

**Chapter 1 : Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning by Nancey Murphy**

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Universities[ edit ] The original building at Yale , “ The number of universities in Paris remained relatively constant throughout the 18th century. Europe had about universities and colleges by North America had 44, including the newly founded Harvard and Yale. The universities themselves existed primarily to educate future physicians , lawyers and members of the clergy. A notable exception were universities in Spain , which under the influence of Catholicism focused almost entirely on Aristotelian natural philosophy until the mid 18th century; they were among the last universities to do so. Another exception occurred in the universities of Germany and Scandinavia , where University of Halle professor Christian Wolff taught a form of Cartesianism modified by Leibnizian physics. Before the 18th century, science courses were taught almost exclusively through formal lectures. The structure of courses began to change in the first decades of the 18th century, when physical demonstrations were added to lectures. Experiments ranged from swinging a bucket of water at the end of a rope, demonstrating that centrifugal force would hold the water in the bucket, to more impressive experiments involving the use of an air-pump. Beginning around 1733, the Hats party in Sweden made propositions to reform the university system by separating natural philosophy into two separate faculties of physics and mathematics. The propositions were never put into action, but they represent the growing calls for institutional reform in the later part of the 18th century. However, the reform did not survive beyond the Third Partition. The United Kingdom of the Netherlands employed the same system in 1784. However, the other countries of Europe did not adopt a similar division of the faculties until the mid 19th century. The contributions of universities in Britain were mixed. On the one hand, the University of Cambridge began teaching Newtonianism early in the Enlightenment, but failed to become a central force behind the advancement of science. On the other end of the spectrum were Scottish universities, which had strong medical faculties and became centres of scientific development. Most of the new institutions emphasized mathematics as a discipline, making them popular with professions that required some working knowledge of mathematics, such as merchants, military and naval officers, and engineers. After a tremendous number of official academies and societies were founded in Europe and by there were over seventy official scientific societies. Around the start of the 18th century, the Academia Scientiarum Imperialis in St. Petersburg. Regional and provincial societies emerged from the 18th century in Bologna , Bordeaux , Copenhagen , Dijon , Lyons , Montpellier and Uppsala. The development of unchartered societies, such as the private the Naturforschende Gesellschaft of Danzig and Lunar Society of Birmingham “ , occurred alongside the growth of national, regional and provincial societies. Official scientific societies were chartered by the state in order to provide technical expertise. Most societies were granted permission to oversee their own publications, control the election of new members, and the administration of the society. In some societies, members were required to pay an annual fee to participate. For example, the Royal Society depended on contributions from its members, which excluded a wide range of artisans and mathematicians on account of the expense. A dialogue of formal communication also developed between societies and society in general through the publication of scientific journals. Periodicals offered society members the opportunity to publish, and for their ideas to be consumed by other scientific societies and the literate public. Scientific journals, readily accessible to members of learned societies, became the most important form of publication for scientists during the Enlightenment. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society , published by the Royal Society of London, was the only scientific periodical being published on a regular, quarterly basis. The Paris Academy of Sciences, formed in 1666, began publishing in volumes of memoirs rather than a quarterly journal, with periods between volumes sometimes lasting years. Smaller periodicals, such as Transactions of the American Philosophical Society , were only published when enough content was available to complete a volume. At one point the period extended to seven years. Independent periodicals were published throughout the Enlightenment and excited scientific interest in the general public. First, they increased in number and

