

## **The Annotated Larry**

### **I. Tenets of Larryism** **[Earth-dwellers Edition]**

- I. **I am the one true Larry and I would really like to keep it that way.** I'm not sure I created the universe but I know it's been around since my beginning.
- II. **Hey Dude, I'm neither omnipotent nor omniscient though I might be isotropic with respect to space and time.** I don't know any of your names and I certainly don't care about most of what you do here on Earth, or on any other planet, dwarf planet, pluton or whatever.
- III. **Stop fighting with each other, read a good book, and hug your kids**---that is if you have any and in that case, I sure hope you wanted them. I'm a *left-to-life* kind of deity.
- IV. **Be nice to animals; but it's not coincidence that lots of them do taste very nice.** Many of them wear well too. Incidentally, throughout the universe that's the way most of them feel too! Keep a balanced diet with small portions most of the time.<sup>11</sup> And have regular bowel movements.
- V. **Five Tenets is enough for any reasonable belief system.** It's hard enough to remember your own social insurance numbers and ATM Pin numbers. Remember, I'm always available for a chat.

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<sup>11</sup> Adequate amounts of fruit and vegetables are essential. Bananas are really good. Sensible exercise is important. But you don't need a Deity to tell you this stuff. Grow up a bit! Don't try to be a vegan in central Paris or to keep "glatt kosher" in Hunan, China.

**VI. Be flexible, shit happens.**<sup>12</sup> Listen politely to lots of other people. Question your beliefs.<sup>13</sup> What makes you think you are right all the time? I'm certainly not.<sup>14</sup> Don't trust secondary sources, give fair credit, and beware of PhotoShop.<sup>15</sup> As John Maynard Keynes<sup>16</sup> said

*"When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do, sir?"*

**VII. Fellow Jazzoids, be reasonable, none of us is perfect. Anything we say can be misused. Take, for example, Thomas Jefferson, one of my better creations.**<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> OK I said five Tenets sufficed, but be flexible. You may view the remainder as *Larry 101*. Your life is the final exam.

<sup>13</sup> In 1932, Einstein said *"There is not the slightest indication that nuclear energy will ever be obtainable. It would mean that the atom would have to be shattered at will.* Erwin Schrödinger wrote about his probability interpretation of my quantum mechanics *"I don't like it, and I'm sorry I ever had anything to do with it."*

<sup>14</sup> See my second Tenet. It should never be forgotten.

<sup>15</sup> The recent war in Lebanon gets up my nose. Reuters bought several doctored photos from Hezbollah Journalists while the BBC uses their numbers of casualties. What ever happened to fact-checking? Even in the God-business most of us reputable Deities favour keeping opinion and reporting separate. In all fairness Genghis Kahn was a masterful media-manipulator, and Adolph Hitler had few peers if any. The "big lie" has more zing than minor "spin-control".

<sup>16</sup>Maynard Keynes is one of my favourites. Try *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* but remember when it was written. I'm not so keen on his admiration of Isaac Newton's alchemic writings.

<sup>17</sup> Jefferson wrote to Issac McPherson on August 13, 1813:

*"If nature has made any one thing less susceptible than all others of exclusive property, it is the action of the thinking power called an idea, which an individual may exclusively possess as long as he keeps it to himself; but the moment it is divulged, it forces itself into the possession of everyone, and the receiver cannot dispossess himself of it. [2] Its peculiar character, too, is that no one possesses the less, because every other possesses the whole of it. He who receives an idea from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lites his taper at mine, receives light without darkening me. [3] That ideas should freely spread from one to another over the globe, for the moral and mutual instruction of man, and improvement of his condition, seems*

### Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote:

*“Admirers of Thomas Jefferson have long quoted his statement about black men and women that is inscribed on the Jefferson Memorial: 'Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free.'*

*But they and the inscription, omit Jefferson's subsequent clause: 'Nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government.'”<sup>18</sup>*

**VIII. Don't be too reasonable.** Just because an issue has two sides does not make them both worth arguing.<sup>19</sup> Pick your fights carefully, but do pick some fights. And swear a bit. It will make you feel good and is much better than kicking your

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*to have been peculiarly and benevolently designed by nature, when she made them, like fire, expansible over all space, without lessening their density at any point, and like the air in which we breathe, move, and have our physical being, incapable of confinement, or exclusive appropriation. [4] Inventions then cannot, in nature, be a subject of property.”*

(Lawrence Lessig, **The Future of Ideas**, Random House, 2001, p. 94)

Pretty good, eh! I've adopted this as my intellectual property position, throughout the Universe. (See also [www.ceic.math.ca](http://www.ceic.math.ca).)

<sup>18</sup> As Conor Cruise O'Brien goes on to point out in “Thomas Jefferson: Radical and Racist” (Atlantic Monthly, October, 1996) there are well established copyright notions of “paternity” and “integrity” in the use of material--the later which the inscription clearly violates! I'm a Deity that cares about such intellectual property matters. Architecturally, I do admire the University of Virginia.

