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The Daily Show Way: Critical Thinking, Civic Discourse, and Postmodern Consciousness

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*Critical Thinking, Civic Discourse, and Postmodern Consciousness*

Roben Torosyan

> If you want to become whole, 
> let yourself be partial. …
> If you want to be given everything, 
> give everything up.

*Tao Te Ching*¹

For many twenty-somethings and grandmothers alike, *The Daily Show* taps a human longing for questioning, conversation, and fun that is generally neglected in civic discourse. The show can also help us at once give up being locked into our own assumptions and biases, while owning just how *inevitably* partial any view is.

**Civil Disservice**

Despite Stewart admitting his own “socialist” sympathies, *The Daily Show* often critiques not only right-leaning but left-leaning language. After Froma Harrop, the president of the National Conference of Editorial Writers and its Civility Project, labeled tea party “patriots” as “terrorists,” John Oliver interviewed her. Harrop had written, “The tea party Republicans have engaged in economic terrorism against the United States—threatening to blow up the economy if they don’t get what they want.”² Oliver sought “to find out how to restore civility to America's public discourse” in a report entitled “Civil Disservice” (January 12, 2012).

Midway through the piece, Oliver said, “I really admire how understanding you are to people who have different opinions to you. . . such as yourself.” Harrop paused, then replied, “Yeah.” Oliver pushed further, “So apparently, there are a lot of people out
there that are just name-calling for no real reason. How can I get them to tone down the
language?” Harrop failed to engage his point. Oliver then asked, “What if they don’t fight
back, they just get into this weird displacement?” Harrop replied, “Meaning?” And Oliver
said, “Meaning that they kind of don’t engage in what I’ve just said to them.” Harrop
answered, “Well you chain them up in a room.” Oliver then confined Harrop to an
elevator but similarly failed to get her to acknowledge her rhetoric.

After the airing, Harrop subsequently wrote in a follow-up blog, “Of course it was
staged. ‘The Daily Show’ is comedy, not journalism. This was a comedy sketch in which
the participants played out a parody of themselves, just as the guest hosts of ‘Saturday
Night Live’ are sometimes cast in self-deprecating situations. But you already knew that,
didn’t you?” In other words, Harrop tried to claim that contradicting her own desire for
civility was deliberate, that she caricatured herself. Yet in neither her so-called parody
nor her blog did she ever retract her use of the labels “terrorism” and “terrorists.”

In contrast to Harrop’s cynicism, extreme language, and denial, The Daily Show
promotes language that’s more moderate and accurate. Interestingly, despite the show’s
ironic satire, it aims at greater accuracy as a means to the larger end of truth in general, a
stream of thinking termed “modernism.” But in “postmodernism,” truth is seen more as
both a continuum (from less true to more true) and as a process (given that there is no
unbiased perspective out there, the point is to question everything). Despite its modernist
message that there is truth, the show’s constant questioning makes us more self-conscious
about our own thinking habits. The Daily Show and its writers “teach that deliberation is
not a means to an end but an end in itself. Discussion, dialogue, provocation, and
questioning are valued for their own sake—not because they lead to truth but because
they foster a community able to discern untruth.”

Better, I believe the show does lead to truer understanding. But more than information, the show promotes transformation—from knee-jerk habits of mind to mindful self-awareness. One way it does so is by catching how people try to manipulate opinion using the red herring tactic.

**The Red (Herring) Menace**

In a segment entitled “Are You Prepared?!?” (May 16, 2006) correspondent Samantha Bee begins, “Recent events have shown that Americans face certain death. Death that will kill you.” Like many of the show’s fake news items, the report caricatures the way the nation’s leaders and television media tend to sensationalize stories, appealing to emotion rather than disciplined reason.

Bee interviews one suburban couple about their emergency preparedness:

Bee: Homeland Security says you need duct tape and plastic sheeting to protect your home. I assume you have that?

Couple: No.

Bee: Communications gear?

Couple: No.

Bee *(lowering her voice as if embarrassed)*: Do you at least have a large tarp with which to collect the corpses of your friends and family?

