criticism in LTE to Post-Gazette of God Squad, because of religious favoritism by editors. M-0020

USA  
Sept –2004  
Phil Hester’s comic book series portrays atheists in an unfair light. M-0021

USA  
04-Sep-2005  
John Weir of ABC Good Morning America uses a form of the offensive canard “no atheists in foxholes,” while describing the faith groups assisting during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. A completely false and nasty assertion as testified to by the reporter, who is a 15 year police veteran and detective sergeant for the City of Gulfport. M-0022

Oklahoma panhandle (Hardesty)  
16-Feb-07  
2006  
Nicole’s father tried to get an atheist group started in the area and tried to advertise in the Guymon Daily Herald. Editor Orville Knight ([editor@guymondailyherald.com](mailto:editor@guymondailyherald.com)) told her father that his mere mention of a group was a “spit in the face of Christians.” The newspaper purposely tried to make the Smalkowski’s look bad even though Mr Smalkowski was acquitted of all charges related to his dealing w Nicole being kicked off the basketball team for not reciting the Lord’s Prayer. M-0023

National  
23-March-2006  
The God Squad continues, even while attempting to apologize for earlier insults, to degrade those who are not believers. “Many people can so easily believe in God, then go out and almost kill someone in the parking lot of the church, it’s hard to tell the believers M-0024

from the nonbelievers” 1-Sep-05. “Nonbelievers have no reason to get out of bed in the morning and no reason to believe that life has an edge over death, hope an edge over despair and love and edge over hate” 26-Aug-2002.

NBC – National  
5-April-2006

M-0025

While highlighting religious faith in the military, Katie Couric insulted atheists: “Perhaps you’ve heard of the expression – there are no atheists in foxholes – and the men who have occupied the oval office have also turned to a higher power.” There was no atheist invited to the program. To date, just like Tom Brokaw, no apology has ever been offered. <http://www.atheistfoxholes.org/>

New York, NY  
8-Dec-1980

M-0026

John Lennon murdered by religious fundamentalist upset with Lennon’s lyrics that mock God “Imagine there’s no heaven.” Mark Chapman joined a fundamentalist Christian College. He pleads guilty because after prayer he decides it was God’s will, anyway.

History Channel – National  
25-Feb-2007

M-0027

History Channel, while advertising on the “Dark Ages” equates “inhuman” with “godless,” insulting all atheists/godless persons. “600 years of godless, inhuman behavior.” Complaints when unanswered.

11-June-2007

M-0028

Chuck Norris said, if he were running for President, on June 11, 2007, that he would tattoo the words “In God We Trust” on the forehead of every atheist.

Wisconsin  
June-2007

M-0029

Wisconsin Public TV refused to schedule a three-part series called “A Brief History of Disbelief.”

Albany, NY  
15-March-07

M-0030

Suzanne Fields “Nobody Here But Us Believers – insults non-believers in syndicated column in mainstream newspapers. OK to vilify atheists. <http://www.humaniststudies.org/enews/?id=288&article=1>

National  
January 2007

M-0031

Paula Zahn show “why do atheists inspire hatred” smears and laughs at atheists complaints of mistreatment, as if having to flee town and being evicted by a landlord and having townspeople call their boss to complain that he hired an atheist isn’t really an imposition.

Entertainment Tonight M-0032  
Charlie Sheen, while being interviewed by an Entertainment tonight journalist slanders  
atheists with: "Anybody who doesn't believe in God hasn't looked into the eyes of their  
child."

New York, NY M-0033  
Catholic League's Bill Donohue in NYTimes 11-30-2010 bigoted letter claims that  
atheists "believe in nothing, stand for nothing and think we came from nothing."

## Work Related Discrimination

Irving, Texas W-0001  
2001  
Co-worker of nontheist made prejudicial and negative stereotyping remarks about  
Atheists, placed the worker in fear of disclosure.

West Allis, WI W-0002  
2001  
Job lost due to Atheist lifestance, which was revealed when computer screen message  
"No Gods, No Master" was used to counter co-workers' religious messages such as  
"Jesus Loves You" and "Prayer is the answer."

Syosset, New York W-0003  
President of the State University of New York (SUNY) at Old Westbury ends business  
meetings with prayer and the holding of hands, forcing Atheist teachers to be hypocrites  
or suffer the consequence of prejudice if they do not comply.

Florida W-0004  
December 1999  
Two doctors were coerced to pray, read religious literature, and observe religious icons.  
These directives were distributed through memorandum form an authority figure.

St. Louis, Missouri W-0005  
November 1999  
Member of the Ethical Action Committee denied appointment to "minister" and assist  
convicts at the Eastern Missouri Correctional Center. Reason: Ethical Society deemed  
not the right kind of religion.

Kansas City, Kansas W-0006  
October 1999  
Professor dismissed from faculty because research into the history and culture of the  
Freethought movement no longer "fit the mission of the medical school."

Royal Oak, Michigan W-0007  
November 1992

Early retirement (buy out) coincidentally offered after non-believer placed non-religious literature on a bulletin board to offer alternative to religious literature poster. Had to retire at 63-1/2 instead of the planned 65. By putting non-religious items on the bulletin board (General Motors) personnel director told him he was “disturbing the troops.” Secretary told him he can’t post anti-God things when pulling down an article from a newspaper about a prayer case. Prior to leaving, other employees were trying to “save him,” or “convert” at a pace of 2-3 days a week.

Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Fall 1991

W-0008

Lost job due to disclosure of Atheist lifestance. Very religious owner preferred fundamentalist workers. Despite having more expertise than another, was laid off. Other co-workers assumed sexism at first, but later confirmation from co-workers that said religious discrimination really did occur.

Downingtown, PA  
1998

W-0009

Job denied when nontheist lifestance was revealed on a resume that referred to a website design.

New Jersey  
1960s

W-0010

Atheist (like many others) subjected to company (at a Public Utility) communion breakfasts and other religious affairs. When he complained of bigotry towards blacks, which was rampant at the time, people would say (among other derogatory things) “Here comes the nigger loving Atheist.”

San Bernadino Mtns, California  
1960

W-0011

Atheist deemed too non-religious to be a camp counselor after questioning by the camp director.

Huntsville, Texas  
1963

W-0012

Atheist required to sign oath, swearing that he “believed in a Supreme Being” or face loss of job at Sam Houston Univ. Had to keep lack of religion to himself.

Flagstaff, Arizona  
1970

W-0013

Atheist denied job by University of Arizona due to his lifestance. Was at the in-depth interview stage and when the interviewer determined he was a Humanist, he indirectly let him know that he would not fit into their very conservative milieu.

USA

W-0014

Developmental disabilities worker cornered by visiting Scoutmaster insisting he join “because he might be in a foxhole, someday.” Atheist joined because he did not want to

make waves with his employer. Did not have to participate, just had to be there, but then they decided to do a group prayer (circle, hold hands) and spoke on behalf of others there. Worker felt pressured to keep Atheism to self.

Lansdale, PA

W-0015

After years of working with people in a friendly atmosphere, all that changed when Atheist was found out. Co-workers made no attempt to disguise their disdain for Atheist making sure, for example, he heard them say the "GOD" in "God Bless You."

Sacramento, California

W-0016

2001

New Hewlett Packard worker besieged by attempts to proselytize him right off the bat at his job. Pressure to view a taped sermon, his response to have the theist read "losing faith in Faith," was not accepted. Same co-worker said nasty things about non-religious. Right after Sep-11 a secretary forwarded prayer information and religious propaganda. He complained with "In this time of crisis, please do not assume that everyone at HP prays." Her response was indignant with "Give me a break. I was sending out the message for the URL purpose, for information. Do not respond back, I do not want your reply." She never apologized. Worker deals with this on a regular basis.

Norcross, GA

W-0017

14-Oct-03

Leo Wells, founder & CEO of Wells Investment Services says "atheism" is grounds for dismissal. In violation of Civil rights laws.

Greenville, TN

W-0018

29-Jul-03

Carletta Sims was fired from her job because two Christian co-workers had issue with her Atheism. The Christians were allowed to move to different office areas. Ms Sims was then subject to pictures of Jesus and other related items on her computer. When she complained, she was terminated. A court ruled in her favor.

Nashville, TN

W-0019

1-Aug-03

Imad Bashir (Atheist from Pakistan) refused further consideration by an all Muslim staff. All staff were Muslims from southeast Asia. Saw people with lower scores already working in residency. Director told him his consideration for the job was in the hands of Allah. Guess Allah didn't give him the job.

Phoeniz, AZ

W-0020

3-Mar-03

New skycap employee embarrassed by his superior when he chose not to participate in the group prayer led by the trainer. Prayer was to Christ. Trainer announced to group that new employee did not believe in Christ, so he can stand outside the room.

Irvine, CA

W-0021

27-Jan-07

Former Executive Fired over religion. Carwax manufacturer allegedly fired him because he had not pursued "a Christian lifestyle" and wasn't "on fire for Jesus." Atticus O. Firey, 34, of Newport Beach contends Meguiar's Inc. committed religious discrimination when it fired him in July after nearly 10 years with the company. Company president Barry Meguiar repeatedly urged Firey, then the chief operating officer, to attend church, the suit alleges, and told him he was "robbing this company of the blessing of God by not being on your knees and on fire for Jesus."

[LA Times Story](#)

Devens, MA

W-0022

Atheist working for a Bible-believing Christian was encouraged to watch an anti-evolution video. The supervisor slowly stopped providing training to support to the atheist. He was brought to the supervisor's office and told that he wasn't working out and that the supervisor would "pray" for him. Company name – Specialty Racing Products under the ownership of Waitco.

Austin, TX

W-0023

Texas State Education Agency forced the resignation of Chris Comer, curriculum director, for merely passing around a notice of a speech by a science/evolution supporter. The agency is more interested in promoting intelligent design over rational science and does not want dissenters among its team. Comer had an excellent work record.

Kentucky

W-0024

2000-2003

Employee filed a report of improper religious programming and was subsequently retaliated against, once in a public restaurant by a member of management. Open records request provided information relating to her "religion" issue.

## Teacher & Student Discrimination

Alabama

E-0001

1998

Principal prohibits formation of Freethought Club at high school. Principal eventually concedes after much involvement by the Freedom From Religion Foundation and the ACLU.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

E-0002

August 2000

Atheist student subjected to proselytizing by religious teacher.

