

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Freethought

News



Vol. 8 No. 4, April, 2019
Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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* TBCoR member

Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

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Rick O'Keefe

Web site

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Newsletter

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Special Projects

Mark Brandt

& Bill Norsworthy

See our event websites at:

www.tampabaycor.net &

www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason

This publication online at:

www.tampabaycor.net



Edward L. Ericson

Honored Humanist Pioneer in the Tampa Bay area receives Recognition

Edward L. Ericson will accept the Felix Adler Lifetime Achievement Award at AEU Assembly in Tampa

Edward L. Ericson, author of *The Humanist Way* (1988) and several other books on humanism, will be honored with the Felix Adler Lifetime Achievement Award at the AEU Assembly in Tampa. The ceremony will take place on Saturday, June 22 during the National Ethical Service luncheon. Look for registration soon so you can join us June 20-23 for "Reclaiming Democracy For All."

The American Ethical Union

is having its annual conference in Tampa.

20 - 23 June 2019



104th AEU Assembly Registration is OPEN!

Early bird prices end May 17th.

American Ethical Union

2 West 64th Street #408, New York NY 10023

[212-873-6500] [office@aeu.org] [aeu.org]



Darwin Day Evolves

Over 120 people came to hear Dr. Ryan Cragun and 'Friendly Atheist' Hemant Mehta discuss the future and political present of Religion on March 16th.

Sociologist Cragun, and mathematician Mehta reached similar albeit differently based conclusions. Secular society is responding, though slowly, to the challenges of our time, and while powerful religious institutions continue to hold sway in the political system, the actual practice of most people continues to move away from such affiliations.



Hemant Mehta Dr. Ryan Cragun

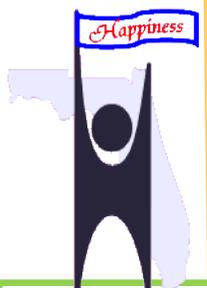
Many thanks go to our fine guest speakers for giving us valuable insights and information, but mainly for giving us hope.

JP

Listen to Freethought Radio every Friday Afternoon at 2 PM

Atheists of Florida produces *Atheist Forum*, every week for information and opinion from a secular POV. The broadcast is available on WTAN-1340 AM and on the internet at TanTalk1340.com as well as live cast on the Aof channel of YouTube.com

Anywhere in this newsletter
CLICK on an image or blue
text for the link.



The Humanist Society of the Suncoast

An Epicurean society dedicated to the proposition that only the fully examined life is worth living.
Associate organization of the [Humanists of Florida](#), the [AHA](#), [COR](#), & [ASHS](#). Find us at www.suncoasthumanist.com

Our April Guest: **Jackie Azis**
ACLU Staff Attorney

The **2019 Florida Legislative Session** is under way, and unfortunately, numerous bills have been filed that pose grave threats to our civil rights and civil liberties.



Currently, numerous bills threaten: a woman's right to access abortion care, to worsen racial disparities in our criminal justice system, exacerbate the school to prison pipeline, enable racial and ethnic profiling of people of color and immigrants' across the state.

Other bills, those with less chance of passage, would contribute positively to life in Florida: by eliminating driver's License suspensions for non-driving related offenses, acting on HIV Prevention, removing employment barriers for people with past convictions.

Tampa Bay Harvest

Bring food: the first kindness & the measure of our Hospitality. Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings. Money is more effective than cans and boxes to get the most benefit to the greatest number of people. But we can also use personal care toiletries. Thanks to *Jordan Williams*. **We need volunteers!** Write to jim@suncoasthumanist.com Thanx.



Humanism

is a movement that concerns itself with all that threatens or enhances the prospect for human thriving in all respects.

Before joining the ACLU of Florida, *Jackie Azis* worked for a civil rights and employment law firm in Peoria, IL. She then served as an assistant public defender in the Fifth Judicial Circuit of Florida, representing hundreds of clients facing misdemeanor and felony charges. In 2016, the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers presented her with the James T. Miller Scholar award recognizing outstanding young criminal defense lawyers.



The Dunedin Public Library
At 223 Douglas Ave. in Dunedin.
([map](#))

Saturday, April 13th
at 2:00 PM

Many of our members meet afterward for more conversation and refreshment not far from the library.



Vol. XXXII No. 4 April, 2019

**Please Join or renew
Now!**

Humanist Society of the Suncoast

Annual Dues

Regular -\$25
Reg. Couple -\$30.
Supporter -\$35/40 (With pin above)
Life -\$200. (Pin)
Life Couple -\$250.(Pin)
Associate -\$10



Your membership helps keep Humanism alive & growing in the Tampa Bay area. A small part of your dues allows us to participate fully as a member organization of the Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason & enables us to support larger & more exciting programs.

If you have questions concerning your dues or status, contact our treasurer,
marios_psomas@hotmail.com

If new, please fill out the form; if renewing just indicate your name & any changes from our previous information. Thanks!

Name: _____

Address -if new : _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: * _____

E-mail: _____

(Privacy respected)

Send check made out to:
"Marios Psomas"

Memo line: "Humanist Society Dues"
(501c3, tax deductible)

Humanist Society of the Suncoast, AHA
1013 Connecticut Rd
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

*= optional

List of Fake News Websites:

Before you get too excited about an item you want to share or comment about, make sure the social media item is legit.

The list:

<http://bit.ly/2vvrXbb>



Humanists work to build a world in which happiness is the enduring criterion of all policy.

What is the Humanist Way?

- ◆ **To extend** a human centered approach to the critical problems of life & society.
- ◆ **To encourage** attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance & a loving generosity in human relationships, & in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others, & encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture & experience.
- ◆ **To develop** & popularize the skills of creative & critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition & irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
- ◆ **To exalt** those artistic & imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure & enlightenment, & which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, & other expressions, we embrace the essence of what it means to be human.
- ◆ **To explore** the grounds of ethics & morality within the unfolding history of our evolving culture. Such knowledge will enable us to become effective protagonists for the happiness of the individual person. JP

The Movable Feast

the Humanist Society's monthly social Dinner

Join us April 21 at Applebee's at 5 O'clock for American style cuisine, and decidedly the best company:

Applebees

For [map](#) [Menu](#)

5110 E Bay Dr Clearwater, FL
33764

Kindly **RSVP** to: (727) 581-2146
Great Conversation and good food, reasonably priced.

Laugh Lines From the Skeptics Dictionary

If lawyers can be disbarred and clergymen defrocked, doesn't it follow that...

Electricians can be delighted,
musicians denoted,
cowboys deranged,
models deposed,
Burglars can be detected,
laundry workers could decrease,
eventually becoming depressed and depleted,
bedmakers would be debunked,
baseball players will be debased,
landscapers will be deflowered,
bulldozer operators will be degraded,
organ donors will be delivered,
old veggies would be despoiled,
software engineers will be detested,
garment workers will be debriefed,
and song writers will eventually decompose.

On a more positive note, politicians could be devoted.

Humanist Society of the Suncoast

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc., Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason, & The Association of Secular Humanist Societies

Board of Directors.

Meets Sept., December, April

Jay Alexander,
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Lois Fries, Secretary
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~*~*~*~*~*

Jordan Williams, mail Publisher

Jim Peterson, Editor
E-Mail us at:
jim@suncoasthumanist.com

Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist,
click:
[Secular Therapy Org.](http://seculartherapy.org)
[Cognitive Neurosciences](http://cognitiveneurosciences.com)

Or call:

Lynda Gurvitz,
<http://fampsy.org/member/lynda-gurvitz/>
(727) 725-8820

Joel Schmidt
www.floatoncounseling.com
321-604-7637



Your Best Letters...

As a first generation American whose father and all grandparents were born in Eastern Europe, I listened with more interest than most, to the sentencing of Paul Manafort.

My grandfather came here just after WWI, and worked four years to save enough to bring his family here in 1921. Although my family was lucky to escape most of the horrors of domination by Russia, their friends and other relatives were not.

When I was a child, and through young adulthood, we received many letters from them about their treatment by the occupying Russian soldiers, who would enter their homes at any time, sleep in their beds when they wanted, filthy boots and all, take any food that appealed to them, and generally treat them like servants. There were so many examples of their cruelty, and I listened to the letters as my parents read them.

That is what Paul Manafort was attempting to do to Ukrainians while he made millions of dollars lobbying for pro-Russian politicians in that country.

It was unbelievable to me when Judge Ellis said, “He’s lived an otherwise blameless life” and “has no criminal history” when he sentenced him to a relatively short term. I feel cheated not only by the millions in taxes Manafort did not pay, that people like me had to make up, but also for the years he should have spent in custody for trying to place the Russian yoke onto the people of Ukraine for nothing other than greed and reluctance to give up his high-flying life-style!

