

*What is a conservative atheist? Isn't that an oxymoron? Well, Frank Cress thinks that it is a valid position and, in fact, thinks he can convince you that the conservative atheist position is most rational of all. Come along for discussion on a wide variety of subjects ranging from abortion to gay rights, from raising atheist children to software development techniques. If you are an atheist with socially conservative values you will probably find most of your thoughts expressed here-maybe even for the first time ever in print. Even if you disagree with some or most of the material you'll find this effort to be thought provoking and unique in presentation.*



*Frank Cress is a 42 year old Illinois native and U.S. Air Force veteran who now lives with his family in Northwest Indiana. He is in the software development profession and is currently a Director of Quality Assurance for a Chicago, Illinois based firm. This is his first publication. He can be contacted through his website at [www.ConservativeAtheist.com](http://www.ConservativeAtheist.com)*



Published by Fultus Corporation  
[www.fultus.com](http://www.fultus.com)

Damned If I Do... Damned If I Don't • Reflections of a Conservative Atheist • Frank Cress

# Damned If I Do... Damned If I Don't Reflections of a Conservative Atheist

**Frank Cress**



# Damned If I Do...Damned If I Don't

## Reflections of a Conservative Atheist

by

Frank Cress

ISBN 1-59682-073-X

Copyright © 2005 by Frank Cress

All rights reserved.



Published by Fultus Corporation

*Corporate Web Site:* <http://www.fultus.com>

*Fultus eLibrary:* <http://elibrary.fultus.com>

*Online Book Superstore:* <http://store.fultus.com>

*Writer Web Site:* <http://writers.fultus.com/cress/>



No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in reviews and critical articles.

The author and publisher have made every effort in the preparation of this book to ensure the accuracy of the information. However, the information contained in this book is offered without warranty, either express or implied. Neither the author nor the publisher nor any dealer or distributor will be held liable for any damages caused or alleged to be caused either directly or indirectly by this book.

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	7
I AM WHAT I AM .....	9
What is a Conservative Atheist? .....	10
Conservative Atheist Ingredients .....	14
Quick Views.....	21
Life as a Conservative Atheist .....	38
ATHEISM.....	44
Religion and Other Such Nonsense .....	45
In the Name of the Lord.....	56
Are You Designed? .....	62
Raising Atheist Children.....	67
Laplace's Determinism .....	76
CONSERVATISM VS. LIBERALISM .....	80
The Leftist/Liberal Agenda.....	81
Our Failing University System .....	92
Go Left Young Man.....	97
Redistribution, Socialism and Gross National Product Dilution .....	102
Katrina's Watchful Eye .....	108
Leftism in the Workplace.....	115
Paris and London... Fascinating or Fiction?.....	122

## Frank Cress

---

Raising Conservative Children .....	125
(Fan)atic No More .....	129
AS LONG AS YOU'RE HERE.....	134
Good Enough Software Development .....	135
Cowboys and Their Code Software Development Frontier Days .....	137
Thanks for the Advice, But No Thanks .....	145
CONCLUSIONS .....	153
Why I Am Not a Libertarian.....	154
What To Do?.....	160
Appendix I .....	166
Appendix II .....	169
INDEX.....	175

*For the many people close to me that have helped me find my socio-political self. You have read with me, shared your thoughts, listened to mine, argued and even sometimes agreed. To my family for putting up with my constant analysis and difficulty with convention. I am indebted to many of those same individuals for their repeated critical and uncritical reviews of this text and for showing me that there actually may be some interest in these subjects other than between my own ears.*

# Introduction

*If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.*

~Francis Bacon

I guess I never really thought about it but, anyone can write. For most of my life I've been pretty opinionated and pretty talkative. As a student I was always in trouble for talking out of turn. I suppose I was disruptive but not in a hurtful way. I didn't bully other students around and I didn't talk back to teachers. I just always had something on my mind. More often than not that something came out of my mouth. My father and his father were successful lifelong salesmen, each with the gift of gab. My mother's side of the family is bursting with campfire storytellers that filled my summer vacations with vivid pictures of family tales and local backwoods lore. As I matured I began to read books for pleasure. I devoured layman's science books and magazines and as a result became all the more opinionated. I was always seeking an outlet for my thoughts. I was an atheist. I'd talk to anyone that would talk to me about it. It was always hard to find another teenager that wanted to discuss science but at the same time wasn't a Star Trek freak or into some other hobby that turned them into social misfits.

