

APA FORMAT GUIDE

BRIERCREST COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

2017–18

This document provides basic guidelines for formatting in APA (American Psychological Association) style, which is used primarily in psychology and related social sciences. More extensive information on this formatting system can be found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition, which can be purchased from the bookstore or found in the reference section of Archibald Library (call number = Ref. 808.06615 P976). Students may also wish to look up information at the APA’s official style website (<http://www.apastyle.org/>), or view topic-specific posts at the APA style blog (<http://blog.apastyle.org/>).

GENERAL

(Note: A sample APA-format paper is provided, beginning at page 11.)

Use 8½” x 11” paper for academic essays and reports.

Do not use file folders or report covers (unless otherwise directed by your professor); simply staple your pages in the upper left corner.

Margins should be 1 inch (2.54 cm) on all sides.

Use left justification for all academic papers.

Double-space throughout, including the reference list, notes, and block quotes.

Use the *Times New Roman* font in its 12-point size.

Page numbers should appear in the upper right-hand corner of every page and should continue through to the end of your paper, including the references.

To add a page number in MS-Word (Windows version), go to: Insert → Page Number → Top of Page → Choose the right-justified “Plain Number” option.

To add the page header in MS-Word (Mac version), go to: Insert (in the top menu) → Page Numbers ... → Set “Position” to “Top of Page (header)” and “Alignment” to “Right.”

THE INITIAL PAGE

[Distance education students should follow the sample initial page on page 21; all other Briercree students should follow the sample on page 11.]

Enter your name and box number in the upper left hand corner.

Double-space down and enter your instructor's name and professional title

Double-space and enter the course number (and section number, if applicable).

Double-space once again and enter the due date for the assignment. (The date should be formatted as follows: day month year (e.g., 16 May 2017). There is no punctuation between elements.)

Double-space and centre the title of your paper. Capitalize the first letter of the following words: (1) the first and last word in the title, (2) every noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, and adverb in the title, and (3) every preposition in the title that is longer than four letters long. The only words that *won't* be capitalized are short prepositions (*of, to, by, etc.*) and short articles (*the, a, an*) that appear in the middle of the title.

- If you are using a subtitle, separate the title from the subtitle with a colon.
- For titles longer than one line, break the lines to form an inverted pyramid shape. Double-space multi-line titles.
- Do not **bold**, *italicize*, or underline the title; do not CAPITALIZE all letters in the title.
- Begin the first paragraph ONE double-spaced line below the title.

CITATIONS AND QUOTATIONS

Cite the work of those whose ideas or research findings directly influenced your work. *Failure to cite sources is plagiarism, since presenting ideas without acknowledging where you got them implies a claim that you are the source of the ideas.* Citing a source implies that you have personally read the source. Use parenthetical citations, not footnotes or endnotes, when referring to your sources.

Citations must include the last name(s) of the author(s) and the date of publication. Provide page numbers in citations connected to direct quotations. If you use the author's name(s) in the sentence, then only include the date in the parentheses. Examples:

It may be possible to construct a Christian positive psychology (Hackney, 2007).

Hackney (2007) claims that constructing a Christian positive psychology may be possible.

The abbreviation “et al.” is short for the Latin phrase “*et alii*,” which means “and others.” This is used in APA formatting when making a reference to a publication with three or more authors. It would be terribly cumbersome to have to read (or to type) “Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Simon, & Breus (1994)” every time that you refer to that source, so “Greenberg et al. (1994)” is used instead. When citing a source with three to five authors, use all author names the first time you cite the source, and “et al.” for subsequent citations. For works with six or more authors, use “et al.” in the first citation as well. (*Note: while “et al.” is used in citations, be sure to list **all** the authors’ names in the references section. There is one exception: you may use “et al.” in your references section if there are seven or more authors.*)

Quotations should be typed exactly as they are in the original, including wording, spelling, and punctuation, although the end or terminal punctuation can be changed or dropped, depending on the structure of the sentence in which the quote appears. When you change the case of a letter, you should indicate the change in editorial, that is, square, brackets. (*Note: In the example which follows the quotation is placed just before a comma—an acceptable alternative to delaying it until the end of the sentence.*)

Original quotation: “We live, as we dream—alone.”

