

FIG LEAVES

Volume 17 Issue 11

November 2008

November FIG Meeting

There will be no November meeting, please celebrate Thanksgiving, i.e. the new crop harvest festival

December FIG Meeting: *Tuesday Dec. 16, 7:00 PM at the Vernon Manor*

God and the Philosophers,
by Paul Edwards

Discussed by Timothy J. Madigan

We are pleased to welcome our longtime friend, Tim Madigan, to tell us about *God and the Philosophers*. This book is a witty and learned exploration of critical views on the nature and existence of God, as expressed by major philosophers of the Western world from the medieval period to the present day. It is the last work of noted philosopher Paul Edwards. He addresses how the concept of God has changed over the centuries, in large part due to the analyses of such skeptical thinkers as David Hume, Thomas Paine, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Bertrand Russell.

A longtime critic of theistic arguments, Edwards demonstrates a masterful understanding of the ways in which the scientific revolution of the 17th century, the Enlightenment of the 18th century, the evolutionary materialism of the 19th century, and the rise of analytic and existentialist philosophies in the 20th century prepared the way for the growing role of atheism in the 21st century.

Editor Timothy Madigan gave Edwards thoughtful feedback over the years on various drafts of this work and compiled it for publication after Edwards's death. He is therefore in a unique position to talk to us about it.

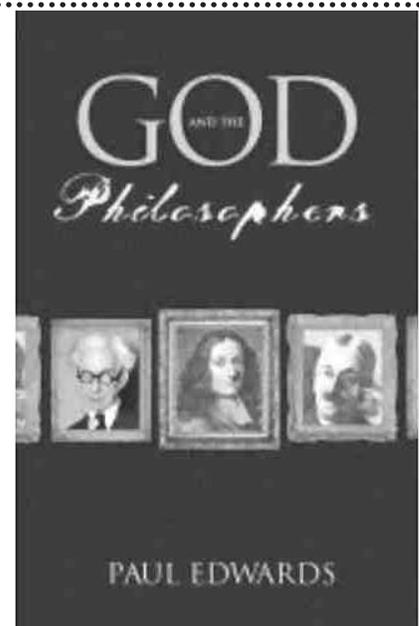
Paul Edwards (1923-2004) was the editor of the monumental and highly acclaimed *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, as well as *Immortality*. He taught for many years at Brooklyn College and the New School for Social Research.

Timothy J. Madigan (Rochester, NY) is an assistant professor of philosophy at St. John Fisher College and a member of the editorial board of *Philosophy Now* magazine. For many years he was editor of *Free Inquiry* magazine.

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Events (note date/time changes)

November Meeting

No Meeting -enjoy Thanksgiving!

December Potluck

No Potluck - Enjoy the holidays!

December Meeting

Tuesday , Dec. 16, 2008, 7:00 PM
at the Vernon Manor
400 Oak Street, Cincinnati, OH



October Meeting

FIG Hosts First Election Information Night

On October 28, FIG members met to discuss the issues and the ballot and discuss them through a rational lens. The FIG members present were all from the State of Ohio, so we focused on Ohio issues and candidates. The goal was to ensure that FIG members were informed on all of their candidates and issues when heading into the ballot box.

The meeting started out by discussing the ballot issues. The conversation mainly focused on the five proposed statewide Constitutional Amendments in Ohio with particular focus on Issue 5 and Issue 6. Wolf Roder raised the point about whether or not the Constitution should be used at all for these Issues, since it can be a slippery slope to repeatedly amend the Constitution. Taking Wolf's cause for concern in mind, members went on to discuss the merits of the Constitutional Issues. Issue 5 was about Payday Loans and there was a philosophical conversation about whether the government should place limits on people's ability to take out loans. Some members did not like the idea of the government placing limits on its citizens. Others felt that the Payday Loans are preying on individuals and limits still allowed them to take out loans, but without the ability to get into major debt. Issue 6 was the ballot initiative on building a casino in Wilmington. FIG members came to the consensus that this specific measure was troubling since it allows one person to build a casino and essentially places the ability to have a monopoly into the Ohio Constitution.

Members also discussed Cincinnati Issues 7 and 8. Issue 7 asked voters to ban the use of Stop Light Cameras in the city. The discussion ranged from issues of privacy to safety. The main focus of conversation was on the cameras would make it safer and if safety is an acceptable reason to limit privacy. Issue 8 was an initiative to return Cincinnati to Proportional Representation (PR) for the election of City Council. PR is an interesting model from a statistical perspective and could potentially improve the diversity of council, but there was a concern about not every vote being counted. On the heels of the 2000 and 2004 elections where voter irregularities happened, it seemed that the concerns outweighed any potential benefits.

