

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Freethought News

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Vol. 4 No. 7 July 2015 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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HUMANIST CHARITIES

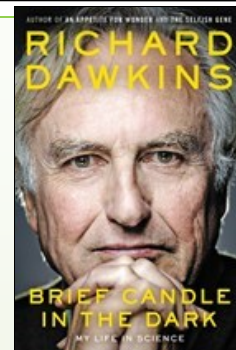
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Coming in October...Sponsored by Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Richard Dawkins

Author of

A Brief Candle in the Dark

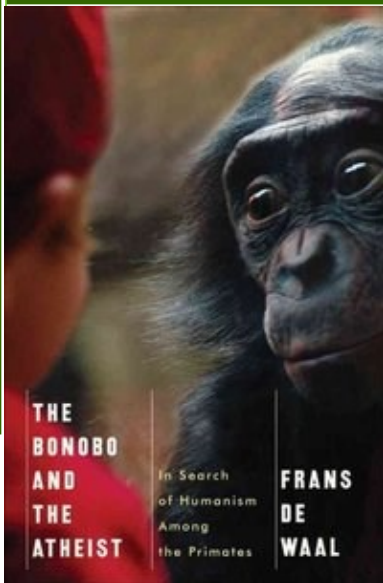


Throughout *A Brief Candle in the Dark*, Dawkins shares with us his infectious sense of wonder at the natural world, his enjoyment of the absurdities of human interaction, and his bracing awareness of life's brevity: all of which have made a deep imprint on our culture. The book will be released on September 29th.

Yes, Dr. Dawkins is coming to Clearwater - October 10th!

You can get your copy and get the author's autograph through TB CoR at a special Meet the Author event on October 10th at the Clearwater UU Octagon. Your ticket will admit you to the event and get you a copy of the book. No book other than the hardcover edition provided to you through the event will be autographed.

There will be a preliminary special reception at extra cost before the event for those who wish to meet personally with the author. Regular admission to the event has been set at \$40.00. This includes an autographed copy of the book. Tickets will be on sale at [Brown Paper Tickets](#). Be sure to check for the time limited, Early Bird Special. **Ticket Sales open on July 15th**



Is the essence of Humanist philosophy anchored in primate behavior?

It seems that much more discipline is required for modes of love and friendship, than for war and aggression.



Dr. Frans DeWaal

Buy it at your local bookstore or at [Amazon.com](#)

10 Easy Steps to Defeat Religion

With **Dr. Ryan Cragan**



Ten practical and socially valuable measures you can use to advance the cause of human freedom and capability will be discussed on Sunday, July 12th at the AoF meeting at the North Tampa Library on North Blvd. in Tampa at 1:30 PM. His recent book of the same title will be available.

Letters of Distinction

Some of our best writers published in our local media

ISIS fills voids in daily life

ISIS' plans are working well. First, disrupt normal life in a city, making living almost unbearable. Then offer stability and security for a price; accepting the fundamentalist Islamic rule of draconian sharia domination. Once established, opposition to their rule will be met with death.

Ben Franklin said, "Those willing to give up a little liberty for a little security deserve neither security nor liberty." Perhaps America's greatest gift to the world is the "secular" state, separating church and state, mostly preventing such draconian sectarian rule by the dominant church.

Religious fundamentalists use the same technique here in the U.S., but not as draconian as yet. They use their political power to defund and dumb down public schools to the point that private schools look like a better alternative. 90 percent of vouchers go to religious schools that could be compared to the Wahhabi madras schools in Saudi Arabia, where students are taught what to think instead of how to think.

Frank Prahl TBTimes, 6-17-15, 2A

A lifelong love of books

In his interesting discussion of the public library, the writer explains just how much of an asset it is to a community. My fondness for the library goes back many years. As a little girl in a small Iowa town, I early on conceived a love of books. Many a happy Saturday afternoon I spent browsing and reading in the library. It closed at 5 p.m. and I reluctantly left, always with an unread book checked out.

Doubtless I was often over my head in the books I found — and loved. How does an 11-year-old understand *Jane Eyre*? What about *The Fair God*, an account of the Spanish conquerors of Mexico? Those are just samples.

I was once inadvertently locked in at closing hours, not hearing the librarian's announcement. Somehow I found a door left unlocked and gained my freedom. But overall, I gained another kind of freedom in the library, thanks to the dusty stacks filled with books waiting for me in that small Midwestern town.

Abigail Ann Martin, Brandon TBT 6-13-15

Send us your letters, published or not.

Upholding the Constitution

The article on the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) has asked Levy County School Board to investigate a number of potential violations of the Constitution regarding state and church. Atheists of Florida would join in asking the School Board to investigate, and make public its findings, concerning the allegations made by FFRF.

All public employees in Florida are required to sign an oath affirming that they will support the Constitution of the United States. This would include the First Amendment, which states that our Constitution prohibits the making of any law respecting the establishment of religion. This forbids the government from unduly preferring one religion over another, one religion over non-religion, or non-religion over religion.

The Levy County employee handbook states: "The Obligation to the public requires that the individual a) Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated." The handbook also prohibits discrimination in any form on the basis of race, religion, etc. By promoting religion, an employee is discriminating against students in their classroom that are from other religions or are non-religious.

These conditions of employment require a teacher to not promote religious views in the classroom. This is in violation of their oath to the state and their employment agreement with the School Board. This issue should be addressed, and if in fact is true, the teachers should be educated as to their obligation as employees and as professionals in the field of education.

If the declaration of "Good Friday" as a school holiday and the invocations which "generally invokes Jesus" are true, these are both violations of the Constitution and should be changed.

Upholding American tradition and public policy in this matter will be well regarded by the citizenship.

Judy Adkins Ocala Star Banner 6-21-15



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

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)

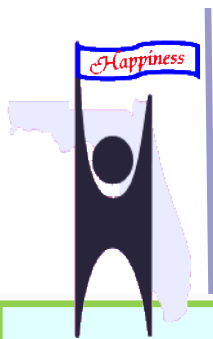
Thus substantive and exciting new activities are offered to the Tampa Bay area that were not possible for most organizations before.

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

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



The Humanist Society³ 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

Volume 23 No. 7 July, 2015

NB: Because of construction at the Countryside Library, we will meet instead at the **Dunedin Public Library** 223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin, FL ([map](#))

Will Civilization be Hacked?

