

THE GUIDE TO NIHILISM - FAQ

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"The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference."

Nihilism is NOT the 'belief in nothing'.

Nihilism IS *skepticism* coupled with *reduction*, and furthermore it is the realization that there is/are no:

1. teleology
2. wrong or right - just cause and effect
3. sacred principles, along with taboo, heresy and blasphemy.

... and that:

4. artificial morality and values are subjective, elastic, fungible and impermanent
5. that which is self-evident requires no belief, for it has an independent, objective existence and self-continuation.

While Nihilism rejects:

6. faith, and everything necessitated by it.

And Nihilism uses:

7. Occam's Razor
8. logic

While recognizing:

9. natural selection
10. sustainable idea-sets have minimized internal contradictions.

Furthermore even if it can be shown that one element has flaws this does not demonstrate that any or all of the remaining points are flawed as well.

5) Self-Evident. For example, one does not need faith in the objective principle or the word-symbol 'gravity' to know that if you jump off a cliff you will fall to the bottom, or that if you punch a wall it will hurt your fist. This concept segues into the idea of pain and sensations which although they can be distorted, they are still consistent and these neurological signals are the same throughout the animal kingdom. A needless fixation on the basic chemical and electrical properties (or beyond) does not invalidate the fundamental purpose they serve for the biological organism.

9) Natural Selection. One path is selected over another for a reason. "Natural selection is a mechanism for generating an exceedingly high degree of improbability." R. A. Fisher. Nor through divine guidance since this is unsupported by any evidence and rejected using the principle of Occam's Razor. Rather natural selection outcome is a product of surroundings and the unceasing struggle of adaptation and the search for success. This process should not be confused with a value, which is an arbitrary choice by a human mind such as saying the color blue is better than the color purple. Whatever mind-games the philosophers want to play, one can debate where it leads and why, but none of that matters. Occam's Razor again - because natural selection reflects the framework that not only we as biological entities exist within but the entire universe operates upon that principle as a result of being a finite system. Everything either succeeds or it fails.

What if I don't agree with everything? Within any set of ideas exists a reasonable allowance for dissent. In other words to be a nihilist you don't have to agree with every single detail merely the basic tenets.

Basic tenets: Nihilism is the refutation of God, the refutation of morality, refutation of law, refutation of justice, and the refutation of all artificial order. Furthermore I carefully chose the word 'refutation' because it means illuminating them as false and erroneous. This as opposed to say 'disbelief' meaning *refusal* to believe, although *non-belief* could be more appropriate. All that is happening at minimum is merely illuminating the assumptions and false underpinnings of what is commonly taken for granted such as the anti-logic of religion, the injustice of modern-justice, and other manifestations of social hypocrisy. You can think of nihilism as clarity through reduction.

What is nihilism? A purified definition of nihilism is reduction to that which is ineluctable, which is a short way of saying that nihilism is about dealing with those elements and facts that cannot be avoided, vitiated or abrogated, while accepting that all else is shades of illusion. Nihilism is an understanding of what morality is (a byproduct of social living that's warped through the abuse of power), where good and evil come from, and the influence of those forces. Morality defines everyone's actions; it defines the legal structure that punishes, the limitations on our thoughts and ideas, the range of response to any given situation. Think of why they have too many cattle in India and the concomitant range of disease and starvation.

Who are the Nihilists? Anyone who follows and comprehends the tenets of Nihilism. At present it's mostly an informal and often individualistic expression largely due to widespread misunderstanding, public misconceptions, or simply a lack of awareness. However that will change, starting here.

Is life pointless? No, the purpose of all life is to reproduce itself, and every other function is an extension of that necessity.

What's the difference between Nihilism and Anarchism? Anarchism is against authority, the idea being that all authority is repressive and should be abolished. To a Nihilist authority in some form is unavoidable and repressive government is just a symptom of a much deeper problem, secondary to what really matters. If all one is concerned with is tyrannical rule, if that's all you want to solve, go for it but you won't ever make any permanent change because you're pulling up the weeds and leaving the roots in the ground. Nihilism is fundamentally much more significant because it strikes at the roots, it strikes at perception and morality.