The meeting concluded with an opportunity to ask about candidates and provided members an opportunity to share their knowledge about and past interactions with members on the ballot. It was a spirited discussion and allowed us to think about this historic election through a rational perspective.

- Reported by Shawn Jeffers

.....
Poetic Quote

.....
 "Faith" is a fine invention, when
 gentlemen can see
 But microscopes are prudent, in an
 emergency.
 Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

.....
 Those-dying then,
 Knew where they went-
 They went to God's right hand-
 That hand is amputated now
 And God cannot be found
 Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)



FIG Leaves - Thoughtful articles, letters, reviews, reports, anecdotes, and cartoons are very welcome. Submit in Electronic format via the internet to:

fignotes at(@) gofigger.org;
 or on disk or typewritten via mail to Editor, FIG Leaves, P.O. Box 53174, Cincinnati, OH 45253. Contributions received before the first Friday of the month will be considered for publication that month.

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Memberships run from:
 1 January to 31 December.
 One year: \$25
 Family: \$35
 If you join during the year, you receive a \$2 discount for each month that has passed.
 We request contributions above membership dues. Contributions are tax deductible.



THINGS TO DO....

THINGS TO SEE...



Media Events/Programs

The Humanist Perspective

Show times on Time-Warner Cable:

Channel 15: Tuesday 3:30 am and Saturday 7:30 pm

Channel 24: Friday 12:30 pm.

Programs:

11-14 Nov: *Future Bioethics*, with Ronald A. Lindsay

18-21 Nov: *The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence*, Pt. 1, with Seth Shostak

25-28 Nov: *The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence*, Pt. 2, with Seth Shostak

2-5 Dec: *The Immorality of Religious Ethics*, Pt. 1, with R. Joseph Hoffmann

9-12 Dec: *The Immorality of Religious Ethics*, Pt. 2, with R. Joseph Hoffmann

Hear! Hear! *Answers in Atheism* at

<www.answersinatheism.net>

JOIN US! - We are live on the internet Thursday evenings from 7 pm to 8 pm EST. Our shows are also available as archived audio files, so you can listen later at any time

Please tune in at www.answersinatheism.net.

The Answers in Atheism crew

The Cincinnati Atheists Meetup

When: Monday, Nov. 17 at 7:00PM - 10:00 PM

Where: Joseph-Beth Booksellers
2692 Madison Rd. Rookwood Pavillion
Cincinnati OH 45207; 513-396-8966

Meetup Description

Regular monthly gatherings are held on the 3rd Mondays from 7:00 - 10:00 PM. New people join every month, and we all wear name tags (no quizzes). Check the Message Board for current hot topics.

To find us: Go in the front doors of the bookstore and turn left. Enter the Bistro and walk straight back as far as you can go. We're all freethinkers, so we'll look just like you.

The Bistro has a full menu, including vegetarian options. If you like, enjoy dinner, dessert, tea, or a brewski. Restaurant direct line: 513-396-8970

O.F.A.

It's The Holiday Season & Operation Foxhole Atheists Needs Our Help!

Created by Blair Scott of the North Alabama Freethought Association (NAFA), OFA sends packages to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq who have identified themselves as atheists or humanists. You may not agree with the war but the soldiers aren't responsible for starting it and they need our support. I'm asking you all to **bring some of these goods to any meeting** and I will see that they get to OFA and from there to the troops.

The soldiers have requested: **Beef Jerky, Poptarts, Granola Bars, Breakfast Bars, Pringles, Cookies, Cheetos, Canned soup with poptop lids, Crystal Light on-the-go drink mix, Powdered Gatorade drink mix, Travel pillows (U-shaped).**

Any magazines or books (atheist or humanist materials can be sent but some of the soldiers choose to remain unknown as such in their companies). **DVD's,**

Any kind of snack food or reading material would be appreciated. If you would prefer, their website takes PayPal donations. <http://thenafa.org/ofa/>

Let's rally behind our fellows in uniform and show them some support!

Thank you, John Welte



SCIENCE BOOK CLUB 2008 Schedule - all meetings will be held on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the downtown Cincinnati Public Library in Room 3A at 2:30 PM.