How could a judge have so little awareness or consideration of his horrible behavior? He had no compassion in his lobbying efforts, but was sure to ask for (and seems to have received) compassion from Judge Ellis. Shame!!

Lois Fries

Enhanced version from that published in the TB Times . 3-12-19

Why do Florida Legislators hate public education? Senate Bill 7070 establishes the “Family Empowerment Scholarships” which would use taxpayer funds to support private, sectarian schools. The bill only provides scholarships for up to 15,000 students, out of the 2,587,197 total students enrolled in public schools. But there is nothing to prevent them from continuing to expand that number yearly until everyone qualifies. The flagrant disregard by legislators for the Florida Constitution is also disconcerting.

Article 1, Section 3, states “No revenue of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution.” By allowing taxpayer funds to go to sectarian schools not only does it reduce the support of the public schools, it clearly violates the constitution.

In my opinion, part of the goal of public schools is to prepare students to live in a democracy, to value cooperation, fairness, and justice. This can only be achieved by having to interact with people who have different values and viewpoints. That is why public schools are so important. People meet others they might never encounter in the world in which their family resides such as church, country club, street, etc. Civics education has never been more important. We must learn how to live together, work with people of divergent views, and protect everyone’s rights.

Judy M. A dkins

Original letter published in the Times - 3-16-19



*Member, TBCoR,
Hum Society, &
AHA affiliate.*

Our regular meeting at n. Tampa Public Library has been cancelled as members are going to the AA Conference in Cincinnati.

Check back in May

Humanist Quotes

4/19

Because humanists do not believe in any kind of god or supernatural force that will solve their problems, they believe that human beings must take sole responsibility for solving the world's environmental problems. Only humans are capable of finding the solutions that can lead to a sustainable existence.

Google Questions

The true humanist maintains a just balance between sympathy and selection.

Irving Babbitt

From the failure of the humanist tradition to participate fully or to act decisively, civilizations may perhaps crumble or perish at the hands of barbarians. But unless the humanist tradition itself in some form survives, there can really be no civilization at all.

Louis Kronenberger

We have to replace beauty, which is a cultural concept, with goodness, which is a humanist concept.

Philippe Starck



An autonomous project of the Humanist Society.
Affiliate of the [Post Carbon Institute](#)

Failed Economics

By Rex Weyler, PCI

At the end of 2018, **Credit Suisse published its updated report on global wealth**. Forty-two-million millionaires and billionaires comprise the **richest 0.5%** of the world's population. That translates to 0.8% of adults in the report, possessing 44.8% of the world's economic wealth. A decade ago, researchers commonly reported that the wealthy 15% of humanity owned 85% of the resources. Today, 6.2% (9.5% of adults) now claim 85% of the wealth. The rich got richer.

The super-elites, the 2,208 billionaires — those who attend Global Economic Summits, own banks, buy off governments, pollute with impunity, and hold political influence in virtually every nation in the world — comprise not the “1%” but only 28-millionths of a percent of the human population. According to Forbes magazine, **the average billionaire makes about \$635 million dollars every year**, \$12 million per week, even when they're on holiday.

For these people, neo-classical economic theory works just fine, but only if one ignores the human and ecological costs: poverty, squalor, homelessness, migrations, biodiversity loss, global heating, disappearing forests, toxic land and water, and rising, acidic oceans. Capitalism is designed to benefit those who have capital, the wealthy. For most of humanity, modern neo-classical economics erodes well being. For the ecosystem at large, neo-classical economics serves as a rationalization for plunder.

A Prize for Ecological Ignorance

Last year, international economists awarded their colleague, William Nordhaus, the “Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics.” This is not a genuine Nobel prize, but rather an award sponsored by Sveriges Riksbank “in Memory of Alfred Nobel.”

In the 1970s and 80s, Nordhaus played a key role in dismissing the now-confirmed, **“Limits to Growth” study**. In a 1991 paper, **“To slow or not to slow,”** Nordhaus argued that although economic

growth increases carbon emissions, nations should not sacrifice growth to combat climate change. He discouraged carbon emissions reduction because, in his estimation, global heating just doesn't hurt the world's economy that much. “Don't let anyone distract you from the work at hand,” Nordhaus told his students, upon winning the prize, “which is economic growth.”

Climate scientists and ecologists have blamed Nordhaus for rationalizing the failure of governments to take urgent climate action. Some fellow economists — Nicholas Stern at the London School of Economics; Martin Weitzman, at the US National Bureau of Economic Research; and others — have disputed Nordhaus' assumptions, calculations, and conclusions. In February, at the Scottish Economics Conference in Glasgow, Steve Keen, Head of the Economics, History and Politics School at Kingston University in London, explained **errors and omissions in Nordhaus' theories**, which lead to what Keen calls his “absurd” conclusions about climate action.

Nordhaus and other economists choose, arbitrarily, to discount the future. If we valued future generations equally to ourselves, we would assume a discount rate of zero. Nordhaus prefers to discount the future at 6% annually, which presumes that communities twelve years from now have less than half the value of a community today. A community or individual 70 years from now has only 1% of our value. The high discount rate allows Nordhaus and colleagues to argue that the economic cost of reducing emissions today is too high compared to the “low” benefit of protecting people in the future. No wonder **the youth are in rebellion!**

Continued on Page 17

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc.

(SPAC), has been meeting continuously since 1927. It was incorporated in 1979 as a nonprofit, tax deductible organization.



For almost 50 years SPAC has provided free educational programs for its members & the public. For additional information send your emails to: spaceaminer@gmail.com

Meetings are normally held on the fourth Friday of each month (except November & December when it is on the third Friday) at the St. Petersburg College/Gibbs Campus, 6605 5th Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL 33710, at 8:00 P.M. Meetings are open to the public.
Calendar

M.A.R.S. – Tampa Astronomy Club

Welcome to the [Museum Astronomical Resource Society](#), also known as the M.A.R.S. astronomy club. M.A.R.S. is sponsored by the [Museum of Science & Industry \(MOSI\)](#), in Tampa, Florida. We are also members of both the [Astronomical League & Night Sky Network](#). This site provides club news & astronomical information to our membership & to the public.

Whether you are new to astronomy & curious about how to experience it, or a seasoned veteran looking for an active club to spend observation time with. We invite you to attend a meetings as our honored guest.

Monthly meetings are normally held on the 3rd floor of MOSI in the Science Works Theater, & take place on the 2nd Friday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Meetings are free & open to the public.

Details & RSVP:

<https://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/>



The mission of the Center for Inquiry is to foster a secular society based on science, reason, freedom of inquiry, & humanist values. Since 2002, our all-volunteer chapter has served West Central Florida. Won't you support us? [Join our community today.](#)



Rick O'Keefe,
Coordinator

Some of April's activities are:

- * Brandon—Skeptics Brunch
- * N. Pinellas—CFI Supper Club
- * Clearwater—CFI SHARE Book Club
- * Thank Goodness 4 Godless Friday Nights
- * Howard's Skeptics Corner
- * Brandon—2 Skeptics in the Pub
- * 2+ astronomy clubs' meetings
- * Tampa Bay Tech Center many activities
- * And more at <http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I>

Subscribe to our CFI Tampa Bay newsletter here: <http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I>, Then scroll down the page until you see "Receive E-Mails".

Reasonable Talk

Captivating talks on science, humanism, skepticism, and other smart stuff. Find talks by topic, speaker, or event. Is this better than 24 hour Trump manure on "the news"? Yes! Is this better for your mental health than reality TV? Obviously! So, go here: <https://reasonabletalk.tv/>



The Morning Heresy is your **daily digest** of news and links relevant to the secular and skeptic communities. What you wouldn't otherwise know.



**Richard Dawkins
Foundation
for Reason & Science**
A division of the Center for Inquiry

TEACHER INSTITUTE FOR EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE (TIES)

Provides middle school teachers
the tools they need
to effectively teach evolution.

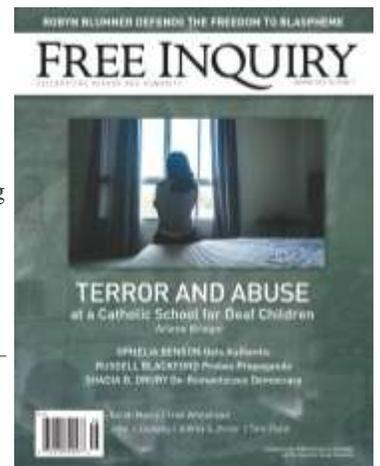
Humanists recognize that it is only when people feel free to think for themselves, using reason as their guide, that they are best capable of developing values that succeed in satisfying human needs and serving human interests.