What's the difference between nihilism and atheism? Atheism says 'don't believe in God' while nihilism says 'don't believe in anything', so nihilists are atheists but atheists are not necessarily nihilists.

Do you have to be an atheist to be a nihilist? The simple answer is 'yes'. However, in some cases the answer is 'no' because basal nihilism, the emotion and introspective reasoning characteristic of what's broadly termed social nihilism, plagues disparate groups to include the religious and the atheist alike.

Isn't Nihilism just an excuse for hedonism? No. Nihilism is rejection of guilt, the moral nose ring, because it fuels environmental theologies and an endless series of self-abasement ideologies. Nihilism is dropping guilt and becoming human; it's the acceptance of instinct that minimizes mental illness and repressed aggression. Ultimately the choice of hedonism is open but nature has an uncanny ability to punish the foolish, then neighbors will find a way to deliver comeuppance to the rest compelled to flaunt the limits of reasonable behavior. You may be able to do anything you want but that doesn't mean you necessarily should. Besides, hedonism is unhealthy because it's slavery to compulsion. Likewise it's acutely obvious as the population gets fatter and weaker that *imbalanced pleasure is just postponed pain*. So understanding cause and effect within our biological limitations and defining appropriate conduct is a reflection of self-respect and sanity. And pleasure is a biologically evolved response to certain behavior and stimuli, that genetic imperative which is the real owner of the human soul. News flash: your MTV rebel is just a deluded slave.

Isn't this just another revolution? Revolution in the traditional sense does nothing more than repeat the failures of the past; this plan is to avoid those same mistakes. What is commonly called revolution is a ruse designed to dupe the people into releasing pent up anger in officially approved directions usually against themselves or against the few

people smart enough to actually change things for the better - just ask those 'revolutionary' Communists, or more accurately study what they've done. But contemporary language has serious limitations on the ability to express proper nihilistic meaning; the desire is for more than revolution because the intention is to circumvent the cycles of history.

Where do you stand on violent disobedience? In order for violent disobedience to have credibility you have to try peaceful disobedience first. In other words, you have to give authorities the opportunity to address your concerns, i.e. the reason for the disobedience. Once you've tried and demonstrated that peaceful protest and/or disobedience aren't working then violent action becomes justified. The effectiveness of either type of disobedience is more problematic, much of it depends on the situation, and success in either case requires organization and persistence.

"I don't think this web site is really nihilistic because the definition I've read states everything is meaningless, life is futile and nothing can be known."

1. Most of this confusion originates from overly simplistic definitions written by non-nihilists who have little interest in nihilism itself and no desire to make it internally consistent or functional. That is a problem with many dictionaries and why the better ones have more than one definition. Nevertheless, to grasp nihilism one can't stop at the dictionary! I think it's a wise reminder at this point that just because someone says something doesn't make it factual and just because many, even a majority of people, believe something that doesn't make it real. Determining fact from fiction is a much more challenging process than merely accepting or rejecting idle statements; the most effective decisions are based upon experience.

Our human mind allows us the illusion of existing within two distinct worlds, that of everyday reality or that of fantasy and philosophy. The first is pragmatic and the second is idealized. The fictionalized, idealized philosophy world may be of use at times to better understand the nature of things, perhaps by creating a simplified model of practical reality but ultimately by virtue of the fact we all exist within a physical human body we're constrained in significant yet universal ways that forces us all back to that world of practical reality whether we like it or not. The nihilism you've read here does vary to certain degrees from simplified dictionary definition of existential nihilism and also the very myopic view that many contemporary pundits take on nihilism and its potential which ignores historical precedent, such as the 19th century Russian Nihilists, and also the flexibility within all living idea-sets. (see above '[what if I don't agree with everything](#)').

