

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Freethought News



Vol. 9 No. 5, May 2020

Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

What's Inside?

Suncoast Humanist Soc	2*
Tampa Humanists	2*
Post Carbon Council	5*
Atheists of Florida	6*
CFI Tampa Bay	7*
Tampa Bay Skeptics	9*
Books/Cooper Library	10
Inst For Sci & Hum	11*
Tampa Bay Thinkers	12
Humanist Families	12*
Military Atheists	12*
Ethical Humanism	12
Socrates Café	12
Hum. Sarasota Bay	12
UU Humanists	12
Freethinkers@USF	13
Secular Coalition	13
TB Technology Ctr	13
Astronomy clubs	13
Coalition of Reason	13
Unified Calendar	14
Articles of interest	15
* TBCoR member	

Tampa Bay Freethought Organizations go online

After nearly 2 months of dormancy, various of our groups are rapidly taking advantage of the internet's potential for outreach and activity. Here are a few examples:

Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason which includes many if not most of the affiliated organizations listed at left:

<https://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason/>

Atheists of Florida has connections to a variety of meetings, local to national:

<https://www.meetup.com/FloridaAtheists/>

Resist provides opportunities for activism for causes like democracy, equality, human rights, etc.

<https://www.meetup.com/Resist-Tampa/>

Humanists of the Suncoast has for 32 years provided a home for lively discussions and activism on philosophical and human issues at:

<https://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/>

Tampa Bay Thinkers host monthly online discussion for serious people on serious matters:

<https://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/>

The Socrates Café in Tampa has always entertained lively discussions on important issues. While currently not meeting, keep an eye on their page:

<https://www.meetup.com/Socrates-Cafe-The-unexamined-life-is-not-worth-living/>

The Sierra Club stays concerned about environmental issues:

<https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Groups-of-the-Greater-Tampa-Bay-Florida-Area/>

But wait! There's more. Check 'em out.

New Data on Incipient Climate Catastrophe Suggests the Need for Rapid Human Action

Most everyone knows that humid heat is harder to handle than the "dry" kind. And recently, some scientists have projected that later in the century, in parts of the tropics and subtropics, warming climate could cause combined heat and humidity to reach levels rarely if ever experienced before by humans. Such conditions would ravage economies, and possibly even surpass the physiological limits of human survival.

According to a new study, the projections are wrong: such conditions are already appearing. The study identifies thousands of previously rare
Continued on page [15](#)

Vitamin D levels appear to play role in COVID-19 mortality rates

Posted: 07 May 2020 09:13 AM PDT

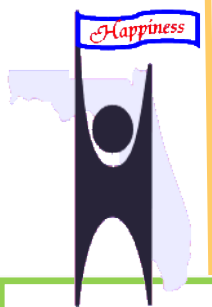
Researchers analyzed patient data from 10 countries. The team found a correlation between low vitamin D levels and hyperactive immune systems. Vitamin D strengthens innate immunity and prevents overactive immune responses. The finding could explain several mysteries, including why children are unlikely to die from COVID-19.

[Read More](#)

NB. Until further notice, following best-practices and official medical recommendations, **all group gatherings are postponed** due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We will **let you know here when ...**

Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason
Web site—Jim Peterson
Editors—**Jim Peterson & Rick O'Keefe**
Back & current issues online at:
<http://www.tampabaycor.net>
Special Projects—Mark Brandt & Bill Norsworthy
See our event websites at:
<http://bit.ly/2vUJoE1>
Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the editors, TBCoR, or its member organizations.

Anywhere in this newsletter, **CLICK** on an image or blue text for a link.



The Humanist Society of the Suncoast

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

HSS goes online!

Jim Peterson is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: The Humanist Society, present and future - Social Sharing and Serious Discussion.

Time: May 23, 2020 02:00 PM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting; click on this URL:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89878422243?pwd=MnpLVGNjWENkRWg3SoFjS1pwRohWUT09>

Meeting ID: 898 7842 2243

Password: 978268 You may connect by phone.

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89878422243?pwd=MnpLVGNjWENkRWg3SoFjS1pwRohWUT09>

See you online!

Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism or other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good.

If Humanism is to fulfill its potential to become the default worldview of our species, we will have to become a good deal more active than we are now.

In a time in which large sections of our population are under the fearful sway of ill educated conspiracy theorists and political- religious manipulators whose personal fortunes and power bases are directly the result of their ability to sway mass opinion, we offer a calming message of reliance on verified knowledge and the disciplines that helped to build science and reason.

The question is, can screaming epithets and fearsome threats be overcome by sound reasoning when the actual reality of our time is as serious as it is?

We must show the way.



Vol. XXXIII No. 5 May, 2020



The Humanist Society has maintained an enlightened presence on the Florida Suncoast sine 1987.

Please Join or renew
Humanist Society of the Suncoast

Annual Dues

Regular -\$25

Reg. Couple -\$30.

Supporter -\$35/40 (With pin above)

Life -\$200. (Pin)

Life Couple -\$250 (Pins)

Associate -\$10



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

If you have questions concerning your dues or status, contact our treasurer,

Scott Wilson scott33761@yahoo.com

If new, please give info below; if renewing just indicate your name & any changes from our previous information. Thanks!

Name: Address –if new : City, State, Zip
Phone:E-mail: (Privacy respected)

Send check made out to:
"Scott Wilson"

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

Humanist Society of the Suncoast, AHA
6814 Charlotte Harbor Way
Tampa FL 33625



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

What is the Humanist Way?

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

The Movable Feast

the Humanist Society's monthly social Dinner

Join us May. 19th at Applebee's at 5 O'clock for American style cuisine, and decidedly the best company:

Cancelled!
Applebees
For map Menu

5110 E Bay Dr Clearwater, FL
33764

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

Wry Eye with a View

Did you hear about the mathematician who's afraid of negative numbers? He'll stop at noting to avoid them.

What's the best thing about Switzerland? I don't know, but the flag is a big plus.

Hey! I just invented a new word! "Plagiarism."

Helvetica and Times New Roman walk into a bar. "Get out of here!" yelled the barkeep. "We don't serve your type."