While exaggerated for comic effect, Bee’s parody of loaded media questions conveys a serious message: Civic discourse is often driven more by emotion and dogma than by reasoned dialogue. By reducing the entire issue of emergency preparedness to “either protect yourself or die,” Bee lampoons how such false dichotomies (false either/or choices) do anything but promote safety (much less a feeling of safety), which requires even-tempered, reasoned planning, preparation, and prevention.
Hysteria makes a great red herring. As Stephen Colbert says, “There’s fear out there; someone’s gotta monger it.” The tactic of redirecting attention away from corruption, wasteful government spending, and other serious problems is just one way Stephen Colbert’s character regularly exudes the very opposite of seven critical thinking attitudes. In contrast, Stewart and team regularly enact them all:

1. inquisitive  
2. open-minded  
3. truthseeking  
4. systematic  
5. analytical  
6. judicious  
7. confident in reasoning

To illustrate the show’s “judicious” undercurrent: After the 2005 London terrorist attacks, Stewart mused, “The attacks happened overseas, yet 62 percent of Americans are worried about similar attacks here. I wonder why Americans are so nervous about it.” Glaring news headlines then flashed with ominous voiceovers: “London Terror,” “Attacks in London,” “Who’s at risk? How prepared are we?” Wide-eyed, Stewart said, “Oh, I see. But I’m sure the on-air cable hosts will bring some perspective, context, and understanding to the coverage.” Clips then showed hosts saying: “Are we next in America?” “How safe are we in America?” “Can we prevent a subway or a bus attack in the US?” “Why are they doing this?” and “You have to wonder, will we ever truly feel safe again?” Such clips highlight our tendency to focus egocentrically on our own safety when people suffer elsewhere. They also show the failure of news organizations to act in the traditional, time-honored role of judicious watchdog, arbiter, and protector.

Daily Show humor presupposes that news organizations have a responsibility to the public, much as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) conceived a government and its
citizens to be bound by a social contract. Government should provide people “a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate.” News organizations, similarly, should function in ways that benefit people, not use scaremongering to gain audience share. Likewise, Stewart and company show how politicians appeal to voters’ basest instincts to rally support for their own ideological positions.

“Diss” Ingenuous Bullshitting: Scapegoating and Leaping to Judgment (Day)

When the Republican-dominated House passed a resolution to continue the Iraq War (June 19, 2006), Stewart underscored the event:

Stewart: Representative Tom Cole encapsulated how the Republicans had once again succeeded.

Cole (video clip): Whether we are right or wrong on our side of the aisle, we do have a common position and it’s expressed in this resolution.

Stewart: That’s right: He’s right. Or wrong. But either way, people agree with him.

The congressman’s assumption here seems to be that we shouldn’t focus on the adequacy of such positions, let alone whether they would help or harm. Interestingly, this is the mark of neither honesty nor lying, but bullshitting, which involves making assertions without caring about their truth or falsity. Worse yet in this case, we only need agreement among the party in power, regardless of consequences, because the majority is presumed to represent the will of the people. Such an epistemology (or framework for knowing what’s true) devalues thinking through decisions, compromises democratic deliberation, serves only the interests of those in power, and reduces everything to either-or absolutes. As Stephen Colbert says (in one installment of “The Wørd”), “You’re either
for the war, or against America. There’s no gray area.” (“Or gray matter, apparently,” as the explanatory side-text reads onscreen.)

Stewart has said most politicians probably do truly believe they’d do a better job than their opponents. But they tend to neglect making honest arguments to justify that belief. They don’t consider enough information honestly to arrive at the best course of action. Instead, they often follow Niccolò Machiavelli’s (1469-1527) advice “to learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not use it, according to the necessities of the case.” Such reasoning leads to thinking that the ends one presumes to be good “justify” any means, no matter how destructive.

With a postmodern focus on process, Stewart often disagrees less with what politicians actually believe, and more with the way they suppress respectful and possibly fruitful exchange. Many leaders go from duplicitously manipulating rhetoric to outright dissembling and lying. Worse still, the media often appear to collude in the deception, failing to provide appropriate context or perspective. For example, when former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld gave a speech (May 9, 2006), he was interrupted by hecklers. Then he took a question.

Questioner: I’m Ray McGovern, a 27-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency. Why did you lie to get us into a war that was not necessary, that has caused these kinds of casualties?

Rumsfeld: First of all, I haven’t lied.

Stewart: Oh, he didn’t lie. Well, that settles it. There's pound cake in the back, we can have a good time, and uh—

Rumsfeld: It appears that there were not weapons of mass destruction.

