

Lies of Religious Literature written by Joseph McCabe published by Kessinger Publishing. Lowest price guaranteed on calendrierdelascience.com

The Deceitful Tactics of Apostates. According to the Watchtower, apostates speak half truths, twisted things, and even outright lies. Everything apostates say is thought to be worthless. Is it true that only the Watchtower has the truth and everyone else is wrong? Carefully read every sentence. Take your time and make sure everything is the truth. Do they have the truth? If so, what scriptures would you quote to support what they say? Look for false assumptions, half truths, twisted things, and a subtle distortion of reality. Do you notice any evidence of mind control, religious propaganda, or even outright lies in the following Watchtower quotes? Is the Watchtower spreading the truth? Is it true that the words of apostates are valueless? Is it true that we cannot worship God without the organization? Or do they simply disagree? Putting humans on the same level or above God is condemned in the Bible, is it not? Please show us where loyalty to the Watchtower can be found in the Bible. Apostates want to destroy the faith of the members of the congregation and want them to leave the truth. They do this in a very clever way. They explain Bible verses in the wrong way to make others believe their ideas. If we follow them, we will leave the road to everlasting life. Those who listen to them will be disappointed. We are determined to be loyal to Jehovah and to his organization. How can we avoid being misled by them? If any statements come to our ears that are critical of the truth or cast aspersions on the congregation, the elders, or any of our brothers, we do not accept them at face value. We ask, Is the one spreading this story acting in harmony with what the Bible says? Anything we hear that tears down the brotherhood rather builds it up is a worthless thing. Watchtower April 15, , pages 3 - 7 Article: Indeed, no matter what apostates may say to the contrary, the real aim of intruders is to steal, and slay and destroy. For example, what will you do if you receive a letter or some literature, open it, and see right away that it is from an apostate? Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what he has to say? You may even reason: And, besides, if we have the truth, we have nothing to fear. The truth will stand the test. The truth will set you free from false beliefs, negativity, stress, anger, depression, fear, guilt, religious domination, manipulation, and control. The truth is the truth. The truth sets us free. Lies keep us in bondage. Consider all viewpoints and know the truth. What is the truth and what are lies? Who is spreading these lies? Does God authorize an organization to speak on his behalf? Who are the true enemies of God? This has been doctrine of the Witnesses since Watchtower Jan 15, , Article: Everyone else does not have God. You know that God loves you just as much as someone who belongs to the Watchtower organization. Everyone is tempted by Satan. All people, - regardless of which religion they belong to are imperfect, - even members of the Watchtower organization. The teachings of the Watchtower are not any more truthful than the teachings of the Catholics, Lutherans, Mormons, Pentecostals, Muslims, Hindus, Why are they told that there are only two organizations? Critics say that a steady diet of religious propaganda and false assumptions every single day for years and years is a powerful tool. Watchtower wordology and terminology compels readers to obey their every word. Do Religious Beliefs Harm Anyone? Do innocent looking religious beliefs harm anyone? Families and close friendships are destroyed when someone leaves the organization. A JW cannot see any other possibilities. This prevents them from accepting beliefs, spiritual viewpoints, and convincing factual evidence that is presented by anyone outside the organization. We know this is true when we look at their baptismal vows. Should I Get Baptized? Theocratic War Is it true that the entire world is controlled by Satan? What Does The Bible Say?

Chapter 2 : The Sacred Lies of Minnow Bly by Stephanie Oakes

*Lies Of Religious Literature [Joseph McCabe] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the original.*

This book seems to have appeared out of nowhere. From the very opening line of "I am a blood-soaked girl" , I had a feeling that this was going to be one of those books that sucks me in completely. Growing up, I believed in miracles. Not only am I fascinated about the subject matter, but this happens to be one of the most moving, painful and well-written books about a religious cult, existing outside the rules and laws of society as we know it. I think this novel is so well-balanced by many fantastic things. It offers us a horrifying portrait of life inside the "Community". I want to tell him that these are the people who lashed their children with switches thick as forearms when the Prophet commanded, married their daughters off at sixteen to men generations older. These are the people who beat Jude until there was nothing left but a mess of blood and bone. They had to cover him in a sheet because it made the women sick to look at. Almost all books about religious cults are disturbing, shocking, even gory sometimes, but *The Sacred Lies of Minnow Bly* is much more powerful because of everything else it does. For one, it is extremely well-written and atmospheric. The author uses a combination of horrific and beautiful imagery to paint each scene in our minds. For another thing, Minnow Bly - having escaped the Community - muses on the notion of religion, freedom of choice, and the reality of justice, in between recounting her tale of the time she spent under the rule of the Prophet. The book raises questions that made me stop and think for a while - I love it when a book can do that. The story starts in the present where Minnow is being sent to juvenile detention for assault. We know a few things: Who killed him is a mystery; the details of how she lost her hands are also a mystery. But it also contains moments of humour, lightness and friendship between Minnow and the other girls in juvenile detention - especially the hilarious Angel. As I said, it balances so many things and, I personally think, it leaves us with a lingering and unsettling message - not about religious cults, but about the way in which our laws can punish victims. It really affected me and I hope you read it too.

THE MISUNDERSTOOD GOD tells the truth about who the Creator is. This book analyzes what religion says about God's heart and personality and measures it up to what God calls Himself: Love. It simplifies a generation's tangled perceptions of God by taking a journey through the sixteen aspects of love.

