

# **The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster Study Guide**

**The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster by Bobby Henderson (FSM)**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

[The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster Study Guide.....1](#)

[Contents.....2](#)

[Plot Summary.....4](#)

[A Letter from Bobby Henderson.....5](#)

[The Blunders of Science - The Need for Alternative Theories.....6](#)

[The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Viewpoint.....7](#)

[The Blunders of Science - Toward a New SuperScience.....8](#)

[The Blunders of Science - What's the Matter with Evolution?.....9](#)

[The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Vision.....11](#)

[The Blunders of Science - FSM vs. ID, an Unlikely Alliance.....12](#)

[The Blunders of Science - Communion Test.....13](#)

[The Blunders of Science - Unified Spaghetti Theory.....14](#)

[The Blunders of Science - More Evidence.....15](#)

[The Blunders of Science - Kiwi Birds: Flightless?.....16](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - A Condensed History of the World.....17](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - Key Moments in FSM History.....18](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - Bobby Answers the Big Questions.....19](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - WWAPD?.....20](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - The Holy Noodle.....21](#)

[Explaining Pastafarianism - A History of Heretics.....23](#)

[Propaganda - The Pastafarian Guide to Propaganda.....25](#)

[Propaganda - Pamphlets.....27](#)

[Propaganda - Swag.....28](#)

[Propaganda - Fund-raising.....29](#)

[Propaganda - A Guide to the Holidays.....30](#)



Propaganda - Enlightenment Institute..... 31  
A Final Note from Bobby Henderson and His Staff..... 32  
Characters..... 33  
Objects/Places..... 36  
Themes..... 38  
Style..... 40  
Quotes..... 42  
  
Topics for Discussion..... 45

## Plot Summary

The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster is a parody that spoofs Intelligent Design (ID) as a pseudo-science. The concept for the book originated from a letter written by the author, Bobby Henderson, in protest of the Kansas State Board of Education's decision to require intelligent design in their school science curricula as an alternative theory to natural evolution. With biting satire, Henderson surmises that evolution and ID can co-exist in the form of the supernatural and that our higher power is in fact a flying spaghetti monster (FSM). Henderson provides humorous and ludicrous scientific evidence to prove this theory. Those who believe in FSM are known as Pastafarians and try as much as possible to live like pirates, whose dwindling numbers have caused global warming. FSM Heaven includes a beer volcano and a stripper club, so the most easily-converted Pastafarians tend to be college men. The tongue-in-cheek Gospel contains many illustrations, flyers to help promote the religion, and papers and essays written by fictional experts who support the FSM theory with scientific or mathematical evidence.

The book is presented in three parts. The first, the "Blunders of Science," tears apart the concepts of both evolution and intelligent design theories and provides scientific explanations and other evidence for why FSM is the most credible theory. In the second part, "Explaining Pastafarianism," Henderson provides more details about FSM from its origination to present day, as well as more information on what it means to be a Pastafarian. The third section, "Propaganda," contains pamphlets to help market FSM, FSM craft projects and papers from members of the Enlightenment Institute, a fictitious think-tank dedicated to proving the existence of FSM.

With unrelenting satire, Henderson ultimately succeeds in conveying his belief that Intelligent Design is a pseudoscience conjured up by Christians pushing their Creationism agenda into public schools. His Gospel uses such pseudoscience tactics to show that a supernatural flying spaghetti monster is just as plausible as a Christian god (or any other) and that if Creationism is taught, then FSM should be included in the curriculum and given equal scientific credence.



# A Letter from Bobby Henderson

## A Letter from Bobby Henderson Summary

The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster is a parody that spoofs religion and science, in particular the debate between scientifically-based evolution theories and religious based intelligent design (ID) theories. The author, Bobby Henderson, surmises that evolution and ID can co-exist in the form of the supernatural and that our higher power is, in fact, a flying spaghetti monster (FSM). Henderson provides humorous and ludicrous scientific evidence to prove this theory, mocking Intelligent Design as a pseudoscience conjured up by Christians to get Creationism into public schools.

The Gospel starts with a letter of introduction from the author, Bobby Henderson, a self-titled prophet. He suggests there are many new and exciting opportunities in religion, and the Gospel will explain the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster (FSM) and a heaven that includes a giant beer volcano and stripper factory. Rather than a "two-bit cult," Henderson describes FSMism (or Pastafarianism) as a boutique religion and the best one in existence. He asks readers to try it for thirty days and if they are still not convinced, he is sure their old religion will take them back.

## A Letter from Bobby Henderson Analysis

The author's opening letter sets the tone for the rest of the book with its ludicrous propositions and sarcastic wit. He introduces the concept of FSM with a positive certainty that anyone who learns about it will be converted. Like most missionaries, he offers some strong incentives, such as being able to dress like a pirate and a beer volcano and stripper factory that await faithful followers in heaven. A self-proclaimed Prophet, Henderson will set out to prove that the FSM is as credible a deity as any other god, and he will show facts to prove this. As such, he is spoofing Intelligent Design advocates who have attempted to make their theory (the universe is too complex to have been created at random, so an intelligent being must have designed it) into a science.



# **The Blunders of Science - The Need for Alternative Theories**

## **The Blunders of Science - The Need for Alternative Theories Summary**

Henderson points out that evolution is an unproven theory, and those who believe in Intelligent Design (ID) have a valid point that other theories should be taught in the classroom, as one is no better than another, unless proven otherwise. He uses gravity as an example and formally submits that he believes the Flying Spaghetti Monster is behind this force, keeping us pushed down with his noodly appendages. He rationalizes that this is why humans have become taller over the centuries; with an increase in population, the FSM could not keep his appendages on everyone at one time. With such sound science and observations, he is convinced that if "Newtonism" is taught as fact in terms of gravity, time should be made to include other theories, such as Henderson's FSM.

## **The Blunders of Science - The Need for Alternative Theories Analysis**

With continuing satire, Henderson uses some ludicrous examples to explain why the FSM theory on gravity is as sound as Newton's theory and thus should be incorporated into a school curriculum. Again, his nonsensical theory mocks ID advocates, who attempt to use science as a basis for getting Creationism into school programs. Well versed in science with a degree in physics, Henderson is easily able to parody Evolution advocates (predominantly scientists) with equal humor. Only by discounting scientists who purport evolutionism (like ID advocates) can Henderson push forward his supernatural theory.



# The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Viewpoint

## The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Viewpoint Summary

This chapter includes a "note" from Ferris P. Longshanks, a sheriff, school board member and concerned citizen. Longshanks' note is to fellow citizens on the importance of having choices and insisting that ID should be a choice, along with Evolution as, for example, Burger King is to McDonalds. Longshanks expounds on the clear logic behind Intelligent Design that appeals to Baptists and NASCAR fans alike. He uses a flat screen TV analogy to compare ID and Evolution theories. The first offers you many choices and has a logical process for purchasing a TV; whereas, with the evolution theory, you might have to wait several million years for the universe to randomly cough up a flat screen.

Longshanks talks of men of science who support ID theories though Longshanks is hard pressed to name them, compared to the many "unknown" evolutionists such as Carl Sagan, who are virtually silent on the topic. Why are they silent? Because they're dead! Ergo, if a theory has to rely on dead scientists, how sound is it? Longshanks blasts the liberal media and activist judges, while raising a disturbing question on a Pacific Northwestern man named Bobby Henderson, who sleeps in a crypt and lied about his military record, amongst other things. He warns against letting this "lying divorcee, who may or may not be a shape-shifting night creature" lead the debate.

