

# The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

# Freethought News

See Pg 6

Vol. 4 No. 1 January, 2015 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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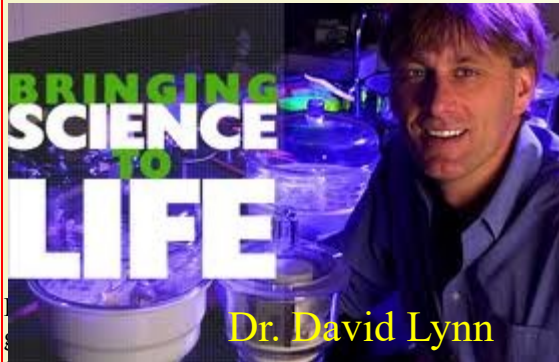
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\* Member organizations



## Darwin Day 2015

Will be on February 7th 2015 at the Octagon of the UU Clearwater Facility.



on our planet have propelled him into the front ranks of biological science.

**Dr. Elaine Hull** from FSU will discuss her investigations into the question of whether we are intrinsically wired for religion.

Also, we will hear from **Herb Silverman**, whose notable achievements in South Carolina politics are a source of encouragement and humor.

All our speakers will bring a greater and more useful understanding of the human condition.

**Tickets** are available now from our member organizations. **You'll never spend a better \$25.**

**Remember, this is your chance to evolve!**

For more information, or to **purchase tickets online**, see: [www.evolutetampa.com](http://www.evolutetampa.com)



Bill Cooper, Ed Golly, Dawn Cooper, Marie Cooper

## Ed Golly Awarded

the first *Matt Cooper Memorial Freethought Service* recognition by CoR on December 6th at our annual banquet. He was recognized for his staunch advocacy in the freethought movement, and given a standing ovation by those present.

## Local Initiative aims at overthrow of antique Blue Laws in Tampa.

Sarasota and Key West have repealed their outdated "BlueLaws", let's do the same. Consumers throughout Tampa deserve the right to shop when it is convenient for them, not to be limited by antique, religiously inspired reg



win votes for catering politicians. Tampa is an international city, hosting many visitors from all over the world. Exceptions have already been made for Tampa International Airport and sporting events. Tampa aspires to be a modern, sophisticated and fun city; we need to simplify our ordinances to be one.

Go to this [petition site](#) to sign up. This campaign was created by members of AoF.

## Directory

Tampa Bay  
Coalition of Reason

Calendar  
[Rick O'Keefe](#)

Web site  
Jim Peterson

Newsletter  
[Jim Peterson](#)

Special Projects  
Mark Brandt





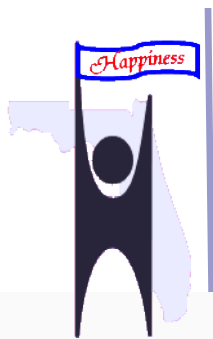
# Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – January, 2015 Calendar

This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where .... We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

**Organizers of these events will be most grateful to all who have the courtesy to RSVP for those events that require it.**



|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01-18, Sunday, 5 PM   | <b>PINELLAS COUNTY</b> - Humanist Society Moveable Feast Members welcome.                                 | This month's selection: see Page 4 Please RSVP to the address given on pg. 4  |    |
| 01-TBA–See Spring calendar next issue.                              | <b>TAMPA</b><br>Humanities Institute at USF   | See <a href="#">Web site</a> for full listing of many great events and calendar. Many fabulous speakers all in one month! See page 7.   |    |
| 01-TBA–See the Meetup for update                                    | <b>Central Pinellas</b> Skeptics in the Pub at the Creole Café,   | Skeptical activities and critical thinking. Click <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/</a>   |    |
| 01-TBA–See the UUC calendar   | <b>CLEARWATER</b> –<br>UU Humanists,  | <b>regular Sunday meeting:</b> <a href="http://www.uuc.org/">http://www.uuc.org/</a><br>See page 7 for more info on <b>UU Humanists</b>   |    |
| 01-03, Saturday, 2:00 PM<br>Topic: Life on other Worlds             | <b>CLEARWATER</b> -<br>Humanist Society of the Suncoast   | Lectures & discussions. To RSVP: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/">http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/</a>  |    |
| 01-09 & 10 See Web site   | <b>TAMPA</b> - M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club at MOSI  | See <b>Web site</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/">http://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/</a> for all details.  |    |
| 01-11 & 23,<br>Usually 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday gen'l. mtg.           | <b>ST. PETERSBURG</b> -<br>Astronomy Club   | For several dates, location, & and details: <a href="http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php">http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php</a>   |    |
| 01-11, Sunday, 7 PM   | <b>BRANDON</b> –<br>Brandon Atheists  | Atheists in the Pub. <b>RSVP</b> .<br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/</a>   |   |
| 01-11, Sunday, 1:30 PM  | <b>TAMPA</b> - See page 6 for details<br><a href="#">Atheists</a> of <a href="#">Florida</a> , Inc.       | More: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/</a>   |  |
| 01-17, Saturday, 11:30 PM<br>Usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday       | <b>TAMPA</b> –<br>Tampa Humanist Association  | Details: Page 5, or see our Meetup <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association</a>  |  |
| 01-18, Sunday, 2 PM<br>Usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month | <b>BRANDON</b> –CFI Skeptics &<br>Humanists   | Lunch & discussion. Click to <b>RSVP</b><br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>   |  |
| 01-19, Monday, 7 PM   | <b>NW HILLSBOROUGH /<br/>CARROLLWOOD</b> –<br>Tampa Bay Thinkers  | Lively discussions. For topic, see page 10.<br>RSVP at Web site: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP">http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP</a>  |  |
| 01-19, Monday, 11:30 AM<br>MLK-Ringling Museum of Art               | <b>BRADENTON- SARASOTA</b><br>Humanist Families of Tampa Bay  | Family outings and other activities. See page 13<br><a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa">www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa</a><br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/Humanist-Families-of-Greater-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/Humanist-Families-of-Greater-Tampa-Bay/</a> |  |
| 01-24, Saturday, 10:30 AM<br>Must have read the book to attend      | <b>NW HILLSBOROUGH / WESTCHASE</b><br>–<br>CFI Readers Book Discussion (Limit 12)                         | Book lovers meet monthly to discuss books we've read<br><b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>   |  |
| 01-25, Monday, 10:30 AM   | <b>SARASOTA</b> -<br>Humanists of Sarasota Bay  | Variouis locations and activities during the month.<br>See <a href="http://husbay.org/">http://husbay.org/</a> for more info.   |  |
| 01-26, Monday, 6 PM   | <b>N. PINELLAS AREA</b> -<br>CFI Skeptics/Humanists Supper  | <b>RSVP is required</b> if you are coming. <i>Seating is limited to 20!</i> Click here <i>before</i> midnight, Sunday.<br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>   |  |
| 01-28, Wednesday, 6:30 PM<br>Dinner & discussion                    | <b>PALM HARBOR</b> - See page 6 for details<br><a href="#">Atheists</a> of <a href="#">Florida</a> , Inc. | Details:<br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay</a>   |  |
| 01-TBA, Saturday, 11:00 AM  | <b>CLEARWATER</b> –<br>Tampa Bay Skeptics   | Skeptical activities and critical thinking. Click to <b>RSVP</b><br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/</a>   |  |
| 02-TBA, Saturday, 11:00 AM  | <b>TAMPA</b><br>Center for Inquiry–Tampa Bay  | Details & RSVP:<br><a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>  |  |



