

The art of darkness:

Philip Pullman's Christian atheism

By Tony Watkins

Summary

Philip Pullman, author of *His Dark Materials*, is well known for his antipathy towards religion. Yet although he insists that this world is all there is, he seems constantly drawn towards ideas of transcendence. He advocates many Christian values, though he refuses to accept their Judeo-Christian origins, and assumes them in his attack on the church. He sees himself as an enemy of religion, but his atheism has a distinctively Christian flavour.

Introduction

Philip Pullman is a brilliant and controversial writer whom Peter Hitchens dubbed 'the most dangerous author in Britain'¹ (a headline Pullman proudly displayed on his wall²). He is best known for *His Dark Materials* (HDM), a trilogy comprising *Northern Lights/The Golden Compass* (1995), *The Subtle Knife* (1997), and *The Amber Spyglass* (2001). It has sold millions of copies in over 40 languages, and has been adapted for stage, radio productions, film, and television (BBC/HBO 2019–2020). Its antipathy towards religion prompted some American Christians to campaign against the *Golden Compass* movie (2007). This hostility arises from Pullman's consistently antagonistic views on religion, and particularly for his subverting of biblical themes and images. He claims, 'I'm

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not in the message business; I'm in the "Once upon a time" business,³ yet also declares, 'I'm happy to be known as [religion's] enemy.'⁴ Pullman has written many books, but the focus of this paper is a brief Christian critique of Pullman's views on religion, especially as he expresses them in HDM.

The world of *His Dark Materials*

HDM tells the story of two children from parallel worlds whose paths intertwine, plunging them into a series of extraordinary adventures. It's a story of good versus evil, but the sense of who or what is good inverts many traditional Christian ideas.

Northern Lights centres on twelve-year-old Lyra whose world resembles ours, yet in some respects is very unlike it. A key difference is that part of each person's psyche is externalised in the form of an accompanying animal – a *dæmon*⁵ – which is tightly bonded to the 'human' (though the person is inextricably composed

1 P. Hitchens, 'This is the Most Dangerous Author in Britain', *The Mail on Sunday*, 28 January 2003, p.63.
2 See the photograph accompanying C. Hitchens, 'Oxford's Rebel Angel', *Vanity Fair*, October 2002, pp.174–180.
3 P. Pullman, 'My Books', philip-pullman.com.
4 P. Pullman, 'Religion', philip-pullman.com/pages/content/index.asp?PageID=12 (No longer available; accessed 9 Sept. 2008).
5 This draws on Socrates's guiding spirit (*daimon*), not demons within Christian theology.

of both parts). Pullman says it's the best idea he ever had. It allows for a physical conversation partner, lending greater dynamism to what would otherwise be internal dialogue, and graphically reveals characters' emotional states. This is especially so for children, for whom the animal species is not yet fixed, showing the unsettled nature of pre-adulthood identity. Lyra lives under an oppressive totalitarian regime, the Magisterium (blatantly echoing the Roman Catholic church), which is troubled by the discovery of 'Dust'. These mysterious particles are attracted to people, especially after puberty. The Magisterium infers a connection with original sin, leading to cruel experiments in protecting children from it.

The Subtle Knife (SK) opens in our world with a new protagonist, Will. He stumbles into another world where he encounters Lyra and comes into possession of a remarkable knife that cuts windows between worlds. Their adventures in SK and *The Amber Spyglass* (AS) take them through multiple worlds, including the world of the dead, and they join in a war between the Authority ('God') and those fighting to establish a Republic of Heaven. The great battle

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Lyra and her daemon

brings an unexpected twist when the Authority is killed off in a surprisingly anticlimactic moment.

Pullman subsequently wrote two HDM novellas and a short story – *Lyra's Oxford* (2003), *Once Upon a Time in the North* (2008), and 'The Collectors' (2014) – but countless fans were impatiently awaiting *The Book of Dust*. Pullman told me in 2004 that this would present the 'creation myth' underlying HDM.⁶ Eventually, he decided on a Book of Dust trilogy, but neither volume published so far – *La Belle Sauvage* (2018) and *The Secret Commonwealth* (2019) – contains this creation myth. *La Belle Sauvage* (LBS), which

tells the story of Lyra's origins, shot Pullman back to the top of bestseller lists. *The Secret Commonwealth* (SC) picks up Lyra's story eight years after HDM when she has absorbed rationalist and relativistic ideas. These have robbed her of imagination and the ability to perceive unseen aspects of reality, prompting a rupture in her relationship with her daemon, Pantalaimon. A new HDM novella, *Serpentine*, is due on 15 October 2020.