## The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Viewpoint Analysis

This chapter spoofs stereotypical ID advocates, namely conservative Christians, who use fear-based tactics (in this case rape, loss of material goods, and communism) to push their theology over scientific rationale. Longshanks' "alternative views" appear as nonsensical as FSMism, an obvious parallel the author was trying to draw. Longshanks also dismisses any rule of law or investigative journalism as "liberalism," as is often the case with extreme conservatives. Interestingly, the author had Longshanks refer to his own dubious role as a prophet for alternative theories. The point being made is that ID is Christian based, even though a specific religion is not mentioned, but it appears there is little room for other religions in that theology.



# **The Blunders of Science - Toward a New SuperScience**

## **The Blunders of Science - Toward a New SuperScience Summary**

Henderson opens with the thrill of science not being limited to natural explanations, and not since the Middle Ages has science been so open to new ideas, such as the supernatural. He explains that science is merely a tool to aid our understanding and that the supernatural could be as useful a tool, if not more so. He points out that empirical science has only been around a few centuries, while supernatural science (or super science) has been around centuries longer. Henderson uses an analogy: land discovered between 1400 to 1600 A.C.E (after common era), when supernatural science ruled, was 14.5 million square miles, while in the last two centuries only 0.3 million square miles have been discovered. Logically, more land should be found to support a growing population but that is a detriment of empirical science; therefore, anyone not wanting the inclusion of the supernatural in science must want children to starve.

Henderson also considers medicine in the middle ages to be sounder than today's medicine. There are more diseases today than ever, so like scientists, doctors need all the tools they can get, such as the supernatural. If witches ever repopulated, today's pragmatic scientist would be a sorry match for their supernatural powers. Henderson concludes that there is validity to the inclusion of the supernatural in science and believes the natural and supernatural can equally co-exist, versus the ID theory of the supernatural and the retarded co-existing.

## **The Blunders of Science - Toward a New SuperScience Analysis**

Henderson makes an amusing parallel between the middle ages and present day. He uses more farcical arguments, such as lands discovered or witches existing then versus now, to prove the value of the supernatural in science. The middle ages (often referred to as the dark ages) were of course very repressive times full of superstition, which Henderson satirically refers to as an enlightened time in science and medicine. Between the lines, it is a reminder about the dangers of superstition and religious extremism gaining government control, a fear in contemporary society as the lines between church and state are becoming more blurry in many cases.





# The Blunders of Science - What's the Matter with Evolution?

## The Blunders of Science - What's the Matter with Evolution? Summary

Henderson equates the gradual change of species with his grandfather, chalking it up to old age. Despite a scientist friend pointing out that changes in species take generations, Henderson presents his own research findings to counteract evolutionary "wacky ideas."

In a "closer examination of natural selection," he finds that there is also sexual selection; so the reader is encouraged to masturbate on the second concept as he shreds the first. His first shredding of natural selection is the platypus, which seems to have no common sense adaptation as the only mammal with a duck bill. He next shreds bacteria. As it has grown resistant to antibiotics, it is getting smarter as a result of common sense versus adapting for necessity. He also dismisses humans breeding animals as a myth derived from propaganda, as every breed of dog has a purpose, meaning they were designed by an intelligent designer. He questions natural selection in the form of plant species, pointing out that any child who's been forced to eat Brussels sprouts proves this theory bunk.

Henderson then goes on to present a number of fallacies and facts, such as rather than teeth being grinding tools for early man, most pirates didn't have teeth; goose bumps provided buoyancy for pirates rather than being signs of distress; and the appendix is not a remnant of an internal pouch but a secret carrying place for pirates' gold, hence the term, "cough it up." He concludes that no evolutionary evidence exists except at the whim of the FSM, who has made fossils appear older than their apparent age to throw humans askew, given his modesty. And, as a chart shows, global warming has increased as pirates (the FSMs' "chosen people") have decreased, reinforcing proof of His existence.

The chapter ends with Henderson describing the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster as a peaceful religion compared to the Rambo style of Christianity or other religions. Pastafarianism also doesn't ascribe to dogma, or a set of rules. In fact, FSM believers reject FSM and are even open minded enough to consider that the Flying Spaghetti Monster does not exist - if this can be proven.



## The Blunders of Science - What's the Matter with Evolution? Analysis

Henderson bunks evolution with the ignorance of many creationists who find ways to contradict it to support their own ideology. Henderson uses hilarious examples to prove that natural selection is not a valid theory in evolution; for one, the platypus would not have been created, and it would be far more natural for a deity such as the FSM to have created it as a joke than believe it has a purpose. In this chapter, the pirate and human connection is explained, and the fact pirates share far more DNA with humans than chimpanzees, solves the evolutionary question. With his list of fallacies and facts, Henderson wittily demonstrates how easy it is to find coincidences and contradictions to scientific evidence, even if it means stretching the imagination a bit. He ends the chapter by mirroring a common Christian argument: disprove that God (FSM) exists versus prove it.



# The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Vision

## The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Vision Summary

This chapter contains a 2-page note written by a fictional doctor and a religious leader, followed by a page of examples to support their theory of Unintelligent Design. Peter J. Snodgrass, PhD and Imam Perez Jaffari explain that given world disasters from tsunamis and twisters to plastic surgery gone wrong, "The FSM, our Creator, isn't very bright;" therefore, the world must have been created by Unintelligent Design. They point out that a scientist and religious leader came up with this concept, and it is only right that both sides should work together to present different ideas. As such, their concepts will "appeal to 'Bible Thumpers' and 'brainiacs' alike." They go on to cite ten examples of Unintelligent Design, including the duck-billed platypus, the dodo, disco and more.

## The Blunders of Science - An Alternative Vision Analysis

This chapter makes even more fun of Intelligent Design by coming up with Unintelligent Design. It also poses the question of whether religion and science should co-exist as the scientific and religious authors assert. Obviously, their combined heads have come up with useless conclusions, coincidences and contradictions to support a theory with little substance about a Creator (FSM) that isn't necessarily the brightest tool in the shed, all powerful or not. This chapter mocks ID advocates who use "scientific experts" to give credence to their theories, much like any good marketing campaign needs its testimonials. Henderson's point is that however much science is being bandied by Intelligent Design advocates, none actually proves ID as a rational concept.



# The Blunders of Science - FSM vs. ID, an Unlikely Alliance

## The Blunders of Science - FSM vs. ID, an Unlikely Alliance Summary

Henderson makes the point that 99% of scientists believe in evolution and to count on disoriented biology students to decide whether ID should be part of the science curriculum could be a mistake. In science, scientists are subject to peer review to ensure no loopy theories get through. Naturally, scientists will support their peers. Fortunately, some school board members have been brave enough to question this, and so the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster throws its hat in the ring.

However, since those behind ID claim the theory is not religiously based, why are 95% of ID members evangelical Christians? And why don't they claim a creator, since the theory couldn't exist without one? Henderson draws the conclusion that the FSM is the one behind the ID movement as he likes to make this sort of mischief. He agrees that without proof of a creator, it is hard to show proof of ID, though he believes there is a conspiracy: the FSM is manipulating data and information to throw humans off the truth.

As similar as FSM theories seem to ID, there are distinct differences, Henderson points out. But one commonality is that both assume a conclusion first, then backtrack to find evidence, a concept for which he congratulates ID proponents. This is the opposite of scientists who can spend years muddling over tests without knowing how things will turn out.

## The Blunders of Science - FSM vs. ID, an Unlikely Alliance Analysis

Without naming them, this chapter takes a direct poke at the Kansas School Board, which initiated this book in the first place by trying to include ID in their science curriculum. With the usual satire, Henderson shows the disparity between science and concepts of creationism - one standing on facts and the other on presumptions. Of course the parody is that he says he agrees with the ID advocates for the open-minded environment they are creating with the opportunity to let FSM theories be part of this new wave in education.