# The Humanist Society<sup>3</sup> of the Suncoast News

An Epicurean society dedicated to the proposition that the fully examined life is worth living well.  
Associate organization of the Humanists of Florida, the AHA, COR, and CSH. Find us at [www.suncoasthumanist.com](http://www.suncoasthumanist.com)

Volume 23 No. 1 January, 2015

December and January  
mark the Time to

## ~ Join or Renew ~

Your Humanist Society of the Suncoast  
Annual Dues.

\_\_ Trial -3 month- free news

\_\_ Regular -\$25.

\_\_ Reg. Couple -\$30.

\_\_ **Supporter -\$35/45 (W/ pin)**

\_\_ Life -\$200.

\_\_ Life Couple -\$250.

\_\_ Associate -\$10.



Your membership helps keep Humanism alive and 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 and enables us to support larger and more exciting programs.

If you have questions concerning your dues or status, contact our treasurer, [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com)

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address -if new : \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\* \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

(Privacy respected)

Send tax deductible (501c3) dues to:

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



\*= optional

### Learning from the Past to Influence the Future

Applying Archaeology to Solve Modern Dilemmas

We often hear lip service paid to George Santayana's warning, "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." But seldom do we hear of the applicable solutions to our foibles.



Archaeologist, Naturalist and Certified Permaculture Designer, **Jay Hardman** will present a program on the prehistory of anthropogenic (human created) soil. He will show how ancient practices, adapted through the use of more modern technology and broad scale practices, presents enormous potential for real world solutions. Through petrochemical-free horticultural practices, the sequestration of carbon residue in soils for millennia, and other permaculture solutions, multiple vexing modern issues, can be addressed.

Our immediate, small scale, local applications today will serve as crucibles (pun intended) for industrial farming applicability into the new paradigm of the future. An introduction to Permaculture (permanent culture/agriculture) and examples of user friendly, low-tech options for the backyard farmer/inventor will be offered. What will this mean for a more humanistic world? Group discussion will follow and is encouraged.

Our **annual election** has been delayed several times by library closings, but is now scheduled for this January meeting. If you would like to participate in the governance of our little group, just be nominated, or nominate yourself. You have to be a paid member for at least a year. The board regularly meets three times a year, and serves with enthusiasm but no pay except the gratitude of members.



**Food: the first kindness. Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings.**

An important measure of this concern is care for the physical well being of others. As reactionaries in congress vote to cut the budget for food stamps and other key supports, there is increasing hunger here in our community. Thanks to **Glenn Paul**, chair. Ed Note: Glenn needs assistance. **We need volunteers!** See a board member. Or write to [jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com) Thanx.

Please join us at  
2 PM Jan 3rd  
at  
The Clearwater  
Countryside  
Library 2741  
State Rd. 580  
Clearwater, FL  
33761

Many members  
go to dinner  
afterwards at the  
Dennys on US-19.  
**Alternative venue  
ideas welcome!**





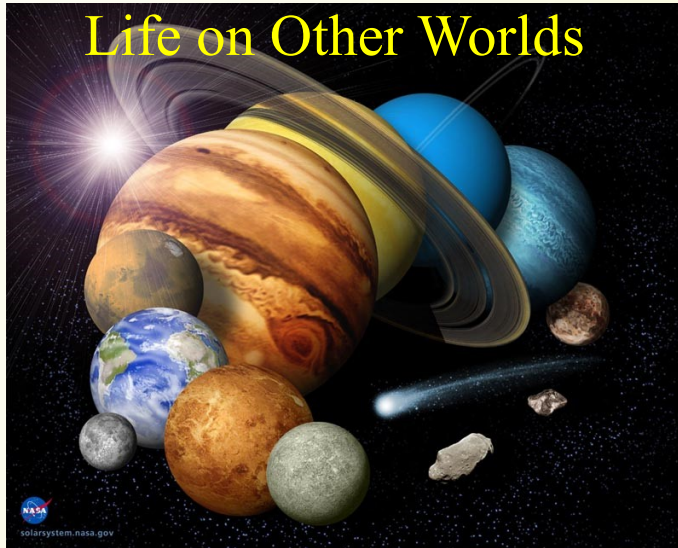
## Tampa Humanist Association

Meets every third Saturday at, 11:00 AM in  
**The North Tampa Public Library**  
8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604 [Map](#)

Meets January 17th



Dr. Jonathan Smith



As President of Florida Citizens for Science, Dr. Smith has dealt with many strange forms of life, most notably in the Florida legislature. This time however he will be using his professional experience to discuss more interesting (and likely more intelligent) forms as they might arise elsewhere in the universe. You might not want to miss this discussion, which involves an essential aspect of our evolving cosmos, of which we ourselves are an example.

