New Atheism: Painting with all the Colors of the Wind

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will focus on how the new atheism is confronting today’s world in the attempt it is making to secure political power in its assault against faith. The course will provide adequate ways in which Catholic leaders might respond to this onslaught.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for atheism and how the philosophy attempts to explain itself.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the new atheism as it manifested itself in the late-20th century and early 21st.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the way atheism is refuted and the various methods by which Christians might confront it.

3. COURSE PLAN

MODULE 1: Dialogue and Proclamation
- Read Introduction and Chapter 1 of Catholic Realism; Dialogue and Proclamation [provided in course]

MODULE 2: New Atheism and the Question of a God
- Read Chapter 4 of Catholic Realism

Recommended readings:
- Answering the New Atheism, “Can God’s Existence be Demonstrated?” pp. 75-91
- Catholic Realism, Chapter 2, Types of Atheists and Stories of Converts, and Chapter 6.

MODULE 3: Proof and Attributes of God’s Existence
- Read Chapter 3 of Catholic Realism
- View the famous 2-part Russell/Copleston Debate on YouTube – Part 1 and Part 2

Recommended readings:
- Answering the New Atheism, “Dawkins’ Fallacious Philosophy” pp. 52-74
MODULE 4: Responding to the Arguments for Atheism

- Catholic Realism, Impact: Conclusion

Recommended Readings:
- The God Delusion, "Why there Almost Certainly is No God," pp. 137-189
- Answering the New Atheism, “Dawkins’ god, Chance” pp. 10-22
- Catholic Realism, Chapter 5: The Problem of Pain
- Catholic Realism, Chapter 6: Morality and Atheism

4. REQUIRED READING


RECOMMENDED READING


5. ABOUT THE COURSE DEVELOPER

Dr. Sebastian Mahfood, OP, is a Lay Dominican of the Chapter of the Holy Rosary in the Province of St. Albert. He is Vice-President of Administration and Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Holy Apostles College & Seminary and Provost of the Continuing Education Program at the Sacred Heart Institute. He holds a master's in comparative literature from the University of Texas at Arlington, a master’s in philosophy and a master’s in theology from Holy Apostles College & Seminary, a master's in educational technology from Webster University and a doctorate in postcolonial literature and theory from Saint Louis University. He is currently pursuing an MBA from Webster University in St. Louis.