What effect does the current escalation of digital attacks on individuals and institutions have on society at large? Hackers from many countries have demonstrated their ability to do tremendous damage to our physical and financial infrastructure. Does the threat posed by attacks on vital utilities (electricity, air traffic, communications, etc.) cause great harm and undermine social cohesiveness and the confidence we need to proceed into the future? Will the latest generation of computer viruses prove hardy enough to bring down the internet? Or, will the strategies, methods, and software coming available to prevent and reverse their damage be able to frustrate the ambitions of the hackers and spammers and keep civil life functional.



Join us for a fascinating session with the digital architect of **Malwarebytes**,

Matthew Thomas.



~ **Join or
Renew** ~

Your Humanist Society of the
Suncoast
Annual Dues.

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- _ **Regular -\$25**
- _ Reg. Couple -\$30.
- _ **Supporter -\$35/45 (W/ pin above)**
- _ 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

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



Food: the first kindness and the measure of our Hospitality 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 Thanx.

Please join us at
2 PM July 11th
at
The Dunedin
Public Library at
223 Douglas Ave.
in Dunedin.

Many members
can go to dinner
afterwards at
Marguerites Cafe.
Directly across
from the Library.

Some alcohol avail.





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

What is the Humanist Way?

1. To extend a human centered approach to the critical problems of life and society.
2. To encourage attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance and a loving generosity in human relationships, and in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others, and encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture and experience.
3. To develop and popularize the skills of creative and critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition and irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
4. To exalt those artistic and imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure and enlightenment, and which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, and other expressions, we embrace the essence of what it means to be human.
5. To explore the grounds of ethics and 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 monthly social Dinner
For July, change is afoot at ...

Kumba Island

1800 Gulf-To-Bay Blvd Clearwater
(N.E. Corner of G-T-B & Keene)

We're changing our approach. Now its just open. No RSVP required. Trundle on down for the fine food and fastidiously fabulous fellowship!

Be there on Sunday July 19th by **5 O'clock** for Early bird specials. As always, this is a self treated dinner. Ask to be seated with "the humanists." DK
~ Only the best people eat here when we do. ~

Laugh Lines *Punaites* 7-15

- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.
- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- Jokes about German sausages are the wurst.
- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.
- When chemists die, apparently they barium.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection you know urine trouble.
- Broken pencils are pretty much pointless.
- What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- I dropped out of the Communism class because of lousy Marx.
- I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.
- Velcro - what a rip off!

JP

HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc.
The Association of Secular Humanist Societies

Board of Directors

Meets Sept., December, April

Jay Alexander,
Steve Brown,
Lois Fries, Secretary
Dave Kovar, Vice President
Beth Maxie,
Jim Peterson, President
Frank Prah,
Marios Psomas, treasurer
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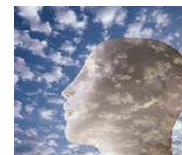
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Jon Green, Mark Kligman, Jerry Moore,
Mark Winterbottom, Sidney Goetz
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Acenbrack Dec., Rob Byrch, Dec. Jackie
Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard,
Matt Cooper Dec, Jim Butler
~*~*~*~*~*~*

Jordan Williams, mail Publisher

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

**Need Psychological
Counseling?**
For a secular therapist,
click:
[Cognitive Neurosciences
Inc. or,](#)
The Therapist Project,
or,
Lynda Gurvitz,
(727) 725-8820
or Patricia Walters,
(813) 988-5977

**Also, For Addiction
Problems, see: [Life Ring
Secular Recovery Meetings](#)**
11485 Oakhurst Road
Waters Edge Club House
Largo, Florida



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 July 18th

Our next roundtable discussion will consider:

Creating a Humanist Way of Life

Can we change the everyday nature of our Society?

What can we as individual Humanists do to improve the lives of ourselves and others? It has been observed that politics is the answer to the question, "How shall we live?" But in our country, the habits and concerns of everyday life are not addressed in the electoral act. Instead, we witness the same kind of coercive persuasion that dominates so much of the form of life we call entertainment, mostly television. It's easy, too easy, to find our non-work hours dominated by screens of various kinds. In 1963 former FCC Commissioner, Newton Minnow looked upon the tiny media of his time and observed a "vast wasteland." Things have not much improved.

But what can WE do to change this state of affairs? It's so easy, soothing and comfortable to yield to the embrace of the video alterlife most of us have fallen into. And in the usual cauldron of work and family responsibilities, it is not unreasonable to desire to relax in front of a warm screen. The problem here is that this way of life is not compatible with the dynamic potential residing in our humanity. Social life is a marginal concern for many if not most. Economic constrictions limit many more options. Think of this. The question is

What can we do?

Join the Tampa Humanist Association!



JP

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](#)



Another Humanist Discussion group forms in east Tampa

5

UU Humanists of Tampa - Public Discussion, 2nd Wed. eve from 7 -9 PM and on the 4th Sun. Morning 9:45 - 10:45.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa
11400 Morris Bridge Rd. Tampa, FL 33637
More information can be found at :

<http://uutampa.org/unitarian-universalist-humanist-of-tampa/>

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?

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

Gale Barron

gfbshb@aol.com

Secular Services Directory

Serving the Secular Community with Rational Competence

if you offer or need professional services in any area of life, check out this opportunity. The directory for services will be out soon.



Humanist Quotes

"I try to deny myself any illusions or delusions, and I think that this perhaps entitles me to try and deny the same to others, at least as long as they refuse to keep their fantasies to themselves."

Doubts about religion? You're one of many.

AFRICAN AMERICANS FOR HUMANISM

Learn more at WeAreAAH.org

LANGSTON HUGHES
Writer and Activist

ALIX JULES
Dallas - Ft. Worth Coalition of Reason



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

The world needs to end its dependence on fossil fuels

as quickly as possible. That's the only sane response to climate change, and to the economic dilemma of declining oil, coal, and gas resource quality and increasing extraction costs. The nuclear industry is on life support in most countries, so the future appears to lie mostly with solar and wind power. But can we transition to these renewable energy sources and continue using energy the way we do today? And can we maintain our growth-based consumer economy?

The answer to both questions is probably not.

The electricity sector: Solar and wind produce electricity, and the fuel is free. Moreover, the cost of electricity from these sources is declining. These are encouraging trends. However, intermittency (the sun doesn't always shine, the wind doesn't always blow) still poses barriers to high levels of solar-wind electricity market share. Grid managers can easily integrate small variable inputs; but eventually storage, capacity redundancy, and major grid overhauls will be necessary to balance inputs with loads as higher proportions of electricity come from uncontrollable sources. All of this will be expensive—increasingly so as solar-wind market penetration levels exceed roughly 60 percent. Some of the problems associated with integrating variable renewables into the grid are being worked out over time. But even if all these problems are eventually resolved, only about one-fifth of all final energy is consumed in the form of electricity; how about other forms and ways in which we use energy—will they be easier or harder to transition?

