
PANViews



*Newsletter of PA Nonbelievers, Inc., affiliated with American Atheists,
Atheist Alliance International and the Council for Secular Humanism.*

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President's Report

Josh CruverKibi

For 2023, I will be using my president statements each month to talk about cognitive health for atheists and nonbelievers. Many of you know that I am obsessed with psychology and or have heard me talk about or read my statements on psychology and cognition. I thought it would be a good idea to write what I know about cognitive health while being a nonspiritual thinker and/or not relying on emotional, reactive, and/or inductive reasoning alone. My intent for writing 12 months of cognitive health for atheists and nonbelievers is to inspire self-reflection, recognize our psychological strengths, and help others identify and explore ways of self-improvement. Good balanced cognitive reasoning takes practice, effort, and continuous improvement. We will not always succeed, but it is critical to continuously try to improve and train our brains for healthy cognitive resilience.

For January, I have chosen the topic of cognitive resilience. Many people have heard me make comments about what appears to me, hypothetically speaking, that atheists and nonbelievers tend to have higher levels of cognitive resilience than theists. It is only my observations or inductive hypotheses based on my interactions with our community over the years and my professional work. I will not use my president statement to try to make hypothetical proofs. I want to instead expand on these perceived general tendencies towards cognitively resilient behaviors for discussing cognitive health.

The dictionary definition of resilience is the capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulty. This is not a helpful definition or framing in the context of cognition, but I feel it is important to note due to the likely typical social assumptions about those that are perceived as resilient. I think that the dictionary definition relative to cognitive resilience, would be better viewed as a goal (to increase one's capacity to recover from difficulty). Cognitive or psychological resilience "is considered to be the process by which individuals demonstrate more positive outcomes than would be expected, given the nature of the adversity experienced." (Parsons, S, Kruijt, A, and Fox, E, 2016)

Without overthinking or overanalyzing resilience, it may be best viewed similarly to the processes of the theory of evolution. Resiliency, like the theory of evolution, is not winning every time. What is most important is increasing your cognitive adaptability to the situation, experience, and or your perception. Cognitive resilience is the ability to change your conscious thoughts and reactions relative to you and your lived experiences, to best interact with a current experience with the external environment and personal cognitive state or perception. There is not a universal resilience cognition, or one size fits all reaction. The measure of cognitive resilience would be best viewed as the willingness to engage in a balanced interaction, relative to you, your experiences, and your current perceptions.

Perfection should not be the goal for resilience, similarly to survival of the fittest. Resilience is 'getting back up', choosing another path or thought, giving yourself time to think and contemplate, and knowing when to give yourself a rest or slack. Particular to atheists or nonbelievers, despite many of us being taught spiritual, religious, and woo frames of thinking (cognition), we resiliently found other ways of

perceiving ourselves and the environment. The demonstration of resilience was the unlearning of dysfunctional cognitive processes. But it is important to accept that resilient retraining of our cognitive processes can be complex and take a long time. It is also important to recognize that dysfunctional cognitions and negative experiences are not just religious ones, are relative to all our significantly different lived experiences, and are often interspersed with perceived positive experiences. Perfection is relative, and according to who?

Cognitive resilience is to some extent determined by genetic potential and is a biological process, but the most important variables are developmental and experiential. This means you have the potential to modify and improve your cognitive resilience with intentional activities and behaviors. You can increase your cognitive resilience through intentionally varying your daily activities and experiences, learning new things, reading, challenging your cognitive potential (puzzles, thought experiments), increasing metacognition or awareness of how you think, practicing and increasing cognitive coping skills relative to your strengths and weaknesses (e.g. practice delayed gratification), increasing your cognitive executive function's ability to regulate limbic reactivity, engaging socially with others, exercise to increase blood flow to the brain, engage in good nutrition, and practicing healthy sleep habits.

For further reading on research on Resilience Theory, <https://positivepsychology.com/resilience-theory/#organizational>

For a deeper technical dive into Cognitive Resilience may I suggest- Parsons, S, Kruijt, A, and Fox, E. (2016). A Cognitive Model of Psychological Resilience. *Journal of Experimental Psychopathology*, 3, 296-310. doi:10.5127/jep.053415. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.5127/jep.053415>

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Atheist News in Pennsylvania– The Nation – The World!