I am certain she now better understands me and that is a comfort. She was exhausted by all she knew and all she had forgotten. It is in these spaces in between busy that the sneaker wave catches me and knocks me slightly sideways. Like those the first glimpses of faith we are bewildered, but still we came out trusting, having been already washed while anchored deep within the gated waters. Though it took the shadow of death for her to see the depths of her participation, she only perceived a fraction of its scope while in this world. One solitary flare burst from the earth and arcs into the darkness. Those with eyes to see are captured by its presence, entranced with expectancy and eager for the outcome. And it is always a surprise. So often we think of ourselves as only the solitary flare, rising upward from the earth trying to break free from the gravity of earth. We are so aware of the broken parts that we have little hope for outcomes. And that lonely flare dies just before it explodes in light and color, forming quickly shifting and free-falling wonder for those with eyes to see. I think my mum now has those eyes and looks upon her own life in ways to which she was blind while here. Paul Young And so we gaze upon the lynchpin, the fulcrum and the crux of the cosmos, that we have killed Ourselves in self-destructive rage, trying to blot out the memory or Our self-consuming shame, to kill Our Life that fought against Our tenacious embrace of death—only to discover that even here We are loved completely, to the same relentless depth that We have always been. It is eerie to walk past the killing house, the building in which the executions take place. Here all the modern equipment is ready to resuscitate the doomed man whose heart might stop prematurely. The State wants to have the satisfaction of wielding the sword and not be thwarted by some stress-induced trauma and heart attack. Also, in that building are the poisons and protocol; a procedure that even includes the ritualistic sterilization of the needles. We meet in the library. I along with my friends, Wes, and Joe, gather with a dozen men who live here in Unit 2-A, also waiting. I think that Jesus sends us to those in prison not for their sake but for ours. Their prison is obvious, and while they cannot leave it we often cannot even see our own places of incarceration. We need their clarity, but instead we hide them away, out of sight and out of mind, giving them little voice with which to speak to us, or help us. So, Jesus sends us to them. For three hours we are together face-to-face, a handful of brothers who deeply love Jesus and each other. Three of us have actual execution dates, and without a miracle of human kindness their days are indeed numbered. Some, like my friend Terry King, has been on Death Row for 34 years, waiting since he was in his early twenties. He is one of the freest human beings I have ever met. Should we turn a blind eye to injustice, to betrayal, to murder, to abuse? That is exactly the point. There should be no blind eyes. And yet human justice stands with eyes covered, blind. With such blindness, we lose sight of our humanity. The restorative justice of God requires eyes that see, not only the victim, but also the human being who is the perpetrator. True just-love must see everyone. It must take all into account; the perpetrator, the victim, the community, everyone, and seek to restore the broken hearts of every participant and group. You cannot sever justice from love. If you do, not matter how you coat it with moral or religious language, it is masked vengeance enacted to appease the fury of our anger against death, and we will take it out on those whom God also loves. Perhaps we have mixed intentions? We desire healing for the victim while knowing in our heart of hearts that we have no power to accomplish such a miracle, so we perpetuate the myth that somehow vengeance is healing and restorative. We also know that only love and relationship can heal broken hearts. So, we resort to age-old ways of attempting to restore through sacrifice; the killing of something living to fight what death has perpetrated. We preach that this is how we balance the scales of justice; that through death we will heal what death has done. How twisted is this? Is that not why Cain kills Abel, because he feels the slight of what he has perceived to be unfair? Is this the best that the world systems have to offer? Justice, bereft of love, is only vengeance. If our understanding of justice requires that we put to death a human being in order to achieve it, we have sold ourselves a lie; that death can heal, that death can

restore, that death can right a wrong. Only life and love have the power to do any of this. Can punishment, regardless of the amount or its severity, change or untwist the wrong into, right? Can punishment change and heal the brokenness in me that wanted to do evil in the first place? What makes this more pernicious, is that many who profess to be lovers and followers of Jesus participate in the perpetration of vengeance on behalf of the State, with the blessing of Religion. Again, neither has any efficacy to heal or restore. Step aside and we will crucify him. God becomes fully what we are in order to, as us, absorb our diabolical thirst for vengeance, our twisted and perverted sense of justice, and by becoming our scapegoat and sacrifice, destroy the power and false promises of death. This is so we might learn to live with resurrection life, so we would never need to kill another human being again. Prisons ought not be places of retributive vengeance, but places that create boundaries and discipline for the purpose and intention of healing and restoration. Reconciliation and rehabilitation in the best sense. Every judge and lawyer ought always to have in their hearts and actions the desire to bring healing to every person and situation they serve and protect, not simply be enforcers of State or Religious law. And again, here is the exposure and why Death Row becomes an expression of back-handed grace; these men love each other, love God and love humanity. God did this miracle of restoration in spite of human justice. What has happened in their hearts and in the hearts of many of their victims, is true justice. It is firm-handed love that seeks the wholeness of all involved. It requires forgiveness, confession, repentance, the owning of both the wrongs and the self-righteous judgments. In our punitive vengeance, have we also not become perpetrators ourselves. Who among is without sin and has the right to cast the first stone? If Jesus refuses, where does that leave us? Jesus lives in them, and the State with the support of Religion will crucify him again, and again, and again. For three hours we told stories, cried, hugged and finally stood in a circle, holding hands. The men pray, profound prayers of trust and hope and forgiveness and kind blessing for those who have chosen to be their enemies. Our hearts breaks, and in response our eyes leak as Abu, an elderly dignified man who has travelled the road from mental illness, to Islam, to Jesus, lifts up his powerful voice embedded with the resonance of a life of loss and love, and slowly sings our common language:

Chapter 4 : Are you an educated religious fool? Bible lies exposed! | calendrierdelascience.com

In religious symbolism and iconography: Relation to the literary and visual arts or similar to those of language (metaphors) and to pictorial expressions in prose and poetry. They are related in allegory, parable, fairy tales, fables, and legends in which they can appear in a form that is closely related to that of religious symbolism.

