

Ep 60: Atheists in foxholes – religion and the army

Posted: Tue, 2nd Nov 2021

In an increasingly secular country, why does the British army retain its exclusively Christian practices?

There are many institutions in Britain whose entrenched Christian characteristics are out of step with the country's increasingly diverse and secularised population. Among these are the [monarchy](#), the [Church of England](#), and, closely linked to both, the armed forces.

In this episode, [Emma Park](#) speaks to [Laurence Quinn](#), a civil servant and former lieutenant colonel in the Royal Engineers. During his career in the army, Laurence came to discover that he was not religious. He began to notice the institutionally Christian features of the army and their implicit exclusion of non-Christians like himself. Three of the most striking of these features concern chaplaincy, language and culture, and, above all, the services conducted by the army to remember fallen comrades.

Laurence talks to Emma about his own efforts to make the army's practices more secular and inclusive. He argues that its Christian characteristics no longer reflect the views of the majority of its members.

[Watch this episode on YouTube](#) | [Direct MP3 Link](#) | [Transcripts](#)

Support the podcast, share with a friend, and leave a positive review everywhere you can.

Podcast produced by Emma Park for the National Secular Society (2021). All rights reserved.

[In an increasingly secular country, why does the British army retain its exclusively Christian practices? @DrEmmaPark speaks to former lieut. colonel Laurence Quinn.](#)
[Click to tweet](#)

We publish our podcast to enable exploration of subjects of interest to NSS members and supporters. Guests' views may not always align with those of the NSS.

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [FoRB](#), [Public services](#)

Related Campaigns

-

Keep public services secular

Public services intended for the whole community should be provided in a secular context.

[Read More](#)

-

Freedom of religion or belief

Secularism protects freedom of religion or belief for all.

[Read More](#)

Subscribe to NSS Podcasts: [Apple Podcasts](#) | [Android](#) | [Google Podcasts](#) | [Stitcher](#) | [Spotify](#) | [RSS](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Blubrry](#) | [TuneIn](#).

If you value the podcast please share it with a friend and leave us a positive review wherever you get it. You can also support future podcasts and our campaigns by [joining](#) the NSS or making a [donation](#).