size. There was also a move away from publishing in Latin in favour of publishing in the vernacular. Experimental descriptions became more detailed and began to be accompanied by reviews. The journal allowed new scientific developments to be published relatively quickly compared to annuals and quarterlies. A third important change was the specialization seen in the new development of disciplinary journals. Volumes tended to focus more strongly on secular affairs, particularly science and technology, rather than matters of theology. Along with secular matters, readers also favoured an alphabetical ordering scheme over cumbersome works arranged along thematic lines. Published in 1703, the *Lexicon technicum* was the first book to be written in English that took a methodical approach to describing mathematics and commercial arithmetic along with the physical sciences and navigation. The folio edition of the work even included foldout engravings. The *Cyclopaedia* emphasized Newtonian theories, Lockean philosophy, and contained thorough examinations of technologies, such as engraving, brewing, and dyeing. It had three main branches: The *Marperger Curieuses Natur-, Kunst-, Berg-, Gewerkund Handlungs-Lexicon* explained terms that usefully described the trades and scientific and commercial education. *Jablonksi Allgemeines Lexicon* was better known than the *Handlungs-Lexicon*, and underscored technical subjects rather than scientific theory. For example, over five columns of text were dedicated to wine, while geometry and logic were allocated only twenty-two and seventeen lines, respectively. It was the goal of universal encyclopedias to record all human knowledge in a comprehensive reference work. The work, which began publication in 1728, was composed of thirty-five volumes and over 71 separate entries. A great number of the entries were dedicated to describing the sciences and crafts in detail. As a *Reasoned Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Trades*, it is to contain the general principles that form the basis of each science and each art, liberal or mechanical, and the most essential facts that make up the body and substance of each. Both areas of knowledge were united by philosophy, or the trunk of the tree of knowledge. An increasingly literate population seeking knowledge and education in both the arts and the sciences drove the expansion of print culture and the dissemination of scientific learning. The new literate population was due to a high rise in the availability of food. This enabled many people to rise out of poverty, and instead of paying more for food, they had money for education. With the establishment of coffeehouses, a new public forum for political, philosophical and scientific discourse was created. In the mid-18th century, coffeehouses cropped up around Oxford, where the academic community began to capitalize on the unregulated conversation that the coffeehouse allowed. Education was a central theme and some patrons began offering lessons and lectures to others. As coffeehouses developed in London, customers heard lectures on scientific subjects, such as astronomy and mathematics, for an exceedingly low price. The public, on the other hand, gained both knowledge and entertainment from demonstration lectures. Class sizes ranged from one hundred to four or five hundred attendees. Courses were offered at virtually any time of day; the latest occurred at 8: One of the most popular start times was 6: Generally, individuals presenting the lectures did not adhere to any particular brand of physics, but rather demonstrated a combination of different theories. In the demonstration, a young boy would be suspended from the ceiling, horizontal to the floor, with silk chords. An electrical machine would then be used to electrify the boy. Essentially becoming a magnet, he would then attract a collection of items scattered about him by the lecturer. More formal works included explanations of scientific theories for individuals lacking the educational background to comprehend the original scientific text. The book was produced specifically for women with an interest in scientific writing and inspired a variety of similar works. A similar introduction to Newtonianism for women was produced by Henry Pemberton. Extant records of subscribers show that women from a wide range of social standings purchased the book, indicating the growing number of scientifically inclined female readers among the middling class. Sarah Trimmer wrote a successful natural history textbook for children entitled *The Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of Nature*, which was published for many years after in eleven editions. Some poetry became infused with scientific metaphor and imagery, while other poems were written directly about scientific topics. Other antiscience writers, including William Blake, chastised scientists for attempting to use physics, mechanics and mathematics to simplify the complexities of the universe, particularly in relation to God. The character of the evil scientist was invoked during this period in the romantic tradition. For example, the characterization of the scientist as a nefarious manipulator in the work of Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann.

During the Enlightenment era, women were excluded from scientific societies, universities and learned professions. Women were educated, if at all, through self-study, tutors, and by the teachings of more open-minded fathers. In fact, restrictions were so severe in the 18th century that women, including midwives, were forbidden to use forceps. Over the course of the 18th century, male surgeons began to assume the role of midwives in gynaecology. Some male satirists also ridiculed scientifically minded women, describing them as neglectful of their domestic role. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be taught while she is young. Two notable women who managed to participate in formal institutions were Laura Bassi and the Russian Princess Yekaterina Dashkova. Bassi was an Italian physicist who received a PhD from the University of Bologna and began teaching there in 1743. Her personal relationship with Empress Catherine the Great r. Caroline Herschel began her astronomical career, although somewhat reluctantly at first, by assisting her brother William Herschel. On August 1, 1781, Herschel discovered her first comet, much to the excitement of scientifically minded women. Many other women became illustrators or translators of scientific texts. Englishwoman Mary Delany developed a unique method of illustration. Her technique involved using hundreds of pieces of coloured-paper to recreate lifelike renditions of living plants. German born Maria Sibylla Merian along with her daughters including Dorothea Maria Graff were involved in the careful scientific study of insects and the natural world. Using mostly watercolor, gouache on vellum, She became one of the leading entomologist of the 18th century. They were also one of the first female entomologists who took a scientific trip to Suriname to study plant life for a total of a five year span. Noblewomen sometimes cultivated their own botanical gardens, including Mary Somerset and Margaret Harley. Scientific translation sometimes required more than a grasp on multiple languages.