So one could say that the typical contemporary, dictionary view of existential nihilism is a fuzzy philosophy that fixates on fictional extremes in the typical way metaphysics does while the active 'political' version is a more refined, pragmatic extension of basal nihilism. The bottom line is that one can't put any singular, one-dimensional interpretation of nihilism into practice, or indeed into any realistic situation. They say that

politics is the art of the possible and if that's true then political nihilism is the art of pragmatic nihilism. *If you want to live nihilism rather than just fantasize about it then you have to take the nihilism here, or at least something very, very close to it.*

2. One obscure complaint against this website goes like this: since the website is 'something' rather than 'nothing' it isn't nihilism. Skipping the specious nature of the argument itself, a specific but hidden emotional sentiment is what's actually being conveyed. This sentiment is an anger manifest from being told that in life some things are either impossible or inappropriate; in other words the appeal of 'nihilism' here is using it to justify any and all personal action – (of course in practice this means 'my' action not 'yours'!) In this case nihilism is seen as a license to 'do whatever I want to do' but any kind of structure or analysis applied to that belief inevitably undermines the argument hence the anger vented at the *CounterOrder/Nihilism's Home Page*. Oh darn ... and life is fair *except when you lose*.

How is it possible to know anything at all?

You can't, but we can make guesses that usually suffice. These guesses are based upon experience stemming from the illusion of time creating a sense of past and knowledge of previous occurrences. Most everything else is a statistical construction, nonetheless most things around are so predictable and normative that this guessing is equivalent to knowing. "Our experience hitherto justifies us in believing that nature is the realization of the simplest conceivable mathematical ideas." - Albert Einstein

What is the meaning of history?

Since it's impossible to know beyond the fleeting moment of the present, history assumes a highly subjective quality. This is one reason why Napoleon said "History is a collection of lies statesmen have agreed upon." History exists not as an absolute chronology of events which is an absurdity because most of it can never be known for certain, but rather for the lessons we learn from those past events and messages we extract from it, if any. Reference above question.

What is ANUS? Neither Freydis, *Nihilism's Home Page*, nor CounterOrder.com are affiliated with [ANUS](#), an acronym for *American Nihilist Underground Society*. They currently promote an unusual mixture of heavy metal music and extreme nationalism.

Further, ANUS, the [Center for Nihilist and Nihilism Studies](#), and multiple connected Internet sites, most of which are false-fronts, are part of a deceptive effort to present an Internet presence that is larger and more important than it really is. The proponents behind these websites are not nihilists, nor are they likely any of the other labels they've claimed in their panoply of terminology, they're simply race-based ultra-nationalists and the rest is window-dressing. This is the reason why it's so difficult to determine from superficial elements just what exactly ANUS and associated groups really represent. And it appears that they want to own and co-opt every kind of post-modern phraseology they can find so they can manipulate it towards their agenda. That's not to say that their actual ideas and conclusions behind the smokescreen have no merit or shouldn't be

debated, rather that their approach is intentionally disingenuous and that raises serious questions as to the honesty and integrity of the source. Being ideologically motivated they are willing to place belief ahead of facts because for them to mislead is acceptable if it promotes their core values.

[Is religion really that awful?](#) One very common question goes like this: If there's no 'meaning' to life then doesn't it make sense to do whatever makes you happy and not think about things that don't make you happy? In other words since ignorance is bliss why learn anything? Another version essentially replaces the word 'ignorance' with 'religion' – if there's no 'meaning' to life and religion makes people happy, why rain on their party trying to disabuse them of their beliefs?

This question seems more rhetorical than serious to me, but nonetheless as often as it's asked it would seem to merit an answer. The explanation could go on for pages but to be succinct it boils down to two points. First of all stupidity is not healthy for anybody. Seeing through superstition and illusion is a critical task because it prevents the individual from being exploited in life. Second, the religious, believing they hold a monopoly on truth, are compelled to force everyone else to believe the same things they do which means conflict is inevitable. Nihilism and religion cannot co-exist because the believers cannot allow it.