Responding to *His Dark Materials*

Pullman is a breathtaking writer possessing rare ability to grip, delight, and stretch readers from pre-teens to academics.

He displays dazzling imagination, mastery of narrative construction, and superb virtuosity with language. He draws on a vast range of influences, including ancient myths, Romantic literature, mysticism, science, and the Bible. Pullman is steeped in the English literary tradition, so the Bible unavoidably forms part of the marinade. But Pullman became familiar with it through spending time living with his grandparents as a child. His grandfather, a parish priest, was 'the sun at the centre of [his] life'.⁷ Although Pullman

calls himself an atheist, he says 'I am a Church of England atheist, and a 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* atheist, because that's the tradition I was brought up in and I cannot escape those early influences.'⁸

The three main influences on HDM⁹ all relate to the Bible: Milton's *Paradise Lost*, William Blake's work, and an essay by Heinrich von Kleist.¹⁰ Milton's story of angelic rebellion is the most obvious (and gives the trilogy its title¹¹). Pullman sees Satan as the hero, endorsing Blake's verdict that, 'The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it.'¹² Pullman recounts the story of an old country squire listening spellbound to *Paradise Lost* being read aloud and suddenly exclaiming, 'By God! I know not what the outcome may be, but this Lucifer is a damned fine fellow, and I hope he may win!' Pullman adds that these 'are my sentiments exactly'.¹³

In HDM, the angelic revolt is unfinished business. The war against God is 'the last rebellion' with 'humans, and angels and beings from all the worlds, [making] a common cause.'¹⁴ Pullman, like Blake, ignores the way Milton deliberately presents Satan as heroic and enticing, before undercutting his boastful stance. C. S. Lewis called this Satan's 'progressive degradation',¹⁵ contrasting his Milton's simpler portrayal of the Son, which emphasises his humility.¹⁶

6 T. Watkins, 'Interview with Philip Pullman (from 2004)', tonywatkins.uk/pullmaninterview.

7 P. Pullman, 'I Have a Feeling All This Belongs to Me', in: *Discovering the Golden Compass: A Guide to Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials*, edited by G.W. Beahm, Hampton Roads, 2007, pp.9–33.

8 L. Miller, 'Far From Narnia: Philip Pullman's Secular Fantasy for Children', *The New Yorker*, 19 December 2005.

9 *The Amber Spyglass* acknowledgements.

10 See T. Watkins, *Dark Matter: A Thinking Fan's Guide to Philip Pullman*, Damaris Publishing, 2004, pp.74–78.

11 'Unless the almighty maker them ordain / His dark materials to create more worlds' (Book II, lines 915–916).

12 W. Blake, 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell', in *William Blake Collected Poems*, edited by W. B. Yeats, Routledge, 2002, p.165.

13 P. Pullman, 'Introduction', in: *Paradise Lost: An Illustrated Edition with an Introduction by Philip Pullman*, edited by J. Milton, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.1.

14 P. Pullman, *The Amber Spyglass*, Point, 2001, p.222.

15 C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, Oxford University Press, 1960, p.99.

16 Thanks to John Coffey for drawing attention to this and showing that Milton used this to critique abuse of authority and lust for power ('"The Brand of Gentilism": Milton's Jesus and the Augustinian Critique of Pagan Kingship, 1649–1671', *Milton Quarterly*, 2014, Vol.48,2, pp.67–95).

Although *Paradise Lost*'s themes are core to HDM, William Blake's work influences Pullman more profoundly, though more subtly. He describes it as, 'like a key that unlocks a part of [himself]'.¹⁷ He refers often to the impact of Blake's poetry, but also acknowledges the importance of Blake's visual art, which he first encountered shortly after graduating.¹⁸ Pullman shares Blake's interest in the contrast between innocence, the passing of which feels like loss, and experience, which brings great gains. Pullman links acquiring experience with puberty and sexual development, connecting it to the Fall (Genesis 3).