This one goes out to all Bible huggers and religious zombies: The total fools can be forgiven when they say that the bible has no mistakes in it; because they are total fools. The uneducated fools have a good excuse when they believe that the bible contains no contradictions; because they are uneducated fools. The Idiots have a good excuse for preaching that the bible contains no inconsistencies; because they are idiots. The buffoon has every right to proclaim that the bible is the most perfect book ever written; because he is a buffoon. The imbeciles cannot help themselves when they say that bible science is exact science; because they are imbeciles. Bible is not a book to tell you about your history or truth about life. The real truth is out there, all around you. However, the bible is useful for telling fairy tales. Concerning Bible science, see the following verses: I the LORD does all these things. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: This is a lie! David killed charioteers: But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host. And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. Solomon only had 4, stalls of horses. And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem. And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: It was says 1Chron. David also houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them an hundred chariots. This things were created to instill fear in Christians and control their actions. Neither is there any God in some imaginary heaven above the clouds. Heaven and hell are right here on Earth, everyday. Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. These are the birds you are to detest and not eat because they are detestable: Like a slug melting away as it moves along, like a stillborn child, may they not see the sun. The above points are just a few of the hundreds of obvious contradictions, inconsistencies, mistakes, faults and absurdities that can be found in the book called the bible. So I ask you again after reading and reasoning out the above points, how can any educated, intelligent, or enlightened human-being living in the twenty-first century still articulate that the bible has no contradiction, no inconsistencies, no mistakes, and no absurdities, that it is the most perfect book ever written? If you believe that you are an educated, intelligent, and an enlightened person and you still assert that the bible is the most perfect book ever written and contains no mistakes, no faults, no contradictions, no myths, no inconsistencies etc.

Chapter 5 : The real danger of religious lies - CNN

The lies are often spread by powerful people, not angry mobs. And they are almost impossible to eradicate.

Prepare to be enlightened. Jesus "The Imaginary Friend Christianity was the ultimate product of religious syncretism in the ancient world. Its emergence owed nothing to a holy carpenter. There were many Jesuses but the fable was a cultural construct. The nativity yarn is a concatenation of nonsense. With multiple authors behind the original gospel story it is no surprise that the figure of "Jesus" is a mess of contradictions. Yet the story is so thinly drawn that being a "good Christian" might mean almost anything. The 12 disciples are as fictitious as their master, invented to legitimise the claims of the early churches. The original Mary was not a virgin, that idea was borrowed from pagan goddesses. The pagan world knew all about virgins getting pregnant by randy gods: The Mythical "Virgin Mother". Scholars have known all this for more than years but priestcraft is a highly profitable business and finances an industry of deceit to keep the show on the road. Unlike the mythical Jesus, a real historical figure like Julius Caesar has a mass of mutually supporting evidence. The case for a mythical Jesus "Nailing Jesus. Ehrman - Did Jesus Exist? Popular scholar recoils from the abyss. A rescue mission for the "Jesus of history" "The New Apologists Still holding to the idea that some sort of holy man lies behind the legend? Better check out Godman "Gestation of a Superhero It is intuitively satisfying to think that someone was behind the towering legend. Yet like the worship of Horus or Mithras a human life was neither necessary nor helpful. As it happens, we have an excellent witness to events in Judaea in the first half of the first century AD: Philo of Alexandria c. Yet Philo says not a word about Jesus or Christianity! Brotherly love and compassion had been taught by the Stoics for centuries. The Christian faith was a vulgarised paganism, set to the theme of the Jewish prophets and debased by religious intolerance. The early Christian sects attacked each other as energetically as they attacked pagans. The final defeat of militant Jewish nationalism and the eradication of the Jewish kingdom gave the incipient Christian churches the final uplift they required. A closer look at the glib assertion that the Jesus story "got off the ground quickly and spread rapidly. There never was just one Christianity. Only later did he acquire a human death, a human life and finally a human birth. In the mid-2nd century the Jewishness of the faith was purged but apologists had little to say about a human Jesus. They took comfort in noting similarities between their own ideas and pagan myths. The Christians remained a minority until well after one particular faction formed a political alliance with the Roman State. The orthodox creed remained unpopular for centuries and persecution of its critics was necessary to impose its will. Sourcing the legend "The Syncretic Heritage of Christianity Through the centuries, the Christian godman has been made and remade. Egypt provided many of the themes and much of the detail. From the age of the Ptolemies, Alexandria was the ancient cooking pot of religious fusion. Here, Hellenised Judaism influenced the early Christians. From Egypt, Catholicism copied its rituals and ceremonies, including relics, demonology, and monasticism. The Patriarchs of Alexandria wrote much of Catholic theology and it was probably in Alexandria that a profound and detailed Buddhist influence impressed itself upon the faith. From Persia, too, came a Saviour God and notions of rebirth, a Mithraic dress rehearsal for Christianity, triumphant in Rome but fatally weakened by its exclusion of women. In Judaea itself, hatred for the Roman conquerors bred a genre of apocalyptic curses, anticipating an end of the world. Much of the mythology of Christianity is a rehash of an older and even more transparent fabrication "Judaism. Yahweh, the god fashioned by the Jews, was a brutal tyrant, a being with a humanoid personality and a disturbing blood-lust. Say hello to G-D! The sacred mission was to populate and subdue the earth. Judaism bequeathed its unfortunate mix of ignorance and intolerance to a wayward faction of heretics known to the world as Christians. Jerusalem in 10th century BC had been barely a village of huts and cave dwellings. Temples on the Mount? From "Threshing Floor" to "Noble Sanctuary". Persians and Greeks bearing gifts. He was an astute and successful ruler. The Herodians and the Jewish elite became Romanised but religious fanatics led an armed resistance which ended in catastrophes under Titus, Trajan, and Hadrian. In the aftermath, a collaborationist revision of Judaism, later attributed to a 13th apostle "Paul", allegedly of impeccable Pharisaic credentials, competed fiercely with a reconstituted rabbinic Judaism which fused piety