The Council for Secular Humanism: The mission of the Council for Secular Humanism is to advocate and defend a nonreligious lifescape rooted in science, naturalistic philosophy, and humanist ethics and to serve and support adherents of that lifescape.

The Council is North America's leading organization for non-religious people. A not-for-profit educational corporation, the Council supports a wide range of activities to meet the needs of people who find meaning and value in life without looking to a religion. Its activities range from magazine publishing and campaigning on ethical issues to holding conferences and supporting a network of autonomous local groups.

Secular humanists reject supernatural and authoritarian beliefs. They affirm that we must take responsibility for our own lives and the communities and world in which we live. Secular humanism emphasizes reason and scientific inquiry, individual freedom and responsibility, human values and compassion, and the need for tolerance and cooperation.

CSH publishes the respected *Free Inquiry* magazine. The aim of *Free Inquiry* is to promote and nurture the good life—life guided by reason and science, freed from the dogmas of god and state, inspired by compassion for fellow humans, and driven by the ideals of human freedom, happiness, and understanding. *Free Inquiry* is dedicated to seeing that one day all members of the human family thrive by embracing basic humanist principles.





17
years in
Florida



We are deeply concerned with the moral education of our children. We want to nourish reason and compassion. ~ Center for Inquiry--*The Affirmations of Humanism: A Statement of Principles*

Fundraising Request

By Rick O'Keefe

Center for Inquiry Tampa Bay, a 100% volunteer 501©(3) non-profit corporation, needs funds to bring in speakers and programs for 2019, pay for overhead (office expenses, transportation, meeting supplies, annual corporate fees, etc.). Your contribution will make an impact, whether you donate \$5 or \$5,000. Every little bit helps. Thank you for your support. I've included information to explain a few things about Center for Inquiry below.

At the Center for Inquiry, we believe that evidence-based reasoning, in which humans work together to address common concerns, is critical for modern world civilization. Moreover, unlike many other institutions, we maintain that scientific methods and reasoning should be utilized in examining the claims of both pseudoscience and religion. We reject mysticism and blind faith. No topic should be placed off limits to scrutiny—certainly not fringe science and religion, which have an enormous influence on beliefs and conduct.

We also maintain that values are properly the subject of study and discussion as much as empirical claims. The Center for Inquiry studies and promotes human values based on a naturalistic outlook. Ideological doctrine and religious dogma have no more right to dictate our moral norms than they do to influence scientific research.

The Center for Inquiry supports research, but our mission activities go far beyond sound scholarship. The Center for Inquiry, and its affiliates, the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry and

the Council for Secular Humanism, also carry out their work through education, publishing, advocacy, and social services. The Center for Inquiry has established dozens of regional centers and communities, which provide a means of delivering educational programs and services on a local level and provide a venue for like-minded individuals to meet and share experiences. In addition, the Center for Inquiry has affiliates and sponsors programs in many different countries. A secular society ultimately should embrace all of humanity, not just selected countries.

In aiming to foster a secular society, we do not seek to abridge the rights of believers. We vigorously object to government support of religion and the use of religious dogma to justify public policy; we do not oppose the free exercise of religion. The secular society we are building is a community of reason and compassion in which the dignity and fundamental rights of all individuals are respected.

Fostering a secular society requires attention to many specific goals, but three goals in particular represent the focus of our activities:

- ◊- An end to the influence that religion and pseudoscience have on public policy
- ◊- An end to the privileged position that religion and pseudoscience continue to enjoy in many societies
- ◊- An end to the stigma attached to being a nonbeliever, whether the nonbeliever describes her/himself as an atheist, agnostic, humanist, freethinker or skeptic.

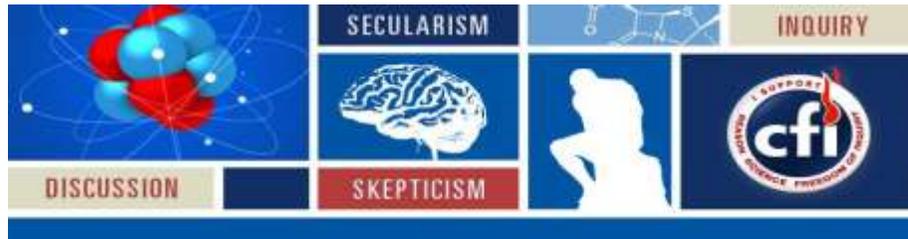
*Many thanks,
Rick*

Being all-volunteer means CFI needs volunteers, members, & donors.
Might you become one?



Click below

JOIN NOW



Special freethought days in April:

- ◇ April 1: Skeptics holiday—April Fool's Day
- ◇ April 12: Yuri's Night / Cosmonaut's Day
- ◇ April 16: National Library Day
- ◇ April 22: Earth Day (US)
- ◇ April 28: Int'l. Astronomy Day

Future books for the **CFI S.H.A.R.E. Book Club**. Provided so attendees can be prepared.

(Requirements: Must be a paid-up member of CFI, and must have read book before attending. Not a member? Join: <http://bit.ly/2pTDfej>)



5/25 *Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression – and the Unexpected Solutions*, by Johann Hari

6/22 *The Long Honduran Night: Resistance, Terror, and the United States in the Aftermath of the Coup*, by Dana Frank

POINT OF INQUIRY

RADIO SHOW & PODCAST

We find ourselves in the information age among many who, although have the access to proper and accurate scientific information, choose not to believe it.

What causes the parents of a newborn to avoid vaccines? Where do the misconceptions of genetics originate? Today on *Point of Inquiry*, Kavin Senapathy talks with Carl Zimmer and Dr. Paul A Offit while at CSICon 2018 about their research into vaccinations, science denial, and how some groups in the US have tried to use genes and heredity to argue in favor of white supremacy.

Podcast: <http://bit.ly/2FIWeLV>

Sign up to receive the newsletter: <http://bit.ly/2FjiLcw>



CHURCH AND STATE

How (and Why) Americans Were Taught to Hate Atheists

If you asked Americans to list the most negative labels to give someone “atheist” would probably be on that list. For the majority of Americans being an atheist is akin to being amoral and unAmerican. Growing up, that’s certainly the message I got. Sunday School made it clear that atheists were bad, Godless people.

What most Americans don’t know is that if you grew up in the 50’s or 60’s you didn’t need to attend Sunday School to be taught to fear and hate atheists. Because in the early-50’s the US government initiated a massive, multi-pronged, multi-year campaign to demonize atheism — and it worked *very* well.

That article is all here, and much more news: <http://bit.ly/2FQVO3t>

READ THIS: TB-CoR’s [Meetup](#) makes it easy to **view & RSVP** to our activities & some affiliated events. The value to us of your joining our Meetup is that we need to know how many folks expect to attend an activity. Some programs are limited in seating; some require ordering books, etc.; some are open only to paid-up CFI members; & some require prepayment. So, sign up if you aren’t already participating.

With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility: The Myth of Parental Rights

By [Nicholas Little](#), March 14, 2019

I fear the Greeks, even those bearing gifts. Also, in a less literary vein – a crap sandwich on the tastiest bread is still a crap sandwich.

When our opponents present us with something, whatever they call it and however they present it, we are right to be suspicious. And however prettily they dress up the outside, it's vital that we look below the surface to determine whether their gift is in reality full of soldiers seeking to sack Troy or just a giant turd between two delightful slices of fresh sourdough bread.

How things are presented matters. But what is underneath that presentation is also critical, and very often we see charming presentation used as an attempt to sneak terrible content through. The opponents of legalized and safe abortion are masters of this technique. For years they have spoken of "Partial Birth Abortions," choosing that language to demonize a rare and medically necessary procedure, Intact Dilation & Extraction.

There's one comment from a law school professor of mine that has stayed with me vividly. When any student would mention "states' rights," he would launch on an irritated tirade. "States don't have rights. Individuals have rights. Rights are things the state can't do to you. States have powers." And he was right. The term "states' rights" was used to because rights are a good thing. Bad governments take away rights. And thereby, it could gloss over what "states' rights" actually meant in the real world – the justification of viewing human beings as property and, later, the treatment of people, based solely on their race, as second-class citizens.

We are seeing the same use of presentation by our opponents now. The same attempt to dress up abusive and appalling policies in the language of rights and freedoms. It's essential that we keep that in mind when we look at the world. When we campaign to remove exemptions from mandatory vaccination laws, [as our media guru Paul Fidalgo spent yesterday in Maine doing](#), our opponents cry out for their "parental rights." This is, of course, nonsense. There is no right to expose your child, or all the other children they will come in contact with at school, at the mall, or in the park, to potentially fatal, debilitating diseases unnecessarily, based solely on the ramblings of a [fourth-rate actress](#) online, and the self-serving, faked experiments of a [struck-off doctor](#).

