

Freethought News

Vol. 5 No. 5, May 2016 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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* TB-CoR Org.



David Silverman comes to Tampa Bay At the Octagon, UUC May 14, 3 PM Sponsored by Tampa Bay CoR

His latest book will be available: *Fighting God: An Atheist Manifesto for a Religious World*

David Silverman is President of American Atheists and was the creator and Executive Producer of the 2012 Reason Rally. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from Brandeis University, his MBA in Marketing from Penn State, and his CAGS in International Business from Seton Hall. Dave served as a professional inventor at Bell Labs for 8 years (74 issued patents) and a Marketing Director for Natural Microsystems.

He has been an atheist since he was 6-years-old. Dave became an activist in 1996 and soon became New Jersey State Director. He also founded the Alliance of Lucent and AT&T Atheists and Secularists, the first employee club of its kind. The Board of Directors elected Dave as President in September of 2010.

Mr. Silverman has appeared on most major news programs including The O'Reilly Factor (spawning the famous "WTF meme-face"), Scarborough Country, CNN's Paula Zahn NOW, Nick News, Hannity FOX and Friends, NPR's All Things Considered, and many more.

Take the bus to ...

Reason

the Rally that is, in Washington D.C.
June 4th, 2016.

The Reason Rally and its member organizations are organizing a bus trip to bring Tampa Bay folks to the rally that is promised to be a major event on the national scene.

For more information as it develops, see Page 13

***"We are many! We are strong!
We are united! And we are here!"***

Looking for a copy of *Brief Candle in the Dark* by Richard Dawkins? See information on page 13.

"Religious Freedom or License to Discriminate?"

In 2015, the Florida House passed [HB7111](#), which would have allowed adoption agencies to refuse service to same-sex couples, but it died in the Senate. [HB401](#), which was introduced in October 2015 and discussed in the early months of this year, also failed to make it to the governor's desk. The bill would have allowed individuals, businesses with five or fewer owners, religious institutions and businesses operated by faith groups to refuse to produce, create or deliver a product or service to a customer if they have a religious or moral objection, according to [the Herald-Tribune](#) in Sarasota, Florida.

[HB43](#) states that religious organizations, including churches and some schools, and faith leaders do not have to participate in any marriage ceremony that violates their religious beliefs. It was signed by Republican Gov. Rick Scott on March 10 and will take effect July 1.

For more on this accelerating problem, come to the *Humanist Society meeting* to hear **Toni Van Pelt** speak on Sat. May 7th _ next page!

Your Career in Broadcasting

Atheists of Florida is currently producing our regular video series, the *Atheist Forum*, from our studio in South Tampa. We are always seeking help with the production either as crew members; writers, producers, camera, switchboard operators, or as speakers for our program usually consisting of two or more presenters discussing a particular topic relating to science, education, state/church separation, art, philosophy, or any of a thousand other variegated topics.

This is a great experience dealing with exciting ideas and interesting people on a project that can make a significant contribution to the social and intellectual vibrancy of our community. If you would like to participate, contact Aof's Chris Brown at aof@aof.ngo.

Directory

Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Calendar

[Rick O'Keefe](#)

Web site

[Jim Peterson](#)

Newsletter

[Jim Peterson](#)

Special Projects

Mark Brandt, Judy Adkins,
& Bill Norsworthy

See our event website at:

www.evolvetampa.com

See the full roster of the
Leadership board on
Page 5.

Happiness

Our 29th Year

The Humanist Society² 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

Dunedin Public Library 223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin, FL ([map](#))

Volume 24 No. 5 May, 2016

Religious Freedom?

"RFRA: Religious Freedom or License to Discriminate?"

Toni Van Pelt President and Public Policy Director, **Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.** And Organizer for West Coast Florida chapter of the **National Organization for Women (NOW)**

Based on religious objections with increasing frequency, we are seeing individuals, businesses, organizations and institutions claiming a right to discriminate by refusing to provide services to women, LGBTI people and the disability community and by resorting to hiring discrimination. These are the same arguments that were used in the 1960s to oppose laws requiring integration in restaurants because of sincerely held beliefs that God wanted the races to be separate. We even saw some religiously affiliated universities refuse to admit students who engaged in interracial dating. Now the radical right is working to expand allowance of this discrimination for "moral" reasons.

Imposing beliefs on others who do not share them goes against the very fiber and core of the Secular Humanist, Feminist and shared American family values and principles. Ms Van Pelt will discuss the history of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), and outline the damage it has done to date and the potential for future damage. She will also discuss ways you can help to stem the tide of religious special exemptions to the rule of the law and to assist and insist in the establishment of secular moral principles in American culture.