He also brings up the point that while ID doesn't specify a particular reason, it is 95% evangelically based, and an Intelligent Design theory couldn't exist without a creator. Of course the reason that a creator isn't mentioned in the ID theory is that it would not be a universally-appealing concept if it seemed to exclude other religions and, of course, less likely to be accepted as a science by catering to an exclusive group.



# The Blunders of Science - Communion Test

## The Blunders of Science - Communion Test Summary

This and the remaining chapters in the first section of the Gospel set out to prove the FSM theory. The Communion Test is designed to provide quantitative results on whether the food of the Christian God or the food of the FMS has better nutritional benefits to gauge which deity is most likely to be true. Two subjects were selected and for 76 hours, one ate paper thin wafers and one ate spaghetti with meatballs and sauce (the FSM communion). Their vitals were checked, and not surprisingly, the one who ate the spaghetti fared much better.

For the sake of science, since 2 calories of wafer versus 1,200 calories of spaghetti had to be taken into consideration, another test was done where the Christian subject received 1,250 calories worth of wafers. Again, the Pastafarian fared well, while the Christian become violently ill.

## The Blunders of Science - Communion Test Analysis

While absurd, this chapter exemplifies how far-flung science can be pushed to try to make a conclusion work by creating tests that will support it. Of course the results are meaningless except in what the researcher wants to draw from them, and naturally that will be whatever supports the conclusion. While the results of eating 1200 calories worth of wafers versus spaghetti would be obvious to anyone, the Pastafarians' superior health and well-being at the end of the test is construed as making FSMism more probable than a Christian god.



# The Blunders of Science - Unified Spaghetti Theory

## The Blunders of Science - Unified Spaghetti Theory Summary

This chapter shows how to physically create life and how that process correlates to making spaghetti. The recipe for life includes a giant pot of boiling water and spaghetti-shaped, elementary particles (subatomic string) and salt. Henderson explains how to convert these strings into fusilli-shaped DNA to form life. His theory is that these "strings" are in fact spaghetti, despite what pagans might claim, and thus the world is in essence an eternal bowl of spaghetti created after FSM's image.

Although man does not look like spaghetti, we were created to resemble FSM's ideal image, the Pirate. Henderson warns that if technological trends make us too lazy, humans will start to resemble pasta. He suggests we all become Pastafarians and live the way of the pirate before it's too late.

## The Blunders of Science - Unified Spaghetti Theory Analysis

This chapter shows how a god can be found in almost anything and in any form, useful to believers who want to show evidence of their particular god's existence. The spoof easily compares creation with pasta, using a boiling pot of water, salt, elementary particles (tiny spaghetti) and hot light (to emulate the sun) to form life. More evidence that the FSM exists. Rather than being created in God's image as in Christianity, Pastafarians believe we were created in FSM's ideal image - the pirate. Unlike the Christian god, it is known what the FSM looks like and therefore easier to find images in the world that appear to be icons, such as DNA strands.



# **The Blunders of Science - More Evidence**

## **The Blunders of Science - More Evidence Summary**

Henderson reasons that the most proof of the FSM's existence comes from scientists, and scientists come from colleges, so in looking at those institutions of higher learning, there is much more evidence to be found. Colleges cost a great deal of money for an overpriced diploma, leaving students in poverty. They have no choice but to consume beer and pasta for nutrition, making them more like pirates. Obviously, the FSM is behind this influence, a good sign for the future. Henderson concludes that if students are our future, so is Pastafarianism.

## **The Blunders of Science - More Evidence Analysis**

Again, Henderson humorously demonstrates how easy it is to find evidence of a god anywhere and everywhere, though usually as a matter of perception rather than fact. A recent graduate when he wrote this book, he also mocks education, especially its sticker tag. Henderson's book is appealing to college students not only for its quirky features (the beer volcano and stripper factory) but as fodder for thought about their own education in the sciences.



# **The Blunders of Science - Kiwi Birds: Flightless?**

## **The Blunders of Science - Kiwi Birds: Flightless? Summary**

Henderson questions evolutionists' contention that flightless birds didn't develop the ability to fly because they were not threatened by predators in their area. He believes kiwi birds, for example, can fly but simply choose not to as they are lazy. He offers an experiment that evolutionists can use to test his theory. The experiment involves putting twenty or thirty kiwi birds in the back of a dump truck, taking them to the highest cliff possible, and dropping them off. Henderson predicts that the kiwis will show their ability to fly with the ground rushing toward them.

## **The Blunders of Science - Kiwi Birds: Flightless? Analysis**

In this extremely short chapter, Henderson questions evolutionary theories. Despite all the facts to the contrary, he questions the theory that flightless birds lost the ability to fly as their species evolved without this need. His wacky kiwi bird experiment expresses the absurdity of some alternative arguments to natural science.





# Explaining Pastafarianism - A Condensed History of the World

## Explaining Pastafarianism - A Condensed History of the World Summary

According to Henderson, the FSM created the universe five thousand years ago, though FSM placed evidence of a much older existence to throw humans off the track. He created Earth in under a second, which he also disguised to look older. Henderson explains that dinosaurs did exist and lived alongside humans about three thousand years ago. No bones have been discovered from this time as dinosaurs didn't have bones, the ones dug up being a big hoax by the FSM. Dinosaurs moved by engorging different muscles to get stiff.

Most important in Pastafarian history is the Golden Age of Pirates, some 2,500 years ago. This is when the FSM "revealed his Noodly Appendage" to show people the lightened way, ergo the way of piracy. Unlike the thieves they have been portrayed as, pirates were in fact peace-loving explorers, who handed out candy to children, the roots of Halloween. Some people rejected FSM's word and set out to fight the Pastafarians, Noah being a good example. Although little is known what happened between Noah and the pirates, it is believed Noah came across a pirate ship and started giving the pirates a hard time, finally hurtling his defenseless animals at the ship.

No one bothered the Pirates for a long time after that until the Hari Krishnas, believing the Pirates were evil, declared a holy war. FSM missed them descending on the pirate ships in their kayaks, thinking they were a musical group or fishermen. The Pirates assumed they had arrived for candy, only to be slaughtered by the Krishna's double-bladed kayak paddles. After constant attacks, pirates began hiding in coves, virtually hunted to extinction by all sorts of religious groups jealous of their happy lifestyles. Little evidence exists from these bloody wars, since Pirates concealed their religious texts in treasure, a lure for others to find and reveal the truth in these documents.

## Explaining Pastafarianism - A Condensed History of the World Analysis

This chapter makes fun of Creationists who have a difficult time reconciling evidence of dinosaurs with religious text and have gone as far as to suggest that dinosaurs co-existed with man, despite strong scientific evidence to the contrary and no proof to support this theory. Similarly, there is little proof of the Pirates' true history as the FSM's Chosen Ones given many easily-explained reasons. It also makes a stab at Noah and the incredulity of that event and draws comparisons of the Pirates' persecution to the Christian one.



# Explaining Pastafarianism - Key Moments in FSM History

## Explaining Pastafarianism - Key Moments in FSM History Summary

This chapter is a photo collection of key moments in FSM history. Photos show proof of the FSM's existence, from aboriginal cave paintings and ancient Greek architecture to a Michelangelo painting and man's first walk on the moon. Even the Great Wall of China appears to be a spaghetti-shaped tribute to the FSM. The FSM was even at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, though our founders were intimidated by his intellect and immediately made a separation between church and state. He was not allowed to sign the declaration, and his image was later removed from the painting commemorating the event.

