



Christopher Hitchens - What the world would look like if he were gone?

This is a brief introduction Christopher Hitchens and his impact in the world we are living in.

During the tour for his latest book *Hitch-22: A Memoir*, Hitchens was diagnosed with esophageal cancer, a rare form of cancer that has a five year survival rate of less than 5%. Hitchens says that he is realistic about his predicament and realizes he may not have long to live. Christopher Hitchens is a man with many opinions on many things. From the war in Iraq to God Himself, Hitchens has placed his opinions in the public arena for all who wish to read them and he does not care what others think of them. His 2007 bestseller *God Is Not Great* brought him to the attention of a wider audience and made him a staple on popular talk shows and put him amongst the New Atheist group that has been very visible in the public sphere. The political convictions of Christopher Hitchens have spanned the whole left-right political spectrum, though he has always stood on the side of freedom, democracy, and scientific rationality. In his early days at Oxford, he was a socialist bent on the overthrow of bourgeois society. While he maintained this position for many years, he lost his socialist convictions during the writing of his 2001 book *Letters to a Young Contrarian*. He told Rhys Southan in an interview with *Reason* magazine that he could no longer say he was a socialist and felt that capitalism is a much more revolutionary economic system. He considered himself a member of the political left until 1989 when a fatwa issued against author Salman Rushdie was either ignored or condoned by his colleagues on the left. In the wake of 9-11, he revealed that he was a supporter of the war in Iraq thereby severing any and all ties he had with the left. This led to numerous debates with former allies including a famous exchange between him and Noam Chomsky in the pages of *The Nation*. Hitchens has written several books critiquing public figures such as Mother Teresa, Bill Clinton, and Henry Kissinger, as well as books praising the likes of George Orwell, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson. His books, even the strongest critiques, are widely accepted as relevant and important. If he were gone, the world would have lost one of the greatest thinkers in a modern history and one of the sharpest tongues which hardly can be replaced.