

When the DVD is placed in the player, the following menu appears:

*The Last Presentation* introduces a minority group of 35 million Americans. Surveys show that many people have negative feelings about them. One of the group members might be your friend or your fellow student. This prejudice exists because few know anything about this minority. This video attempts to show their human face.

What is the minority?

Press PLAY to find out.

---

Script of *The Last Presentation*, version 3.

Black, then superimpose the titles on opening scene:

The Colorado Coalition of Reason

COCORE

Presents

*The Last Presentation.*

Thirty students are in a high-school classroom. Some students are in groups, standing and talking. Others are sitting in chairs. A bell rings and everyone takes their seat. At the front of the room stands the Teacher. In addition to the usual school furnishings, there are posters, a DVD player, and a large monitor on a stand. Enter the Presenter (Sara Price).

O'Steen: Nice to meet you, Sara Price.

Price: Thank you for inviting me.

O'Steen: Yes. (Pause) Everyone, class, let's welcome Ms. Price.

**Price:** Hello, everyone. Why don't you tell me about the speakers you've had so far.

**Heather:** We've had Catholic priest and a Protestant minister. We also had a Jewish rabbi, a Muslim Mullah, and a Buddhist Monk.

**Price:** And here I am, standing in front of you, giving the last presentation. After all of those speakers from the major religions, what's left? What's left are the approximately 750 million people in the world, 35 to 40 million of which are Americans, people who don't have a religion or a belief in a god or gods. Linguists have a way of adding an A in front of a word to mean not. Atypical means not typical and asymmetrical means not symmetrical. Well, if you believe in a god or many gods or goddesses you're called a theist. Folks like me who don't believe in gods are called Atheists. (Pause.) I don't know if you realize how hard it is for me to get to the spot that I'm standing on. When there are social science classes on diversity or comparative religion, atheists like me are seldom invited to speak. Most high school students don't get the opportunity to talk with an atheist. So I hope you'll take advantage of my being here to ask questions and express your opinions while giving me a chance to express mine. I encourage you to interrupt me at any time to ask questions so I know you're awake. (smile)

**Student B raises hand.**

**Price:** Question in the back

**Student B:** I mean like I understand the words you're saying, but is it true you REALLY don't believe in God? I'm having a hard time understanding that.

**Price:** Let me give you an example to show you where I'm coming from. Can someone move that monitor? (Monitor is moved.) In March 1997, 39 people gathered in a

mountaintop mansion in San Diego. I believe the area was called Rancho Santa Fe. These people committed suicide. Why did they take their own lives? They committed suicide because they believed they were going to be “transported” (makes quotation marks with fingers) to a space ship in the tail of the Hale Bopp comet. That mass suicide happened in 1997 and the group was called Heaven's Gate. (Shows video of humans being transported to comet) How do we know what they were thinking? How do we really know they expected to be transported to a spaceship hiding in the tale of a comet? We know because, before these people took their own lives, they sat in front of a video camera and shared their beliefs. (Pause) I feel sorry for the families and friends they left behind. It must have been a terrible ordeal for the survivors. I believe it was especially tragic because I don't know anyone outside of the Heaven's Gate cult who believed that there really was a spaceship in the tail of the comet. Well, guys and gals, from my point of view as an atheist, all religions are as unbelievable as Heaven's Gate. Spaceships hiding in the tails of comets, virgin birth, reincarnation, seventy-two virgin brides waiting for martyrs in paradise, ten thousand gods, the end of the world, voices from a burning bush, direct communications with an invisible god, or thunderbirds, to me, they all come under the categories of myth, superstition, or wishful thinking. (Pause.) Pink T-shirt?

**Student C:** Are there also different kinds of atheists?

**Price:** Yes there are. We have the foolish ones like me who admit their lack of belief in public and the smart ones who mumble something about not being very religious.