Dr. Smith is president of the Florida Citizens for Science, whose mission statement gives a fairly comprehensive idea of their purpose:

Florida Citizens for Science is a statewide, nonprofit, grass-roots organization made up of those who wish to help our state develop and maintain the highest educational standards. We support science-based curricula, textbooks, testing methods and appropriately trained teachers to provide students with the analytical skills and understanding necessary for the good of our communities, our state, our country and our world. We welcome members with different political views, religions and philosophies, but maintain that the proper focus of science education is the study of the natural world through observation, testing and analysis.



## The Practical Urgency of Science 5

All around us we find an astonishing array of charlatans in all fields of human endeavor. We find people making money out of scams such as weight loss programs, miracle cures for cancer and diabetes, and inheritance and investment scams.

We encounter people who seriously believe that prayer can cure cancer, solve their financial problems and even make it rain in a particular location.

Of course it is much easier to pull this sort of trick on people who have little or no scientific training. They don't ask the questions: "What is the evidence for this claim and is the source reliable? Many people don't know what a double blind test is and don't distinguish between experimental evidence and anecdotes.

Many of these people are not fools, nor do they lack a form of education; they simply don't have even the most basic scientific background.

I have an acquaintance who has been a very successful accountant. He has informed me of his deep religious faith and also of the fact that he does not believe climate change is caused by human activity.

In other words he is able to accept the veracity of documents written by ancient Middle Eastern tribesmen with a personal agenda but not the word of various scientific researchers with no common agenda greater than discovery.

He subscribes to the common story that volcanic action is the cause of the carbon buildup in the atmosphere. He prefers the science of public clowns like Lord Monckton, Andrew Bolt and others.

This is why we have to hold out for improved scientific education at the earliest levels in our schools. The criteria of scientific skepticism needs to be an instrument everyone can use. It needs to be taught to students as soon as they can read, write and count. WA Humanists, Perth AU

## HUMANISTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD

The need is great. All it takes is about an hour out of a day and the commitment to show up once a week. The feeling of having helped is most gratifying. How can we as Humanists not act to impact a child in the inner city in a positive manner?

YOU can give a child a much-needed hour of personal attention that will encourage reading and just might help them to move forward while improving their self-esteem.

In Hillsborough County, contact: **Debra L. Blossom**,  
Program Manager Training and Volunteer Management  
[debra.blossom@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:debra.blossom@sdhc.k12.fl.us) 813.872-5254

Gale Barron  
[gfbshb@aol.com](mailto:gfbshb@aol.com)

## Humanist Quotes

*"That which can be asserted without evidence, can be dismissed without evidence."*

*Christopher Hitchens*

[Read more](#)



An autonomous project of the Humanist Society. Affiliate of [PCI](#)

## The Oil Price Crash of 2014

Oil prices have fallen by half since late June. This is a significant development for the oil industry and for the global economy, though no one knows exactly how either the industry or the economy will respond in the long run. Since it's almost the end of the year, perhaps this is a good time to stop and ask: (1) Why is this happening? (2) Who wins and who loses over the short term?, and (3) What will be the impacts on oil production in 2015?

### 1. Why is this happening?

Euan Mearns does a good job of explaining the oil price crash [here](#). Briefly, demand for oil is softening (notably in China, Japan, and Europe) because [economic growth is faltering](#). Meanwhile, the US is importing less petroleum because domestic supplies are increasing—almost entirely due to the frantic pace of drilling in “tight” oil fields in North Dakota and Texas, using hydrofracturing and horizontal drilling technologies—while demand has leveled off.

Usually when there is a mismatch between supply and demand in the global crude market, it is up to Saudi Arabia—the world's top exporter—to ramp production up or down in order to stabilize prices. But this time the Saudis have refused to cut back on production and have instead unilaterally cut prices to customers in Asia, evidently because the Arabian royals *want* prices low. [There is speculation](#) that the Saudis wish to punish Russia and Iran for their involvement in Syria and Iraq. Low prices have the added benefit (to Riyadh) of shaking at least some high-cost tight oil, deepwater, and tar sands producers in North America out of the market, thus enhancing Saudi market share.

The media frame this situation as an oil “glut,” but it's important to recall the bigger picture: world production of conventional oil (excluding natural gas liquids, tar sands, deepwater, and tight oil) [stopped growing in 2005](#), and has actually declined a bit since then. Nearly all supply growth has come from more costly (and more environmentally ruinous) resources such as tight oil and tar sands. Consequently, oil prices have been very high during this period (with the exception of the deepest, darkest months of the Great Recession). Even at their current depressed level of \$55 to \$60, petroleum prices are still above the [International Energy Agency's high-price scenario](#) for this period contained in forecasts issued a decade ago.

Part of the reason has to do with the fact that costs of exploration and production within the industry have risen dramatically (early this year Steve Kopits of the energy market analytic firm Douglas-Westwood estimated that [costs were rising at nearly 11 percent annually](#)).

In short, during this past decade the oil industry has entered a new regime of steeper production costs, slower supply growth, declining resource quality, and higher prices. That all-important context is largely absent from most news stories about the price plunge, but without it recent events are unintelligible. If the current oil market can be characterized as being in a state of “glut,” that simply means that at this moment, and at this price, there are more willing sellers than buyers; it shouldn't be taken as a fundamental or long-term indication of resource abundance.

### 2. Who wins and loses, short-term?

Gail Tverberg does a great job of teasing apart the likely consequences of the oil price slump [here](#). For the US, there will be some tangible benefits **Post Carbon Council...** from falling gasoline prices: motorists now have more money in their pockets to spend on Christmas gifts. However, there are also perils to the price

plunge, and the longer prices remain low, the higher the risk. For the past five years, tight oil and shale gas have been significant drivers of growth in the American economy, adding \$300 to 400 billion annually to GDP. States with active shale plays have seen a significant increase of jobs while the rest of the nation has merely sputtered along.

Other oil exporting nations with a high-price break-even point—notably Venezuela and Iran, also on Washington's enemies list—are likewise experiencing the price crash as economic catastrophe. But the pain is widely spread: Nigeria has had to redraw its government budget for next year, and [North Sea oil production is nearing a point of collapse](#).

Events are unfolding very quickly, and economic and geopolitical pressures are building. Historically, circumstances like these have sometimes led to major open conflicts, though all-out war between the US and Russia remains unthinkable due to the nuclear deterrents that both nations possess.