But the error here goes so much further than this. The entire notion of "parental rights" here is a flawed one that seeks to mask the reality – the abuse of children through their needless exposure to danger – in the language of freedom and rights. Let's be clear on this. Being a parent does not give you rights. The rights that are talked of here are the rights of the child. It is the child that has the right to choose whether to be vaccinated and, thereby, likely protected from a whole range of diseases that have been the scourge of humanity, or not to be vaccinated and to roll the dice with their own safety.

Of course, in the overwhelming majority of cases, we recognize that children are not positioned to exercise their rights and make these choices. We therefore allow parents to act as a guardian of those rights and exercise them on behalf of the child. This is a very good thing. The parent is, in most situations, the one best placed to make such decisions. When deciding whether a child should study German or French, play football or swim, watch American Idol or go to bed at 8 pm, we default to the parents. Having government decide this would be not only impractical, it would also represent a form of tyranny that is incompatible with a free society. But that's not saying the parents have the "right" to require those things of the child. Instead, the parents are exercising their best judgment in the service of their children. They are

the caretaker of the child's rights until that child is sufficiently developed to exercise them on their own behalf.

There have always been situations where we as a society have recognized parents are not the best placed to exercise the rights of the child. Regardless of parental wishes, children must be educated, may not work in coal mines, and cannot purchase alcohol or cigarettes. The child's right to safety and education is paramount there. The parent not only does not have the right to send their child to work at the textile mill, they are not seen as the correct guardian of the child's right to choose where (and when) to work.

Unfortunately, where we allow these rights of the child to be overridden, it is far too often in the name of a similar misnomer, the "religious freedom" of the parent. The Supreme Court, in *Yoder v Wisconsin*, 406 U.S. 205 (1972), allowed Amish parents to withdraw their children from school after the 8th grade. While laws regularly require lifesaving medical intervention against parents' wishes, Idaho still exempts harm caused by parental reliance on faith-healing from child abuse laws. Parents are free to send their children to schools which deny them a scientific education, replacing it instead with religious dogma.

Where our opponents present their claims as defending "religious freedom" or "parental rights," it is essential we look deeper. Who really owns the rights at issue? Children are not property. Their parents do not own them and do not own their rights. While it is good that we grant parents a broad range of discretion in how they exercise their children's rights, the basic point must not be forgotten. They are the child's rights, not the parent's. No amount of linguistic games change that. Justifying vaccination exemptions as "parental rights" or "religious freedom" doesn't alter what they are – stealth attempts to deny the right to a healthy future to our children.

Nicholas J. Little is Legal Director of Center for Inquiry.

The Center for Inquiry (CFI) strives to foster a society free of the dogmatic influence of religion and pseudoscience; a society inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment, the wonders of science, and the limitless potential of human intelligence and creativity; a society in which beliefs are not granted the same rights as people, where the freedom of expression is enjoyed by all, and all ideas are open to the scrutiny of reason.

Secular government. Free inquiry. Critical thinking. Humanist values. This is the Center for Inquiry. Join us, we need you <http://bit.ly/2pTDfEj>

"You, even while you still have life, are as good as dead. You squander the greater part of your time in sleep, you snore when awake ... you are buffeted with countless cares on every side and drift aimlessly in utter bewilderment of mind."
Lucretius poses this 'squandering argument' near the close of Book III of his *De Rerum Natura*.



Founded in 1988 by **Gary P. Posner, M.D.**, **Tampa Bay Skeptics** is a nonprofit educational & scientific organization devoted to the critical examination of paranormal & fringe-science claims, & the dissemination of factual information about such claims. [Read More!](#)



The FDA announces in a press release that it's **none too pleased with Nutra Pharma Corp.**, a company that makes homeopathic products for the treatment of chronic pain and addiction. Outgoing FDA commissioner Scott Gottlieb says:

Health fraud scams like these are inexcusable. These patients deserve proven treatments not false promises that can deter them from seeking otherwise effective care, and that can also contain ingredients or contaminations that can threaten their health.

Elizabeth Cohen and John Bonifield at CNN report on the ferocity and vileness of anti-vaxxers' attacks on anyone who dares to advocate for vaccinations, even if that someone is a parent who just lost their child to the flu:

Nothing is considered too cruel. Just days after their children died, mothers say anti-vaxers on social media called them whores, the c-word and baby killers. ...

Some anti-vaxers told [grieving mother Jill Promoli] she'd murdered [2-year-old] Jude and made up a story about the flu to cover up her crime. Others said vaccines had killed her son. Some called her the c-word.

The worst ones — the ones that would sometimes make her cry — were the posts that said she was advocating for flu shots so that other children would die from the shots and their parents would be miserable like she was.

Read the whole piece, because it gets much worse. For example:

"I hope they stone you to death," another Facebook user wrote. "I'll make a special trip to happily watch your head crack. The parents of the children you are destroying should each get a chance. Like a nazi piñata."



Committee for Skeptical Inquiry

promotes science and scientific inquiry, critical thinking, science education,

and the use of reason in examining important issues. It encourages the critical investigation of controversial or extraordinary claims from a responsible, scientific point of view and disseminates factual information about the results of such inquiries to the scientific community, the media, and the public. *Click the magazine cover logo to subscribe.*

Canada's *Waterloo Region Record* worries that there's not enough being done to **counter anti-vaxxers' propaganda**:

...what makes the situation more frightening and surely more dangerous for the entire public is that more and more parents are turning to utterly useless but readily available homeopathic remedies.

No, no no. These parents are wrong if they think they're protecting their daughters and sons by giving them products such as homeopathic "nosodes" instead of having them inoculated with safe, effective government-approved vaccines.

Italian far-right politician Massimiliano Fedriga is an outspoken opponent of mandated vaccinations, calling them "Stalinist." **He's been hospitalized with chicken pox.** He's doing fine, and doesn't appreciate your schadenfreude.

Voice of San Diego reports that there is one single doctor, Dr. Tara Zandvliet, who is responsible for authorizing **almost one-third** of all the San Diego school district's medical exemptions to vaccinations. Zandvliet, however, is not anti-vax (she says), but seems to just have a much lower threshold for exemptions, including a family history of allergic reactions.

West Virginia's attorney general has **filed a novel suit** against the state's Catholic diocese: consumer fraud. NYT reports:

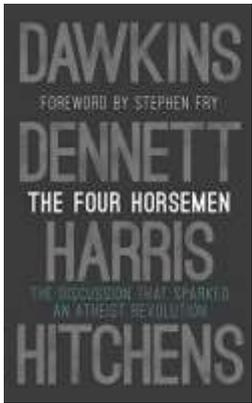
The West Virginia approach alleges that the diocese and bishop "knowingly employed pedophiles" at Catholic schools and camps but did not disclose to parents the "danger" of sending their children to these programs, which advertised safe environments. The suit also says that church officials did not conduct adequate background checks for employees of Catholic schools and camps.

"We believe that every parent who paid tuition for a service that falls under consumer protection laws deserves to know the schools their children are attending are safe," the West Virginia attorney general Patrick Morrissey said in a phone interview. "The church itself advertised that these children would be in a safe environment."

Recommended Reading

Click on the book's **image** for more info

Curran reveals how this son of devoutly Catholic parents came to question the existence of God and how, from that radical premise, Diderot went on to question the legitimacy of the established church, the monarchy, sexual mores, aristocratic privileges, the slave trade and European colonization...Indeed, readers of this biography are likely to be impressed by the scope of Diderot's thought and by his courage, as he risked persecution to ask and answer taboo questions, thereby making it easier, and safer, for us to do the same."

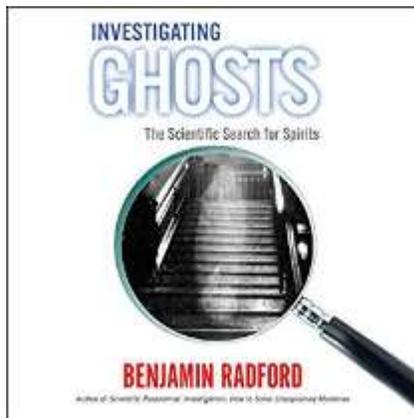


It's hard to believe, but "the four horsemen of atheism"—Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris—only ever found themselves in the same room at the same time once. In 2007, the quartet gathered to film a two-hour conversation on what was then the beginnings of "new atheism" and a paradigm shift in the public perception of both atheism and extremist religious belief.

