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I know it's a hot afternoon for many of us at it is the afternoon although if you're in Portugal it's bedtime so I thank you all for being here at this time.

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And again, especially when there are other good panels that one could go to. This is an abbreviated essay.

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I'm gonna do a lot of reading and I apologize for that. I normally do PowerPoints and I mentioned earlier that I lost my PowerPoint so I'm just going to be reading and.

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I'll try to summarize where I can or I feel it's. Going a bit long, but I did time myself.

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And I'm gonna set my timer. Now, so this is primarily a critique of the philosophy that Pullman embedded in his works and not so much a literary critique, although except for that overlaps with the philosophy.

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So here we go. So Philip Pullman's award winning and highly successful. His start materials trilogy offers a rousing often dripping epic fantasy.

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There's 2 young principals, Lyra and Will face many dangers and overcome herling obstacles before the final pages.

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In doing so, they become compelling characters who it might be argued offer good role models to young leaders of such virtues as courage, tenacity, and loyalty.

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However, in this retelling of Paradise Lost and drawing heavily from William Blake and the Swedenborg, How and infuses his story, but sometimes long passages that argue for his worldview, materialistic atheism, in ways that not only seem prechee, but which end up sounding more like diatribes than rational arguments.

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And these at times disrupt the narrative flows so he can make his points. While using fantasy to convey as well view is certainly appropriate.

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Pretty much every writer does this. Pullman ultimately disappoints in part because of this. Yeah, I said earlier for those who were here, yeah, I appreciate actually the especially the visual that the television series I thought was quite good and even the first movie.

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I enjoyed many ways, but is that embedding the philosophy that does trouble me? This paper will reference concepts in all 3 works of the trilogy but will specifically explore the harrowing of hell in the amper spyglass.

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Examining problems attempts to share readers that by rejecting specifically Christian views of the final destination, one can live more freely and happily knowing that there is no light to come beyond a vague joining with the universe.

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This raises issues about the nature and purpose of the afterlife in the meanings of justice, the soul, and morality.

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I should know that I'm not referencing any of the books that came after such as the Book of Dust series and the shorter ancillary stories that fit within this original trilogy.

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In the Amber Spyglass liar will journey through the underworld and free the spirits trap there, allowing the ghost to dissolve and escape their grim existence.

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But by denying the reality of non-physical souls, Pullman offers pernicious paradoxes, and I'm going to say even some outright contradictions in his novels, which are as questionable and even extreme as the documents he seeks to supply it.

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I should also note that while much my critique will challenge, full of sopical underpinnings, I'm not rejecting the novels.

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They and the adaptations are full of interesting and even fun, magic to premises. And as riding as often as good as any other leading fantasy writer, he's actually quite a good writer.

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For those I'm familiar with the author, Pullman has openly positioned himself as the anti Cs Lewis who attempts to embed the gospel of atheism from his fantasy novels.

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In an interview here for a quote, I hate the Narnia books and I hate them with a deep and bitter passion close quote.

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Home and objects to the list for being too preachy and for using this works to promote his religious ideology.

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He finds it mistreats an unsuspecting audience, namely females and children. And Pullman's words, Lewis's work is dishonest propaganda in the service of a life-hating ideology.

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And that's from a quote. I'm not always gonna say quote unquote. I am quoting quite a bit.

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That'll just get, too much. You also despise Melissa's space novels, especially Paralandra, in which an Oxford Dawn is sent to the planet Venus to prevent that world's fallen to sin by keeping that, figure from disobeying the creators law.

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From an actually found this concept revolting, arguing that Satan is heroic and disobeying God in favor of having knowledge is more noble than what he believes is blind obedience.

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So, so hated Paralandra, he sought traverse the storyline. Pullman says, quote, Eve must fall.

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Lyra must be tempted. It is the church ostensibly the good guys who are trying to protect her and went over to Satan this time as it were.

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But this time Satan is understood to be good rather than evil, close both. For full month, the fall is again, quote, a completely essential.

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It's the best thing, the most important thing that ever happened to us and if we had our heads on straight we would have churches dedicated to Eve instead of the Virgin Mary.

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As well. To counter Lewis, home and turn to a source especially familiar to Lewis, Paradise lost and retells the story that so that a humanistic resolution triumphs.

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In fact, the trilogy's title, *Historic Materials*, comes from a line by Milton in book 2 of *Paradise Lost* referring to the material God used to create the universe.

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Homer borrows much Christian language and imagery in his work, but recast them for his secular purposes.

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In so doing, as Guteron points out, Homer's explicit use of Christian motif symbols a language is unique in high fantasy.

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Almost novels appear to comprise no less than the deconstruction of the traditional complex of Christian beliefs, values, and practices, and the construction of an alternative system.

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Good no further points out homeless purpose is radically to reinterpret or demythologize if not exercise Christian institutions and beliefs.

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But above all, he's going to do this honestly in the overt language of religion. 4 months, by being protocol, honest in his approach.

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That is by showing the dark side of religion and openly preaching an alternative view is honoring his young readers more than Lewis did.

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Homer perceived Christianity in his churches as things which have and continue to be centers of wickedness. I would to church this morning so I've got because I'm in that camp.

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In short, Poma's purpose is to dismantle the grand narrative of the Christian religion and to replace it with an emancipatory and natural humanism.

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Equing Carl Sagan for Pullman, the physical world is all there is. It is primary.

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So any problems of an eternal afterlife with Aslan, Jesus or lost loved ones is the poorest of lies and must be exposed.

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I think this group knows the value of fancy literature. So I have a short section. This kind of defends the uses of fantasy, and then teaching children through it.

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I'll just call it Allen Jacobs here. Yeah, Al Jacobs argue that something consequential is at stake when judging books of this kind.

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They offer not just a story but a world and the lessons they teach is not just a moral but a world view.