with mercantile success.

Chapter 6 : Bokononism - Wikipedia

The Christian right is most known for their denial of inconvenient science, but in many respects, they're just as bad when it comes to the facts of history.

Either the universe had a beginning or it did not. If it did, either that beginning was caused or it was not caused. If it was caused, either the cause was personal or it was impersonal. Based on these dilemmas, the argument can be put in the following logical form: Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its existence. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe has some kind of cause of its existence. The cause of the universe is either an impersonal cause or a personal one. The cause of the universe is not impersonal. Therefore, the cause of the universe is a personal one, which we call God. This version of the cosmological argument was bolstered by work in astrophysics and cosmology in the late twentieth century. On one interpretation of the standard Big Bang cosmological model, the time-space universe sprang into existence ex nihilo approximately 13.8 billion years ago. Such a beginning is best explained, argue kalam defenders, by a non-temporal, non-spatial, personal, transcendent cause—namely God. The claim that the universe began to exist is also argued philosophically in at least two ways. First, it is argued that an actual infinite set of events cannot exist, for actual infinities lead to metaphysical absurdities. Since an infinite temporal regress of events is an actual infinite set of events, such a regress is metaphysically impossible. So the past cannot be infinite; the universe must have had a temporal beginning. A second approach begins by arguing that an infinite series of events cannot be formed by successive addition one member being added to another. The reason why is that, when adding finite numbers one after the other, the set of numbers will always be finite. The addition of yet another finite number, ad infinitum, will never lead to an actual infinite. Since the past is a series of temporal events formed by successive addition, the past could not be actually infinite in duration. Nor will the future be so. The universe must have had a beginning. Many objections have been raised against the kalam argument, both scientific and philosophical, including that there are other cosmological models of the universe besides the Big Bang in which the universe is understood to be eternal, such as various multi-verse theories. Philosophical rebuttals marshaled against the kalam argument include the utilization of set theory and mathematical systems which employ actual infinite sets. Teleological Arguments Teleological arguments in the East go back as far as C. In the West, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics offered arguments for a directing intelligence of the world given the order found within it. There is an assortment of teleological arguments, but a common theme among them is the claim that certain characteristics of the natural world reflect design, purpose, and intelligence. These features of the natural world are then used as evidence for an intelligent, intentional designer of the world. The teleological argument has been articulated and defended at various times and places throughout history, but its zenith was in the early nineteenth century with perhaps its most ardent defender: In his book, *Natural Theology*, Paley offers an argument from analogy: Artifacts such as a watch, with their means to ends configurations, are the products of human design. The works of nature, such as the human hand, resemble artifacts. Thus the works of nature are probably the products of design. Furthermore, the works of nature are much more in number and far greater in complexity. Therefore, the works of nature were probably the products of a grand designer—one much more powerful and intelligent than a human designer. Those offered by David Hume—in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* are often taken to be archetype refutations of traditional design arguments. Among them are that the analogy between the works of nature and human artifacts is not particularly strong; that even if we could infer a grand designer of the universe, this designer turns out to be something less than the God of the theistic religions especially given the great amount of evil in the world; and that just because a universe has the appearance of design, it does not follow that it is in fact designed; such an event could have occurred through natural, chance events. A more recent version of the design argument is based on the apparent fine-tuning of the cosmos. Fine-tuning arguments, whose current leading defender is Robin Collins, include the claims that the laws of nature, the constants of physics, and the initial conditions of the universe are finely tuned for conscious life. Consider the following three: While each of the individual calculations of such constants may not be fully accurate, it is argued that the significant