Come on in, have a seat!

Today's program will be followed by our annual election to the board of directors. If you have been a paid up member for a year, and would like to participate directly in the governance and direction of this organization, run for a seat. You will earn the gratitude and plaudits of everyone and be able to have a hand in making some important decisions about all aspects of local Humanism.

Only 3 meetings a year are required by the bylaws, though if you want to pursue some important new initiative, we can have more.



Tampa Bay Harvest

Food: the first kindness and the measure of our Hospitality. Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings. Money is more effective than cans to get the most benefit to the greatest number of people. Thanks to **Glenn Paul**, chair, and **Jordan Williams**. Ed Note: Glenn needs assistance. **We need volunteers!** Write to jim@suncoasthumanist.com Thanx.

Please join us at

2:00 PM
May 7th

in

The Dunedin
Public Library at
223 Douglas Ave.
in Dunedin.

Many of us go to dinner afterwards at: **Marguerites Cafe**. Directly across from the Library.

Join or renew the Humanist Society of the Suncoast

Annual Dues.

- Trial -3 month- free news
- Regular -\$25**
- Reg. Couple -\$30.
- Supporter -\$35/40 (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) check made out to:
"Marios Psomas"*

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

** = optional*



Let us know what you think: in depth! Reader ideas and commentary will be given very favorable consideration.

If you have a letter, comment, suggestion or editorial contribution? Write to us at:
tbcor@metrodirect.net



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

ACROPOLE

1170 Starkey Rd, Largo, FL 33771, Largo
(Southern Extension of Keene)

We're changing our approach. Now its just open. No RSVP required. Trundle on down for the fine food and fastidiously fabulous fellowship! See [Menu](#). Be there on Sunday May. 15th by 5 O'clock to meet with our friends. As always, this is a self treated dinner. Ask to be seated with "the humanists."

We need a coordinator for this!... Maybe you?

~ Only the best people eat here when we do. ~

Laugh Lines *Women's Dictionary*⁵⁻¹⁶

Argument

(ahr•gyoo•munt) n. A discussion that occurs when you're right, and continues until he realizes it.

Airhead

(ayr•hed) n. An act you put on when pulled over for speeding.

Bar-be-que

(bar•buh•Q) n. You bought the groceries, washed the lettuce, chopped the tomatoes, diced the onions, marinated the meat and cleaned everything up—for the dinner he made for his friends."

Blonde jokes

(blahnd joks) n. Jokes short enough for men to understand.

Cantaloupe

(kant•e•lope) n. Gotta get married with a license.

Clothes dryer

(kloze dri•yer) n. An appliance designed to eat socks.

Diet soda

(di•it so•duh) n. A drink you buy at a convenience store to go with a half pound bag of peanut M&Ms.

Diamond

(di•mun) n. Something you think should be on your finger but he can only see in a baseball park.

Eternity

(e•ter•ni•tee) n. The last two minutes of a football game.

Exercise

(ex•er•siz) v. Walking up and down a mall,

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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Collette, Glenn Paul, Don 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) 452-6547



Tampa Humanist Association

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

May 21st, 11 AM

Discussion Leader: *Lucas Hopegood*

Overlooked Issues and New Ways to Think About Them

We will examine the interconnectedness of a variety of traditional and contemporary approaches to the problem of life as we find it. We are fortunate to have Mr. Hopegood, who is pursuing a career in which cognitive ability is the instrument of choice in arriving at useful insights. This will be a great session. Just bring your brain in for a free tuneup.

JP

Learn more about the association at: <http://tampahumanist.com/>



Show off your commitment to Science and Reason!



Tampa CFI is offering these elegant license plate surrounds. Legal, sturdy, fits all US plates - easy to install. Now only \$10.

Order from [Rick O'Keefe](#)

Tampa Bay CoR
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

Tampa Bay CoR

9654 W. Linebaugh Ave. PMB #110

Tampa, FL 33626

E-mail: tbcor@metrodirect.net

Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Join the Freethought Organizations of the Tampa Bay Area: Center for Inquiry-TampaBay, Tampa Humanist Association, Institute for Science and Human Values, Humanist Society of the Suncoast, UU Humanists Clearwater, Atheists of Florida, UU Humanists Tampa,* Freethinkers @ USF,* Plus numerous Meetup organizations that promote serious secular discussion and activity about important issues in our area and beyond.

