



# **Stephen Hawking Smoked My Socks: How beliefs contaminate our opinions: an astrophysicist's perspective**

*Hilton Ratcliffe*

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**"*Stephen Hawking Smoked My Socks* is a brave and beautiful work, in the tradition of Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country* or Biko's *I Write What I like*. This is South African intelligentsia once again aligning world opinion with a very reasonable version of Truth."**

**-- Ian Campbell-Gillies**

Basically, I remained fascinated with your thesis from page one to the end of *Stephen hawking Smoked My Socks*. I expect you and I might well have different perspectives on some specific points - which two people wouldn't? - but the whole notion of faith as you discuss it is, in my view, completely true... Now though I've read the book and, as a practicing Christian, simply cannot see what all the fuss was about. I hope your valid comments re religions and religious faith/belief will not be allowed to detract from the very real accurate message you're conveying re science. In my view (and I may be quoted on this) you've very carefully and accurately exposed possibly the biggest flaw in modern science - a flaw which extends well beyond the bounds of astrophysics and, indeed, physics!

-- theoretical physicist Dr Jeremy Dunning-Davies, University of Wales, Cardiff.

*Socks* is filled with lavish helpings of ideas and food for thought. This is the only book that I have ever read where, after finishing, I immediately started to reread it. It is a feast. Ratcliffe's book brings to fruition decades of study of the human lot as exemplified by the manner in which scientists make progress in the face of stultifying beliefs that slow progress because of our innate need to follow the leader. It is a beautifully constructed symphony of words that mixes poetic sentences with profound insights contrasting the nature of science and belief.

- Dr Gerrit Verschuur, professor of astronomy, University of Memphis

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