Twelve years later, the full transcript of that landmark conversation is now finally available in book form. The Four Horsemen: The Discussion That Sparked an Atheist Revolution also includes new essays from the three surviving participants (Christopher Hitchens died in December of 2011) as well as a brilliant foreword provided by the inimitable Stephen Fry.

All proceeds benefit the Center for Inquiry, so get your copy now in print and ebook formats.

Ghosts have fascinated and haunted us for millennia. They appear in our campfire tales, films, books, and television shows as well as in our dreams and nightmares. Despite widespread belief in spirits and the popularity of television ghost hunting shows, scientific evidence for them remains elusive. Investigating Ghosts is the first book to examine the history and techniques of ghost hunting from folkloric, scientific, and sociocultural perspectives.



Colonel Kate Germano was an exceptional highly accomplished leader. The women recruits she trained excelled, equaling men. Her bosses didn't like that. Then the Marines fired her.

At a time when women are fighting sexism and systemic bias in many sectors of society, Germano's experience has wide-ranging implications and lessons--not just for the military but also for corporate America, the labor force, education, and government.



The Matt Cooper

Humanist Lending Library

Humanist Society members can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to marios_psomas@hotmail.com Then pick it up at the next meeting. **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated.

TITLE AUTHOR

1. The Expanding Circle Peter Singer
2. In Gods we Trust Scott Atran
3. Why Evolution is True Jerry Coyne
4. The Second World Panag Khanna
5. Denialism Michael Specter
6. The Selfish Gene Richard Dawkins
7. Democracy Incorporated Sheldon Wolin
8. The Upside Irrationality Dan Ariely
9. The End of Growth Richard Heinberg
10. The God Delusion Richard Dawkins
11. All That We Share Jay Wallgasper
12. Sex, Time, and Power Leonard Shlain
13. Sex at Dawn C. Ryan, & C. Jetha
14. What liberal Media Eric Alderman
15. The End of Faith Sam Harris
16. Plan B Lester Brown
17. The Portable Atheist Christopher Hitchens
18. Open Society George Soros
19. Non Believer Nation David Niose
20. God on Trial Peter Irons
21. Natural Experiments of History Diamond-Robinson
22. The Missionary Position Christopher Hitchens
23. Life Inc Douglas Rushkoff
24. A brief History of Time Stephen Hawking
25. Breaking the Spell Daniel Dennett
26. The Philosophy of Humanism Corliss Lamont
27. The Quotable Atheist Jack Huberman
28. 50 Reasons People Believe In G.G. Harrison
29. Mathematics and Politics Alan Taylor
30. Stealing Elections John Fund
31. The God Virus Darrel Ray
32. What Every American Should Know About World Rossi
33. Imagine There's no Heaven Editors of Free Inquiry
34. Hidden Order David Friedman
35. What the Dog Saw Malcolm Gladwell
36. Sway Ori, Rom Brafman
37. The Better Angels of our Nature Steven Pinker
38. Letter to a Young Contrarian Christopher Hitchens
39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded Thomas Friedman
40. Gaming the Vote William Poundstone
41. Subversion Fable Alexa KcKearing
43. Evolution and the Big Question David Stamos
44. Why People Believe Weird Things Michael Shermer
45. The World is Curved David Snick
46. The Snow Ball Warren Buffett
47. The Moral Landscape Sam Harris
48. How We Believe Michael Shermer
49. Full House Steven Jay Gould
50. The Origins of Political Order Francis Fukuyama
51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible Isaac Asimov
52. Autobiography of Mark Twain Harriet Smith, Editor
53. Science Friction Michael Shermer
54. Genius James Gleick
55. Inevitable Illusions Piatrelli & Palmarini
56. Demon Haunted World Carl Sagan
57. Being Right Is Not Enough Paul Waldman
58. Loser Takes All Mark Crispin Miller
59. Taking Back Politics Cathy Allen
60. Spiritual Common Sense Mark Lindquist (Gift by author)
61. Autobiography of Mark Twain Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith
62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible Various
63. 12 Vol Complete Works Robert Ingersoll
64. On Religious Liberty Roger Williams & Davis
65. The God Makers Baker & Hunt
66. Inevitable Illusions M. Piattelli-Palmarini
67. Ain't Nobody's business If You Do Peter McWilliams
69. Bonk Mary Roach
70. What Money Can't Buy Michael J. Sandel
71. Financial Shenanigans Howard Shilit
72. Sex & God Darrel Ray, ED.D
73. Best American Non required Reading Dave Eagers
74. Reporting at Wit's End St. Clair McKelway
75. Corporations are not People Clements
76. Could I Vote Mormon for president? Cragun - Phillips
77. Culture of Honor Nisbett - Cohen
78. Rot on the Vine Stenes
79. Thoughts of a Freethinker New Kaye * Essential works
80. An Atheist Stranger by Herb Silverman
81. Candidate without a prayer- Herb Silverman

Evolve Fish is a source for freethought paraphernalia:

<http://evolvefish.com/>

To access more Freethought history & perspectives,

Frank Prahl's Freethought Library fpahl77@gmail.com

Recent Invocations

The year's first invocation was delivered by **Joe Reinhardt** to Largo City Council on 2/5/2019. [Watch on YouTube/ AoF](#)

Jim Peterson delivered an [invocation](#) to the Clearwater City Commission on 3/7/2019 .

Political bodies around the bay have proven that having speakers from the freethought community has been not only "safe" but positive. Democracy means rule by the people, and that means all the people.



The mission of the **Secular Coalition for Florida** is to increase the visibility of & respect for non-theistic view-points in the State, & to protect &



secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

Bill Norsworthy, is our Florida representative. Please sign up [here](#).

Volunteer activists are wanted, needed, & appreciated!

SC wants **you** to represent the voice of thousands of people of reason in the halls of power.

As our government undergoes its seemingly perpetual crises, the secular coalition is needed to remind citizens & officials alike that ours is indeed a secular society. But to preserve its character from the

St Pete Atheists // Freethought Group

Moderated by: Gary Thompson

Contact: easy8@tampabay.rr.com

On the web: <http://atheists.meetup.com/209>

- * Provide intellectual & emotional support to each other & to others in our community who share our philosophy.
- * Foster humanistic moral values & ethical behaviors.
- * Promote a naturalistic worldview wherein beliefs must be verified by a scientific examination of evidence.
- * Defend the separation of church & state *at all levels of government* as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America.
- * "To Smell the Roses Along the Way"

Next meet: Check the meetup site above.

UU Humanists of Clearwater

at 2470 Nursery Rd. in Clearwater.

Usually every 3rd Sunday at 12:30 to 1:30 pm, after UU services,
!



University of South Florida Humanities Institute

Haunted Houses

Poet **Traci Brimhall** will give a reading from her most recent book, **Saudade**. Saudade (a feeling of longing, melancholy, or nostalgia) is set in the Brazilian Amazon and is described as being one part ghost story and one part revival. Brimhall calls it "autobiomythography."

Brimhall, a 2013 National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, teaches creative writing at Kansas State University. The reading will be held on Thursday, April 18, at 6:00 p.m. in the TECO Room of the College of Education Building.



The Crafty Freethinker ...

Yorkshire lass born and bred, currently living in the Sunshine State. Maker of fine Secular Jewelry, and lifelong freethinker, my work can be seen by clicking on the image above.



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Our anxious Readers

A Humanist Discussion group in East Tampa !



UU Humanists of Tampa

Public Discussion, 2nd Wednesday eve from 7-9 PM, & on the 4th Sunday Morning 9:45-10:45.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa

Atheists of Florida,



Ed Golly, Chair - Judy Adkins, Exec. Dir.
Al Hann, Vice chair,

See [AoF Meetup](#) for details Website: <http://aof.ngo>

AoF is a comfortable & safe place in which to find rewarding new friendships, to discover hidden potentials, & make a positive contribution to your own humanity as well as that of others. We are pleased to offer legal assistance with church state separation issues as an important focus. For many people, atheism represents the most focused & powerful criticism of the philosophical world-view with which most of us were raised. It is liberating for the same reason it attracts the enmity of those who are committed to the closed & changeless narrative of unexamined traditional beliefs. JP



The Atheist Forum



Fridays 2 to 3 pm.

The broadcast is available on the internet at TanTalk1340.com, live streaming on smart phones using the "TuneIn" application, www.youtube.com/atheistforum and on the following frequencies in the Tampa Bay area –

WTAN AM 1340, WZHR AM 1400, WDCF AM 1350, WTAN FM 106.1, and WZHR FM 104.3.