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://www.tampabaycor.org/>



Member, TB-CoR



4

The mission of the [Secular Coalition](#) is to increase the visibility of and respect for non-theistic view-points in the State, and to protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

Bill Norsworthy, is our Florida representative. Please sign up [here](#). Volunteer activists are wanted, needed, and appreciated!



See page 7 for more information on our Secular Coalition activities around the National day of Reason. SC wants *you* to represent the voice of thousands of the people of reason in the halls of power.

A Humanist Discussion group in east Tampa !

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/>

“Is it too modern to notice that there is nothing [in the ten commandments] about the protection of children from cruelty, nothing about rape, nothing about slavery, and nothing about genocide? Or is it too exactly “in context” to notice that some of these very offenses are about to be positively recommended?”

Christopher Hitchens



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

An Interview with Richard Heinberg on the new Tesla

JESSICA DESVARIEUX of the *Real News Network* Folks are lining up to reserve electric car automaker Tesla's Model 3. It's considered to be one of the first electric cars for the mass market at an expected price tag of 35 thousand dollars. Tesla's CEO, Elon Musk, will be unveiling the vehicle on Thursday evening, so we can't show you what it will actually look like. But in this segment we wanted to get beyond the consumerism and ask, will this be a game changer for the automobile industry in America and the environment? Now joining us to help us answer that question is Richard Heinberg. He's a senior fellow at the Post Carbon Institute.

RICHARD HEINBERG: It's a pleasure, Jessica.
DESVARIEUX: So, Richard, why has it taken so long for an affordable electric car to sort of come to the market? I'm reminded of the 2006 documentary "Who Killed the Electric Car?" which really highlights how we essentially went from having electric cars on California roads in the '90s to then, eventually, shredding and destroying those very same vehicles years later. So my question to you, Richard, is, who killed the electric car?

HEINBERG: Well, the bosses at the Detroit automakers decided back in the 1990s that there wouldn't be a mass market for the electric car because of the short range of the vehicles. They thought consumers wouldn't buy a car if it didn't have a two to three hundred mile range, and the batteries at that time were not capable of delivering that kind of range. So even though they built some prototypes and sent them out to drivers, they never produced a mass market car. Today, battery technology has improved enough so that it is possible to produce an electric car for the masses with at least a 200-mile range, and that's what's anticipated for the Tesla Model 3.

DESVARIEUX: Okay. there are some folks that are saying that this isn't as big of a game changer as people are making it out to be, because essentially you're getting power to charge your electric vehicle from fossil fuel sources like coal. Do you agree with that?

HEINBERG: Not entirely. First of all, the energy mix is different in different parts of the country. Some parts of the country, electricity is mostly coming from coal. In other parts of the country the mix is more oriented toward natural gas, hydro and renewables. So, first of all, it depends on where you're getting your electricity from. And second, you know, if you look out at the energy transition that we're just beginning right now, away from fossil fuels toward renewables, it's clear that one of the main strategies that we'll have to pursue during this energy transition is electrification. Right now only about 20 percent of the final energy that we use in the United States is in the form of electricity. The rest is in the form of liquid fuels for transportation, energy for high heat industrial processes and so on. We have to electrify as much of that energy usage as we can, because most of our renewable sources of energy produce electricity. That's true of solar and wind, geothermal and hydro power. So we need to electrify as much transportation as we can.

DESVARIEUX: I want to ask you about the role of cheap oil. Do you think that threatens the growth of the electric car industry?

HEINBERG: Well, probably not over the long run. We're headed toward electric cars one way or the other, I think. However, over the short run it definitely takes some wind out of the sails, because from the consumer's standpoint the biggest draw for an electric car is that over the lifetime of ownership the operating costs are much lower, so if you have cheap gas that changes that differential a bit, so that there's not as much of an advantage.

DESVARIEUX: Okay, let's talk about the future.
HEINBERG: Well, a truly green transportation system probably wouldn't rely on electric cars that much because it wouldn't be relying on cars that much. Cars are an inherently inefficient mode of transportation. I mean, think about it. Most cars just have a driver and maybe one passenger, and meanwhile you're dragging around two tons of metal, glass and plastic in order to get those one or two people where they want to go. Much more efficient modes of transportation are light rail, any kind of public transportation, actually. So what we really need is to build up more rail transport and get people walking and bicycling as much as possible.



The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc.