Hear about the new restaurant called Karma? There's no menu because you get what you deserve. Though I hear it may not re-open.

A woman in labor suddenly shouted, "Shouldn't! Wouldn't! Couldn't! Didn't! Can't!" "Don't worry," said the doctor. "Those are just contractions."

"Knock, knock."
"Who's there?"
"Control freak."
"Con--"

"Okay, now you say, "Control freak who?"

Yesterday I saw a guy spill all his Scrabble letters on the road. I asked him, "What's the word on the street?"

I saw my new neighbor this morning. He said, "You like crosswords. What rhymes with orange?" I said, "No it doesn't." These words of sanguinary rectitude brought to you by Rick Okeefe.

Humanist Society of the Suncoast

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

Board of Directors.

Meets Sept., December, April

Jay Alexander,
Kyle Hicks,
Lois Fries, Secretary
Dave Kovar,
Brad Perryman Vice Pres.
Jim Peterson, President
Scott Wilson , Treasurer
Jordan Williams.

Emeritus members: Terry Eckstein, Dr. Jon Green, Mark Kligman, Dr. Jack Robinson, Dec. Jerry Moore, Anita Garcia, Mark Winterbottom, Sidney Goetz Dec. Bob Collette, Glenn Paul, Kay Paul, Dec. Don Acenbrack Dec., Rob Byrch, Dec. Jackie Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard, Matt Cooper Dec, Jim Butler, Marios Psomas, Dec, Steve Brown

~*~*~*~*~*

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

Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist,
click:

[Secular Therapy Org.
Cognitive Neurosciences](http://fampsy.org/members/lynda-gurvitz/)

Or call:

Lynda Gurvitz,
[http://fampsy.org/members/
lynda-gurvitz/](http://fampsy.org/members/lynda-gurvitz/)
(727) 725-8820

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





It's been a while since we've sent out a newsletter, and despite not working my full 40 hours at my "real job", I haven't found myself with a lot of free time during the coronapocalypse. As you'll see, we've still been keeping ourselves busy!

Over the past few weeks, leaders from various local organizations have been building an exciting new community program called, *"It Takes a Village"*. Just this week, I gave an invocation at the Polk BoCC meeting which was picked up by *The Friendly Atheist*. Becca was interviewed by national news writers at *Religion News Service* about the release of the Secular Survey report by American Atheists. And Alison Gill, VP of Legal & Policy with American Atheists joined me on *Freethought in Florida* to discuss the survey results.

We are approaching the anniversary of launching memberships, so those of you who signed on early are coming due for renewal this month. THANK YOU for supporting the ACPC and our shared vision for Polk County. We couldn't have grown as quickly as we did in the first year without you.

Of course, we aren't hosting any events in order to continue following distancing recommendations to help stop the spread of COVID-19, and we miss seeing you all so much. We've been playing some online games to de-stress, and have hosted a couple virtual meetups, too.

Please know that we are here for you. If you need anything during this time, please reach out!

* * *

The Atheist Community of Polk County, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) Florida non-profit corporation dedicated to protecting the separation of church and state and promoting a positive atheist community.

We are a growing community of atheists, freethinkers, skeptics and humanists organizing in Polk County, Florida to network, socialize, work in the community, provide educational speakers and more. We are making efforts to expand our programming, with emphasis on scheduling events in various places around the county, at different days/times, etc. so more people can find something to enjoy that's convenient.

Humanist Quotes

"Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood."
– **Attributed to Marie Curie (1867-1934)**

"If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favorable."
– **Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE)**

"It is only those who do nothing that make no mistakes."
– **Attributed to Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)**

"Whenever you have a mishap, remember to ask yourself how you can make use of it."
– **Epictetus (1 st Century CE)**

"It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their side of the question."
– **John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 1863**

World Humanist Congress 2020 News

As we continue to track information from the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States' Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and government agencies regarding public health guidelines and travel advisories, we take seriously the growing urgency to make a decision about whether the Congress will continue.

AHA is still evaluating whether or not to cancel the Congress, but it is increasingly likely that we will have to do so.

At this time, we recommend that you DO NOT book airline travel or hotel rooms for the Congress until further notice.

Hotel rooms that you have already reserved at the Hyatt Regency Miami may be cancelled up to 48 hours prior to scheduled check-in without penalty. (Accommodations you may have reserved elsewhere are subject to the cancellation rules you agreed to at the time of reservation.)

We will issue notifications immediately when a final decision is made regarding the status of the Congress. If the event is cancelled registration fees will be refunded (minus a processing fee of \$50).

Repeal Blasphemy Laws

Exciting news! Senators Lankford (R-OK) and Coons (D-DE) introduced a Resolution to support the repeal of blasphemy laws globally, as a companion to the resolution introduced in the House of Representatives earlier last year. Now that the resolution has been introduced in both chambers with bipartisan support, we are asking all to call their Senators to support the resolution.

At least 84 countries around the world still have blasphemy laws that endanger the lives of those who do not conform to the state's official religion or worldview. Christians, Muslims, Hindus, nontheists and other religious minorities are all at risk. These laws have dire consequences; conviction can mean life in prison or a death sentence.

This necessary resolution strongly encourages the State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with foreign nations and opposes any attempts at the United Nations to advance blasphemy laws.

Joint efforts to move the needle have been working. Recently, countries such as Greece, Ireland, and Canada have repealed their blasphemy laws and more are considering bringing these draconian laws to an end. But we won't win this fight without you. Can you take a moment right now to ask your Senators to co-sponsor S.Res.458?

In today's divided political climate, Republicans and Democrats have come together to say that this issue is too important for politics. That's because the issue of religious freedom, which includes the right to believe any faith or none at all, is something that all Americans can support. Will you join us in supporting international religious freedom by asking your Senator to co-sponsor this resolution?

Click here



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

A Life of Heat 'Near Unlivable' for More Than 3 Billion People in Just Decades, Climate Report Warns

By Julia Conley

In the next five decades, more than three billion people—one third of the world's population—could live in regions with climate conditions considered unlivable, [according to](#) a new study.

Researchers at Washington State University, Nanjing University in China, and Wageningen University in the Netherlands examined the history of the conditions in which humans have comfortably lived, starting in the mid-Holocene era about 6,000 years ago and up to the present day.

