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July 2, 2011: What Did I Learn From the Huffington Post Piece?

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Title: What Did I Learn From the Huffington Post Piece?

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7/2/2011—On Wednesday, after blogging here concerning Todd Akin's comments, I posted similar ideas on Huffington Post: "Well, Don't We Liberals Hate the Public God?" The result was 347 comments and the piece was picked up all over, including the Wall Street Journal online. Since I am trying to drum up interest in my book, this is nothing to sneeze at. Yet, I am a little disappointed by the comments. I shouldn't be. I wrote after all that Akin was right in a way. The comments demonstrated that. The points made were along the following lines: "You can't hate what doesn't exist." Well you'd think so, but Hitchens clearly hates the idea of God, as the existentialists did. Anyway, the point is public references to God, which the people writing in certainly hate. "God means God" This unthinking acceptance of what some religious believers say is sort of odd. It is almost that liberals want to fight against the symbol, God. People do use the term in many other ways, even within the religious traditions. I shouldn't be surprised. Justice Scalia once wrote the same thing: "This is not necessarily the Christian God (though if it were, one would expect Christ regularly to be invoked, which He is not); but it is inescapably the God of monotheism." "The framers separated church and state" Well they did something, but what they did and how we should interpret what they did is the question, not an answer. It is a little hard to show that most of the framers would have objected to the current Pledge of Allegiance. "Religious believers are always trying to get their religion accepted in public" My fault for not writing that I am not a believer. I forget that it must always be stated. "This God is a power play by" A power play against nontheist religions, against nonwhite peoples, and so forth. Certainly some truth here. This is the old story: when the missionaries came, we had the land and they had God. Now they have the land and we have God. No one can defend everything done in the name of God. "God language is divisive" Well, yes, as we can see. But anything substantive is divisive in the sense that some people do not agree. The claim that all men are created equal helped spark a civil war. It was a claim worth making, however.