Listeners can call 727-441-3000, where four lines await your call in of questions and comments. All programs are being archived on the AoF web site, www.aof.ngo. Tune in!

Subscribe to our
YouTube Channel

iTunes



March Events

[Find details by clicking here](#)

Apr 17-21, AA Nat Con Cincinnati

meetup

Be sure to check for changes and RSVP!

Apr Meet us any Friday at 12 at O'Keefes Rest. Clwrtr

Apr 21st Applebee's. Largo 5 PM See page 3 top.

Why is the FL Legislature giving our tax money to churches? Also, other questionable proposals for 2019

Annually, Atheists of Florida monitors proposed legislation for Florida. While the session doesn't begin until March 5th, there have already been almost 3000 bills filed before the senate and the house.

What are we looking for? Legislation that allows or encourages the intrusion of religion into government or citizens personal lives, bills that give tax payer dollars directly to religious institutions, and bills that prevent/minimize religious intrusion. **For a list of all the bills we are tracking, visit our website:**

<https://www.atheistsofflorida.org/florida-legislation-2019/> If you know of a bill that we are missing, please let me know at, admin@atheistsofflorida.org.

What you can do to help ensure that the FI and US constitutions are observed. If you see a bill that you are concerned about (either ensuring passage or opposing passage) please contact your representative or senator.

Not sure who represents you? – you can find out here:

Senate - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators>

House - <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/myrepresentative.aspx>.

Here are just some of the problematic bills...

Bills that allow religious intrusion:

Requiring each school to offer an elective course on the study of the bible and religion (HB 195)

Educational standards that require teaching of controversial subjects in a "balanced" manner (SB 330).

And at least two bills that would restrict a woman's reproductive health choices (SB 558, SB 792 and HB 235).

Bills that give money directly to religious institutions:

Two bills that provide funding for security at Jewish Day Schools (HB 2105 and HB 2277).

A bill to provide funding of a church expansion (because their membership has grown) (HB 2771).

A church wants funds to offer an alternative event for Halloween (HB 2137).

A church wants money to fix their parking lot (HB 3865).

And finally, a few bills that would minimize intrusion:

A bill that brings Florida into compliance with marriage equality (SB 254 and HB 6009)

Prohibits conversion therapy for children (SB 84 and HB 109); Requires public schools to teach sex education based on science (SB 926 and HB 703).

JMA

Walking Away From the Left

By Gary P. Posner

His name is Brandon Straka. He is of male gender and Caucasian pigmentation, so in this day and age his WalkAway campaign is, of course, probably unworthy of even the slightest attention. On the other hand, he is young. And gay. And (until very recently) a lifelong liberal Democrat. So even if that does not compel acceptance of his every word (in light of the Jussie Smollett fiasco), maybe his story is deserving of at least a token listen.

I don't think you will ever find Straka being interviewed, or even discussed with disgust (other than being dismissed as a Russian-supported propagandist), on CNN or MSNBC. Or ABC, CBS, or NBC. You could try randomly wading through a myriad of his YouTube videos. I happened to stumble upon him the night of March 3rd while channel surfing and stopping on the dreaded Fox News Channel in the midst of this discussion with attorney Mark Levin (tinyurl.com/Levin-Straka).

I stopped to watch because at first glance it looked to me like Levin was interviewing David Copperfield — the resemblance is uncanny. But rather than seeing someone who employs elaborate apparatus to create stunning illusions, Straka appeared to be deconstructing one — the most all-consuming one on the political landscape — with mere words. He discussed the litany of the left's indictments against "the world's biggest bigot" (Donald Trump) and, thanks to his trusted news sources, how "scared to death" he had been upon the President's election. "I really believed everything that the liberal media told me." That is, until his first inkling that the atmosphere inside the progressive bubble might contain an insalubrious smog of smoke and mirrors. That sudden insight precipitated

the strangest experience I've ever had in my life. I almost ... dissociated for a moment because there was this disconnect between my brain and my heart, because my brain was telling me, "Oh my god, I don't think [Trump really did what they said he did]." My heart was saying, "But we hate him, but we hate him, but we hate him." ... And so I couldn't reconcile within myself what had happened. ... [W]hy did CNN tell me that he did, because CNN has never lied to me before? So why did they start lying today?

Perhaps the ingredients in Straka's servings are as tainted as at Chez Jussie. If so, Straka should be shut down just as quickly. But whereas everything in Smollett's kitchen was obviously fishy from the outset, the items on Straka's menu, while alien to those with a progressive palate, may actually pass a preliminary smell test.

If you watch the first two minutes of that show and your vital signs remain stable, it's probably safe to watch another couple. And if you persevere to the 12-minute mark, you will hear him explain how "Once you see it, you can never unsee it. Once you realize what they're doing, you see it every single time." At that point, if your appetite isn't sufficiently whetted for the next course, you can certainly just ask for the check.

But since you'll probably be dining here only this once, what's the harm of hanging around and sampling the full assortment? The worst that can happen, if his story elements appear to flow coherently and his reasoning seems sound, is a brain/heart "disconnect" similar to Straka's. And as long as you make sure that your friends and family never find out ... Well, maybe it's not really worth the risk after all.

Freethought News and its editors welcome well-reasoned opinion pieces and comments, as well as your original articles, observations, and paid advertisement. We reserve the right to edit submissions or to not print them. All submissions must be signed and contain contact information, and not be copyrighted material by other creators.

Evolution, illustrated: Study captures one of the clearest pictures yet of evolution in vertebrates

January 31, 2019, Harvard University

What do you get when you put together several tons of steel plates, hundreds of mice, a few evolutionary and molecular biologists and a tiny Nebraska town near the South Dakota border? One of the most complete pictures ever of **vertebrate evolution**?

Led by Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology and Molecular and Cellular Biology Hopi Hoekstra, a team of international researchers conducted a years-long study in which hundreds of **mice** were released into massive, custom-built outdoor enclosures to track how light- and dark-colored mice survived in light- and dark-colored habitats.

The results not only confirmed the intuition that light-colored mice survive better in light-colored habitats, and vice versa for dark-colored mice, but also allowed researchers to pinpoint a mutation related to survival, specifically that affects pigmentation, and understand exactly how the mutation produced a novel coat color. The study is described in a February 1 paper published in *Science*.

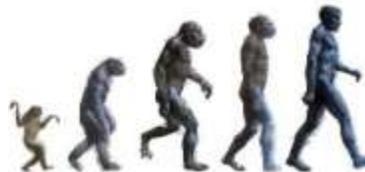
"This project has been many years in the making, and part of the inspiration for it came from the experimental evolution studies people have been doing for many years now using microbes in the lab," Hoekstra said. "The idea has been that you start with a particular population, genotype it, and then give it environmental challenges and watch how the population evolves over generations. Then you genotype it at the end and you can see, at the genetic level, what changes.

"We were interested in replicating that approach but doing it in vertebrates, and doing it in a natural environment," she continued. "And letting them evolve in habitats that—importantly—are open to predators, or at least visually hunting, avian predators."

To do it, then postdoctoral fellow Rowan Barrett (now a faculty at McGill University) and colleagues traveled to the tiny town of Valentine, Nebraska in order to take advantage of an important natural habitat—the Sand Hills.

As early as the 1930s, Hoekstra said, it had been observed that mice living in the sand hills—a large area of contiguous sand dunes with sandy, light-colored soil—were lighter in color than those living in the surrounding areas with dark, loamy soil.

Ultimately, though, Hoekstra said the study offers an important—and importantly complete—picture of how evolution works in mammals.



"What I like about this study is it starts at the organismal level and goes all the way down to a mutation, and understanding how, precisely, that mutation leads to a change in phenotype and how that change leads to survival differences in the wild," she said. "So I think this is a very satisfying illustration of the full process of evolution." *Read the rest at:* <http://bit.ly/2Ffh2S>

Tampa Bay Thinkers



Discussing serious matters since 2008.
Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa,
 every 2nd Monday, monthly at 7 PM.

Monday, April 8, 2019

**Topic: What Responsibility does
 the News Media have to the
 Public?**

See our Meetup site: [www.meetup.com/
 tampa-bay-thinkers/](http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/) for more info.

Humanist Families of Greater Tampa

Jennifer Hancock started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year.

There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly Humanist Way of life. Jennifer is author of several books including: *The Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, & her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine*.

Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize & enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings & Manatee/Sarasota area outings every month.

Throughout the year we host parties like Darwin Day in February, World Humanist Day in June, Freethought Day at Disney in October & Carl Sagan Day in November. Among our spin off groups, is a Parenting Beyond Belief group which gets together to discuss the challenges of raising children without religion. We are on **Facebook**.

See more at: <http://www.Jen-Hancock.com>.