McGovern: You said you knew where they were.

Rumsfeld: I did not.
Stewart: See? He never said he knew where they were.

Rumsfeld *(earlier video from March 2003)*: We know where they are. They’re in the area around... Baghdad.

Stewart: Well to be fair, Rumsfeld probably never saw that episode of *Meet the Press*.

Stewart begins his comments, as he often does, in the guise of a hopeful, if somewhat gullible, citizen. He then pretends to believe that the media will dutifully investigate such doubletalk: “So, the Secretary of Defense, caught, in a contradiction, about weapons of mass destruction. Surely that will be a big story.” Clips instead show CNN’s Paula Zahn accusing McGovern of having “an axe to grind,” Tucker Carlson calling him “not just any heckler,” and Anderson Cooper asking McGovern irrelevantly “Were you nervous?”

Carlson continued:

Carlson: Isn’t it enough that he was wrong and had bad judgment? Why does he have to be a liar too?

McGovern: Well, that's the question you'll have to direct to him.

Stewart: But won’t.

Stewart then showed clips from what he called “a Fox News unvestigative report” [sic] about Rumsfeld entitled, “Why He Fights.” The reporter interviews General Paul van Riper—who called for Rumsfeld’s resignation—and asks accusingly:

Fox News Reporter: What are you trying to accomplish by doing this? And you don’t think this debate threatens the civilian leadership of the military? Does that hurt the war effort?

Stewart *(sniffing deeply)*: Mmm, I can’t tell if I’m smelling the fairness *(sniffs)* or the balance.

Alluding to the Fox News tagline “Fair and Balanced,” Stewart draws attention to how such loaded questions support a one-sided agenda, rather than providing an even-handed
and honest investigation or discussion. By allowing such contradictions to speak for themselves, *The Daily Show* implicitly invites us to notice when we too resort to deception—keeping *us* honest when we believe, say, that we ourselves deserve to succeed by any means necessary.

**In the Line of Ire: Reframing the Debate**

One way to fight Machiavellian manipulation, the show implies, is to reframe the terms of debate. In interviewing William Bennett, author and former Secretary of Education under Ronald Reagan, Stewart questions the apparent inconsistency between Bennett’s claim to affirm America’s belief in freedom and his attempts to limit freedom by a ban on gay marriage.

Stewart: Why not encourage gay people to join in in [sic] that family arrangement if *that’s* what provides stability to a society?

Bennett: Well I think if gay… gay people are members of families, they’re *already* members of families.

Stewart: And that's where the buck stops, that’s the gay ceiling.

Bennett: Look, it’s a debate about whether you believe marriage is between a man and a woman.

Stewart: I disagree. I think it’s a debate about whether gay people are part of the human condition or just a random fetish.

Stewart rejects Bennett’s framing of the debate. He doesn’t just contradict him by saying, “Marriage isn’t *necessarily* between man and woman.” Rather, he suggests that the debate isn’t about how to define marriage, but instead about who counts as human, and how to understand the human condition.

Bennett: The question is how do you define marriage? Where do you draw the line? What do you say to the polygamist? What do you *say* to the polygamist?
Stewart: You don’t say anything to the polygamist. That is a choice, to get three or four wives. That is not a biological condition that “I gots to get laid by different women that I’m married to.” That’s a choice. Being gay is part of the human condition. There’s a huge difference.

Stewart first shows that calling homosexuality a mere choice ignores that it’s a much more basic condition of who someone is; he thus undercuts superficial versions of the determined/chosen dichotomy. Stewart then speaks to the larger question of what it means to be human. While Stewart seeks to foster respect for the freedom to be our fully human and different selves, Bennett treats differences of human condition as subject to choice and hence, regulation.

Bennett: Well, some people regard their human condition as having three women. Look the polygamists are all over this.

Stewart: Then let’s go slippery slope the other way. If government says I can define marriage as between a man and a woman, what says they can’t define it between people of different income levels, or they can decide whether or not you are a suitable husband for a particular woman?

Bennett: Because, gender matters in marriage, it has mattered to every human society, it matters in every religion, uh, it has mattered in…

Stewart: Race matters in every society as well. Isn’t progress understanding?