## Explaining Pastafarianism - Key Moments in FSM History Analysis

This photo album chapter pokes fun at visual evidence from which theories can be conjectured but not readily proven. A shape or symbol might show similarity to a religious icon but is it intentional or by chance? Henderson shows how easily the FSM can be found visually in the world as, of course, can other icons. His presence is apparent from cave paintings of kangaroos leaping in his likeness to his presence when man landed on the moon. A few famous images include the FSM, such as the signing of the Declaration of Independence or man's first step on the moon, but, of course, there are reasons why His image was obliterated from them. The referral to separation of church and state is mentioned next to the Declaration signing painting, the excuse being that our founders were too intimidated by his intellect. Henderson implies that some supreme intervention must have happened to create this separation, as it obviously is an obscure concept to ID advocates.



# **Explaining Pastafarianism - Bobby Answers the Big Questions**

## **Explaining Pastafarianism - Bobby Answers the Big Questions Summary**

Bobby Henderson goes deeper into the theory that the decline of pirates has caused global warming. Contemporary pirates have little effect as rushing around in speed boats with guns or being on a Pirates sports team with lots of rules and regulations hardly captures the spirit of the adventurous buccaneer. As proof, the months following Halloween are much colder than the months preceding it, since more people wear pirate costumes around Halloween. He also notes that on Talk Like a Pirate Day (September 19th), it has consistently been colder than another day of the year randomly pulled (July 10th).

Henderson says that inconsistencies in FSMism are from FSM's tampering, plus you can't have a widespread religion without inconsistencies. He says his faith welcomes all religious and atheist people to convert. They will not go to hell if they don't but might not gain access to some of the better areas of FSM heaven. Henderson believes the FSM has a strong sense of humor, as it is the only way to explain certain ironies, such as why peace-promoting evangelical Christians align themselves with pro-war groups.

## **Explaining Pastafarianism - Bobby Answers the Big Questions Analysis**

This chapter reiterates themes of religion and science with the author's ludicrous responses to questions about Pastafarianism that basically mock other religions, predominantly Christianity. He is quick to point out some inconsistencies and ironies in Christianity, such as preaching peace while supporting war and most religions' long histories of violence. He emphasizes the point that a religion can't be widely accepted without inconsistencies; in other words, based on faith over fact, with a fact-based findings on faith having ambiguous logic at times.



# Explaining Pastafarianism - WWAPD?

## Explaining Pastafarianism - WWAPD? Summary

The acronym for this chapter stands for What Would a Pirate Do? Henderson says in these trying and technological times, it is easy to get lost in the trappings and question our purpose. If feeling lost, he suggests pondering, what would a pirate do? He then offers seven steps that a pirate would take, including "1) drink grog, 2) obtain a parrot, 3) find a band of marauders, 4) steal or build a ship, 5) find a wench, 6) plunder , and 7) say Arrrgh!!!"

Henderson encourages grog as it "opens the mind and frees the soul." Pirates are useful for repeating forgotten information, but as they are scarce, a PDA or diary can make do. One can't pirate alone, so that's where the marauders of a similar ilk come in. The next big step is to acquire what all pirates want most - a ship. Once on board, a pirate needs company, hence the need to secure a wench. But with long days at sea, malaise can set in, so to break the monotony, a pirate must plunder. Henderson says following all these steps will lead to a life of happiness, capped with a final step which is to embrace Arrrgh!!!, as without it you're just another landlubber.

## Explaining Pastafarianism - WWAPD? Analysis

At this point the book has become completely tongue-in-cheek and takes a break from its ID and evolution themes to have pure fun with the pirate theme. One might say dressing up like pirates is satirical of the fanatic faithful going to extremes to pay tribute to their gods. At the same time, it parodies the common Christian question posed to those in moments of doubt: What would Jesus do? Pirates are the antithesis of conservative morality, so their choices, such as drinking grog and finding wenches, are quite irreverent, while the message remains the same. In other words, how far is one willing to go, from moderate to extreme, to follow a belief system? And in subtext, the author questions if drinking, fornicating and plundering are really much different than historical events in Christianity.



# Explaining Pastafarianism - The Holy Noodle

## Explaining Pastafarianism - The Holy Noodle Summary

This chapter describes the first five days of creation, the Olive Garden of Eden, the Flood, the Tower of Scrapple, Mosey, and the eight "I'd Really Rather You Didn't's" commandments. On the first day of creation, the FSM created light, then split the light and dark into day and night. On the second day, he created firmament with coves to protect pirates from harm, as well as a beer-spewing volcano. He drinks heavily from the volcano, so on the third day he is hung over and forgetting what he did on day two, he created land again. Realizing his error, he moved the second day's firmament to Heaven. On the fourth day, the FSM created the sun, moon and stars. On the fifth day the FSM created animal life and was so pleased with himself that he got drunk. When he woke, he fell out of bed and realized that in his drunken stupor he had created a stripper factory in Heaven and a midget on earth.

The midget complains a lot in the Olive Garden of Eden so the FSM gives him some animals and instructs him to make pasta every day. After the midget takes a nap, the FSM surprises him with a woman. Before long, the midget and woman begin arguing and, feeling naked, cover their bodies with fig leaves. The FSM comes into the garden in search of breadsticks but the midget lies to him that there aren't any more.

Seeing that man could be wicked, The FSM returned to Heaven and made his own spaghetti. He spent so long cooking it that by the time he was done, man had populated. The FSM absentmindedly drained the spaghetti in the colander, then realizes it fell on earth. Luckily, Noah and his family had built an ark. They floated for forty days and nights, including a few battles with pirates as mentioned before, then landed on Mount Ararat.

After the flood, Noah's sons spread out across the land to open diners. One short order cook, Mosey, could cook a mean papyrus but grew tired of the mistreatment under Phil. He ventured off to become a pirate. This got the FSM's attention. He told Mosey to go back for the other short order cooks and make his own restaurant franchise, which he did after some confrontations with Phil. Mosey became Pirate Mosey. He led his pirates in search of a ship and ended up on Mount Salsa. The FSM was irritated and told Mosey he needed to go to the ocean, not a mountain, to find a pirate ship. Moses was too embarrassed to come down. The FSM spent time with him and gave him Commandments (later shortened to Condiments) on ten tablets, though Mosey dropped two on his way down the mount. The Eight "I'd Really Rather You Didn't's" included rules Pastafarian should try not to break, such as insulting others on an empty stomach or not building expensive churches in His name.



## Explaining Pastafarianism - The Holy Noodle Analysis

This chapter is a pasta-infused parody of Old Testament events bearing little likelihood of actually having happened based on reason, such as the world's genesis, the Garden of Eden, Noah's ark, and Moses and the 10 commandments. The chapter opens with a highly-irreverent portrayal of a god who likes beer and created man while in a drunken stupor, with the Big Bang (a scientific theory Creationists don't believe in) being the FSM's disoriented tumble out of bed. Henderson also spoofs Noah and the big flood, as well as Moses and the 10 commandments to show that even blind faith can't override basic laws of nature. Since Pastafarians aren't dogmatic, the commandments (two of which were accidentally dropped) don't order people to follow the rules, rather ask them politely not to do certain things. In this chapter, as throughout others, Henderson shows his disdain for dogma, which is not part of the Pastafarian credo. In fact, Pastafarians reject dogma. His implication is that dogma forces ideology versus free thinking.



# Explaining Pastafarianism - A History of Heretics

## Explaining Pastafarianism - A History of Heretics Summary

This chapter profiles 'heretics' who challenged both religious and scientific dogma, including Aristotle, Leonardo Da Vinci, Giordano Bruno, Charles Darwin, John Scopes, and Dolly the Sheep.