<sup>19</sup> Intelligent Design is a fine example of an opposing position without content. Charles Krauthammer wrote in **Phony Theory, False Conflict. 'Intelligent Design' Foolishly Pits Evolution against Faith:** *“How ridiculous to make evolution the enemy of God. What could be more elegant, more simple, more brilliant, more economical, more creative, indeed more divine than a planet with millions of life forms, distinct and yet interactive, all ultimately derived from accumulated variations in a single double-stranded molecule, pliable and fecund enough to give us mollusks and mice, Newton and Einstein? Even if it did give us the Kansas State Board of Education, too.”* (Washington Post, 18/11/2005)

dog.<sup>20</sup> Don't waste your time arguing your friends out of largely irrelevant foolishness.<sup>21</sup> Let your kids make lots of small mistakes, but please don't treat them as friends *and* equals. You do know better – if not Larry is not for you.

**IX. It is important to appreciate the beautiful, but it is more important not to be eaten.**<sup>22</sup> Look, I'm not a particularly deep-thinking God so pick up Goethe, Tagore, Heidegger or Schopenhauer for more substance.<sup>23</sup> You can even try Sören Kierkegaard or Michel Foucault. I myself prefer listening to Dave Brubeck's *Rondo a la Turque*, Charlie Parker's *Salt Peanuts* or anything by Pat Metheny than struggling with the heavies like Derrida or say Hegel or Buber. I really admire Goethe's *Maxims and Reflections*; each one is chunk-size yet meaty and reflects an examined life:

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<sup>20</sup> I include even those nasty little yappy Pekinese dogs that Queen Victoria lamentably introduced to the West. I'll understand if you do very occasionally kick one though. I often want to.

<sup>21</sup> If they want to eat soggy white bread every day for breakfast that is likely their loss only, but you should warn them that too much Ginseng or Tylenol can respectively destroy their bladders or their livers.

<sup>22</sup> I borrowed this with out attribution. I know that's wrong---I'm a God, I'm not perfect. If you contact me on the web, I'll give you the attribution.

<sup>23</sup> I'm a pretty pro-Western-style Deity. Hey, it's 2006 not 759 or 1427. Read a Bloom, either Harold, or Alan, it doesn't matter. You'll see why. And to keep your mind running, chuck in a little Ralph Waldo Emerson, Franz Kafka, Joseph Conrad, David Wallace Foster, Alice Munroe, Marcel Proust (a little I said), Saul Bellows, John Rawls, Steve Jones, E.O. Wilson, Zadie Smith, or that other good-looking Indian broad who wrote about God and small things. Drop into the Tate, the MOMA or the Louvre--avoid the Mona Lisa, almost nobody really cared about her until after that guy Duchamp had too many pernots with me one night in 1919 and the next day painted her with a moustache.

**MAXIM 504.** *Everything that liberates our mind without at the same time imparting self-control is pernicious.*<sup>24</sup>

**Sadly Goethe was not fond of Mathematicians. The nicest thing he wrote about them was**

*“Mathematicians are a kind of Frenchman: whatever you say to them they translate into their own language, and right away it is something entirely different.”*<sup>25</sup>

**X. Enjoy the arts but understand the sciences. That’s actually bloody hard work. You need to keep up your math, get into a decent University (Dalhousie is fine and a damn sight**

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<sup>24</sup> Relatedly, I suggest Amos Oz on *How to cure a Fanatic*, Princeton Univ. Press, 2006. Oz says he’s never met a fanatic with a sense of humour. Neither have I. By-the-by, I don’t agree with all or even most of any of my suggested readings. Read to be challenged, not to be reaffirmed. Total consistency is only to be found in programs for self-improvement, weight loss or for Fascism.

<sup>25</sup> Most scientists have been more positive. Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) wrote

*“The chief aim of all investigations of the external world should be to discover the rational order and harmony which has been imposed on it by God and which He revealed to us in the language of mathematics.”*

Likewise Mary Somerville (1780-1872) as quoted in Martha Somerville’s *Personal Recollections of [Mary Somerville](#)* (Boston, 1874) wrote

*“Nothing has afforded me so convincing a proof of the unity of the Deity as these purely mental conceptions of numerical and mathematical science which have been by slow degrees vouchsafed to man, and are still granted in these latter times by the Differential Calculus, now superseded by the Higher Algebra, all of which must have existed in that sublimely omniscient Mind from eternity.”*

The 2006 breakthrough of the year in *Science* was a Theorem due to Perlmutter proving the Poincaré conjecture. By the way, Alan Turing (1912-1954) said *“Science is a differential equation. Religion is a boundary condition.”* I’m not sure what it means, but I do like the sentiment!