number of them, coupled with their independence from one other, provides evidence of their being intentionally established with conscious life in mind. Objections to fine-tuning arguments are multifarious. According to an anthropic principle objection, if the laws of nature and physical constants would have varied to any significant degree, there would be no conscious observers such as ourselves. Given that such observers do exist, it should not be surprising that the laws and constants are just as they are. One way of accounting for such observers is the many-worlds hypothesis. In this view, there exist a large number of universes, perhaps an infinite number of them. Most of these universes include life-prohibiting parameters, but at least a minimal number of them would probably include life-permitting ones. It should not be surprising that one of them, ours, for example, is life-permitting. Much of the current fine-tuning discussion turns on the plausibility of the many-worlds hypothesis and the anthropic principle. There are other versions of the teleological argument that have also been proposed which focus not on fundamental parameters of the cosmos but on different aspects of living organisms—“including their emergence, alleged irreducibly complex systems within living organisms, information intrinsic within DNA, and the rise of consciousness”—in an attempt to demonstrate intelligent, intentional qualities in the world. If successful, the cosmological argument only provides evidence for a transcendent first cause of the universe, nothing more; at best, the teleological argument provides evidence for a purposive, rational designer of the universe, nothing more; and so on. Natural theologians maintain, however, that the central aim of these arguments is not to offer full-blown proofs of any particular deity, but rather to provide evidence or warrant for belief in a grand designer, or creator, or moral lawgiver. Some natural theologians argue that it is best to combine the various arguments in order to provide a cumulative case for a broad form of theism. Taken together, these natural theologians argue, the classical arguments offer a picture of a deity not unlike the God of the theistic religious traditions and even if this approach does not prove the existence of any particular deity, it does nonetheless lend support to theism over naturalism which, as used here, is the view that natural entities have only natural causes, and that the world is fully describable by the physical sciences. Along with arguments for the existence of God, there are also a number of reasons one might have for denying the existence of God. If the burden is on the theist to provide highly convincing evidences or reasons that would warrant his or her believing that God exists, in the absence of such evidences and reasons disbelief is justified. Another reason one might have for not believing that God exists is that science conflicts with theistic beliefs and, given the great success of the scientific enterprise, it should have the last word on the matter. Since science has regularly rebuffed religious claims in the past, we should expect the claims of religion to eventually become extinct. A third possible reason for denying the existence of God is that the very concept of God is incoherent. And a fourth reason one might have is that the existence of God conflicts with various features of the natural world, such as evil, pain, and suffering. The Challenge of Science Over the last several hundred years there has been tremendous growth in scientific understanding of the world in such fields as biology, astronomy, physics, and geology. These advances have had considerable influence on religious belief. When religious texts, such as the Bible, have been in conflict with science, the latter has generally been the winner in the debate ; religious beliefs have commonly given way to the power of the scientific method. It has seemed to some that modern science will be able to explain all of the fundamental questions of life with no remainder. Given the advances of science and the retreat of religious beliefs, many in the latter half of the twentieth century agreed with the general Freudian view that a new era was on the horizon in which the infantile illusions, or perhaps delusions, of religion would soon go the way of the ancient Greek and Roman gods. With the onset of the twenty-first century, however, a new narrative has emerged. Religion has not fallen into oblivion, as many anticipated; in fact, religious belief is on the rise. Many factors account for this, including challenges to psychological and sociological theories which hold belief in God to be pathological or neurotic. In recent decades these theories have themselves been challenged by medical and psychological research, being understood by many to be theories designed primarily to destroy belief in God. Another important factor is the increase in the number of believing and outspoken scientists, such as Francis Collins, the director of the human genome project. But despite this orchestrated opposition arguing the falsity and incoherence of theism, it has proved rather resilient. Indeed, the twenty-first century is reflecting a renewed interest in philosophical theism. The Coherence of Theism Philosophical challenges to theism have

also included the claim that the very concept of God makes no sense—that the attributes ascribed to God are logically incoherent either individually or collectively. There are first-rate philosophers today who argue that theism is coherent and others of equal stature who argue that theism is incoherent. Much of the criticism of the concept of theism has focused on God as understood in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but it is also relevant to the theistic elements found within Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and certain forms of African and Native American religions. The question of whether theism is coherent is an important one, for if there is reason to believe that theism is incoherent, theistic belief is in an important sense undermined. The logical consistency of each of the divine attributes of classical theism has been challenged by both adherents and non-adherents of theism. Consider the divine attribute of omniscience. If God knows what you will freely do tomorrow, then it is the case now that you will indeed do that tomorrow. But how can you be free not to do that thing tomorrow if it is true now that you will in fact freely do that thing tomorrow? There is a vast array of replies to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that omniscience is incompatible with future free action and that, since there is future free action, God—if God exists—is not omniscient. Another objection to the coherence of theism has to do with the divine attribute of omnipotence and is referred to as the stone paradox. An omnipotent being, as traditionally understood, is a being who can bring about anything. So, an omnipotent being could create a stone that was too heavy for such a being to lift. But if he could not lift the stone, he would not be omnipotent, and if he could not make such a stone, he would not be omnipotent. Hence, no such being exists. A number of replies have been offered to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that the notion of omnipotence as traditionally defined is incoherent and must be redefined if the concept of God is to remain a plausible one. Arguments for the incoherence of theism have been offered for each of the divine attributes. While there have been many challenges to the classical attributes of God, there are also contemporary philosophers and theologians who have defended each of them as traditionally understood. There is much lively discussion currently underway by those defending both the classical and neo-classical views of God. But not all theistic philosophers and theologians have believed that the truths of religious beliefs can be or even should be demonstrated or rationally justified. Problems of Evil and Suffering

a. Logical Problems Perhaps the most compelling and noteworthy argument against theism is what is referred to as the problem of evil. Philosophers of the East and the West have long recognized that difficulties arise for one who affirms both the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God and the reality of evil. David Hume, quoting the ancient Greek thinker Epicurus —

B. Is he [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Is he able, but not willing? Is he both able and willing?

Are you an educated religious fool? If you're a Jesus Christ follower, your answer to this mind-opening question is bound to be biased and that can be linked to mental religious slavery, which results to deterioration and the victim may not even realize it.