In short, there are far more challenges associated with the energy transition than opportunities. There are potential solutions to all of the problems we have identified. But most of those solutions involve higher costs or reduced system functionality. Moreover, the energy dynamics of the transition itself will pose a challenge: where will the energy come from to build all the solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, electric blast furnaces, and solar cement kilns that we'll need? Building the fossil-fueled energy producing-and-consuming infrastructure of the modern world has been by far the greatest construction project in human history. It took over a century, and it's still a work in progress. Now we'll have to replace most of this vast infrastructure with something different—different energy generators, different cars, trucks, roads, buildings, and industrial processes, using different materials (no petroleum-based plastics, no asphalt). All of this will take time, money . . . and energy.

And there's the rub. Where will the energy come from? Realistically, most of it will have to come from fossil fuels—at least in the early-to-middle stages of the transition. And we'll be using

fossil fuels whose economic efficiency is declining due to the depletion of existing stocks of high-quality oil, gas, and coal. Again, this implies higher costs. Why not just use renewables to build renewables? Because it would be slower and even more expensive. Yet the faster we push the energy transition, the more energy will have to be diverted to that gargantuan project, and the less will be available to all the activities we're already engaged in (running the transport, manufacturing, communications, and health care sectors, among others).

The fossil fuel and nuclear industries have an understandable interest in disparaging renewable energy, but their days are numbered. We are headed toward a renewable future, whether we plan intelligently for it or not. Clearly, intelligent planning will offer the better path forward. One way to hasten the energy transition is simply to build more wind turbines and solar panels, as many climate scientists recommend.

But equally important to the transition will be our deliberate transformation of the ways we *use* energy. And that implies a nearly complete rethinking of the economy—both its means and its ends. Growth must no longer be the economy's goal; rather, we must aim for the satisfaction of basic human needs within a shrinking budget of energy and materials. Meanwhile, to ensure the ongoing buy-in of the public in this vast collaborative project, our economic means must include the promotion of activities that increase human happiness and well being.

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Richard Heinberg



Richard Heinberg is a senior fellow at the [Post Carbon Institute](#) and the author of twelve books, including his most recent: *Afterburn: Society Beyond Fossil Fuels*. Previous books include: *Snake Oil: How Fracking's False Promise of Plenty Imperils Our Future*; *The Party's Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies*; *Peak Everything: Waking Up to the Century of Declines*; and *The End of Growth: Adapting to Our New Economic Reality*.

Recent Local Invocations:

Once again, **Dave Kovar** has delivered a great Humanist speech to the Clearwater city council on June 18th.

See it here: http://clearwater.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=25&clip_id=2867



Jim Peterson also gave an invocation to the Largo City commission on May 19th. It can be seen here: <http://view.earthchannel.com/PlayerController.aspx?PGD=largofl&eID=161>

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.

Come to our Summer Social

our Summer Social is just ahead, on Friday, July 24th beginning at 6:00 p.m. It will, again, be held at Benedict's Restaurant at the intersection of Bayshore Blvd. and Curlew Road in Dunedin. The address is: 2676 Bayshore Blvd. This will again be a fixed price dinner that includes appetizers, entrée, side dishes, dessert and drink (tea, coffee). You may also bring your own wine, beer, etc.



Choices for entrées are: Steak (cooked to order), Chicken Piccata, Meatloaf (House Specialty) and Eggplant Parmesan. You must let us know in advance which of these selections you prefer, and no changes can be made. Cost of the meal will be \$22.00 and must be paid in advance. Tip is included. To make your reservation, contact Mark Brandt (mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu), Beth Maxie (bcounselor@aol.com) or me, Bill Norsworthy, at (bnorsworthy@verizon.net). Limited number: first come, first se..



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



July is the two year anniversary of the first of Edward Snowden's revelations about the NSA's mass surveillance programs. And on Tuesday, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the USA Freedom Act – a bill that limited mass surveillance under Section 215 of the Patriot Act and other authorities.

While USA Freedom Act is a start, no one should mistake it for comprehensive reform – it leaves many of the government's most intrusive surveillance powers untouched, and it leaves disclosure and transparency loopholes.

Read Edward's message below, and then take the next step: [call the president's office and tell him to rein in Executive Order 12333](#). It's been used to collect info about millions of innocent people without any judicial oversight. It's time to bring the government's surveillance practices back in line with democratic values. 7-15

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T
PROTECT ITSELF
JOIN THE ACLU



The Humanities Institute at USF

<http://humanities-institute.usf.edu/about/>



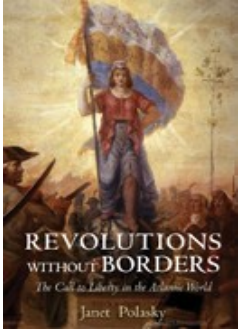
Challenge, Create, Connect: Our new motto focuses our commitment to bring the beauty, values, and lessons of the humanities to USF and our community.

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.

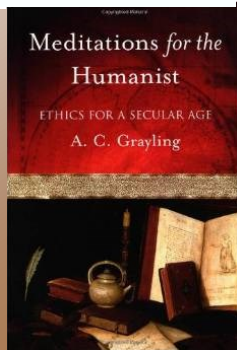
As part of our mission to encourage important research in the humanities, the Institute provides summer grants for humanities-focused research projects. Following the National Endowment for the Humanities, we foster a broad and inclusive definition of humanities, to include the contributions of scholars in language, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, archaeology, religion, ethics, arts, and humanistic social sciences. 7-15

Meaningful Books

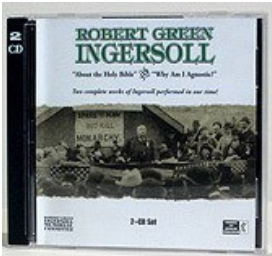


Revolutionaries want to tear down walls. Between 1776, when America declared independence, and 1804, when Haiti at last threw off the yoke of French rule, the compartments and divisions of established power became everyone's target. This book assiduously describes how, just as the doctrine of the universal rights of man seized the Western world, so too did an irrepressible iconoclasm.

