

Become a member of the Red River Freethinkers

All memberships to this 501(c)(3) organization are tax-deductible to the full extent as allowed by law.

Your contributions are the main source of income for this organization. Without your continued support, we would not be able to continue producing and distributing this newsletter.

Individual Membership	\$30/year
Family Membership	\$45/year
Student Membership	\$15/year
Newsletter only	\$10/year



Send dues, along with name, address, phone number, and email address to: Red River Freethinkers, P.O. Box 405 Fargo, ND 58107-0405.

Your membership dues to the Red River Freethinkers for 2010 have been paid.

You are not yet a member of the Red River Freethinkers for 2010.

NOTE: If you received a complimentary copy of this newsletter and would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact any of the RRF officers or send an email to info@redriverfreethinkers.org.

<http://www.redriverfreethinkers.org>

Articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of the Red River Freethinkers organization.

The mission of the Red River Freethinkers is to promote freethinking through education and activism

Red River Freethinkers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Family membership	\$45/year	Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter. Send name, address, phone number, email address and dues to Red River Freethinkers, P.O. Box 405, Fargo, ND 58107-0405.
Individual membership	\$30/year	
Student membership	\$15/year	
Newsletter only	\$10/year	

Newsletter contents Copyright 2010 © Red River Freethinkers. All rights reserved.



Red River Freethinkers
P.O. Box 405, Fargo,
ND 58107-0405

RED RIVER FREETHINKERS

President Jon Lindgren
701-232-7868
jon.lindgren@ndsu.edu

Treasurer Carol Sawicki
701-232-5676
csawicki@corpcomm.net

Secretary Lilie Schoenack
701-306-0630
lilieann@msn.com

Community Service Coordinator
Lew Lubka
701-232-2164
lubka@fargocity.com

Webmaster Eric Ashton
701-306-4130
webmaster@redriverfreethinkers.org

Publicity and Outreach Director
Mary Cochran
701-293-7188
olliesmaga@msn.com

Newsletter Jason Schoenack
701-306-0815
jschoena@hotmail.com

RED RIVER FREETHINKERS

THE RED RIVER RATIONALIST

ISSUE 134 MAY 2010

BOOK REVIEW: DISBELIEF 101

The author begins right away (well, after an introduction by Tom Flynn) by assuring young people who may be nervous reading such a book that he understands their fears. S. C. Hitchcock (writing under a pseudonym for the safety of his family) tells such readers that, if they take nothing else from the book, and if they are unable or unwilling to read anything else, to remember that there is no God. "Religion," he says, surely striking a nerve with everyone in his intended audience, "survives and is a huge force in the world because it relies on the indoctrination of children." It was this observation, Hitchcock noted in an interview, that drove him to write the book.

The book is divided into several brief chapters that build on each other, explaining the absurdity of believing in god(s). The book endeavors to shine light on the flaws of all religions, dwelling primarily on the three 'great' monotheisms.



Disbelief beautifully addresses concerns and fears a young person may have regarding casting aside faith. It even advises youths on how to deal with their rational thinking, should they happen to live in a household where dissenting opinions are forbidden. For example, Hitchcock spends three pages calming his readers & telling them it's okay to set such ideas aside until they are free of well-intentioned care-givers who would likely not understand.

Additionally, the book devotes a chapter to debunking a few of the tired objections to evolution, such as the arguments that things are too complex to have evolved, that life violates thermodynamics, and the particularly silly argument that it's "just a belief".

Sprinkled throughout are references to things young people will understand. *Disbelief* includes dialogues between fictitious people to help illuminate more difficult ideas. It is also replete with examples that pointedly, simply, and humorously demonstrate the absurdity of religion - and especially the damaging belief that one religion is superior to all others. And, should all of this still be too much for a young person to grasp, Illustrator Leslie White's fifteen drawings interspersed in the book drive home each major point in an unforgettable (and often hilarious) manner.

Before ending with a helpful bibliography, Hitchcock makes the argument that, while

physical abuse is not tolerated in this country, mental abuse gets a free ride: punch your kid in the face, he says, and the cops will come to your door. Tell them that god will burn them forever in hell if they don't accept Jesus into their heart, and everyone ap-

plauds your faith. Comparing religions to the marketing strategy of the fast-food industry, Hitchcock reiterates his original argument that if religions did not indoctrinate children, religion would cease to exist. That was a thought that even I - someone who left the teenage years behind quite a while ago - found stunning and insightful.

Do yourself a favor: buy a copy of this book. If you're too old to benefit from its arguments, give it as a gift to the young person in your life.

Visit www.disbelief101.com for more information, and to order the book. ■

James Zimmerman
St. Paul, MN

POINTS OF INTEREST

- The June Red River Freethinkers meeting will be a potluck held at the Rogne farm in Kindred, ND from 1:00pm-3:00pm on Sunday June 20. Directions to the Rogne farm are on the front page of the RRF website. The RRF website address is on the back page of this newsletter. Everyone is welcome!
- Every Saturday morning from 11-12pm on KNDS 96.3 FM in Fargo, catch Kent and Brian on "The Amplified Atheist".
- Check out the *Center for Inquiry* (CFI) podcast "Point of Inquiry" at pointofinquiry.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

BOOK REVIEW: DISBELIEF 101	1
INFORMATION UNDERLOAD	2
BECOME A MEMBER OF THE RED RIVER FREETHINKERS	4

