

# Review of Richard W. Morris' *God on Trial* Carson City, Nevada: Oregon Cascade Corporation, 2010

*Review by C.L. Stewart*

If you were asked to prove the existence of God in court, using the Rules of Evidence required by all U.S. courts, could you? Author Richard Morris boldly takes on this challenge in his latest book titled "God on Trial."

Richard Morris, a lawyer licensed in two U.S. states and England, is a member of Mensa, and a former teacher and adjunct professor. He also holds airline transport pilot, flight, and ground instructor licenses. He began his legal career as a prosecutor, and did criminal defense before limiting his practice to civil matters. His published credits include articles in such diverse periodicals as the *San Diego Realtor Magazine*, *San Diego Mensan*, *American Atheist*, *Playboy*, *Truth Seeker*, *Art World News*, and he was a columnist for the Page (Arizona) newspaper, *Page USA*.

"God on Trial" unfolds as David Stone, a young atheist and instructor of philosophy declares that he "does not believe" in God in front of a large crowd attending a religious service in the Bible belt community of Dicksburgh—a town with a law against blasphemy.

Through Morris' main characters, Pastor and Sister Leah, readers are given a bird's-eye view of the motivation of church management and of the scams frequently sold to "the faithful" by self-proclaimed religious leaders. Exploiting the public is only one of the many "sins" that Pastor and the good Sister frequently engage in, *always in the name of God*. Sodomasochistic religious rituals, bogus healing demonstrations, the "accidental" death of Sister Mary, séances, and explicit religious initiation ceremonies make this novel a riveting read.

When the jury trial begins, complete with an atheist defense attorney, a Bible belt prosecutor and judge, and the highly paid Reverend Doctor Zacharias J. Baptiste, the expert witness procured by Pastor, at a costly sum, the fun begins.

Richard Morris' in-depth knowledge of the Christian Bible and other religious and historical texts, combined with his understanding of epistemology, philosophy, critical thinking, knowledge of the legal system, and wry sense of humor, makes "God on Trial" an enticing, entertaining, and educational adventure.

The trial heats up as the defense educates the court through questions such as, "Did you know that the Christian bible states there were two Jesus's?" His question posed to the expert Reverend Baptiste as to the definition of the holy "seed" and how it came to be deposited into the womb of Mother Mary, provides for an amusing and thought-provoking perusal. The conflicting accounts of the lineage of Jesus and the numerous exhibits of "godly" punishment carried out by God's chosen, are also among the many issues explored by Morris.

Through the defense attorney's questioning, author Morris takes readers on a wild ride that shakes the documented foundation upon which the Christian Bible stands and exposes some of the major inconsistencies, which number in the hundreds, found in the Bible. "If God is merciful, then how could God condone extreme acts of torture and the murder of thousands of innocents?" "Did God create existence?" "Did God exist before existence?"

Bishop Baptiste is faced with a dilemma when the defense challenges his god's omnipotence and omniscience by stating, "If God now knows the future and cannot make changes, he is not omnipotent. If God can change future events, he is not omniscient, because he would not know now what changes he might make later."

Young David once told his class of students, "Religion is an epistemological issue. The logical person must ask: What do you know and how do you know it? Which is more important, *what* you believe, or *why* you believe?" Ironically, his own fate rests on how each member of the jury will answer these same questions once the defense and prosecution have presented their final arguments.

Will David be deemed innocent or guilty? Will he be saved by logic or persecuted by fallacious beliefs? Get on the bus to Dicksburgh and attend the trial to find out.

Author Morris has provided readers with a very interesting, thought-provoking, sexually stimulating, eye opening, psychological, and philosophical trip, and he's inviting us all to ride.

Unique, bold, uncensored, and well researched, readers seeking intrigue, presented with intelligence and a tongue-in-cheek wit, will thoroughly enjoy journeying with Richard Morris.

I consider "God on Trial" a must read.