[What is the successful end-state for Nihilism? / What happens when Nihilism wins?](#)

Nihilism doesn't necessarily have any end-state except perhaps when it finally leads to something greater, like a stepping stone to be superseded. So it's not really an issue of winning in the traditional sense of things, there's no final victor because life isn't like that. Dwelling on the hypothetical end-state of Nihilism may cause people to miss the significance of the process for by expanding and interjecting the 'extreme' position into the mainstream it makes reaching a functional and factual conclusion on the part of the public far more likely to occur. It's about influencing the center of mass by expanding the poles of debate. For example think of the long-shot candidates that enter an election not with the realistic intent of getting the most votes but rather to influence the debate and compel the public to address their issues of concern when they would otherwise be ignored and swept under the rug by the dominant political parties.

[Should I Vote?](#) Is the glass half full or is it half empty? Deciding whether to vote or not is the same sort of question – the answer depends on your perspective and sentiment at the given moment, but the short answer is yes; let me explain in greater detail [< here >](#).

[My Teenager is depressed/suicidal, what should I do?](#) Quite a few e-mail letters sent to me are from parents asking for help dealing with their teenager suffering from depression characterized as nihilism and futility. Here's a general response that adds some context to the problem along with some practical optimism:

All teenagers go through at least one phase of serious depression, and of course traumatic occurrences can suddenly make it all worse, but regardless of the labels used

to describe it I think much of it originates in a lack of personal efficacy and the subsequent feeling that they lack any power or control over events that affect their lives. In this regard Maria Montessori was really on the right track, but everything she developed was for kindergarten and younger, once they get to be teenagers there's not a whole lot anybody can say or do to alter their perceptions of events around them. This problem is compounded by the fact that teenagers have no true conception of how things work in the adult world that is radically different from the school and home life which is all they've encountered so far.

The bottom line is that we all exist within a very dynamic universe where everything is in constant flux, although at any given moment it may seem the same as the moment before. So, even if it all looks bleak now it could well be the complete reverse tomorrow, and in the meantime there's unlimited potential for personal reward to anyone engaged with the world around them and willing to watch, learn, and participate in it.

How should I reference this website for my school paper?

Author and e-mail address: [Freydis](#)

Website name: *Nihilism: The CounterOrder*

Home Address: www.CounterOrder.com

Date: (shown at the very bottom of every page)

Lexicographic clarifications: The common atheist espousal of disbelief in the supernatural or especially that which can only be proven is often closer to nihilism. Indeed many people using the term atheist would better fit in the category of nihilism but for lack of awareness of the proper terminology. Anarchism is a similar problematic phrase because what most anarchists really want isn't no-government it's self-government, the individual sovereignty of *autarchy*. Furthermore nihilism is not a 'belief in nothing' which is a self-evident absurdity but actually:

1. A doctrine holding that all values are baseless and nothing can be known or communicated.
2. The belief that destruction of existing social or political institutions is necessary for future improvement.

Obligatory philosophical questions for the curious and desperately insecure alike, here's nihilism as reduction:

Nihilism shouldn't be the spurious cop-out explanation everything is meaningless. 'Political' nihilism or nihilism in the only form that has any continuity states not that existence is meaningless merely that the contemporary meaning is inaccurate. In that spirit here is an attempt to rectify some of those inaccuracies.

What is the meaning of life everything? From as far back as any evidence can be discerned the fundamental algorithm for everything around us is the ability to be copied

and extenuated. Anything that can fulfill this role will spread and 'succeed' to varying degrees based on multiple factors such as copying fidelity or cleverness in avoiding hazards or outwitting opponents etc. One can reject this paradigm but only at the cost of 'success'. No thing and no entity has ever managed to avoid it nor can it be avoided because it's an integral law of the universe(s).

How is success defined? Success is basically the degree the organism has adapted to the surrounding environment and prospered. Strategies for success include increased intelligence and enhanced power, leading to wider spread, greater numbers, and magnified influence.