**Laughter**

**Price:** Different kinds of atheists? Not really. The terms atheists, freethinkers, and nonbelievers are basically the same, folks who have no belief in a god. Secular humanists say people find their morals by examining the effects of their choices,

but we're all in the same boat. We admire logic, reason, and science. We encourage separation of church and state. And we're also big on accepting responsibility for our actions and being moral and ethical. One of our primary goals is to prevent people from forcing their religious views on us. Resisting religion has caused problems for centuries. Let me give you an example. In 1609, Galileo improved a Dutch toy to construct one of the first telescopes. Up until that time, there had been an argument that had gone on for a hundred years about whether the earth was the center of the solar system or whether it revolved around the sun. Galileo turned his new instrument on the night skies and saw the moons of Jupiter. He made mathematical calculations, and then wrote books that supported Copernicus' heliocentric theory of the earth revolving around the sun. In Galileo's time, many learned people believed in the Copernican theory, but didn't say so in public, partially because it was a theory with no proof and partially because of opposition from, among others, the Catholic Church. Why was Galileo's discovery so important? It was a mark against the Church because they had insisted that God via the Pope had said the earth was the center of the universe and now they had been proven wrong. More importantly, in a very dramatic fashion, it changed the way people thought. Before, when people looked towards heaven or paradise it was "up there" in the clouds. The second your mind changed to thinking of the earth as a rotating sphere moving through the solar system, circling around the sun, you were no longer looking up, you were looking OUT, away from the earth. Things would never be the same. Want to know what a dramatic difference it made. Take an easy chair to a wide open a space like a pasture. At dawn, sit facing eastward. (Shows picture of rising sun at dawn.) As the horizon begins to brighten, all of your senses tell you that you are motionless and the sun is rising. However, with your knowledge of our solar system, thanks to Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, your brain will assure you that you are on a giant rotating rock that is moving you eastward at hundreds of miles an

**hour. Concentrate and your sense will experience something that early humans never could, that the sun is a stationary point and the earth is rotating. Yeah, right there.**

**Student E: Aren't you afraid that when you deny God you'll die and burn in hell?**

**Price: No. Saying that hell exists doesn't make it so and we atheists have never seen any evidence that it does. An earlier version of hell was a freezing cold chasm, before the popular version of eternal fire. Ever wonder where the model of a hot hell came from? Some academics say you should look at pictures of volcanoes or visit Hawaii. Chasms of molten lava equals eternal fire. Burning magma equals brimstone. And the hydrogen sulfide smell of rotten eggs equals the smell of Hades. Of course the question of hell is closely related to the other question, the big question. What happens after you die? We believe that when your brain and body stop working, that's the end of life. No reincarnation, no resurrection, no ghosts, no nothing, you die and that's the end of the story. Yeah, I'll get you in just a minute. We think that if you only have one life to live, you have an obligation to live it to the fullest. Yes, the question in the back.**

**Student I: My pastor said there is a scientific theory called Intelligent Design that proves that God exists. So what do you think about that?**

**Price: When you give presentations like this, you often get the same questions. One of my friends, Tim Englert, interviewed a scientist about Intelligent Design. I'd like to share that interview.**

**Price points remote and monitor lights up.**

**Monitor shows Tim Englert sitting facing Matt Young.**

**Englert: Okay, Matt, nonbelievers are often asked about Intelligent**

**Design or ID. Now some people say Intelligent Design is based on science.**

**Young:** Intelligent Design Creationism has nothing to do with science. It's the latest round of a fight between science and certain dogmatic religious beliefs.

**Englert:** The latest round?

**Young:** I suppose it began in earnest about when the Inquisition burned Giordano Bruno at the stake for claiming that the stars were suns like ours, and then sentenced Galileo to permanent house arrest for claiming that the earth revolves around the sun. The Inquisitors put what they wanted to believe ahead of what science plainly showed. Intelligent Design Creationists do the same thing. They pretend that evolution is false or shot full of holes when in fact it's not.

**Englert:** Well are science and religion in conflict then?

**Young:** Absolutely not. Some of our best scientists are religious, and they find no conflict between their religious beliefs and their scientific efforts.