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Thus it is not and that simply puts book down and say I don't believe it when so many young people are having worldview seeds planted.

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On the other hand, we shouldn't not try to censor the books. But engage them and interact with their important ideas.

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Besides, where the critiques are ride about such things as church abuses and hypocritical church leaders, we should be open to being corrected.

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Therefore, it's happening, Pullman's religious critiques, especially as views of the afterlife, can help us see where his ideas succeed or fall short.

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Part of my critique is the moment insist that the material world alone exists. Looks like we have a couple of people in the waiting room, perhaps.

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In the trilogy, he makes concrete a significant number of abstract and insubstantial contracts.

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Log, souls, ghosts, love and hate are all make physical throughout the trilogies pages.

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The authority is corporeal. A week of broken down shell who appears in the story merely to dissipate.

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So like elements are revealed in demons in as much as demons are in some inexpressible way essential to the being of their humans.

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Spector Stock the Worlds seeking Hick's demon adults on whom to feed and leave behind zombie like autatomatop.

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Love is embodied in dust. The strange, normally invisible substance, which eventually saturates will a liar in their adoration of each other.

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Hey, just make flesh in the church. Is mechanisms and those who do its work. Since everything in the universe is material, you know, those things we think of as being immaterial such as ghosts are made of dust.

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An invisible but intangible particle that makes up the universe. So I have a number of issues with homeless views, but for this session I'm just gonna focus on 3.

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One, I'm gonna argue that, his view of everything being physical doesn't fit very well with his material world, especially underworld part.

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It doesn't actually advance his focus on morality. And he doesn't include any sense of rewards or punishment.

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Everything is treated equally and therefore we lose a sense of justice by using the afterlife the way he does.

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So what is his underworld? So I'm gonna give a section that just, recounts the underworld and describes it.

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As the Amber Spyglass, that's a third of the trilogy. As that opens, Liar has a vision of the land of the dead.



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On a great plane where no light shown from long from the iron dark sky and where a mist obscured the horizon on every side.

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The ground will spare earth beaten flat by the pressure of millions of feet. Even though those feet had less weight than feathers.

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So it must have been tined that pressed it flat even though time had been stilled in this place.

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So it must have been the way things were. This was the end of all places and the last of all worlds.

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She also sees the ghost who live there, beings without faces that were visible and no voices that spoke. She realizes they were in prison.

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Someone had committed a crime, though no one knew what it was or who had done it or what authority had sat in judgment.

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This vision, which a recently murdered best friend Roger cries out for help, spruce Lyra and Will to go to the land of the dead to free him.

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Lord Ashe Real tells us that the authority has promised his followers heaven, but has lied instead and prisons them in this desolate place.

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We'll suggest that he use the subtle knife to cut a doorway into this realm, pausing the pair to speculate on what that land would look like and giving us the first real clue is to form this treatment of the underworld.

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Lyra asks, could we really go to the land of the dead? But what part of us does it?

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And this is where I really wish I had a nice British accent to read some of these things to you.

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So you'll just have to kind of in your mind here at the British accent. Could we really go to the land of the dead, but what part of this does that?

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Because demons fade away when we die, I've seen them and our bodies well they just stay in the grave and decay don't they?

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Will respond, then there must be a third part, a different part. Why are identifies this is the part of her that does the thinking or the mind to which Will agrees.

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Yes, and that's the ghost. That's, that the mind is somehow separate from the body and the demon or life force.

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And this exists consciously in an unchanging nether world without hope or end. Once, enter the underworld, they follow a stream of newly dead people and notice that the bright daylight faded and dimmed until a sort of in reached by light covered everything.

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Well, everything was just as clear as in full daylight, but there's less light to see it by.

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As if all the strength were draining out of a dying sun, close both. Quickly, the edges of things were losing their definition as well and becoming blurred.

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The color was slowly seeping out of the world. A dim green gray for the bright green of the trees in the grass, a dim sand gray for the vivid yellow of a field of corn, a dim blood gray for the red bricks of a neat farmhouse.

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The further in they go, the murkier it becomes. Some go to this dim will try to find comfort in each other with one mother assuring her child that they're going to see her grandpa.

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But the child is inconsolable and leaps bitterly as the string of people walk on disconsolate leaf through the fading landscape.

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Although as one commentator says the term people is too strong a word for what will and Lyra encounter when they recall the land of the dead.

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The preacher who's well, creatures who well there are translucent and ethereal nothing more than wispy recollections of human beings.

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They are literally ghosts of their former selves. They're apparently compelled by an unknown force to move forward.

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Souls lingered in the stole mascot forever and lose their memories the longer they remain.

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We're told that quote, the land of the dead isn't a place of reward or a place of punishment is a place of nothing or postpone.

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Byron will follow the first ghost encounter to a holding area. While waiting to go further into the defining realm, they go to the each person has a death.

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An apparition that accompanies people from the time they are born and a scores them from the living world at the appropriate time.

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That's Pullman is now offered a fourth part of the human being if this step is indeed part of a human being, that's actually not by clear, but each person is assigned this death.

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Figure, but so we have a body, a demon, a ghost or mind, and a death. Why is death access her guide and to the deeper underworld?

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Everything is in in gray and Harpy's destroy with little hope might linger there. The starkness on the underworld manifest the starkness of the condition these souls endure.

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They're trapped without hope of either dissipation or moving to a higher realm. As with any great, that Lyon will come out alive from the underworld.

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Uniquely in fiction though, they also free all the trap souls. When the heroes open a door out of the wasteland, the souls get to leave and become part of the universe.

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Why are promises then that they're atoms will become part of poke the air and wind or the trees and the earth and all the living things.

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They'll never vanish. They're just part of everything. Well, just to part it's true, but you'll be out in the open part of everything alive again.

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Of course, the ghost of a priest tried to stop them for heresy. Spires points out that this concept of dust returning to dust is a biblical reference, often invoked in Christian burial, ashes to ashes dust to desk.