Nov 16 Gary Weiss: *What we believe but cannot prove: today's leading thinkers on science in the age of certainty* ed. by John Brockman

Dec 21 Randy Weaver: *Into the cool energy flow, thermodynamics, and life* by Eric D. Schneider

Jan 18, 2009 - Dr. Richard Bozian: *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* by Antonio Damasio





Richard Dawkins Retires From Oxford.

Richard Dawkins forces people to confront reality. With his help a campaign has raised the money to pay for a message on the side of buses: "There is no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life."

The pity is that the world sees truth as "shrill and strident." The truth is the truth, nothing else. Retirement, of course, does not require one to stop writing. A world without the prospect of another book by Dawkins would a sadder place.

- *What's New* by Robert L. Park, 7 November 2008

A Desalination Plant For London?

Most people think London has enough water, but the city is forced to build a desalination plant to accommodate population growth. It's not the fecundity of native Londoners that has risen; as in all of Europe, immigration is on the rise with inevitable cultural conflict. Expect more such problems around the world as the demands of the green revolution reduce clean water, and excess population spills out of Muslim nations that can no longer feed their people as oil revenues decline.

- *What's New* by Robert L. Park, 7 November 2008

What Change For Science In The Obama Administration?

I was in the air between Washington and Seattle when the election was decided; I learned the result from a taxi driver, an immigrant from the republic of Georgia with children to educate. He clearly enjoyed being the one to tell me. He had the same enthusiasm for change that I sensed in the long line when the polls opened that morning. The agent for change today, as always, is science, but throughout the tedious election campaign neither camp displayed much interest in a science debate and the idea died. But what was it we wanted to know? We already knew that neither candidate had any background in science. We knew we didn't need more Freedom Cars running on hydrogen or corn ethanol. Nor do we need to defend the human rights of stem cells, or put up with barriers to buying Plan B, or for our children in science class to be taught "both sides" of the creationism issue. Even less do we need old-fashioned crap like sending human astronauts back to the Moon

in an age of automation. What we need to know is who Obama will turn to for advice. As President, he can call on any scientist in the country, and the time to do it is right now. We'd feel even better if Obama were to signal his intention to elevate his science advisor to cabinet rank. We could suggest about a thousand scientists who would do a good job, but it wouldn't help if Obama ignores his science advisor.

- *What's New* by Robert L. Park, 7 November 2008

John McCain Spice

1 1/2oz Grand Marnier

1/2oz ginger ale

1/2 oz pineapple juice

1oz fresh pineapple

*Muddle all ingredients and serve in a sugared martini glass

Obama Pama

1/2 oz 4 Copas blanco

1oz pama liqueur

1/4oz triple sec

3/4oz sour mix

Two fresh squeezed lime wedges

*Build on the rocks

Moose Milk

1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk

6 oz. water

6 oz. blended whiskey

2 oz. brandy

4 oz. (2) eggs

Pinch salt

2 tsp. vanilla

3 oz. sugar

Separate the egg yolks from whites and beat separately. Blend all ingredients: fold in stiff egg whites - age in cold storage 24 hours. Dust individual servings with nutmeg. Makes 1 quart. Serves 10.

The McCain Spice is dangerously sweet, much like Palin's naïve enthusiasm and negotiation tactics. The Obama Pama is sharp and to the point. Here's your chance to try the candidates on for size before the big vote and see how they treat your taste buds. Or - if you prefer to sit home alone and drink yourself silly this election, try out your own bartending skills shaking these up.





From One Crisis To Another

30 October 2008 by: Philippe Escande, *Les Échos* (translation: Leslie Thatcher)

The World Wildlife Fund reminds us that “with respect to natural resources also, we are living on credit.”

After the borrowing crisis, the footprint crisis. We’re in the process of drowning ourselves in an ocean of debts and here the WWF comes and sends us a curious sort of lifesaver in the guise of ecological footprint. To put it roughly, that honorable assembly of nature protectors reminds us that with respect to natural resources also, we are living on credit. We are exhausting our planet at top speed and are now in the process of eating up our capital. When will we reach the end? The World Wildlife Fund doesn’t say, but it does amiably draw our attention to the fact that the present financial crisis is a walk in the park compared to the ecological crisis that looms on the horizon, say around 2030.

