

# Could a Humanist Ever Frolic In The Sea Of Faith?

Noel Cheer

## Part 2: We're All in This Together

### Abstract

In Part 1, I argued that there exists a universal human capacity to establish meaning in life by assigning value to people, places, objects and events. If such valuations become life-directing then the term 'religion' is as good a name as any for the exercise of this capacity if we agree that conventional religious expressions are historically- and culturally-coloured examples.

In Part 2, I will argue that, although we should be grateful for the clarity of thought and for the social activism of secular humanists, rationalists, skeptics and atheists, they understate some important human requirements of the kind that are celebrated by organisations such as The Sea of Faith Network<sup>[1]</sup>.

### Who Needs Religion?

It is a widespread attitude among Sea of Faith people that a religious outlook is not only healthy but is essential to a fully-realised life. Its expression need not be conventional. The founding figure of the original Sea of Faith Network, Don Cupitt, has recently discovered that the idiomatic uses of 'Life' and 'It All' now occupy the space that 'God' once routinely occupied in everyday speech<sup>[2]</sup>. But while the secularisation of the West, in particular, has brought many advantages, it has also created what the critic George Steiner referred to as a nostalgia for the absolute, a sense of disarray, a 'dessication'<sup>[3]</sup>.

This loss is felt at the personal level also. Carl Jung wrote,

Among all of my patients in the second half of life, that is to say over thirty-five, there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them feel ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers and not one of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.<sup>[4]</sup>

The reader is invited to keep an open mind about what can be said to constitute 'religion', as Part 1 requested. or example, it would be an insult to the scholarly work of Jung and countless others to fail to see past the stereotypical old man with a beard in the sky approach when talking of God.

The religious humanist takes the view that, while secular humanism has many commendable features, it offers an incomplete reading of all the richness and potential of the human person.<sup>[5]</sup>

There is a constellation of ideas around the word 'holy' which comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'halig', meaning healthy, sound or whole. 'Heal' 'health' and 'hale' (as in 'hale and hearty') come from the same source. Religion, at its finest, deals in wholeness. We might combine themes from Jung, Steiner, Nietzsche, Jesus, the Apostle Paul and Darwin and suggest that the characteristic of human wholeness is a yearning for transcendence, not into a supernatural world but into a fully realised humanness. This is not metaphysical transcendence, but aspirational transcendence. We are all born animals but, if the circumstances are right then we develop both the aspiration and the competence to transcend the animal substrate to become spiritual beings.

Let us be clear, while such transcendence does not look to denial of the flesh, it assigns the highest priorities to spiritual attitudes — to love, faith, hope, and mutual support. It is these fruits of the spirit that should have the casting vote, not the flesh. Relegate the flesh, but do not deny it.<sup>[6]</sup>

The personal journey that our humanness invites us into is one best undertaken in the spirit of reconciling that which our analytical science has put assunder. Adam Kirsch, writing in the *NY Sun*, heavily criticised Daniel Dennett's recent book *Breaking The*

*Spell*<sup>[7]</sup> on a number of grounds. The most substantial is this:

The ... dilemma for Mr. Dennett is that there are kinds of truth [which] the positivist cannot measure. At the heart of organized religion, whether one accepts or rejects it, is the truth that metaphysical experience is part of human life. Any adequate account of religion must start from this phenomenological fact. Because Mr. Dennett ignores it, treating religion instead as at best a pastime for dimwits, at worst a holding cell for fanatics, he never really encounters the thing he believes he is writing about. ... For what dooms his book, not just in literary but in logical terms, is his complete failure to recognize the existential demand of religion.<sup>[8]</sup>

To consider such demands, it is necessary to recognise that a large percentage of our important mental processes are subconscious, subjective and a-rational. Whether or not one laments this failure to measure up to the stern demands of Rationalism, it is nevertheless a fact. Those who spend most of their mental activity in aesthetic pursuits attest to the sheer delight in not being wholly bound by reason or Reason.

We all possess an unconscious region of the mind which operates out of the reach of our awareness and so is not accessible to conscious introspection. But it can inject thoughts into the conscious region of our mind as, for example, it does in dreams<sup>[9]</sup> and it can be informed and nurtured by activities as diverse as exotic religious ritual or reading a good novel.