Over that period of time, the study shows, the vast majority of the world's population has lived in areas with a mean annual temperature between 50° and 60° Fahrenheit.

Scientists are pushing world governments to take action to keep the warming of the Earth below 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of this century, by drastically reducing fossil fuel emissions. But [many fear](#) limiting global warming to this degree won't be possible.

With every 1° Celsius (1.8° Fahrenheit) that the planet's temperature rises, the new study says, one billion people will be forced to either migrate or adapt to new climate conditions which will affect crops and livestock and may make their outdoor environments impossible to work in.

"I think it is fair to say that average temperatures over 29° [84° Fahrenheit] are unlivable," Professor Marten Scheffer of Wageningen University [told](#) *The Guardian*. "You'd have to move or adapt. But there are limits to adaptation. If you have enough money and energy, you can use air conditioning and fly in food and then you might be okay.

But that is not the case for most people."

About 25 million people today live in the hottest areas of the world, mainly in the Sahara region of Africa where mean annual temperatures top 84° Fahrenheit.

At the rate the planet is expected to warm, a larger share of Africa and parts of India, South America, Southeast Asia, and Australia could become too hot for people to live comfortably—driving many to migrate elsewhere in order to grow crops and obtain sufficient food and water. These areas are now home to about 3.5 billion people.

"It's a bit unfortunate that most population growth happens to be in the place that will be hardest to live in," Scheffer [told](#) *The Washington Post*.

As the coronavirus pandemic has [caused carbon emissions](#) to drop due to reduced traffic and shut-down economies around the globe, Adam Browning of Vote Solar tweeted, "we should look to recover from this crisis in ways that prevent the next."

[According to](#) *The Guardian*, more than one billion people are expected to live in untenably hot climates by 2070 "even in the most optimistic outlook" presented by the study, which was published Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

"We were frankly blown away by our own initial results. As our findings were so striking, we took an extra year to carefully check all assumptions and computations," Xu Chi, a researcher at Nanjing University who co-authored the study, [told](#) the *Sydney Morning Herald*. "Clearly we will need a global approach to safeguard our children against the potentially enormous social tensions the projected change could invoke."

The study demonstrated how the world could look very different than it does now by 2070, even in parts of the world which aren't expected to face the extreme temperatures the researchers described, with billions of people forced to migrate elsewhere.

"It is likely climatic changes will in effect move large cities and whole countries into temperature niches that present inhabitants would find unimaginable," Neil Adger of the University of Exeter, who reviewed the study, [told](#) the *Post*. "So will cities move? Unlikely. But will they become less attractive destinations for people to move to? Definitely. And ultimately some present cities will stop growing and ossify."



 post carbon institute

 **HERE** for Climate
HUMANIST ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE EFFORT

Atheists of Florida Inc.



For our Atheists helping the Homeless project -

For all meetings: bring, if you can, small bars of unused soap, small bottles of shampoo, heavy duty socks, any kind of personal care items, or money (for bulk purchase of these items).

Ed Golly, Chair - Judy Adkins, Exec. Dir.
See **AoF Meetup** for details Website: <http://aof.ngo>

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



The broadcast is on hiatus for now. Previous programs are available **on the internet** www.youtube.com/atheistforum. Now, tune in to VoR See [page 13!](#)
Contact us: info@atheistsoffloridainc.org



The Atheist Community of Polk County, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) Florida non-profit corporation dedicated to protecting the separation of church and state and promoting a positive atheist community.

We are a growing community of atheists, freethinkers, skeptics and humanists organizing in Polk County, Florida to network, socialize, work in the community, provide educational speakers and more. We are making efforts to expand our programming, with emphasis on scheduling events in various places around the county, at different days/times, etc. so more people can find something to enjoy that's convenient.

May Events

Details—click [here](#)

meetup

May 19, 5 PM
Cancelled! dinner
with members of
the Humanist
Society.

At Applebees
See Page 3 details

Be sure to check for
changes and RSVP!

May
Register for
our on-line
meet below.

Reasons you should join our **new online real-time meeting**:
Stay tuned for more details. Register at: <https://www.free2think.org/>

Always Vigilant

Public school prayer events are generally billed as being student-organized in order to *appear* constitutional.

But in reality, school staff are often actively involved, even to the extent that they're the ones organizing the event.

To stop this unconstitutional Christian proselytizing, someone needs to expose the adult organizers. That's where we come in!

Let us know of any church-state violation you may run across - restrictions, prayers, bible readings, etc. We'll take it from there. Thanks, www.aof.ngo

Be sure to come by AoF's regular
Sunday night Zoom sessions starting at
5:00 PM.

For linking information, see our notice on the
Coalition of Reason Meetup page, or go to our
website; www.aof.ngo.

We will not be undone by a virus.

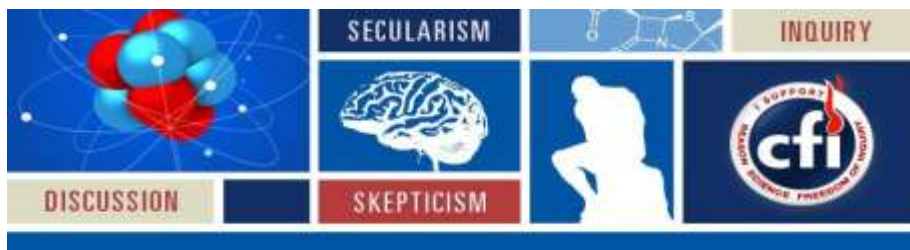
New Taxpayer Support for Churches!

The CARES Act, passed by Congress to provide economic stability during the coronavirus pandemic, created a stream of funding for businesses and nonprofits called the Paycheck Protection Program. Unfortunately, however, they did not include important protections for the separation of religion and government.

Now, the Small Business Administration (SBA), which oversees the program, has said that churches are allowed to receive this funding and use it to pay for inherently religious activity, such as clergy salary.

This is our opportunity to tell SBA that they are wrong —
American taxpayers must not be forced to subsidize religion!

**Please take action now! Write to SBA to ask them to
put in place basic protections to protect the
constitutional separation of religion and government.
AA.**



Incorporated in Florida on October 3, 2002. Only with *your support* can we succeed.