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But she also knows that it has an equal consolatory appeal in a pantheistic sense. In a few instances, some souls even seem able to extend their existences.

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Some ghosts like these scores B and Will's father seem to have the ability not to dissolve until they desire to.

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After imparting final words to Lyon, we are told, quote, and now that their purpose, this is a Lee and Will's father, now that their purpose was achieved, the dead warriors allowed their atoms to relax and dripped apart at long long last post vote and that allowed us an interesting word there.

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When the ghost do emerge from the deafening realm, most of them go happily into the night, the star like the air.

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Roger leads behind such a vivid little burst of happiness that will was reminded of the bubbles in a glass of champagne.

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When Lee gives up the ghost, it is described as a peaceful and pleasant experience. Quote, the last little scrap of consciousness that was least scores, we floated upward.

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Just this is great balloon had done so many times. I'm troubled by the flares and bursting shells, depth of the explosions and the shout surprise of anger and warning and pain.

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Conscious only of this movement upward the last of these fours be passed through heavy clouds that came out under the brilliant stars where the atoms of this beloved demon Hester were waiting for him.

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Although the liberation, Pullman effects does not take the form of Christian resurrections, these captives do rise up from the underworld to gain a final breath of the night air.

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Press and clean and cool. And a side of the open heavens as they turn through relief and joy into the night, the starlight in the air.

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Happy, the section thus. In short, the release of the death from the prison is associated with the end of the dictator that overaws them.

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An idea strongly resonating with the conception of the resurrected price heroes hell. This powerful iconographic tradition depicts the race price, trampling down the gates of Hades and lifting out Adam out of the patches of Satan.

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And onto the joys of paradise. The motifs underlying the heroin date back to the days of the New Testament for the first letter Peter tells of the dead Christ preached to in the spirits in prison to the spirits in prison.

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And Matthew's gospel depicts saints leaving their tombs and bearing witness in Jerusalem after Jesus's death.

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The votes are far to porum finds it comforting that there is a way out of the after light.

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To know that after spelling dark will come out again to a sweet land like this to be free the sky like the birds.

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Well that's the greatest promise anyone could wish for, he says. But is it really, and here's the, I've been a challenge, These prolonged scenes in the underworld drawn from various literary and religious streams from the Greek Hades to the Juicyol to numerous literary works.

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Furnish Pullman within imagery and a logic important in the construction of a convincing secular liberation narrative.

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Andrew. LEETZ argues, but without either color or clarity, the powerful visual images of the actual life that have been so carefully crafted throughout the generations and reinforced by popular culture, suddenly seemed less clear in Pulman's world.

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Leicester Tut, Implements rule. But it's precisely here that almost literally the pictures do not fight cohere with his worldview.

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I like to submit at least 3 theoretical problems. The first, again, he insists that everything is material.

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So I submit that the imagery is often poetic and I'm going to grant that and aesthetically appealing to the reader.

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But this requires a contradiction even though it does not ultimately add up philosophically.

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Their squires, an advocate for the trilogy, even acknowledges this point by saying this lack of consistency and its consequent disruption of his ideological intent is one of those loose ends and one of the loose ends of the trilogy.

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And this is because how can you have souls and spirits in a material world. So this is a reworking of the a mind body problem.

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This view seems to drop on and Adam is in a pan psychism. Use which Pullman has been supporting.

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He's argued that dust may be similar to dark matter and dark energy, unseen and mostly undetected substances that help physicists account for unusual phenomena in the universe.

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I don't have the expertise or time to delve into those issues. Do you do show some problems as he applies in 2 souls and the afterlife?

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And the first paradox is that mind body problem. The Souls in the Amber Spite glass seem to fit our.

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Traditional understand is the disembodied souls join with ourselves to make us human, but Pullman insists that such states do not exist.

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He states that Actually, I'm sorry. I lost my spot. Oh, there. And, Pullman's underworld, the authority in his stark angel, Metatron, have essentially trapped the dust of the dead, so cannot return and nourish the universe.

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However, Pullman denies that in material substance exist. So these goes seem to be physical entities even though they technically do not have their bodies.

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So what are these goes before they dissolve? The book suggests that the authority is somehow kept these schools around by trapping their dust.

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They're made of dust. That doesn't seem to make a lot of, at least for me, for bodies are buried.

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As Lyra herself says, their bodies are buried in disintegrate. The demons dissipates when they die and when they're humans die.

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So what is this thing that this left? And Liar says it's the mind, but then the seems that the mind is the physical thing, but then not.

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So I think you have some issues here. I go more into that. I'm gonna skip some of that right now.

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So again, let's not clear out. It is aesthetic, but it is.

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Is this a loose end is their squires says. One wonders, additionally have the demons work in the material world.

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The demons themselves are material, even though they can shape shift and somehow feel what their human bodies feel.

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And by the way, I'm going to say that I think that the demons are one of the great inventions that Pullman has.

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I love this idea of being able to see the spirit or soul of the person outside the body and of course they take an animal shape and that's a lot of fun certainly very imaginative and I'm on Team Pan for one and team Hester so if we're going to do any kind of team sport with the, with the, demons, I've got mine lined up, but.

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We do a fantasy club maybe. With the demons. That could be fun.

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But it's very creative, but I get I not quite sure what it how it works if it's all material.

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And, and again and again, and I'm going to skip some of that documentation, says that the universe is only material and that's all we have is the material world and therefore the things we think of as being immaterial don't really exist.

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And, and so I think that's challenging here. So how do the demons work? The demons are material themselves, even though they can shape shift.

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But when Will leaves his soul behind on Shorts of Hell, he feels the part of it is mental and part is physical.

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But how can a mental state also be physical when these terms by definition mean that the 2 are different? And that one is not physical.