As I grew older I also began to recognize my interest in politics and social constructs. I was a conservative. I honed my political opinions throughout my 30's and early 40's. I really didn't even know the difference between a conservative or a liberal until I was in my 30's. I really see that as part of my purity—I hadn't a clue about bi-partisan politics, left and right. I didn't know that the two political parties were so clearly and fundamentally divided in such predictable ways. I didn't know the motivating forces behind the Republican and

Democratic parties in my native United States. I did have clear political views and like everyone else I had positions on the issues in the news. What I didn't have was an affiliation with a political party.

When I realized that many people considered the notion of a conservative atheist an oxymoron I was really struck by how divided the two viewpoints really are. Why couldn't I be conservative and atheist? I scoured the web for others like me. Why is there no conservativeatheist.com on the World Wide Web, I wondered? I thought, "I've got something to say, so I'll buy that domain and see what happens". I bought the conservativeatheist.com domain and I wrote. I really liked having an outlet for views that I've long maintained. I've found that summarizing books after reading them is a good way to internalize the content as is discussing them with friends. I'm frequently and pleasantly surprised with visitors from all over the United States and around the world. The vast majority are overwhelmingly positive. I always ask new visitors how they found my site and most say that they were simply looking for others that held conservative views but didn't believe in god. Well, they found me and I found them.

This book has its roots in the writings on my web page with additions inspired by my aim to publish. Please understand that I have not had social or religious philosophy published before. I'll cover many topics in this book on which I am not expert or formally trained. I will give you my opinions whether you like them or not. Because I am admittedly not expert in most subjects covered I welcome critique and even argument. Since I maintain that my views are based on reason I'm open to change if presented with compelling, reasoned viewpoints that contradict my own.

# Part I

## I Am What I Am

*I am against religion because it teaches us to be satisfied with not understanding the world.*

*~Richard Dawkins*

# Chapter 1

## What is a Conservative Atheist?

*Historians will have to face the fact that natural selection determined the evolution of cultures in the same manner as it did that of species.*

~Konrad Lorenz

From Dictionary.com:

### **Conservative:**

1. The inclination, especially in politics, to maintain the existing or traditional order.
2. A political philosophy or attitude emphasizing respect for traditional institutions, distrust of government activism, and opposition to sudden change in the established order.

### **Atheist:**

1. One who disbelieves or denies the existence of a God, or supreme intelligent being.

Political conservatism coupled with atheism is a combination that you don't see much of, overtly, anyway. That's really the main motivation behind my web site and the reason I'm writing this book. I am a die-hard capitalist with mostly conservative cultural views. I disagree with the leftist/liberal agenda popular among atheists and feel that it is approaching socialism at best and blatant anti-Americanism at worst. At the same time I do not subscribe to the religious foundation that is so strongly attached to the right/conservative agenda in the United States and elsewhere. I find no reason to believe in any of the roughly 100,000 religions based on the estimated 2,500 gods that have been identified since the time of

## Damned If I Do...Damned If I Don't

---

the Neanderthals. I read a great deal of both conservative publications and publications about atheism or skepticism in general but seldom do I see writings that support both views simultaneously.

I feel that the conservative atheist viewpoint is truly one that is pure, thoughtful, reasonable and devoid of any obligations of following with religious or political tradition. Traditional conservatives and liberals or Republicans and Democrats in the United States are renowned for voting the "party line". They feel that since they've decided that their individual ideals align best with one party or the other they will always choose that side and concede any instances where they don't agree with their selected ticket. There are so many issues that it really is not possible these days to completely agree with a team so you choose a few issues that matter to you and side with the team that sees those specific issues as you do.