Brownwood, Texas

E-0003

September 2001

Teacher forced to work in an environment (with harassment from students as well as fellow teachers) of unrestrained religious proselytizing after rumor spread about her Atheist lifestance.

Madison, Wisconsin October 2001 Principal collects names of non-pledging of Allegiance elementary school students. Reported by the Freedom From Religion Foundation	E-0004
Minneapolis, Minnesota February 1994 Nine-year-old student denied honor roll certificate by religious teacher who discovered that the family of the student were Atheists. Three years later he was awarded the certificate, but only after going to court.	E-0005
DeKalb, Alabama 1993 Teacher and student (son) subjected to student-initiated prayers at assemblies, graduation ceremonies, and athletic contests.	E-0006
Canoga Park, California Unspecified Date Teacher fears losing job if Atheist stance were disclosed (promoting Boy Scouts of America, saying the Pledge of Allegiance, etc.).	E-0007
Santee, California October 2001 Invitation to a gathering at a church distributed by teachers at a public school causes Atheist family to experience exclusion and bigotry.	E-0008
Westby, Wisconsin July 31, 2002 Private School neglected to inform parents of student about the religious, esoteric, occult science underpinnings imposing indoctrination on unsuspecting student.	E-0009
Fallbrook, California 1998 Student discriminated against by school officials and fellow students when she (by refusing to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance) exercised her freedom of conscience.	E-0010
Calvert County, Maryland June 1999 After protesting a prayer at his public high school graduation, student experienced harassment and threats from the community. When questioning local authorities, they threatened to arrest him and banned him from a post-graduation party. He was also threatened with suspension if he continued not to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.	E-0011
Camarillo, California November 2000	E-0012

After disclosing to a few friends that she was a nonbeliever, student found offensive graffiti painted on her locker.

West Allis, Wisconsin

E-0013

Unspecified Date

Atheist student beaten by fellow students after complaining that a teacher was reading the Bible to the class daily.

Ada, Oklahoma

E-0014

December 1995

Atheist professor experiences wave after wave of prejudice due to his nontheist lifestyle which was disclosed in a book he had written (car vandalized, threatening phone calls and letters, church proselytization, character assassination, children of professor beaten and/or shunned by fellow students, targeted by local police, etc.).

Pennsylvania

E-0015

Late 2001

College Professor held a prayer session. Complaining politely, an Atheist student was rudely treated by the Professor.

Pennsylvania

E-0016

Unspecified Date

Catholic School taught that Atheist and Agnostics were groups of people "against" Catholicism with many images of evil looking people.

San Antonio, Texas

E-0017

2002

Atheist children (ages 10 and 8) told that the true meaning of Easter is the resurrection of Christ by their Public School teacher.

Las Vegas, NV

E-0018

Unspecified Date

When 13, student subjected to bigotry: "Who cares what you think. You're an Atheist." Unable to hide Atheism easily. Questions were asked about student not attending Mass. Student had to attend as this was the only close school.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

E-0019

27-August 2000

Religious art teacher (an ex-nun) constantly inflicted her beliefs on the students. "There is a God" for example. Teacher also had a set of classroom rules including "No taking name of God in vain." There was also a rule on vulgar language, so this rule meant more than that. Principal supported teacher saying she was "saint-like," "very religious," as if these were positives. Intervention from ADSN was needed to educate the educators. Subsequently, teacher appeared to only be annoyed, not remorseful.

Huntsville, Texas

E-0020

1963

Sam Houston Univ School held a regular “Religious Emphasis Week.” Dean of student affairs would not allow Madalyn Murray-O’Hair as a speaker despite the authorized vote of the Student Council.

Erie, Pennsylvania  
September 2001

E-0021

God Bless America sung at public school open house. Mother concerned that she outed her 7-year-old daughter. FSGP Guidebook helped – Mother contacted principal and got satisfactory response. Principal stated she was unaware there were any Atheists, but if she knew ahead of time, she would not have done it (allowed GBA to be sung).

Garland, Texas  
Winter 2002

E-0022

Atheist children (ages 6&8) subject to the “God” Pledge of Allegiance in public school. Big Springs Elementary School. Uncomfortable at being led by their mentors in the POA.

Philadelphia, PA  
Winter 2002-2003

E-0023

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade Ashland Middle School – So Delco School District - two students bring in Creationism propoganda. One called teacher stupid. The other threatened to punch teacher in the face. The threatening student refused to talk to teacher when approached. Parents of another student purposely ignore him.

Las Vegas, NV  
Summer 2003

E-0024

Clark County School District PTA allowed the BSA in. PTA member scared to speak up for fear of reprisal against young son (1<sup>st</sup> grader).

Arlington, TX  
Winter 2004

E-0025

Student in History class admitted being an Atheist when Professor asked if anyone had been discriminated against because of religion. Professor was trying to make the point that such discrimination does not happen. Classmate later insulted and proselytized to her.

Guntersville, AL  
Winter 2004

E-0026

Teacher may have been removed from a list of authorized substitute teachers because of his teaching of Evolution.

Abilene, Texas  
17-Sept-03

E-0027

11 year old girl told by substitute teacher that she has no right to live in America because she refused to say the “under God” pledge of allegiance.