(SPAC), has been meeting continuously since 1927. It was incorporated in 1979 as a nonprofit, tax deductible organization. For almost 50 years SPAC has provided free educational programs for its members and the public. For additional information send your emails to: spaceaminer@gmail.com



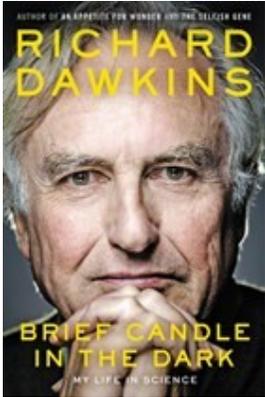
Meetings are normally held on the fourth Friday of each month (except November and December when it is on the third Friday) at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL., at 8:00 P.M. Meetings are open to the public.



TBCoR Leadership Team 2016

- Toni Van Pelt*
~ ISHV
- Bill Norsworthy*
UCH
- Beth Maxi*
HoTA
- Mark Brandt,*
UCH
- Chris Brown,*
MAF
- Jenn Hancock,*
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- Rick O'Keefe,*
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- Jim Peterson,*
HSS, TBPC
- Al Hann*
AoF ~

Meaningful Books

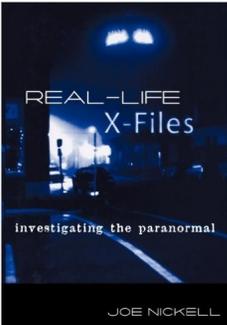
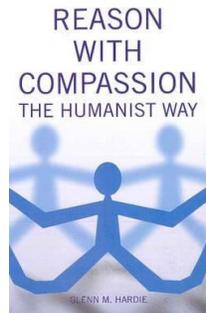


The last few copies, signed by Richard Dawkins, are available. This is his recent autobiography that he presented to us in Clearwater last October.

Order here:

<http://bit.ly/EvolveTampa>

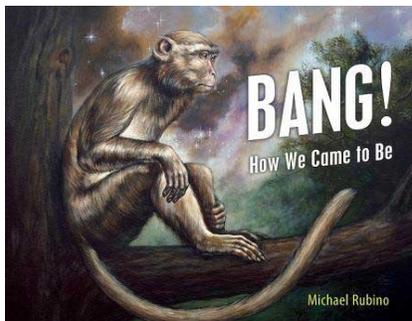
The book reviews the essential ideas of Humanism, its origins and sources and then moves on to different aspects of morality, emphasizing that it must be grounded in experience to have validity. One of the strengths of the book is that it uses point-by-point summaries, which are easy to review. Another is that it is replete with references and suggestions for further reading. It deserves a prominent place on the bookshelves of anyone with an interest in modern Humanism. <http://bit.ly/1ShDeGw>



As a former private investigator and forensic writer, Joe Nickell has spent much of his career identifying forged documents, working undercover to infiltrate theft rings, and investigating questioned deaths. Now he turns his considerable investigative skill toward the paranormal, researching the most well-known and mysterious phenomena all over the world. http://bit.ly/Real-Life_X-Files

Written for children as well as for parents and professionals, a guide to the complex issues of the scientific world-view is discussed in a manner designed to help children feel good about themselves.

<http://bit.ly/1PdGXwK>



More *Seasonings* by CFI & Humanist Society member and journalist- poet, **Lula J. Dovi**. She has completed a second illustrated chapbook of poetry reflecting on her 92 years of adventures. It is available at [Google Books](#) now. But the first [can be found here](#).



Evolve Fish is a good source for your freethought goodies:
Pins, jewelry, 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
16. Plan B
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
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
56. Sex & God
57. Being Right Is Not Enough
58. Loser Takes All
59. Taking Back Politics
60. What Happened in Ohio?
61. Autobiography of Mark Twain
62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible
63. Database Systems (Complete Ver.)
64. Reluctant Database Administrators
65. Asimov's Guide to the Bible
66. Inevitable Illusions
67. Ain't Nobody's business If You Do
69. Bonk
70. What Money Can't Buy
71. Financial Shenanigans
72. Sex & God
73. Best American Non required Reading
74. Reporting at Wit's End
75. Corporations are not People
76. Could I Vote Mormon for president?
77. Culture of Honor
78. Rot on the Vine
79. **Thoughts of a Freethinker** **New!**

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St. Clair McKelway
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Cragun – Phillips
Nisbett – Cohen
Stenesh
Kaye

For even more access to Freethought history and perspectives, you may wish to check out Frank Prahl's Freethought Library. Contact fpahl@verizon.net

Florida Atheists



Chair, Tracy Thomas; President pro-tem, Al Hann



Join members of our Tampa chapter at our new headquarters / Studio Building

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

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. ♪

May, 2016 - 5004 S. MacDill Ave Tampa Fl.