**Englert:** How does science work?

**Young:** Real scientists try to find out WHETHER something is true, they don't try to show THAT it is true. They test the results of their ideas and theories against actual measurable facts. Or else they perform experiments, get new unexpected results, and try to account for them theoretically. Finally, they publish papers and let other scientists examine their results. By contrast ID Creationism have published barely three papers in ten years, and not one of those has impressed main stream scientists. ID Creationism does nothing even vaguely scientific. It merely announces that evolution is so complicated it could not possibly have worked without external help. That is, ID Creationism says God did it, (maybe less emphasis) but it provides absolutely

**no evidence that evolution could not have happened without God's help. It simply masquerades as science.**

**Englert: Masquerades as science?**

**Young: Yup. Real scientists start with a question and try to find the answer. They don't start with the answer and try to justify it. We now know for example that Darwin's idea of natural selection is not the complete answer. Under certain conditions, mechanisms other than natural selections can also drive evolution. We found these mechanisms by asking questions and looking at the answers that Nature gave us.**

**Englert: And Intelligent Design theory?**

**Young: The Intelligent Design Creationists in stark contrast presume the answer. There must be a god because everything is so complex and it works together so well. God must have intervened in evolution to make everything come out right.**

**Englert: How do they justify this claim?**

**Young: As far as I know, there are no tests or research to support this wishful thinking. Just a handful of oversimplified mathematical calculations and an excellent marketing plan. Intelligent Design is the modern successor to Creationism. In fact, that's why I insist on calling it Intelligent Design Creationism. It's the latest in a series of failed philosophical arguments that do not stand up to time and science.**

**Englert: Well Doctor Young, thank you for sharing your views and appearing before our cameras.**

**Young: Your very welcome.**

**Fade to black, then to Price.**

**Price:** We atheists think Intelligent Design is Creationism dressed up in a three-piece suit by a PR firm from Madison Avenue. Question by the column.

**Student J:** So you don't believe God created the earth? Where do you think we came from?

**Price:** I don't believe that God created the earth, the universe, or even Wal-Mart. I think natural processes created the world. I think generally, Darwin had it right. Natural selection or evolution was the sculptor of the species. Young lady in the blue T-shirt.

**Student K:** Isn't it true that this is a Christian nation, since almost everyone in America is a Christian?

**Price:** Is this a Christian nation? You all ask wonderful questions. I'm so impressed. Not long ago, Tim Englert also interviewed a history professor about that very question. (Operates remote again and the monitor lights up. Title shows Dr. James Denton, University of Colorado at Boulder, History Department

**Englert:** Dr. Denton.

**Denton:** Hi, Tim.

**Englert:** We often hear people saying that America is a Christian Nation. Now as a historian, what do you think about that claim?

**Denton:** Is this a Christian Nation? The question should probably be, What is separation of church and state? Let me give you a little historical background. From the first day that the first Pilgrim sat foot on the sand at Plymouth Rock a battle began over a simple question, "Should the citizens of this new land be ruled by secular law or by religious text? In round one, the Reverend John Winthrop ordered Roger Williams out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony because

**Williams was very critical about the colony's not practicing true separation of church and state. And the battle was on. Although there were some secularists amongst the early settlers, the average person acknowledge a Supreme Being. Many were devout theists, and others avoided rocking the boat by not addressing the subject. Decades later, during the painful process of creating the Constitution, the framers argued. They fought over many things from personal liberties to trade, to economics, to geography. They whispered their concerns about slavery, but the religious questions were always there. Maybe not in the forefront, but they were always there.**

**Englert: What kind of questions?**

**Denton: Ah questions like, should there be church taxes? Should there be a national religion? Should Americans have religious freedom? Thomas Jefferson first used the term, "A wall of separation between church and state," in his 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptists. Three years after the Constitution was ratified by a majority of the colonies, the Bill of Rights was created. The first amendment contains what is known as the establishment clause. (Denton picks up book.) Let me read that to you. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.**

**Englert: Did the establishment clause settle the question?**

**Denton: Absolutely not. To describe the discussions as heated between groups who liked or disliked the wall would be an understatement. (Pause) Well I almost said that the arguments raged back and forth between both sides, but that wasn't true. Neither side was truly united. It was more a loose affiliation of opposing sides with common goals.**

**Englert: What were the battles about?**

**Denton:** Monuments for public display, slogans printed on currency, military chaplains, religion in schools, and many other subjects. A milestone came decades later in 1947. Justice Hugo Black echoed Jefferson's wall of separation phrase when he wrote the majority decision for the United States Supreme Court in the case *Everson versus the New Jersey Board of Education*. Now that decision defined parameters and basically said that you could not force your religious views on others.