As [analysis by David Hughes of Post Carbon Institute](#) shows, even without the price crash production in the Bakken and Eagle Ford plays would have been expected to peak and begin a sharp decline within the next two or three years. The price crash can only hasten that inevitable inflection point.

How much and how fast will world oil production fall? [Euan Mearns offers three scenarios](#); in the most likely of these (in his opinion) world production capacity will contract by about two million barrels per day over the next two years as a result of the price collapse.

We may be witnessing one of history's little ironies: the historic commencement of an inevitable, overall, persistent decline of world liquid fuels production may be ushered in not by skyrocketing oil prices such as we saw in the 1970s or in 2008, but by a price crash that at least [some pundits are spinning as the death of “peak oil.”](#) Meanwhile, the economic and geopolitical perils of the unfolding oil price rout make expectations of business-as-usual for 2015 ring rather hollow. [Richard Heinberg, Senior Fellow](#) Click [www.tampabaypostcarbon.com](http://www.tampabaypostcarbon.com) for more. 12/14

**Tampa Bay CoR**  
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

## Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Join the Freethought Organizations in the Tampa Bay Area: Tampa Humanist Association, Humanist Society of the Suncoast, Center for Inquiry, UU Humanists Clearwater, Atheists of Florida, UU Humanists Tampa,\* Secular Student Alliance USF,\* Plus numerous Meetup organizations that promote what are essentially Freethought principles. (\*= not currently members of the Coalition)

Thus substantive and exciting new activities are offered to the Tampa Bay area that were not possible for most organizations before.

We are especially grateful to the national office of the United Coalition of Reason and its director, Jason Heap. You may recall that UCoR was the major impetus to getting a large number of billboards erected in Tampa Bay and across the nation with such messages as “You can be good without God. Millions are!”

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

As this momentum continues to grow, we will keep you informed of developments. JP Contact: [tbcor@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcor@metrodirect.net)

<http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>

## Clearwater UU Humanists

We are a group of Unitarian Universalists committed to a humanistic and non-theistic worldview. Currently, meetings are scheduled once a month and are usually held on the third Sunday of most months from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, after UU services.

The UU Humanists are open to all aspects of humanism, including investigation of religious humanism. However, the focus of the group is on secular aspects of humanism.

Programs have been well received with attendance between 50 and 75. To learn more, please contact: co-facilitators: Bill Norsworthy [bnorsworthy@verizon.net](mailto:bnorsworthy@verizon.net) Mark Brandt [mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu](mailto:mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu) Web site: [www.uuclearwater.org](http://www.uuclearwater.org)



Clearwater, Florida

Be sure to check us out during the next year, as we have some extraordinary programs and truly wonderful speakers. See page 1 for Darwin Day!

Join us for our January meeting when we will here from *Beth Ciesielski*, who will speak about her work for CFI in Romania over the past decade.

1/15



## Florida NOW

<http://www.flnow.org/>

NOW is a multi-issue political organization. NOW's self-defined role has been to initiate change for the benefit of the greatest number of people, to affect the legal and institutional structures of the society in a way that systematically expands the choices and possibilities available to all women. In this way, NOW takes action to bring women, as a class, into the mainstream of society, rather than offering aid to individual women in achieving personal solutions or temporary relief from oppression.

The Florida National Organization for Women is a group dedicated to taking action to bring ALL women into full equality and participation through changing policy, law and culture. This mission attracts women and men of diverse backgrounds and gives us the ability to look at the systemic oppression in our lives and determine actions that will bring about change for all women.

Often, we are contacted by women and men who are facing "legal" situations, or in need of help for a group or individual. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to provide direct services, and for legal reasons we can not provide referrals for lawyers or other services. If you need these services, please consider doing an internet search for local attorneys, referral services, legal aide, domestic violence shelters, or other terms that are appropriate for your individual situation. Good luck.

## FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



Recently, we got big wins from the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in two of our key cases – one challenging Florida's ban on marriages for same-sex couples, and the other challenging Florida's law that people on government assistance must submit to suspicionless urinalysis.

In our marriage case, the US supreme court has given us a final word that should allow loving same-sex couples to start getting married and having their marriages recognized in Florida as soon as Tuesday, January 6!

In the drug testing case, the Court ruled that forcing people who apply for temporary state aid to submit to an invasive and humiliating search of their bodily fluids is [an unconstitutional government search](#).

This is the fourth time a court has rejected Gov. Scott's arguments that the government can subject people to tandom searches of their bodily fluids based on nothing more than stereotypes about poor people, but Gov. Scott has stated before that he is willing to defend this plan all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. We need a strong network of supporters to help us protect these important wins from being overturned in Florida.

[Help us finish this fight and the many others that lie ahead, by pledging to stand for freedom in Florida.](#)

Thank you for standing with us.

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T PROTECT ITSELF JOIN THE ACLU



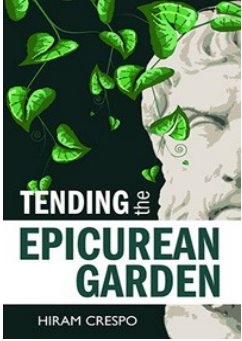
## The Humanities Institute of USF

The USF Humanities Institute, established in 2003, provides a forum where ideas are debated, values are clarified, and students, faculty, and community come together to envision a better world through scholarship, debate, and public programs.

We showcase the scholarship of USF faculty from across the disciplines, as well as hosting renowned scholars and sponsoring small conferences and symposia on topics developed with faculty and students. We are developing distinctive signature themes, and strengthening our focus on relevance and community engagement, demonstrating that the joy and challenge of the humanities belong to everyone.

As part of our mission to encourage important research in the humanities, the Institute provides summer grants for humanities-focused research projects. Following the National Endowment for the Humanities, we foster a broad and inclusive definition of humanities, to include the contributions of scholars in language, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, archaeology, religion, ethics, arts, and humanistic social sciences.

