

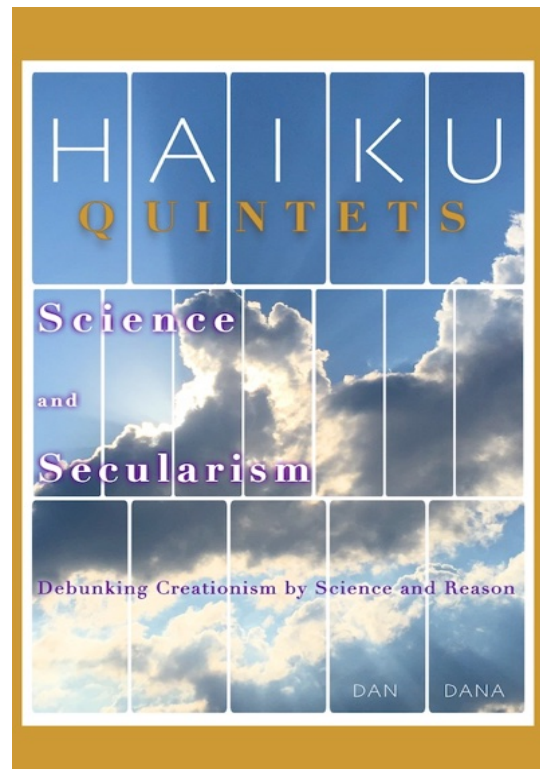
Summary*

Science and Secularism: Haiku Quintets and Other Musings combines a personal memoir, two haiku sequences, a philosophical essay, and a collection of scientist quotations into a single, multi-genre argument for a secular, science-based worldview. Rather than a straightforward poetry collection, the book layers autobiography and argument around its verse, tracing one man's path from small-town Christianity to atheism and situating that journey within a broader case against supernatural belief.

The book opens with "My Journey to Atheism," a first-person account of growing up in a devout Methodist family in rural Missouri, encountering a friend's gift of Bertrand Russell's writings as a teenager, and moving through Protestant, then Christian, then agnostic identities before settling into atheism during college and graduate study in psychology. This memoir establishes the book's central claim: that religious belief is largely an accident of birthplace and upbringing rather than a conclusion reached through evidence, and that abandoning it need not mean abandoning kindness or meaning.

Two haiku quintet sequences follow. The "Secularism" set uses the compressed five-verse form to examine belief itself — the origins of gods, whether atheism counts as a faith, and the author's correspondence with an anonymous atheist friend in Nigeria who must conceal his views for safety. The "Science" set turns outward toward cosmology and physics, rendering the Hubble Deep Field, dark matter, planetary formation, and the sheer improbability of human existence in miniature, treating scientific wonder as a substitute for religious awe. A free-verse "Ode to Scientism" extends this theme, cataloging the physical processes underlying the self and repeatedly asking "why here, why now, why me" before concluding there is no need for a creator to answer it.

The book's longest prose section, "Creationism Debunked by Science and Reason," is an essay adapted from a published anthology chapter critiquing pandeism — the belief that a creator deity became the universe itself. Structured as a point-by-point rebuttal incorporating an exchange with a pandeist editor, it argues that no creator is needed to explain existence, drawing on cosmologists including Krauss, Hawking, and Hellier. The book closes with a curated set of quotations from scientists on religion and reason, and a short biographical sketch of the author, a retired mediator and psychologist, presented in his own haiku quintet form.



*Summary created by perplexity.ai