Are you concerned about the upcoming school board elections?

Help Atheists of Florida research candidates running for school board across the state of Florida. We will survey them on their views of state-church separation and the teaching of science, then publish the results so voters can have a better understanding before voting (we will not be endorsing any candidate). This can be done from your home, no need to go anywhere. The first elections are in August, so we need to get started very soon. Just send an email to elections@aof.ngo to volunteer.

Are you going to the Reason Rally?

We are planning on an event the weekend after the Reason Rally – the Reason Revival. If you attended the reason rally, come and share your experiences with us. We will have speakers about reason and critical thinking and snacks of course. Look for info on our meetup site or email us at aof@aof.ngo.

Did you know that this year is the 225th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights?

We will be having an event in December to observe this anniversary, especially as it relates to the establishment clause. If you would like to help organize this event, please send an e-mail to aof@aof.ngo about your concerns, ideas, etc. and we will discuss them.

St Pete Atheists // Freethought Group

Moderated by: Gary Thompson

Wednesday, May 18, 2016 7:00 PM

Contact: easy8@tampabay.rr.com

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

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

Clearwater UU Humanists

Sunday, May 17th at 12:30

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.



Clearwater, Florida

This month, our meeting will be on **May 14, at 3 PM, as we welcome David Silverman to Tampa Bay At the Octagon, Sponsored by Tampa Bay CoR**



If you're headed for the Reason Rally...

Are you ready to learn the skills to make your voice heard on Capitol Hill? [Register now](#) for Reason Rally's Advocacy Day presented by the **Secular Coalition for America!** We're scheduling visits with every single one of the 535 Congressional offices - so we need you! [Click here](#) to learn more about Advocacy Day, including the event schedule.

Tampa Bay Thinkers



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008. Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa, every 3rd Monday, monthly at 7 PM.

May 16th : Topic:

What does the future hold for the next generation?

See our Meetup site: www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/ for more information.

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 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*.

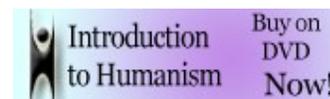


Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings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

Thank you! **Jennifer Hancock**



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.

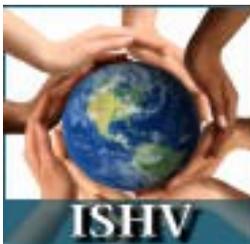
Write **Rodrick Colbert** at: freethinkersust@gmail.com.



Tampa Bay Computer Society & Doc's Café

Lectures, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. Visit our *new* facility on 300 S Duncan Ave Suite 275, Clearwater, FL 33755. [Map](#) Dave 'Doc' Dockery, President. Check out *Doc's Café* to discuss serious ideas and issues. Find us at: www.tampabay.org

We repair our member's computers Free!



The Institute for Science and Human Values

Toni Van Pelt President and Public Policy Director
Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc. Mailing address: 11280 Freedom Ct., Seminole, FL 33772 Email: tvanpelt@ishv.net Web: www.ishv.net


Rick O'Keefe

David Helfand: On Evidence and Climate Science by [Derek C. Araujo](#), April 7, 2016

Canvass Americans' opinions on global warming and you will find a cavernous divide. On one side, a generally well-meaning segment of the public heeds the latest scientific findings, views obstructionist policymakers' inaction and intransigence with dismay, but occasionally muddles the facts. On the other side, a considerable swath of the electorate holds the unshakable conviction that thermometers have a pronounced liberal bias. Any attempt to address climate change, we are told, plays into the hands of an inexplicably vast and powerful network of conspiratorial climatologists. Lost somewhere in the mix is the science that should inform and largely settle the discussion.

Professor David Helfand hopes to change all that. Dr. Helfand, professor of astronomy at Columbia University and the author, most recently, of *A Survival Guide to the Misinformation Age: Scientific Habits of Mind*, aims to help nonscientists come to their own conclusions. He seeks to do so as any good scientist would: by offering a forthright presentation of the best available evidence. On a recent Monday evening on Manhattan's Upper West Side, Helfand delivered a two-hour *tour de force* before an auditorium packed with One Day University adult students. The event, titled "Climate Change: What We Know and What We Don't Know" and moderated by New York Times science reporter Claudia Dreifus, delivered exactly what was promised.

Helfand has a passion for dispassionate analysis. Some political activists seek to goad the public into action on climate change by highlighting worst-case scenarios and downplaying uncertainties and gaps in understanding. Helfand believes this is a profound mistake. In his view, the scientific community's best hope of convincing a confused and ill-informed public is through a precise, honest presentation of our best scientific evidence—limitations, uncertainties, warts and all. He eschews rhetorical carpet-bombing in favor of a clear, candid exposition of the relevant facts and evidence.