San Francisco, CA E-0028  
Exchange student (Atheist) from Poland has difficulty finding a host family.  
Reported by Lynne Schulz

Knoxville, TN E-0029  
India Tracy, a 14yr old straight A student was physically attacked after she refused to participate in school-sponsored Christian events, including a tent revival held each year in April. Union County Schools TN

Charleston, SC E-0030  
Atheist professor refused opportunity to rebut Christian professor after agreement not honored. Each professor was to talk with each other's students, but only the Christian professor opportunity was honored. Apparently Charleston Southern University prefers Christianity to neutrality.

Lafayette, CO E-0031  
10 December 2004  
Peak to Peak Charter School – Student slashes her wrists due to religious fundamentalist bullying at the hands of other Christian students and teachers. Numerous complaints by parents of non-religious students. Body slams, calling her a lesbian. Don't believe in Creationism, "you're a Pagan," and you'll burn in hell. Perpetrators are not being punished. Threats.

Cedarburg E-0032  
4-July-2004  
Cedarburg School Board member told at least one resident that varsity basketball coach was an atheist just before his contract was voted on. It was not renewed.

Tri-Cities, WA E-0033  
June 2002  
Atheist high-schoolers forbidden from starting a Kamaikin High School Atheist Club. School official denied request, yet two Christian clubs meet on campus, have teachers for advisors, and put up posters for membership all around the school. The yearbook allowed "Youth on Fire" to get their own page in the yearbook.

St Paul, MN E-0034  
9-Apr-05  
Secular community at College of St Catherine (Catholic college for women) banished and libeled by college president after President determined, at the last minute, that she didn't want any "monsters" on the campus. President encouraged hostile environment, including hate mail and defacing of the instructor's door.

Lawrence, KS E-0035  
2000-2003  
7-10y-old Student physically and verbally harassed because of atheism. Stood silent during pledge. Kept to herself, yet other students called her "monkey" and "people who

don't believe in God are stupid." Kindergarten teacher said "God" was the President's boss. Third grade teacher asked her if she went to church. She said "no," but teacher did not explain why she specifically asked her. Made to feel very uncomfortable.

Baton Rouge

E-0036

November 2003 – May 2004

LSU Hellenic Student Assoc President received physical attack attempts and discrimination in being told only "Greek Orthodox Christians" can be members of the Association by members who didn't like his atheism.

Oklahoma

E-0037

2005-2006

Nicole Smalkowski was dismissed from her high school basketball team when she refused to participate in group recitations of the Lord's Prayer. Her father was then charged with a felony. He was acquitted of all the false charges in July 2006.

[Smalkowski Atheist Alert](#)

Lafayette, CO

E-0038

2001-2003

Discrimination at Public Charter School - Peak to Peak Charter School, Lafayette, CO) - Atheist child called child of the devil, told his father was Satan, was hit, kicked, tripped, threatened to be beaten w a baseball bat, had his belongings stolen and assignments ruined, ALL after he volunteered to represent Science in a Creationism v Science evolution debate set up by his 6th grade Bio teacher. Complaints to school officials went unanswered.

2007-May

E-0039

Teachers in Albemarle School District in Virginia would not hand out flyers for humanist, atheist, freethinker camp, "Camp Quest." This despite being ok with religious promoting materials earlier including Boy Scouts.

2009-Jan

E-0040

Child between ages 7-10 was physically and verbally harassed because she merely stood silent during the Pledge of Allegiance and was revealed by her teacher as a person who does not attend church. While she kept to herself other students called her "monkey" and "stupid" for not believing in God. Kindergarten teacher declared that "God" was the President's boss.

## Politics and Government

Kentucky

P-0001

January 2000

Bill to allow faith-based organizations to discriminate passed in Kentucky Legislature.

United States

P-0002

November 8, 2001

President George W. Bush said, “Those who celebrate the murder of innocent men, women, and children have no religion.”

Chicago, Illinois

P-0003

August 27, 1987

George Bush (whilst campaigning for the presidency, as incumbent vice-president) said, “I don’t know that Atheists should be considered as citizens, nor should they be considered patriots. This is one nation under God.”

New York, New York

P-0004

December 2001

Request for Atheist group to visit Ground Zero was never acknowledged by Mayor Rudolf Giuliani’s office (religious groups were given authorization).

Virginia

P-0005

August 24, 2000

Republican Party adopts creed, which states in part, “We believe ...that faith in God, as recognized by our Founding Fathers, is essential to the moral fiber of the Nation.”

Madison, Wisconsin

P-0006

December 1995

Winter Solstice banner displayed at Capitol Building to balance government endorsed Christmas display was stolen from rotunda. Lack of security blamed.

Florida

P-0007

June 2001

Blue Laws strictly enforced preventing citizens who do not observe the Sabbath to comply with Biblical restrictions.

Pennsylvania

P-0008

Ongoing

The State of Pennsylvania Preamble to the State Constitution prefers religion by starting as follows: “WE, the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance, do ordain and establish this Constitution.” Similar statements are found in various other State Constitutions. For Example in Kentucky, in addition to a similar preamble, the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment states: “The right of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience.” But, no similar right is given to non-believers.