**Englert:** Well did the 1947 Supreme Court decision settle the question?

**Denton:** (Laughs) Of course not. If it had, you wouldn't be here talking with me. The battle continues today between those who wish to eliminate Jefferson's wall and those who want to maintain it. The pendulum swings back and forth between yes and no. Each side cheers or groans at each round of advances or declines. Come and see my replacement in fifty years and we'll see if there is a more definitive answer.

**Englert:** (Laughs) Well I'll have my replacement do that.

The monitor goes black.

**Price:** Saying America is a Christian nation because the majority of Americans are Christians would be like saying since the majority of Americans are Caucasian that this a white nation. Neither one is true. America is not a Christian nation although the fight to make it one has been going on since this nation was formed. Yeah, in the back.

**Student L:** You don't believe in God. Do you believe in good and evil?

**Price:** Good and evil? It's all in your point of view. People can do things that by any definition are terrible antisocial acts, things that are harmful to others and I would call those evil acts. Ask an antelope what he thinks about being eaten and

he'll tell you the lion is evil. The lion will say he's simply having dinner. By the way, being philosophical about it doesn't stop the pain or the death of the antelope. Nations go to war against each other. Our side is fighting for god, country, and apple pie. The folks on the other side are evil. The folks on the other side think the same think only reversed. Now that doesn't mean that people don't commit evil acts in war because they certainly do. It means that the definition of good and evil can change with your point of view. When some people talk about evil, the image that comes to mind is Satan or the Devil. Since we atheists don't believe in gods, it follows that we don't believe in devils. We don't think of evil as a noun or a person. We also don't believe that a person must be religious to be moral. The atheists I know act ethically. To us, that means don't hurt other people, don't take their possessions, and don't lie. Yeah, right there.

**Student N:** Isn't atheism a religion, just like all the others?

**Price:** Isn't atheism just another religion? Yet another wonderful question. Hey, I know this is a comparative religion class and I am here, no doubt about that, but I'm not representing a religion. I'm representing a lack of religion. Dictionary definitions of religion say things like revering or worshipping a supernatural power or a creator or a governor of the universe. We don't worship anything or anyone. Think about the organization Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Those folks aren't particularly religious, but they do what they can to stop people from drinking and driving. We organized atheists are the same as Mothers Against Drunk Driving except we're trying to prevent people from forcing their religious views on us. Want to know something funny? If I had a magic wand that would eliminate religion, I wouldn't wave it.

**Student O:** Why not?

**Price:** Religion gives many people much-needed support. It

provides the floorboards of their lives and gives them something to hang onto. Lots of religious people do good things in charity. They tend to their flocks and they help those less fortunate. I wouldn't want to wave a wand that got rid of them. However, all religions have their fundamentalists. Many people from religions around the world join me in my concern about fundamentalists who feel they have the RIGHT, (pause) no, that's not the correct word, (pause) they have the OBLIGATION to force their views on others. Too often fundamentalists feel that they are the only ones with the correct answers and the rest of the world has got it wrong, wrong to the point that it's acceptable to be violent. (Pause.) Having said that, I suppose it's time to delve into some of the difficult subjects that have brought me here. This is the tough and uncomfortable part of comparative religion. If you've studied history, you know the past is filled with religious wars and religious persecutions. The violence continues today around the world. Nine eleven is only one of the more recent. Remember that magic wand I talked about before. Well, I wouldn't wave it to get rid of religion, but if I could, I'd sure wave it to get rid of religious harassment. Here's another video interview by Tim Englert on the subject

Price points remote and monitor lights up.

**Englert:** I'd like to chat with you about school harassment. It's always been around, big ones picking on little ones. Gender bias, usually boys teasing girls. All of it's wrong but harassing kids because of their race, religion, or sexual orientation seems to be especially cruel. Regrettably, on rare occasions leading to suicide. COCORE often runs into poignant stories, but most victims are hesitant to be interviewed on camera. I'd like to share some actual cases with you. A Jewish family, Wayne and Sue Willis and their four kids, moved to Alabama for a job transfer. Despite complaints to school administrators, the kids were victims of blatant religious harassment. A teacher said, If the