Religious people tend to be against abortion and often see that as the single factor in an election. Liberals tend to be pro-abortion and see the conservative position as a breach of a woman's rights. Abortion tends to get lots of attention around election time but is it really central to the daily operation of most of our lives? It is not. Most voters haven't been or won't be personally put in a position where they'll want an abortion but can't get one or the unimaginable predicament of not wanting an abortion but being forced to get one. I think most people would agree that it is irrational and even irresponsible to choose your candidates based on one such issue. Consequently, you find another issue where the anti-abortion side agrees with you, like prayer in school. Now you say to yourself, "Ok, that's two issues that we agree on." Here's where the trouble starts. You know that there will be issues on which you and your chosen side do not agree. You tend to dismiss those issues as not significant, which can be a mistake, or you mold your own views to fit in with the rest of the team's views. For example, by choosing the side of the religious right based on the abortion issue you are forced into being against stem cell research. Stem cell research is a field that will someday no doubt benefit everyone in some way. Lives will be lengthened, diseases will be cured but since you are pro-life when it comes to abortion you can't pro-life in the strictest sense.

Conversely, let's say you are a liberal. You are against the liberation of Iraq because people are dying and you feel that Saddam

---

should be given time to work things out on his own. At the same time your team is passionate about women's rights and feels that the United States is the great oppressor of women. When you are asked to look at the horrible rights violations of women in Iraq and throughout Islam you are forced to turn your head so you can maintain allegiance with your team.

So, I understand the basic reasoning for choosing sides but can't I use my brain instead of my emotions to determine right from wrong, right from left? Can't I be against reparations for slavery but at the same time support abortions under certain circumstances? Can't I be opposed to large government welfare programs but still support stem cell research? Why not, I ask? If I'm not completely comfortable with the agenda of the homosexual community does it have to be because I think gays are sinners? Can't these and other issues be looked at from a non-partisan perspective and one that does not ever involve the fear that someone will attempt to "play the role of god"?

The conservative atheist is the individual that uses reason to guide their decisions. We haven't chosen sides with a broad brush stroke. Siding entirely with the right or the left at this point puts us in jeopardy of either living in a constrictive Christian church state or a socialist/communist economic nightmare. The conservative atheist stance is truly the only one that will allow us to successfully achieve a total separation between church and state as our forefathers clearly envisioned while maintaining the capitalist democracy foundation that made this country great.

A few years ago I began searching for web sites and/or books that support my unusual non-partisan position. Needless to say my search came up almost empty. Lately searches seem to be turning up more sites, articles and postings that speak of conservative political views without the religious dogma. I also continue to get an increasing number of visits to [ConservativeAtheist.com](http://ConservativeAtheist.com) from people that I don't know. I'm not sure exactly how to explain what appears to be a heightened interest but my first inclination is that is it due to the 2004 presidential elections and the renewed interest in the inherent political debates. Still, there must be more of us out there that strive to live true to predominantly conservative values and morals but at the same time know that religious views are not consistent with what we know about the world today. There must be more people who want

## Damned If I Do...Damned If I Don't

---

the best of both worlds. Is that too much to ask? If you are one of us, think you might be, or even if this pisses you off, please read on. Hopefully the information contained in these pages will make you think about your preconceptions of both conservatives and atheists alike.

# Index

- Abortion, 21  
Abu Ghraib, 84, 85  
Affirmative Action, 22  
agile, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143,  
144  
AIDS, 23  
American Indian, 158  
Animal, 23  
Ann Coulter, 38, 166  
Atheism, 44  
atheist, 7, 11, 18, 21, 47, 50, 67,  
68  
Atheist  
    Definition, 10  
Autobahn, 123  
B.C. Johnson, 50  
Belief, 45  
bible, 25, 56, 57  
big brother, 98  
Botswana, 104  
Capital Punishment, 24  
Carl Sagan, 168  
Censorship, 25  
Charles Darwin  
    The Origin of Species, 167  
Charles Murray, 166, 167  
Christian, 34, 46, 57  
Christopher Lubienski, 70  
Cloning, 24  
Cold War, 16, 18  
conservative, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15,  
18, 21  
Conservative  
    Definition, 10  
conservative atheist, 8, 12  
Conservative Atheist Party,  
164  
Crystal, 138, 144  
cultural relativism, 118, 125,  
161  
Dan Barker  
    Losing Faith in Faith, 167  
Daniel Dennett, 78  
Daniel Flynn, 88, 166  
David Horowitz, 23, 31, 88, 91,  
166  
David Thompson, 77  
Democratic, 8  
determinism, 76, 77, 79  
Dinesh D'Souza, 22, 50, 88  
E.O. Wilson, 79, 168  
Edwards Air Force Base, 17  
Einstein, 47  
Emir Fethi Caner, 167  
England, 82  
Ergun Mehmet Caner, 167  
Ernst Mayr, 168  
eupraxophy, 48  
Euthanasia, 26