Integrated quotation: When the narrator claims that “[w]e live, as we dream—alone” (Conrad, 1899, p. 82), he affirms the impossibility of understanding . . .

Block Quotations

- Block style is used for quotes that would otherwise occupy more than four complete lines of text in your paper (not in the source).
- The first word of the quote begins on a new line, and quotation marks are not used.
- The entire quote is double-spaced and indented 1” (2.54 cm) in from the left margin.
- The reference or citation is placed at the end of the quote, *outside of the closing punctuation*.

REFERENCES

The references page is placed at the end of your paper and provides the full information for materials you have cited in your paper. (*Note: It should be labelled “References” and NOT “Bibliography”.*)

All references should be listed in alphabetical order by first author’s last name with the first line of each entry flush left and subsequent lines indented (this is called a hanging indent). Use standard double-spacing throughout, including within entries. Do not insert an extra double-spaced line between entries.

(Note: APA style now requires the inclusion of the digital object identification (doi) number for any reference (book or journal article) that possesses such a number. Of course, if the document does not include a doi, then your references do not require it.)

The following examples show the format of some basic types of reference entries:

Journal article:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume, page–page. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxxx

Slife, B. D., & Richardson, F. C. (2008). Problematic ontological underpinnings of positive psychology: A strong relational alternative. *Theory & Psychology*, 18, 699–723. doi:10.1177/0959354308093403

Book:

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Date). *Title of book*. Location: Publisher.

Pyszczynski, T., Solomon, S., & Greenberg, J. (2003). *In the wake of 9/11: The psychology of terror*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Chapter in a multi-author, edited book:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. page–page). Location: Publisher.

Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. (1991). A terror management theory of social behavior: The psychological functions of self-esteem and cultural worldviews. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 24) (pp. 93–160). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Online source:

Author, A. A. (Date). *Title of work*. Retrieved from source url.

Wong, P. T. P. (2006). *The positive psychology of persistence and flexibility*. Retrieved from http://www.meaning.ca/archives/presidents_columns/pres_col_feb_2006_persistence-and-flexibility.htm.

Note: If you obtain a journal article from an online source (such as PsycArticles), cite the journal (as if you obtained the physical article in the library), NOT the database.

Online-only journal:

Author, A. A. (Date). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume, page numbers (if applicable).

Retrieved from url.

Hackney, C. H. (2006). Reflections on audacia as a martial virtue. *Journal of Western Martial Art*, 8. Retrieved from http://ejmas.com/jwma/articles/2006/jwmaart_hackney_0906.htm.

Videos:

When videos are referenced, the format will vary depending on the medium. For online videos posted at websites such as YouTube, the format for an online source should be used.

Example-

charleshackney. (2013). *Correlation does not imply causation*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd8iuRiMMNM>

If the video is from a published work such as a movie, the format for a film should be used.

Example-

Scorsese, M.(Producer), & Lonergan, K. (Writer/Director). (2000). *You can count on me* [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount Pictures.

An episode of a television show will have a different format.

Example-

Hall, B. (Writer), & Bender, J. (Director). (1991). *The rules of the game* [Television series

episode]. In J. Sander (Producer), *I'll fly away*. New York, NY: New York Broadcasting Company.

PUNCTUATION

Double Quotation Marks

Use the following guidelines when using punctuation with double quotation marks:

.” ,” ”? ”! ”: ”;

”? ”!—If the punctuation mark pertains to the entire sentence of which the quotation is part.

?” !”—If the punctuation mark is part of the quoted material.

If quoted material ends in a semicolon or colon in the original, the punctuation can be changed to a comma or period to fit with the structure of your sentence.

When you quote from the Bible, the punctuation is placed after the parentheses. Example:

“Jesus wept” (John 11:35 NIV).

Single Quotation Marks

.’ ,’ Generally, single quotation marks come after the punctuation marks.

Spacing After Punctuation

Leave one space after all punctuation, (e.g., , ; : . ? !)

Do not leave a space after colons when used in Scripture references or between hours and minutes (e.g., Rom 3:23; 6:30 p.m.).

Do not leave a space after periods in abbreviations such as: i.e., e.g., a.m., p.m.