parents won't save the souls of these children, we have to. In one instance, a teacher took hold of a Willis child's head and forced him to bow down for a prayer that was coming over the school loudspeakers. Two of the Willis children were physically assaulted. One child was beaten by five other kids. At a school assembly, a minister told a student audience that anyone who had not accepted Jesus as his or her savior was doomed to hell. A Willis child in the audience left, accompanied by jeers from her classmates. She suffered nightmares for weeks. This case took place in 1997 and was finally resolved in court. (Picks up another folder) Here's one more recent. In 2004, a Colorado grade school girl says she was tripped jabbed, and subjected to relentless harassment, called a lesbian and a pagan because she did not believe in creationism. The girl threatened to commit suicide to avoid being returned to school. There were several other complaints about this school. Most harassment cases are solved, as this one was, with reason and empathy. (Puts folder down) When that doesn't work, the process usually ends up in the courts. Let's visit with two gentlemen who have been at the end of that process.

(Cut to courtroom scene, Englert walking down aisle toward two men seated at a desk in front of a judge's bench.)

**Englert:** Hi Judd, Hi Gordon.

**Golden:** Hi, Tim.

**Gamm:** Hi, Tim

**Englert:** I should begin by saying thank you both for agreeing to this interview.

**Golden:** You know I understand that we were second choice, that what you really wanted were victims of religious harassment.

**Englert:** Guilty as charged. We found plenty of victims, but they

were all very reticent to go public.

**Golden:** It's so hard to get people like that to come forward. It's both the pressure that they feel personally as well as the societal pressure that people feel that they just can't let their point of view be known when it conflicts with the majority.

**Englert:** Does religious harassment happen very often?

**Golden:** Well, unfortunately, there's been little change in my 30 years of handling these kind of cases. There has been religious harassment consistently over the past 30 years. The change now is that you hear more about it because there's so many more media outlets, TV stations that report it. But the way it's been, unfortunately is when there is a majority religion in a public school, so often that religion tries to impose their particular religion or way of doing things on the minority, often with the cooperation of teachers and unfortunately in the sports venue with coaches. That has been one of the most consistent and unfortunate ways in which religious harassment has taken place.

**Gamm:** The impact that coercing other people to say things that they don't believe, I think can be best understood, since perhaps most of you are Christians, to understand what it would be like if you went to class and your teacher said we're going to pray now, and the teacher began to start praying to Mohammed or to Zeus. How would you feel? And if you were to say, oh well, it doesn't matter I'll just go ahead and pray because everyone else is doing it, it reflects on your integrity. It clearly doesn't reflect your beliefs and to have other people be forced to say prayers or to be compelled to be a participant in athletics that they have to go along and say things they don't believe, it undermines a person's integrity, and I think it reflects on our ability to think for ourselves. That if other people can coerce us into thinking or to saying things that don't reflect what we

value, then we dismiss and treat cavalier or just casually the idea that we can say things that don't reflect our values.

**Englert:** As an attorney, what would you say to high school students about religion and the first amendment.

**Golden:** The first amendment is an enduring and wonderful thing. And the best part about it, the thing that provides the most protection for people of faith is the free exercise clause, but what that means is that you can freely exercise your religion, practice it as you wish without the government telling you anything about how you're going to do it outside of government institutions. The establishment clause, the other part of it says keep religion out of the government. So for those of you who have deep religious beliefs or are nonbelievers, however you see it, the place to practice those beliefs and to express them is not when the government is supervising things, not when there is a teacher watching, not when there is a coach trying to instruct a team. The time to do it is on your own time, with your own family, with your own peer group, with your own religious group.

**Englert:** Well, Judd, Gordon, thank you very much for agreeing to appear before our cameras. It was very much appreciated.

**Gamm:** Thank you, Tim.

**Golden:** You're welcome, Tim.

(Scene change back to Tim's office. He enters and sits.)

