

OBAMA REMAINS SUSPICIOUS OF CHRISTIANITY

An exchange between President Barack Obama and author Marilynne Robinson was published in the November 5 edition of the *New York Review of Books*.

The subject was Christianity. Here is a question that President Obama asked Robinson:

“How do you reconcile the idea of faith being really important to you and you caring a lot about taking faith seriously with the fact that, at least in our democracy and our civic discourse, it seems as if folks who take religion the most seriously sometimes are also those who are suspicious of those not like them?”

If the subject were Islam, it is not likely the president would make an analogy between religion and intolerance, even though there are grounds to conclude that devoutness in the Muslim world is associated with terrorism. No, it is Christianity that worries him. He made this clear in 2008 when he connected Christianity to those who “cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who are not like them.”

Some will defend the president saying there is evidence that Christians are more intolerant of others than the unaffiliated are. In 1991, Bill Donohue reviewed all the major surveys on tolerance, beginning with the Stouffer study in the 1950s, and found that most indeed came to this conclusion. But Donohue also found that these studies never challenged verities held by secularists. To be specific, “tolerance” means “to put up with.” Given the secular bias of most social scientists, measurements of tolerance always seek to grade respondents on whether they are offended by attacks on traditional moral values. Ergo, secularists appear more tolerant—not because

they are (if they were then Hollywood would be a bastion of tolerance)—but because it is easier for them “to put up with” attacks on these moral values.

Ironically, even though Obama sat through 20 years of listening to the intolerant sermons of Rev. Jeremiah—“God Damn America”—Wright, he is no more suspicious of this brand of Christianity than he is of Islam.