Magnanimity is in short supply," writes A. C. Grayling is this wonderfully incisive book, "but it is the main ingredient in everything that makes the world a better place" And indeed *Meditations for the Humanist: Ethics for a Secular Age* is itself a generous, insightful, wide-ranging, magnanimous inquiry [Order](#)



Ingersoll on CD: 2-CD set includes "About the Holy Bible" (1894) and "Why Am I an Agnostic?" (1889). The complete texts, without one word omitted ... performed with an oratorical flourish that does justice to Ingersoll's mighty words. Plus an introduction that places Ingersoll and freethought into the context of America's Gilded Age. Two complete works of Ingersoll performed in our time! 2-CD Set, \$12. [Click here to order](#)



Thoughts of a Freethinker is the second book of local Humanist writer, *Michael Kaye*. Pensive considerations from an unencumbered mind lurking in the fresh air just outside the box. Order it from [Amazon](#), or at your local book monger.



One of an acclaimed series of books for parents and children. [Neil DeGrasse Tyson](#) takes youngsters through the Universe. Includes awesome images from the Hubble Space Telescope Available [here](#).

Bank of Wisdom

Electronic publishing to make the world better

Make digital withdrawals from the bank, free! See Humanist Society Librarian, Marios Psomas for details.

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 Lending 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 Then pick it up at the next meeting **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated.

TITLE

1. The Expanding Circle
2. In Gods we Trust
3. Why Evolution is True
4. The Second World
5. Denialism
6. The Selfish Gene
7. Democracy Incorporated
8. The Upside Irrationality
9. The End of Growth
10. The God Delusion
11. All That We Share
12. Sex, Time, and Power
13. Sex at Dawn
14. What liberal Media
15. The End of Faith
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17. The Portable Atheist
18. Open Society
19. Non Believer Nation
20. God on Trial
21. Natural Experiments of History
22. The Missionary Position
23. Life Inc
24. A brief History of Time
25. Breaking the Spell
26. The Philosophy of Humanism
27. The Quotable Atheist
28. 50 Reasons People Give for Believing In God. G. Harrison
29. Mathematics and Politics
30. Stealing Elections
31. The God Virus
32. What Every American Should Know About World
33. Imagine There's no Heaven
34. Hidden Order
35. What the Dog Saw
36. Sway
37. The Better Angels of our Nature
38. Letter to a Young Contrarian
39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded
40. Gaming the Vote
41. Subversion Fable
43. Evolution and the Big Question
44. Why People Believe Weird Things
45. The World is Curved
46. The Snow Ball
47. The Moral Landscape
48. How We Believe
49. Full House
50. The Origins of Political Order
51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible
52. Autobiography of Mark Twain
53. Science Friction
54. Genius
55. Inevitable Illusions
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58. Loser Takes All
59. Taking Back Politics
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62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible
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76. Could I Vote Mormon for president?
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78. Rot on the Vine
79. **Thoughts of a Freethinker** **New!**

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Florida Atheists



Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Judy Adkins

Join our Tampa chapter Sunday, July 12th Dr. Ryan Cragun will speak. See the [AoF Meetup](#) for details.

Ryan Cragun - How to defeat Religion in 10 easy steps

Our favorite author and speaker is back to talk about his new book. I am sure he would be glad to autograph a copy for you (he may have extra copies available for sale.)

Do you want the greatest challenges of the day to be addressed with thoughtful, reality-based solutions rather than with cherry-picked quotations from scripture? Do you want to shrink religion—especially fundamentalist religion—to the point that it plays no noticeable role in American public life? Do you want right-wing religious leaders to be so unpopular that politicians avoid them rather than pander to them for endorsements? Drawing on the latest social-scientific research on religion to help interested nonbelievers—and even progressive believers— weaken the influence of fundamentalist religion in society at large, *How to Defeat Religion in 10 Easy Steps* illustrates specific, actionable steps we all can take to facilitate fundamentalist religion’s decline. It covers topics as far ranging as education, welfare, sex, science, capitalism, and Christmas. Each of the 10 chapters focuses on a specific action that research has shown can weaken religion, detailing why and how, and concluding with specific action recommendations for individuals, local groups, and national organizations.

We have adopted two of his proposals for our group, I'm glad I'm not a fundamentalist (if you would like to record a statement at the meeting, we will be glad to record you there) and How tolerant is my religion institution - we will be researching and publishing information on various churches, mosques, synagogues, etc. in Florida regarding their policies towards different issues. If you want to volunteer, please let us know.

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. 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. JP

St Pete Atheists // Freethought Group
Moderated by: Gary Thompson
Monthly Meetup Day: Third Tuesday at 7 PM
Contact: easy8@tampabay.rr.com
On the web: <http://atheists.meetup.com/209>

Save the date...

FreeFlo 2015

The Florida Humanist Conference

- **Friday, November 6, 2015 5:00 PM, to Sunday, November 8, 2015, 5:00 PM**
- [Holiday Inn Orlando-International- Airport, 5750 T.G. Lee Blvd, Orlando, FL](#) ([map](#))

Speakers (subject to change, more info and descriptions below taken from: <http://www.floridahumanist.org/>):

- Dan Barker**, Author of *Life Driven Purpose: How an Atheist Finds Meaning and Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America’s Leading Atheists* and Co-president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation
- Anthony Pinn**, Professor, prolific author, Director of Research at the Institute for Humanist Studies and Founding Director of the Center for Engaged Research and Collaborative Learning.
- David Tamayo**, President of the Hispanic American Freethinkers
- Sarah Morehead**, Executive Director at Recovering From Religion & President of the Reason Rally Coalition
- Seth Andrews**, Author of *Sacred Cows – a Lighthearted Look at Belief and Tradition around the World and Deconverted: A Journey from Religion to Reason* as well as host of *The Thinking Atheist*
- Katherine Stewart**, Journalist and author of the *Good News Club*
- Bo Bennet**, Author of *The Concept & Logically Fallacious*, co-host of *The Humanist Hour* and blogger at *Relationship with Reason*
- Dr. Ryan Cragun**, Professor and author of books such as *How to Defeat Religion in 10 Easy Steps* and *What You Don’t Know about Religion (but should)*
- Robyn Blumner**, Editorial writer and President and Executive Director of the *Richard Dawkins Foundation*
- Stewart Huff**, Comedian



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

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

Tampa Bay Thinkers



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008.

Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa, every 3rd Monday, monthly at 7 PM.