“Nones” for Democrats

PANViews has reported before on the increasing numbers of religious “nones” in the US. “Nones” include atheists, agnostics, and those who just don’t care. The Associated Press, apnews.com, reported on a Pennsylvania group, Secular Democrats of America, which emphasizes the separation of church and state. They knock on doors and make phone calls, a member told the AP, to support “LGBTQ+ rights, COVID science, bodily autonomy and reproductive rights.”

A 2021 Pew Research Center put the number of nones at 29%, which is roughly 10 points higher than in 2011. In 2020, 72% of nones voted for Joe Biden. The Associated Press article goes on to explain that “nones” overwhelmingly supported Democratic candidates in the 2022 midterms. Not only that – a lot of them are voting. 22% of midterm voters did not have any religious affiliation, according to the survey AP VoteCast. These voters chose Democratic House candidates over Republican by a 65% to 31% margin.

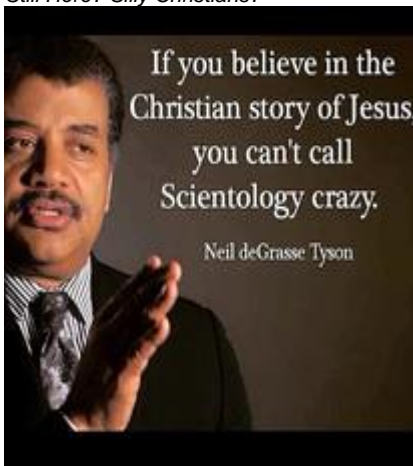
As noted above, not all nones are atheists or agnostics, and there are fewer nones than evangelicals. But nones are more likely to be politically active: make a campaign donation, go to a political meeting, or protest.

For comparison’s sake, it is worth noting that the 22% of voters who are nones equals the percentage who are Catholic. Both of those groups are dwarfed by Protestants and other Christians at 43%. 3% are Jewish, 1% Muslim, and 30% are evangelical Christians.

The article also shared results from the midterms. About 80% of nones voted against abortion referendums in Michigan and Kentucky; between 66 2/3% and 75% of nones voted for Democrats in Arizona and Wisconsin. More interesting for PAN members, about 80% of nones voted for Josh Shapiro and John Fetterman. While Shapiro is openly Jewish, Fetterman did not mention religion during his campaign. A quick Google search does not show that he has any religious affiliation.

The article notes the support from nones can cause problems for Democrats, given that they receive significant support from black churches. Somehow, the article concludes, Democrats have to keep nones and black church members happy.

Still Here? Silly Christians?



Attempt to “Protect” Kids in Lancaster

Some parents in Lancaster County’s Warwick School District are trying to recruit local churches in their effort to fight what they call the school district’s “woke curriculum” and library materials that “debauch and deflower” their children.

According to Lancasteronline.com, Warwick Parents for Change invited some church leaders to a planning meeting. Copies of the invitation were sent to Lancasteronline. They read, in part, “These kids, our kids, your kids, have lost the realization of who they are as being (sic) created in the image of the Living God. Instead, they are being redefined by socially determined labels, reduced to mere products of race, sex, and ‘gender identity.’ These children and youth are also being

denied the period of innocence traditionally afforded to those of a tender age as woke curriculum and library materials debauch and deflower impressionable eyes and minds.”

This isn't the first time the district has faced this type of issue; it has beaten back 3 attempts to ban books since 2021. The article notes the school district has a procedure for parents to limit their child's access to materials they don't like. Last year, 9 students opted out of certain books; this school year, there were 7 students with restrictions. 6 of the restrictions were for "All American Boys" by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, which is part of Warwick High School's 10th grade curriculum. Parents object to the book's strong language, alcohol and drug use, racism and its police references. It was one of the 10 most challenged books nationally in 2020.

Pennsylvania is third in the nation in banning books, with a total of 457 banned books in 11 school districts. Only Texas and Florida ban more.