He infuses this and Milton into his rich and exciting narrative, brewing a heady mix of anti-religious sentiment with which he 'chips away at the very basis of Christian doctrine'.¹⁹

The rest of this paper asks three key questions of HDM: How is the world viewed? What is loved, despised, or ignored? How is a better world imagined? These form a useful diagnostic framework for reflecting on any cultural work.

How is the world viewed?

Pullman is sceptical about anything transcendent. He says, 'There well may be a God out there ... [but] I see no intellectual need for the existence of God; I see no moral need for him; and I feel no emotional need. There is not a God-shaped hole in my life.'²⁰ He doubts that rational argument would ever persuade him of God's existence; rather he would need a direct experience.²¹ He has twice experienced an intense impression of the universe as 'alive and conscious of meaning', but insists that he had 'no sense of the supernatural; I didn't feel at one with God; I felt at one with the physical world, and I saw what it meant ... that I belonged in it.'²²

How is the world viewed?

Pullman sees reality within what philosopher Charles Taylor calls a 'closed immanent frame',²³ which excludes

transcendence. He sees religion as the biggest problem with the world, and those who cling to such ideas as deluded. However, he stands in a long literary tradition which is profoundly shaped by Christian thought, and he constantly returns to, builds on, and subverts biblical themes. The most obvious is his retelling of the Fall - the rebellion against God - which drives the narrative. Pullman values religious language and narratives, but rejects any reality underpinning them. He portrays God as humanity's enemy in HDM because he believes that the idea of God lies behind many of the greatest evils. Putting 'God' out of his misery²⁴ is a metaphor for Pullman's belief that, 'the old assumptions have withered away ... the idea of God with which I was brought up is now perfectly incredible.'²⁵ However, he identifies the 'most important subject' he knows as 'the death of God and its consequences'. One of the 'most deadly and oppressive consequences' is a 'sense of meaninglessness or alienation that so many of us have felt in the past century or more. We're bereft of that connection with the universe as a whole which makes suffering bearable.'²⁶

Yet Pullman sees religious questions as vital. He admits that these are the 'big questions. Where did we come from? What is life about? What is evil? Those are questions I do think about.'²⁷ This seems to be why Rowan Williams sees him as 'intensely spiritual',²⁸ though Pullman says he would not 'talk of a person's spiritual life ... it doesn't make sense to me. ... when other people talk about spirituality I can see nothing in it, in reality.'²⁹

For Pullman, eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is an act of self-determination and taking responsibility - the moment at which humanity gained wisdom.

What is loved, despised, or ignored?

In a work of this scale, there are many aspects of this, but here we will touch on just three.

Pullman loves knowledge and wisdom. He views Eve's action in taking forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:6) as commendable because, 'she was after knowledge. What could possibly be wrong with that?'³⁰ He sees humanity before the Fall as God's pets meekly

doing what they were told.³¹ For Pullman, eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is an act of self-determination and taking responsibility - the moment at which humanity gained wisdom. Pullman inevitably reads this through his anti-religious framework. He overlooks the context: Adam and Eve were living in intimacy with God and he had given them great freedom and responsibility. God's intention was for their flourishing: they were to gain wisdom - not on their own terms, but through rightly relating to him.

17 P. Pullman, 'William Blake and Me', *The Guardian*, 28 November 2014.

18 Although Pullman says little about Blake's visual art, it clearly influences his imagination.

19 B. Schweizer, "And He's a-Going to Destroy Him": Religious Subversion in Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, in: *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*, edited by M. Lenz, and C. Scott, Wayne State University Press, 2005, p.160.

20 P. Pullman, *Daemon Voices: Essays on Storytelling*, David Fickling Books, 2017, p.298.

21 'Five Minutes With Philip Pullman', BBCNews.co.uk, 24 September 2011.

22 Pullman, *Daemon Voices*, p.298.

23 C. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Belknap Press, 2007.

24 Pullman, AS, pp.431-432.

25 P. Pullman, 'The Republic of Heaven', *The Horn Book Magazine*, 2001, Vol. Nov./Dec. p.655.

26 Ibid., pp.655-656.

27 P. Jukes, 'All His Materials', Aeon, 13 January 2014, aeon.co/essays/a-rare-interview-with-philip-pullman-the-religious-atheist

28 R. Williams, 'The Book of Dust: Philip Pullman Might Not be Fond of the Church, But He is Intensely Spiritual', *New Statesman*, 22 October 2017.