**Englert:** I have another file that I'd like to share with you. It concerns the U. S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. In the 2004, the football coach was asked to remove a large banner from the locker room that said I am a Christian first and last. .... I am a member of teach Jesus Christ. Between 2000 and 2004, cadets have filed over 50 complaints of religious discrimination, mostly about evangelism. Can you imagine? By filing these complaints,

**the cadets have risked their careers. The reason this case is of major concern to COCORE is that the issue is far from being settled. Some legislators and religious leaders say that separation of church and state should be ignored and that the evangelism should continue in the name of freedom of religion. I'd like to end our short discussion about school harassment with a short poem by the Reverend Martin Neemueller.**

**First they came for the Communists,  
but I was not a communist so I did not speak out.  
Then they came for the socialists and the trade unionists,  
but I was neither so I did not speak out.  
Then they came for the Jews,  
but I was not a Jew so I did not speak out.  
And when they came for me,  
there was no one left to speak out for me.**

**Fade to black, scene cuts to classroom.**

**Price: We've talked about how atheists have a different point of view. Let me give you another hypothetical example. Someone you love very much takes ill. They grab the right side of their abdomen and say they are in terrible pain. You rush them to the hospital and the doctor says they are having an appendicitis attack. What treatment do you think the doctor is going to recommend?**

**Student M: Cut 'em open and remove their appendix.**

**Price: Exactly. And what do you think is going to happen if the surgery isn't performed?**

**Student M: The person I love is probably going to die.**

**Price: You got it. Now, there are certain denominations that believe you MUST not shed human blood or receive a blood transfusion, no matter how serious the illness. Their method of treating appendicitis is to pray over the victim.**

**How would you feel if this organization said your loved one could not have surgery because it was against God's will? In the second row.**

**Student N:** But that would never happen. We don't have any restrictions like that here in school.

**Price:** (Smiles.) I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, (holds hands out to students).

**Students:** under God.

**Student N:** I never thought about religion forcing the words on everyone. You're supposed to be able to skip it if you want to, but no one ever does.

**Price:** In my opinion, students who complain about religion being forced on them are either very brave, very concerned, or both. (Pause). I'm about to show you another video interview by Tim Englert. It's the last one, but it's about two sensitive subjects. Although Tim asks about separation of church and state, the woman talks about assisted suicide and stem cell research. I'm not going to tell you whether they are right or wrong. However, I'd like you to hear from someone who has the right to her opinions. It's another interview with someone who is dying. If this video makes you uncomfortable, please don't hesitate to leave.

**Price** points a remote control and the monitor light up. The scene shows a woman sitting on a sofa. Beside her is a cane. Monitor shows Carol Presley. It is a news style interview with Tim Englert.

**Englert:** I don't have a picture.

**OSV:** Try three.

**Englert:** Okay. Oh there it is. Hi Carol. Thank you for sharing your views and appearing before our cameras.

**Presley:** My pleasure, Tim.

**Englert:** Tell us your feelings about separation of church and state.

**Presley:** Are you actually rolling?

**OSV:** We're rolling.

**Presley:** Oh, you're rolling. (Laughs.) Well I have a couple of feelings about separation of church and state and these feelings have become more intense since I developed ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease.

**Englert:** And what are they?

**Presley:** The first is my concern about stem cell research. Stem cell research has the potential for curing a number of diseases, including ALS. And it's frustrating to me to know that research is being curtailed because of religious beliefs that not everyone shares.

**Englert:** I see. And the second subject?

**Presley:** The second subject, Tim, has to do with my prognosis. As you know, Lou Gehrig's disease is a fatal disease. And what happens during the progress of the disease is that muscles gradually deteriorate and I'll eventually become paralyzed. And one of the muscles that deteriorate is the diaphragm muscle. And so breathing becomes more and more difficult. Imagine you're breathing ability decreasing a tiny amount each day. Eventually it will lead to a slow and agonizing suffocation. And I'm also worried about being a burden on my family at this time.

**Englert:** But what are your options?

**Presley:** It's important to me that I have options at the end of my life. And it's very difficult for me envision what options

would be legal for me to end my life if I so choose. The only one that seems available to me within the legal structure is refusing nutrition and hydration, but there should be other choices. When your reality becomes worse than your nightmares, it's time to think about unthinkable options. I definitely don't want to become a vegetable that my husband has to take care of.

**Englert:** We're talking about assisted suicide.

**Presley:** We're talking about my choices. I don't want someone using the power of the government to force their religious views on me.