How did we get here? I don't think it really matters since we clearly ARE here but the most likely scenario is comet vectored seed chemicals developed in interstellar clouds warmed by ambient radiation. Basically the hypothesis known as Panspermia. Earth's life evolved from that inglorious but crucial start.

What is our purpose? This is a better question and the answer is ultimately a personal decision limited to the confines of contemporary moral topology and the ideological sandbox. However I believe that the only answer with any strategic viability is for 'success'.

Why do we die?

The succinct answer: so that new things can grow, to prevent stagnation and eventual extinction. On a microscopic level the question of why we die, or more specifically why our cells die, is a fascinating and surprisingly complex issue. An accessible documentary on the topic of cell death is *Death by Design* (1995) by Brunet & Friedman.

Is there life after death? The human life is a vehicle for genetic continuity and in this case life is very nearly immortal because the genetic material (is supposed to flow) on indefinitely, vacillating between the male or female container and perhaps ironically evolving and changing as little as possible. This is why civilization developed and why (barring extraneous influences) life mates with similar life.

Will the 'self' live after death? This is the above question distilled into the more traditional intent of the question which is to determine if one's own consciousness or 'self' will continue on in any form after the physical death of the body. The exact same consciousness? No. I see no evidence for that anywhere. However the fractional consciousness, which is partially a product of genetic material, will continue in your descendants and through the greater population through the spread of influential thoughts and ideas.

What is the point (of anything / everything)? The universe may be pointless when measured using human values but this is because the universe didn't come into existence for human enjoyment. Rather, human life adapted to fit pre-existing conditions

that the universe already contained. The universe exists independently of human life - the natural order is not anthropocentric. Many times we get the 'wrong' answer because we ask the 'wrong' question. We shouldn't ask "why is everything pointless" but instead "why do we believe it's pointless?"

What if I don't like these answers? People are basically the same today as they were millennia ago, but technology and the speed at which novel ideas spread has certainly changed. Religiosity has been selected into the gene pool and religion, and its false answers, won't be instantly disappearing anytime soon – but it can be replaced. The reason people are attracted to mystical solutions is the built in need dating from the dim archaic primate primeval, the overpowering urge to genuflect to dominant powerful males out of *fear*. Meet God.

But I can continue, what else is there to tear apart and uphold as illusion or delusion?

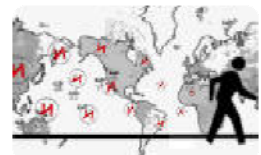
The most meaningful question someone can ask is **what is consciousness?**, or who am I? The reductionist answer is that all consciousness and sentience is a temporal illusion of accumulated sensations. Awareness and consciousness is the product of a continual state of interaction with the people, forces, thoughts and objects around us. Existence is to feel, to learn and accumulate information and interpret it, thereby creating a sense of what is. Isolation is a form of death, yet it is a death that can usually be recovered from once no longer isolated.

Who is Freydis?

Some people have asked for biographical information on the primary author of the *CounterOrder* (*Nihilism's Home Page*). The reason for the lack of this material is because my autobiographical writing is too quickly labeled as conceit by opponents and trivia by supporters. Regardless it rarely seems especially cogent to the arguments and ideas I'm providing and especially unnecessary given the brevity maxim - when in doubt leave it out. But now I'm in a generous and dangerous mood so I'll give it a shot.

Who's writing this?!

The vast majority what you read here is written by me, I go by Freydis after an intriguing early American (but not native) historical figure. What you're reading is the accumulated effort of many years both on and off-line.



What does Freydis do out there?

A little of this a little of that! Ah! I've spent more time in school systems and public employers than in private workforces but I never really fit in anywhere I go. That's not to say I don't try or that I don't get along with people which I do but the point is I think differently and have a level of perception that often puts me at odds with authority and simpleton peers alike.

What are your credentials?