The theme of natural resources exhaustion is obviously not new. Since the Club of Rome and even far earlier, we have known that our unbridled consumption of land, forest, water and air would run into a limit, but as that limit has receded while we advance, we’ve gotten used to living with this quite virtual threat. As we’d gotten used to not listening to those Cassandras who predicted the bursting of the real estate bubble. But precisely because the finance ceiling has fallen on our heads, we must take advantage of the occasion to ask ourselves how to prevent the environmental ceiling from crushing us completely.

The dangers are known; the remedies also. We are too many, too rich, too extravagant. One problem is that one of the main reasons for the acceleration highlighted by the WWF report relates to the improvement in our standard of living and also that of millions of Chinese and Indians. Globalization and economic growth - which, whatever we say today, are all the same preferable to destitution and chaos - have widely contributed to the acceleration of the planet’s decline. All the more so as this phenomenon was largely made possible by the very low price of energy the last ten years. So we have picked up bad habits that more and more people copy as soon as they are able.

So then, rather than wait around indefinitely for someone to make a gesture because “those Chinese pollute more than we do,” let’s take things in hand. Here are four levers to give our Earth more breathing room: bring demography under control; consume less, but better;

economize on energy, and bet heavily on technological research to improve our productivity and produce clean energy. Impossible? When we see the results of countries like Germany that have succeeded in reducing their environmental footprint even as they pursue growth, we observe that solutions exist.

The [French] Environmental Summit shows the way. And if the government wants not only to counter the present crisis, but also to avoid the next one, it should measure every recovery initiative, every form of assistance and every big program by the criterion of their environmental footprint.

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The Business of Saving the Earth

by: Chris Wood, *The Walrus Magazine*
October/November 2008 Issue (excerpt quote from an 8 pp article)

Sometime in mid-September, our species will blast through “Earth Overshoot Day,” the date when we will have consumed all of the natural goods and services, from fish to trees, that our planet takes twelve months to produce. For the remainder of 2008, we will live off the dwindling stock of earlier years’ production. We’ve been doing this for a larger part of every year since the late 1980s: living on eco-credits, giving scant thought to reducing our ecological spending or paying down our overdraft. Now the bill has come due. Drought ravages a third of the planet; deserts annually devour twice as much farmland as they did thirty years ago. Bio-diversity is fraying, and the fresh water that sustains both it and us can no longer be taken for granted. Our species is hurtling around the sun on a spaceship whose life-support system is grinding toward meltdown. Houston, we have a problem.

Are we at least enjoying the ride? As it turns out, not so much. During the past half century, rising incomes have brought the rich world no measurably greater joy in life. For some groups, notably women, the sense of well-being has actually waned. As wealthy as we may be in North America, people in Nigeria and El Salvador report greater contentment. To the amusement, no doubt, of long-departed sages, we are discovering yet again that man does not live by iPod alone, that no amount of stuff can fill that gnawing hole in the soul where happiness might take root.

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The Creation Museum - It's Unbelievable!

Often, when I visit a museum of natural history, I'm overwhelmed by the density of information presented in each room, in each diorama, on every plaque. Not so much at the Creation Museum. There, I was overwhelmed by the density expected of **me**.

The Creation Museum is the creation (in more than seven days, I suspect) of a group called Answers in Genesis which espouses not only the literal interpretation of the Good Book, but a "Biblically-based world view." AiG spent 27 million dollars on this massive facility in Petersburg, KY. On opening day, a group of protesters staged a "Rally for Reason" at the CM presided over by Edwin Kagin, two-time Atheist of the Year, and my host for a recent house concert in northern Kentucky. (And my song *Creation Science 101* was played by my buddy John Welte in constant rotation in the van on the way to the rally.)

"Prepare to Believe" read the slogan at the ticket counter. Yes, I paid to get in, so you wouldn't have to. Just inside the "Canyon Entrance" there's a video featuring two paleontologists gently brushing dirt from an embedded fossil. "My fiend Kym and I are both pale-ee-on-tol-o-gists," explains the one who's white. "We look at the same fossil evidence, but we come away with entirely different conclusions. This is because we begin at Different Starting Points."

Kym, you see, relies on Human Reason and concludes that the remains are millions of years old. But our friend proceeds from the unquestioning acceptance of God's Word as revealed in the Bible, and knows that this specimen must have died and been buried in sediment in the Great Flood 4,300 years ago, give or take a week next Tuesday. Human Reason and God's Word. Different Starting Points, see? The first two large exhibit rooms are devoted to this gleeful embrace of ignorance, A/B-ing Human Reason (wrong) and God's Word (right) as they pertain to the natural world.