Bennett’s appeal resembles the warning of conservative orator Edmund Burke (1729-1797) against interfering extensively with habit and tradition, because society needs stability. Stewart suggests, on the other hand, that to avoid stagnation, society also needs change and progress—which require that we become more inclusive of greater variety and difference over time. To learn first requires admitting that one’s perceptions may be limited. As the Tao Te Ching puts it, “The mark of a moderate man is freedom from his
own ideas.” To free our minds, we must if not actually shift frames of reference then at least try honestly to understand frames different than our own.

**Look Who’s Not Talking Now: Going Beyond Experience**

Our experience both opens and closes our perception of the world, like a lens that brings some things into focus while blurring others. As the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) wrote, “If a person is trying to understand something, he will not be able to rely from the start on his own chance previous ideas.” If Bennett fails to question the source of his moral indignation—how, for instance, family influence or a distaste for gay sex may influence his viewpoint—he can’t truly understand either the issue or his role in debating it.

In his interview, Bennett went on to target “activist” judges, saying that gay marriage is coming because “the courts have decided it.” He continued by associating being gay with a devaluing of marriage in Western culture:

- **Bennett:** In Holland and Norway, marriage is taken less seriously. When you define it out, when you start to say it can involve anybody, then I think, any grouping, anybody who loves anybody, it has serious problems.

- **Stewart:** It has serious problems. And you know divorce is not caused because fifty percent of marriages end in gayness.

Deliberately associating being gay with “taking marriage less seriously” is a similar form of scapegoating. Bennett’s argument seems similarly aimed at blaming an innocent target (here, homosexuals) and gives no reason for his prejudice.

Stewart puts the obsession with the issue of gay marriage, and its abuse by politicians and pundits, in perspective by identifying divorce as not the result but the greater concern. As with all humor, the joke first gives a context (marriage), then sets up
an incongruity or problem (what ends a marriage), and finally leaps to an unexpected resolution (marriage ends in gayness). The structure of such jokes resembles that of serious problem-solving. To make sense something, we need to put it in appropriate context then build a new understanding. Stewart’s juxtaposition clarifies that the institution of marriage is threatened not by homosexuality but by choices people make.

**Show Me the Meta**

*America (The Book)* contains an image of colonists meeting Native Americans. The caption reads, “America’s path to democracy was cleared by the colonists’ generous giveaways, like the much sought-after ‘Smallpox Blankets.’” The line makes us laugh at an agonizingly tragic fact about colonial history. Such sharply tinged satire in *The Daily Show* derives from the very nature of tragedy and comedy. According to Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), tragedy combines both Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies, reason and recklessness, restraint and excess, going back and forth between the two, never resting at either.

Such a dynamic relationship is the theme of correspondent Ed Helms’ visit to one of the great battlegrounds of what *The Daily Show* terms the “evolutionary” war. He stands in front of Ray County Courthouse, in Dayton, Tennessee, the site of the infamous 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial, where John Scopes was convicted for teaching evolution to high school students. That trial “gave Dayton a reputation for closed-minded ignorance,” as Helms says. But, he then implies, it’s really just a reenactment town.

Helms *(voiceover)*: Just like Colonial Williamsburg, the town is populated with costumed performers who reenact the quaint attitudes of the good old days.

Helms *(to resident June Griffin)*: What is your take on the Scopes trial?
Griffin: Evolution is a total fabrication and a lie. Evolution distorts faith, destroys faith, and builds an economic market that is contrary to our American way of life.

Helms: That’s good stuff.

Helms (voiceover): In addition to the skilled actors, Dayton’s attention to detail is staggering. The town has gone so far as to erect this elaborate set of a fully functioning college. Named after William Jennings Bryan, the prosecutor in the Scopes trial, the college keeps things authentic. Store owner Tim Cruver, whose daughter plays one of the college students, explains.

Helms (to Cruver): What does their science department teach regarding evolution vs. creationism?

Cruver: Well it’s a fact that they’re going to be teaching creationism up there because they don’t believe in evolution.

Helms: When the tourists aren’t, ya know, milling around, watching the classes and stuff, then what do they teach?

Cruver: Well, the same thing.

According to a 2005 Pew Forum survey, nearly two-thirds of Americans support teaching creationism alongside evolution. Yet doing so treats faith and prejudicial belief on par with scientific truth. Science requires observation, testing, data, analysis, and verification. And these can’t simply be forced to fit one’s values, important as values are in deciding what questions to pursue.