Leave a single space after periods following initials in names (e.g., J. R. R. Tolkien).

Hyphens and Dashes

A hyphen is made with one stroke of the hyphen key. A dash is made with two conjoined hyphens (or one e-m dash, to be technical).

Do not leave a space before or after hyphens or dashes. Examples:

Vancouver is a fast-growing city.

The proposal may—in fact, does—meet all the requirements.

Ellipses . . .

Ellipses show that you have omitted part of the material you are quoting. Ellipsis points are made by using the period key. In most cases, there will be three ellipsis points, each of which is followed by a space. Ellipses before or after quotations are unnecessary.

If omitting material from the beginning of a sentence, do not capitalize the first word of your quotation if it is not capitalized in your source. Example:

The Apostle John indicates that God “gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

If you are omitting words from the middle of a sentence, place the ellipsis points in the space the material would normally occupy. Example:

“[W]hoever believes . . . shall not perish” (John 3:16).

If you are omitting material after a complete sentence, use four ellipsis points (the first point is the period belonging to the first sentence). Example:

“The family may fairly be considered an ultimate human institution. . . . It has been the main cell and central unit of almost all societies hitherto.”

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONTRACTIONS

Scholarly abbreviations, such as e.g. and i.e., should be used sparingly and within parenthetical expressions.

Example: “Restrictions on the sulphur content of fuel oil are already in effect in some cities (e.g., Paris, Milan, and Rome), and the prospect is that limits will be imposed sooner or later in most cities.”

(Note the difference in meaning between i.e., “in other words,” and e.g., “for example.”)

Contractions (e.g., isn’t, don’t) are not typically used in academic papers.

ABBREVIATIONS OF PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES OF CANADA

AB	Alberta	NT	Northwest Territories	QC	Quebec
BC	British Columbia	NS	Nova Scotia	SK	Saskatchewan
MB	Manitoba	NU	Nunavut	YT	Yukon
NB	New Brunswick	ON	Ontario		
NF	Newf’d and Labrador	PE	Prince Edward Island		

ABBREVIATIONS OF STATES AND TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES

AL	Alabama	KY	Kentucky	OK	Oklahoma
AK	Alaska	LA	Louisiana	OR	Oregon
AS	American Samoa	ME	Maine	PA	Pennsylvania
AZ	Arizona	MD	Maryland	PR	Puerto Rico
AR	Arkansas	MA	Massachusetts	RI	Rhode Island
CA	California	MI	Michigan	SC	South Carolina
CO	Colorado	MN	Minnesota	SD	South Dakota
CT	Connecticut	MO	Missouri	TN	Tennessee
DE	Delaware	MS	Mississippi	TX	Texas
DC	Washington, D.C.	MT	Montana	UT	Utah
FL	Florida	NE	Nebraska	VT	Vermont
GA	Georgia	NV	Nevada	VA	Virginia
GU	Guam	NH	New Hampshire	VI	Virgin Islands
HI	Hawaii	NJ	New Jersey	WA	Washington
ID	Idaho	NM	New Mexico	WV	West Virginia
IL	Illinois	NY	New York	WI	Wisconsin
IN	Indiana	NC	North Carolina	WY	Wyoming
IA	Iowa	ND	North Dakota		
KS	Kansas	OH	Ohio		

Biblical Abbreviations

Briercrest College and Seminary has certain formatting expectations when citing the Bible that may vary from those found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition. This format guide should be taken as the final word in this matter for students at Briercrest. Abbreviate biblical books as follows. (*Note that no punctuation follows the abbreviated name.*)

Gen, Exod, Lev, Num, Deut, Josh, Judg, Ruth, 1 Sam, 2 Sam, 1 Kgs, 2 Kgs, 1 Chr, 2 Chr, Ezra, Neh, Esth, Job, Ps (Pss), Prov, Eccl, Song, Isa, Jer, Lam, Ezek, Dan, Hos, Joel, Amos, Obad, Jonah, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal, Matt, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Rom, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1 Thess, 2 Thess, 1 Tim, 2 Tim, Titus, Philm, Heb, Jas, 1 Pet, 2 Pet, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Rev

Abbreviate these common English-language Bibles as follows:

JB Jerusalem Bible
 KJV King James Version
 LB Living Bible
 RSV Revised Standard Version
 NCB New Century Bible
 ESV English Standard Version
 NEB New English Bible
 NIV New International Version
 NKJV New King James Version
 NLT New Living Translation
 NRSV New Revised Standard Version
 NASV New American Standard Version

The following abbreviations are acceptable when followed by a number (except at the beginning of a sentence). Example:

chap(s). = chapter(s)

v(v). = verse(s)

Do not write out the words ‘chapter’ or ‘verse’ when citing.