USF Freethinkers

Join Freethinkers@USF for

genuine, conversational discourse & a communal atmosphere.

Freethinkers@USF is a cosmopolitan collective of USF students promoting critical thinking & pluralism through dialogue & reasonable inquiry. Join the official group and vote on upcoming discussions:

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/
 FreethinkersUSF/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/FreethinkersUSF/) for more information.
 contact: fadibitar@mail.usf

TB-CoR Welcomes

Ethical Humanism

Ethical Humanism, also called Ethical Culture, is an evolving body of ideas that inspires Ethical Societies. Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity (**Humanist Manifesto III**). For Ethical Humanists, the ultimate religious questions are not about the existence of gods or an afterlife, but rather, "How can we create meaningfulness in this life?" and "How should we treat each other?" The American Ethical Union was founded in 1877 by Felix Adler in New York, and currently has over 30 member societies.

Organizer **Bart Worden** hopes to get a local Meetup group started soon. Watch these pages.



Tampa Bay Technology Center & Thinkers Salon



*We repair our member's
 computers - Free!*

Lectures, discussions, & hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. Our new address is 2189 Cleveland Street, Suite 229, Clearwater FL 33765. [Map](#)

Check out *Thinker's Salon* a forum for serious social & scientific ideas & issues.

Find us at:
www.tampa-bay.org

The Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers



The **MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists (MASH)** community was created for atheist & secular humanist military personnel stationed at MacDill Air Force Base, their families & retired military residing in the Tampa Bay area. MASH provides a valuable & much needed resource in which you will find common ground to socialize, discuss issues, & draw emotional support from like-minded members.

Local Contact: Chris
 (christbrown@yahoo.com)
 MSgt, USAF (Retired)

Co-Organizer:

**MacDill Atheists & Secular
 Humanists (MASH) MacDill AFB**



Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Join the Freethought Organizations of the Tampa Bay Area: groups that promote serious secular discussion & activity about important issues in our area & beyond.

Substantive & exciting new activities are now offered to the Tampa Bay area that were not possible for most organizations before.

Every year we sponsor events as Darwin Day in February, Solstice day in December, and other activities all year long.

We are especially grateful to the national office of the United Coalition of Reason & its director, Sarah Levin.

You may recall that UCoR was the major impetus to getting a large number of billboards erected in Tampa Bay & across the nation with such messages as "You can be good without God. Millions are!"

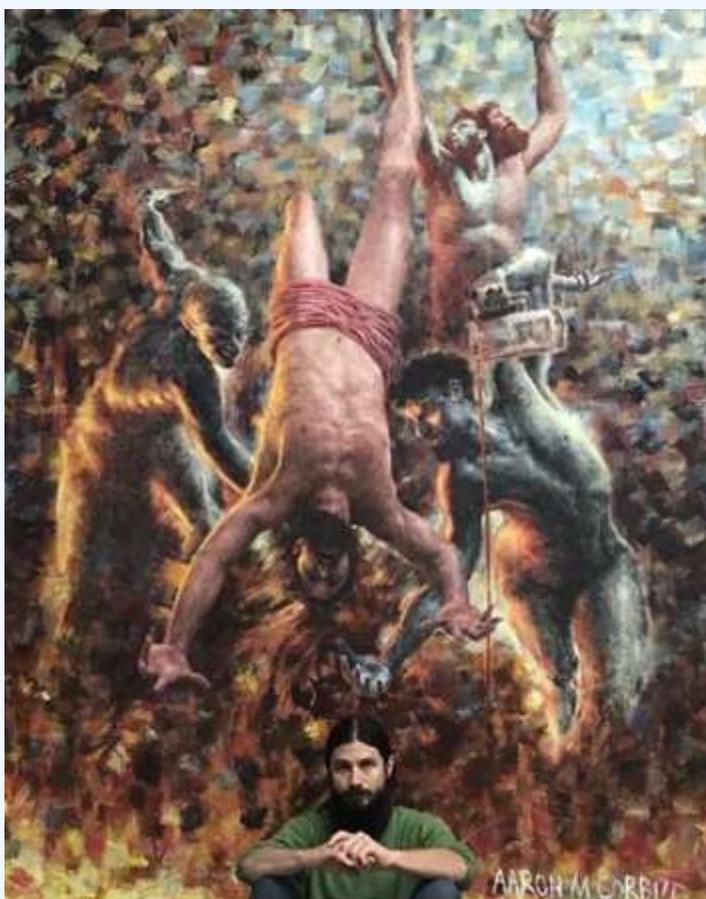
TBCoR is an alliance of groups identified with the secular / freethought / Humanist / Atheist movement.

As this momentum continues to grow, we will keep you informed of developments .
JP

Contact: tbcor@metrodirect.net
Or see, <http://tampabaycor.org/>
Or, <https://unitedcor.org/coalition-of-reason/tampa-bay/>

Lakeland Artist forced to remove work by "offended" religious Zealots

It is with a heavy heart that I've discovered my tapestry painting "the fall of Dionysus" must be taken down due to complaints that it is "satanic". I would like to publicly apologize for anyone who is offended by this piece, and also to state that never in my career would I intentionally insult or offend a religion or culture with my artwork. My intentions for this painting were strictly personal, dealing only with my abuse with alcohol that led me to a downward spiral that almost cost me everything, my friends, my family, my beautiful dear wife, and ultimately my own life. The figure of Dionysus falling is a self portrait, although dramatized, as all the other figures in the painting represent aspects of my psyche. The figures in the far upper right represents the conflict to reach for higher meaning in life, the scary looking dudes at the bottom represent the damage I've caused myself with delusions and negligence. In today's society the Dionysus myth is illuminated as manly, tough, courageous, but alcohol abuse is anything but that. This painting was salvation for me, the emotional impact was almost devastating to relive all the horror I've put myself and others through. Please help me share this, so that maybe my community will better understand a perspective they hadn't seen before. This painting was forged from love. Sorry again to those who were offended. [Aaron M Corbitt](#)



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Chris Brown,
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Failed Economics from page 5

Furthermore, neo-classical economic theory discounts the poor, since they don't add much to economic growth. For example, Nordhaus dismisses the global heating threat to agriculture, forestry, and fishing because these enterprises contribute only about 4% of global GDP. Should food production decline, starvation in poor nations will hardly impact global GDP. Furthermore, these economists discount the entire biosphere — insects, birds, whales, forests, rivers, and dying coral reefs. The thousands of species that go extinct each year due to human activity don't matter since they were not, allegedly, adding anything to human economics or well-being. This suite of discounts bolsters the Nordhaus argument that slowing carbon emissions is not important.



In a 1992 paper, Nordhaus feigned to take the 1972 **Limits to Growth** study seriously, while **shrewdly mocking the study**, referring to its acceptance by the “popular imagination” and by “the anti-growth school ... of pessimism,” wherein people “fretted” over trivialities such as “climates overheated by greenhouse gases.” Meanwhile, he implied that sophisticated economists, such as himself, understood that “an efficiently managed economy need not fear ... resource exhaustion,” nuclear meltdowns, or global heating.

By insisting on linear, simplified economic models, dismissing biophysical limits as trivial, status quo economists ignore the way dynamic living systems actually function. Biological growth in living ecological system necessarily encounters complex interactions, resource depletion, population limits, waste recycling, feedbacks, and system-changing tipping points. All of this remains virtually absent in Nordhaus and most of modern economics.



Annual Carl Sagan Day Picnic (2019)

Takes place on Sunday, **April 7, 2019**
at Turtle Beach Pavilion

Located at 8918 Midnite Pass Rd, Siesta Key, FL [Map](#)
Click [here for more info](#)

Keeping up with Jennifer... *Thinking Freely Speaking Out*



Evidence Based Solutions in the workplace

Anyone involved in HR and Diversity Issues knows - what we are doing isn't really working. We still have bias. We still have discrimination. We still have problems with inclusion. And none of the initiatives seem to make a dent. Some do, in specific cases, but as a problem plaguing society and our workplace, it's pretty sticky.



This is why I want to share the Evidence Based D&I HR Magazine [article](#).

We need to use more science to help us solve these problems. One of the ways we try to solve D&I problems is by compiling reports about experiences of black, Asian, minority and ethnic people in organizations to ask about their experiences. And these stories are useful to help us understand the impact of the dynamics and experiences that people are having in an organization.

What this doesn't do is help us come up with solutions to fix them. It is simply not enough to tell stories to try and get people to care. There are other sciences we can bring in to help us. Like, behavioral science, or sociology or psychology.

Another thing that won't work is "solutioneering" which I refer to as proxy problems. Where people decide that the problem is we have not instituted a particular solution. When that might not be the problem at all.