July 20th: **Topic:**

A New World in Cyberspace

Meetup site: www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/

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

Contact: Chris
(christbrown@yahoo.com)
MSgt, USAF (Retired) Co-Organizer:
MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists
(MASH) MacDill AFB, FL

Humanist Families of Greater Tampa

Jennifer Hancock started 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*.

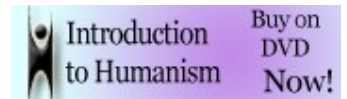


Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings 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/) . See more at: <http://www.Jen-Hancock.com>.

Parenting without Punishment



I have never hit my kid. Well, not never. I did one time whack him when he bit my butt, but that was an accident. I was doing dishes when he bit me and I wheel around to see what it was and accidentally hit him in the process. We both cried quite a bit as a result.

What I mean to say is I've never used physical punishment on my child. My son is intelligent, well behaved and a joy to be around. He's 9 and he's reasonably well disciplined. I say reasonably because I still have to keep track of his homework and remind him to do it. But, he's only 9, I'm pretty sure he will eventually have enough self-discipline to be responsible for those tasks too.

Given how many parents seem to think hitting kids and physical punishment is necessary to raising a well-disciplined kid, I have to wonder if maybe their definition of discipline is different from mine. To me discipline isn't imposed by others, it is self-discipline that is the ideal. I was able to help my son become such a pleasant well behaved kid because I taught him how to choose to be good for himself. If I had tried to force him to obey me through the use of physical punishment he would have never become self-disciplined.

Hitting kids to get them to obey you is a form of bullying. It's abusive. It's unnecessary and it's counterproductive to the goal of raising well behaved kids who have sufficient self-discipline to behave well without the threat of punishment.

I'm not alone in thinking this. The American Psychological Association agrees. They came out against corporal punishment back in 1975 as being unnecessary to the development of moral and competent adults (<http://www.apa.org/about/policy/corporal-punishment.aspx>) and more and more research has been done that shows that not only is spanking as punishment not necessary, it's actually counterproductive - <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/04/spanking.aspx>

But is the question of whether or not to physically punish children a Humanist issue? Of course it is. The methods humanist parents use to raise ethical, responsible adults must reflect our values. Physically battering a child is morally indefensible given that it serves no good purpose and is actually counterproductive. We have other more humane methods we can use to help our children learn self-discipline and we should be using them.

Thank you! **Jennifer Hancock**

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.

- ◆ **Florida School Backs Down After Suspending Student for Sitting Out the Pledge of Allegiance.** *June 1, 2015* – TheAHA defends a student’s right to freedom of speech.
- ◆ **Florida Government Can’t Display Ten Commandments, Says Humanist Group.** *June 3, 2015* – AHA decries deliberate promotion of religion on public land.
- ◆ **Humanist Group Applauds U.S. Supreme Court Decision for Marriage Equality.** *June 26, 2015* – Supreme Court upholds the rights of same-sex couples in its ruling on the landmark *Obergefell v. Hodges* case.



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



This Woman’s Point of View

by **Toni Van Pelt**

An enforcement tool, *Fifty Shades of Grey*— “An old story, repackaged”

Fifty Shades of Grey, the selling of male violence, domination, powerful and wealthy, is a very old story, repeated throughout the generations.

In my day it was the *Story of O*. Yes, most women are turned on by many of these images of sexual bondage, degradation and humiliation.

I used to be myself. From the time I first experienced sexual fantasies it was usually an image of me kneeling at the altar in the catholic church with a priest coming up from behind me, inserting his penis and telling me to pray. It went on from there.

I imagine a number of catholic girls had the same kind of fantasies from a tender age and perhaps boys. How can it be any different in this society, that we are all turned on by abusive sexual images? As in all of planetary society, it is the way we are brought up and continue to bring up children. It is a big part of the grooming of girls, women and boys to accept violence and degradation as “normal” by the larger community. It is a huge part of the slavery industry. [\(Read More\)](#)

“Silence never won rights. They are not handed down from above; they are forced by pressures from below.”

-- Roger Baldwin, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union



August 2-8 in Holland, NY.

Details on [Facebook](#).

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.



5 Ways To Help Human Rights Activists in Theocracies 12

June 11, 2015 by Kaveh Mousavi

One of the constant readers of this blog, *BeaverTales*, asked a question from me on the comment section of this blog. This is it:

Kaveh, you've commented previously how important the US/KSA relationship is to stability in the region. Most US freethinkers find the KSA theocracy deplorable for a variety of reasons, and want to help Raif Badawi but are unsure what we can do except get the US government to protest.

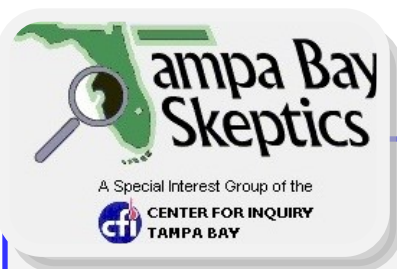
Perhaps there is a reason for not doing it...but can you write a column indicating ways the Freethought community can stand together on this issue from the point of view you folks have in Iran as the KSA's political counterweight? and as a fellow ex-Muslim? Anything that is realistic, pragmatic and actually helpful to Mr. Badawi and family?

I intend to give my own answer to this question. Of course, I'm one person living in a theocracy, and many other people in the exact situation would disagree, but I have tried to be as inclusive as possible. I think these five ways are the best way people living in democracies can help those like us in Saudi Arabia and Iran. I have said all these things multiple times before, but putting them all in one post is useful.

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/1GzaJEc>

Raif Badawi Protest, Oslo

Image credit: Dan-Raoul Miranda
(Creative Commons license) via Flickr



Once a Believer, Now a Skeptic

by Gary P. Posner

I was about ten years old when my grandmother first told me the story that would intoxicate my thought processes for nearly two decades. I knew squat about philosophical skepticism (the antidote), but all of a sudden I had been granted knowledge of something far more exciting, especially to a sci-fi buff -- that flying saucers were real!

The sighting had occurred about 10 years prior, around 1950, while she, my grandfather and uncle were driving back home to Baltimore from western Maryland. My grandfather pulled off the road (as did a few other cars) as they watched an odd-looking craft fluttering noiselessly in the sky. Though within a minute or so it would disappear from their field of view, it remained forever in my grandmother's thoughts, and from the first time I heard about it, rarely ever far from mine.

So impressed was I by her story that, by about the time I started high school, not only was I a dues-paying member of the largest pro-UFO organization in the country, I was its Youth Council representative for the state of Maryland. The group was known as NICAP -- the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena -- based in Washington, D.C. And I can even remember my first college English composition being about UFOs.