Henderson describes Aristotle as a New Age Philosopher who studied under Plato but disagreed with his teachings. A Renaissance man, Aristotle talked about God, but also an eternal universe, which the Catholic Church took a dim view to about a thousand years later when Aristotle hype resurfaced.

Da Vinci was responsible for every invention of war but was brilliant in exploring art and science, unlike scientists of today who have little regard of the arts. His troubles with the church are apparent to anyone who has read The Da Vinci Code.

Henderson gives 16th century philosopher Giordano Bruno a less sympathetic portrayal for having controversial views (e.g. the idea of an infinite universe), a big mouth, and unpleasant personality that resulted in him getting burned at the stake during the Inquisition.

According to Henderson, Darwin's love was the culinary arts, but he was tricked into studying science by his father. His exploratory trips were in fact to collect culinary goods rather than observe nature. On the Voyage of the Beagle he became a believer in the FSM and went on to deliver a fascination in earth worms with the belief man descended from them. He was convinced by a friend, Huxley, to say man descended from monkeys rather than worms, after which his evolutionary theories really took off.

Another heretic is Charles Scope, a teacher who was fined for breaking the Butler Act in Tennessee which prohibited the teaching of evolution in the class room. Henderson blames this on the ACLU's interference and Scope being their unwitting puppet. Lastly, Dolly the cloned sheep is mentioned as a heretic, having been genetically rather than naturally produced. Scientists speculated that it was an instinct about her short life on earth that made her libido act wild.

## Explaining Pastafarianism - A History of Heretics Analysis

This chapter profiles heretics who were persecuted for enlightened thinking that clashed with Christian dogma. Through irony, this chapter reinforces the dangers of a single



religious doctrine, such as the Inquisition that saw those with opposing views, such as Giordano Bruno, burned at the stake. Henderson's implication is that if religion is allowed into academia under a dubious umbrella, it may not be long before non-believers are persecuted in one form or another.

Henderson takes many true facts about the founder of the theory of evolution, Charles Darwin (such as his writings, voyage on the Beagle, bouts of illness, and interest in earth worms), and cites ways in which these events show he believed in Pastafarianism. (In real life, false rumors abounded that Darwin regained his religious beliefs on his death bed, but according to family members who were present, that was not the case.) Again, this chapter illustrates how easy it is to try to convert facts to ideology and vice-versa. It also reinforces the detriment of allowing a single theology to gain power.





# Propaganda - The Pastafarian Guide to Propaganda

## Propaganda - The Pastafarian Guide to Propaganda Summary

Henderson says that Pastafarians welcome anyone; FSM faith is not based on dogma, and they offer a God-back guarantee if not satisfied within 30 days. He warns Pastafarian missionaries to always be alert, especially when wearing an eye patch and to be especially cautious when trying to convert Mormons and Born Agains. Henderson then describes how best to approach various groups, including academics, the elderly, children and celebrities with advice such as showing the graphs and charts included in the Gospel to scientists and mentioning pirates to children.

Henderson then dispenses advice on how to interact with people of other faiths. For Mormons, Henderson suggests showing up at their homes, since this seems their preferred method of conversion. Christians like carrying signs proclaiming sinners going to hell, so he suggests making your own FSM signs with slogans such as Beer Rules. He thinks the only sticky point for converting a moderate is the Jesus factor, but suggests making the argument that Jesus was probably the FSM in disguise, so it makes more sense to convert to FSMism than worship a god put in place by the FSM.

Henderson goes on to suggest that the United States went to Iraq not because of weapons of mass destruction (it was common knowledge those were in Iran and North Korea rather than Iraq) but because it was a secular Arab country, hence easier to convert to Pastafarianism through the "Wiggly Multiappendaged Deity, or Operation WMD." Pastafarians are most similar to Rastafarians, especially as they live in pirate habitats such as the Caribbean.

The chapter ends with a note from Henderson concerning midgets and his surprise at the flak he has received for using this term, though it has always been from big people rather than little. However, since he always looks straight ahead versus down, he may have missed a little person trying to talk to him.

## Propaganda - The Pastafarian Guide to Propaganda Analysis

This chapter is a parody of missionary work and other religious efforts to convert others to a particular faith. Henderson makes fun of all religions, though has a penchant to target Christians the most, since they are the dominant religion in this country and at the source of Creationist debates. He mentions that other religions exist beyond



Christianity, despite what politicians would have us believe, emphasizing a lack of true separation between church and state in this country.

Additionally, Henderson makes a satirical commentary on the Iraq war and the questionable reasons for starting it (WMD). He regards it as a political propaganda move to westernize the country, much like missionaries have attempted to convert "uncivilized" populations over the centuries. The derogatory references to midgets seems to represent prejudice about people we know little about (i.e. from other religious groups).



# Propaganda - Pamphlets

## Propaganda - Pamphlets Summary

This chapter includes a pamphlet that can be copied and used to promote Pastafarianism. It contains concise summaries of information from other chapters in the guide, such as scientific proof supporting the existence of the FSM, as well as quotes from "experts," such as senators and PhDs. Features and benefits are also shared, such as every Friday being a holiday and the beer volcano and stripper factory in Heaven.

Following the pamphlet is an excerpt from Bobby Henderson's letter to the Kansas School Board to formally request that if alternative views to evolution are being considered, FSMism should also be part of the curriculum. In it he reiterates "scientific" comparisons with Christianity as proof it is just as legitimate, along with quotes from "smart people who agree with us."

## Propaganda - Pamphlets Analysis

This chapter makes a stab at the "business" of religion, particularly evangelicalism. The promotional brochure draws comparisons to Christianity with supposedly equally strong (yet farcical) scientific backing to support FSMism beliefs, and thus necessary inclusion in Intelligent Design theories.

The letter to the Kansas State Board makes a mockery of their intent to include creationism as a scientific area of study. The original letter was never formally responded to by the board, though a few board members wrote to Henderson, and the letter has been used in other states (along with the Gospel) to dissuade other school boards from pursuing similar goals of including creationism in the class room.



# Propaganda - Swag

## Propaganda - Swag Summary

This chapter provides craft projects to help promote or have fun with Pastafarianism. Included in the back of the book is a stencil of the pirate fishbone. Step-by-step instructions are provided for making the stencil, with the suggestion of spraying the fishbone in "interesting places." Similar types of instructions are given for making your very own Spaghetti Monster simulacrum out of rubber bands, pipe cleaner, fuzzy balls and a few other small items to emulate pasta and meatballs.

## Propaganda - Swag Analysis

The pirate fishbone is an obvious parody of the fish representing Christian faith, most often seen on bumper stickers. Compared to the Christian's conservative symbol, the FSM pirate fish is as rebellious as (and representative of) its followers. Pastafarians have one thing on Christianity: although the FSM is usually invisible, His shape and appearance are known. As Henderson points out, there will probably never be a Christian god simulacrum.



# Propaganda - Fund-raising

## Propaganda - Fund-raising Summary

Pastafarianism accepts contributions but does not take collections. Pastafarians are saving up for a big pirate ship (the Pastafarian church) so fund raising is necessary to support such an endeavor. Although the faithful are not required to contribute money to go on the ship, they won't be allowed to touch the cannons to offer some incentive for those who help out.

One grand fund-raising scheme involves time travel and the lottery; with different time zones where it's a day earlier in other parts of the world, Pastafarians on one side will share lottery information with members on the other size of the time zone to score big fund-raising bucks. Henderson says that while this may seem unethical, it hardly compares to evangelical Christians garnering quite a bit of their wealth from social security checks.