It was Saturday morning, and the place was crowded with families and bussloads of Baptists. I heard a grandpa explaining to his son and grandson, "Evolutionists just assume that they're right, so everything they see fits their theory." "Right," said the son, for his son's benefit.

In chamber after chamber, the Young Earth Creationist saga unfolds life-size. Eve is Cher with well-placed hair. (Until the shame of the Fall forces her to cover herself in animal skins - then she's, well, Cher.) Adam is a bearded Fabio. The denizens of Eden cavort with dinosaurs - one Triceratops even wears a saddle.

Methuselah is a scary audio-animatron who makes you guess his age, (969). Noah looks something like Gene Hackman. Moses looks nothing like Charleton Heston. There are several rooms and passages devoted to the horrors of an un-Biblical world - projected images of heroin addicts, blister-covered babies, Nazis, graffiti - which make some little kids cower until their moms assure them that it's going to be okay, because God loves them. I kept walking, walking, walking. It's huge. And all around me the people were lapping it up like cream. "This is amazing," said one. "It's unbelievable!" said another.

Going in, I was naive enough to think there'd be some case made for Creationism, or some attempt to rebut Evolution. There's no such thing. It's just a big, big presentation of a small idea. It's like a lot of the Christian Music I've heard all across the country - schmaltzy, bombastic productions of boneheaded three-chord songs. This museum is not at all aimed at doubters, empiricists, sinners and Liberals like me. It's mind candy for the Faithful. And yet, I look around at these people, and I'm not inclined to mock them. I like these people. They're funny, some of them. They're trying to do something good. And they are smart - yes, they are.

And I think about the tiny, simple world they've wedged between two leather covers, and I stop laughing altogether. Because these are the people Karl Rove jerks around. These are the people who vote against their own economic interests, against their own workplace safety, against the real security of the country they love, just so gay people can't get married. These are people who accept things on faith - things like, "Barack Obama is a Muslim," and "Sarah Palin is a reformer" and that there's a "Pro-Abortion Movement" in America.

I suspect that my funny songs wouldn't change their way of thinking, but that doesn't make them my enemies. My enemies are the powerful people who exploit the simple desire to have simple answers. I left the Creation Museum happy for that clarity, and proud to be doing these songs, attempting at least to ward off an America whose slogan reads, "Prepare to Believe," or worse, "Abandon intellect, all ye who enter here."

If you're going to have a road on which comedians may be driving, and on that road you build "Beaverlick Baptist Church," aren't you just asking for accidents?

-The Roy Zimmerman September Newsletter
(3 November 2008)





Another Failed Attempt at a Secular Ethic

Forbidden Fruit: The Ethics of Humanism

by Paul Kurtz (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1988)

a review by Ronald Morales on Amazon.com

As the old saw goes: It's easier to toss grenades than it is to catch them. In other words, it's easier to attack something than it is to posit a defensible alternative. Kurtz is on stronger grounds criticizing theistic ethics and theism in general than he is in providing some rational, secular basis for ethics. For the last few centuries, philosophy has been full of failed attempts to find some nontheistic, rational foundation for morality. But if there is any consensus between theistic and non-theistic moral philosophy today, it's that no attempt to generate such a rational defense has yet been successful. There's simply no rational secular reason why someone should always morally care for another human being, particularly when there's no particular reason why caring about another serves any particular personal interests.

What the religious folks have going for them is that they have shared bases for moral appeals. Go to a church, mosque, temple or synagogue, and everyone can point to some shared agreement in a religious text that tells them why they ought to care for one another and for strangers. Atheists and agnostics have no such shared basis, and whatever basis any particular nontheist might personally appeal to provides no rational reason for any other nontheist, since there's no objective, secular, rational grounds for morally caring about others when it's not in one's interest. Any assumption that it's always in one's interests to morally care about everyone else in every case is just naive and unrealistic. Certainly there are cases when the expected personal gains from, say, stealing from someone else, outweigh any personal costs, at least for some people.

Appeals to evolutionary ethics begs the question, since just because evolution has generated a moral impulse gives nobody any reason to follow that impulse (should we follow all impulses all the time? - and why should one in the short term care about the ultimate survival of one's genes or even species?).