It wasn't for another decade -- when I took some time off in 1977 between my internship and my first year of internal medicine residency to read, travel, etc. -- that my metamorphosis from UFO believer to skeptic began in earnest. I happened upon a newspaper article about, and subsequently corresponded with and befriended, Philip J. Klass, the world's premiere UFO skeptic. He soon introduced me to the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (then known as CSICP and later CSICOP), which he had helped establish a year earlier, and I ultimately founded Tampa Bay Skeptics in 1988.

The full story of my journey from believer to skeptic, which comprises a chapter in the book *Skeptical Odysseys* (Prometheus Books, 2001), can be accessed by clicking the book cover's link near the top of the page at gpposner.com.



Tampa Bay Computer Society & Doc's Café

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CENTER FOR INQUIRY

Tampa Bay

The mission of the Center for Inquiry is to foster a secular society based on science, reason, freedom of inquiry, and humanist values.



Rick O'Keefe

Friends, atheism is the door, humanism is the mansion. Giving up on failed faith isn't the end of the journey. It's the beginning for "inquiring minds." Skepticism is an alternative. Without developing an understanding of each, one can remain in a fog of confusion. To become a humanist and/or a skeptic takes learning and discipline, sometimes called "critical thinking." Here are some starting points.

A short video, well worth watching and sharing:
[It's Time for Science & Reason!](#)

Our latest (short) ad campaign videos:
[Living Without Religion](#) and [African Americans for Humanism](#).

Visit our famed affiliate, [Tampa Bay Skeptics](#).

Founded in 1988, Tampa Bay Skeptics is a nonprofit educational and scientific organization devoted to the critical examination of **paranormal** and **fringe-science** claims, and the dissemination of factual information about such claims. Programs encourage the use of critical thinking skills while discussing current events of importance to thoughtful people. We encourage those who wish to help further the cause of skepticism to join TBS! Note that Friends of the Center may receive their first year's TBS membership free.

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

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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.



50 folks making a difference. You can too! Join a TB-CoR group.

[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.

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- ⇒ ⇒ [Paranormal and Fringe-Science Claims](#)

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As an active agent for social and cultural change in U.S. and international policy, in the courts, and at the grassroots, the Center for Inquiry—in its roles as a think tank, United Nations NGO, and government affairs office—frequently releases carefully researched position papers of academic quality. Past position papers have focused on issues such as stem cell research, genetic engineering, global climate change, and Islam and human rights.

[View a full archive of CFI's position papers.](#)

The world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest ornaments, of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue, are complete skeptics in religion.

-- John Stuart Mill



Reasonings
 The Reasonings of Norm R. Allen Jr.
Where are the Black Skeptics?
 an Institute for Science and Human Values Project



God and the Problem of Evil

It has always been absolutely clear to me that theodicy is a complete waste of time. The problem of evil simply cannot be solved. How could evil exist if a perfectly good, all---powerful, all---knowing God exists? Evil cannot come from that which is perfectly good. Therefore, God could not have created evil. (Moreover, evil could not have originated outside God, because God is everywhere. A perfectly good God would have recognized evil and destroyed it at its inception.)

Further complicating matters, evil could not exist unless God permits it to exist. However, a perfectly good God, by definition, could not permit evil to exist, even for some imagined “higher good.” Even if such a good exists, that would simply mean that God permits necessary evils, which means that he is not, a=er all, perfectly good. He could be incredibly good, unbelievably good, and so on. However, he could not be perfectly good, as most theists dogmatically contend. After all, a necessary evil is an evil still.

Theists have sadly tried to rationalize the existence of evil while embracing a belief in a perfect God ever since this God business began.

Their favorite excuse is that God gave human beings free will. Rather than challenge theists’ conception of free will as I usually do, I will say, strictly for the sake of argument, that free will as conceived by theists exists. It is all part of God’s glorious yet bafflingly mysterious plan. Still, all this means is that evil – which inevitably flows from God’s “gift” of free will – is a part of God’s plan, which again, means that he is not perfectly good.

Furthermore, the existence of moral evil says nothing about the existence of natural evil (natural disasters or “acts of God.”) People are killed in earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and so forth. These occurrences have nothing whatsoever to do with free will, in the minds of many theists.

However, other theists insist that God punishes human beings with these acts. Yet innocent puppies, kittens, bunnies and other animals are also brutally killed by alleged acts of God. Where is the kindness and justice in all of this?

There is actually strong biblical evidence to back up the notion that the God of classical theism “punishes” human beings in this world. For example, Amos 3:6, Lamentations 3:38, and Isaiah 45:7 show that God is good and “evil.” (Problem of evil solved!)

Predictably, theists are ready with the excuses. They maintain that just as earthly fathers must discipline their children, so the Heavenly Father must discipline his earthly children. This idea has prompted a friend of mine, atheist activist Bobbie Kirkhart, to say that, just as abused children blame themselves for the abuse heaped upon them by their parents, pathetic theists blame themselves for the abuse heaped upon them by their abusive Heavenly Father. Just as children do not understand that nothing they could have done could possibly justify the abuse they suffer, theists do not understand that no matter what they have done, they do not deserve to be crushed to death in earthquakes, drowned in floods and tsunamis, and so on.

Of course, most theists are not having any of this. They use the analogy of the young child that must have an important vaccination, yet endure pain for the greater good. Similarly, human beings must endure their punishments from God for the greater good. This analogy fails especially because human beings do not have the power to administer certain vaccinations without pain. Yet God, being all---powerful and all-knowing, could certainly come up with a plan that would not entail so much pain, suffering and evil.

Many theists think nothing of blaming the victims of God’s fatherly abuse. For example, they will say that we have early warning systems that let us know when certain natural disasters are imminent, yet we ignore them. A similar claim was made after Hurricane Katrina hit the New Orleans area. However, what excuse could they have made for the earthquake in Lisbon and numerous other natural disasters that occurred long before we had such warning systems? Moreover, as I have already stated, innocent animals are brutally killed, and they do not have such warning systems.

Theists such as the Christian debater William Lane Craig claim that perhaps the universe could not have been created in a way in which natural disasters did not occur. However, that’s just a sneaky way of trying to claim that perhaps the omnipotent, omniscient God could not have created a universe without natural disasters, which would be a ridiculous – even blasphemous – claim to make.