29 Pullman, *Daemon Voices*, p.289. Italics original.

30 'Faith and Fantasy', Australian Broadcasting Company Radio National, 24 March 2002.

31 Watkins, 'Interview'.



The Temptation and Fall of Eve,
William Blake, 1808

A major source of wisdom in HDM is the alethiometer.³² Lyra uses this instrument to seek guidance, which comes from Dust – particles of consciousness that permeate the many worlds. She reads the alethiometer intuitively (until her loss of innocence), ‘through grace’:³³ it is a gift of the cosmos. Pullman’s worldview excludes transcendence, yet here he reaches for it in the guise of ‘panpsychism’ – the idea that all matter is inherently conscious. Pullman apparently believes this: ‘Why shouldn’t consciousness be a normal property of matter, like mass?’ he asks. ‘Let every particle of dust breathe forth its joy. I don’t argue this, I perceive it.’³⁴ Pullman is smuggling the transcendent into the immanent frame and points to him experiencing ‘cross-pressures’ – Taylor’s term for assuming the immanent frame while ‘feeling the echo of transcendence’.³⁵ Elisabeth Gruner observes that Pullman ‘ironically revitalizes the very myths [HDM] overtly works to discredit. ... the sense of the divine is active in [Lyra who] embod[ies] a new theology for a new world.’³⁶

Pullman despises the abuse of authority, the nature of which is another key theme in HDM. He denounces the church for being authoritarian, hypocritical, and sexually repressive. He maintains that the real target of his criticism is not God or religion per se, but the religious accumulation and misuse of power. Yet he still regards the church as an evil blighting the world.

Hence the Magisterium in HDM is a repellent institution driven by power-hungry individuals, ‘saturated with anxiety and so with violence’ because their tyrannical God is ‘just another inhabitant of the universe, only more powerful than anyone else’.³⁷ HDM contains virtually no nuance here. One reviewer noted, ‘a number of unequivocally evil people in these books, and ... a number of Christians, and these are always – always – the same people.’^{38 39}

There are passages (especially in AS) where Pullman seems intent on ramming home anti-religious propaganda. Several characters vehemently criticise the Magisterium. One says that throughout history, the church has ‘tried to suppress and control every natural impulse. And when it can’t control them, it cuts them out. ... every church is the same: control, destroy, obliterate every good feeling.’⁴⁰ Pullman insists that this church is a fictional creation, yet he blurs the lines between fiction and reality by expressing similar loathing for the real church: ‘they have burned, hanged, tortured, maimed, robbed, violated, and enslaved millions of their fellow-creatures, and done so with the happy conviction that they were doing the will of God ... That is the religion I hate, and I’m happy to be known as its enemy.’⁴¹

Pullman is not alone in expressing abhorrence for some horrific episodes in Christian history (including the Crusades, the legacy of which blights the contemporary world, and the Inquisition), and for more recent abuse scandals. It is to the church’s shame when it fails to judge its own actions, particularly because historically orthodox Judaism and Christianity have strong traditions of internal critique. We see this especially in the Old Testament prophets, New Testament letters, and Jesus’ teaching. Pullman’s outrage against the misuse of authority ironically stands in the prophetic tradition of the religion he condemns.

However, Pullman only refers to negative aspects, and these are far from the whole story. Much that we take for granted – healthcare, education, science, and more – has its origins in Christianity. Despite his strong critique of Christian history, historian Tom Holland concludes that Christianity has been the ‘single most transformative development in Western history’.⁴² Pullman ignores this and does not see that his condemnation of religion depends on the Christian worldview.

Pullman ignores any need for a solid basis for values. HDM may be anti-religion, but it nevertheless embodies Christian values, including truth, responsibility, love, freedom, and tolerance. He wants what religion gave us, but stripped of any transcendent aspects. He is ‘amazed by the gall of Christians’ for suggesting that the immanent frame does not provide any bedrock for values, and says, ‘You think that

32 From Greek *aletheia*, meaning truth.

33 Pullman, AS, p.520.

34 Pullman, ‘William Blake and Me’. He is referring to a line from Blake’s *Europe: A Prophecy*, 1794, plate iii, lines 17–18.