One of these "solutions" is unconscious bias training. But the evidence is that this training doesn't actually change behavior. There are several reasons why that is the case - one of which is what I teach - the science of how behaviors actually change.

The advice they give is please don't just act so you can be seen to be doing something. Do something that will actually work. This requires decision makes to be conscientious, explicit and judicious in seeking out and using evidence to design your intervention.

My courses are online at: <https://humanistlearning.com>

Thanks and take care. *Jennifer Hancock*



Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – April, 2019 Calendar

This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when & where We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions.
 Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson. Your RSVP is requested, & often is required for admittance.
 See our Meetup site for more: www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason



Various Sundays, 2 PM; & Friday nights	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Freethought Social & Godless Friday Night	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to RSVP: http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I	             
TBA – various activities	TRI-COUNTY – Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details & RSVP: http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup	
TBA – various activities	S TAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics, Inc..	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I	
2nd Saturday, 2 PM see Pg. 2 3rd Sunday -Dinner see Pg. 3.	DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists Now on the 2nd Saturday at 2 PM !	
3rd Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER– UU Clearwater Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists	
TBA – various activities at MOSI	E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource Society (MARS) at MOSI	Details & RSVP: http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi Other events: http://bit.ly/MARS-home	
TBA - numerous events— this semester	E. TAMPA– Humanities Institute at USF	See Web site for full listing of many events & calendar. http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities Locations vary! Page 11.	
4th Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper	RSVP is required. Seating is limited to 25! <i>For CFI & TBS paid members.</i> http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I	
3rd Saturday, 11 AM	N TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & RSVP: No program this month! http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists	
Various Saturdays	NE CLEARWATER – CFI Readers Book Discussion	Limited to <i>10 paid-up CFI members.</i> RSVP is required. Must have read the book under discussion to attend. http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I	
3rd Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH– Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers	
4 th Friday, 8 PM general meeting. Many more events monthly.	ST. PETERSBURG– Astronomy Club	For several dates, locations, & details: http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar	
Various Saturdays/Sundays plus various other times/ venues	TAMPA BAY REGION– Center for Inquiry Tampa Bay	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I	
TBA – various activities	TAMPA BAY REGION– Humanist Families	RSVP here: Family outings & other activities. Details & RSVP: http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN	

2019 Freethought Cruise

Nassau-Cuba itinerary. For more details: P. [16](#) or, www.freethoughtcruise.com. Departs March 21.



Read more on the web at: www.tampabaycor.net

The Green New Deal - Explained

When the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published their latest report in October, the message was stark: if the planet wants to avert dangerous climate breakdown, we need to cut emissions in half by 2030, and hit net zero by the middle of the century.

It would be difficult to overstate how dramatic this trajectory is. It represents a total and rapid reversal of our present direction as a civilization. We've built up a global energy infrastructure around fossil fuels over 200 years, and now we need to completely transform it in 30.

The only way to accomplish this feat is with coordinated government action on a massive scale. Proponents of the US's Green New Deal idea have it right: we need to pump public investment into churning out solar panels, wind turbines and batteries at a historically unprecedented rate, reminiscent of the industrial retooling that enabled the allies to win the second world war.

But even this won't be enough, in and of itself. There's something missing from the Green New Deal strategy – and it could turn out to be a fatal flaw.

The problem with the existing plan is that it doesn't address the paradox of growing energy demand. Over the past few years, scientists have been warning that we may fail to reach our climate goals even with the most aggressive efforts, because global economic growth is driving energy demand up at a pace that's outstripping our ability to install clean power.

Today the world is producing 8bn more megawatt hours of clean energy each year than in 2000. That's a lot – enough to power all of Russia. But over exactly the same period, economic growth has caused energy demand to increase by a staggering 48bn megawatt hours. In other words, all that new clean energy we've rolled out covers only a small fraction of new demand. That's why emissions keep rising. It's like shoveling sand into a hole that just keeps getting bigger.

This problem is going to eventually cripple us. If we continue growing the global economy at existing rates, it will nearly triple in size by the middle of the century. That's three times more production and consumption than we're already doing – which will require nearly three times more energy. It will be difficult enough for us to decarbonize the existing global economy – virtually impossible to do it three times over.

Our obsession with economic growth is making our task much more difficult than it needs to be. It's like we've chosen to fight this battle facing uphill, with one hand tied

behind our back.

There's an easier way. The recent IPCC report points out that to have a realistic chance at staying under 1.5C, we need to scale down energy demand. The scenario it proposes – developed by an international team of scientists – calls for high-income nations like Britain and the US to significantly reduce their consumption of material stuff.

Right now, rich nations devour 28 tonnes of material per person per year – including everything from fish to forests, plastics to metals. That's four times more than ecologists say is sustainable. It requires an extraordinary amount of energy to extract, produce and transport all that stuff. By using less of it, we can shrink global energy demand and make it much easier to decarbonize the economy.



'We could tax red meat to promote a shift to less resource-intensive foods, and ban single-use plastics and disposable coffee cups.' Plastic waste at a recycling plant. Photograph: Clemens Bilan/EPA

This isn't just about convincing individuals to lead simpler lives, although of course we need that. It's about changing the way our economy operates – liberating ourselves from the irrational imperative to grow material use unnecessarily.

How can we do this? One way is to legislate extended warranties on products, so washing machines and refrigerators last for 30 years instead of 10. Another is to ban planned obsolescence, so manufacturers can't create products that are designed to fail. And we could introduce a "right to repair" so we can get our smartphones and blenders fixed cheaply when they break down rather than having to buy new ones.

Continued on page [20](#)

Green New Deal *Continued from page 19*

We could also cut down on waste by banning food from landfill (as South Korea and France are doing). We could tax red meat to promote a shift to less resource-intensive foods, and ban single-use plastics and disposable coffee cups. We could liberate public spaces from advertising (like São Paulo has done) to free us from the psychological pressures of having to buy stuff just to feel good about ourselves. And we can expand access to public goods and develop platforms for sharing things like cars and lawnmowers.

All of these measures would dramatically reduce material consumption, without any loss to our wellbeing. But to really make it work, we need to get straight to the heart of the issue: put a cap on annual material use and tighten it year on year, down to 8 tons per capita by the middle of the century. This will change incentives across the economy – reorienting people and business toward long-lasting, repairable and recyclable products.

By dramatically reducing energy demand, this approach will give us a good shot at accomplishing our climate goals.



What's exciting about this is that it doesn't just help us avert climate breakdown. It also provides our best hope of reversing other aspects of ecological collapse – from deforestation to soil depletion, from biodiversity loss to insect die-off. Reducing our material impact on the Earth means freeing up more space for other living systems to recover and thrive.

We need to do everything we can to transition to clean energy, yes. But we'll only succeed if we reduce the amount of energy we consume in the first place, rather than continuing to grow it. The science is clear: scaling down material use must be at the core of the Green New Deal – and at the center of our climate policy.

Jason Hickel, PCI



DISEASES ERADICATED OR DECIMATED



BY SCIENCE:

1. CHICKEN POX
2. DIPHTHERIA
3. MEASLES
4. POLIO
5. SMALLPOX
6. PNEUMOCOCCAL DISEASE
7. PERTUSSIS
8. TETANUS
9. TYPHOID FEVER
10. YELLOW FEVER



BY RELIGION: PRAYER/FAITH...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

CENTERING the MARGINS

A Summit for **BIPOC & LGBTQ Nontheists**



We are only four days away from our first ever conference for LGBTQ humanists, nontheists, agnostics, and freethinkers.

Centering the Margins will take place at the Washington Ethical Society in DC on Saturday, March 30 from 9:00 am – 6:30 pm.

Speakers include:

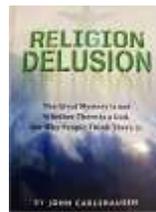
- co-founder and lead organizer of Black Lives Matter Houston **Ashton P. Woods**
- vice president of programs for American Atheists **Debbie Goddard**
- local professor of philosophy **Gerrard Davis**
- organizing member of One Struggle Kansas City in the Movement for Black Lives, **Lucky Garcia**
- mental health and advocacy expert, **Sonjiah V. Davis**, LICSW, LCSW-C
- and more!

The event, which will center Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), also includes racial justice caucuses for BIPOC and White attendees.

[The full program can be read here.](#)

Please help us spread the word by [sharing information about the conference](#) with members of your community.

[Tickets are available on Eventbrite.](#)



A book about the folly of Religion. Folly is described in the Dictionary as being foolish, lack of sense and unwise conduct. This describes Religion perfectly. Click image at left for Amazon.



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