May 04, Angela Wu is currently reading it Before you read this. I love the message of Grace, in fact I wish there was more throughout this book. I guess you can call this suggestions. He makes a lot of absolute statements as well as thoughtless connections that may be interpreted the wrong way. The danger is if or when things are interpreted the wrong way. For ex he writes "A true relationship with God is impossible unless we love people". All things are possible through Him who gives me strength. Also, what does that mean for people who have autism, who are asocial and cringe at any sort of human contact. Jesus says in John 15 "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: Yes, Love one another. Of course you can love God by loving others. It seems like he tries to force analogies. Some of them directly contradict what he says. Then he compares it to God saying, "God does not expose your sin, he covers it". But the whole message of grace is that he has forgotten it. He continues to say "Do not fear that God will ever humiliate you in order to humble you or teach you a lesson. Exposing an unfinished person is rude. He is great at keeping things just between you and Him. You are His masterpiece, and He will protect you and cover you until you are complete" This points to God never condemning us. But here he suggests that we are incomplete. The next page he says, "Though you are a work in progress, He has already declared you completed! Ok, then why did say that we are unfinished, then say we are complete. However, according to his previous analogy, because we are complete, God will expose us? Take out the analogy. I wish he would directly talk about grace. But this is certainly a great starter book to share with people who have false perceptions of God.

Chapter 8 : Category:Religious literature - Wikipedia

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The divine truth was at times revealed to the mystic in visions, auditions, and dreams, in colours and sounds, but to convey these nonrational and ineffable experiences to others the mystic had to rely upon such terminology of worldly experience as that of symbols. The nature of religious symbols and symbolization The word symbol comes from the Greek symbolon, which means contract, token, insignia, and a means of identification. Parties to a contract, allies, guests, and their host could identify each other with the help of the parts of the symbolon. In its original meaning the symbol represented and communicated a coherent greater whole by means of a part. The part, as a sort of certificate, guaranteed the presence of the whole and, as a concise meaningful formula, indicated the larger context. The symbol is based, therefore, on the principle of complementation. The symbol object, picture, sign, word, and gesture require the association of certain conscious ideas in order to fully express what is meant by them. To this extent it has both an esoteric and an exoteric, or a veiling and a revealing, function. The discovery of its meaning presupposes a certain amount of active cooperation. As a rule, it is based on the convention of a group that agrees upon its meaning. Concepts of symbolization In the historical development and present use of the concepts of symbolization, a variety of categories and relationships must necessarily be differentiated. Rational, scientific-technical symbols have assumed an ever increasing importance in modern science and technology. They serve partly to codify and partly to indicate, abbreviate, and make intelligible the various mathematical e. It functions in a manner similar to that of the religious symbol by associating a particular meaning with a particular sign. The rationalization of symbols and symbolical complexes as well as the rationalization of myth have been in evidence at least since the Renaissance. Sailko The concept of the religious symbol also embraces an abundantly wide variety of types and meanings. Allegory , personifications, figures, analogies , metaphors , parables, pictures or, more exactly, pictorial representations of ideas , signs, emblems as individually conceived, artificial symbols with an added verbal meaning, and attributes as a mark used to distinguish certain persons all are formal, historical, literary, and artificial categories of the symbolical. The symbol religious and other is intended primarily for the circle of the initiated and involves the acknowledgment of the experience that it expresses. The symbol is not, however, kept hidden in meaning; to some extent, it even has a revelatory character i. It indicates the need for communication and yet conceals the details and innermost aspects of its contents. Varieties and meanings associated with the term symbol Different forms and levels of the experience of and relationship to reality both sacred and profane are linked with the concepts of symbol, sign , and picture. The function of the symbol is to represent a reality or a truth and to reveal them either instantaneously or gradually. The relationship of the symbol to a reality is conceived of as somewhat direct and intimate and also as somewhat indirect and distant. The symbol is sometimes identified with the reality that it represents and sometimes regarded as a pure transparency of it. The doctrine of the eucharistic sacramental presence of Christ in the teachings of Eastern Orthodoxy , Roman Catholicism , and the Protestant Reformers concretely demonstrate the various and extensive levels of symbolical understandings. The concept of the symbol, however, includes all these interpretations. Archivo Mas, Barcelona Furthermore, a symbol in its intermediary function has aspects of epistemology theory of knowing and ontology theory of being. As a means of knowledge, it operates in a characteristically dialectical process of veiling and revealing truths. It fulfills an interpretative function in the process of effectively apprehending and comprehending religious experience. In doing so, the word, or symbol with its meaning, contextual use, relationship to other types of religious expression, and interpretative connection with the various forms of sign, picture, gesture, and sound plays an important part in the process of symbolical perception and reflection. Although the symbol is an abbreviation, as a means of communication it brings about through its connection with the object of religion and with the world of the transcendent not only an interpretative knowledge of the world and a conferral or comparison of meaning to life but also a means of access to the sacred reality. It may possibly