**Chapter 2 : Science and the Enlightenment - A Scientific Revolution**

*In this timely and provocative book, Nancey Murphy sets out to dispel skepticism regarding Christian belief. She argues for the rationality of Christian belief by showing that theological reasoning is similar to scientific reasoning as described by contemporary philosophy of science.*

Copernicus and Galileo the two foremost casualties of theological interference, with Galileo placed under house arrest by the notorious Inquisition. This period of restriction continued until the Enlightenment. The evidence building up against religious doctrine, irrefutably contradicting the Biblical timeline, burst forth in an unstoppable torrent, aided by the work of scholars and philosophers across Europe. This Scientific Revolution, which began during the 17th century, became a catalyst for a new philosophy, one that permeated every level of human society and placed the emphasis for change on humanity rather than intangible gods. The Age of Enlightenment, a phrase coined by the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant 22 April – 12 February , represents the change from antiquity to modernity, the period in history where the modern world began and science replaced superstition. When Was the Age of Enlightenment? Isaac Newton, painted by Godfrey Kneller Public Domain It is extremely difficult to state exactly where the Age of Enlightenment began, because it blended into the Renaissance and varied from discipline to discipline, but many historians point to the Scientific Revolution of the 17th Century as the precursor. The later half of this century saw minds such as Descartes, Newton, Leibniz, and Galileo begin to change scientific thought, their views even trickling downwards to the common man. Isaac Newton 4 January – 31 March devised a physical model of the universe that tore apart the intricate models created by the Ancient Greeks, building his system upon gravity and mechanics and fuelling an explosion of humanistic thought. Science, the Enlightenment and Religion This change in thought coalesced around the philosophy of minds such as Newton and John Locke – , and it was based upon transforming society and describing knowledge in terms of human experience rather than Biblical tenets. John Locke, portrait by Godfrey Kneller Public Domain Western Europe, largely due to the wealth flowing in from colonialism, moved away from agrarian economies, and underwent a rapid process of urbanization. Not only did this population migration generate wealth, but urbanization also allowed academics and thinkers to congregate and share ideas, with cities such as London, Paris, and Edinburgh becoming strongholds of Enlightenment thought. Away from Catholicism, England flourished and began to produce some of the greatest philosophers, scientists, engineers, and fomented the Industrial Revolution, as wealth flowed from the New World and Asia. During this Age of Reason, scholars adopted empiricism, proposing the idea that theories should be based upon human observations and experience. The universe operated like a soulless machine, without the hand of God behind every unexplained phenomenon, although many scholars, even Newton, felt that there was room for a creator, the Uncaused Cause of Aristotle. This new definition of knowledge permeated every aspect of human society, including art and culture, and the rapid accumulation of knowledge, free from religious overtones, saw science start to split into separate disciplines as the age of the great polymaths ended. Scholars and philosophers rebelled against the restrictions of Christianity and used science and metaphysics to question and probe the universe. Reflecting the politics of the time, Europe became much more secular and science, in turn, tore apart the roots of Biblical literalism and absolutism. Philosophers, such as Descartes 31 March – 11 February , had already questioned the nature of the soul and envisioned a purely physical and mechanical universe, postulating that animals and the body were automatons, with only the soul elevating humanity. Money began to flow into research, and the easy availability of such inventions as the microscope, telescope, and barometer gave scholars the means to make accurate observations, conducting experiments as they refined the scientific method into its modern form. Books were cheaper than ever before, and the improvement in roads and transportation allowed ideas to flow freely, with men such as Newton and Leibniz July 1, – November 14, conducting fierce debates by letter. Scientific societies sprang up, offering places to share and refine ideas, as well as give some semblance of peer review and criticism. Science, the Enlightenment and Social Reform Rene Descartes Public Domain The overarching goal of the Enlightenment thinkers was social reform, and they provided the first real challenge to the

autocracy and theocracy that had dominated society for so long, with science one of the foremost tools for promoting change. Trade and commerce replaced agriculture, which largely became outsourced to the colonies and the New World. Europe, after the earlier deprivations of plague, famine and war, transformed into rich and abundant societies, with more time devoted to the pleasures of life. As was the case with the Greeks and Islamic scholars, this allowed resources to be channeled into academia and research. The Age of Enlightenment was characterized by optimism, a feeling that humanity could change the world and rectify any mistakes of the past. Rather than Aristotelian metaphysics and abstract musings about the philosophical framework of the universe, philosophers began to look at the nature of knowledge itself, throwing out theology and understanding that humanity could influence nature rather than be subject to the whims of fickle Gods. Knowledge served humanity, not religion, and the ideas of original sin and asceticism declined. This trend was an offshoot of the belief that anything could be studied and broken down by science, that explanations were available through observation and experimentation rather than philosophy. The Legacy of the Age of Enlightenment This idea of a mechanistic framework for human society and for the universe itself became the bedrock of modern society, with Francis Bacon , Isaac Newton and John Locke becoming the founding fathers of the Enlightenment, possibly the biggest change in human society of all time, the transition from the ancient into the modern world. The science of man became the dominating force. Check out our quiz-page with tests about:

**Chapter 3 : Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning**

*Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning. In this timely and provocative book, Nancey Murphy sets out to dispel skepticism regarding Christian belief. She argues for the rationality of Christian belief by showing that theological reasoning is similar to scientific reasoning as described by contemporary philosophy of.*

God in the Age of Science?: A Critique of Religious Reason Published: The reader is presumably invited to draw the lesson that science supplanted religion sometime in the eighteenth century, but this painting also has surprisingly macabre overtones. The onlookers are not gathered religiously around the crib of Christ, but watching with curiosity and horror as a bird is slowly suffocated by an early air pump. Whether intended or not, the cover therefore raises fascinating moral and social questions about the scientific enterprise that would have been interesting to explore but unfortunately are not addressed within the book itself. By the end of the book, Philipse concludes that if we aim to be "reasonable and intellectually conscientious," we should become not just agnostic but "disjunctive strong" or "strong disjunctive" universal atheists. By the latter he means we should conclude that: Either religious believers have not succeeded in providing a meaningful characterization of their god s , or the existence of this god or these gods is improbable given our scientific and scholarly background knowledge. To summarize metaphorically, it is as if the last chance to secure a foundation for the throne of God is to rest on the shoulders of the Emeritus Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford and, if he has failed, as Philipse argues he has, the game is pretty much all over for God. Philipse goes about this ambitious task in a series of commendably clear steps. In Part I, he argues that statements such as the assertion that God or some other god exists have to be interpreted as claims to truth, the only philosophically interesting option. Once Philipse has disposed of the challenge of the reformed objection of Alvin Plantinga et al. Given, however, that we are living in the age of science, Philipse argues that the natural theologian is faced with a dilemma he calls "The Tension". As either option is unpalatable, he argues that the best option for the theist is to accept a probabilistic account of scientific and scholarly methods as consisting in rules of inference to the best explanation, "which enable us to assess how probable a hypothesis is in the light of an evidence-set," the approach he ascribes to Swinburne. This conclusion sets up Part II, which considers the question of "whether theism really is an explanatory theory or hypothesis, which can be confirmed by empirical evidence"; The following chapter then examines the question of the necessity of God. Nevertheless, assuming for the sake of argument that theism is a meaningful theory, Philipse devotes the rest of Part II to arguing that it lacks any "significant predictive power", that specific evidence adduced to confirm theism inductively can be better explained by rival secular explanations and that other countermoves fail, notably an appeal to miracles such as the Resurrection and phenomena that are "too big" for science. Part III considers the probability of theism assuming that it does have some predictive power and evaluating claims to be able to explain the state of the cosmos on this basis. This section offers critiques of cosmological arguments, arguments from design and an assortment of other arguments and their defenses, concluding with a chapter on religious experience that refutes the attempt to shift the burden of proof to the non-believer. The number and complexity of these issues precludes making more than a few observations. In my judgment, many of the tactical steps of this book are well argued, notably chapters 3 and 4 on Reformed Theology, as well as the critique of the notion of the personhood of God on the basis of natural reason and the discernment of anthropomorphically-oriented divine purpose on the basis of cosmic order. Indeed, Philipse is at his best, I think, when he challenges claims belonging to revealed theology that have been appropriated and presented as natural theology. Cultural influences make it hard for many philosophers today to draw this distinction clearly, which is one reason I judge it is normally better practice to go to classical sources, such as Plato and Aristotle, if one wants genuinely to establish what might be known about God or the gods on the basis of natural reason alone. Is natural theology inadequate to regard God as personal? Spaemann has already said as much. The Book of Job raises the same issue and with great subtlety. The Jewish people knew this nearly two and a half millennia ago, which is why they used circumlocutions to refer to God and forbade the holiest name to be spoken, and also why Christian theology is based on the understanding that the only word adequate for God is