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Somehow physical desk connects it all and has evolved to manifest itself in various ways, but how this is a better explanation than the substance dualism view that Pullman rejects is unclear.

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Holdman also suggests that dying is peaceful, even beautiful. And that the merging with the universe is of utmost importance.

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Try this and key, King, who's a just woman is really offering more of a pantheistic view here and there's sympathetic that more pantheistic view.

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They argue, quote, with Pullman, even the cryptic comment about Hester waiting for Lee seems to imply a kind of existence for the individual in this relationship with this former demon is secondary to the relationship to the universe itself.

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In moreality is ongoing. Participation in creation itself, helping the living to flourish, close quote.

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Yeah, this suggests Pullman wants this dark material both visible and spiritual too. To be fair, Pullman does not explicitly deny an enduring identity nor individuality in the afterlife.

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He seems happy to leave this matter in the form of a question so people will focus not on their fate but on their connections to others and to the universe itself.

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Is this view the depth of simply glorious melding with the cosmos that V points out may be Homer's ultimate paradox?

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On quote here. Well, the irony is the, is doing what atheists have always criticized religious people for doing.

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Replacing reason with imagination, indulging in wish fulfillment and escapism. Homer surely knows that if the physical body is all there is and if the body dissolves into his constituent chemicals, there can be no consciousness, nothing to feel happiness, unquote, in merging with the blade of grass or with the air, nothing to be alive and becoming a part of the warmth that eat us and the

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birds that eat them, close both. The conservation of matter would argue that the material body does become part of the universe.

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But Pullman leaves us with the idea that we'll be we'll be conscious of this in some way and rejoice in the brief yet fulfilling experience and this is a better alternative than the glories that happen.

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And, if all this material, the Poma's ultimate triumph seems hollow. Or if all particles participate together in the universe, then there would be no ultimate difference being on Earth in heaven or in an underworld, all is the same.

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A view that again sounds suspiciously like some form of Furthermore, dust is physical and has evolved, then Pullman is only left with materialism.

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As he is publicly acknowledged and embraced. But objective ideals and morality cannot be grounded in materialism as they are reduced chemical reactions and physical laws.

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This seems counterintuitive. Do you really think the concept such as justice and mercy obey physical laws?

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Do we think that love which Pullman ends with in a rather dramatic fashion is primarily starting to random natural processes such as gravity or the weak nuclear force.

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This makes his morality equal to that of the magisterium. He portrays as evil.

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So the Angel Bath of most explains how this happened to, to Will with their creation story.

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The Almighty, it's the authority rather, the authority, God, the Creator, the Lord, Yahweh, and I the King, the Father, the Almighty, all these were names he gave himself.

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He was never the Creator. He was an angel like ourselves. The first angel true.

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The most powerful but he was formed to dust as we are and dust is the only name for what happens when matter begins to understand itself.

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Matter loves matter. It seeks to know more about itself and dust is formed. The first angels condensed out of dust and the authority was first of all.

07:07:56.000 --> 07:08:03.000

He told those who came after him that he had created them, but it was a lie. If matter is self forming and the process is evolutionary, then there's no reason for worshipping one being over another.

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All in essence are the same. That's what he's saying. The only reason the authority gets to rule is through deception power.

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The authority then is perverting nature and that seems to be the biggest crime of all for dust needs to do as it will.

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But again, I'm gonna argue that that then creates a lack of morality that if everything is just the way it is and evolved that to be that way.

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Did the, the church is seen as oppressive, whereas the morality of the hero characters is natural and good.

07:08:34.000 --> 07:08:43.000

He has no bases, no grounding for saying that they're good. God is just another preacher and then.

07:08:43.000 --> 07:08:47.000

As Lewis pointed out, in such a system values are now mere natural phenomena. Course I get a Lewis quote in there.

07:08:47.000 --> 07:09:02.000

Let's look at a few specifics from the novel. So in the ever spyglass, after the herring of hell, Will and Lyra's spyglass, after the harrowing of hell, Will and Lyra reunite with Mary Malone and Lyra reunite with Mary Malone and she's made this a, with Mary Malone and she's made this a device that

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lets her see the device that lets the Amber Spyglass lets her see the dust.

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Yeah, so she's watching from a distance when Will and Lyra kiss. So not creepy, it's not peeping Tomish so much, but she does notice that when they kiss she could, or she sees them really after they've kissed.

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They're coming back to her and there's this dust is really cold left on them.

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And so she says that. They seem to be made of living gold. They would seem the true image of what human beings always could be once they'd come into their inheritance.

07:09:33.000 --> 07:09:41.000

The desk pointing down from the stars and found a living home again and these children no longer children saturated with love were the cause of it all.

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Here's the love between the couple, obviously echoing the Garden of Eden's story, but what if he describes how dust flows over them, but how does this work?

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Remember, dust is conscious matter. How can a single kiss perverse original sin? Dan and Malone especially has problems with this scene being the climax of the novel and its alternative version to Christian theology has a really long quote, which I'm going to.

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Skip mostly for now. Other than to say that, yeah, he was waiting for kind of the climax of the battle and the war and all that.

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And then we end with this little simple kiss and then everything reverts to Lyra and Will and they're kind of glowing with this golden globe.

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Of some kind. He says because these 2 teenagers are basically innocent as the shifting of their demons reveals their innocent love is supposed to show that sex and the things of the flesh are very good when properly ordered close book.

07:10:31.000 --> 07:10:39.000

But again, how's that reverse original SIP? Maloney is more of what he sees as poor riding here, but the point is also a fair one.

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How can a physical kiss between 2 adolescents reverse the flow of good and evil. Especially the underlying love is not metaphysical, but itself is merely physical.

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Does their budding attraction cause some great gravitational pull? That reverses the flow of dust.

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How is their love any different from that of any others in the novel? For Pullman, you must triumph over the oppressive authority by learning the sinning is simply enjoying life, pursuing knowledge and not worrying about the afterlife.