Many theists seem oblivious to the fact that “sacred” texts condone evil. The Bible has condoned genocide (Numbers 31:17---18), slavery (Luke 12:47---48) and many other evil practices. Evil exists largely because theistic religions condone it. The Bible even teaches that the omniscient God created the devil. Then why should theists try to blame human beings for the existence of evil?

The best resolution to theodicy that I have heard came from the Onion some years ago. It was put forth that God suffers from bipolar disorder. When he sends hurricanes and other natural disasters, it is because he has not taken his spiritual meds. Rather than saying, “forgive them Father for they know not what they do,” we should be saying, “forgive him children for he knows not what he does.”

The bottom line is that if an omnibenevolent, omnipotent and omniscient God exists, evil could not come to be. The conclusion seems inescapable. The God of classical theism is history’s longest running hoax.

Religion is an insult to human dignity. Without it you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.

-- Steven Weinberg, Nobel Laureate, Physics

HCCRA would put into permanent law two broad rights of refusal: a version of the Blunt amendment and the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act.

Under HCCRA, Employers Would Have An Unprecedented Ability to Shirk Their Legal Obligations Based on Employers’ “Moral or Religious Objection” (The Blunt-like provision):

HCCRA would take the Supreme Court’s *Hobby Lobby* decision to the next level by allowing even more companies to opt out of the law and harming those the law is supposed to protect. HCCRA would allow *any* employer or insurance company to refuse to cover *any* of the preventive services or *any* essential health benefit allowing these entities to deny critical health care to the millions who rely on such entities for insurance. A plan or employer could:

- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover vaccines** because of a religious or moral objection to immunizations.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover screening for Type 2 Diabetes** because of a religious or moral objection to a perceived unhealthy lifestyle.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover Human Papillomavirus (HPV) screening** due to a religious or moral objection to the way the virus is transmitted. HPV can lead to cervical cancer, making early detection critical.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover HIV/AIDS screening or counseling** due to a religious or moral objection to the way HIV/AIDS can be transmitted.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover prenatal tests** due to the employer’s religious or moral objection to such testing.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover maternity care** because of concern that pregnant, unmarried employees could use the coverage in violation of the employer’s belief that sex and procreation are permissible only within the marital relationship.
- ◆ ◆ **refuse to cover certain prescription drugs** due to a religious or moral objection to the research methodology used to discover the drug, such as stem cell research.

HCCRA Undermines the Basic Principle of Insurance. In addition to allowing plans and employers to undermine the ACA’s coverage guarantees, HCCRA allows individuals who purchase insurance in the individual market to do the same. If one individual claims a particular service is contrary to his or her religious or moral beliefs, the plan does not have to cover it, even if required to do so by the new health care law. By allowing each individual to pick and choose specific medical services to be covered in a plan, HCCRA radically undermines the basic principle of insurance, which involves pooling the risks for all possible medical needs of all enrollees. The language is vague enough that, if even one individual objects to any of the required coverages, insurers may be able to deny coverage to an entire market. Consumers in a market could even lose coverage of the full range of critical health services. For example:

- ◆ ◆ An individual could object to coverage of vaccines for children, so the plan could then not be required to do so.
- ◆ ◆ A man purchasing an insurance plan offered to women and men could object to maternity coverage, so the plan would not have to cover it for everyone, even though such coverage is required as part of the essential health benefits.

HCCRA Includes the Abortion Non-Discrimination for Health Care Providers Act (ANDA) Which Would Greatly Broaden Existing Refusal Rights Regarding Abortion. ANDA expands and further entrenches current laws that, under the guise of protecting the “conscience” of health care providers, bar federal, state and local governments from enforcing laws preserving or requiring access to abortion. In short, ANDA:

- ◆ ◆ Significantly expands the reach of and makes permanent the **Weldon Amendment**, which prohibits any federal agency or program or any state or local government from taking actions against a wide range of health care entities, including insurance plans, if they refuse to provide, pay for, cover, or even refer for abortion care. Currently, the Weldon Amendment is an annual appropriations rider, and is attached only to funds made available through the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

§ For example, under ANDA those who “participate in” the provision of abortion – a vague term that could mean that those only tangentially involved in abortion care, like an admissions clerk, an ambulance driver, or the person who processes medical claims – could refuse to comply with laws regarding abortion.

§ It adds Accountable Care Organizations to the list of entities protected by this broad refusal.

- ◆ ◆ Contains no exceptions for the health or life of the woman, nor in cases in which a pregnancy is the result of rape or incest. This means that, for example:
 - o This means that ANDA could protect a hospital that refused to provide an emergency abortion even though federal law (Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act or “EMTALA”) requires the delivery of services in life threatening emergencies.

HCCRA also creates a new private right of action for violations of federal laws that allow individuals or entities to opt out of laws relating to abortion, including for any “threatened violations.” This would allow individuals or entities that believe discrimination has occurred relating to any of the broad refusal rights to go to federal court more easily than an individual who is discriminated against because of religious beliefs unrelated to abortion.



PEN American Center honors the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* with its Freedom of Expression Courage Award.

The May award commends the magazine's staff for continuing to publish after the Jan. 7 attack at the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris that killed 12 people. As the award citation reads, "In paying the ultimate price for the exercise of their freedom, and then soldiering on amid devastating loss, *Charlie Hebdo* deserves to be recognized for its dauntlessness in the face of one of the most noxious assaults on expression in recent memory."

PEN, an international society of writers committed to protecting global free speech, has steadfastly defended the freedom to offend as a basic component of free speech. As PEN leaders Andrew Solomon and Suzanne Nossel argued in the *New York Times*, satirists like those at *Charlie Hebdo* safeguard "the outer precincts of free speech." And that border patrol is vital, they wrote. "Without those who stake out the border provinces, we would all be forced to dwell in an ever-shrinking expressive terrain."

Today, the freedom to offend faces two major threats: the "assassin's veto" and government censorship. The assassin's veto is easy to denounce but difficult to counter. How do you convince publications to print something that could cost the staff their lives? Yet it is government censorship that has proved more difficult to combat, in part because it is so readily accepted even in parts of the world with free speech traditions.

Increasingly, governments are treating the freedom to offend as something distinct from freedom of speech – and something far less worth protecting. Britain, for instance, has largely criminalized offensive speech. In 2012, a British man served 56 days in prison for a racist tweet. (Imagine what America's incarceration rates would look like if that were possible here.) That same year another Brit was arrested for posting a picture of a burning Remembrance Day poppy on his Facebook page.

Inflammatory speech has caused legal problems for public figures as well, in both Britain and Canada.

