

“THE LEDGE” SELLS ATHEISM

Over the summer, the movie “The Ledge” opened in Los Angeles and New York. People of faith are used to being trashed by Hollywood, but this film was different: it was an open promotion of atheism.

The characters in the movie were utterly predictable. Gavin’s loss of faith deepened after his wife blamed him when their daughter was killed in an accident. Because he believes in nothing, he is the good guy. Gavin has an affair with an evangelical’s wife—you guessed it, the evangelical is a close-minded homophobe—leaving the poor gal (played by Liv Tyler) in a mess. You see, she was once a prostitute before her husband (himself a former alcoholic and drug abuser) introduced her to God. In any event, after Mr. Intolerant, the evangelical, discovers the affair, he tells Gavin to jump from a ledge or he’ll kill both of them, as well as himself.

Matthew Chapman is the writer and director. “God-fearing straight men have had a monopoly for a very long time,” he says, “and many peculiar decisions have been made.” Among the most peculiar, historically speaking, is something Chapman doesn’t want to admit: it was the Judeo-Christian ethos of America that accounts for the unprecedented levels of justice and freedom enjoyed by non-believers.

Chapman is an atheist and the great-great grandson of Charles Darwin. Darwin, it should be noted, was a self-described agnostic. He once said to a dogmatic atheist, Edward Aveling, “Why should you be so aggressive? Is anything gained by trying to force these new ideas upon the mass of mankind?” Too bad Chapman didn’t learn that lesson