

Atheists Think Other Atheists More Likely to Be Evil

Atheists are more likely to suspect fellow atheists, rather than religious people, of being evil, according to a new study.

An article in the journal *Nature Human Behaviour* said the worldwide study showed “extreme intuitive moral prejudice against atheists” by Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and even fellow atheists.

In the study, participants were given a description of an evil person who tortured animals as a child, and then grows up to become a teacher who murders and mutilates five homeless people.

The study looked at the attitudes of more than 3,000 people in 13 countries around the world, with nations ranging from the very secular, such as the Netherlands, to the very religious, such as the United States.

The participants, including atheists, were twice as likely to assume that the serial killer was an atheist.

Study co-author Will Gervais, a psychology professor at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, told French news agency AFP, “It is striking that even atheists appear to hold the same intuitive anti-atheist bias.”

The study also found that “religious belief is intuitively viewed as a necessary safeguard against the temptations of grossly immoral conduct, and atheists are broadly perceived as potentially morally depraved and dangerous.”

It concluded, “People perceive belief in a god as a sufficient moral buffer to inhibit immoral behaviour.” {eoa}

Copyright The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc., All rights reserved.