St. Louis, Missouri

P-0009

14-Sep-2000

Ethical Culture “religious services will not be accommodated” at the Eastern Missouri Correctional Center. Some inmates asked for counseling in ethics as opposed to the only choice “religious.” Request started in Nov 24, 1999 was ultimately rejected by Sept 14, 2000. Officials never had any intent to allow a non-religious organization to provide counsel and support to inmates. Only religion may apply in prisons.

Washington, DC  
23-Oct-2003

P-0010

Congress begins working on an act that would specifically discriminate against Atheists, the Religious Liberties Restoration Act (108<sup>th</sup> Congress) that States have the power to decide whether or not to display the 10 Commandments, that the Pledge shall have the word “under God,” that the motto “In God We Trust,” shall remain the national motto.

Washington, DC  
2-March 2004

P-0011

American History and Civics Education Act proposed by Senator Lamar Alexander. In doing so, Alexander slandered millions of Americans when he condemned “this drift toward agnostic Americanism” along with multiculturalism, bilingualism and diversity. Essentially, Alexander believes minorities are second class citizens.

Charleston, SC  
26-March 2003

P-0012

As he was being introduced by the mayor, 7 of 12 City Council members walked out, simply because an Atheist was allowed to give the official invocation.

Sacramento, CA  
25-Nov 2003

P-0013

Malicious attempt by Christian Reverend Austin Miles to have Michael Newdow disbarred because of Atheist activism.

Washington, DC  
11-April-03

P-0014

Long before calling teachers terrorists, Education Secretary Rod Paige told a Baptist publication that he believes it is important for schools to teach Christian values. “All things equal, I would prefer to have a child in a school that has a strong appreciation for the values of the Christian community, where a child is taught to have a strong faith.”

Harrisburg, PA  
6-May-2004

P-0015

While saying yes to a government issued Day of Prayer proclamation, Governor Rendell refuses request by PA Non-Believers to issue the same for a Day of Reason. Coverage of this issue was in many publications. Meanwhile, Day of Prayer leader praised the Governor for being discriminatory.

United States

P-0016

Seven state constitutions discriminate against Atheists. MD – “Duty of every man to worship God.” MA – non-Christians not “equal.” NC – Any person not believing in God is disqualified for any office. PA – specifies that God believers are not disqualified ... as opposed to others. SC – No governor may NOT believe in God. TN – All office holders must believe in God. TX – “provided he acknowledges the existence of a Supreme Being.”

- Berthoud, CO P-0017  
Atheists of Northern Colorado adopt a highway, but their signs put up by CDOT are constantly vandalized. CDOT now wants them to pay for new signs. Meanwhile, no other group has to pay for their signs. Signs are no longer up.
- Colorado Springs, CO P-0018  
Atheist Alliance holds convention here, but unlike all other conventions, the governor (Bill Owens) and mayor (Lionel Rivera) refuse to welcome them.
- Harrisburg, PA P-0019  
7-November 2005  
House speaker demanded that atheist stand for pledge and “very religious” prayer at an official PA House assembly. Atheist declined and was later told, on official letterhead, that it is expected of anyone, atheists included, that they stand and observe the pledge and prayer.
- Austin, Texas P-0020  
Texas State Constitution invokes "blessings of Almighty God, do ordain and establish this Constitution" and Sec 4. "Religious Tests" states that ONLY those who believe in God are allowed to hold office.
- Jackson, MI (Michigan Dept of Corrections) P-0021  
15 July 2003  
While visiting a son in prison, the mother was denied a right to wear a tee shirt that was deemed offensive about “God.” Also, while in waiting room, slogan “God Bless America” kept scrolling by on electronic information board.
- New Orleans, LA P-0022  
28 August 2006  
As reported in “The Humanist” Nov-Dec 2006 – Secular Humanist denied opportunity to participate in Katrina commemoration event by Mayer’s office (Ray Nagin). Only when ACLU intervened was the opportunity given. “A Secular Humanist Reflection”
- California P-0023  
02-26-07 thru 04-05-07  
Non-believer going through Alcoholics Anonymous program mandated by government action was forced to go through the “spiritual component” of the AA program even after his complaint. He was told there are no secular programs available to parolees in Northern California.
- Springfield, IL P-0024  
2-April-2008  
Rep Monique Davis (D), displayed blatant bigotry towards atheists in an exchange with Rob Sherman, who was testifying to the House State Government Admin Committee. Davis said “get out of that seat,” “it’s dangerous for our children to even know that your

philosophy exists,” “you have no right to be here,” referring to atheists.  
[http://blogs.chicagotribune.com/news\\_columnists\\_ezorn?files/DAVIS.mp3](http://blogs.chicagotribune.com/news_columnists_ezorn?files/DAVIS.mp3)

North Carolina Senate Race  
31-October-2008

P-0025

US Senator Elizabeth Dole, known for regularly denigrating atheists and the non-religious, engaged in a bigoted attack against atheists by attempting to show her competitor as a person with atheist ideas. Her competitor, Hagan, then also denigrated atheists by re-enforcing her Christian background. Basically, both candidates used atheists as the bogeyman.

Cape Coral

P-0026

Atheist leader ousted from Cape Coral Council’s meeting. Council is considering re-posting the 10 commandments.

Polk County, FL

P-0027

Malicious persecution of atheist who dared to challenge the illegal transfer of taxpayer property to local churches. Sheriff illegally used department’s credit card among other sources for this purpose. In retaliation, atheist was arrested on spurious charges.