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While the passage is poetic, at least some more questions and some frustration, then it answers. Good and evil or ultimately hollow concepts and we are left with a niche in vision that might make a mind making right. A vision.

07:11:19.000 --> 07:11:38.000

Pullment seems to I don't have time to discuss how the names of the heroes hinted this moral code, Lyra, whose name is like lying and she does lie an awful lot in the story, but also I think echoes the liar that or Orpheus played to bring Euridichi back out of the underworld, so nice underworld reference perhaps in her name.

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And then will, the will, the name itself, and find willful action, perhaps.

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So I'll skip that, other than what I just said. How must be also, the concept of any of the integer, this is book seems to endorse for Pullman and this is from the satellite, matter and spirit are one.

07:11:55.000 --> 07:12:01.000

They're the same thing. And yet somehow the best part is the body. And that's for the ever slots.

07:12:01.000 --> 07:12:09.000

So, is the matter in spirit of one, but the body is better. So in tangible, says, reality, love and freedom are merely the products of chemistry and natural processing.

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And yet for me the book is Heidi Moral. He's really talking about things of justice and injustice and abuse and so forth in ways that he wants us to consider.

07:12:19.000 --> 07:12:27.000

And, Our thoughts and actors are just brute facts that evolved if this is true, but this seems counterintuitive.

07:12:27.000 --> 07:12:37.000

Philosophers fences back with and Stephen Parish argue, quote, if everything is a root fact, including all our thoughts that there are no rational relations between our thoughts and reality.

07:12:37.000 --> 07:12:45.000

This undercuts any justification we have for believing anything, post quote. And just some I have some other sources I'm gonna skip now.

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For it. So basically he's really left with the idea that people behave the way they do possess the way that they behave and he just likes certain actions over others.

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The last point which I'm just gonna very briefly touch on is that his absolution of hell, even with a relativistic sense of justice.

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Unlike his literary predecessors, who have a figure in the underworld distributing rewards and punishments, and assigning levels of the same.

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This is not so for Pullman other than a brief remark that the authority just traps everybody, in the other world.

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Everyone's in the same way and there's no punishment for evil or award from good behavior. The evil church leaders will share the same fate as the Egyptians, but is this really morally fulfilling?

07:13:26.000 --> 07:13:31.000

Where is the sense of justice and what would motivate a mother Theresa to be better than a mussolini?

07:13:31.000 --> 07:13:42.000

This backpack and Well, without absolutes, nothing is ultimately good, honorable, or worthy of praise is all lost in the twilight of moral nothingness.

07:13:42.000 --> 07:13:49.000

The only motivation to do good in the novels is to claim that dust responds to kind acts and gaining wisdom, which allows for more goodness.

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This is all Pullman can offer, an ambiguous but heartfelt fee to be better for religion and so present rules can offer only offer of false hope.

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And in fact, squires admit that, his moral ethos is too vague to be of any practical use.

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This takes us back to the purposes of the afterlife in the first place. Most traditional views of an afterlife include some sense of reward and punishment, union with the Almighty and a sense of list and rejoicing for those who get the rewards.

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This motivates people to follow the teachings through religion, which usually includes a moral code. One is tended to say the Pullman primarily leaves us with the keep calm and carry on sentiment one associates with the British, although perhaps his final message instead is keep kind and carry on.

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That's really the last thing that the virus says is that we have to do good, we have to work hard and so forth.

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I'm going to need to skip that both for the sake of sign.

07:14:44.000 --> 07:14:49.000

What then are we to make a Pullman's conclusions? He certainly tells an interesting tale.

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As Christian Literary critic, says, woman has made a significant advance in the history of atheism.

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Fullman himself is argue that the stories can lead people to change their beliefs when he said, quote, I think if you're convinced by one part of the story, you're a little more than willing to believe the rest of it was quote.

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And then in another interview, he said, we all need some sort of myth, some sort of overarching narrative to live by.

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For hundreds of years in the West, this need was fulfilled by the Christian story, but that is now either dead or dying.

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This is why we need to be aware of the implications in this story, where they plant seeds of belief or disbelief.

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We love Lyra and Will and their demons. So we listen to the arguments. Against the repressive church.

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However, we need to also point out that Pullman confuses hierarchy with tyranny and it's feeble old man does not resemble the great God and Savior many of us know.

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For all the sacrifices of Plymouth's trilogy, he ignores the greatest part of Christianity and a key aspect of Paradise Lost.

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By growing price and all the references to God's love for us, high sacrifice, the need to build up one another, love and compassion, and the many positive contributions of the church.

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Thankfully, he gives us no real reason or evidence to change our minds and the subtle knife of logic cuts both ways.

07:16:03.000 --> 07:16:09.000

This world view depends on evidence as much as mine and his book for one, least me for one wanting.

07:16:09.000 --> 07:16:13.000

I'll stop there. I just. Skip out a lot so.

07:16:13.000 --> 07:16:23.000

We can move now to questions and comments and, thank you. Anyway, thank you for your attention.

07:16:23.000 --> 07:16:32.000

Thank you. David for that presentation. And we have, sensitive to 15 min for discussion. So anyone who wants can make their comments or questions.

07:16:32.000 --> 07:16:41.000

So anyone who wants can make their comments or questions and if you don't want to be 15 min for discussion so anyone who once can make their comments or questions and if you don't want to speak you can drop them in the chat and I'll read them

07:16:41.000 --> 07:16:47.000

I'll just say thank you for this paper. I was a very afraid it was going to be.

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It, which cause I was torn that it was a good story, but the, and the, was so repellent to me.

07:17:01.000 --> 07:17:04.000

So I liked your approach very much. Thank you.

07:17:04.000 --> 07:17:05.000

Well, thank you. Well, I think we should be able to read just about anything. We just have to test ideas, right?