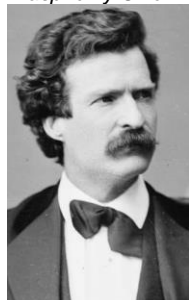
It's Still Hard to be an Atheist

While it's encouraging to see the growth in people identifying as nones, it's important to remember that most nones don't describe themselves as atheist. That title still elicits strong negative reactions.

PAN member Tim Simpson brought an essay from the newsletter Atheist Republic (<http://bit.ly/1BUHbyQ>) PANViews' attention. It describes the many ways in which atheists still are regarded as the "other" in much of America.

The essay notes the number of nones is rising. But it quotes a survey by Bertelsmann Stiftung that finds 50% of Americans are threatened by atheism. Religious people think atheists are without morality and are less trustworthy than believers. It notes that atheist students often report being isolated and bullied, not just by fellow students, but by teachers and administrators as well.

Blasphemy Chick



Stripping away the irrational, the illogical, and the impossible, I am left with atheism. I can live with that.

Mark Twain

While the bullying and discrimination atheists can feel is awful, the silent assumptions that people make can be worse, and harder to fight. The essay lists the kinds of things atheists face; among them, having their charitable efforts rejected, losing their jobs, being forced to participate in religious ceremonies, being denied the opportunity to form their own groups and organizations, and to participate in other organizations.

Ironically, such actions would not be allowed against religious people. The United States takes "religious protection" seriously, but often it is used to gain advantages or preferential treatment. Christians are fighting to be allowed to refuse services to people whose life choices they reject; Christians put their religious texts in hotel rooms. And, of course, religious organizations and the clergy receive special tax treatment.

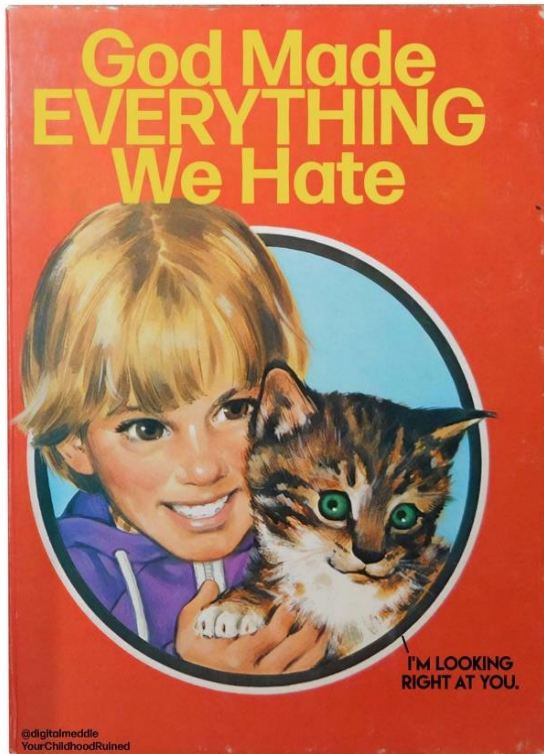
The essay notes that openly atheist candidates rarely run for office. A 2012 poll showed that just over half of American votes would pick a "well-qualified" presidential candidate who happened to be an atheist. The essay claims there are no open atheists in Congress, and only one in any legislature. 6 states still have laws preventing atheists from holding office; even though those laws wouldn't be enforced, that they are still on the books is a problem.

Of course, the treatment of atheists is much worse in other parts of the world. In "The Freethought Report 2013," the International Humanist and Ethical Union describes many human rights violations against atheists and other nonbelievers and reports the death penalty can be used for violations against religion in 13 countries. People who are considered critical of, or just not sufficiently respectful of, religion, have

been attacked by mobs and jailed. For example, Sanal Edamaruku, president of the Indian Rationalist Association, made the mistake of embarrassing the Catholic Church on national television. Apparently, the church was publicizing a miracle, a weeping statue of Jesus. Edamaruku pointed out that the “tears” were the result of a leaky drain. The church complained and Edamaruku was arrested and charged with “hurting the religious sentiments of a particular community.” He fled India and is living in Finland.

The article closes by noting that while atheists shouldn't exaggerate problems, we shouldn't ignore them either. Many people assume that all good people are religious. It would help if atheists (assuming they are good people, of course) would be more open about their atheism.