## Military

Military

ML-0001

April 2003

A Baptist chaplain offered cleansing swims to hot, filthy soldiers in Iraq, but only if they would convert to Christianity. “It’s simple. They want water. I have it, as long as they agree to get baptized.”

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/5554317.htm>

Military

ML-0002

April 2003

Commander of Ft Bragg, NC invited Baptist evangelical preachers to use base for a military-themed training revival.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/06/national/06GENE.html>

Military

ML-0003

Air Force public affairs officer makes media statement that war makes believers out of non-believers, explaining why there are no atheists in foxholes.

<http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/NEWS/StoryLocalchaplain08w.htm>

Military

ML-0004

Christian pamphlets requesting that soldiers pray for President Bush are distributed to troops. They were produced by In Touch Ministries (Copy on File) “A Christian’s Duty.”

Military ML-0005  
Atheist, and former football star, Pat Tillman's family gets no justice in the supposedly "friendly" fire death. Religious Lt Col blamed the family for continuing to ask questions about Pat's death, calling them "infidels," and that when they are dead, they will be worm dirt since they are atheists. He says it is because of the family's "lack of religion" that this is still an issue.

Military ML-0006  
23-July-2006  
In the US Dept of Defense website, Lt Genl H Steven Blum outright associates atheists and agnostics with bigots and claims they all lose their atheism when their life is on the line.

Military ML-0007  
June-July 2007 (reported Aug 2, 2007)  
A young soldier got a 1<sup>st</sup> ever meeting together for the Atheist enlisted soldiers at a base in Iraq as part of the MAAF-Iraq chapter. He hung flyers daily (a lot of which were torn down). Soldier went through proper channels to do this and all authority to do so. At the first meeting a Major (highest rank at meeting), a fundamentalist Christian, threatened them with punishment under the UCMJ, forced them to stand at attention while he humiliated them for several minutes. Lawsuit filed in Dec 2007  
Reported by active military personnel

Military ML-0008  
25-May-2006  
Reporter John Burnett insulted all non-theist military members and vets with the line "There are no atheists in foxholes." NPR was asked to have him retract the statement. Nothing, no retraction, was ever made.

## Family and Community

Simi Valley, California F-0001  
August 3, 2001  
Atheist patient encountered unwelcome religious literature, art, and a visit by a chaplain during the hospitalization of a child.

Lancaster, Pennsylvania F-0002  
1994 (ongoing)  
Due to Atheist lifestance woman is experiencing shunning by neighbors and family members.

Pocopson, Pennsylvania F-0003  
March 2002

After State/Church separation victory in Federal Court, plaintiffs were subjected to harassment, hate mail, and threats.

Zephyr Hills, Florida F-0004  
February 16, 2001  
Apartment rental denied (by University of So. Florida) to an Atheist couple because of lifestyle.

Long Island, New York F-0005  
November 9, 2001  
President of a Secular Humanist group has noted several incidents where, as an outspoken nontheist, he has been negatively stereotyped and discriminated against.

San Antonio, Texas F-0006  
January 24, 2001  
Request denied after restaurant discovered it had rented to an Atheist group. Andy's Restaurant, 13835 Nacogdoches Rd, San Antonio, TX 78217 – Restaurant refused to honor commitment. And, when the group arrived, they were told their business was not welcome and were asked to leave the property promptly.

Pocopson, Pennsylvania F-0007  
March 2002  
Pennies from Humans campaign jar vandalized after State-Church victory was announced.

Brooksville, Florida F-0008  
2001  
A sixteen year old boy experienced unwelcome proselytizing by a minister during a hospital stay even though the boy's family indicated that they were nontheists. The same boy refused to say an oath to God during his short relationship with the Boy Scouts of America.

Waunakee, Wisconsin F-0009  
1993  
Atheist couple who filed a case against a religious holiday display were run out of town due to harassment and prejudice.

Yakima, Washington F-0010  
September 22, 1997  
Atheist display denied at the Central Washington State Fair.

Exton, Pennsylvania F-0011  
July 29, 1994, August 29, 1994, September 28, 1994, Oct 28, 1994, November 30, 1994  
During Boy Scouts of America discrimination rallies on these date's protesters were approached by passersby who brandished currency to prove that America is a "Christian Nation." Rally participants were told to leave the country.

- Pennsylvania F-0012  
Late 2001  
After complaining in a polite manner about a coerced prayer session, an Atheist experienced former friends stop communicating with her.
- Albany, Oregon F-0013  
2001  
A family member (sister of mother) would not attend the wedding because the daughter was a non-theist simply because of that fact.
- San Antonio, Texas F-0014  
2002  
Atheist children (ages 10 and 8) made fun of by other children because of their creed.
- San Antonio, Texas F-0015  
2002  
Woman called a bad parent simply because she did not teach her children to believe in God. Also called a whore and slut for going to gynecologist (they thought she was getting an abortion).
- Lancaster, California F-0016  
13-Oct-2002  
Friends express shock that letter to editor writer is an Atheist. None were concerned with his positive message in his letter, but only the fact that he was Atheist. Writer is an active member of community.
- Kingsport, Tennessee F-0017  
January 2002  
Atheist new to area signed up for a CSF (didn't know what that was) singles dance at the American Legion. CSF stood for Christian Singles Fellowship, but the writer did not discriminate so he stayed on. However, some of the fanatics discovered he was not one of "them." All of a sudden people start making up complaints about him, like his shorts are too short. Ultimately, kicked out for nothing other than bigotry.
- Pipe Creek, Texas F-0018  
1999?  
Atheist donated considerable money to public park project, but fundies made fuss, not wanting Atheists involved or even visiting. "besmirched by the miasma of Atheism"  
Atheists were not fit for participation in civic projects and would somehow hurt the town if they visited, dined, or shopped there.
- Mount Pleasant, Michigan F-0019  
1998  
BSA kicked out Atheist and his son (in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade). Cub Scouts came to his elementary Public School – sponsored by the School. Son joined, father agreed to be a