## Meaningful Books



### [Tending the Epicurean Garden](#)

By Hiram Crespo, [ebook from Humanist Press](#)

Hiram Crespo brings the Epicurean passion for maximizing happiness into the modern age with this practical guidebook. He offers a blizzard of ideas, from healthy recipes that stimulate natural “feel-good” chemicals in the brain to the journaling of positive events, even on a bad day. The highest attainable happiness, though, is communing with friends.

### [Holidays and Other Disasters](#)

By John G. Rodwan

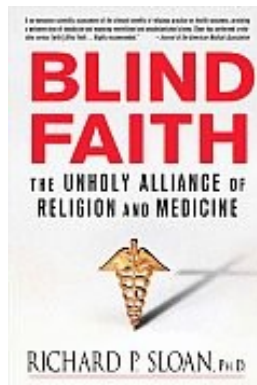
*Holiday sale offer:* [\\$4.99 ebook from Humanist Press](#)

*Holidays and Other Disasters* considers the major U.S. holidays – Easter, Christmas, Opening Day, etc. – from an atheist’s perspective. The book considers the various issues holidays raise, including race and class, and discusses other forms of expressive activity, such as literature, music and sports, along with religion and holiday rituals.



[Seasonings](#) by Humanist Society member and journalist poet, **Lula J. Dovi** has completed an illustrated chapbook of poetry reflecting on her 92 years of adventures. It is [available here](#) at Powell’s Books.

Pharmacists who refuse to fill prescriptions for contraceptives. Surgeons who pray in the OR. Pro-life clinics and end-of-life interventions, intelligent-design activists and stem-cell-research opponents. Is *this* the state of modern medicine in America? In *Blind Faith*, Dr. Richard P. Sloan examines the fragile balance and dangerous alliance between religion and medicine; two practices that have grown disconcertingly close during the twenty-first century.



**Read Humanist Periodicals:** The world’s leading minds can be read at: [The Humanist](#), [Free Inquiry](#), [Free Mind](#), [Humanist Perspectives](#), [Skeptical Inquirer](#), [Secular Humanist Bulletin](#), [The Florida Humanist Journal](#), [Skeptic](#), [Essays in Humanism](#), and many others. Look ‘em up!

**Evolve Fish is a good source for your freethought goodies:**

Pins, posters, buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, etc.

<http://evolvefish.com/>

## The Matt Cooper

### Memorial Humanist Library

Humanist Society members (only) can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to Marios Psomas at: [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto: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 Hawkins                 |
| 25. Breaking the Spell                                   | Daniel Dennett                  |
| 26. The Philosophy of Humanism                           | Corliss Lamont                  |
| 27. The Quotable Atheist                                 | Jack Huberman                   |
| 28. 50 Reasons People Give for Believing In a God.       | 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 Rest of World. | Rossi                           |
| 33. Imagine There’s no Heaven                            | Editors of Free Inquiry         |
| 34. Hidden Order   | David Friedman                  |
| 35. What the Dog Saw                                     | Malcom 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. Sex & God  | Darryl Ray                      |
| 57. Being Right Is Not Enough                            | Paul Waldman                    |
| 58. Loser Takes All                                      | Mark Crispin Miller             |
| 59. Taking Back Politics                                 | Cathy Allen                     |
| 60. What Happened in Ohio?                               | Fitrakis, Rosenfeld & Wasserman |
| 61. Autobiography of Mark Twain                          | Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith        |
| 62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible                         |                                 |
| 63. Database Systems (Complete Ver.)                     | Kifer, Bernstein, & Lewis       |
| 64. Reluctant Database Administrators                    | Josef Finsel                    |
| 65. Asimov’s Guide to the Bible                          | Isaac Asimov                    |
| 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?                   | Cragnun – Phillips              |
| 77. Culture of Honor                                     | Nisbett – Cohen                 |
| 78. Rot on the Vine                                      | Stenesh                         |



# Florida Atheists



Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Judy Adkins

Join our Tampa chapter on **Sunday, Jan 11**.  
See the [AoF Meetup](#) for more information.

JOIN US - AoF meeting information can be found at our Meetup site and more information about the organization can be found on our [website](#) and on our [Facebook page](#).

**Soon you will be able to subscribe to AoF's news service, keeping you informed of matters of importance to the freethought, secular community.**

AoF is a comfortable and safe place in which to find rewarding new friendships, to discover hidden potentials, and 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.

Look for exciting new programs and internet webcasts (audio & video). Let us know if you wish to participate. We are a resource for those with questions and doubts about the standard religious narrative of life.

For many people, atheism represents the most focused and powerful criticism of the philosophical worldview 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 and changeless narrative of unexamined traditional beliefs.

Because it is such a foundational and wrenching break with the past and because it leads the way in recognizing a broad range of possibilities for both scientific and social progress, atheism is an essential pillar for all other humanist and freethought philosophies. We join our coalition organizations to provide an essential part of the unique spectra of thought and activity that is vital to human progress. From a personal standpoint, we bring a human centered ethic to bear in serving our fellow human beings as they struggle to overcome the delusional psychology of years of religious conditioning. JP

**Bank of Wisdom**  
*Electronic publishing to make the world better*

## E.O. Wilson: Science, Not Philosophy, Will Explain the Meaning of Existence

"I like to say that most of philosophy, which is a declining and highly endangered academic species, incidentally, consists of failed models of how the brain works. So students going into philosophy have to learn what Descartes thought and then after a long while why that's wrong and what Schopenhauer might have thought and what Kant might of thought or did think. But they cannot go on from that position and historical examination of the nature of humanity to what it really is and how we might define it. So by default the explanation of meaning, of humanity, falls to science and we are making progress, if I might speak for science."

For the rest of the transcript and the video, <http://bigthink.com/videos/eo-wilson-on-the-meaning-of-human-existence>

## NY Times: The Divide between "Pushy" Atheists and Secular Humanists

"Much like the current appeal of the libertarian movement and *Reason* magazine, the sharp iconoclasm of Myers and others appeals to young people seeking something novel and anti-establishment, an outlook easily captured in a T-shirt and expressed as an identity by way of a label such as atheist. But as college students move into their late twenties and thirties, marry and start families, something more than entertaining, ideologically reinforcing attacks on religion are needed to sustain adult-level engagement.