Dayton’s opposition to evolutionary theory, as Helms puts it, “would be terrifying if it were real”—which it is! It rightly scares us that so many people ignore or defame the scientific community’s consensus that humans evolved from non-human primates. An extra irony comes when Griffin says that she despises actors, apparently not realizing that Helms himself is an actor:

Helms: June, you’re very good, you’re very good. Do you have a background in acting?
Griffin: No, I despise actors.

Helms: Really?

Griffin: Yes.

Griffin’s “character” is unaware of the difference between a faith-based view (such as creationism) and a verifiable, scientific account of human origins (such as evolution), and is equally unaware that an actor has conned her into being the butt of a joke.

While the entire “Evolution, Schmevolution” series implicitly supports evolution, Stewart himself is usually concerned less with what people should think and more with how to engage in productive dialogue. In addition to reframing the terms of debate, he shows how to “go meta,” or get above it all, and improve the process itself, be it political argument or media reportage.

For example, when interviewing Ramesh Ponnuru, author of The Party of Death, Stewart begins with meta-commentary:

Stewart: It seems like rhetoric like The Party of Death puts people on—I guess what I would call—the defensive, in some respects.

Ponnuru: Yeah, I can’t really present the argument against things like abortion by pretending it doesn’t have something to do with death. I guess that’s part of the argument.

Stewart: Could you agree there is maybe sanctimony on both sides?

Ponnuru: Yeah, absolutely.

Stewart: Now, what’s the sanctimony on your side?

By referring to sanctimony, Stewart targets the false righteousness in many debates.

When pro-life advocates call abortion “genocide” and its defenders “murderers,” they
ignore important issues, such as women’s right to protect their bodies. Likewise, when pro-choice advocates use language such as “products of conception” or “termination of pregnancy,” they dehumanize the issue as one of cold, impersonal science. Ponnuru goes on to claim, “I try very hard to argue for a rational case,” but rather than granting that his opponents have a reasoned defense with whom he disagrees, he reduces them to mere proponents “of death.”

Stewart’s approach to discourse, on the other hand, avoids the common attack-and-defend interview model, and instead endorses problem-solving values of conflict resolution. As Stewart illustrates, this model prefers rationality to reactivity, sincerity to disingenuousness, authentic representation to dissembling, meaning to absurdity, and recognition to cynical suspicion. Even when the show’s writers use sarcastic or cynical humor, they do so not to make empty jokes, but to recognize more honestly what is otherwise ignored.

**Self-Effacement and Good Faith**

Stewart: I disagree with a lot of people. I think the whole problem with this debate is it’s being waged on both extremes. If you extend it out it becomes: Do you condone what some would call rape to prevent what some would call murder? Because women are, I think rightly so, protective of what we call their p*$#ies. I don’t know the scientific terms. But that’s the part that’s missing from the book. Can I tell you something?

Ponnuru: Yeah.

Stewart: I am very unprofessional.

No sooner does Stewart seriously summarize the abortion debate than he irreverently uses a word he knows will be censored and then derides his own behavior. Much as post-modernism frees us up to value ruptures and bursts of irrationality, Stewart’s interruption
functions “momentarily breaks, but does not derail, the otherwise linear, logical flow of the discussion.” Moreover, Stewart’s style seems aimed at putting interviewees more at ease, giving them a relatively free and uninhibited venue for expression. Adding unexpected taboo provides further lighthearted relief from the tension of serious discussion. Despite disagreeing with guests like Bennett and Ponnuru, Stewart will often efface himself to provide his guests with a face-saving out. For example, Stewart backed off Bennett at one point and said, “I’m just grasping at straws,” taking responsibility for his own limited perspective, and even putting himself down.

Strikingly, Stewart will also often put down audience ridicule of a guest. When Ponnuru hesitated and stumbled at one point, and the audience began to cheer, Stewart cut them off, saying, “No, no, no.” Then he said to Ponnuru, “And I want this, honestly: for us to have a conversation, because you’re a smart guy, and you’ve made a lot of smart arguments.” Stewart’s shtick is at once an act and at the same time implies, as a tee-shirt from the Stewart-Colbert Rally read, “I may not agree with you, but I’m pretty sure you’re not Hitler.” In effect, Stewart extends a presumption of good faith to his interviewees rarely seen in the media.