On a more hopeful note, according to profootballtalk.nbcsports.com, Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, has formed a foundation to combat antisemitism. His foundation has expanded its focus to fight all forms of hate. It has released an ad (which may be seen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM_kHQjZARK) that urges all who are the subject of hate to unite and fight back. And the ad specifically includes atheists.



Do You Believe in Miracles?

Dr. Josh Brown, who directs the neuroscience program at Indiana University - Bloomington, does. He believes that God miraculously healed him of a brain tumor. So does his wife, Dr. Candy Gunther Brown, who received her doctorate from Harvard in religious studies. They believe God intervenes to heal people miraculously all the time.

The Browns, and their Global Medical Research Institute, Inc. were the subject of an opinion piece written by Dr. Molly Worthen, a historian at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in the *New York Times*, [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com).

The Browns are continuously looking for stories of healing that cannot be explained by current medical knowledge (although they agree that God mostly heals through medicine.)

Several years ago, Josh Brown was diagnosed with a brain tumor (he provided medical records to prove this.) Both Browns grew up in conventional Christian homes that did not expect God to produce miracles. However, Josh was desperate, and went to any Christian healing revival he could find. Eventually, an MRI showed that the tumor had turned into scar tissue.

The Browns received a grant to investigate healing claims of two organizations, Global Awakening and Iris Global, in Mozambique. The organizations said that they were healing blindness and deafness through prayer. The Browns brought audiometry equipment and eye charts and tested 24 people. They assert they found improvement beyond what could be attributed to hypnosis, or a placebo effect.

Critics complained the sample was small, that the hearing tests were in a noisy setting, there was no control group, and that the test subjects would understandably want to show improvement. Undiscouraged, the Browns founded the Global Medical Research Institute which publishes stories of the

rare cases of healing that do not appear to have a scientific explanation. The article said the stories are rigorously investigated before the Browns publish them.

Professional scientists are not impressed. Michael Shermer, publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, commented “Case methods are fine as a way to start. But how do you shift from case studies to more experimental protocols that are the gold standard?” He added that he has asked believers about the times when prayer doesn’t work. “Their answer is, ‘God works in mysterious ways.’ It’s just hand-waving.”

The Browns’ experience is especially unusual, given that they operate in academia. The thrust of the article is that it is not useful to expect divine cures to fit into some neat, provable construct. Many people throughout the world believe in miraculous healing; even in the relatively skeptical United States, 29% of survey respondents claim they have seen one. If so many people believe in miracles, the article asks, why do so many people believe they aren’t real? But of course it offers no real proof miracles exist.

England Isn’t Christian Anymore

England’s history is closely tied to Christianity. Starting with Henry VIII, English rulers have used the initials “D.F.” after their name, for Defender of the Faith. The Anglican church is official and state-supported; bishops serve in the House of Lords. It’s true that the number of people actually attending services has dropped dramatically, but the very name “Anglican” implies that the church, and Christianity, is imbedded in English culture.

Not anymore. According to the Guardian, theguardian.com, census results show that only 46.2% of people in England and Wales described themselves as Christian.

These changes have led to a call to examine the official role of Christianity in British life. For example, should Christianity still be taught in public schools, should those schools hold Christian services?