35 J. K. A. Smith, ‘The Good News Hasn’t Changed, But How We Proclaim it Must’, *Convivium*, 24 November 2014.

36 E. R. Gruner, ‘Wrestling With Religion: Pullman, Pratchett, and the Uses of Story’, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, 2011, Vol.36:3, p.277.

37 R. Williams, ‘A Near-Miraculous Triumph’, *The Guardian*, 10 March 2004.

38 A. Jacobs, ‘The Devil’s Party: Philip Pullman’s Bestselling Fantasy Series Retells the Story of Creation – With Satan as the Hero’, *First Things*, 12 March 2007.

39 Pullman portrays religious characters more even-handedly in LBS and SC. There are good people within the Magisterium in SC, but they become victims to power-hungry leaders who manipulate, bully, and kill.

40 P. Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*, Scholastic, 1997.

41 P. Pullman, ‘Religion’.

42 T. Holland, *Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind*, Little Brown, 2009, p.xxv.

nobody can possibly be decent unless they've got the idea from God or something. Absolute b***** rubbish!⁴³

Pullman here confuses the fact of morality with its foundation. Since he denies any transcendent authority, values can only come from 'ordinary human decency' and 'accumulated human wisdom - which includes the wisdom of such figures as Jesus Christ. ...[who] was a moral genius.'⁴⁴ But how should we define decency? What makes accumulated wisdom better than previous moral ideas? What makes someone a moral genius? Pullman has no ground for answering these questions in any objective way. Certain values feel right to him, but he lacks a basis for seeing them as universally right since he cannot appeal to any source of morality beyond himself or his culture. He ignores the decisive way in which Christian morality has formed that culture and values. Nietzsche, 'the most widely-read atheist thinker of all time' recognised this, arguing that what we consider 'quintessential liberal values have their origins in monotheism.'⁴⁵

Holland shows that even today's progressive morality would be unthinkable without our Christian past.⁴⁶ Like many secular humanists, Pullman imagines the fruits of the Christian 'social imaginary' - or common understanding - can remain fresh, despite hacking down the tree.

How is a better world imagined?

Within HDM, those fighting against God intend to replace his kingdom with a 'Republic of Heaven'. Pullman also talks about this in real life. It is a potent metaphor expressing what he thinks we truly need: joy, 'a sense of meaning and purpose', a 'connection with the universe', and 'all the things that the kingdom of heaven used to promise us but failed to deliver'.⁴⁷ We need them in this world - 'not elsewhere, because there ain't no elsewhere' - which is, 'a place of infinite delight, so intensely beautiful and intoxicating that if we saw it clearly then we would want nothing more, ever. ...this earth is our true home.'⁴⁸

How is a world of joy, meaning, purpose, and connection to be achieved? Pullman sees the Republic of Heaven as embodying a 'moral and social dimension' because 'we're connected in a moral way to one another ... We have responsibilities to them, and they to us. We're not isolated units of self-interest in a world where there is no such thing as society; we cannot live so.'⁴⁹ So it is achieved by people living morally (i.e., by the values mentioned above, among others) and bearing their responsibilities, even at great personal cost. The latter is pivotal throughout HDM, culminating in the narrative's heart-rending conclusion. The

Republic is 'already partly present' wherever people treat others with 'kindness and [approach] the universe with curiosity and wonder.'⁵⁰

Pullman admits that this is an attempt to attain what 'the religion that's now dead [gave us] in full measure'.⁵¹ The biblical storyline begins and ends with humanity at home in a place of peace, wholeness, and fullness - perfect shalom.⁵² The Bible sees shalom as grounded in intimacy with God, but humanity endlessly strives for it on our own terms. 'The Republic of Heaven' attempts to do so in entirely human, immanent ways.

At one level, Pullman recognises the problem of the human heart here. The Republic of Heaven 'must deal with human beings as they are ... recognising that there is a depth of human meanness and wickedness which not even the imagination can fully plumb.'⁵³ Pullman does not regard this as an intractable problem, however: 'There's no one responsible but us. Goodness and evil have always had a human origin.'⁵⁴ Therefore we can deal with meanness and wickedness by making better choices and acting rightly. This raises again questions of how we know which choices are better and what acting rightly means without a transcendent moral authority. Pullman is attempting to

Christians can value his exploration of life's big questions, even though we may disagree with his answers.