Helfand's insistence on laying evidentiary foundations was on display from the outset. His presentation began not with a rallying cry to arrest the alarming rise in greenhouse gas emissions, but with a detailed discourse on the science of sunspots, the reflectivity of clouds and polar ice, and the precession of the Earth's rotational axis. Dreifus occasionally seemed eager to draw Helfand toward an early statement of scientific conclusions and policy recommendations. Helfand held firm, preferring to lead the audience, methodically and relentlessly, through the facts and evidence it needed to reason its own way. Ice core and tree ring analysis, carbon isotopes and computer models were carefully offered for the audience's consideration.

Equally important to Helfand is care and accuracy in stating the facts. He points out, for example, that science reporters do a massive disservice to the concerned public when they mistakenly assert that melting icebergs cause sea levels to rise. It is only the melting of ice on land, not of sea-bound ice, that contributes to this rise. Moreover, roughly half of the rise in sea levels is attributable not to melting ice, but to the expansion of the oceans' volume as their waters warm. By muddling the facts and misstating the evidence, well-intentioned advocates lend climate change deniers a helping hand.

Helfand does not shrink from drawing firm conclusions where the evidence warrants them. We know, for instance, that the bulk of the rapid rise in the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has come from fossil fuel burning; isotopic analysis rules out alternative emission sources touted by climate change deniers. But he cautiously avoids overstating the evidence and overstepping its bounds. For example, although we expect ocean levels to rise with the climate's warming; uncertainties in our climate models make it difficult to predict precisely how far and how quickly they will do so. Feedback loops in the Earth's climate make climate prediction a tricky business.

Helfand is equally clear, however, that uncertainties in climate modeling are no excuse for dawdling. We know for a fact that human-generated greenhouse gas emissions have rocketed, and that rising temperatures and rising emissions are linked, each feeding off the other. While the range of possible outcomes from climate change is wide, the most probable outcomes are unsettling, and there is a substantial risk of catastrophic change that would yield intolerable increases in human suffering. Even if climate change is nonprecipitous, dismaying dangers abound: the exhaustion of fresh water sources, increased spread of tropical diseases, ocean acidification, and a collapse in biodiversity are real concerns. Helfand likens action on climate change to the purchase of insurance against an identifiable risk. One would be foolish to build on a floodplain without purchasing flood insurance on the grounds that disaster might never come. Why regard it as any less foolish to play fast and loose with risks to the Earth's climate?

To his great credit, Helfand recognizes that his preferred approach to communicating climate science might be suboptimal. His wife tells him his calm, measured reasoning is unlikely to persuade those most in need of convincing. For the interested and discerning citizen, however, Helfand offers all the information required to reach an informed and well-reasoned opinion. Let's hope the general public is willing to listen

Derek C. Araujo is a teaching fellow and Ph.D. candidate at the Columbia University Department of Physics. He is a former Vice President and General Counsel of the Center for Inquiry.

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From the Florida Council for Science Education

March/2016 The Florida legislative session is mercifully over and the instructional materials bills we've been tracking are history. These ill-conceived bills would have changed the way textbooks and other educational tools are reviewed and selected, handing entirely too much power to well meaning but non-expert parents and not so well meaning, ideologically driven special interest groups. You can learn more about the bills and why there were bad for science education in our [news release](#) and [series of blog posts](#).

According to the [National Center for Science Education](#) this weekend: "We're fortunate and happy that these bad bills didn't get out of the starting gate," Florida Citizens for Science's Brandon Haught told NCSE. "The good thing to come out of this brief fight is that a clear anti-science motivation behind these bills is now documented. The bills' sponsors and supporters aren't likely to give up, though. But we'll be ready, just as we have been for a full ten years now."

I predict that the main cheerleaders for these bills, [Florida Citizens Alliance](#), will be back. They have a sizable network and they visited Tallahassee in person to help round up four co-sponsors on the senate bill and 19 co-sponsors on the house bill. They're worth keeping an eye on.

On the other hand, as I told NCSE, the good thing is that Florida Citizens Alliance handed us all sorts of evidence of their anti-science views, which can be very useful in the future. And we also made some very good friends with other groups opposed to the Alliance's antics.

For more great analysis, see the [Florida Citizens for Science Blog](#).

Ever wonder what other Florida Freethought groups are doing?