Michigan Drops Opposition to Secular Marriage Celebrants, Ending Lawsuit: <https://bit.ly/2UBfwpF>

Secular celebrants are now permitted to officiate and solemnize marriages in Michigan, after the state attorney general reversed the government's opposition to a lawsuit brought by the Center for Inquiry (CFI).

Promising that the state considers CFI-trained and certified Secular Celebrants to be covered by existing statutes regarding marriage solemnization, the presiding federal court brought the case to a close.

Access Points

by Tim Binga

With the COVID-19 outbreak and its requisite closures, I have had time to do some catching up on the blogs, articles, etc., that always seem to be put off when there are other things to be done. While catching up, I noted that some recent writings have once again raised the issue of "silliness" and question why the various skeptic's organizations still pursue the believers of things "silly."

First and foremost, I am not speaking on behalf of the management or administration of the skeptical organizations I work for, in this case the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CSI). However, in case you were not aware, CSI was founded as the Committee for the Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) in 1976, examining such things as UFOs, astrology, and the like (which some might call pretty silly). As the organization grew, it took on more and more subjects that some folks deem as silly: cryptozoology, alternative medicine, ghosts, divination, parapsychology, etc. The idea was that science and scientists were not examining these phenomena because they were focused on their own science. Someone needed to do it.

Of the luminaries who joined the founding of CSICOP, Carl Sagan, the man who became a renowned "science popularizer," stands out the most. The organization followed his lead, seemingly determining that we needed science education,

critical thinking, and a better public understanding of science; CSICOP turned in that direction.

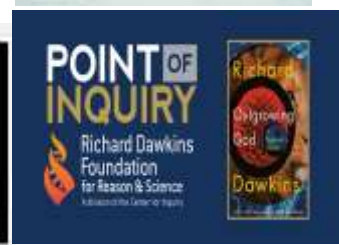
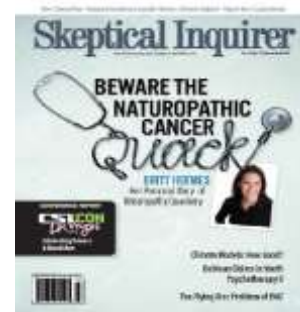
Based upon my research, it appears that over time it developed into that organization. But there is still a need to examine those "silly" issues. Why? Because the issues keep returning.

Former baseballer Jose Canseco asked: "Can Bigfoot and Aliens Get Covid?" Chiropractors have been told not to tell people that they can cure COVID-19. Psychics still take peoples' money. Homeopathy. The Illuminati. Ancient astronauts. Guess what? They all return in some form or another.

Besides the fact that these topics keep coming back, one point to consider is the educational aspect. Covering these topics gives an opportunity for PR and also can be thought of as providing an introduction to skepticism. If someone starts investigating Nessie and finds out that there is no evidence for its existence, maybe they will start questioning other "facts" that they believe. Maybe the house they live in is not haunted; what proof is there for this? How about werewolves, vampires, giants? Hmm, maybe there is evidence about [insert topic here].

Skepticism is not an all-encompassing idea; it is a spectrum. Some folks do not believe in ghosts but think zombies are real. Some folks are religious and have doubt there. But it is not black and white. So, the question is: Do we include all, or only those who believe exactly as I do? Or do we educate people, with the resources at our disposal, and try to teach them critical thinking and reason through the entry point of their interests?

If nothing else, these "attacks" prove that we need to keep doing this kind of work; they also keeping coming back.





The **Center for Inquiry (CFI)** leads the charge on promoting science, reason, critical thinking, and humanist values.

CFI's vision is a world in which evidence, science, and compassion—rather than superstition, pseudoscience, or prejudice—guide **public policy**.



"Suppose after all that death does end all. Next to eternal joy, next to being forever with those we love and those who have loved us, next to that, is to be wrapt in the dreamless drapery of eternal peace. Next to eternal life is eternal sleep.

Upon the shadowy shore of death the sea of trouble

casts no wave. Eyes that have been curtained by the everlasting dark, will never know again the burning touch of tears. Lips touched by eternal silence will never speak again the broken words of grief. Hearts of dust do not break. The dead do not weep. Within the tomb no veiled and weeping sorrow sits, and in the rayless gloom is crouched no shuddering fear.

I had rather think of those I have loved, and lost, as having returned to earth, as having become a part of the elemental wealth of the world – I would rather think of them as unconscious dust, I would rather dream of them as gurgling in the streams, floating in the clouds, bursting in the foam of light upon the shores of worlds, I would rather think of them as the lost visions of a forgotten night, than to have even the faintest fear that their naked souls have been clutched by an orthodox god.

I will leave my dead where nature leaves them. Whatever flower of hope springs up in my heart I will cherish, I will give it breath of sighs and rain of tears. But I cannot believe that there is any being in this universe who has created a human soul for eternal pain. I would rather that every god would destroy himself; I would rather that we all should go to eternal chaos, to black and starless

night, than that just one soul should suffer eternal agony.

I have made up my mind that if there is a God, he will be merciful to the merciful.

Upon that rock I stand. –

That he will not torture the forgiving. –

Upon that rock I stand. –

That every man should be true to himself, and that there is no world, no star, in which honesty is a crime.

Upon that rock I stand. –

The honest man, the good woman, the happy child, have nothing to fear, either in this world or the world to come.

Upon that rock I stand."

🔗 **Robert G. Ingersoll**

IT'S TIME TO STOP GIVING SNAKE OIL SALESMEN THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

The makers of homeopathic medicine want it both ways.

- They want their "drugs" to be treated like real medicine, to be able claim they can treat all kinds of ailments, and sell them right alongside evidence-based medicines on pharmacy shelves.