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We have to test in way and I find Pullman at times is a brilliant writer. He has very compelling characters.

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He knows how to craft a story. I do find that the Amber Spyglass though weighs itself down as long as by far I think of the trilogy and that's where it gets in these long passages kind of going off.

07:17:28.000 --> 07:17:39.000

To talk about how evil the church is and how and so forth so i think that's we just need to be aware there so

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And Bernie, did you have a hand up again? Okay, go ahead. Good.

07:17:41.000 --> 07:17:55.000

Yes, I did. I had one of the things that most bothered me in the trilogy.

07:17:55.000 --> 07:17:56.000

Yes.

07:17:56.000 --> 07:17:58.000

Is the second book. Now, I'm Catholic and I went to Catholic school. I knew a lot of nuns and I knew nuns who left the order and none of them became atheists.

07:17:58.000 --> 07:18:13.000

They all stayed in the church and worked in the church. So his his character that of the nun who you know comes an atheist was just insane to me it made no sense.

07:18:13.000 --> 07:18:19.000

Yeah, I do think he's kind of all or nothing. In many ways. It's kind of everything to associated with the church is evil.

07:18:19.000 --> 07:18:25.000

And all those who are not associated with the church are the good ones. I think if you found a middle round.

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His work would have actually been perhaps even more compelling. And but he didn't go in that direction so I think.

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I think Jan had a hand up.

07:18:42.000 --> 07:18:44.000

Okay.

07:18:44.000 --> 07:18:48.000

Oh, I don't, yeah.

07:18:48.000 --> 07:18:49.000

Yeah.

07:18:49.000 --> 07:18:56.000

Yeah. I was gonna say I appreciate you tackling the topic. I wrote a paper on Pullman in grad school and one of the things about being one of the things about being a Christian in grad school is, I found it a hard, I found it hard not to be as strident as Fullman was.

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Yes. Me too.

07:18:57.000 --> 07:19:04.000

Because his critique of Christianity is it's like he's coming for it with the Battle Axe.

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And it was really hard for me not to. I and I don't think I succeeded. I think I ended up being as strong as you was.



07:19:07.000 --> 07:19:09.000

Okay.

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But, one thing I will say I noticed They were a couple of things. About his conclusion that I found to be a bit cliched.

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The count sex as coming of age. Like we can't come up with something else. To stand in for adults and it has to be that.

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Yeah.

07:19:35.000 --> 07:19:47.000

And when they find God, he's literally in a box. And, you know, it got and I literally wanted to throw the book across through like really you can't come up with something more original got in a box but yeah I wondered if you wanted to wait in on that and the way he seems to fit Christianity and sexuality is.

07:19:47.000 --> 07:19:48.000

Oh

07:19:48.000 --> 07:19:57.000

If you thought that was a particular weakness of his argument or, you know, what you want.

07:19:57.000 --> 07:19:58.000

Okay. Okay.

07:19:58.000 --> 07:20:03.000

Yeah, no, it does seem that he thinks that that's what original thing is. Original S is a met the Apple is a metaphor.

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For Adam and Eve having sex. So he buys that. Then that's an old theory, and an old reading of, of Genesis.

07:20:11.000 --> 07:20:12.000

Oh

07:20:12.000 --> 07:20:28.000

But then he seems to wrap everything into that. Well, then the way to do away with original sin is just to embrace sexuality as you were saying and yeah, I just think again, he puts all his apples in one basket when he does that and that becomes problematic.

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Hey, he tied himself to some extent a little rarely. Because he's following these other texts like the Garden of Eden story like Paradise Lost.

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So, he has to kind of, an adolescent literature is usually quest. Story and it has the care just coming of age.

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So just the genre he's picking and the type of story he's telling those kind of make him I think they kind of force him into certain formulas.

07:21:00.000 --> 07:21:01.000

Oh

07:21:01.000 --> 07:21:02.000

What I agree, I got in a box, was just problematic and, to your, your first point about being strident, it's hard not to be in some ways because, obviously we want to defend our fate.

07:21:02.000 --> 07:21:17.000

Pullman himself can be very strident. I mentioned the nice British accent. He has that.

07:21:17.000 --> 07:21:18.000

Something.

07:21:18.000 --> 07:21:19.000

He's also, and he comes across the very much the grandfatherly figure. And yet his writing is he does not pull punches in his beliefs and what he sees is been, evil, which is the church.

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I just don't think he solves his name. He will agree that he doesn't solve the problem that itself.

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And I'm not sure if I fully answer your question, by you by, at least touched on it.

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Yeah.

07:21:32.000 --> 07:21:36.000

AJ has it end up, I think.

07:21:36.000 --> 07:21:45.000

Hey, Jay, did you wanna? I'm in.

07:21:45.000 --> 07:21:56.000

I kind of enjoyed the stories. I don't tend to, see what kind of message the author's trying to get across.

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I try to read the story for entertainment and I think you told the story quite well. Yeah, some stuff contradicted each other.

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But you know, it's a story. It's fiction. So I found it quite entertaining.

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I, you know, the people in the Magisterium that were acting up deserved what they got.

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Yeah, no, that's true.

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And so how can you say, you know, they It wasn't cut and dried.

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I know I agree with you. And a lot, but a lot of commentators, have argued much as I have that He has kind of gone on crusade if you will, if I can use that word, to use these stories as a way to get people to change their mind.

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And that has been, so I, again, they're entertaining and if that's what you get out of them is entertainment, then read them for that, certainly.

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In the way that many people will read the Chronicles of Narnia and not see the Christian message, they just find it and that's fine.

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Lewis was fine with that. We'd read stories for what they are, but Poma specifically wrote them to be the anti Narnia stories and he purposely is trying to make them into an atheistic creed of some kind.

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And so in that sense, I think we it opens it up for critique. If we wanna go there.

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So, so I appreciate that, and I thought about that, how much I want to, you know, go after him because it is just ultimately a work of fiction.

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But, Yeah.

07:23:25.000 --> 07:23:26.000

And they're very, and because it is just ultimately a work of fiction. Cause it is just ultimately a work of fiction.

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They're very popular. And they're very, and because they're making them into TV series, I actually think the TV series will reach more people than the books will because that's the nature of media.

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Yeah, so the ideas are gonna keep propagating. Without, and again, he doesn't soften the blow.

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It's not cutting dried. I need this cut drive for him. There's, you know, all the church people are bad.

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All the secular people are good and sometimes I have to I have to follow by that take that back Lord Astral is not good and he's the second person.

07:23:54.000 --> 07:23:58.000

I don't think we like him as much that much either, but, that's anyway.

07:23:58.000 --> 07:24:00.000

But thank you for that. Oh, go ahead.

07:24:00.000 --> 07:24:10.000

Yeah, going in no pre preconceived not knowing that he did this or that. It comes across as a nice story.

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Okay, why went in when I first read it I went in without knowing anything about it and it bothered me.

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I saw what he was doing. So I had the opposite reaction. Wait a minute. What about this? What about that?

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And that's where this paper really came out. It was my first reading of him. I didn't know.

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I didn't know who he was. I didn't know anything other than had won awards and so I just kinda and he was trying to be another CS Lewis.

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So I just kind of knew the little echoes of who by didn't know the purpose. And so I was very much bothered by that.

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So, David had the other day, but you're as a hand up.

07:24:42.000 --> 07:24:53.000

Oh, well, I could talk for a long time on the subject. The, when my daughter read the, the Golden Compass, I think she liked it a lot.

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And when she went to the second book, what is it called? The unsuttle phallic symbol, something like that.

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It's up to

07:25:11.000 --> 07:25:12.000

Oh.

07:25:12.000 --> 07:25:13.000

Yes. And it, it horrified her and she refused to read anymore. And I think in Pullman trying to be the anti Lewis he also thinks he's being a pro feminist writer or something. What does he do?

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He puts his, his girl to sleep just like the original Laika in Blake's poem.

07:25:25.000 --> 07:25:26.000

Oh yeah.

07:25:26.000 --> 07:25:40.000

But unlike like a it doesn't look so good for Lyra when she wakes up. And so he's clearly read Blake and he's thinking about Blake and he's read Milton, but like some other writers not including Blake by the

way people always say well Blake said Milton is of the devil's party but doesn't know it but Blake doesn't say that

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Blake's character the devil says that There's no such excuse for Percy Shelley But, I don't think Milton would approve of this, this trilogy, by the way.

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No.

07:25:54.000 --> 07:26:01.000

But I think it's an artistic failure though. It crashes and burns by the third volume and it's largely because of what he does to Lyra.

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But I think there's a couple of other big problems. One is the dust. It's not a very effective artistic symbol.

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He needs to find something a little more, it's too hard to hold on to. In a way it makes sense.

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But I don't think it works very well. Ursa or Eleanor Arnison at a Rivendell discussion once said of another author.

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The problem is she's writing to her pre-written outline. And he let his character Lyra and his other characters get away from him a little bit.

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This is my, my expansion of the idea. When I wasn't talking about this series. But I think what he has to do is he has to bring it down to the ending that he's got.



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But you don't believe it because it doesn't really work. His characters have gotten away from him or something and he's unable to control it.

07:26:55.000 --> 07:27:08.000

The other problem he has is those very interviews that you've mentioned where he talks about wanting to be the anti Lewis and he criticizes Lewis for a whole bunch of things and all of his critiques.

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Are in part valid, but they apply to his own work even more and he doesn't see that.

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Yeah. It's like, Doesn't.

07:27:22.000 --> 07:27:23.000

Yeah.

07:27:23.000 --> 07:27:28.000

He also is very jealous of Jake Rowling and CS Lewis because their books were being burned and banned all throughout the East and his books are the ones that are really trying to promote atheism over the kids heads without with sucking them in without them knowing.

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And even says that in one of those interviews. And that's fair because Lewis did the same thing, which isn't true either, but we'll leave that aside.

07:27:40.000 --> 07:27:53.000

But he He was just resentful. It's because those readers if they're readers, who are burning, rolling and bounding Rawling and Lewis because they have magical wizards in them.

07:27:53.000 --> 07:28:01.000

They're not really capable of reading his books and even understanding. I'm sorry. But in any case.

07:28:01.000 --> 07:28:02.000

Yeah, I'm sorry. I will stop for a moment.

07:28:02.000 --> 07:28:06.000

If I can respond, you think it's got the dog? No, no, thank you. If the dust.

07:28:06.000 --> 07:28:11.000

It was really hard to figure out exactly what dust is because he keeps changing the definition. It's kinda like the force in the starboard series.

07:28:11.000 --> 07:28:14.000

Okay.

07:28:14.000 --> 07:28:22.000

It keeps changing. What is the force? Is it just this nebulous? Energy is it a particle you're born with?

07:28:22.000 --> 07:28:23.000

Thank you.

07:28:23.000 --> 07:28:25.000

Is it, you know, is it biological? I, it just kept. Lucas himself didn't seem to quite know what to make of it.

07:28:25.000 --> 07:28:35.000

I think, That's happened with Pullman, all the Pullman now was thinking is more like dark matter, dark energy.

07:28:35.000 --> 07:28:36.000

This thing I like the fact David that your demon showed up. Mine has not shown up yet.

07:28:36.000 --> 07:28:42.000

Yeah. Okay. Okay. This is my daughter's demon.

07:28:42.000 --> 07:28:43.000

But she leaves with me all the time she goes to work

07:28:43.000 --> 07:28:48.000

So. Oh, okay. Okay.