Incorrect: Matthew chapter 5 verse 13

Correct: Matthew 5:13 or Matt 5:13

Abbreviated biblical references are not permitted in the middle of a sentence.

Incorrect: In Matt 5:13 Jesus says . . .

Correct: In Matthew 5:13 Jesus says . . .

Quoting the Bible

There are two ways to cite the Bible:

(1) in the body of the text. Example:

In Matthew 5:8 Jesus says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

(2) within parentheses prior to the final period. Example:

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matt 5:8).

If study-Bible notes are consulted, the Bible must appear in the references. Otherwise, do not include the Bible.

Indicate which version of the Bible you are referencing in your paper. The first citation should indicate the version. Example:

“Jesus wept” (John 11:35 NIV).

Subsequent references need not note the version unless another version is being cited.

Charles Hackney, 1234

[Sample initial page and paper]

Sigmund Freud, MD

PSY 300

16 October 2015

Malcolm Reynolds' Loss of Faith

The television show *Firefly* (Whedon, 2002a) centres around a crew of misfits who operate on the space vessel *Serenity*. The show is set in the distant future, a time in which Earth had become overpopulated and humanity responded by moving out into space and terraforming a large number of planets and moons into suitable habitats. At the time in which the events of the show take place, the inhabited planets had recently been unified, with or without their consent, by the Alliance. Malcolm Reynolds (often called "Mal"), the captain of *Serenity*, had fought on the losing side of this conflict, and he and his crew now eke out a living on the fringes of the Alliance, supporting themselves through smuggling and other criminal activities.

This paper will focus on one aspect of Malcolm Reynolds' character. In the pilot episode of the series (Whedon, 2002b), we see that Mal took part in a pivotal battle (the Battle of Serenity Valley) between the Alliance and the "Independents" who resisted the Alliance's hegemony. Mal was a Sergeant in the Independents' forces, and he is shown to have been a person of cheerful optimism and sincere Christian faith. Mal believed that God would provide victory for the Independents and their righteous cause. When the Independents were crushed by the Alliance, Mal's faith was similarly crushed. Six years later, Mal (now captain of a space ship named after the place of his defeat) has become hardened and embittered (though he retains a sense of humour and a deep nobility of character), and he demonstrates resentment toward God in particular and religion in general. In the few episodes of *Firefly* that were produced, and the

spinoff film *Serenity* (Buchanan et al., 2005), this is demonstrated primarily in his interactions with Shepherd Book, a wandering priest who joins Mal's crew.

In this paper, Mal's loss of faith will be examined, drawing from the small but growing research literature on the psychology of religious conflict and apostasy. Certain "risk factors" in Mal's background and personality, known to increase the likelihood of apostasy, will be identified. Mal's reaction to the Battle of Serenity Valley will be analyzed as a case of disappointment and anger directed toward God. Finally, questions will be raised about Mal's future as it relates to this issue.

Factors that Predispose Mal Toward Apostasy

The psychology of atheism (lack of belief in a god or gods) and apostasy (renunciation of one's religion) are understudied topics when compared to the research that falls within the category of "psychology of religion," whether one chalks this discrepancy up to ideological biases within the social sciences (Stark, 1999), or to less sinister methodological difficulties (Bainbridge, 2005). Psychologists who examine the irreligious, in the same way that psychologists of religion investigate variables that influence conversion into a faith (e.g., Granqvist & Hagekull, 2001), investigate variables that influence deconversion out of a faith. Several such investigations are relevant to an understanding of Mal's transformation from religious to irreligious.