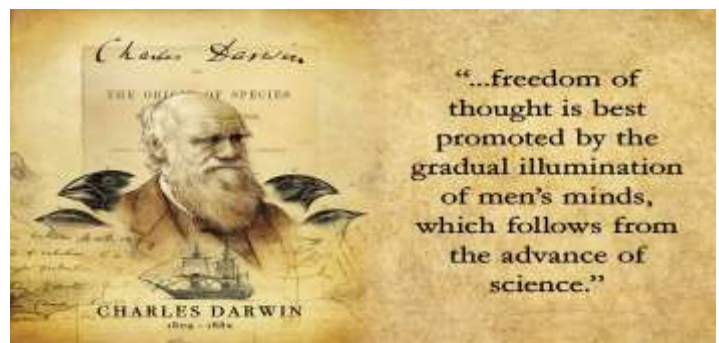
- They also don't want their products to be held to the same rigorous standards of safety and efficacy as real medicine.

They don't want to have to prove their stuff actually works, because, of course, they know it doesn't.

Homeopathy is perhaps the most **obviously phony form of alternative medicine**, and we simply can't assume that those who manufacture and market it are acting in good faith, any more than we assume positive intent from a fraud psychic who fleeces clients out of their life savings to remove a curse.

Read the rest here: <https://bit.ly/3avne9E>

Skepticism is my nature
Freethought is my methodology
Agnosticism is my conclusion
Atheism is my opinion
Humanism is my motivation.
~ Jerry DeWitt





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



Was Freud right about anything?

By [Benjamin Plackett](#), [Live Science](#)

[Contributor](#) 03/21/2020

Spoiler: not really.

Sigmund Freud is one of the most famous doctors to delve into the human subconscious. But is anything he said rooted in science?

After all, one of his most memorable ideas suggested that we're all repressing our true desires to have sex with our parents. But [Freud](#) didn't use science to arrive at this idea. He started out with a theory and then worked backward, seeking out tidbits to reinforce his beliefs and then aggressively dismissing anything else that challenged those ideas. That's according to Frederick Crews, a one-time Freudian follower and professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley.

"Freud passed himself off as a [scientist](#). He was very sensitive to objections and would simply laugh at an objection and claim the person making it was psychologically ill," Crews told [Live Science](#).

Related: [Why can't we remember our dreams?](#)

Back in 2017, Crews wrote "Freud: The Making of an Illusion" (Metropolitan Books) to examine the legitimacy of Freudian principles.

"Statistically, it's conceivable that a man can be as dishonest and slippery as Freud and still come up with something true," Crews said. "I've tried my best to examine his theories and to ask the question: What was the empirical evidence behind them? But when you ask these questions, then you eventually just lose hope."

As damning an assessment as that is, it wasn't always like this for the founding father of psychoanalysis, who wrote that mental health problems could be cured by bringing unconscious thoughts back into the conscious realm. In his own time, Freud enjoyed celebrity status as a leading intellectual of the 20th century.

Chief among Freud's overflow of opinions was the "Oedipus complex," the [hypothesis](#) that every young boy wants to have sex with his mother and so wants to murder his father, whom he sees as a rival. But there's a catch. The boy also has the foresight to realize that his father is simultaneously his protector. Presented with this

challenging scenario, the child is forced to repress his homicidal cravings.

"It's just about the craziest idea that anyone ever had," Crews said. When people asked about young girls, Freud hastily came up with another idea, the Electra complex. "It's just a cut-and-paste job. Suddenly, the little girl wants to have sex with her father," Crews said. "It's completely ludicrous."

At the core of both these theories is the notion of repressed emotions. That very concept empowered Freud to dismiss his detractors. "He would always be totally convinced he knew what was wrong with his patients and then simply browbeat them until they agreed. When patients disagreed, he didn't entertain the notion that he could be mistaken," Crews said. "He invoked his favorite concepts, chiefly repression, and would say the patient's unconscious secretly harbored Freud's ideas but was too scared to confront them. That's the exact opposite of testing ideas."

But not everyone is as critical as Crews.

"Freud was right about 'day residue' in [dreams](#)," said Robert Stickgold, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. "But the whole psychoanalysis thing, and the role of childhood sexuality, was totally bonkers."

Day residues are exactly what you think they are: traces of what happened in reality that find their way into our dreams. Freud was nothing if not prolific, content to opine on matters as diverse as sexual perversions, the notion of female "hysteria," and subliminal memory, or the memories that supposedly lurk in parts of the brain separate from the conscious. But for some observers, that's where the man's apparent [genius](#) lies.

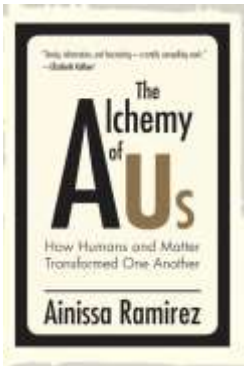
"You can think of him as an idea factory," explained Harold Takooshian, a professor of psychology at Fordham University in New York City. "Freud never considered himself a data guy. He hoped other people would take on his ideas to prove or disprove them."

But Freud's theories are, on the whole, almost impossible to submit to the rigor of statistical analysis that legitimate science has to endure, said Crews. "That's because his ideas are hopelessly vague. How do you test for them? They're just phrases."

skeptic (n): a person who searches for truth through questioning and reasoning

Recommended Reading

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



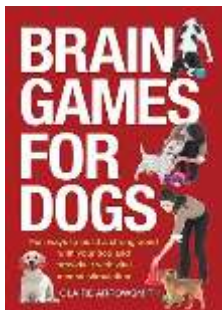
Ramirez shows not only how materials were shaped by inventors but also how those materials shaped culture, chronicling each invention and its consequences—intended and unintended. Filling in the gaps left by other books about technology, Ramirez showcases little-known inventors—particularly people of color and women—who had a significant impact but whose accomplishments have been hidden by mythmaking, bias, and convention. Doing so, she shows us the power of telling inclusive stories about technology. She also shows that innovation is universal—whether it's splicing beats with two turntables and a microphone or splicing genes with two test tubes and CRISPR.

A razor-sharp thinker offers a new understanding of our post-truth world and explains the American instinct to believe in make-believe, from the Pilgrims to P. T. Barnum to Disneyland to zealots of every stripe . . . to Donald Trump.

In this sweeping, eloquent history of America, one of our sharpest observers, Kurt Andersen, demonstrates that what's happening in our country today—this strange, post-truth, "fake news" moment we're all living through—is not something entirely new, but rather the ultimate expression of our national character and path. America was founded by wishful dreamers, magical thinkers, and true believers, by impresarios and their audiences, by hucksters and their suckers. Believe-whatever-you-want fantasy is deeply embedded in our DNA.