## Propaganda - Fund-raising Analysis

In this one-page chapter, Henderson openly attacks evangelical church leaders for getting wealthy from their congregations. The silly time travel fund-raising scheme may seem illicit, but, as Henderson points out, it's far lower on the moral barometer than duping old people out of their small living pensions. Followers are donating money based on faith with the promise of a better afterlife. Henderson offers Pastafarians an even better afterlife in FSM heaven and a cooler church aboard a ship.



# Propaganda - A Guide to the Holidays

## Propaganda - A Guide to the Holidays Summary

Like all religions, Pastafarians have special holidays. They include Pastover, Ramendan, Halloween, International Talk Like a Pirate Day, and Fridays. Analogous to Passover at Easter, at Pastover spaghetti is served in FSM's image and stories are shared about when the FSM first touched humans. Family members dress like pirates and pass an eye patch around, taking turns saying why they are glad to have been touched by the FSM's noodly appendage. Ramendan is similar to Ramadan, except Pastafarians do not pray or fast. Instead, they only eat Ramen noodles for a few days as they reflect on their starving college days and feel grateful for what they've achieved since then.

Halloween is important to Pastafarians as it reminds them of the days when pirates roamed freely. On this holiday, Pastafarians dress up as pirates and go in search of wenches and grog. It is also obvious that their dwindling numbers have been the cause of global warming. International Talk Like a Pirate Day is self-explanatory and celebrated September 19th. Dressed like pirates, Pastafarians seek out wenches and grog on this special day. With the grog going around, the majority of FSMism converts happen on this holiday. Every Friday is a Pastafarian holiday, and the faithful are encouraged to take it easy and pay tribute to the beer volcano and stripper factory.

In addition to these special days, Pastafarians celebrate all major commercial holidays, with a big break through most of December and January. Henderson notes how Pastafarianism is spreading, as now instead of Happy Christmas, they say Happy Holidays to incorporate Pastafarians as well.

## Propaganda - A Guide to the Holidays Analysis

This chapter puts a campy pirate twist on traditional holidays, such as Passover, Easter and Ramadan. It also takes a jab at the commercial exploitation of holidays such as Christmas and at Wal-mart in particular. Pastafarianism holidays are all more or less alike, involving pasta, piracy, grog, and wenches.

# Propaganda - Enlightenment Institute

## Propaganda - Enlightenment Institute Summary

Pastafarians have formed an Enlightenment Institute to find more fact-based evidence on the FSM, with works published in a quarterly publication called the Science Creative Quarterly. Mathematicians use complex equations to prove FSM's existence, with hypotheses such as "immaculate induction" and the ontological argument. They all boil down to the simple fact that a pasta-based creator is responsible for the world's creation.

The first abstract is written by a mathematician, who uses the immaculate induction hypothesis and insists that mathematical analysis also needs to be included in exploring Intelligent Design, along with science and religion. The author includes a formula on "Grand Design" to show how intelligent design can only be explained with a mathematical structure. The second paper, also by a mathematician, gives propositions and conclusions to quickly prove that the FSM is our creator, though he was an egotistical maniac to create the world as he desired. The next paper, written by a historian, writes of Penguins and Pasta, claiming irrevocable proof of the FSM's existence. Examples include the proliferation of pasta in Europe, couscous in desert climates, noodly-shaped geographical landmarks and the fall of ancient South American civilizations that did not have pasta. He also points to the kangaroos in Australia, who attempt to fly in an attempt to imitate the FSM, and fossilized noodle dishes in China. Antarctica has no evidence of pasta because this was where the FSM sent the outcasts, ergo the penguins who are descendants of the original midget on earth.

## Propaganda - Enlightenment Institute Analysis

This chapter serves to demonstrate that FSMism is as rational as Intelligent Design and spoofs the lack of methodical scientific evidence supporting it. It mocks those with scientific credentials who support ID and reject most components of evolution (while generally conceding the earth is older than 6,000 years.) The "Of Penguins and Pasta" paper is a parody of "Of Pandas and People: the Central Question of Biological Origins," published by an intelligent design advocacy group. This became a national case when teachers in Dover, PA (2004) were required to reference this publication when teaching evolution, which has since been overturned.



# **A Final Note from Bobby Henderson and His Staff**

## **A Final Note from Bobby Henderson and His Staff Summary**

The gospel ends with a 2-page letter from Bobby Henderson exalting that FSMism is the only religion based on hard science, making it "the most unquestionably true theory every put forth in the history of humankind." Addressed to the "Newly Converted Reader," he encourages fellow Pastafarians to spread the word while reminding Evolutionists that evolution could not have happened without the FSM's interference. To ID proponents, he says he supports their argument that other teachings should be included in science curricula and suggests a supernatural approach would be a valuable component to evolution and creationism. In this regards, they are allies.

Henderson agrees that theories are different than facts, but FSMism has more facts to back it up than other religions, making it the best one in the world. He ends by saying he hopes there are a few new converts from reading the gospel and at very least, he hopes it made readers think. He signs his letter as a self-proclaimed "prophet."

## **A Final Note from Bobby Henderson and His Staff Analysis**

Henderson's letter is written in the same satirical tone as his opening letter. He again attempts to make ID proponents look ridiculous by aligning his fictitious religion next to creationism, pointing out the similarities and equal credence based on theory and dubious fact. His request that Pastafarianism is included in the curriculum with Intelligent Design and Evolution echoes this sentiment. Using parody as his weapon of choice, Henderson is ultimately attempting to sway readers to see the dangers of opening up the sciences to special-interest groups using it as a pretense to advocate their religious beliefs.





# Characters

## Bobby Henderson

Bobby Henderson is the author of the Gospel, which he writes in a first-person voice. A self-claimed prophet, he is spreading the word of the Flying Spaghetti Monster and his theories on evolution and intelligent design. As a satire, his character in the book is a firm believer in the supernatural and mocks evolution and ID as implausible, or at least FSMism as just as plausible. He pushes the envelope from creationism to the supernatural to demonstrate the lack of any concrete methodology behind trying to make religion a science. This book was written after Henderson sent a letter to the Kansas school board in protest of their trying to add ID to their school science curriculum as an alternative to evolution. Although he didn't initially get a response to his quirky letter (some board members later replied), it led to the publication of the Gospel as well as much debate between religious and scientific scholars. It has also influenced other boards under pressure to change their curriculum. As a persuasive, expository piece, there is no character growth in Henderson (or any others).

According to his biography in the book, Henderson has a B.S. in physics, was twenty-five at the time of publication and lives in Corvallis, Oregon. The Gospel spawned several websites that he manages, including [www.Venganza.org](http://www.Venganza.org), [www.FlyingSpaghettiMonster.com](http://www.FlyingSpaghettiMonster.com) and [www.TalkLikeaPirate.com](http://www.TalkLikeaPirate.com).

## The Flying Spaghetti Monster

The Flying Spaghetti Monster (FSM) is a deity created by the author, Bobby Henderson, as a spoof to counteract ID theories on creation. The FSM is a large, invisible god made of spaghetti and meatballs. He uses his appendages to provide gravity, though as the population grows he can't reach everyone at once, hence people are getting taller. He invented the world rapidly, and many experts claim without much intelligence or hindsight. He also made a heaven that includes a beer volcano and stripper factory. The first man he created in a drunken stupor was a midget, but he was inherently rather evil and his descendants were cast off to the Antarctic and evolved into penguins.