God, the Word made flesh. First, a serious examination of natural theology usually presupposes, or takes a view or presents some case for a particular understanding of causation, which alone gives us access to knowledge of remote forces and agents of any kind. For this reason, philosophers in the past who constructed very diverse arguments relating to God, such as Thomas Aquinas or David Hume, were similar insofar as they prioritized the issue of causation. By contrast, Philipse says very little in a positive sense about what he means by a cause, either using the term in passing without reflection or restricting his brief comments to denying particular views of causation advanced by others for example, the doctrine of "double causation". He rejects the view that laws of nature are causes: In response, I would say that laws of nature presumably shape our predictions of phenomena, so at least one kind of phenomena, scientific predictions, are indubitably caused at least in part by the laws of nature. The inverse square law is a consequence of deeper principles, notably the conservation of flux in a three-dimensional space, and the relevant number of dimensions may itself be a contingent consequence of the early physical evolution of the cosmos. Physicists, at least, do not consider it nonsensical to enquire into such matters. The deeper issue, however, is that although Philipse is emphatic about what kinds of things cannot be causes, his positive account is ambiguous. A second and related problem concerns domains, especially the proper domain of what is meant by God in natural theology and the domain of science. An example is when Philipse raises the possibility of an omniscient, omnipotent, and morally indifferent god MIG as a rival hypothesis to theism and makes the odd point that the necessity of God would raise a problem for theism as a "theory". The problem is that a focus on undercutting proofs for a specific theism under the banner of traditional terminology risks confusing readers, undermining the stated aim of building a case for universal atheism and obliterating a target that many other theists would take issue with anyway. I was also left curious to know what possibilities Philipse himself advocates or might be willing to accept as an impersonal uncaused cause or causes of the cosmos, or whether he thinks the reliability of our inferences in trying to resolve such questions simply breaks down at some point. With regard to the domain of science, Philipse places great value on the power of scientific methods to make predictions. In chapters 6, 9, 10, 11 and at many other points he argues repeatedly that theism has no significant predictive power and compares it unfavourably with science on this basis. In adopting this strategy, Philipse is unquestionably correct that the power of prediction is one of the great successes of modern science, the anomalous magnetic moment of the electron being predicted and tested to more than ten significant figures. Nevertheless, as one goes to higher levels of complexity than those natural systems that can be modelled as aggregates of two-body systems, science becomes less a matter of prediction and more a matter of discovering and unifying phenomena under common explanatory frameworks, as is the case, for instance, with zoology. So by placing so great an emphasis on prediction as a litmus test of success in a scientific age, Philipse runs the risk of doing too much, of cutting away not just God as a "theory", but those sciences that are not in the business of making predictions, along with the humanities as well. Philipse does seem to verge on taking this step, criticizing Heidegger, Levinas and Jean-Luc Marion among others on the basis that their approaches to questions of natural theology "seem to have zero reliability in the pursuit of truth," but why stop with them? To accomplish this goal, however, Philipse has to address, and quickly dismiss as unreliable or contradictory, any knowledge that is derived from revealed theology in order to establish the priority of natural theology, the main target of his critique in the remainder of the book. Philipse devotes chapter 1 and parts of chapter 10 to this task, but many of the arguments he puts forward in his critique of revealed theology are too brief and superficial to establish credibility with his colleagues in those areas of the academy that specialize in such matters. To give an example, he asserts that in his first letter to the Corinthians Philipse uses this slender claim to support his case that there are contradictions within the New Testament that make any revealed theology drawn from it unreliable, but in theology, as in science, a single counterexample, even if genuine, rarely suffices in itself to overthrow a paradigm. This book might have been successful as a focused critique of excessive and poorly justified claims that are sometimes made in the name of natural theology. Indeed, I shall find parts of this work valuable in future on that basis. Oxford University Press, , Volume I, New ed. London ; New York: Clarendon Press, , The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History, 1st ed. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, Churchill, "Flew, Wisdom, and Polanyi: Cambridge University Press, , Harrington, Sacra

Pagina Liturgical Press, ,

**Chapter 4 : Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning - Nancey C. Murphy - Google Books**

*Chapter 3, "Probable Reasoning Come of Age-Philosophy of Science," covers Murphy's elucidation of (1) the historical background of positivist, neopositivist, and historicist philosophies of science; (2) Lakatos and the methodology of scientific research programs; (3) critical and constructive evaluations of Lakatos's methodology; and (4) the positive consequences for a Lakatosian theology as science (pp. 5).*