In the *Firefly* episode "Our Mrs. Reynolds" (Whedon & Curtis-Hall, 2002), Mal mentions having grown up without a father. Instead, he was raised by his mother and "about forty hands" on his mother's ranch. Paul Vitz (1999) argues that some atheists adopt their position as the result of unresolved difficulties involving their fathers. Vitz employs the same logic that Sigmund Freud used in *The Future of an Illusion* (Freud, 1927) to explain belief in

God. Freud connects belief in God to a desire for a caring and protective father. One's feelings toward one's father are connected in Freudian psychoanalysis to the Oedipus complex (Freud, 1913), which occurs as a part of natural personality development between the ages of three and six. Children at that age begin to comprehend the concept of gender, and they feel attraction toward their opposite-sex parent. This makes the same-sex parent a rival, and the child experiences hatred and resentment toward the same-sex parent. Even if this conflict is resolved in a relatively healthy manner, Oedipal urges are never entirely dispelled. But if the Oedipus complex is not properly resolved, it may result in a fixation at that stage of development, influencing the way in which the child comes to understand authority and sexuality. As Freud describes God as a projection of our father image onto the universe, a desire to be loved and sheltered by one's "earthly" father can result in a desire that there be a loving and sheltering "heavenly father."

Vitz extends Freud's theory, connecting rejection of God to unresolved Oedipal issues that result in animosity toward one's own "earthly" father. Such animosity may come about for a number of reasons, including the father being "absent through death or by abandoning or leaving the family" (Vitz, 1997, p.9), as is clearly the case with Mal's father. As Gordon Allport put it nearly five decades before Vitz: "It seems curious that Freud insists that belief in God is a projection of dependence and love associated with the earthly father, he overlooks the fact that by the same token atheism may be construed as the projection of ambivalence or hatred associated with the male parent" (Allport, 1950, p.118). As partial support for his "defective father hypothesis," Vitz offers profiles of such prominent atheists as Karl Marx, Madelyn Murray O'Hair, Baron d'Holbach, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Sigmund Freud himself, all of whom had fathers who were absent or weak or abusive. Mal's fatherless childhood may

have predisposed him to respond with resentment when God appeared to fail him at Serenity Valley.

Another aspect of Mal's character that may have predisposed him toward apostasy is the relative maturity of his faith. When we see Mal in the Battle of Serenity Valley, there is no questioning the sincerity of his faith. But the maturity of that faith is a separate matter. We are shown only one clue in connection to this issue in the Battle of Serenity Valley. Mal announces his intention to shoot down an enemy aircraft, and when his comrade Zoe asks if he thinks that they can succeed, Mal holds up the cross that he wears around his neck and says "You even need to ask?" (Whedon, 2002b). What we see here is Mal connecting his belief in God to victory in battle. This kind of "magical thinking" (a focus on supernatural forces or beings bringing about what one wants) characterizes what Gordon Allport (1950) called "immature religion." When confronted with suffering and evil, the religiously-immature person typically cannot continue as before. "A faith centered in self-advantage is bound to break up" (p. 120). The outcome of such a crisis will either be an intensification and maturation of one's faith, or else a collapse into turmoil and doubt. Allport recounts two cases of veterans (both of Protestant upbringing) who were severely wounded in battle. One's reaction involved a deepened spirituality and commitment to God, while the other became a militant atheist.

Religious struggle provides opportunities for either psychological growth or deterioration, depending on how one handles the situation (Exline & Rose, 2005; Raiya, Pargament, & Magyar-Russell, 2010). One aspect of this is the attempt to find an explanation for one's struggle that fits within the pre-existing religious framework. Hunsberger, Pratt, and Pancer (2002) examined how young people dealt with their struggles and religious doubts. Those who sought out and consulted "anti-religious" literature for guidance were more likely to have

become less religious two years later, while those who sought out “pro-religious” literature were more likely to have increased in religiousness and decreased in doubt two years later. Would Mal’s religious struggle have ended differently if he had “done his homework” after Serenity Valley? It is impossible to say, but a study of scripture and history might have shown Mal that, whether one is talking about the Christian samurai at the Battle of Sekigahara, the fall of the Roman Empire, or Israel enduring the Babylonian Exile, being one of “God’s People” has never guaranteed victory in military conflicts.