Followers of FSMism are called Pastafarians. The FSM has an affinity toward pirates, his chosen people. He is generally a kind deity with a sense of humor (the duck-billed platypus being an example of one of his jokes). He also has fooled humanity by making the universe appear much older than it actually is, hiding fossils and other items to fool scientists. Unlike the Christian god, it is known what the FSM looks like, and evidence of His presence can be seen all over the world in geography, art, food and even jumping kangaroos, who try to imitate his flight. The very fabric of life, DNA strands, are even pasta shaped, giving even more credence to the FSM's existence.



## Pastafarians

Pastafarians are believers of the Flying Spaghetti Monster and also believe the earth was only fairly recently created, though the FSM has planted evidence to trick humans into believing it is much older. Their goal is to try to convert others into this one true religion. Pastafarians are non-dogmatic and embrace Piracy. They celebrate all holidays in addition to their own, including Talk Like a Pirate Day. Every Friday is also a holiday. Pastafarians are non-violent and have no history of bloody warfare, unlike other religions.

## Scientists/Evolutionists

Henderson mocks science throughout the Gospel, questioning facts versus theory and giving his own bizarre evidence to prove evolution wrong. This is done in parody as he voices (to extreme) rationale for the supernatural as a way of demonstrating how inappropriate it would be to allow Intelligent Design into a science curriculum. A note by a scientist and a religious leader exemplifies this preposterous notion with their theory of Unintelligent Design. Henderson aligns himself with ID proponents as far as agreeing that alternative learning should be offered to students and demonstrating FSMism is as credible (if not more so) than ID theories.

## Creationists

The Gospel is a parody on creationists hiding behind the pseudoscience of Intelligent Design. Henderson mocks creationists by spoofing the science behind their theories to ludicrous levels. Several voices in support of ID appear in the text. Ferris P. Longshanks, a sheriff, school board member and concerned citizen presents an "alternative view" to support Intelligent Design and why this choice needs to be offered in schools; he says without choices, we are no better than communists. He is against Henderson taking the lead on this. Others vilify creationists, primarily mathematicians and scientists from the Enlightenment Institute, who use intricate formulas and find facts based on their own conclusions to prove all but FSM theories wrong.

## Born Again Christians

Pastafarians know that Born Again Christians are the hardest to convert as they are fervent about their own religion. According to Henderson, they are all former crack addicts, so they are best left alone.



## Pirates

Pirates are the FSM's "Chosen Ones." All Pastafarians try to emulate pirates as much as possible and on certain holidays, dress and talk like them. Pastafarians also believe that the dwindling number of pirates is responsible for global warming.

## Midgets

Henderson makes a number of offensive and politically incorrect references about "midgets" (even that derogatory name itself) and has a disclaimer suggesting the Gospel be kept on a high shelf so as not to offend them. He says midgets are short as they get the most touching from the FSM's appendages. He also claims the first man created by the FSM was a midget, and all his descendants were outcast to the Antarctic and eventually became penguins. As the population grew, the FSM wasn't able to keep his appendages on everyone, hence the population grew taller.

## Kiwi Birds

While evolutionists contend that kiwi birds didn't develop the capacity to fly, Henderson argues that kiwi can in fact fly but lack the motivation. He suggests dumping a truck load of kiwis off a high cliff to prove his theory.

## Penguins

A Pastafarian belief is that penguins were once midgets, descended from the "first man," who angered the FSM, so he transformed them to birds that couldn't fly and transported them to the coldest place on earth with no access to pasta.



# Objects/Places

## FSM Heaven

FSM heaven is a college man's dream, with a beer volcano and stripper factory. The volcano was originally on earth, but after experiencing a bad hangover, the FSM decided to create a heaven and move the volcano there.

## Enlightenment Institute

A think tank of experts set out to prove the validity of FSM as a true religion. They publish their findings in Science Creative Quarterly.

## Pirate Fish Bone

Like the Christian fish symbol representing Christ, FSM has its own fish bone symbol with a pirate face. It appears in many photographs throughout the Gospel.

## Eye Patch

Committed Pastafarians wear eye patches to be more like pirates. The eye patch is passed around during the family meal at Pastover.

## Pirate Ship

The Pastafarians are committed to raising funds to make enough money to buy a large pirate ship to use as a church and to live their lives like the Chosen Ones.

## FSM Pamphlet

The Gospel includes a pamphlet that can be copied and distributed to help promote Pastafarianism.

## The Olive Garden of Eden

A parody of the Garden of Eden, the Olive Garden of Eden is where the first man (a midget) dwelt with a woman of the FSM's creation. It has olive trees, which the midget is warned not to eat as he could choke or break a tooth. Naturally, he eats the olives and breaks a tooth, after which he becomes aware of his nakedness.



## **The Scrapple Tower**

Noah's son, Ham, and another guy named Nimrod inadvertently create the Scrapple Power when their snout and sawdust treats don't sell as they hoped and the treats are piled into a smelly tower. It comes down at the FSM's insistence as it "stinks to high heaven," from which that expression was born.

## **The Eight Condiments**

Mosey carries the FSM's commandments down Mount Salsa to share with his pirates, but drops two tablets on the way. The commandments (or condiments) are things that the FSM would prefer his followers not to do.

## **[www.talklikeapirate.com](http://www.talklikeapirate.com)**

The official website for the Pastafarian's holiday, Talk Like a Pirate Day, held on September 19th of each year.



# Themes

## Evolution vs. Intelligent Design (or Science and Religion)

The central theme (and debate) of this Gospel is the validity of Intelligent Design as a science, ergo fact versus faith. The author is biased in his belief that Intelligent Design is not scientifically based and has no place in a science curriculum, so he writes with a persuasive point of view. His book uses a god of his own creation, the Flying Spaghetti Monster, to satirically demonstrate how any faith could have as much scientific credence as Christianity. By painting an absurd picture, yet using similar arguments such as presumptive theories based on questionable facts, Henderson gives a strong, one-sided argument for his case.

Henderson endorses the supernatural as a third theory and gives countless examples of how his supernatural deity is factually provable. But like ID advocates, he begins with a conclusion, then conducts research to fit it, however obscure the connection. For example, he conducted a diet experiment between a Christian and Pastafarian based on the food of Christ (wafers) and the food of the FSM (spaghetti); the Pastafarian naturally fared better, meaning that the FSM's existence was more likely. The many "contributors" give equally ludicrous arguments to support theory as fact—a spoof on ID advocates who have found a way to make creationism look scientific enough to be accepted into a science curriculum. Since ID advocates say evolution is just a theory, Henderson also spoofs this by agreeing with them and acknowledging the FSM was actually playing a trick by planting fossils and other hard evidence, so any proof of evolution should be discounted.

## Separation of Church and State

The basis behind the argument of keeping science methodically and factually pure has a deeper root in the idea of separation between church and state. While both religion and science hold importance for different reasons, this separation was founded by our founders to prevent one religion from dominating politics and government institutions. This separation allowed a greater freedom of religious expression rather than one religion controlling the power, as was the case in many European countries.

There has been much controversy in the past about whether or not religion has a place in American schools, from the word "God" in the pledge of allegiance or prayer groups, and, of course, whether Intelligent Design should be part of a science course. While Henderson attempts to demonstrate the threat to the credibility of science by co-mingling these conflicting disciplines in a school curriculum, he hints at the larger threat of letting a single-minded ideology infiltrate a public institution. He points out that this is the way politicians behave. Christianity already appears to have infiltrated the government. Although not mentioned in the book, Henderson's website points out that



Senator Bill Frist and President George W. Bush are both open ID advocates, condoning it in science curriculum, so this is obviously of concern to the author.

