

Mid Ohio *A*theists

A Newsletter For Atheists in the Mansfield Ohio Area

Fifth Issue

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Adopt-A-Highway

Our group is now participating in the Ohio Department of Transportation's Adopt-A-Highway program. The section of highway we adopted is Interstate 71 between mile markers 166 & 168. This is located between Ohio 13 and Ohio 97.

All the paperwork is completed and the required safety training is done. The permit authorizing our group to pick up litter was issued on September 17. We are just waiting on the state to put the signs in place and then we can schedule our first pickup. The cleanup season is between April and October, if the signs are put up soon we may yet be able to make a pickup this year.

This is an excellent way for members to put our group in the public eye in a positive way. ♦

September Meeting

We met at Barnes and Noble on Sunday the 19th. There were many things discussed concerning the Adopt-A-Highway program and the affiliation with American Atheists.

We also talked out volunteering in helping keep Mansfield parks clean and helping the Domestic Violence Shelter by donating items.

We had one new person at the meeting who recently found out about our group. It is really satisfying to know we are reaching people who have a desire to talk and interact with like-minded people, people they don't usually encounter in their everyday life. ♦

Atheist Quote

"One of the embarrassing problems for the early nineteenth-century champions of the Christian faith was that not one of the first six Presidents of the United States was an orthodox Christian."
- Mortimer Adler (1902 – 2001) philosopher, educator, and popular author.

Atheists more knowledgeable than theists

A recent poll by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life finds that atheists know more about religion than theists. The survey included 32 questions about core teachings, history and leading figures of major world religions. Atheists averaged 20.9 and the overall average was 16.

Many theists missed questions even about their own faith. Those who

Total	16.0
Atheist/Agnostic	20.9
Jewish	20.5
Mormon	20.3
White evangelical Protestant	17.6
White Catholic	16.0
White mainline Protestant	15.8
Nothing in particular	15.2
Black Protestant	13.4
Hispanic Catholic	11.6

scored the highest were atheists and agnostics, as well members of two religious minorities: Jews and Mormons.

That finding might surprise some, but not Dave Silverman, president of American Atheists, an advocacy group for atheists. "I have heard many times that atheists know more about religion than religious people," Mr. Silverman said. "Atheism is an effect of that knowledge, not a lack of knowledge. I gave a Bible to my daughter. That's how you make atheists."

Previous surveys by the Pew Research Center have shown that America is among the most religious of the world's developed nations. But the U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey shows that large numbers of Americans are uninformed about the tenets, practices, history and leading figures of major faith traditions – including their own. ♦

AA Affiliation

We are proud to announce that Mid Ohio Atheists is now an official affiliate of American Atheists. This will give us more exposure and hopefully allow us to be seen by more local people. The only requirement is we had to state we agreed with American Atheists' Aims & Principles, which are listed here- [http://atheists.org/Aims and Principles](http://atheists.org/Aims_and_Principles)

There are also some other benefits in being affiliated in that our members will get discounts on American Atheists membership and products they have for sale. Here is a list of the benefits-

- Free listing on the American Atheists' Web Page.
- Assistance in arranging programs and setting up new local organization.
- 20% discount at the American Atheists store for purchases over \$50.00 (with promo code).
- Reduced convention fees for members of Mid Ohio Atheists and a free Affiliate meeting at the annual convention.
- 20% first-year discount for American Atheists membership for members of Mid Ohio Atheists (with promo code).

Contact Ron for the promo code.

We are looking for other national and regional atheist or atheist friendly organizations with which to form alliances. This will give us greater exposure and more opportunities to advance our mission statement objectives. If there is an organization you think would make a good fit with MOA, bring it up at the monthly meeting. ♦

*We are on the web at-
midohioatheists.org*

The Accommodators

By Drenn Workman

The Accommodators- also known as the enablers.

As there is no evidence for the existence of any god whatsoever, for religion to exist, blind faith is required. Blind faith is required also for the acceptance of many of the outrageous claims within the religion. Outside of religion such irrational concepts are not believed. For example, if I were to proclaim I could walk on water, though there might be some nut cases who would believe it, most would dismiss it. Yet, within the ranks of the believer, there are people who accept that someone did walk on water despite the fact that the surface tension of water is unable to support more than a bug's weight.

Many non-believers, in a vain hope of defusing the dangers of religion, wish to adopt a stance of live and let live, attempting to accommodate religion and get believers on board with some of the issues of concern with them. This is encouraging delusional behavior. Whereas everyone has the right to believe whatever of their choosing, a collusion be-

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tween believers and non-believers would be possible only on a few scant issues, and not for some believers, they being fundamentalists, who are intolerant of all other belief and non-belief systems.

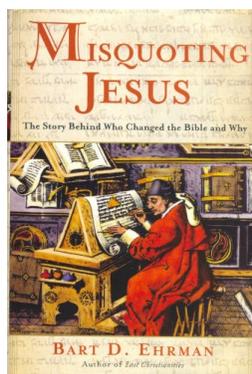
Why should behavior which is delusional and dangerous be encouraged? Constitutionally, much delusional belief and behavior, though not encouraged, is tolerated. Nonetheless, toleration should not be extended to accommodation. Enabling a delusion is immoral, and as detrimental to society as enabling a drunk, or drug addict. ♦

Atheist Book Corner

You will never look at the Bible quite the same way after you read Bart Ehrman's book Misquoting Jesus, subtitled "The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why".

This book details that the Bible that exists today is not the unaltered word of god that fundamentalists want you to believe it is. The Bible was assembled from manuscripts that were manually copied by scribes. This book describes the ways in which scribes altered the texts they were copying, whether it be by simple copyists errors or alterations purposely made to make the text support one theological idea or another.

One example is in the last chapter of the Book of Mark which tells of three women who visit Jesus' tomb on Easter. The oldest manuscripts end at verse 8, where the young man in the tomb tells the three women to go tell the disciples that Jesus has risen, but the women were afraid and told no one. That's it, end of story. Later manuscripts don't stop there but go on to say that Jesus appeared to the disciples and gave them the great commission to go preach the gospel to the whole world.



It seems that ending the story at verse 8 wasn't very satisfying to the later scribes so they decided to embellish the story.

Another example of alteration is in the story of the woman taken in adultery. This story, which appears in John 7:53-8:11, is not in the earliest texts, but was added later. It also appears in different places in later texts. A clear indication it was added and not original. It may be a great story of forgiveness, but it is not original to the text.

A third example is in 1 John 5:7-8, which is a passage that directly states the concept of the trinity, that god is 3-in-1. Nowhere else in the Bible is this stated so succinctly. This passage appears in the Latin Vulgate Bible but not in the earlier Greek texts, it was clearly added to support the Catholic doctrine of the trinity. The popular King James version of the Bible was based on the Latin Vulgate and thus this alteration to the original texts is in most Bibles in use today.

In all, Misquoting Jesus is a very enlightening book on how the Bible of today is not the same as the original manuscripts written so many centuries ago. ♦

Atheist Humor

How many atheists does it take to change a light bulb?

Two. One to actually change the bulb, and the other to videotape the job so fundamentalists won't claim that god did it. ♦

October Meeting

This month's meeting will be on Sunday the 17th at 10:00 AM at Barnes & Noble in Ontario. We will be discussing updates to the community service activities discussed in last month's meeting. Also, any members who haven't yet done so need to bring a list of books they wish to include in the group's lending library.

You don't have to be a member to come to the meeting. Anyone that is atheist friendly is welcome to attend. ♦

We're also on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/
midohioatheists](http://www.facebook.com/midohioatheists)