The Enlightenment was both a movement and a state of mind. The term represents a phase in the intellectual history of Europe, but it also serves to define programs of reform in which influential literati, inspired by a common faith in the possibility of reason. The powers and uses of reason had first been explored by the philosophers of ancient Greece. The Romans adopted and preserved much of Greek culture, notably including the ideas of a rational natural order and natural law. Amid the turmoil of empire, however, a new concern arose for personal salvation, and the way was paved for the triumph of the Christian religion. Christian thinkers gradually found uses for their Greco-Roman heritage. The system of thought known as Scholasticism, culminating in the work of Thomas Aquinas, resurrected reason as a tool of understanding but subordinated it to spiritual revelation and the revealed truths of Christianity. The intellectual and political edifice of Christianity, seemingly impregnable in the Middle Ages, fell in turn to the assaults made on it by humanism, the Renaissance, and the Protestant Reformation. The Renaissance rediscovered much of Classical culture and revived the notion of humans as creative beings, and the Reformation, more directly but in the long run no less effectively, challenged the monolithic authority of the Roman Catholic Church. For Martin Luther as for Bacon or Descartes, the way to truth lay in the application of human reason. Received authority, whether of Ptolemy in the sciences or of the church in matters of the spirit, was to be subject to the probings of unfettered minds. The successful application of reason to any question depended on its correct application on the development of a methodology of reasoning that would serve as its own guarantee of validity. Such a methodology was most spectacularly achieved in the sciences and mathematics, where the logics of induction and deduction made possible the creation of a sweeping new cosmology. The success of Newton, in particular, in capturing in a few mathematical equations the laws that govern the motions of the planets, gave great impetus to a growing faith in the human capacity to attain knowledge. At the same time, the idea of the universe as a mechanism governed by a few simple and discoverable laws had a subversive effect on the concepts of a personal God and individual salvation that were central to Christianity. Inevitably, the method of reason was applied to religion itself. The product of a search for a natural rational religion was Deism, which, although never an organized cult or movement, conflicted with Christianity for two centuries, especially in England and France. For the Deist, a very few religious truths sufficed, and they were truths felt to be manifest to all rational beings: Beyond the natural religion of the Deists lay the more radical products of the application of reason to religion: The Enlightenment produced the first modern secularized theories of psychology and ethics. John Locke conceived of the human mind as being at birth a tabula rasa, a blank slate on which experience wrote freely and boldly, creating the individual character according to the individual experience of the world. Supposed innate qualities, such as goodness or original sin, had no reality. In a darker vein, Thomas Hobbes portrayed humans as moved solely by considerations of their own pleasure and pain. The notion of humans as neither good nor bad but interested principally in survival and the maximization of their own pleasure led to radical political theories. Where the state had once been viewed as an earthly approximation of an eternal order, with the City of Man modeled on the City of God, now it came to be seen as a mutually beneficial arrangement among humans aimed at protecting the natural rights and self-interest of each. The idea of society as a social contract, however, contrasted sharply with the realities of actual societies. Thus, the Enlightenment became critical, reforming, and eventually revolutionary. Locke and Jeremy Bentham in England, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, and Condorcet in France, and Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson in colonial America all contributed to an evolving critique of the arbitrary, authoritarian state and to sketching the outline of a higher form of social organization, based on natural rights and functioning as a political democracy. Such powerful ideas found expression as reform in

England and as revolution in France and America. The more rarefied the religion of the Deists became, the less it offered those who sought solace or salvation. The celebration of abstract reason provoked contrary spirits to begin exploring the world of sensation and emotion in the cultural movement known as Romanticism. The Reign of Terror that followed the French Revolution severely tested the belief that an egalitarian society could govern itself. Learn More in these related Britannica articles:

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Historical context[ edit ] Intellectual context: These deists, while maintaining individual positions, still shared several sets of assumptions and arguments that Paine articulated in *The Age of Reason*. The most important position that united the early deists was their call for "free rational inquiry" into all subjects, especially religion. Saying that early Christianity was founded on freedom of conscience, they demanded religious toleration and an end to religious persecution. They also demanded that debate rest on reason and rationality. Deists embraced a Newtonian worldview, and they believed that all things in the universe, even God, must obey the laws of nature. Without a concept of natural law, the deists argued, explanations of the workings of nature would descend into irrationality. This belief in natural law drove their skepticism of miracles. Along these lines, deistic writings insisted that God, as the first cause or prime mover, had created and designed the universe with natural laws as part of his plan. They held that God does not repeatedly alter his plan by suspending natural laws to miraculously intervene in human affairs. Deists also rejected the claim that there was only one revealed religious truth or "one true faith"; religion could only be "simple, apparent, ordinary, and universal" if it was to be the logical product of a benevolent God. Moreover, many found the Christian revelations in particular to be contradictory and irreconcilable. Most deists argued that priests had deliberately corrupted Christianity for their own gain by promoting the acceptance of miracles, unnecessary rituals, and illogical and dangerous doctrines these accusations were typically referred to as "priestcraft". The worst of these doctrines was original sin. Deists therefore typically viewed themselves as intellectual liberators. Those few British radicals who still supported the French revolution and its ideals were viewed with deep suspicion by their countrymen. By the middle of the decade, the moderate voices had disappeared: These acts prohibited freedom of assembly for groups such as the radical London Corresponding Society LCS and encouraged indictments against radicals for "libelous and seditious" statements. Afraid of prosecution and disenchanted with the French revolution, many reformers drifted away from the cause. It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. The circumstance that has now taken place in France of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity and of the theology that is true. I contrived, in my way there, to call on Joel Barlow, and I put the Manuscript of the work into his hands According to Paine scholars Edward Davidson and William Scheick, he probably wrote the first draft of Part I in late 1793, [8] but Paine biographer David Hawke argues for a date of early 1794. He only escaped the guillotine by accident: Part II was first published in a pirated edition by H. Symonds in London in October 1794. Eaton was later forced to flee to America after being convicted of seditious libel for publishing other radical works. Later, Francis Place and Thomas Williams collaborated on an edition which sold about 2,000 copies. Williams also produced his own edition, but the British government indicted him and confiscated the pamphlets. Fearing unpleasant and even violent reprisals, Thomas Jefferson convinced him not to publish it in 1795; five years later Paine decided to publish despite the backlash he knew would ensue. Carlile charged one shilling and sixpence for the work, and the first run of 1,000 copies sold out in a month. He immediately published a second edition of 3,000 copies. Like Williams, he was prosecuted for seditious libel and blasphemous libel. The prosecutions surrounding the printing of *The Age of Reason* in Britain continued for thirty years after its initial release and encompassed numerous publishers as well as over a hundred booksellers. In Part I, Paine outlines his major arguments and personal creed. I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life. I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy. But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not

believing them. My own mind is my own church. All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit. I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise; they have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe. Paine rejects prophecies and miracles, writing: How happened it that he did not discover America, or is it only with kingdoms that his sooty highness has any interest? For example, in his analysis of the Book of Proverbs he argues that its sayings are "inferior in keenness to the proverbs of the Spaniards, and not more wise and economical than those of the American Franklin ". My intention is to show that those books are spurious, and that Moses is not the author of them; and still further, that they were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterward; that they are no other than an attempted history of the life of Moses, and of the times in which he is said to have lived, and also of the times prior thereto, written by some very ignorant and stupid pretenders to authorship, several hundred years after the death of Moses. Paine also argues that the Old Testament must be false because it depicts a tyrannical God. The "history of wickedness" pervading the Old Testament convinced Paine that it was simply another set of human-authored myths. He presents the history of Christianity as one of corruption and oppression. Soon after I had published the pamphlet "Common Sense," in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a revolution in the system of government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of Church and State, wherever it has taken place Human inventions and priestcraft would be detected; and man would return to the pure, unmixed and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more. It is an age of revolutions , in which everything may be looked for. All of these arguments appear in *The Age of Reason*, albeit less coherently. In a letter to Elihu Palmer , one of his most loyal followers in America, Paine describes part of his rhetorical philosophy: The hinting and intimidating manner of writing that was formerly used on subjects of this kind [religion], produced skepticism, but not conviction. It is necessary to be bold. Some people can be reasoned into sense, and others must be shocked into it. Say a bold thing that will stagger them, and they will begin to think. His use of "we" conveys an "illusion that he and the readers share the activity of constructing an argument". In the eighteenth century "vulgarity" was associated with the middling and lower classes and not with obscenity; thus, when Paine celebrates his "vulgar" style and his critics attack it, the dispute is over class accessibility, not profanity. For example, Paine describes the Fall this way: The Christian Mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again to bring on the sequel of the fable. After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the Church Mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit: But instead of this they leave him at large, without even obliging him to give his parole—the secret of which is that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian Mythology? Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—gave him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian Mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and Man, and also the Son of God, celestially begotten, on purpose to be sacrificed, because they say that Eve in her longing had eaten an apple. It took "deism out of the hands of the aristocracy and intellectuals and [brought] it to the people". Bishop Richard Watson , forced to address this new audience in his influential response to Paine, *An Apology for the Bible*, writes: For example, he says that once one dismisses the false idea of Moses being the author of Genesis, "The story of Eve and the serpent, and of Noah and his ark, drops to a level with the Arabian tales, without the merit of being entertaining. It was the early Deists of the middling ranks, and not the educated elite, who initiated the kind of ridicule Paine would make famous. As John Redwood, a scholar of deism, puts it: I am unwilling to attribute bad designs, deliberate wickedness, to you or to any man; I cannot avoid believing, that you think you have truth on your side, and that you are doing service to mankind in endeavouring to root out what you esteem superstition. What I blame you for is this—that you have attempted to lessen the authority of the Bible by ridicule, more than by reason.