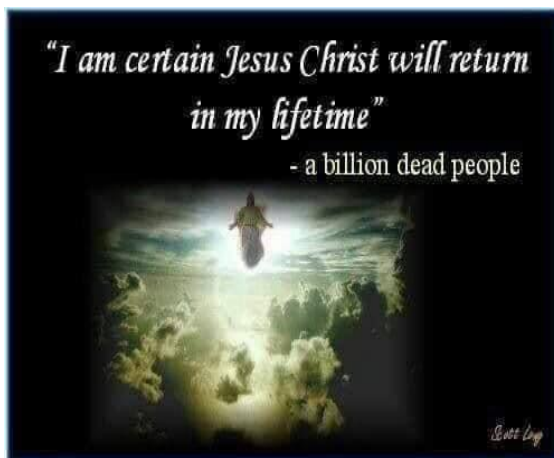


The census showed the Muslim population grew from 2.7 million in 2011 to 3.9 million in 2021. 37.2% of the population claimed no religion, which equates to 22 million people. If the trends continue, more people will be nones than Christian in about a decade. Most of the decline was in northern England, where ten years ago 70% of the population said they were Christian, but now only about 50% do. This change is partially attributable to the influx of immigrants in England; Leicester and Birmingham are the first United Kingdom cities to have minority majorities. 59.1% of the people of Leicester and 51.4% of the people of Birmingham are now from ethnic minority groups. The Office for National Statistics 2021 released other interesting tidbits, including that the fastest growing language is Romanian, with 472,000 people claiming it as their main tongue, but Polish is the most common main language aside from English or Welsh. And the fastest-rising religion is Shamanism.

The census deputy director, Jon Wroth-Smith, pointed out the obvious when he said the figures show “the increasingly multicultural society we live in.” However, he also said that 90% of people surveyed identified “with a UK national identity.”

The article noted King Charles holds not only the title Defender of the Faith but is also the supreme governor of the Church of England. However, he has said he will serve people “whatever may be your background and beliefs”. The Archbishop of York acknowledged that declining belief is a problem for the

church, but the Bishop of Barking, Lynne Cullens, is optimistic. “We will evolve into a church more attuned to the worshipping needs of the communities as they are today.”



Ireland's Catholic Identity

Ireland's public schools have long been essentially Catholic schools. The Irish *Times*, irishtimes.com, reports the Catholic church runs over 90% of the primary schools, and that up to 2 ½ hours each week are spent on religious education.

But just as England is becoming more diverse, so is Ireland. In addition, the sex abuse scandal – which was exceptionally grotesque in Ireland – weakened the hold the Catholic Church had on people, and politicians.

Irish parents have the option to have their child “opt out” of the local Catholic school and attend a more secular one. Critics point out that the opt out procedure isn't always clear. The child will have to attend a school outside their neighborhood, and opting out marks the child, and the family, as different.

Now after a decade-long review, religious symbols in theoretically state-run vocational schools must reflect the beliefs of the entire community, not just Catholicism. The article states that the review “highlighted confusion over whether former vocational schools were ‘de jure multid denominational, but de facto Catholic’”. For example, there had been legal agreements with the Catholic Church, from the 1970s, that obligated a quarter of vocational schools to provide Catholic religious instruction; the schools still have graduation masses, Catholic symbols in the building, and visits from Catholic priests and nuns.

State schools will now emphasize five core values: excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect. Any religious or belief “celebrations” should be equal in terms of symbols used and time spent. Religious symbols should be “reflective of the religions and beliefs of the entire school community” and should be chosen with input from the community.

This sounds good, but it's hard to see how this will actually work if there is a significant number of non-Christian students, or, heaven forbid, non-religious students. The article notes that discussions as to how the core values will actually be defined in schools, especially when the schools had a legal agreement with the Catholic church, are ongoing.

Netanyahu and the Religious Right

Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party won the most votes in the recent Israeli election. However, the Likud did not win enough votes to assume power. According to reuters.com, mainstream political parties did not want to form a coalition with Likud because of Netanyahu's upcoming criminal corruption trial. Therefore, Netanyahu has formed alliances with some extremely conservative, religiously extreme parties so that he could assume control.

The Jerusalem *Post*, jpost.com, reports that the Likud and one of the groups, United Torah Judaism or UJT, are talking about some religious reforms that, in the opinion of the *Post*, would turn Israel into “something of a Jewish version of an Islamic Republic.” For example, the UJT wants to stop power plants from producing electricity on the Sabbath, increase the number of separate beaches, and fund the proper

burial of holy books. Another ally, the Haredi party, is pushing to increase Bible study in secular schools, and to introduce the study of the Talmud.

Netanyahu has said that he will not allow Israel to become a "Halachic" state (essentially, one that follows Jewish law) but critics wonder why his ultraconservative partners imagined the things they ask for would even be possible.

The BBC, bbcnews.com, notes there is concern that the coalition will increase Israel's conflict with Palestinians and restrict minority rights. For example, Avi Maoz, head of the anti-LGBTQ Noam party, will be a deputy minister. Maoz has called for Jerusalem's Gay Pride Day to be banned, opposes equal treatment of women in the military, and wants to limit immigration to Israel to Jews according to a much stricter interpretation of Jewish law than is currently followed.

