

August 23, 1999

I am writing to ask a personal favor.

Would you kindly remove your posting of my book "LIFE 102: What to Do When Your Guru Sues You" from your site?

While I admire and appreciate your commitment to free speech (one I wholeheartedly share), the content of the book is no longer one with which I would like to have my name associated. There are several reasons for this.

First, it no longer reflects my thinking or belief on a subject far more important than MSIA or John-Roger.

I am speaking, of course, of God.

I do not believe anymore in an external God. More accurately, to quote Bertrand Russell, "I believe in God, but I spell it N-A-T-U-R-E." Spirit emanates from matter; matter is not created by spirit. The intelligence of nature is spelled DNA. The most powerful force as far as planet Earth is concerned is the sun. (Could this be "the sun of God"?)

I consider a belief in an external God (or "higher intelligence" or "omnipotent being" that is not firmly rooted in the natural world) to be an infantile fixation—like a teenager who refuses to give up the notion of Santa Claus—based, primarily, on an unwillingness to face our own mortality and fueled by clinical depression. A belief in God is the cause of most pain, suffering, and inhumanity on earth.

When I left MSIA, I thought it was John-Roger who deceived me, so my anger poured out, rather lavishly, on him. In fact, the larger deception was that there is a God at all, and for that I have a lot more people and institutions to blame than John-Roger.

I advised people in the book, over and over again, not to "throw out the baby with the bathwater," the baby being a belief in God. Now I see it's all bathwater, and I say, throw it all out (but keep the bathtub).

As "religious leaders" go, John-Roger is on the benign side. As I see it, the Pope, for example, is far, far more dangerous. His condemnation of

homosexuality lays a religious basis for hate crimes and hate laws. His condemnation of physician-assisted suicide causes millions to suffer into death. His refusal to let women be priests is unconscionable. His opposition to a woman's right to reproductive choice over her own body is barbaric. And so on. Not only does he take these positions but he also encourages Catholics to donate money to political causes that make his narrow-minded repressions into criminal laws, forcing nonbelievers to follow Catholic doctrine or end up in jail.

Who says the Inquisition ended 200 years ago?

And don't get me started on fundamentalist "Christians" and the Religious Right.

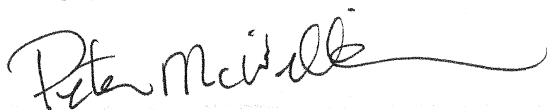
A second reason the book no longer reflects the facts is that John-Roger retired a few years ago and MSIA is now run by John Morton who I believe to be a good and decent man—misguided, but good and decent. He has lots and lots of money, so he is not likely to squeeze every last penny out of his followers (as televangelists tend to do). In fact, he could run MSIA and personally finance the whole thing himself—sort of a hobby, the way Howard Hughes made movies or William Randolph Hearst collected art.

The final reason I would like to see the book disappear is that I have founded my own religion, The Church of the Pursuit of Happiness, and its doctrine is counter to the one expressed in "LIFE 102." Its creed is that the purpose of life is to enjoy it, free from superstition. I would like to avoid any confusion on the ecclesiastical front.

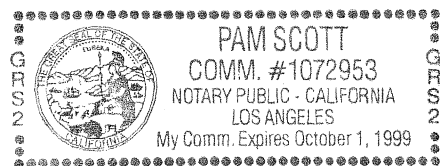
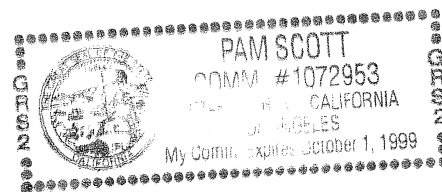
I am being paid nothing to write this letter. This is a true and accurate reflection of my desires and thinking when I ask that "LIFE 102" be removed from circulation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Enjoy,



Peter McWilliams
peter@mcwilliams.com



CALIFORNIA ALL-PURPOSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

State of California

County of Los Angeles } ss.

On 8-23-99

Date

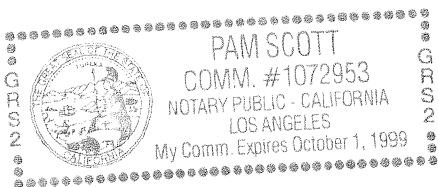
before me, Pam Scott, Notary

Name and Title of Officer (e.g., "Jane Doe, Notary Public")

personally appeared PETER McWILLIAMS

Name(s) of Signer(s)

- personally known to me
- proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence



to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

[Signature]

Signature of Notary Public

Place Notary Seal Above

OPTIONAL

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