den leader. Told that they had to take a religious test and sign the BSA's "Declaration of Religious Principles," which states: People who do not believe in God cannot be good citizens, and cannot be members of the BSA. The boy was devastated by this bigotry. BSA recruiters still came to the school classrooms during regular school hours, and on several occasions the boy was singled out and humiliated for his beliefs. They sued the school district, including BSA, and have won.

Michigan  
2000

F-0020

An Atheist veteran funeral was supposed to be non-religious. The funeral director, an ex-priest, was made aware of this and the expectations of what the ceremony would be. Despite this agreement the funeral director, at the cemetery, got up and started quoting scripture, saying that the veteran was to be judged by Jesus and hopefully we would see him again in heaven. A complete affront to the veteran's beliefs and the expectations of the family at a solemn event.

Allentown, PA  
March 2003

F-0021

Atheist told his son is NOT welcome in Scouting by a candidate for public school.

Coral Springs, FL  
1995-2002 (ongoing)

F-0022

Atheist suffered embarrassment through deprivation of personal rights, emotional distress, job opportunities lost, and intentional entrapment.

Hollywood, CA  
May 2, 2001

F-0023

CFI West offered \$10-20k for signs to a company, Starlight Sign Company, that refused to do business with them because of non-belief. And then, sent Christian material to the organization.

Food Bank

F-0024

Atheist husband and wife lost jobs at same time and ended up at a food bank, then an Outreach Center, where to get food they were forced to sit through Christian singing and prayers and worship services.

American Society

F-0025

Anyone who thinks Atheists are not discriminated against is not looking at the surveys. For no other reason than "non-belief," Atheists are considered the greatest threat to 54% of "the respondents" to "their conception of American Society."  
<http://www.mndaily.com/articles/2004/04/27/9453>

Taylor, MI  
28 October 2004

F-0026

Death result of atheism. 49 year old killed a 62 yr old man with a shotgun because the man didn't believe in God. Told the dispatcher he was still armed and would shoot him

again if he moved. "I shot him because he didn't believe in God." The shooter was an Eagle Scout.

Lycoming and Dauphin Counties, PA

F-0027

1992 and to this day

No atheist is going to embarrass the Catholic Church a priest warned him in 1992. Was told he was too liberal to work for judges in Dauphin County.

Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison, WI

F-0028

17-December-2002

<http://www.ffrf.org/news/2002/defaced.html>;

<http://www.ffrf.org/news/2002/signphotos.html>

Freethought sign defaced, while religious signs left alone.

Larimer County, CO

F-0029

3-Oct-2005

Man harassed by acquaintances, relatives and co-workers (as well as Sen Ben Nighthorse) after his pronouncement of separation of church and state and atheist beliefs.

Las Vegas, NV

F-0030

A well dressed man threatened atheist "How do you want to settle this?" after seeing his "No God" sweatshirt. "You've heard me, I've lived in this town 17 years, and I know people." Atheist was with his young child. The man was clearly threatening and store security moved in to assist.

New Brunswick, NJ

F-0031

Landlord sings leases with phrases like "This is a Christian household" and "If you hate God, do not move in." Landlord claims he can rent to only godly people.

Tuscon, AZ

F-0032

6-Sep-2006

Atheist holding a "God is fake" sign is assaulted by an angry man demanding to take the sign. 9 stitches to his head from a water bottle, even though atheist used pepper spray to defend himself. Despite support from a number of witnesses the officers, upset at the sign, charged him, instead.

Harrisburg, PA

F-0033

Sept-05

While parked in long term parking at Harrisburg airport, bumper sticker "If you don't pray in my school, I won't think in your church" was removed.

Lubbock, TX

F-0034

10-Sep-2003

While his band traveled to Lubbock, TX – after checking bass guitar case with “No God” stickers all over it, same bag, when retrieved at Lubbock airport, had all the stickers removed.

Lacy, Washington F-0035  
Jan 2006

Humanists (husband and wife) insulted by Washington Mutual Savings Bank personal account representative who commented in a negative way about their non-theist interests (public schools, Humanist magazine, evolution), all while opening an account. Husband was set up without his knowledge to donate money to an ultra-conservative church school. When approached, bank manager defended the personal account rep by claiming it was a computer error.

Gallitzen, PA F-0036  
2006

Obscene graffiti sprayed on building belonging to known atheists.