This book provides more than just fun ways to challenge a dog's thinking and puzzle-solving ability. Claire Arrowsmith strongly suggests that such challenges help build a strong bond between a dog and its owner. She examines the accepted evidence of the importance of mental stimulation and why it's important to use only reward-based teaching methods. She also explains how to use hand signals and incorporate mental challenges and learning into everyday activities.



Keep your local bookstore in business. Shop locally. <https://www.indiebound.org/>

A Community of Independent Local Bookstores

The Matt Cooper

Humanist Lending Library

Humanist Society members can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, at any meeting.

Then pick it up at the next meeting. **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated. **Brad Perryman** is our new librarian.



TITLE AUTHOR

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

By **Norm R. Allen Jr.**
 Paul Kurtz Institute for Science and
 Human Values

The Trouble with



Southern Baptists



Southern Baptists have always been reactionary. Indeed, they were founded primarily to defend slavery. They have always been staunchly patriarchal and insistent that only certain Protestants can get into Heaven. Many of them have been anti-Jewish.

This last flaw has not turned off many Israelis. Southern Baptists were on hand to celebrate President Trump's provocative move of the US embassy to Jerusalem. Southern Baptist preachers even delivered sectarian prayers for the occasion.

Southern Baptists believe that the U.S. has a central role in biblical prophecy, even though the name "America" appears nowhere in the so-called good book. Many Christians simply use highly imaginative "thinking" and retrofitting to come to the conclusion that the U.S. is highly favored by God. These religious fanatics believe that the modern state of Israel will figure prominently in Christian eschatology. They believe that Israel will be at the center of the "war to end all wars," and that certain Christians will be raptured to Heaven. (Pat Robertson once even reportedly planned to film the Rapture!)

Israeli leaders seem to know that these Christian bigots do not like them or trust them. However, many Israelis seem to believe they simply have differences in theology. Many Israelis believe that reactionary Christians in the U.S. are among their best allies, and that dangerous anti-Semitism among reactionary Christians is a thing of the past.

The problem with the religious insanity of Southern Baptists is that it is *dangerous*! They are actually looking forward to World War III and they will do whatever they can to accelerate it. And in Trump they have the perfect dupe to do their bidding. Who cares how many porn stars he sleeps with as long as he can help usher in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

Pastor Rick Wiles is especially off-the-wall. He is constantly featured on Right Wing Watch. He has stated that Muslims must be "stomped out like cockroaches." He believes Obama is truly a demon from the pits of Hell.

(However, the pastor has reportedly fallen out with Trump, and in 2017, he said that Ivanka Trump is an evil woman that practices Kabbala.)

Recently, Wiles said that antichrist refers to behavior and beliefs. He said that anyone who disbelieves that Jesus was God in human form "is antichrist." He included Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and others.

Israelis might also be interested to know that Wiles condemns homosexuality and Zionism and says that "They're driven by the same spirit." He believes that homosexuality and Zionism will rule the world simultaneously through Artificial Intelligence and high-tech surveillance of the people. This paranoid conspiracy theorist further believes that the evil figure of the Antichrist will be a homosexual Jew. (Homosexuals and Jews are, not coincidentally, despised by many Southern Baptists.)

Many Southern Baptists believe that the Antichrist will be a Jew. There is no telling how geopolitics will play out. But how could such a belief possibly bode well for Jews, especially Israelis?

White Baptist leaders are not the only ones with controversial religious beliefs. The Reverend Michael R. Jordan, pastor of the New Era Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, recently put up a sign saying "Black Folks Need to Stay Out of White Churches." This was in reaction to a White church, the Church of the Highlands, opening a new branch, headed by a Black pastor, in Jordan's Black community. Jordan has had other provocative signs with messages such as "AIDS is God's Curse on a Homosexual Lifestyle" and "White Folks Refused to Be Our Neighbors."

In 2017, a White Reverend, Chris Ashley, put up a sign at his Cowan Road Baptist Church in Gulfport Mississippi that said "Allah is Satan." He has refused to back down. And so it goes.

Despite all of this bigoted nonsense, the main stimulus for this article is the latest Southern Baptist outrage. The Reverend Grady Arnold of Cuero, Texas has stated that social justice, racial justice and global justice are evil. He has sided with Southern Baptist leader Paige Patterson, who has angered many by apparently viewing women as sex objects and implying that women in abusive relationships should stay and try to work it out. Ashley grumbled, "This social justice is creeping down into local churches. If we start down this road, where will it end?"

White Southern Baptists here are speaking the same language as White non-theists that constantly bash Social Justice Warriors (SJWs). It is this kind of bigoted mindset that demonstrates how race trumps everything. White non-theists that oppose social justice are much more likely to join forces with religious Whites of a like mind, than they are to join forces with Black non-theists, most of whom believe in social justice.

Once again, Southern Baptists are taking a lead in defense of reactionary ideas. Anyone who gives aid and comfort to such religionists is no friend of genuine progress.

Norm r. Allen jr. Is the editor of two ground-breaking books,

- ◆ · *African-American Humanism: An Anthology*
- ◆ · *The Black Humanist Experience: An Alternative To Religion.*
- ◆ · he is currently writing a third book, *Secular, Successful And Black: 25 Profiles.*

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. We strongly emphasize creative childrearing. You can connect with other families dealing with the same problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly humanist way of life.

Jennifer wrote three books: *The Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, & *The Bully Vaccine*.

Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. Come and do something fun, socialize, enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, a museum, go swimming, & sometimes we leave the kids at home. We organize Tampa & Manatee/Sarasota area outings every month.

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

Thanks, *Jennifer Hancock*

The Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers (MAAF)

The **MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists (MASH)** community was created for atheist & secular humanist military personnel stationed at MacDill Air Force Base, their families, & retired military residing in the Tampa Bay area.

MASH provides a valuable & much needed resource in which you will find common ground to socialize, discuss issues, & draw emotional support from like-minded freethinking members.