07:28:48.000 --> 07:28:49.000

We still have some, comments on the chat, so if you, I don't know.

07:28:49.000 --> 07:28:54.000

Yeah, see if you can put her outside. Alright.

07:28:54.000 --> 07:29:00.000

. You want to finish up this answer or if

07:29:00.000 --> 07:29:02.000

No, go ahead.

07:29:02.000 --> 07:29:10.000

Okay, so, in the chat we have Leah saying that she does want to offer a thought. I'm not Christian and in fact, and, and in fact, enemy stand polyface.

07:29:10.000 --> 07:29:23.000

Pullman's metaphysics are a bit messy and I don't think he fully understands what he's searching against all the time in his own world building.

07:29:23.000 --> 07:29:28.000

But I disagree with the assertion that without the church there is no moral grounding for any of the characters.

07:29:28.000 --> 07:29:38.000

I think morality emerges out of community relationships. Could you speak a little more about why the characters morality and sexuality have no grounding without the church?

07:29:38.000 --> 07:29:39.000

If I'm understanding the assertion right.

07:29:39.000 --> 07:29:48.000

Yeah, I'm not saying without the church. I'm saying unless you have a moral standard that's beyond humans, beyond us.

07:29:48.000 --> 07:29:56.000

CS Lewis argues this in a number of his writings, by especially pointing to mere Christianity or,

07:29:56.000 --> 07:30:02.000

Yeah, I'm liking, sorry, the abolition of man. I'm sorry, the abolition man is one.

07:30:02.000 --> 07:30:07.000

It's that we have to have hire something to ourselves. If there's a moral law that has to be moral lawgiver.

07:30:07.000 --> 07:30:23.000

And so it's not the church so much. This giving that for Christians is God who gives that and is through his writings and through the church that those things, especially the church in community, holding one another accountable, for example, is where we, actually live out our morality.

07:30:23.000 --> 07:30:33.000

So it's not that people can't be moral because they are in the Christian view, we're all made in God's image and that includes being moral.

07:30:33.000 --> 07:30:40.000

And so every worldview would have some aspect of that. I agree with you that he is messy and which is what I was arguing.

07:30:40.000 --> 07:31:00.000

In the first place the problem with pantheism that Lewis would argue and he does this especially in the abolition of man is the pantheon does what To some sense I understand it anyway is that everything is the same but everything is also an illusion and that's what Pullman's not probably being pantheist.

07:31:00.000 --> 07:31:07.000

He's not seeing it as an illusion. But then evil itself would be an illusion and it's not real but then that seems counterintuitive.

07:31:07.000 --> 07:31:13.000

Seems like there really is an evil. And evil acts anyway and, and harm and so forth.

07:31:13.000 --> 07:31:23.000

And so it's all an illusion, how do we count for those things? It becomes kind of vicious circle and this little bit more I do more with that in the paper I talk about the moral ground.

07:31:23.000 --> 07:31:42.000

Aspect of it. But I recommend, Lewis's mere Christianity. I think it's chapter 2 or book 2, of that second speech he gives in that and also the abolition of man the top's more about we have to have that grounding underneath and and Lewis would really argue that by vociferously.

07:31:42.000 --> 07:31:48.000

And I correct in other things too if you like.

07:31:48.000 --> 07:31:49.000

And I'm just mindful that Go ahead.

07:31:49.000 --> 07:32:02.000

Right. I know I'm just going to say that, shortly we will need to vacate the space for the next session so I would encourage anyone who wants to vacate the space for the next session so I would encourage anyone who wants to pass the discard a discussion over to the discard.

07:32:02.000 --> 07:32:11.000

I posted the link to it earlier, but I will drop it here again if you have any more questions or any other comments you would like to drop.

07:32:11.000 --> 07:32:12.000

Thank you.

07:32:12.000 --> 07:32:14.000

Thank you. Everyone have a good afternoon, I guess.

07:32:14.000 --> 07:32:19.000

So, Am I supposed to go to the Discord?

07:32:19.000 --> 07:32:26.000

If, I don't know if anyone will address you there directly, but it's just like a chat.

07:32:26.000 --> 07:32:27.000

I don't know if anyone will address you there directly, but it's just like a chat, because the Zoom One won't be available anymore.

07:32:27.000 --> 07:32:36.000

Oh, okay. I want to go. Okay, I wanted to go to the next session so I didn't know if I was.

07:32:36.000 --> 07:32:37.000

Okay. Hey. Okay.

07:32:37.000 --> 07:32:42.000

Oh, no, it will be there permanently. You can answer at a later time. It's just if anyone wants to ask for references or keep the discussion going, if you are free to do so over on Discord whenever you want.

07:32:42.000 --> 07:32:43.000

Hmm.

07:32:43.000 --> 07:32:44.000

Okay, thank you.

07:32:44.000 --> 07:32:45.000

Thank you everyone.

07:32:45.000 --> 07:32:51.000

I want to mention a critique of Pullman in this book. Maria Sachco.

07:32:51.000 --> 07:32:58.000

David, sorry, could I ask you to leave that reference in the discord because you really need to leave the room for the next presenter and moderators to prepare.

07:32:58.000 --> 07:33:00.000

I'm staying in this room for the next one.

07:33:00.000 --> 07:33:03.000

Okay, so, sure.

07:33:03.000 --> 07:33:18.000

Right. If we can just give a space to. Let people move at and move in for the next one, but anyone wants to stay and continue talking can do so.

07:33:18.000 --> 07:33:19.000

Thank you all. Thank you very much.

07:33:19.000 --> 07:33:21.000

Or put references or other things in. Discord. Thank you very much, David. We appreciate it.

07:33:21.000 --> 07:33:27.000

Even email that to me if you could. Hey, email me that reference.

07:33:27.000 --> 07:33:30.000

Thank you. Let's thank David one more time.

07:33:30.000 --> 07:33:52.000

Thank you.