That insistence on the right to publish the images and words that one considers most offensive is the cornerstone of free speech in the United States.

We can see it in the response to the attack in Garland, Texas, in April, when two gunmen opened fire on a "Draw Mohammed" contest. The event, sponsored by the American Freedom Defense Initiative, has little in common with *Charlie Hebdo*. The initiative and its president, Pamela Geller, are openly anti-Islamic. Geller has decried "the mosque-ing of the workplace," the "Islamization" of America and other such nonsense. But listen to how American Muslim groups responded to the attack. "We stand with her and everyone who defends freedom of speech," said Harris Zafar, the national spokesperson for Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

In discussing Geller and her organization, Zafar noted that her words were both "free speech" and "hate speech." That idea – that speech can be deeply offensive and wholly protected – is one that deserves to be fiercely defended, both from the legislator's vote and the assassin's veto.

Je Suis Charlie !

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!

Iceland's parliament has abolished its blasphemy laws, despite opposition from some of the country's churches.

A bill was put forward by the minority Pirate Party, which campaigns for internet and data freedom.

It came after the deadly attack the same month against French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris. The bill said it was "essential in a free society that the public can express themselves without fear of punishment".

As three members of the Pirate Party stood before parliament on Thursday, each said: "Je Suis Charlie", an expression used globally to express solidarity with the *Charlie Hebdo* victims.

After the ruling, the party wrote on its blog (in Icelandic): "Iceland's parliament has now established the important message that freedom will not give in to bloody attacks."

The blasphemy law had been in place since 1940, and anyone found guilty could have been sentenced to a fine or three months in prison.

The Iceland Monitor website said that the Church of Iceland supported the change, and quoted them as saying that "any legislative powers limiting freedom of expression in this way is at variance with modern-day attitudes towards human rights".

The Catholic Church of Iceland, the Pentecostal Church and the Church of Iceland's eastern province opposed the changes.

The Catholic Church wrote in comments submitted after the bill was proposed: "Should freedom of expression go so far as to mean that the identity of a person of faith can be freely insulted, then personal freedom - as individuals or groups - is undermined."

The Icelandic Ethical Humanist

Association said that the new law included provisions to ensure that people could still be prosecuted for hate speech.



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

About UnitedCoR

Are you considering, or have you decided, that you don't need religion? That you're good without a god?

You've come to the right place! Founded in 2009, the United Coalition of Reason is one of the largest nontheist groups in North America, a coordinating place for hundreds of independently run local groups, each a little different.

Each group in our "community of reason" rejects the supernatural and loves rational thought and science. We call ourselves atheist, agnostic, bright, Ethical Culture, freethought, humanist, Pastafarian, rationalist, realist, skeptic, secular, and other terms.

We are happy, positive people who would prefer to engage with religious people and find common ground, while being politely critical on a few important issues such as religious privileges in the law, and faith-based reasoning in political decision-making.

We respect your privacy! Each of our groups is a safe zone if you have not told your friends and family how you feel about religion.

Through our website you can find local nontheist groups in your area:

- ◇ ◇ to socialize and meet like-minded people,
- ◇ ◇ to volunteer together on charity projects,
- ◇ ◇ to share ideas and discuss nontheist philosophy,
- ◇ ◇ for community outreach, to show religious people who we are,
- ◇ ◇ to raise money for nonreligious advocacy,
- ◇ ◇ and for some of our member groups, to take political action.

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** 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.

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.

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). We have 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.



TBCoR Leadership Team 2015

Toni Van Pelt ~ ISHV Bill Norworthy UUCH Beth Maxi HoTA Mark Brandt, UUCH Judy Adkins TBS, AoF Chris Brown, MAF Jenn Hancock, TBHF Rick O'Keefe, CFI, TBS Jim Peterson, HSS, TBPC Tracy Thomas, AoF ~

Be Included!

Group members are invited to send items for this Newsletter. Please send to: tbcornews@metrodirect.net
For calendar items, include URL for group or event.

Tampa Bay CoR

9654 W. Linebaugh Ave. PMB #110
Tampa, FL 33626



Tampa Bay Coalition – July, 2015 Calendar of Reason

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.

Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>



Summer Hiatus	E. TAMPA– Humanities Inst. at USF	See Web site for full listing of many great events and calendar.	
07-05, 07, 11 & 19 See Meetup	BRANDON– Atheists of Brandon	Food, Discourse, Book club Details & RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/	
07-11 & 12 See Web site	EAST TAMPA– M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club at MOSI	Web site: http://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/ for details & other events.	
07-11, Saturday 2:00 PM	CLEARWATER– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	Lecture, discussion, supper. Topic & RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/	
07-11, Saturday, 10:00 AM	BRADENTON/ SARASOTA– Humanist Families	Family outings and other activities. Details & RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/Humanist-Families-of-Greater-Tampa-Bay/	
07-12 & 08-09, Two special events: Ryan Cragun, August meeting	EAST TAMPA– Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Ryan Cragun! Details: http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/	
07-18, Saturday, 11:00 AM	EAST TAMPA– Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details: http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/	
07-19, Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER– UU Humanists	Details: http://www.uuc.org/	
07-19, Sunday, 2:00 PM & 08-22 Triannual Lecture	S. TAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics	Skeptical interests & critical thinking. Click to RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/	
07-19, Sunday, 5 PM	PINELLAS COUNTY Humanist Society <i>Moveable Feast</i>	This month's venue: http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/	
07-20, Monday, 7:00 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH/ Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP	
07-24, Friday, 8:00 PM 4 th Friday gen'l. mtg. Plus other events!	ST. PETERSBURG– Astronomy Club	For several dates, locations, & and details: http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php	
2 nd Wednesday eve. & 4 th Sunday	TEMPLE TERRACE– UU Tampa Humanists	Sign up here: http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/ Topics: http://uutampa.org/shaag-discussion-topics/	
TBA, Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper	RSVP is required if you are coming. Seating is limited to 25! Click here <i>before</i> midnight, Sunday the 24 th . For CFI paid members . http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/	
TBA, Saturday, 10:30 AM; <i>Must have read the book to attend</i>	NW HILLSBOROUGH– CFI Readers Book Discussion (Limit 12)	Book lovers meet monthly to discuss books we've read. Limited to 12 paid-up CFI members . RSVP: is required . http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/	
TBA, Sunday, 2 PM Usually 3rd Sunday monthly	BRANDON– CFI Skeptics & Humanists	Lunch & discussion. Click to RSVP http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/	