In addition, Likud's coalition deal with UJT calls for an amendment to Israel's current anti-discrimination laws, which would allow businesses to refuse service to people on religious grounds.

Atheist, Agnostic and Non- Religious



Doctors are particularly concerned this would reduce the care available to LGBTQ patients, although, according to pbs.com, the politician supporting the change specified it would only apply "so long as there are enough other doctors to provide care." Health care workers throughout Israel issued statements saying that they would continue to treat anyone.

The coalition has also said that it intends to pass legislation that would allow parliament to override Supreme Court rulings. Netanyahu has said that he will not allow discrimination against the LGBTQ community, and he has chosen an openly gay member of Likud to be the parliamentary speaker.

Observers note that the kind of changes Netanyahu's coalition wants to make risk alienating the United States, and the US Jewish community. While Netanyahu continues to insist that LGBTQ rights are safe, he may not have a lot of room to maneuver. As pbs.com points out, he needs the support of his new friends, because they support legislation that could dismiss the criminal charges outstanding against Netanyahu.

Turnabout?

A Virginia restaurant refused to serve an organization because the organization's beliefs on gay marriage and abortion offended those of the owner, and the staff.

Heard this story before, right? But this time it's a little different. The restaurant refused to serve a Christian organization because the organization was adamantly opposed to gay marriage and abortion.

According to www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/, The Family Foundation reserved a room for a donor reception at the Metzger Bar and Butchery in Richmond, VA. A few hours before the event was supposed to start, one of the owners told the organization the restaurant was "unwilling to serve" them. Apparently, someone at the restaurant had researched the organization and didn't like what he found.

Metzger Bar and Butchery posted an explanation on Instagram: "We have always refused service to anyone for making our staff uncomfortable or unsafe and this was the driving force behind our decision. Many of our staff are women and/or members of the LGBTQ+ community. All of our staff are people with rights who deserve dignity and a safe work environment. We respect our staff's established rights as

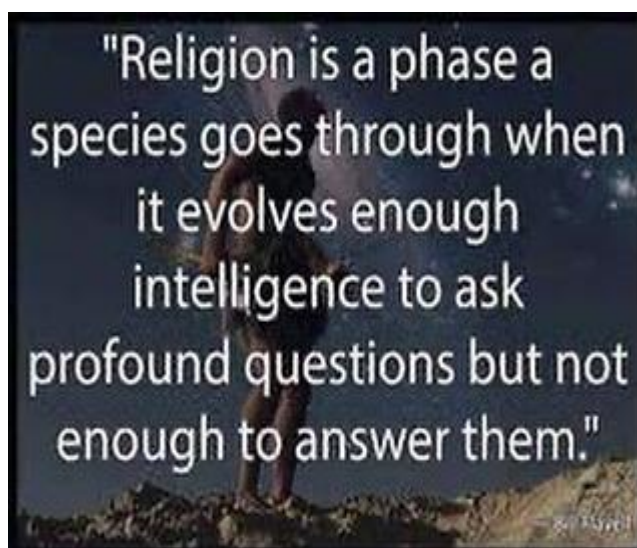
Hasidic Education Problems Continue

A few issues ago, *PANViews* ran a story about the problems with Hasidic school in New York. Hasidic Jews are a sub-group of Judaism, known for their religious conservatism and social seclusion. A study by the state of New York found that Hasidic schools were among the worst performing in the state. The schools concentrate on teaching about Judaism; very few secular courses are offered, and classes and books are mostly not in English. Graduates often find it difficult to navigate the world outside of the Hasidic community.

The New York *Times*, nytimes.com, followed up on its original exposé of the schools. Parents who want their children to get a real education face enormous pressure from their closed-off community, and religious institutions. The problem is exacerbated in cases of divorce. Divorces are granted by a rabbinical court called the beth din. The three-judge panels negotiate binding divorce settlement agreements which often require that children remain in religious schools.

New York State judges typically uphold these agreements, under the guise of maintaining stability for the children. But that's a problem because many of the schools, or yeshivas, are violating a state law that requires private schools to offer basic education.