"Studies show that rising Millennials are skeptical or at least ambivalent about religion, but at the same time looking for a positive and inclusive message about values, tolerance, and collective action to solve problems. Among this generation, there is a deep commitment to tolerance, diversity, and public service.

"A positive vision of secular humanism can capture and channel this ethos across the life course of a diverse segment of individuals, from college to old age. In contrast, the rhetoric offered by confrontationalists such as Myers is in many ways counter to this emerging preference among young people and to the need for a life-long philosophy, preaching instead intolerance while encouraging individualism and association among only like-minded others."



**Compassion & Choices**  
Choice & Care at the End of Life.

Hospices in Hillsborough County: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-hillsborough-county-florida>

In Pinellas: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-pinellas-county-florida>

Pasco: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-pasco-county-florida>

The Hemlock Society: <http://hemlockflorida.org/index.htm>

## Tampa Bay Thinkers

# Humanist Families of Greater Tampa



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008 at the Carrollwood Cultural Center. in Tampa, every third Monday of the month at 7 PM. Dec 15th: Come cogitate with us!

“Surprises in 2014 and Challenges in 2015”

## The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers



Nontheistic service members serve honorably throughout the world—always have; always will. However, nontheists are the last unprotected minority. The nontheistic, whether an atheist, humanist, agnostic, freethinker, or other secular minority, have a strong community.

Jason Torpy, a West Point graduate, serves as president of MAAF. He also holds seats on the boards of the Secular Coalition for America and the American Humanist Assoc.

On the web at: [www.maaf.info](http://www.maaf.info)

Contact: Chris

( [christbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:christbrown@yahoo.com) )

MSgt, USAF (Retired) Co-Organizer:  
MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists  
(MASH) MacDill AFB, FL



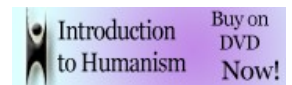
**Jennifer Hancock** started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year.

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*, and her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine* (illustration below). - JP  
See much more at: [www.Jen-Hancock.com](http://www.Jen-Hancock.com),

**Humanist Families** organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and 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 and 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 and 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](https://www.facebook.com/).

Thank you!

## Who are we?

# Humanist Learning Systems

## The Power of Applied Humanism

Humanist Learning Systems was created by Jennifer Hancock to provide a place where people can learn about the Humanist philosophy and how it can be applied to daily life and to help solve our problems.

The idea is to gather together the top Humanist educators to provide courses that will help people think better, have better relationships and get better results by using the techniques and tools of Humanism.

The questions these courses answer is how can we combine critical thinking, science, compassion, ethics and personal responsibility to improve our lives and the lives of those around us.

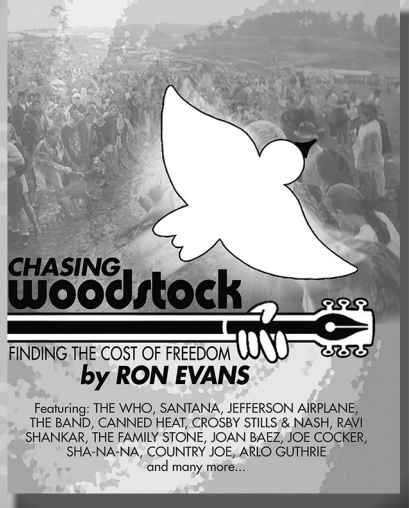
Most programs are open to the public, but we also offer group and organizational training upon request.



*Jennifer Hancock*

01-15

**EupraxBooks**  
Proudly presents

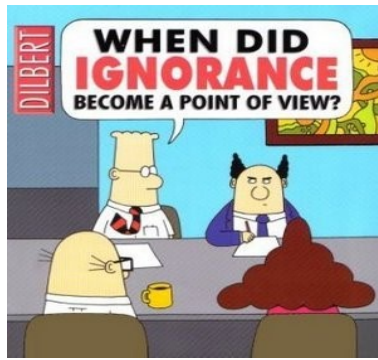


**CHASING Woodstock**  
FINDING THE COST OF FREEDOM  
by **RON EVANS**

Featuring: THE WHO, SANTANA, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE, THE BAND, CANNED HEAT, CROSBY STILLS & NASH, RAVI SHANKAR, THE FAMILY STONE, JOAN BAEZ, JOE COCKER, SHA-NA-NIA, COUNTRY JOE, ARLO GUTHRIE and many more...

"A surprisingly secular slant on the most legendary music event in modern history. First time author Ron Evans takes you on the adventure of a lifetime."

Available at Amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com or author signed at lindakevans.com/cwONLINE.htm



# AH Appignani Humanist LC Legal Center

**Appignani Humanist Legal Center** provides legal assistance to defend the constitutional rights of religious and secular minorities by directly challenging clear violations of the Establishment Clause and seeking equal rights for humanists, atheists and other freethinkers.



the Institute for Science and Human Values  
Presents  
Perspectives on Death and Dying Symposium

**Dying Without Deity**

April 10 & 11, 2015

• Save The Date •



**Secular Coalition for Florida** is unlike any other nontheistic state organization—it brings together organizations and individuals for the express purpose of lobbying government officials on your behalf. If your organization supports our mission statement, please sign up [here](#).

## Prepare for 2nd Annual Freethought Cruise

Come and escape to Cozumel next winter on a Caribbean cruise with David Silverman, President of American Atheists! Join dozens of other freethinkers on the second annual Freethought Cruise.

**We set sail from Tampa, Florida** Thursday afternoon, **January 29th** and visit Cozumel, Mexico returning to Tampa on Monday morning, February 2nd. During both days at sea David Silverman will speak to the group about his work for American Atheists, state/church separation, and his forthcoming book "I, Atheist". Of course, since David is vacationing with us for the weekend there will be plenty of opportunities for you to chat with him one on one.

Cozumel is one of the top diving and snorkeling destinations in the world for its bright coral reefs and beautiful beaches. Shore excursions will also take you to Mayan ruins and many other adventures listed below. Be sure to check out all of them before deciding.

We cruise on the Carnival Paradise which has plenty to do on board. There is Camp Carnival for the kids, several pools, hot tubs, and sun decks and first-rate entertainment. The ship even has dedicated teen and pre-teen clubs AND an adult only sun deck so bring the whole family if you like so everyone can enjoy themselves!