When actor Kevin Spacey told Stewart he wished “Congress and the Senate would go at [the president] every day” and added, “or maybe it should just be you… You should go, and every day ask him questions,” Stewart replied, “I could barely get myself to work in the morning.” As usual, Stewart portrays himself as a mere clown. When he himself is interviewed, he denies that The Daily Show is anything but comedy or at best, political and cultural satire. Such denials only reaffirm that Stewart’s self-inclusive way
of poking fun embodies a powerful way of being in the world—one of thoughtful, self-reflective, and modest engagement.

In the Ponnuru interview, for instance, Stewart ultimately begs to get beyond heated provocation: “Isn’t there a rational conversation to be had in the country…?” Stewart’s repeated call to overcome mutually exclusive oppositions often helps viewers to clarify their own thoughts and feelings, whether they agree or disagree with him or his guests. One rhetorician sees an “agonistic aesthetic” in the way the show aims at a “healthy pluralism that resists reducing antagonists to enemies, and looks to articulate similarities and points of contact and convergence.” Stewart thus seeks to find common ground across political and ideological lines of debate.

Good faith, such as Stewart extends to most of his guests, relies on an implied promise that parties will participate sincerely in open dialogue and assume that progress can be made. By contrast, politicians and celebrities alike often act from bad faith, characterized by hidden agendas, closed discussion, and pessimism about, or indifference to, the genuine progress that open discussion might foster. Hence Matt Lauer delivers straight-laced reports like “Countdown to Doomsday,” which Stewart called a “two-hour investigation into your pants and why you should crap them.”

When President Bush spent part of his vacation reading—and reportedly liking—Albert Camus’ (1913-1960) philosophical novel The Stranger, Stewart hinted at the irony of timing this choice during the Iraq War: Bush chose “a classic novel about a Westerner who kills an Arab for no good reason and dies with no remorse. Why that would strike a nerve, I don’t know.” Daily Show correspondent Jason Jones then “quoted” a response Bush might have to the work: “If the unexamined life is not worth living, then the soul
not delved into is not worth being.” Jones wishes that Bush were a kind of “philosopher king,” Plato’s ideal ruler, always acting rationally in the state’s best interest.

Stewart similarly demonstrates how to act in good faith when he adopts the persona of a serious reporter providing much-needed perspective in place of mere sensationalism:

Stewart: Obviously what is going on in the Middle East is awfully complicated. The fuel that fans the flames: The rival factions within Islam, both of them seem to have antipathy towards the U.S., Israel. It seems like there are some authoritarian regimes that are using proxy countries to fight their wars. It’s a very difficult situation to grasp. Luckily, news organizations are on hand to give us context and ask the important questions.

Paula Zahn (CNN graphic: “Armageddon?”): Are we really at the end of the world? We asked faith and values correspondent Delia Gallagher to do some checking.

By juxtaposing the complexity of current global crises with the crassly commercial way they’re covered, The Daily Show lets misleading statements and images be their own undoing. The effect can be more powerful than a detailed critique by an academic.

Encouraging us be critical of what we take in, The Daily Show forces us to “be partial” (as the Tao counseled in the epigraph at the start of this chapter), or own up to our subjectivity—and at the same time to “give everything up,” or surrender our beliefs, and thus keep learning and questioning. Further, while forcing us to reckon with how disturbingly easy it is to be manipulated, The Daily Show also provides a cathartic laugh in the face of such seemingly inevitable pain and disappointment.

Who knew thinking could be so fun and instructive at the same time?17
Notes

3 Froma Harrop, “To the Angry and the Confused...” www.fromaharrop.com (January 17, 2012).
8 For more on bullshit, see Kimberly A. Blessing and Joseph J. Marren, “More Bullshit: Political Spin and the PR-ization of Media,” in this volume.
10 Lao-tzu, p. 59.
13 For more, see Massimo Pigliucci, “Evolution, Schmevolution: Jon Stewart and the Culture Wars,” in this volume.
17 My deepest gratitude goes to Melanie Torosyan, Chris Worsley, Kohar Gumusyan, and Michael Allen, each of whom continues to help me both express myself fully and not take myself too seriously.