What, my Ph.D. in life-pain is not enough? Credentials are a terrible sham, they are just ways of abbreviating necessary analysis - hey this clown has a nifty diploma on the wall, he must be smart! It may suffice for the deep insights courtesy of the mass-media but in real-life people should be judged by what they produce not how many asses they've kissed or tests they've taken. So, yes truthfully I do have official skills and credentials but, so what? And no I'm not a philosophy major but I have been in the upper education system way too long studying everything from engineering to political science. Word to the wise - libraries are a *lot* cheaper and more effective too.

What 's your intent?

The real reason most readers want to know about the author is simply to gain some kind of perspective on the intentions behind the website and its creator.

Although it may appear professional and calculated today, this website you're reading never began with any strategic goal in mind. *Nihilism's Home Page (the CounterOrder)* originated simply as a means of getting a lot of things off my mind by writing them down and then posting them online to see what kind of feedback I would get – part sanity check and part desire to work out the errors.

Over time CounterOrder.com has grown to include a large volume of material from essays and analysis to art and beyond and even a worldwide membership roster that is in many ways a testament to the evolutionary rather than goal oriented nature of events.

Basically if you want things to change you've got to alter the perspective first and after that you've got to inject the new ideas into the culture. So if any goal can be ascribed to this effort it would be that much of what I'm trying to do is build a methodology that allows people to be what they are naturally without the need for superstition and fantasy to provide a false sense of protection.

And no, I'm not trying to dupe anyone, there's no subterfuge involved here (besides a smattering of humor). Indeed if anything I'm trying to inoculate people *against* getting duped because living without a critical and skeptical view of things is a guarantee for exploitation and the awful panoply of life-hazards and authority driven repression that goes with it. In order for the group and the individual to survive and prosper we have to be free enough to explore and criticize *especially* when and where it's socially uncomfortable to do so; eventually an evolutionary divergence emerges from the chaos.

How did Nihilism's Home Page (the CounterOrder) get started?

I began studying nihilism in 1993 after I discovered the term by happenstance while browsing through an encyclopedia of Sociology. The realization of nihilism as a word and a concept was eye-opening to say the least; it matched my views and feelings on the world and the more I studied it the more fascinated I became. Reading, thinking, and writing at a frenetic pace by 1998 I had accumulated a substantial collection of

handwritten notes. With the arrival of the Internet as a functional medium the progression to a website was a natural outcome. The rapidly expanding content of my *Social Engineering Notebook* split into [Holology](#) and the [Nihilism's Home Page](#) website you're reading now. Much of the core content and many of the symbols and aesthetic design elements originated from drawings created during extended periods of High School boredom. It's amazing how minor events and decisions can have such a significant impact over time.

Although the scale and depth has grown significantly since the beginning the main reason was simply to put my ideas into the public realm to see how people would react, positive or negative, and then to gain some constructive input as to the validity of those concepts. I didn't expect it to be so positively received nor did I expect as many people to agree with it! I called it Nihilism not because I set out to be a nihilist but because that's the best description I could apply to it in totality; after all, nihilism is where you go when you can't find anything to believe in.

Where did the Nihilism symbol come from?

I sketched the rudimentary design for the Nihilism symbol when I was in High School, later when I developed the website I converted the sketch into a digital design using an obscure font for the reversed 'N'. There's no hidden meaning in the design, it's merely intended as a quick, simple, and appealing means of identifying Nihilism and Nihilists.

Will you (Freydis) write a book?

Yes! The paperback book [Nihilism - 21st Century Revelations from a Devastating Mind](#) by Freydis has been officially released. The book is about 300 pages, 5.83" x 8.26", black and white interior with multiple graphics and a color cover. Besides containing most of the CounterOrder website it also has new material unavailable anywhere else. Get your book [< here >](#)!

Special thanks to all who've written in with questions. Keep it up: [e-mail me](#).

"Far too many live, and far too long hang they
on their branches. Would that a storm came
and shook all this rottenness and worm-
eatenness from the tree!"
- Nietzsche's Zarathustra