## Piracy

There are many reasons why Henderson may have chosen pirates to be a centerpiece in the FSM religion. For one, the idea is just plain silly, so fits in with the satirical wit of the rest of the book. However, they might be intended as a parody of Christian crusaders or missionaries. Pirates were out of the mainstream for their crimes at sea, outcasts as Christians once were when persecuted for their beliefs. At the same time, they are rebellious versus conformist and the stuff of boyhood adventure fantasies (as FSM Heaven is a big boy's fantasy). As such, they appeal to a broad audience of potential Pastafarians, such as college students, who would be the most susceptible to joining ranks.

Henderson reinvents history by making the pirates a friendly, congenial lot versus thieving marauders. He credits them for initiating Halloween by giving candy to children. Any written history that shows their true character has unfortunately been destroyed in shipwrecks or buried treasure. Christians have long sought to find concrete proof of Christ, since there is little more than the written word in the Bible upon which to prove his existence. This quest has become the stuff of fantasy fiction, such as searches for the Holy Grail, the Ark of the Covenant, remnants of the crucifix, etc. With no such finds in Christian or pirate history, Christians and Pastafarians have to rely on faith rather than proof.



# Style

## Point of View

The Gospel is written in a persuasive first person point of view, that of the author, Bobby Henderson. The novel is a parody with Henderson acting out a role as a prophet and firm believer in the FSM theory. The text includes papers or essays from other fictional characters, so there are a variety of voices, all in first person. Given the Gospel is written as an informational and inspirational guide on FSM, there is no dialogue or exchange among characters. All voices are extreme, with mathematicians and scientists offering ridiculous calculations and silly empirical evidence to support evolution or FSM and an ID advocate using equally ridiculous proof to dismiss them. Balanced with this intellectual nonsense is the goofy voice of the pirate. Pastafarians aspire to be pirates and imitate their speech, saying things such as Arrrgh!

## Setting

There is no specific setting for The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster other than America as a country. ID advocate Ferris Longshanks refers to Bobby Henderson as being from the Pacific Northwest, but location is irrelevant to the purpose of this book. The only described setting is FSM heaven. The Spaghetti Monster created it as an alternative to earth, where he could escape from people. Given ugly consequences from his first night drinking from the beer volcano he created on earth, he moved it to heaven. He also created a stripper factory in heaven. All FSM faithful are allowed into heaven and there is no hell.

## Language and Meaning

Since this book is a parody against the inclusion of creationism in science curricula, the author (Henderson) uses language in the absurd with the underlying context of the absurdity of creationism as a science. The language is tongue-in-cheek, flippant and often sacrilegious. At the same time, there are serious messages underlying the humor, which was obviously the author's intent. As a physics graduate, Henderson is well versed in scientific theories to make his satirical approach credible as a spoof in the "scientific" papers presented. He also knows of or researched many creationist activities and events to draw parallels with humor. It is obvious he is not a fan of dogma or religious doctrine, hence his religion does not include much of these. Fictitious expert voices also appear in the book, though with the same satirical language, even if in a different point of view, so that the language and messages are consistent throughout.



## Structure

The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster opens and closes with a letter from the author and is comprised of three main sections - "The Blunders of Science," "Explaining Pastafarianism" and "Propaganda." The first part contains 10 short (1-3 page) chapters; the second and third parts have six, short chapters each. Interspersed throughout are "notes" or papers from various fictitious experts sharing their opinions and expertise on topics of evolution and creation. The 166-page novel also contains many illustrations, photos and charts. There are also many humorous footnotes along the sides of the text.

## Quotes

"There's a dirty little secret that the scientific establishment has been trying to keep under wraps for years: there are many unproven theories that are being taught to people as if they were established fact." P. 3

"What if it is He, pushing us down with his Noodly Appendages, that causes this force?...And the fact that the Gravitational powers of the Spaghetti Monster haven't been disproven makes it all the more likely to be true." P. 4

"For what are people without choices? Communists! And despite this fact, there are those who would bar the public from having an open and honest discussion about Intelligent Design, a scientific concept that's so clear and logical as to appeal to Baptist holy men and intellectually discerning NASCAR fans alike." P. 6-7

"We tend to exalt our rigid empirical methods and technological advances, almost as if we're proud of what we've accomplished with them, but when the record clearly shows that supernatural, nonempirical science produces these kinds of results — the discovery of new lands, the elimination of demon-inducing illnesses, and the extinction of witches — it's time to rethink our methods and return to what gave us real results." P. 16

"Evolution is about as useful as a screen door on a submarine." P. 17

"Too many resources are being wasted in trying to prove intelligence in all we see around us. Wouldn't it be better just to throw in the towel, call a spade a spade, and admit that our Creator is a dumbass?" P. 31

"Our findings were that the Christian subject became violently ill upon consuming 2,500 calories in wafers (or 1250) while the Pastafarian continued to show increased vitals, thus illustrating his Noodly Presence." P. 39

"DNA, which is the building block of life, bears a striking resemblance to fusilli pasta." P. 41



"Burdened by poverty, students are induced to drink cheap beer and eat pasta - in short, they are forced to act like Pirates and Pastafarians - and we can only conclude that this is some part of His greater plan to spread FSMism." P. 46

"While I'll agree I've never seen a kiwi bird fly, I disagree with the statement that they can't fly.... You'll never see me running, but there's a good chance I could." P. 48

"To accept the Pirate life is to accept the eternal Arrrgh! Without it, you're just another landlubber." P. 69

"The initial creation, obviously, must have been spectacular, but He then spent the next ten to one hundred years painstakingly preparing the universe to appear older than it actually is." P. 51

"...a certain amount of inconsistency is necessary for a religion to become widespread - for example, Christianity, Islam, and so on." P. 64

"Consider how evangelical Christians, those who ostensibly promote peace, are aligned with pro-war groups." P. 66

"After several battles with Pirates, the ark did finally rest on Mount Ararat, and when the waters receded it was a long walk home for Noah and his family." P. 74

"Today Plato is nearly forgotten. His beliefs include the notion that people who govern should be intelligent, rational, self-controlled, and in love with wisdom, an idea that has long been discredited." P. 80

"I am sure I'm not alone when I say that I'd rather have the Born Agains running the school boards than stealing my car stereo for drug money. So in that respect, dogma is not all bad." P. 98

"String theory - all matter is created of little noodlelike strings. Coincidence?" P. 126

"...Pirates are an essential part not only of our faith, but of the welfare of our entire planet." P. 145

"It has been said that the best sauce requires an occasional stir or two - wiser words have seldom been spoken - and so we have done our best to stir the waters of belief in the hopes of converting just a few more pirates to His Noodly Goodness." P. 166

## Topics for Discussion

The author mocks Christianity, particularly evangelism, in many irreverent ways. Does the humorous, satirical approach help or hurt Henderson's argument that Intelligent Design is not a true science, based on fact and should be kept out of school curricula?

What are some of the implications Henderson is concerned about should ID be taught as a science and how does he convey them?

The Flying Spaghetti Monster is an absurd icon for a god, but Henderson presents many arguments as "pro" of FSM's existence. Is it easier to prove or disprove (scientifically or otherwise) the existence of any god beyond faith or belief?

Aside from humor, in what way are the FSM marketing tactics similar or different from the way other major religious groups try to convert others or raise funds?

Why are pirates the Chosen Ones? What do they represent in FSMism and what subtext might be intended beyond humor?

Henderson is very disrespectful to little people ("midgets") in his book. Do you think he did this simply for humor or perhaps as a statement about religion breeding hate or ignorance of certain groups (e.g. homosexuals, etc.)?

As well as creationists, Henderson makes fun of scientists. Is this equally balanced? What do you think are his real feelings toward the scientific community?

The book is told in an expository first-person voice with "writings" from other fictitious characters. What differentiation (if any) exists between the different voices and is it effective to have these different points of view?