Tampa Bay Thinkers



Be part of the conversation on Monday April 13th at the Carrolwood Cultural Center, Tampa at 7 PM/

Topic:

Learn more [here](#)

We meet monthly to escape shallow, petty talk and to ponder broad, complex yet practical subjects. We expect members to proffer evidence and use logic in conclusions, but expect all present to keep the meeting FUN for all. We teach, and don't scold. We expect the conversation to move without getting stuck so sometimes, we are forced to "agree to disagree" and move on.

We arrive and part as friends. There are no personal attacks, but each IDEA goes under the microscope. Members agree, others disagree, often with enthusiasm! We have no gates, and no gatekeepers. All are welcome and we tolerate no personal attacks, sarcasm, or even indirect denigration. IDEAS RULE and stand on their own. Finally, we are "thinkers", not "doers". Come, join us, participate, learn, exercise your brain, but mostly HAVE FUN.

The Socrates Cafe

A monthly discussion since 2008.

Hosted by **Brent Hardaway**

Facebook: <http://bit.ly/38mye1h>

Join us to discuss "?"



After-talk at The Independent (5016 N. Florida Avenue).

[Postponed] at 3 PM in the **Seminole Heights Branch Library**, 4711 N Central Ave, **Tampa**, FL, 33603. Be sure to RSVP [HERE](#) for more information

Humanistic Jews of Tampa Bay welcomes all who are interested in Jewish history, culture, and tradition independent of supernatural explanations. We believe human beings are responsible for their own choices and making the world a better place through science and reason. Join us for discussions, lectures, cultural events, and holiday celebrations using a Humanistic lens.

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

The American Ethical Union was founded in 1877 by Felix Adler in New York, and currently has over 30 member societies.

UU St. Pete Thursday Citizens' Café

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

100 Mirror Lake Dr. N., St. Petersburg

UU Humanists of Clearwater

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

UU Humanists of Tampa

Public Discussion, 2nd Thursday eve from 7-9 PM.
11400 Morris Bridge Rd. Tampa



Humanists of Sarasota Bay, Inc.
Sarasota, Florida

Next Lecture: Monday,

Speaker:

Topic: **Cancelled for now.**

For more details, information, news and activities, see: <https://www.husbay.org/index.htm>

Tampa Bay CoR

TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

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

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

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

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

TBCoR is an alliance of West Central Florida groups identified with the secular, freethought, Humanist, Atheist

Hear a secular point of view on local radio.

Listen to:

The Voice of Reason

on WTAN Radio Network from Clearwater. Thursdays at 10 AM



The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc.

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

For almost 50 years SPAC has provided free educational programs for its members & the public. Questions? send an email to: spaceexaminer@gmail.com.

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

M.A.R.S. – Tampa Astronomy Club at MOSI

Come to the [Museum Astronomical Resource Society](#), also known as the M.A.R.S. astronomy club. M.A.R.S. is sponsored by the [Museum of Science & Industry \(MOSI\)](#), in Tampa, Florida. We are also members of both the [Astronomical League & Night Sky Network](#). This site provides club news & astronomical information to our membership & to the public. Whether you are new to astronomy & curious about how to experience it, or a seasoned veteran looking for an active club to spend observation time with. We invite you to attend a meetings as our honored guest.

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

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

University of South Florida Humanities Institute



Spring 2020 Newsletter
Now Available!
Complete Schedule of Events

Get all the details of our many activities such as the Book Group, Books & Caffeine, lectures. Poetry, Humanities & Hops. *Always something to involve active minds!*



USF Freethinkers

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

Please Don't Delay – Get Your Shingle Shots Now!

The Food and Drug administration in 2017 approved the much more effective, Shingrix as the preferred alternative to Zostavax, which was approved in 2006.

Both vaccines are approved for adults age 50 and older for the prevention of shingles and related complications, whether they've already had shingles or not. If you have already had the first vaccine, get the second.

Also, don't forget your **Flu & Pneumonia shots!**



TBCoR Leadership Team 2020

Eileen Stafford,
AoF

Bill Norsworthy,
UUCH

Mark Brandt,
UUCH

Chris Brown,
MASH

Jenn Hancock,
GTBHF

Rick O'Keefe,
CFI

David Vangsness,
TBS

Jim Peterson,
HSS, TBPC,
CoR Facilitator



Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – May, 2020 Calendar

Because of CV-19, all gatherings in-person are cancelled pending further notice.



See our Meetup site for more: www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason
Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://www.tampabaycor.net/>

Various Sundays, 2 PM; & Friday nights	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Freethought Social & Godless Friday Nights	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to RSVP : http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l	
TBA – various activities	TRI-COUNTY – Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup	
TBA – various activities	TAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics, Inc..	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l	
2nd Saturday, 2 PM see Pg. 2 3rd Sunday -Dinner see Pg. 3.	DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists Now on the 2nd Saturday at 2 PM !	
3rd Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER– UU Clearwater Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists	
TBA – various astronomy activities at MOSI	E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi Other events: http://bit.ly/MARS-home	
TBA - numerous events— this semester	E. TAMPA– Humanities Institute at USF	See Web site for full listing of many events & calendar. http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities Locations vary! Page 12.	
4th Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper	RSVP is required. Seating is limited to 25! <i>For CFI & TBS paid members.</i> http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l	
3rd Saturday, 11 AM	N TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & RSVP : No program this month! http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists	
Various Saturdays	NE CLEARWATER – CFI Readers Book Discussion	Limited to <i>10 paid-up CFI members.</i> RSVP is required. <i>Must have read the book under discussion to attend.</i> http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l	
3rd Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH– Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://bit.ly/2DVtwCd	
4 th Friday, 8 PM general meeting. Many more events monthly.	ST. PETERSBURG– Astronomy Club	For several dates, locations, & details: http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar	
Various Saturdays/Sundays plus various other times/ venues	TAMPA BAY REGION– Center for Inquiry Tampa Bay	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l	
TBA – various activities	TAMPA BAY REGION– Humanist Families	RSVP here: Family outings & other activities. Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN	

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

Evolve Fish is a source for freethought paraphernalia: <http://evolvefish.com/>

Climate Catastrophe Continued from page [1](#)

or unprecedented bouts of extreme heat and humidity in Asia, Africa, Australia, South America and North America, including in the U.S. Gulf Coast region. Along the Persian Gulf, researchers spotted more than a dozen recent brief outbreaks surpassing the theoretical human survivability limit. The outbreaks have so far been confined to localized areas and lasted just hours, but they are increasing in frequency and intensity, say the authors. The study appears this week in the journal *Science Advances*.