One recent development is that, when we have spontaneous, un-called-for mental events, we now have psychological explanations by which to account for them. Or, more, simply, there is no need to postulate another order of reality when confronted with classic religious experiences such as mystic encounters, visions, or voices that encourage or warn. While

acknowledging that they are often crucially important in the life of the owner, we can state with confidence that they come from 'down there' rather than from 'out there'.

Wholeness is the stated goal of both the religious Christian tradition and the secular psychotherapeutic tradition. Our western Christian tradition formerly looked to the church to facilitate a process of re-prioritisation whereby the spiritual values of mercy, pity, peace and love<sup>[10]</sup> are made to override the fear and greed and self-absorption that is our animal legacy. But now we look to the psychoanalyst to help bring the conscious and unconscious aspects of the mind into harmony<sup>[11]</sup>

During the 20th century, Christian religious thought has moved in the direction of existentialism. It has done this at the expense of the institutionalism characteristic of the grand historical tradition and even of the systems of philosophy that its theology ran in tandem with.

Don Cupitt's quarrel with traditional Christianity reaches even wider:

The whole history of Western metaphysics from Plato to Nietzsche rested upon a mistake, and it was a very bad mistake. We were running away from time, finitude and contingency. We forsook Being and took refuge in dreams of absolute security, rational necessity, timelessness and total knowledge and control. But now with the end of metaphysics, philosophy is at long last returned to its original and founding question, the question of Being.<sup>[12]</sup>

The cognitive content of religious belief is now even less accessible to rational thought than was thought to be the case in earlier formulations<sup>[13]</sup> because as the then Professor of Philosophy, Antony Flew explained:

Existentialism is generally opposed to rationalist and empiricist doctrines that assume that the universe is a determined, ordered system intelligible to the contemplative observer who can discover the natural laws that govern all beings and the role of reason as the power guiding human activity<sup>[14]</sup>.

This ought not to be seen as a rejection of rationality but an assertion that the human person cannot be fully accounted for by using only rational terms.

In the existentialist view the problem of being must take precedence over that of knowledge in philosophical investigations. Being cannot be made

a subject of objective enquiry; it is revealed to the individual by reflection on his own unique concrete existence in time and space.<sup>[15]</sup>

Flew explained how his inability to penetrate below the surface leads to anxiety:

Man is in a condition of anxiety arising from the realization of his necessary freedom of choice, of his ignorance of the future, of his awareness of manifold possibilities, and of the finiteness of an existence that was preceded by and must terminate in nothingness<sup>[16]</sup>.

This is the very anxiety that Cupitt suggests that we must live with, even revel in. By dismantling the gods, by taking leave of the Christian God, we grow up into the human creatures that we might be.

### Taking Leave of God

To reify is to treat an abstraction as though it were concretely real. Many of the authors that we have already quoted see religion as a life-guiding abstraction, as for example, in Cantwell Smith's 'personal faith'. However important this abstraction is, we cannot visualise it as we would a concrete object. Hence, Cupitt writes, "'God' is the religious concern reified."<sup>[17]</sup> The abstraction is clothed in personhood, and so made available to thought. His justification for saying that is that we are products of the Reformation, one result of which was to show that religion can be criticised and reformed.

This has been going on for a long time, as David Boulton observes:

After all, most educated 'believers', with the exception of fundamentalists ... have gradually abandoned the idea that angels and demons, including the devil himself, are 'real' objective beings. Instead, they are seen as figurative and allegorical, human projections of good and evil. A 'real', objective God is for many modern believers the sole survivor of this ancient belief-system. But *Sea of Faith* suggests it is time to 'take leave' of a 'real' God 'out there', to recognise that 'he' too is figurative and allegorical. This is not to deny the reality of the experience which is sometimes described as 'experience of God', but it is to understand the experience and its reality in a different way.<sup>[18]</sup>

The plea was made in Part 1 to acknowledge that religious expressions can undergo paradigm shifts as have science and economics and much else. The last 40 years of the 20th century saw

an acceleration of Christian scholarship which erupted, like an earthquake<sup>[19]</sup> with the publication of Bishop John Robinson's *Honest to God*.<sup>[20]</sup>

In 1967, Lloyd Geering,<sup>[21]</sup> publicly reflecting on the controversy stirred up by Robinson, was tried for heresy by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. Jim Veitch reported that the Assembly found that no doctrinal error had occurred and dismissed the case<sup>[22]</sup>.