What's good for society is not always what's best for the individual, so merely appealing to the best interests of society in general doesn't provide the individual any rational reason to do something that may not be in his or her best interests. And so on. Perhaps this is why we see moral and charitable movements generated by religious movements, but not many by way of atheistic groups. Religious folks can rally around some shared sacred text to motivate them en masse. What do nontheists have?

In the end, the ethics one chooses just ends up being articles of faith, the same kind

of rationally unprovable faith that nontheists criticize religious folks for embracing.

A reply by D. M. Brokaw

In answer to this reviewer's attempt to characterize modern moral philosophy's failure for providing a rational foundation for morality, I would like to quote the well-respected Catholic philosopher, Charles Taylor. Prof. Taylor recently received the 2007 Templeton foundation award for advancing religiously-grounded morals in a scientific and naturalistic world. In his book, *Sources of the Self*, he speaks about Moral Sources. He confesses that even he sees some value in the worldview which sees "reason...as part of the telos [purpose] of human beings" (pg. 92). And further on, "What happens when, as in modern humanist views, we no longer have anything like a constitutive good [i.e. God] external to man? What can we say when the notion of the higher is a form of human life which consists precisely in facing a disenchanting universe with courage and lucidity?" (pg. 93-4). He is referencing Max Weber's notion of disenchantment, as a world without magical thinking. Taylor continues, "It seems to me that we can continue to speak of a moral source here. There is a constitutive reality, namely, humans as beings capable of this courageous disengagement. And our sense of admiration and awe for these capacities is what empowers us to live up to them....(pg. 94). The reviewer's claim that a rational defense has not been successful is false, if Christian philosophers themselves acknowledge that there is an alternative moral source to God in the moral system of humanism. The reviewer above is simply speaking an unsubstantiated opinion, with no authority to speak on behalf of moral philosophers. [Charles Taylor,

Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity. Harvard U. Press, 1989.]

While this reviewer is obviously passionate, he is not correct in his assertions. For instance, he claims, "there's no secular reason why caring about another serves any particular personal interests." I don't really think I need an express command from God to care about kids or parents, or to donate to charities. It is also a fact that there are plenty of secular charities, and this claim is especially ignorant. Read on: Toys-for-Tots, Second Harvest, Habitat for Humanity, The Nature Conservancy, Planned Parenthood, The American Cancer Society, World Wildlife Fund, The American Foundation for AIDS research, Heifer International, Doctors without Borders, Girl Scouts, 4H, Oxfam, Sierra Club, only to mention a few secular groups.

Immanuel Kant posited man as a rational moral agent that has absolutely nothing to do with a religious moral impulse, and is a completely secular moral vision. Also, our legal system is another example of a secular source for morality that is purely driven by humanistic boundaries. Morality is something that is agreed upon by the desires of society. Morality is respective to the time and place also, for those desires change. Perhaps that is why certain Biblical proscriptions seem antiquated by liberal religious standards. Let's face it: very few actually conform to its precepts. It's damn difficult! Well, likewise, humanism requires the same awareness of your actions and the consequences of those actions. It's taking responsibility here and now, without the behavioristic goading of a system of punishments and rewards. In my view, that is simply for children to learn until they are old enough to think critically for themselves. ☘



No December Potluck



No November Meeting
December Meeting
Tuesday Dec. 16, 7:00 PM



FIG Leaves
P.O. Box 53174
Cincinnati, OH 45253

FIG

Our Purpose

The Free Inquiry Group, Inc. (FIG) is a non-profit organization founded in 1991. FIG is allied with the Council for Secular Humanism as well as an affiliate of the American Humanist Association and of the American Atheists.

Though most of our members are secular humanists, we welcome to our meetings anyone interested in learning about or furthering our purpose.



To foster a community of secular humanists dedicated to improving the human condition through rational inquiry and creative thinking unfettered by superstition, religion, or any form of dogma.

In accordance with our purpose, we have established the following goals:

- To provide a forum for intelligent exchange of ideas for those seeking fulfillment in an ethical secular life.
- To develop through open discussion the moral basis of a secular society and encourage ethical practices within our own membership and the community at large.
- To inform the public regarding secular alternatives to supernatural interpretations of the human condition.
- To support and defend the principles of democracy, free speech, and separation of church and state as expressed in the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights.

For more information, write the Free Inquiry Group at the address above, e-mail fignotes at (@) gofigger.org, or visit our web site at gofigger.org or freeinquirygroup.org.