"Previous studies projected that this would happen several decades from now, but this shows it's happening right now," said lead author Colin Raymond, who did the research as a PhD. student at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. "The times these events last will increase, and the areas they affect will grow in direct correlation with global warming."

Analyzing data from weather stations from 1979 to 2017, the authors found that extreme heat/humidity combinations doubled over the study period. Repeated incidents appeared in much of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan; northwestern Australia; and along the coasts of the Red Sea and Mexico's Gulf of California. The highest, potentially fatal, readings, were spotted 14 times in the cities of Dhahran/Damman, Saudi Arabia; Doha, Qatar; and Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, which have combined populations of over 3 million. Parts of southeast Asia, southern China, subtropical Africa and the Caribbean were also hit.

The southeastern United States saw extreme conditions dozens of times, mainly near the Gulf Coast in east Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. The worst spots: New Orleans and Biloxi, Miss. Such conditions also reached inland into Arkansas and along the southeastern coastal plain.

Not surprisingly, incidents tended to cluster on coastlines along confined seas, gulfs and straits, where evaporating seawater provides abundant moisture to be sucked up by hot air. In some areas further inland, moisture-laden monsoon winds or wide areas of crop irrigation appear to play the same role.

Prior climate studies failed to recognize most past incidents because climate researchers usually look at averages of heat and humidity measured over large areas and over several hours at a time. Raymond and his colleagues instead drilled directly into hourly data from 7,877 individual weather stations, allowing them to pinpoint shorter-lived bouts affecting smaller areas.

Humidity worsens the effects of heat because humans cool their bodies by sweating; water expelled through the skin removes excess body heat, and when it evaporates, it carries that heat away. The process works nicely in deserts, but less well in humid regions, where the air is already too laden with moisture to take on much more. Evaporation of sweat slows. In the most extreme instances, it could stop. In that case, unless one can retreat to an air-conditioned room, the body's core heats beyond its narrow survivable range, and organs begin to fail. Even a strong, physically fit person resting in the shade with no clothes and unlimited access to drinking water would

die within hours.

Meteorologists measure the heat/humidity effect on the so-called "wet bulb" Centigrade scale; in the United States, these readings are often translated into "heat index" or "real-feel" Fahrenheit readings. Prior studies suggest that even the strongest, best-adapted people cannot carry out normal outdoor activities when the wet bulb hits 32 C, equivalent to a heat index of 132 F. Most others would crumble well before that. A reading of 35 -- the peak briefly reached in the Persian Gulf cities -- is considered the theoretical survivability limit. That translates roughly to a heat index of 160 F. (The heat index actually ends at 127 F, so these readings are literally off the charts.) "It's hard to exaggerate the effects of anything that gets into the 30s," said Raymond.

The study found that worldwide, wet-bulb readings approaching or exceeding 30C on the wet bulb have doubled since 1979. The number of readings of 31 -- previously believed to occur only rarely -- totaled around 1,000. Readings of 33 -- previously thought to be almost nonexistent -- totaled around 80.

A heat wave that struck much of the United States last July maxed out at about 30C on the wet bulb, translating into heat indexes approaching 115 F in places; the highest was 122 F, in Baltimore, Md., and a similar wave hit in August. The waves paralyzed communities and led to at least a half-dozen deaths, including those of an air-conditioning technician in Phoenix, Az., and former National Football League lineman Mitch Petrus, who died in Arkansas while working outside.

It was a modest toll; heat-related illnesses already kill more U.S. residents than any other weather-related hazard including cold, hurricanes or floods. An investigation last year by the website InsideClimate News revealed that cases of heat stroke or heat exhaustion among U.S. troops on domestic bases grew 60 percent from 2008 to 2018. Seventeen soldiers died, almost all in the muggy U.S. Southeast. High-humidity heat waves in Russia and Europe, where far fewer people have air conditioning, have killed tens of thousands.

"We may be closer to a real tipping point on this than we think," said Radley Horton, a Lamont-Doherty research scientist and coauthor of the paper. Horton coauthored a 2017 paper projecting that such conditions would not take hold until later in the century.

While air conditioning may blunt the effects in the United States and some other wealthy countries, there are limits. Before the new study, one of the previously highest heat/humidity events ever reported was in the Iranian city of Bandar Mahshahr, which almost reached a 35C wet-bulb reading on July 31, 2015. There were no known deaths; residents reported staying inside air-conditioned vehicles and buildings, and showering after brief sojourns outside. But Horton points out that if people are increasingly forced indoors for longer periods, farming, commerce and other activities could potentially grind to a halt, even in rich nations--a lesson already brought home by the collapse of economies in the face of the novel coronavirus.

Climate Catastrophe Continued from page 15

In any case, many people in the poorer countries most at risk do not have electricity, never mind air conditioning. There, many rely on subsistence farming requiring daily outdoor heavy labor. These facts could make some of the most affected areas basically uninhabitable, says Horton.

Kristina Dahl, a climatologist at the Union of Concerned Scientists who led a study last year warning of increasing future heat and humidity in the United States, said the new paper shows "how close communities around the world are to the limits." She added that some localities may already be seeing conditions worse than the study suggests, because weather stations do not necessarily pick up hot spots in dense city neighborhoods built with heat-trapping concrete and pavement.

Steven Sherwood, a climatologist at the Australia's University of New South Wales, said, "These measurements imply that some areas of Earth are much closer than expected to attaining sustained intolerable heat. It was previously believed we had a much larger margin of safety."



The study was coauthored by Tom Matthews, a lecturer in climate science at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. Colin Raymond is now a postdoctoral researcher at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Thanks to: [Science Daily](#)

This space left blank.
(except for this note, of course)
That's because it needs your thoughts, ideas,
news, essays, op-eds, poetry, or what have you.
Send to: editor@tampabaycor.net