**Englert:** You're very brave to share your feelings about such a sensitive subject.

**Presley:** Well, thank you, but sometimes I feel more angry than brave. Here's an example. A religious leader wants to force-feed hospital patients over the objections not only of the family but of the patients legally expressed wishes. Tim, we're talking about tax-supported public hospitals forcing their religious beliefs on others. I hope that explains why I support the separation of church and state.

**Englert:** Thank you, Carol.

**Presley:** You're welcome. Goodbye.

(Fade to black, cut to classroom.)

**Price:** Well, it's a nice day out there and I think it's time to enjoy some of that wonderful sunshine. There are so many things we could have talked about such as prayer in school, abortion, homosexuality, sex education, vouchers, and others subjects but each one could take hours or even days. With limited time, I can only cover so much. (Pause) When 9/11 was in the news, I'm sad to say that a couple of the commentators described the perpetrators as atheists. That

was the worst word they could use to describe suicidal religious zealots. And yet, we've just spent a class period together with me telling you about atheists, telling you how we think and that we consider ourselves moral and ethical. Telling you that we base our lives on reality and not the imaginary. Telling you that since we believe we only have one life to live, we try to live it to the fullest. From my point of view, life has never been better. Huge advances in medicine have brought longer life expectancies. There have been quantum leaps in science and even space travel. Electronic miracles, coupled with better communications and better transportation, make me believe that life really is wonderful. Sure there are challenges ahead, but compared to my generation, you're smarter, better educated, have wider worldviews, and more sources of information such as the Internet than we could ever have dreamed of. The only thing you lack is experience. Let me leave you with this. I hope that you will realize that atheists, humanists, freethinkers, or nonbelievers whatever you call us, are people just like you except we don't have a belief in gods. Thank you for your attention.

Applause, bell rings, students rise, BGM, some students leave, and some gather around Price as credits roll.

**THE END**

Written, produced,  
directed and edited  
by  
Marvin Straus

Presenter:  
Sara Price

Interviewer:  
Timothy Englert

COCORE wishes to thank

**Jim Denton, PhD  
Gordon Gamm, JD  
Judd Golden, JD  
Carol Presely, and  
Matt Young, PhD  
for their appearances**

**Teacher:  
Stewart O'Steen**

**Drawing by  
William Jacob McBrayer**

**Class room students:  
Chris Benedict  
Becky Bock  
Tucker Brock  
Ruben Cerceda  
Erin Dyer  
Biserat Gebremarian  
Brice Hedges  
Zachary Lin  
Chrissy Marshall  
William Jacob McBrayer  
Seandee Means  
Zachary Nordeen  
Joshua O'Hearn  
Fernando Ortiz  
Sydney Page-Hayes  
Megan Powers  
Leanne Rizzo  
Rachel Roth  
Nicki Rzyska  
Chloë Saisich-Baird  
Louis Sandoval  
Heather Tocquigny  
Jennifer Tocquigny  
Sushi Upahdya  
Kiersten Vannice**

**Caryn Wertheimer  
Sara Wingert  
Ella Wrenn**

**Camera operators:  
Marty Mapes-First Camera  
Marvin Straus  
Martin Voelker**

**Audio boom:  
Jeff Zerr**

**Script advisers:  
Larry Bauman  
Carlos Bertha, PhD  
Constance Edwards  
Sharon Fratepietro  
Gordon Gamm, JD  
Judd Golden, JD  
Louis Guzman, PhD  
John Kole  
Herb Silverman, PhD  
Jeff Zerr**

**COCORE is an umbrella  
organization composed of the following groups:**

**Atheists & Freethinkers of Denver  
David Eller, PhD, Coordinator**

**Atheists Student Coalition  
Derek Koloditch, President**

**Boulder Atheists  
Larry Bauman & Jill Maxwell, Cochairs**

**Boulder Heretics  
Dan Culberson, President**

**Colorado Humanists  
Richard Barns, President**

**Freethinkers of Colorado Springs  
Groff Schroeder, President**

**Freethinkers of Northern Colorado  
Constance Edwards, President**

**Humanists Action League  
Gary Betchan, President**

**The Evolve Fish symbol  
was used with permission  
of Evolve Fish at  
[www.evolvefish.com](http://www.evolvefish.com).**

**The Last Presentation ©  
is copyrighted 2006  
by Marvin Straus  
([cocore3@cs.com](mailto:cocore3@cs.com))**