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Atheism, Agnosticism, & non-Religious Worldviews: Theoretical Models and Psychological Measurement – Special journal issue of *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*

Guest Editors: Ralph W. Hood Jr., Heinz Streib, & Thomas J. Coleman III

Research in psychology of religion and spirituality has roots stretching back into the 19th century, however only recently has it begun investigating the atheist or the agnostic. While informative, these investigations have yet to build or identify a psychologically meaningful construct from nonreligion that is not contaminated by, or situated within, a system of theistic propositions. Explorations that focus on purely *negative* identities (e.g., not a theist) may fail to capture much of what is psychologically interesting and informative about this demographic. Atheism is interesting juxtaposed against the background of world-wide belief, but where is the multidimensionality and complexity of non-theistic worldviews that are so commonly attributed to theistic worldviews? Similar obstacles exist within in the cognitive sciences of religion. Here scholars tend to view some cognitive mechanisms as sui generis “religious mechanisms,” characterizing atheists as either implicitly religious or cognitively deficient in attempting to explain the existence of these individuals. The central focus of this special issue of *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, with guest editors Ralph W. Hood Jr., Heinz Streib, and Thomas J. Coleman III, is to challenge psychologists and cognitive scientists to move beyond atheism and agnosticism by investigating “non-religious worldviews” as full-fledged constructs rather than as a solely *negative* identity. We invite manuscripts (theoretical, empirical, and method) focused on exploring atheism, agnosticism, and non-religion from multiple perspectives by addressing the question of complexity and multidimensionality in measurement, psychological mechanisms, and theoretical models. Topics of specific interest are listed below:

- Psychometric measures of non-religious worldviews.
- Atheist and agnostic “spirituality.” Can nonbelievers be “spiritual?”
- Computer models of atheism.
- Comparative studies of atheists and theists.
- Quantifying and categorizing types of nonbelief.
- Atheism and analytical thinking.
- Moving beyond stigma and discrimination.
- Non-religion in childhood and adolescence.
- A framework for “implicit atheism?”
- Do agnostics differ psychologically from atheists?
- Atheism, agnosticism, and non-religious prosociality.
- Atheism, a next step in human evolution?
- Nonbelief as a complex, adaptive system?
- Atheism, health, and wellbeing.
- Atheism and the autism spectrum.

To submit: We ask that authors submit a 1-page Letter of Intent (LOI) by **March 31st, 2017** through the [submission portal](#) as a Special Section Article: Atheism, Agnosticism, & non-Religious Worldviews: theoretical Models and Psychological Measurement. The LOI should outline the content of the proposed manuscript, relevance to the special issue theme, and pertinent expertise of the authors. LOIs will be reviewed for overall quality and adherence to the special issue theme, with a subset invited to move forward with development and submission of a full manuscript. Feedback on letters of intent will be supportive but not definitive, as selected manuscripts will undergo the same review process as any other manuscript submitted to *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* before a final decision on publication. Submission deadline for selected articles will be September 15th 2017.

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