God is Not Welcome

One particularly telling moment in relation to this issue takes place in the episode “Train Job” (Whedon, 2002c). In this episode, Mal says to Book, “If I’m your mission, Shepherd, best give it up. You’re welcome on my boat. God ain’t.” There are any number of ways that Mal could have phrased that, but he said it in a way that implies personal resentment toward God.

Julie Exline is one of the leading researchers in religious struggle (e.g., Exline, 2002) and the experience of anger toward God (e.g., Exline & Martin, 2005). A dominant theme that she has found in her research is resentment toward God as a reaction to underserved suffering (Exline, 2003). Even when the suffering is inflicted by humans (instead of being a natural disaster or illness), God can be blamed for not having prevented the trauma. The experience of undeserved suffering can disrupt one’s belief in a meaningful universe (Kauffman, 2002; Pyszczynski & Kesebir, 2011), producing confusion and anger (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Wotman, 1990). Exline, Yali, & Lobel (1999) found that people who had difficulty “forgiving” God for allowing something bad to happen were more likely to experience anxiety, depression, generalized anger, and difficulty forgiving themselves and others. In some cases, this can lead to

an “emotional atheism,” in which the individual expresses his or her resentment toward God by concluding that God does not exist (Novotni & Peterson, 2001).

In a recent series of studies (Exline, Park, Smyth, & Carey, 2011), Exline and colleagues examined anger toward God in response to traumas such as cancer and the loss of a loved one. They found that participants who viewed God as both cruel and responsible for the traumatic event, and who failed to find meaning in the event, were more likely to feel angry with God. Those who saw God as responsible, but were able to find meaning, were less likely to see God as cruel, and thus experienced less anger toward God. Negative feelings toward God were associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms, higher levels of physical distress, and lower levels of life satisfaction. If the anger toward God persisted or increased over time (as assessed in a one-year follow-up study of cancer survivors), then the outcomes were even worse.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Will Mal be able to get past his resentment toward God? When Exline and colleagues conducted their study of cancer survivors, it was in the context of a one-year follow-up. *Firefly* is set six years after the Battle of Serenity Valley, and the film *Serenity* takes place in the year after that. Mal has retained his resentment toward God for seven years. Mal’s emotional state seems to have worsened at the beginning of *Serenity*. His moods are darker, his approach is more ruthless, and one of his crew members comments that he has “driven” two other crewmembers off the ship through his behaviour. This deterioration may be explainable in connection with other factors, such as the abortive nature of his relationship with the character Inara or the increased stress of trying to survive outside of Alliance control, but it is also consistent with the research literature on religious struggle. However, during the events of the film, Mal seems to turn a corner. He reconnects with lost friends, he chooses to make a principled stance in the face

of evil, and at the end of the film he makes a speech about the power of love. It is possible that these events will lead him toward some sort of resolution, either a return to a renewed and more mature form of his earlier faith (Exline & Rose, 2005) or the establishment of a more secure irreligious identity (Strieb et al., 2009). It is unfortunate that *Firefly* was so prematurely cancelled, as we will not have the opportunity to observe Mal's long-term grappling with matters of faith and meaning, or to reflect on what Mal's struggles might have shown us about our own struggles.

Another unfortunate result of *Firefly's* early demise is the conspicuous lack of evidence on which we can base an analysis like this one. With so few clues present in the series and the film, this paper has by necessity been short on data and long on speculation. What can be said is that the few bits of data that are available to us line up fairly well with the existing scholarly literature on the psychology of religious struggle and apostasy.

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Charles Hackney, Distance Education

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Sigmund Freud, MD

PSY 300, [insert assignment name and/or number]

16 October 2015

Malcolm Reynolds' Loss of Faith

The television show *Firefly* (Whedon, 2002a) centres around a crew of misfits who operate on the space vessel *Serenity*. The show is set in the distant future, a time in which Earth had become overpopulated and humanity responded by moving out into space and terraforming a large number of planets and moons into suitable habitats. At the time in which the events of the show take place, the inhabited planets had recently been unified, with or without their consent, by the Alliance. Malcolm Reynolds (often called “Mal”), the captain of *Serenity*, had fought on the losing side of this conflict, and he and his crew now eke out a living on the fringes of the Alliance, supporting themselves through smuggling and other criminal activities. . . .