As the historian E. Thompson has put it, Paine "ridiculed the authority of the Bible with arguments which the collier or country girl could understand". Claiming that true religious language is universal, Paine uses elements of the Christian rhetorical tradition to undermine the hierarchies perpetuated by religion itself. He contends that Paine draws on the Puritan tradition in which "theology was wedded to politics and politics to the progress of the kingdom of God". There were four major factors for this animosity: Paine denied that the Bible was a sacred, inspired text; he argued that Christianity was a human invention; his ability to command a large readership frightened those in power; and his irreverent and satirical style of writing about Christianity and the Bible offended many believers. Around 50 unfavorable replies appeared between and alone and refutations were still being published in They also issued ad hominem attacks against Paine, describing him "as an enemy of proper thought and of the morality of decent, enlightened people". Between and , Carlile claimed to have "sent into circulation near 20, copies of the Age of Reason". Paine wrote that "the people of France were running headlong into atheism and I had the work translated into their own language, to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article The church had no priest or minister, and the traditional Biblical sermon was replaced by scientific lectures or homilies on the teachings of philosophers. It celebrated four festivals honoring St. Paine became so reviled that he could still be maligned as a "filthy little atheist" by Theodore Roosevelt over one hundred years later. Ethan Allen published the first American defense of deism, Reason, The Only Oracle of Man , but deism remained primarily a philosophy of the educated elite. Men such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson espoused its tenets, while at the same time arguing that religion served the useful purpose of "social control". The public was receptive, in part, because they approved of the secular ideals of the French Revolution. Palmer published what became "the bible of American deism", The Principles of Nature, [89] established deistic societies from Maine to Georgia, built Temples of Reason throughout the nation, and founded two deistic newspapers for which Paine eventually wrote seventeen essays. Before Paine it had been possible to be both a Christian and a deist; now such a religious outlook became virtually untenable. Their fear helped to drive the backlash which soon followed. Hailed only a few years earlier as a hero of the American Revolution , Paine was now lambasted in the press and called "the scavenger of faction", a "lilly-livered sinical [ sic ] rogue", a "loathsome reptile", a "demi-human archbeast", "an object of disgust, of abhorrence, of absolute loathing to every decent man except the President of the United States [Thomas Jefferson]". I know not whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine. There can be no severer satyr [ sic ] on the age. For such a mongrel between pig and puppy, begotten by a wild boar on a bitch wolf, never before in any age of the world was suffered by the poltroonery of mankind, to run through such a career of mischief.

## Chapter 6 : Science in the Age of Enlightenment - Wikipedia

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The Re-Enchantment of the World in the Age of Scientific Reasoning analyses the works of Jonathan Edwards on natural philosophy in a series of contexts within which they may best be explored and understood. Table of contents I. The Great Chain of Being 4. The God of Mechanical Philosophers 5. The New scientia naturalis 2. Science, Fears, Doubts and Anxieties 3. The First Anniversarie IV. The Theatre of Nature: Natura naturata and natura naturans V. The Mechanization of the World of Nature 4. The Laws of Nature 5. God and the World 6. First, it places Edwards on a scholarly map which joins English and American theatres of philosophy. And secondly, it celebrates a discourse which criticized the new mechanistic philosophies, a discourse which needs to be digested before being injected into modern debates over nature and transcendent meaning, as some readers of Edwards are wont to do. It will pay dividends to the reader who wants to struggle with the relationship between the material reality of the world as presented by modern science and the spiritual realities of a God-driven world as implied in the gospel. Comparing the American philosopher-theologian Edwards to the likes of Donne, Pascal and Leibniz, Zakai shows that rather than simply reasserting religious claims, Edwards articulated a singularly sophisticated response to the New Science - appropriating what he could while also reconceiving a religious view of the cosmos. It positions Edwards with others like Donne and Pascal who thought its presuppositions and procedures radically challenged Trinitarian Christianity. While relentlessly criticizing heresies like Arianism, Socinianism and Deism, Edwards labored to re-invigorate study of the "book of nature" -- through typological exegesis of scripture not mathematical analysis. Philosophically rejecting Newtonian science, Edwards advanced his theology of divine self-disclosure: God creates, sustains, directs and redeems nature and history alike. For information on how we process your data, read our Privacy Policy.

## Chapter 7 : C. Karakash, Nancey MURPHY, "Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning" - PhilPapers

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