even lead to a fusion, or union of some sort, with the divine. Here, the concept of analogy is important; the symbol functions in these ways because it has an analogous cognitional as well as existential relationship to that which it signifies. The symbolic process To trace the origin, development, and differentiation of a symbol is a complicated process. Almost every symbol and picture in religion is at first either directly or indirectly connected with the sense impressions and objects of the human environment. Many are derived from the objects of nature, and others are artificially constructed in a process of intuitive perception, emotional experience, or rational reflection. In most cases, the constructions are again related to objects in the world of sense perception. A tendency toward simplification, abbreviation into signs, and abstraction from sense objects is quite evident, as well as a tendency to concentrate several processes into a single symbol. A good example of this last tendency may be seen in ancient Christian portrayals of the triumphant cross before a background of a star-filled heaven that appear in the apses of many basilican churches. In these representations the Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, exaltation, and Transfiguration of Christ are joined to apocalyptic concepts centring on sudden interventions by God into history inherent in the doctrine of the Last Judgment. An excellent example of such an apse mosaic is to be found in the S. Apollinare in Classe, near Ravenna in Italy. On the other hand, there is a tendency to accumulate, combine, multiply, and differentiate symbolical statements for the same thought or circumstance, as seen, for example, on the sarcophagi stone coffins of late Christian antiquity—especially in Ravenna. Here, the same idea is symbolically expressed in various manners. The forms and figures of symbolical thought can change into exaggerations and rank growths, however, and lead to transformations and hybrids—figures with several heads, faces, or hands—as exemplified in the statues and pictorial representations of the deities of India. The meaning of individual symbols can change and even be perverted. The lamb that in ancient Christian art symbolizes Christ may also symbolize the Apostles or humankind in general. The dove may symbolize the Holy Spirit or the human soul. The wheel or circle can symbolize the universe, the sun, or even the underworld. The encyclopaedic Christian allegorism symbolism of the Middle Ages offers many interesting examples, as noted in the writings of St. Isidore of Sevilla, a 6th- to 7th-century Spanish theologian, and Rabanus Maurus, a 9th-century German abbot and encyclopaedist. Chandra The foundations of the symbolization process lie in the areas of the conscious and the unconscious, of experience and thought, and of sense perception, intuition, and imagination. From these arises the structure of religious symbolism. Sensation and physiological and psychological processes participate in the formation of the symbol structure. Extraordinary religious experiences and conditions, visions, ecstasy, and religious delirium brought about by intoxication, hallucinogenics, or drugs that produce euphoria and changes in consciousness must also be taken into consideration. The symbol itself, however, is intended as an objective concentration of experiences of the transcendent world and not as a subjective construction of a personally creative process. In cultic and mystical visions and trances, the forms and processes of the external world and of the religious tradition are condensed and combined with mythical images and historical events and take on a life of their own. The process of rational conceptualization and structuralization, however, also plays a part in the origin and development of many symbols. There is a correlation between sense perception, imagination, and the work of the intellect. Symbols in the religious consciousness The formation of religious symbols that occur when unconscious ideas are aroused or when a process of consciousness occurs is principally a matter of religious experience. Such symbols usually become intellectual acquisitions, and, as religious concepts are further elaborated upon, the symbols may even finally become subjects of major theological questions. In Christian theology, for example, summaries of dogmatic statements of faith are called symbols. This particular use of the term symbol is exceptional, however. In the development of the symbol, religious experience, understanding, and logic are all connected, but each places different accents on the individual categories and species of symbol. Occasionally, religion is regarded as the origin and the product of certain established or fundamental symbols. In such cases the outcome of the process of the structuralization of religious consciousness would then be the establishment of a symbol that is generally applicable to a particular historical species of religion. Conversely, one could ask whether the experience and establishment of an individual or collective symbol by a creative personality or a community is not itself the establishment of a religion. If so, the classical symbol that was developed at the