In 1980 Don Cupitt, then Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, published *Taking Leave of God*<sup>[23]</sup> which he described as a resumption of the discussion about the nature of God begun by John Robinson and shelved for too long. He took his title from a sermon by the medieval mystic Meister Eckhart, who said that

Man's last and highest parting occurs when, for God's sake, he takes leave of God<sup>[24]</sup>

Cupitt argued that we ought to acknowledge the reification and that

faith in God must be understood as expressing an autonomous decision to pursue the religious ideal for its own sake.<sup>[25]</sup>

Nigel Leaves, an Australian Anglican clergyman and academic, wrote his Ph.D. thesis on the evolving theology of Don Cupitt. It was later published in two books: *Odyssey On The Sea of Faith*<sup>[26]</sup> and *Surfing On The Sea of Faith*<sup>[27]</sup>. In the first, he chronicled the development of the theological orientation of Cupitt over a period of about 30 years.

In the present paper we can use Cupitt's own 'odyssey' as a microcosm of the development of radical, protestant thought over that time, an orientation described by Cupitt as 'Protestantism squared'. This summary by Leaves is derived from *Odyssey* and covers the period from 1970 to the present day:

- **The Negative<sup>[28]</sup> Theology:** There is an objective God who was revealed to us by Jesus.

- **Non-realism:** Though the word 'God' need not be abandoned, the notion that it referred to an objective reality should be.

- **Postmodernism and Anti-realism:** The application of non-realism to philosophy. There is not 'the world' but only 'our world'.

- **Expressionism:** A world without God is not a world without value or ethics.

- **The Turn to Be-ing:** Following Heidegger to say that only 'coming to be' ('be-ing') exists.

- **Ordinary Language:** Religion persists and is expressed in everyday

language. Some secular institutions better reflect Jesus' 'Kingdom' message than does the church, which is trapped in its institutionalism.

• **The Religion of the Future:** Religion should be about affirming life — we must pass through nihilism to radical humanism.

Cupitt uses the term 'post-Christian' to assert that Christianity has re-invented itself from within. Not only is post-Christianity still religious rather than secular, but it is continuous with Christianity.<sup>[29]</sup>

The major changes in emphasis that have taken place in the second half of the 20th century have resulted in a sort of DIY approach to religion, one that is well-suited to the confident individualism of the New Zealand psyche. While most religious humanists would look on traditional religious institutions as optional sources of inspiration, they are unlikely to submit to them as authorities with the power to limit or command. We take the view that, for the expression of faith to be genuine, it must be one's own. Lloyd Geering wrote:

"the moral imperative which we experience in the human condition has been internalized. This does not make morality any less important than it was before, but it does make it possible for us to become more morally responsible persons."

### Why Secular Humanism isn't enough

Human beings have two capabilities which are so much in evidence that they separate us from other animals to a significant degree. We can confidently assert that they are 'hardwired'.

One is a capacity for language which, in the majority of people, is expressed in one or more of the natural languages.

The other is a capacity to ascribe life-directing significance to people, places, events, and ideologies. In the majority of people this is expressed in involvement with a formal 'path of faith' ('a religion') and/or an ideological movement such as Communism, and/or in social activism such as Greenpeace; and/or in any one of a multitude of society-watchdog organisations such as the several Humanist or Rationalist or Skeptic organisations.

We in the West live in a disenchanted world in which many hunger for the mental, emotional and spiritual life which was previously fed by ritual and rich metaphors and myth. In seeking nourishment, many fall prey to political spin doctors and the advertising industry which has never stopped believing

in the a-rational part of the human psyche. Such merchants of coercion have turned to their advantage the vulnerability that the western mind displays when it is separated from a commitment to transcendence. Starved of soul-satisfying myths, symbols and metaphors, many in the west have turned to New Age phenomena, to occultist teledramas or to unscholarly treatments of theological themes.<sup>[30]</sup>

But the post-Modern twenty-first century cannot give us assurances of any kind. Things are just too free-floating. Like the progenitor of Judaism and Christianity and Islam, Abraham, each of us must be prepared to set out, with only our faith, and without any forward reservations. We are invited to simply throw in our lot with Life<sup>[31]</sup> and to accept, in faith, that simply **be-ing human** is worthwhile.

Although the opinions of fundamentalist Christians may be totally opposed to those of secular humanists, the conviction with which they are held classify them all 'religious' in the terms explored in Part 1. We must observe that not all expressions of faith result in tolerance for other points of view and so a secular independent keeper of the peace is needed. As Rachael Kohn<sup>[32]</sup> said at the 2005 Conference of the Sea of Faith Network (NZ) the secular democratic society is the best guardian of religious freedom.

While rationalism and secular humanism deal admirably in truth, as defined by philosophers and scientists,<sup>[33]</sup> it is what can be called 'existential truth' that religion and religious humanism deal with. It is here that a statement is 'true' if what it says illuminates the human condition such that life is enriched, relationships are enhanced, and we are inspired to live lives that are more decent and more loving. Plato's 'Myth of Er' in the Book X of his *Republic* is one such example. It was even called by Plato a 'noble lie'. We know that much quality fiction and quite a few movies suggest ways that life might be improved. They exhibit a 'truth' about the human condition even though their story-lines are fictitious. It is now a commonplace, at least among liberal Christian theologians, that much of the Bible has this quality: it is literally fictitious but it has the force and effect of fact.

Since the language of faith deals with the most profound aspects of our existence, then 'existential truth' is much more relevant to our faith than is the philosophical or logical. Scientific and

philosophical truth equips us to handle the objective world about us, while existential truth helps us interact subjectively with objects of value, including ourselves.

The Canadian academic, novelist and critic Robertson Davies wrote:

We are obsessed with the notion that to think is the highest achievement of mankind, but we neglect the fact that thought untouched by feeling is thin, delusive, treacherous stuff.<sup>[34]</sup>

For the most part, secular humanists value only the logical/scientific meaning while religious humanists embrace also the existential. Or, to put it another way, if a secular humanist embraces the existential version then she is already on the slippery slope towards religion. Once we step into the domain where we deal with what the scientific method systematically excludes — subjectivity, aesthetics, moral claims — then we are entering the area in which religion operates.

A purely secular world is simply not able to safeguard that which is most precious about being human. Twenty years ago, hard-right economic policy and a surrender to the dynamics of the market elevated fear and greed to primary virtues, and social compassion was marginalised. Neither is the scientific viewpoint alone a sufficiently rich foundation on which to build a life, because, in order to operate objectively, science must ignore our subjectivity. While that is good for science, the very subjectivity of which we are made — all our hopes, loves, fears, ecstasies, joys and terrors — are of no account there.

The philosopher Jacque Monod was no friend of religion but he touched a nerve when he wrote:

The ancient covenant is in pieces: man at last knows that he is alone in the unfeeling immensity of the universe, out of which he emerged only by chance. Neither his destiny nor his duty have been written down. The kingdom above or the darkness below: it is for him to choose.<sup>[35]</sup>

Any new and radical approach to religious thought must start at about that point. It must acknowledge what older systems of dogmatic certitude denied: that time passes destructively; that events (good and bad) just 'happen' without pity for any victims; that death is the last stop on the tramride of our lives. Because we are all in the same captainless and rudderless boat, we must turn to each other for warmth, for support, and for the encouragement by which the humanness,

latent in us all, can flower. We must start here, now, because this is the only time and the only world that we will ever know. Get that right and something worthy to be called 'God' will emerge.

### Sea of Faith and Humanism

The name of the organisation **Sea of Faith Network** comes from a phrase in Matthew Arnold's poem *Dover Beach*. It was used in 1984 as the title of a BBC television documentary series and book by the English theologian Don Cupitt. The book and the television series trace pivotal changes in western science, philosophy and religion over the past four centuries which together call for a radical re-thinking of our faith traditions.

The Sea of Faith Network is neither a church, nor a church substitute. You might call it a 'talking shop' wherein any and all ideas about the expression of religious faith are exchanged sympathetically. There are some Humanists among SoF who are made more comfortable by there being no assertions of dogmatic certainty nor definitions of orthodoxy. But there are certain 'flavours' and 'attitudes' that go with SoF, as David Boulton observed:

It is our responsibility in Sea of Faith and the growing networks promoting a humanistic understanding of religion to nurture it, to grow it on, to see that it is not entirely swamped by the tidal waves of irrational supernaturalist religion.<sup>[36]</sup>

SoF does not suit everybody and nor does it try. It treads that uneasy line between a rejection of a supernatural order of things (and the explanations that such an order would offer) and the feeling (conviction even) that all that is profound and ennobling about being human, needs forms of expression that sound supernaturalist when what is really happening is that we are talking in the language of transcendence. It is the age old problem of metaphors being taken literally.

### Concluding Remarks

To summarise the recurrent themes of my two articles:

- We are physical creatures before we are mental creatures and we are mental creatures before we are spiritual creatures. Our conscious selves crouch on top of a causal pyramid, the nature of which is slowly being discovered.
- We are contingent creatures built of atoms, defined by genes, bullied by

hormones, bouyed by endorphins, tortured by nightmares and inspired by good music, good poetry and good preaching.

- We each have a unique provenance and we each live a unique life.

• We have two strongly-exercised capabilities which separate us from other animals to a significant degree: a hard-wired capacity for language and a hardwired capacity for what is usually called 'religion' — ascribing life-directing significance to people, places, events, and ideologies.

- So powerful is this urge that we feel bound, *religare*, to do something about it. Its forms of expression are so various as to encompass sometimes violent contradictions in the ranks of the religious.

• The expression of religious faith does not, of necessity, require assertions about supernatural agencies or realms, even though many take that option. Religious faith does not equate to credulity.

- Scientific discoveries require us to look for improved metaphors by which to express the sheer wonder of life on earth and the possibilities latent in our humanness. If scientific paradigms may be modernised, why not religious paradigms also?

• New expressions of religious faith are constantly emerging. In recent decades there has been a re-emphasis on earth-centred values and rituals. Many radically religious people — post-theistic, post-Christian, religious humanist and many others — take the view that the earth is our only home. It is not merely a transit lounge in which we piously wait for death to waft us away to another world above the bright blue sky.

- While Christianity persists as the path of faith of the West, it is largely shorn of its political clout, except in the neo-con USA. It is so diverse in its forms, practices and creeds, and has changed so much over time, as to not be readily described or critiqued without considerable qualification.

• Christianity is shrinking numerically while shedding its liberals and its radicals. In a circling-the-wagons response, spokespeople are moving towards a purity model of Christianity and away from the compassion approach of Jesus<sup>[37]</sup>.

- Our deepest values (including the right to chose or reject expressions of faith) are best ensured by secular government.
- While humans exist, religion will persist in one form or another because to

ascribe value and to commit utterly to it is an essential part of being human.

- The search for better ways to affirm our human-ness will go on as long as humans exist and at, rock bottom, that is what religion is. The ambition to be radically, totally human is about as sacred as it gets. The difference in our time is that we are now free to experiment with expressions of faith as never before.

*Noel Cheer 2006*

Noel Cheer was invited by the editor to explore the term 'humanism' as applied in both **The Sea of Faith Network** and in the **NZHR**. He is the current Chairperson of **New Zealand network of The Sea of Faith**. His email address is [noel@cheer.org.nz](mailto:noel@cheer.org.nz) and the **SoF(NZ)** can be found at [www.sof.org.nz](http://www.sof.org.nz)

### Bibliography

- Borg 1994**, Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again For The First Time* HarperCollins
- Boulton 1996**, David Boulton, *A Reasonable Faith: Introducing the Sea of Faith Network* published by the SoF (UK) and available on their website [www.sofn.org.uk](http://www.sofn.org.uk)
- Boulton 2001**, David Boulton, "What on earth is religious humanism?" in *sof 45 / January 2001*. *sof* (now renamed *sofia*), is a journal of the Sea of Faith Network (UK).
- Boulton 2004**, David Boulton "Seek ye first the Republic of Heaven: Religion — Evolving, Revolving or Devolving", a keynote address to the 2004 annual Conference of The Sea of Faith Network (NZ). Find it at [www.sof.org.nz](http://www.sof.org.nz)
- Campbell 1976**, *The Portable Jung* edited by Joseph Campbell, published by Penguin Books
- Cupitt 1980**, Don Cupitt *Taking Leave of God* SCM Press
- Cupitt 1998**, Don Cupitt *The Religion of Being* SCM Press
- Cupitt 2001**, Don Cupitt, "Comparative Religions" in *Guardian* newspaper 27 October 2001
- Cupitt 2003**, Don Cupitt, *Life, Life*. Polebridge Press, California
- Davies 1997**, Robertson Davies *Happy Alchemy* Penguin Books
- Flew 1979**, Anthony Flew, *A Dictionary of Philosophy* Pan Books, London
- Geering 1980**, Lloyd Geering: *Faith's New Age* Collins, London
- Geering 2002**, Lloyd Geering, *Christianity Without God* Bridget Williams Books, NZ and Polebridge Press, Santa Rosa, California
- Hutchison 1981**, John Hutchison, *Paths of Faith* McGraw-Hill
- Jung 1933**, Carl Jung, *Modern Man in Search of His Soul*. Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., NY.