The article interviewed divorced women who were troubled by the level of their children's education but were afraid of losing custody if they tried to enroll them elsewhere. Family members fight any change, even if the transfer is to non-Hasidic, but still religious, schools with better secular education. Relatives will testify against the mother in divorce proceedings or hire lawyers to go before the beth din to keep the children in Hasidic yeshivas.



Rabbis interviewed by the *Times* said that disagreements over education usually only arose after one parent had left the community. Some parents interviewed by the *Times* agreed with that; they said they often didn't realize how big the education gap was until they began to experience the secular world themselves. As more parents have become concerned about the education their children are receiving, the Hasidic response has not been to improve the education. Instead, Hasidic leaders have been instituting prenuptial agreements to forestall the possibility of removing children from the schools, before they are even born.

Finally, though, there is the problem of culture shock for the students. Children who switch to secular schools are usually far behind their grade level and experience a world very different than their insular community.

Japan and the Unification Church

Japan's parliament has passed a law to restrict malicious donation solicitations by religious and other groups. The main target is the Unification Church, whose ties with Japan's governing Liberal Democratic Party came under attack after the assassination of former leader Shinzo Abe in July.

Abcnews.go.com reports that the current Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida, has tried to soothe public anger over his party's relationship to the Church. The new law allows believers, donors and family members to

seek the return of donations, and makes it illegal to solicit funds by coercion, threats or by linking donations to spiritual salvation.

The man who is accused of shooting Abe told police he shot the former prime minister because of his links to the Unification Church. The church was legally recognized as a religious organization in Japan in 1968 because of its anti-communist stance. Its recognition was supported by Abe's grandfather, former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi.

Police found a letter and social media posting that said the suspect's mother's large donations to the church bankrupted his family and ruined his life. The investigation revealed ties between the church and the Liberal Democratic party, because of their shared interest in anti-communism, and other conservative causes. There were also stories about the children of church members, some of whom said they were forced to join the church, neglected or impoverished because of their parents' attachment to the church. Critics consider the church a cult, because of the financial and mental hardships it imposes.

The Education Ministry and the Health and Welfare Ministry are investigating various issues involving the church, including questionable adoptions involving hundreds of children among church members. Critics think the new law could be tougher, with donation limits, more protection for church members' children, and some recourse for people "brainwashed" into joining the church and making large donations. Most of the church's worldwide funding comes from Japan.

Satanic Temple Strikes Again

The Satanic Temple installed its annual holiday display in the Illinois State Capital Rotunda.

The topic was book burning. The display feature's Copernicus' "De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium," which argued that the earth revolves around the sun. The display contained a leatherbound copy of the text, orbited by crocheted apples and a 12-foot serpent, made by a Temple member, meant to represent forbidden knowledge.



Now They're Full Pains

People who watched TV in the 1980s and 1990s remember the Cameron kids: Kirk, from "Growing Pains," and Candace, from "Full House." Well, Kirk and Candace are still around, but their career focus is a bit different. Both of them are committed – and loud – Christians.

Foxnews.com reports that Kirk has written a children's book, "As You Grow," published by Brave Books. Brave Books describes itself as a Christian, conservative and anti-woke publisher that "promotes morals and values in children."

According to Kirk and the publisher, more than 50 public libraries refused to let Kirk have a story hour to read his book. They claim many of the libraries who either denied, or didn't respond, to his request hold "drag queen" story hours or gender-fluidity programs. After Kirk publicized these refusals, and threatened to "assert his rights in court," some libraries contacted him about holding a reading. "They caved," his publisher crowed.

Kirk claims that he grew up an atheist but was born again at age 17. He irritated his fellow actors on "Growing Pains" by preaching to them, and by requesting the removal of lines from scripts that didn't conform to his faith. After the show was cancelled, the article says he gave up Hollywood to become an evangelist, although there is no indication Hollywood fought to keep him.

Candace – now Candace Cameron Bure, since her marriage to hockey player Valeri Bure – has been a mainstay of the Hallmark Channel. She was recently in the news when she switched to the Great American Network. In a *Wall Street Journal*, wsj.com, interview she said she made the change to "tell stories that have more meaning and purpose and depth behind them," adding that "I knew that the people behind Great American Family were Christians that love the Lord and wanted to promote faith programming and good family entertainment."

In another story, on *The Blaze*, theblaze.com, she explained that her family wasn't Christian, didn't go to church. When she was 12, a friend invited her family to attend church. "It was strange to me, and I giggled at the thought of God. But as we continued to go every Sunday, my heart felt warm, and I saw how happy my mom, brother and sister were. I decided that I wanted to feel the same way." She and some of her family members were baptized shortly thereafter.

However, she doesn't think she truly became a Christian until her twenties, when Kirk gave her a copy of Ray Comfort's "The Way of the Master." She explains, "After reading a book my brother gave to me....it changed my walk with God forever...As I went through every commandment, I saw that I'd broken all of them." All of them, Candace? Adultery? Murder?

Pearls Before Swine

pearlscomic.com



FUN!



Happy New Year

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell the name of a popular location for celebrating New Year's Eve.

Solution at the end of PANViews

S E I B A B N E W Y E A R S E V E Y
G C H A M P A G N E T Y I M N S T T
E N S S U E T H C D A N C E D R H R
S Q I N F E T O O D M U A Y O E I A
E F C G F I N A S L S U E R F K R P
D H E F N F R R R R I A S E D A T S
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| APPETIZERS | DECORATIONS | HATS | PARADES |
| BABIES | END OF DECEMBER | HOLIDAY | PARTY |
| BALLOONS | EVENTS | HORNS | PUNCH |
| BANNERS | FAMILY | KISS | RESOLUTIONS |
| BUFFET | FATHER TIME | MIDNIGHT | SINGING |
| CELEBRATE | FEAST | MUSIC | STREAMERS |
| CHAMPAGNE | FESTIVITIES | NEW YEARS DAY | THIRTY FIRST |
| CONFETTI | FIREWORKS | NEW YEARS EVE | TIARAS |
| DANCE | FIRST OF JANUARY | NOISEMAKERS | WINE |
| DAY ONE | FRIENDS | OCCASION | YEAR IN REVIEW |

PAN News & Update

Meetings – PAN holds in-person and online meetings. Locations, times, and dates below.

Online meeting: Fourth Thursday of the month (changed from the 3rd Thursday to avoid conflict with Reading) at 6PM. We hope to split the meeting into an hour of chat and an hour of presentation or more structured discussion. Anyone with a book/movie review, discussion topic, or potential guest speaker should contact Dietrich Dellinger @ guyinnagorillasuit@gmail.com

Chambersburg – Second Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm, China House, 495 Gateway Ave.

Cumberland/Mechanicsburg - Third Wednesday of the month, 6:00 pm. Lovedraft Brewing, 165 Gateway Drive, Mechanicsburg (no children under 18)

Harrisburg– First Wednesday of the month, 6:30 pm, Harrisburg Midtown Arts Center, 1110 North 3rd Street

Lancaster – Fourth Wednesday, 6:00 pm, Centerville Diner, 100 S. Centerville Rd.

Lebanon - Second Wednesday of the month, 6:00 pm, Hoss's - 1235 E Main St., Annville

Reading – Third Thursdays at 7:15pm, 3rd & Spruce Drafthaus, 238 S 3rd Ave, Reading, PA 19611

York Meeting – First Sunday at noon. Cancelled for January, because of a burst pipe at the Prince Street Café. Back at the Prince St. Café, 2 W. Market St., back meeting room, for February, we hope.

How to Contribute to PAN

Giant Cards - We will have Giant grocery store cards available for purchase at PAN meetings. You pay face value for the card and use the face value at the store, but Giant lets PAN have 5% of that face value. If you shop at Giant, anyway, use the cards in lieu of cash and help PAN. What could be easier?

Pennies for PAN - Finally, we are happy to take money the old-fashioned way. You can give your tax-deductible contribution to a Board Member at one of our meetings or events, you can donate via PayPal on our website, www.panonbelievers.org, or you can mail a check to us at PA Nonbelievers, Inc. PO Box 702, York, PA 17405. Remember when you donate you can indicate what fund you want your donation to go to, you can find the list of our funds on the PAN website in the Donate section.

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