Lyra with the alethiometer

43 H. Spanner, 'Heat and Dust', *Third Way*, April 2002.

44 Ibid.

45 J. Gray, 'What Scares the New Atheists', *The Guardian*, 3 March 2015.

46 See Holland, *Dominion*, especially chapters 20-21.

47 C. N. Brown, 'Philip Pullman: Storming Heaven', *Locus*, Issue 479, December 2000.

48 P. Pullman, 'The Republic of Heaven', *The Horn Book Magazine*, 2001, Vol. Nov./Dec. p.655. This is why he despises C. S. Lewis's Narnia stories: he considers them too influenced by Platonism.

49 Ibid.

50 Pullman, *Daemon Voices*, p.97.

51 Pullman, 'The Republic of Heaven', p.656.

52 This Hebrew word for 'peace' is richer than the English. It includes wellbeing, flourishing, and harmony with God, each other, and the environment.

53 Ibid. p.666.

54 Ibid.

build a grand house on soft sand. There is no forgiveness or redemption here, yet we intuitively know we need it since we constantly fail to live up even to our own standards. The ghastly history of attempts to build a better world on purely human terms (e.g. Stalin, Pol Pot) is symptomatic of the shortcomings of our inherent moral capacity.

And death remains a problem. In *AS*, Will cuts a doorway from the world of the dead, allowing the ghosts' few remaining atoms to disperse into the air. Pullman again reaches for transcendence under the mask of panpsychism as he describes atoms feeling joy, anticipation, and connectedness. This feels like a desperate attempt to find some transcendence in a material world to ease the pain of death, which again indicates Pullman feeling 'cross-pressured'.

Conclusion

There is much to commend in Pullman's work, not least his extraordinary talents as a storyteller and world-builder. Christians can recognise the image of God within him expressing itself through his gifts and many of his concerns, even as he mounts his attack on God. They can affirm his high regard for truth, moral responsibility, and self-sacrifice. Most significantly, Christians can value his exploration of life's big questions, even though we may disagree with his answers.

Pullman presents no systematic argument against God and religion, but his powerful narrative can affect readers at a deep level. He recognises that narratives do more than entertain. 'All stories teach,' he says, 'whether the storyteller intends them to or not. They teach the world we create. They teach the morality we live by.' Pullman suggests that he does not intend to teach through his novels, saying, 'I'm not making an argument, or preaching a sermon ... I'm telling a story.' He also claims, 'it doesn't matter to me whether people

Pullman is cross-pressured: even as he dismisses God and attacks religion, he feels the echo of transcendence. He seems to pine for something beyond what this world contains and can deliver.

believe in God or not, so I'm not promoting anything of that sort.' This is disingenuous: at times HDM becomes decidedly preachy and Pullman's brilliance as a storyteller fades away. Alan Jacobs laments 'Pullman's anti-theistic scolding' despite his 'prodigious skills as a storyteller'. He says, 'For such gifts to be thrust into the service of a reductive and contemptuous ideology is very nearly a tragedy.'

Pullman admits realising that HDM 'would serve as a vehicle for exploring things which I had been thinking about over the years.' He clearly does want his vision of the world to affect readers, or he would not repeatedly emphasise the same points (about God, the church, and the Republic of Heaven) in real life as his characters make in HDM. Yet as we have seen, Pullman is cross-pressured: even as he dismisses God and attacks religion, he feels the echo of transcendence. He seems to pine for something beyond what this world contains and can deliver. Perhaps this merely reflects his upbringing and deep roots in the English literary tradition. But perhaps it is because something in every human heart instinctively perceives that the immanent frame is not enough, that there is a transcendent 'elsewhere' which is the source of the wisdom, values, and goodness for which Pullman yearns.



Tony Watkins helps Christian leaders relate media and the Bible through his writing and teaching, and is doing doctoral research exploring relationships between Old Testament prophets and today's media. Tony has written, or co-written, several books including *Dark Matter: A Thinking Fan's Guide to Philip Pullman* and *Focus: The Art and Soul of Cinema*.

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