**Leaves 2004**, Nigel Leaves *Odyssey on the Sea of Faith: The Life & Writings of Don Cupitt*, Polebridge Press, Santa Rosa, California

**Leaves 2005**, Nigel Leaves *Surfing on the Sea of Faith: The Life & Writings of Don Cupitt*, Polebridge Press., Santa Rosa California

**Monod 1970**, Jacques Monod, *Chance and Necessity* Collins/Fount Paperbacks

**Robinson 1963**, *Honest To God* SCM Press

**Sea of Faith Network Websites:**

NZ: [www.sof.org.nz](http://www.sof.org.nz)

UK: [www.sofn.org.uk](http://www.sofn.org.uk)

Australia: [www.sof-in-australia.org](http://www.sof-in-australia.org)

**Steiner 1974**, George Steiner, *Nostalgia For The Absolute*, the publication of the 1974 CBC Massey Lectures.

**Tillich 1964**, Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, Ch 1, OUP, New York .

**Veitch 1997**, "Presbyterians in Conflict: 1965-1970" by James Veitch in *Stimulus* Vol 5 No 2 May 1997

## Endnotes

1. The name comes from a phrase in Matthew Arnold's poem *Dover Beach*. It was used in 1984 as the title of a BBC television documentary series and book by the English theologian Don Cupitt who has become the founding figure of SoF which has independent but co-operating networks in NZ, UK and Australia.
2. Cupitt 2003 amplifies this.
3. "[T]he decay of a comprehensive Christian doctrine had left in disorder, or had left blank, essential perceptions of social justice, of the meaning of human history, of the relations between mind and body, of the place of knowledge in our moral conduct." The thesis of Steiner 1974 pp1-2
4. Jung 1933 p264
5. There is another 'axis' for which there is not the space to explore, the idea found in Borg 1994 in which we can see forms of religious expression spread out on a spectrum with conscientious conformity to the requirements of some aspect of personal purity at one end and self-giving "mercy, pity, peace and love" (Blake's phrase) at the other.
6. The 'middle way' of The Buddha said almost exactly this.
7. *Breaking the Spell: Religion As a Natural Phenomenon* by Daniel Dennett 450pp, Penguin, £25
8. "If Men Are From Mars, What's God?" by Adam Kirsch, February 8, 2006 in [www.nysun.com/article/27182](http://www.nysun.com/article/27182)
9. We might note Jung's insistence that the mission of psychotherapy is to get the unconscious and the conscious components of the mind to work in harmony, leading to 'individuation', another way of saying 'wholeness'.
10. from Blake.
11. Campbell 1976 p279
12. Cupitt 1998 p106
13. Look at Alexander Pope's deism in his *Essay on Man*.
14. Flew 1979 pp107-108
15. *ibid*,
16. *ibid*
17. Cupitt 1980 p 18
18. Boulton 1996
19. In Geering 1980 p15: "But when religion

itself is caught up in the confusion of change ... then, as in an earthquake, it seems as if the very ground beneath can no longer be relied on."

20. Robinson 1963

21. Emeritus Professor Lloyd Geering has been writing and lecturing on the condition of Christianity since the 1960s and the need to radicalise it since his retirement from Victoria University of Wellington in 1983. He was instrumental in setting up SoF in New Zealand.

22. Veitch 1997

23. Cupitt 1980

24. From a sermon: *Qui audit me*. Christian Humanists point to Jesus' saying in Mark 2:27: "The Sabbath was made for Man[kind], not Man[kind] for the Sabbath".

25. Boulton 1996

26. Leaves 2004

27. Leaves 2005

28. "the negative or *apophatic* tradition, in which God is deemed unknowable and ineffable" Leaves 2004 p21

29. Leaves 2005 p83. This point is debated among post-Christians.

30. We might remember that, though *The da Vinci Code* offers itself as fiction, it is treated as factual by many of its readers.

31. Articulated in Cupitt 2003

32. Dr Rachael Kohn is heard across Australia by radio and on the web every week on ABC Radio National in the programmes: *The Spirit of Things* and *The Ark*.

33. "A statement is true if what it says is the case actually is the case" typical PHIL101

34. Davies 1997 p 153

35. The concluding words of Monod 1970.

36. David Boulton at the SoF (NZ) Conference, 2004

37. Borg 1994 especially pp53-58