Myrtle Beach, SC F-0037  
3-May-2007

A Myrtle Beach atheist was attacked and robbed in the parking lot of the Crabtree Gym. He was chosen by the attackers based on his anti-religion bumper sticker. Police report filed. Police incident file # 01-07-033309  
Via “The Sun News” “Myrtle Beach Online”

Philadelphia Suburbs F-0038  
June 2007

Individual attacked because of atheistic bumper stickers on his car. Threatened with violence, local police were summoned.

Wisconsin F-0039  
November 2004

Office Depot supplier Integrated Resource Group refused to make a “e pluribus unum” stamp because it was going to be used over the oath “In God We Trust.”

New Jersey F-0040

Atheist couple, scandal-free and solvent, were adopting a boy through the NJ Bureau of Children’s Services. A judge denied their application. He said despite the Burkes “high moral and ethical standards” the NJ State Constitution declares that “no person shall be deprived of the inestimable privilege of worshipping Almighty God in a manner agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience.” “the child should have the freedom to worship as she sees fit, and not be influenced by prospective parents who do not believe in a Supreme Being.”

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,877155,00.html>

National F-0041

Movie Golden Compass is condemned because it promotes freethinking and was written by an open atheist writer. But, how often do the same religious leaders complain when their own religion or religious beliefs are promoted? National media reports

Mohave, California F-0042

Kieffe and Sons Ford advertised on radio stating that the 14% of atheist should just sit down and shut up about their atheism. Ford did not condemn their actions. Would Ford have said something if the private car dealer said the same thing about Jews or Hispanics? And, radio station The Quake 93.5 apparently thought this bigotry was OK as well.

<http://atheism.about.com/b/2008/05/29/kieffe-sons-ford-want-atheists-to-sit-down-and-shut-up.htm>

Per KGET 17, Rick Kieffe does not regret running the ad:

[http://www.kget.com/news/local/story.aspx?content\\_id=d341295c-babe-4244-93c7-d0e009bd014f](http://www.kget.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=d341295c-babe-4244-93c7-d0e009bd014f)

Lebanon, TN F-0043

17-August-2008

The Wilson County, TN fair, a department of the county government held an official “God and Country Day,” effectively excluding the many atheists, freethinkers, humanists.

[http://www.wilsoncountyfair.net/events/god\\_and\\_country.htm](http://www.wilsoncountyfair.net/events/god_and_country.htm) Attendees who bring a church bulletin receive \$2.00 off adult admission on Sunday.

Camp Hill, PA F-0044

23-November-2010

Atheist’s car vandalized – spray painting over the word “Atheist,” on a bumper sticker as well as spray paint over the car.

Las Vegas, NV F-0045

28-October-2010

Atheist refused admission to a public library group as a result of non-belief. Clark County Public Library

Treasure Coast Area, FL F-0046

August 2009

After initially accepting a humanist group meeting at the condo association, the association’s directors told complainant to hold his meetings elsewhere, despite the fact that other clubs met at the same place.

California F-0047

Public atheist, Mike Newdow, received numerous threats and attempted attacks, including a pipe bomb. Was called an “atheist piece of shit.” Speaking engagement interrupted due to bomb threat related to his speech.

Harrisburg, PA F-0048

Atheist had rocks thrown at his house, vandalism to his door, tires slashed for speaking out against the mayor who merges church and state through organized prayer services to solve the city's financial crisis.

## Oaths

Charleston, South Carolina  
1990

O-0001

Since 1868, the South Carolina Constitution has read "No person shall be eligible for the office of Governor who denies the existence of the Supreme Being," making it impossible for an Atheist to run for public office. 7 of 12 City Council members got up and walked out when atheist was introduced to give invocation at the meeting.

United States  
Ongoing

O-0002

Claiming as the right of a "private" organization, the Boy Scouts of America administers a religious test oath to all applicants. They recruit in the public school system (entangling teachers and school administrators in prejudice), receive gratuities from the government of the United States and money from United Way Community Funds.

Charleston, South Carolina  
2000

O-0003

Notary license denied to Atheist who refused to swear an oath to God. After a federal lawsuit, the governor of South Carolina conceded and the State Constitution was changed.

Eclectic, Alabama  
December 2000

O-0004

During a Small Claims court case the Atheist lifestance of a plaintiff was disclosed to the jury by the defendant's lawyer. Plaintiff subsequently lost case.

Los Angeles, California  
Late 1970s or early 1980s

O-0005

All prospective jurors in a civil case were required to answer all questions truthfully, "so help you God." Atheist strongly objected to the oath. Overheard the judge tell the attorney's, who were satisfied that his Atheism would have no bearing, words like..."won't swear to God...can't be trusted....subordination... perjury... Atheists United... first amendment lawsuit... newspaper headlines... get rid of him!" He was then excused from service due to his Atheism.

Lansdale, Pennsylvania

O-0006

Even though Atheist landlord was able to prove tenants were obligated to pay him, judge refused to hear his side after landlord did not want to place hand on Bible, preferring to affirm instead.

Durham, NC

O-0007

24-May-2005

Atheist told they had to recite oath with “so help me God” in order to serve on jury.  
Atheist wanted to “affirm.” ACLU wrote letter to county.

Franklin County, Tennessee

O-0008

14-Dec-2005

Atheist required BY judge (TN Court Rules Annotated – pg 448 “You as members of the grand jury do solemnly swear of affirm....So help you God.) to say the offending phrase or be held in contempt of court.

END