## Frank Cress

---

- eXtreme Programming, 137, 138, 142
- fantasy football, 131
- France, 82
- Frank Miele, 79
- GABON, 103
- Gay Rights, 27
- Gender, 29
- Genetic, 24
- George W. Bush, 42, 162, 163
- Germany, 82
- Global Warming, 29
- GNP, 35, 102, 103, 104, 105
- Gross National Product, 102
- Gun Control, 29
- Harley-Davidson, 145
- Harry Browne, 159
- Hawking, 47
- Health Insurance, 30
- Hindu, 46
- Hollywood, 82
- immigration, 30, 82, 156
- Immigration, 30
- Intelligent Design, 62, 64
- Iran, 32, 34
- Iraq, 11, 25, 34, 35, 42, 81, 82, 83, 85, 87, 159, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174
- Issac Asimov
  - The Roving Mind, 167
- Jacob Bronowski
  - The Ascent of Man, 167
- James Randi, 168
- Japan, 17
- Jared Diamond, 167
- Jesse Jackson, 88
- Jim Forrester, 51
- Korea, 32
- Laplace, 76
- leftism, 97
- Liberal Agenda, 81
- libertarian, 154, 156, 159
- Libertarian Party, 154
- London, 122, 124
- Lynndie England, 84
- Martin Carnoy, 70
- Martin Gardner, 168
- Martin Gross, 166
- Mauritius, 103
- Mein Kampf, 58
- Michael Shermer, 168
- Microsoft, 31
- moment of silence, 33
- Morality, 48, 52
- morals, 12
- Mormon, 46
- motorcycles, 18, 145, 146, 150
- Myron Magnet, 167
- National Education
  - Association, 69
  - national IDs, 156
- nature, 27, 29, 56, 68, 76, 78
- NBA, 130, 132, 133
- NEA, 69
- NFL, 131
- Noam Chomsky, 82
- Nuclear, 32
- nurture, 27
- Outsourcing, 32
- Paris, 122, 123, 124
- Paul Kurtz, 45, 48, 168
- Pink Floyd, 57
- prayer, 11, 33, 47, 155
- Prayer, 33
- Private Schools, 69, 70
- protests, 82, 83
- Public Schools, 33, 69, 70
- rap, 125

## Damned If I Do...Damned If I Don't

---

- Rational Conservative Party, 164
- Rationalist Party, 164
- Reason Party, 164
- redistributionism, 161
- religiosity, 40, 47, 72
- reparations, 12, 88
- Reparations, 33
- Republican, 7, 42
- responsibility, 16, 19, 88, 101, 119, 125, 128, 134, 136, 138, 173
- Richard Dawkins, 9, 44, 47, 48, 50, 51, 62, 167
- Richard Feynman, 168
- Richard Herrnstein, 166
- Richard Turco, 32
- Robert Spencer  
Islam Unveiled, 167
- Sagan, 18, 21, 32, 47
- Sarah Theule Lubienski, 70
- school, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 33, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 95, 120, 125, 127, 138, 157, 163
- scientific method, 65
- Scrum, 138, 143
- Separation of Church and State, 34
- Sesame Street, 125
- Sixty Watt Shaman, 51
- Software, 18, 135, 137
- Soviet Union, 16, 98
- sports, 129, 130, 132, 133
- Sportster, 145, 146, 148
- Star Trek, 7
- Stem Cell, 24
- Stephen Jay Gould, 64
- Steven Pinker, 168
- Taxes, 34
- Technology, 60, 161
- terrorism, 35, 59, 83
- U.S. Air Force, 14, 16, 152
- UN Resolutions, 169
- Universal Life Church, 51
- Violence in Schools, 34
- Vouchers, 33, 34, 74
- war, 32, 35, 42, 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 97, 141, 156, 158, 161
- Welfare, 35
- White Sox, 129
- William Dembski, 64
- William Paley, 62
- Workplace, 115