With a \$150 deposit, per person, you can select the cabin of your choice now. The total cost of the cruise is \$330 per passenger for an interior stateroom or \$370 for an ocean view. These prices are based on double occupancy, and includes all taxes and fees. Plus you will get \$50 on board credit per cabin for drinks or other on board expenses. Shore excursion prices are listed below or you can book these on your own if you choose.

After your initial deposit, you will be contacted to determine how you want to handle future payments (such as monthly or in one final payment).

If you seek a wonderful opportunity to have a fun weekend and hang out with fellow freethinkers, don't miss this one!

If you are interested, you may sign up directly through this link:

<http://www.expertvacationstation.com/rw/view/3516>



Travel Specialist for our group:  
Jaime Nelson, Cruise Planners/American Express  
[jainenelson@cruiseplanners.com](mailto:jainenelson@cruiseplanners.com) Ph. 601-802-8810 or 651-785-5157

Check with [CFI](#), [AHA](#), and other groups for more Freethought Cruises!

## Camp Inquiry Announcements



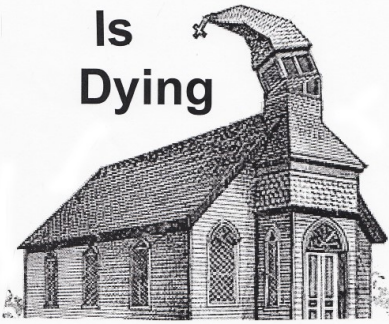
Information about Camp Inquiry 2015 will be announced soon! Please [email us](#) for specific questions about camp.



**Freethinkers@USF** is a multi-cultural, interdisciplinary student society which welcomes USF students who describe themselves as atheists, agnostics, skeptics, freethinkers, humanists, or religiously open-minded who seek to promote reason, compassion, tolerance, and free inquiry on campus. We hope to contribute opportunity for interdisciplinary dialog to the USF community, and build scientific literacy for all to enable objective and rational interpretations of issues affecting our lives. The organization is open to anyone of any religious persuasion or personal beliefs. Write **Rodrick Colbert** at: [freethinkersusf@gmail.com](mailto:freethinkersusf@gmail.com).



# Religion Is Dying



James A. Haught



## *Religion is Dying: Soaring Secularism in America and the West*

By James A. Haught, [Paperback \(\\$6.93\)](#) or [E-book \(\\$3.99\)](#) — Author's [Web site](#)

Perhaps 50 million adult Americans now say their religion is "none" or "don't know." This number has climbed dramatically since the 1990s.

About 20 million U.S. Catholics have left that church - so one-tenth of American adults now are ex-Catholics.

Two-thirds of American Christians in their 20s drop out of church before age 30, one report estimates.

Once-prestigious mainline Protestant faiths with seminary-educated clergy have disintegrated so severely since 1960 that one analyst refers to "Flatline Protestantism."

An estimated 4,000 American churches close each year.

From every direction, evidence is snowballing that America, known for devout religion, is following the secular path of Western Europe, Canada, Australia, Japan and other modern democracies, where churchgoing has retreated to a fringe.

The trend can be seen in cultural changes such as the rapid social acceptance of gays. The Bible commands that homosexuals "shall surely be put to death," and fundamentalist churches have ranted against them for centuries - yet most Americans now feel that they deserve human rights and equality. Religion has lost its power to dictate America's morality.

The Barna religion polling service says secularism has ballooned so much that "about 156 million U.S. adults and children are churchless." That's half of the population.

This book chronicles the slow, relentless demise of supernatural religion in educated societies.



## Neil deGrasse Tyson and the value of philosophy

by Massimo Pigliucci

"It seems like my friend Neil deGrasse Tyson [1] has done it again: he has dismissed philosophy as a useless enterprise, and actually advised bright students to stay away from it. It is not the first time Neil has done this sort of thing, and he is far from being the only scientist to do so. But in his case the offense is particularly egregious, for two reasons: first, because he is a highly visible science communicator; second, because I told him not to, several times.

"Let's start with the latest episode, work our way back to a few others of the same kind (to establish that this is a pattern, not an unfortunate fluke), and then carefully tackle exactly where Neil and a number of his colleagues go wrong. But before any of that, let me try to halt the obvious objection to this entire essay in its tracks: no, this isn't about defending "my" turf, for the simple reason that *both* philosophy and science are my turf [2]. I have practiced both disciplines as a scholar/researcher, I have taught introductory and graduate level classes in both fields, and I have written books about them both. So, while what follows inevitably will unfold as a defense of philosophy (yet again! [3]), it is a principled defense, not a petty one, and it most certainly doesn't come from any kind of science envy.

"Neil made his latest disparaging remarks about philosophy as a guest on the Nerdist podcast [4], following a statement by one of the hosts, who said that he majored in philosophy. Neil's comeback was: "That can really mess you up." The host then added: "I always felt like maybe there was a little too much question asking in philosophy [of science]?" And here is the rest of the pertinent dialogue: [for the rest, go to: <http://scientiasalon.wordpress.com/2014/05/12/neil-degrasse-tyson-and-the-value-of-philosophy/> See page 9 for E.O. Wilson's comment on philosophy.]

Show off your commitment to Science and Reason! Tampa CFI is offering these great license plate surrounds . Fits all US plates - easy to install. Now only \$15.  
order from [Rick O'Keefe](#).



## Tampa Bay Computer Society

Lectures, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. Visit our facility on 1510 Barry Rd. in Clearwater:

Map: <http://tampa-bay.org/map.html>

Find us at: [www.tampa-bay.org](http://www.tampa-bay.org) We repair our members computers!