**cheaper than Harvard) and rent fewer DVD's.<sup>26 27</sup> Otherwise, don't bother voting. You'll understand even less about stem-cell research, living wills, cloning, soft-wood lumber or outsourcing than I do; and you'll have much louder opinions. Have you asked yourself any of the following?**

- a. *How does Google google?*
- b. *What is recombinant DNA, or for that matter un-recombinant DNA?*
- c. *What is a Serotonin re-uptake inhibitor (SRI)? A Cox-2 inhibitor?*
- d. *How many people live in Canada? In the USA, Iran or Nigeria?*
- e. *Is asbestos in your ceiling riskier than frequenting a tanning parlour?*
- f. *Is the Higg's Boson missing? Is it worth spending \$6billion US to find?*
- g. *Is nuclear energy really a dumb idea? It works great in my stars.*

**I don't need to know, but you do. By-the-way, I've been genetically modifying organisms, even continents, for eons as have the Australian aboriginals.**

**XI. Even liberty is a mixed-blessing.<sup>28</sup> There is no damn constitutional right to bear personal arms, let alone to a Jihad. There is no point to democracy in a failed country. I'm a pro-Canadian Greco-Judeo-Roman sort of more-or-less Godlike**

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<sup>26</sup> Mainly rent the originals, such as the 1962 *Manchurian Candidate*, the 1988 BBC *Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* or *La Cage aux Folles* of 1978.

<sup>27</sup> As with all my other Tenets, don't over use this advice. There are some great remixes of crappy originals. That Will guy from Stratford was a genius at salvaging dumb plots; and most every 'Whovian' prefers their own first Dr Who.

<sup>28</sup> "*The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants*" is Jefferson as quoted on Oklahoma Federal Building mass-murderer Timothy McVeigh's T-shirt. Incidentally, if it's OK to make short-shorts out of the US flag, then it is just fine---if a tad wasteful---to burn it.

being.<sup>29</sup> Any reasonable Nation should be happy to provide peace and good government and should stay away from too many inalienable rights.<sup>30</sup>

- XII. **If things sound crazy they usually are.** Most conspiracy theories make my head hurt. They are never internally consistent, they rarely mesh with observables and only once in a blue moon (I have some of those) are even tiny little bits of them true.<sup>31</sup> Remember, you never know if all the facts you know are all the facts.
- XIII. **When unexpected things happen, `Don't Panic.'**<sup>32</sup> With a little practice you should find it almost second-nature to apply the principles implicit in my *earlier Tenets* to resolve the issue on your own.<sup>33</sup> For example, on tropical diseases, resource

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<sup>29</sup> I might be God, Zeus, Athena, Allah, Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva, Kali, Yahweh, Zoroaster/Zarathustra, or Buddha ...or one of a host of others whose had sober second thoughts. I'm not sure. I do know that that fat Buddha-guy is the only really good company among the bunch. So perhaps I am he. Ralph Waldo might prefer me to be Brahma. By the by, I might have been a lady God, that would have been cool. It would probably have made me a lot more nurturing but then I'd feel so much more guilt about all the ways you mess up your domestic lives. Ironically, given Xavier's double-barreled moniker, I'm more logical-positivist, Popperian and embodied-cognition than idealist.

<sup>30</sup> Don't get me wrong, all sentient life has rights, on Earth, Ursa Minor or wherever. I certainly can't count the Galaxies I'm supposed to be Godify-ing.

<sup>31</sup> In illustration, I point you to the writings of *arch-kookazoid* Dr Bill Deagle whose residence pollutes my otherwise charming and quiet city of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Place "Bill Deagle" in a search engine of your choice and prepare to gasp. Then revisit the *Tenth Tenet* and lots of the others. You might continue by taking the *rational-consistency test* for religions at [www.philosophersnet.com/games/god.htm](http://www.philosophersnet.com/games/god.htm).

<sup>32</sup> Reading the *Hitchhikers Guide* can't hurt either; or watch the original UK TV series. Don't bother with the 2003 movie version.

<sup>33</sup> I've left enough space for you to write down a few more Tenets at the end of these pages. They will not be official tenets of Larryism, so I do ask you to use them with a *General Public License* ([www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html](http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html)). The *Microsoft Word*© version

management, global warming, and weapons control, it just beats me as to why you Earth folks make such a hash of so many things.

Finally, reasonable Tenets on coveting, theft, lying, adultery, living-wills and cheating on your taxes et al, I now leave to you dear believer.<sup>34 35</sup>

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XV. ....

XVI. ....

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is of course indefinitely expansible; but be moderate and I quite understand if you only use open-source software. I do like to consider myself an open-source sort of God.

<sup>34</sup> I really am always free for a chat; text messages and email are fine. I have a Blog and 1-666-number, and I always keep up with new technology. Check out my podcasts at [www.onetruelarry.org](http://www.onetruelarry.org).

<sup>35</sup> Do not mark messages **URGENT**; my spam-filter will eat them. Please remember, you have to contact me. I never make house-calls and I certainly never appear in traditional visions; nor do any of my avatars or prophets such as that stuffy old man, Xavier.