Now you can easily know. Atheists of Florida have a new Calendar: <http://atheistsoffloridainc.org/calendar/> which enables everyone to know what's going on around the entire state.

FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



After spending a couple of weeks in their home states to hear directly from constituents, members of the U.S. Senate are settled back in Washington and are now deciding whether to support a bill called the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act.

This is Congress's chance to roll back some deeply damaging and discriminatory policies that started as part of the failed War on Drugs. The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act would reduce some of the harshest federal prison sentences for non-violent drug offenses, allowing impacted families and communities to begin to heal.

[Tell Senators to support the most significant criminal justice reform legislation that has been proposed in years.](#)

Thousands of families across the country have been torn apart by the War on Drugs' harsh and unfair punishments, a burden borne disproportionately by communities of color. This bill would retroactively reduce some overly severe drug sentences that have kept so many ensnared in the system.

This legislation would lower multiple mandatory minimums for drug offenses – draconian punishments that, like the other weapons in the War on Drugs arsenal, hurt people of color disproportionately.

It's time to turn up the pressure and fix our broken criminal justice system.



Connect with the [ACLU of Florida](#)

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Zacharias Pieri

The Poetry of Jihad



April 26, 6PM CWY 206

Free and open to the public. Reception and book signing to follow.

As a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Humanities Institute, Zacharias Pieri has fused the study of poetry with the study of terrorism to gain a better perspective on why terrorists act in certain ways. Pieri is best known for his research on jihadi movements, and in understanding extremism in the 21st Century.

Visitor pay by space available in Collins Boulevard garage.
If reasonable accommodations for disability are required, please call 813-974-3657.

NPM@USF
National Poetry Month 2016



Toni Van Pelt on WTSP News

APRIL 11, 2016 - SEMINOLE, Fla. – [Speaking for both for ISHV and FL NOW] **"I'm concerned for the women and for the children."**

Toni Van Pelt is concerned because she feels a new bill that's sitting on Gov. Rick Scott's desk will unfairly hurt women and children. Van Pelt is a member of the Florida National Organization for Women.

"It's proven over and over again that women do not receive equal pay for equal work so that is something that needs to be considered."

In the bill, permanent alimony is discouraged, the amount and duration of spousal support is based on how long a couple is married and there are alimony limits based on income.

Ironically, it's sponsored by two women Republican lawmakers from Lakeland -- Rep. Colleen Burton Sen. Kelli Stargel.

"I think that what needs to be done is more studying on how will these provisions, how will these bills actually affect real families," Van Pelt said.

Divorce for Men attorney Alan Rosenthal thinks the bill evens the playing field.

"As far as permanent alimony, I think its time has come and gone. Men and women basically have an equal opportunity to join the workforce," he said.

Perhaps the biggest rift between the bill's supporters and opponents is the aspect about child custody. It requires the court to begin with the premise that minor children should spend equal amounts of time with each parent.

Rosenthal said that's the right way to go.

"If the court can't come up with a good reason, I think mom and dad should have equal rights to see the minor children and I think it's very important that they do have equal rights."

But, Van Pelt believes it's not good for families.

"That might not be the best interest of the child, that should be the first consideration."

Scott has until April 19 to decide on the bill. He vetoed a similar measure in 2013.

<http://on.wtsp.com/1VvUns4>

Toni Van Pelt, President and Public Policy Director

Toni Van Pelt

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Mailing Address/11280 Freedom Ct. Seminole FL 33772

View "Perspectives on Death and Dying: Dying Without Deity" Symposium Video at ISHVORG, the ISHV YouTube Channel; or on the [ISHV website](http://ISHV).

MO SETTLES THE EUTHYPHRO-SOCRATES DEBATE IN JUST EIGHT WORDS

(Transcribed from jesusandmo.net/2016/02/03/deed/)

Mohammed: I'm the perfect role model for all mankind. *Jesus:* But what's wrong is wrong. And if it was wrong, you shouldn't have done it.

Mo: It wasn't wrong.

Jesus: By what criteria do you judge the morality of the deed? How can you say it wasn't wrong?

Mo: Because *I* did it. And I'm the perfect role model for all mankind.

If laws should not be based on religion, what should they be based on?
 We hold that reason, empirical evidence, and humanist moral values are reliable guides.
 ~ Michael De Dora, Center for Inquiry



Announcing Women in Secularism 4 this Fall

Join us September 23–25, 2016 in Arlington, VA, just outside of Washington, DC. *Early bird registration is now open!*

[CFI's Women in Secularism 4 conference](#) brings together a diverse lineup of speakers to address what it means to be a “woman in secularism”—not just in theory, but in practice. Speakers will address not only the progress that has been made, but also the many challenges that still lie ahead.