time of the foundation of any one particular religion would then be constitutive for its origin and further development e. It plays a fundamental and continual part in the further growing of such religions and in the mental horizons of their followers. The relation of the symbol and the sacred Symbols as the incarnate presence of the sacred or holy Whatever the experience of reality that lies behind the religious symbol may be, it is above all the experience of the sacred or holy, which belongs essentially to any concept of religion. The historical study of religions has shown that it is fundamentally the symbol that mediates and forms for the religious consciousness the reality and the claim of the holy. Religion is a system of relationships, a system of reciprocal challenges and responses, the principal correspondents of which are the sacred or holy and humanity. Though there are many forms of experience in which the sacred or holy is distinctly known and felt, the experience is often acquired in worship , in which this system of relationships is realized and continually renewed and in which the sacred or holy supposedly makes itself present. The details of worship serve to objectify and regulate in a perceptual and material manner the presupposed presence of the sacred or holy, of which the symbol and the picture are intended to be its materialization. In its material manifestation the sacred or holy is adapted to the perceptual and conceptual faculties of human beings. Viewed from the aspect of its holiness, the symbol originates in a process of mediation and revelation , and every encounter with it is supposed to bring about a renewed actualization and a continual remembrance of this revelation. The actualization of the presence of the holy by means of symbolic representation can, in extreme cases, lead to an identification of the physical manifestations with the spiritual power symbolized in them. The symbol, or at least an aspect of it, is then viewed as the incarnated presence of the holy. The sacred stone, animal, plant, and drum and the totem symbol or the picture of ancestors all represent the sacred or holy and guarantee its presence and efficacy. The origin of many such symbols clearly indicates the identity that was presumed to have existed between the symbol and the sacred or holy. The Greek god Dionysus as a bull, the Greek goddess Demeter as an ear of corn, the Roman god Jupiter as a stone, the Syrian god Tammuz-Adonis as a plant, and the Egyptian god Horus as a falcon all are viewed as manifestations of the deities that were originally identified with these respective objects of nature. Symbols as indicators of the sacred or holy The symbol is understood to have a referential character. It refers to the reality of the sacred or holy that is somewhat and somehow present. When the symbol is an indicator of the sacred or holy, a certain distance exists between them, and there is no claim that the two are identical. Short of actual identification, various degrees of intensity exist between the symbol and the spiritual reality of the sacred or holy. The symbol is a transparency, a signal, and a sign leading to the sacred or holy. Symbols of sacred time and space The symbolical forms of representation of the sacred or holy are to be understood as references to or transparencies of the sacred or holy. The sacred manifests itself in time and space, so that time and space themselves become diaphanous indications of the holy. The holy placeâ€”a shrine, forest grove, temple, church, or other area of worshipâ€”is symbolically marked off as a sacred area. The signs, such as a stake, post, or pillar, that delimit the area themselves are endowed with sacred symbolic meanings, which often can be noted by their particular designs. The ground plan of the sacred building and its orientation, walls, roof, and arches are all utilized to symbolize the sacred or holy. Prehistoric places of worshipâ€”e. Sacred places are often pictorial reflections of the universe and its design and partake of its holiness. In many instances shoes may not be worn on holy ground e. Time as a transparent symbol of the sacred may be represented by means of the cycle of the sacred year and its high pointsâ€”e. Or the lapse of time may be represented in signs and pictures. Time itself, its course, division, and fixed points, is both an allusion and the bearer and mediator of the sacred or holy. Collection of The Newark Museum, purchase Ceremonial and ritualistic objects as indicators or bearers of the sacred or holy Liturgical and ceremonial objects can also indicate or lead to the sacred or holy. Not only holy pictures and symbols e. Liturgical vestments and masks are intended to transform the wearer, to remove him from the realm of the this-worldly, and to adapt him to the sphere of the sacred or holy; they help him to come into contact with the divineâ€”for example, by obscuring his sexual characteristics.

Chapter 9 : Welcome to Enlightenment! – Religion: the Tragedy of Mankind. Articles by Kenneth Humphreys

Religious symbolism and iconography, respectively, the basic and often complex artistic forms and gestures used as a kind of key to convey religious concepts and the visual, auditory, and kinetic representations of religious ideas and events.

Review *White Lies* is a tour de force exploration of the senescence and dying of whiteness as the reigning god-idol of contemporary American society. It joins the growing field of critical whiteness studies as singularly prescient in wrestling with its subject, at once human and other, a real unreality. And this, by design! Driscoll insists that the Ur-event of white genesis in history—the ritualized lynching of black bodies post-Civil War—convened a certainty of identity, illusory in the ferocity of its becoming. Ranging across disciplines as polymath as critical social theory and theology, post-structuralist philosophy and existentialist nausea, history of religious phenomenology and anthropological savvy, along with literature and ethics and cultural studies—the text is indeed dizzying as its author admits and intends. Keying on contemporary events like the killing of Trayvon Martin, the book enacts a self-confessional agon. The author consistently queries his own formulations as one caught inside the very force field he attempts to name into appearance. The result is dense and rich, at once a torment of expressive passion and a labyrinth of exegesis. At many turns of phrase and page, the sheer piling up of nuance and analysis suddenly flashes with horrific epiphany, like lightning on a battlefield at midnight. The militants show up like ghosts; their weapons like gods. The work of reading here is labor, but the reward is a slow gathering of vision—a seeing that flickers with monstrous import. Race is not mere sociology. Neither is it co-terminus with a word. Whiteness for Driscoll, emerges as an impossible attempt at prophylactics—an ever-failing intention to avoid death by visiting it on others. In a carefully conducted tour of this landscape of deceptive self-adulation built upon quite real dead bodies, the reader is offered a substantial mirage. But it cannot secure itself. No matter how desperate the ritual enactments or vitriolic the worship, it shares with all else living the irrepressible fact of its own demise. White people will die. The remedy the author offers? Give up certainties of belief as of salvation. Embrace contingencies of conceptualization as of identification and embodiment. The effort here rewards a patient perambulation in reading. But the strength, not surprisingly, is also the weakness. The text is strenuous; certainly no one unversed in philosophy will be able to access the remedy. Like a Dante lost in the thicket of mid-life, the faint whispers heard in the shadows must already be somewhat familiar before they can materialize as an apparition. But of course, the same could be said of this very review. The paradox is inescapable. But how to get there? For my money, we whites—a la Driscoll here—must assume one hundred percent of the responsibility for the work to be engaged. This is part of the edge of uncertainty that Driscoll has so resolutely tracked. There is no escaping this conundrum or its pain. It is part of the necessary dying. There are other moments that may occasion second-guesses: But there is finally no way to avoid such risks in the attempt to sound out this idol. But this is mere quibbling at the edge of profundity. In sum, the tour is indeed a force! The expose is powerful. But it does leave hanging in the twilight air an unanswered summons: About the Reviewer s: