

Beliefs that Kill
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What people believe matters. There are some beliefs around the world that result in murder. So many of us are like the Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland who said, when Alice noted "One can't believe impossible things:" "When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast." Too many of us believe impossible things.

\225 Albinos. The people in Malawi, in Africa, believe that Albinos should be abducted and killed for the great value of their body parts. Albino parts are ground down and made into potions by witch doctors who claim they bring wealth and good luck. (They obviously did not bring good luck to the murdered Albinos.) They also believe that the bones of people with albinism contain gold, and that sex with an Albino can cure HIV AIDS. This latter is a continuation of the belief that having sex with a virgin girl can cure the HIV of the rapist.

This is certainly a case where beliefs lead to murder. Since November 2014, 18 albino people were killed and many more killings in rural areas were not reported. Dead albinos in their graves are often exhumed too.

In sub-Saharan African countries, many believe that witches are responsible for any misfortunes they might have. (We stopped believing this nonsense by 1700.) There are annual hunts for supposed "witches," who are then murdered.

\225 Honor Killings. On June 8, a Pakistani woman burned her 17-year-old daughter alive to punish her for marrying against the family's wishes. (That will certainly teach her a lesson, eh?) This loving mother tied the girl to her cot and drenched her with kerosene before lighting her on fire. Neighbors heard the screams and tried to intervene, but family members kept them from entering the house.

This kind of murder is no anomaly. More than 1,000 girls and women are murdered this way every year in Pakistan, all believers that this action is honorable. And Pakistanis sometimes bring their stupid belief with them when they emigrate to Britain, Canada, and (infrequently) to the US as well. Germany also faces this murder plague thanks to the belief of Turkish and Afghan Muslims.

\225 Martyrs for 72 Virgins. This may be the stupidest belief of all, convincing not very smart young men to "martyr" themselves for Islam, killing as many infidels as possible and being killed so that they can have a harem of virgins in the afterworld. When young women also agree (or are coerced) into donning a suicide belt, what reward do they believe in the afterworld? Will they become perpetual virgins again so that they can be deflowered every night by a male martyr? This is surely one of the six impossible things to believe before breakfast.

\225 Insulting Islam and the Prophet Mohammad. The belief that 1400 years after his death, people should be murdered for saying something negative about the Prophet and his religion. Would he have cared? And what about when this notion (the crime of being insulted) is practiced by non-Muslim dictators today, who order the assassination of critics in the press? There must be a potent belief in the danger of words (or writing) that criticize great and powerful leaders. Can a whole country (Turkey, Russia, or North Korea) believe that killing critics is a justifiable action to punish "Insult"?

\225 Science is a Fraud. In the case of Climate Change, disbelievers, should they prevail in preventing any remedial actions agreed to by the most rational world leaders, will be responsible for many deaths, particularly of those unfortunates who face drowning or fleeing (Bangladesh, Pacific islands). Other true believers who insist that inoculation programs are dangerous risk deadly disease or death of their children.

And believers that all police are bad and should be killed whenever possible are doomed to live in communities in which there is no police protection for innocent victims.

\225 President Obama is a hidden Muslim. This would surprise those enemy jihadis he has rightly killed.

Watch what you believe lest you get what you deserve.

682 words

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