**Dave 'Doc' Dockery** President,



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. *You can help: [Membership/Renewals/Donations](#)*

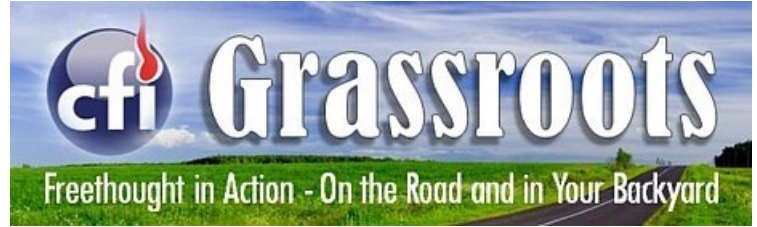


Rick O'Keefe

## [Day of Solidarity for Black Non-Believers](#) 4th Sunday in February

The percentage of black non-believers in the U.S. is small but increasing. Most have difficulty meeting other black non-believers or finding many who are involved in secular organizations. The internet has made many connections possible; however, the common feelings expressed by black non-believers are those of isolation, loneliness, and alienation. Often the remedy for these feelings is activism. This activism includes diligently searching for and befriending other non-believers, working with as many other non-believers as possible to address social ills, continuing to be educated about the factual world, providing positive expressions for secular ideas through writing and public speaking, and strengthening the secular community by supporting existing organizations as well as creating dynamic new ones. Unfettered activism is captured in the purpose of the Day of Solidarity for Black Non-Believers.

For more information, email [aaDayOfSolidarity@yahoo.com](mailto:aaDayOfSolidarity@yahoo.com)



The Center for Inquiry isn't just a think tank—we're a world-wide movement of humanists, skeptics, freethinkers, and atheists, all working together at the grassroots level to advance scientific and secular values **where we live**.

From social events to educational lectures, community volunteering to national advocacy, CFI members are living proof that there are good, ethical alternatives to religious and paranormal worldviews.

### **Announcing the CFI Network**

Whether we identify as atheists, freethinkers, humanists, secularists, or skeptics, we all share basic values rooted in inquiry, naturalism, and the scientific method—values that urgently need to be demonstrated and advanced in the broader culture.

**There must be a system that can unite all of our voices when success requires our voice to be strong. That system is the new [CFI Network](#).**

Support [CFI-Tampa Bay](#), keep informed about our activities, participate in our programs, and become a member!



**BECOME A MEMBER:** Click the *Join Now* button above to join or renew your membership. When you make a donation to CFI-Tampa Bay you become a member of a local and worldwide movement of humanists, skeptics, atheists, and freethinkers, all working together to give voice to your values.

**Doubts about religion?  
You're one of many.**

**AFRICAN AMERICANS FOR HUMANISM**

Learn more at [WeAreAAH.org](http://WeAreAAH.org)

LANGSTON HUGHES  
Writer and Activist

ALIX JULES  
Dallas - Ft. Worth Coalition of Reason

[Cause & Effect](#) is the biweekly newsletter of the Center for Inquiry community, covering the wide range of work that you help make possible.

Applying investigation and reason to current issues, the most widely read publication, [Skeptical Inquirer](#), keeps thinkers informed.

The Secular Humanist magazine, [Free Inquiry](#), delves into all facets of humanity. Nothing is off limits.

Fortnightly CFI updates not enough? Of course they're not! • Follow CFI on [Twitter](#); • Like us on [Facebook](#); • Encircle us on [Google+](#); • Subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel.

**“The meaning of life is not to be discovered only after death in some hidden, mysterious realm; on the contrary, it can be found by eating the succulent fruit of the Tree of Life and by living in the here and now as fully and creatively as we can.” -- Paul Kurtz**



<http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>

## Practical Freethought

So you don't believe in gods? You are not alone. And yes, you can be good without God. Millions are. Thousands of your friends and neighbors in the Tampa Bay area feel the same as you. The [Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason](http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/) is a group of local organizations representing freethinkers, humanists, skeptics, atheists and agnostics that provide a sense of community and a central clearinghouse for the many like-minded groups in the greater Tampa Bay area.

All of these groups share common ground, while each has its own particular emphasis and atmosphere. Some are focused on scientific inquiry and education. Others are focused on ethics and community, activism or the arts. Others monitor state/church separation and fight for your civil rights. All alike are committed to promoting the wider acceptance of a more rational and contemporary view of humanity and the universe we live in.

This site <http://unitedcor.org/tampabay> is where secular people in the Tampa Bay area can discover groups to join, activities in which to participate, events to attend and like-minded people with which to socialize. In short, we want to help those who have grown beyond religious belief to find their philosophical home.

Those nonbelievers who are not ready, or who are unable, to “come out” can take comfort in knowing that they are not the only ones who accept the reality of a 100% natural world.

For the religious community, we want them to realize that, although nontheists reject the supernatural, we share with them compassionate human values that most religious believers embrace. In most ways, we are like them; hard working, taxpaying, moral citizens who care deeply about our families, our communities, our state and our country.

Nontheists are a large minority, larger than many minorities having much more political and cultural influence than we do. Based on the US Census Bureau estimate of Florida's 2008 population and several polls, we estimate our statewide constituency at about 2,800,000 residents (more than 400,000 in the Tampa Bay quad-county area). TampaBayCoR has organized to increase our standing in the marketplace of ideas and to take our rightful place at the table of acceptance and equal rights. We invite all nontheists to support us in our efforts.

Even if you never join a group or attend a meeting you can help Florida move forward by contributing to local or national participating organizations. And you can always help to further the nontheistic community just by standing up proudly for your reality-based life among your friends and family. It's OK to not believe in gods. And, yes—you can be good without a god or religion. Millions of us are.

### Holidays of Special Interest

[Freethinkers Day / Thomas Paine Day](#) -  
January 29

Freethinkers Day, also known as Thomas Paine Day, celebrates the birthday of Thomas Paine (1737-1809), one of the world's most influential popularizers of freethought. Freethinkers Day is an opportunity to promote appreciation of freethinking through the life and works of Thomas Paine. Learn how you can participate in Thomas Paine Day by clicking on the event title link.



**TBCoR Leadership Team 2014**

Mark Brandt, Chris Brown, Jennifer Hancock, Rick O'Keefe, Jim Peterson, Tracy Thomas  
UUCH MAF TBHF CFI HSS, TBPCC AoF

Editorial E-Mail: [tbcor@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcor@metrodirect.net)

### Be Included!

Group Leaders are invited to send items for this Newsletter. Please send them to: [tbcornews@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcornews@metrodirect.net)  
For calendar items, include as much info as possible.