

Professor Peter Atkins

Peter Atkins is a Fellow and professor of chemistry at Lincoln College in the University of Oxford. He is the author of several successful chemistry textbooks, among them *Atkins' Physical Chemistry and Inorganic Chemistry*. With *Why Chemical Reactions Happen*, *Galileo's Finger* and *Atkins' Molecules*, he established himself also as a popular science writer. Like Richard Dawkins, he regularly speaks and writes on atheism and the incompatibility of science and religion, regarding it as his mission to banish ignorance and to advance scientific understanding. In 2011 he published *On Being: A scientist's exploration of the great questions of existence*.

"I regard teaching religion as purveying lies."

"To assert 'God did it' is no more than an admission of ignorance dressed deceitfully as an explanation."

"To say that 'God made the world' is simply a more or less sophisticated way of saying that we don't understand how the universe originated. A god, in so far as it is anything, is an admission of ignorance."

"Religion's inwardly directed sentimental glow reflects on issues privately, exchanges information by assurance and assertion, discusses awkward points by warfare, terror, and coercion, and builds up a network of conflicting ideas that conceal ignorance under a cloak of high-flown yet empty prose."