Confirmed presenters include:

- **Rebecca Goldstein**, philosopher, novelist, and author of *Plato at the Googleplex*
- **Rafida Bonya Ahmed**, human rights activist, author, and widow of slain Bangladeshi writer Dr. Avijit Roy
- **Wendy Kaminer**, lawyer, social critic, and author of *A Fearful Freedom: Women's Flight from Equality*
- **Maryam Namazie**, political activist, blogger, and spokesperson for the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain
- **Julia Sweeney**, Saturday Night Live alumna, television writer, actress, and author

[And many more!](#)

How can we fight back against the intrusion of religious dogma on women's lives, from anti-abortion legislation to the violent threats against religious dissidents? What is the role of “safe spaces” in a movement that highly values free expression? What can we learn from other social movements to more effectively advance the cause of secularism?

**Be a part of this critical conversation.
Register now to get special early bird rates!**

The main program starts on September 23 at 1:00 PM and closes September 25 at 12:30 PM.

The banquet featuring comedian Julia Sweeney takes place Saturday evening, and

[CFI Secular Celebrant training](#) offered September 22, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

Additional registration is required for the banquet and Secular Celebrant training.

[Visit the Women in Secularism site for more information.](#)

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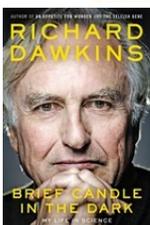
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The Freethought Society is in need of finding "Bus Captains" to help before and during the bus trip. Please volunteer as soon as possible by calling Margaret Downey at: (610) 793-2737

Tickets can be purchased at <http://rallybus.net/reason-rally>



Looking for a copy of Richard Dawkins' book?

Exclusive autographed copy, including our program brochure, and bookmark for only \$46.95 plus S&H. Stock is going fast! Go to:

www.evolvetaampa.com



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. A service of AHA.



Tampa Bay Coalition – May, 2016 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. Your **RSVP** is requested, and often is required for admittance. *Meeting planners need this information.*
Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://www.tampabaycor.org/>

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| TBA | TAMPA BAY AREA– Humanist Families | RSVP here: Family outings and other activities. Details & RSVP: http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN |
| Summer break Lectures & receptions | E. TAMPA– Humanities Institute at USF | See Web site for full listing of many great events and calendar. http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities Locations vary! |
| Every 4 th Friday, 8 PM general meeting. Many more events monthly. | ST. PETERSBURG– Astronomy Club | For several dates, locations, & details: http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar |
| 7 pm 2 nd Wednesday & 9:30 am 4 th Sunday | TEMPLE TERRACE– UU Tampa Humanists | Details: http://bit.ly/UU-TPA_Humanists-Calendar <i>Verify a mtg. before attending.</i> |
| Every Tuesday 11:30 AM, work & social; video production 7 PM | CLEARWATER & S TAMPA– Atheists of Florida , Inc. | Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup |
| 05-07, Saturday, 2 PM | DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast | Details & RSVP http://7it.ly/Suncoast-Humanists See Page 2 for the current program. |
| 05-13, Friday, 7 PM at MOSI | E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource Society (MARS) at MOSI | Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi Other events: http://bit.ly/MARS-home |
| 05-14, Saturday, 7 PM | TAMPA – Center for Inquiry | Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/7FI-TB_Meetup |
| 05-14, Saturday, 7 PM | NE TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc. | Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists See Page 4 for the current program |
| 05-14, Saturday, 3 PM | E. CLEARWATER– UU Clearwater Humanists | Details: http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists |
| 05-15, Sunday, 2 PM | BRANDON–CFI Sunday Social, with Tampa Bay Skeptics | Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to RSVP : http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup |
| 05-16, Monday, 7 PM | NW HILLSBOROUGH– Tampa Bay Thinkers | Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers |
| 05-15, Wednesday, 5 PM | PINELLAS–Suncoast Humanist Dinner | http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists See page 3 |
| 05-28, Saturday, 10:30 AM; <i>Must have read the book to attend</i> | NW HILLSBOROUGH– CFI Readers Book Discussion | Limited to 12 <i>paid-up CFI members</i> . RSVP is required . http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup |
| 05-30, Monday, 6 PM | N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper | RSVP is required . Seating is limited to 25! <i>For CFI & TBS paid members.</i> http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup |



2017 Freethought Cruise with Hemant Mehta

<https://freethoughtcruise.wordpress.com/>

March 16-20, 2017