

Freethought News

Vol. 9 No. 9, September 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
News Links	11
News Links II + CFI	12
Tampa Bay Thinkers	13
Humanist Families	13*
Military Atheists	13*
Ethical Humanism	13
Socrates Café	13
Hum. Sarasota Bay	13*
UU Humanists	13*
Freethinkers@USF	13
Secular Coalition	13
TB Technology Ctr	13
Astronomy clubs	13
Coalition of Reason	14
Unified Calendar	15
Norm Allen Commentary	16

* TBCoR member

Zoomography 101

Almost all area freethought groups are having online programs on a tremendous variety of exciting and timely issues.

Many can readily be found on our Coalition of Reason Meetup site:

<https://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason/> and many more can be found throughout this newsletter. Enjoy!

The key to freedom's future...

Vote!

General Election: November 3rd.

Check your registration and preferences now at your county elections office. They'll be happy to confirm your status, makes changes, or explain what you need to know.

Do it now.

Please Don't Delay – Get Your Shingle and Flu 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 current **Flu & Pneumonia shots** when they are available.

Rob Lorie Speaks!

Better get up early! Rob will lead a discussion of local political events on Sat. Sept 12th at **10 AM** for the Humanist Society of the Suncoast.



Rob is well known as a broadcaster and host of Florida This Week on WEDU-TV and has received journalism awards from the Florida ACLU, Florida Veterans for Common Sense and been nominated twice for a Suncoast Emmy.

More on [Page 2](#)



Mandisa Thomas

is the founder and president of Black Nonbelievers. She has been featured on "CBS Sunday Morning," CNN.com, and in Playboy, The Humanist and JET magazines. She has been a guest on podcasts such as "The Humanist Hour" and "Ask an Atheist," as well as the documentaries "Contradiction" and "My Week in Atheism."

Ms. Thomas will be a guest of the Atheists of Florida Sunday night forum 5PM. A Zoom Event; see page 6

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



Rob Lorei will be our guest on our next Zoom meeting, Saturday September 12, 2020 at 10 AM
(Yes, that's right - **10 AM.!**)

Rob is the author of this statement; "WMNF believes Black lives matter and grieves for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other victims of police brutality. In the interest of our mission to uphold peace and justice, we unequivocally stand with the protests against police violence towards Black Americans and condemn the attacks on protestors by militarized police." He is one of the founders of WMNF, our area's singular alternative media outlet, and is generally considered to be one of the most knowledgeable

journalists active in the Tampa Bay area. Rob will be answering your questions about **political issues** in our region and is heading up the season for us. Get your Zoom link [here](#).

Our Local Board Business Meeting

The Humanist Society of the Suncoast will have a board meeting towards the end of the month. Under consideration is the future of the group. All members are invited to contribute their ideas: contact to jim@suncoasthumanist.com get the Zoom URL for the meeting and to let us know if you have ideas to contribute to the agenda. Date and time will appear on our web page as soon as it is available.

www.suncoasthumanist.com

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.

Vol. XXXIII No. 9 September, 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

Reality Disclaimers ...

Solipsism Warning:

The consumer should be aware that he or she may be the only entity in the universe, and therefore that any perceived defects in product quality are the consumer's own fault.

Determinism Safety Advisory:

Every citizen be advised that despite the possibility that his or her acts are all entirely predetermined by the blind mechanical nature of the universe and are therefore unavoidable and inescapable, he or she will still incur a legal responsibility and liability for any torts, violations, misdemeanors, or felonies he or she commits.

Knowledge-Definition Warning:

Because knowledge is defined for the purpose of this product literature as "justified true belief", the manufacturer cannot prove that they "know" any of the information provided with this product to be true, correct, complete, or consistent because they cannot demonstrate their internal belief states through the principle of Philosophic Privacy.

Cartesian Evil Genius Alert:

The reader is advised that he or she may be subject to an illusion generated by an evil genius, and that his or her "sensory fibers" may be falsely manipulated at any time with neither advance warning nor any possible legal remedy.

Epistemological Denotation Warning:

The consumer must understand that due to the a-priori impossibility of assuring a shared denotation amongst independent agents, none of the advertising material, product literature, instructions, or safety warnings (including this one), associated with this product may contain what the consumer perceives to be factual information.

Non-Universal Ethics Notice:

Due to the possibility that a common notion of ethics are not universally shared by all sentient beings, and that therefore the manufacturer may have entirely different concept of "fairness", "equity", "honesty", and "integrity" than the consumer, the consumer should not expect the product purchased to conform in any way to the advertised properties of the product.

Godelian Product Disclaimer:

As it has been proven that there are many true but unprovable statements, the manufacturer cannot be held liable for any of its unsupported product claims.

Philosopher-General's Existentialist Tobacco Products Label:

Warning! this product has been found to cause cancer and emphysema, and to lead to increased likelihood of strokes and heart disease. However, as the Universe is a soulless waste inhabited by unthinking machines it doesn't matter in the least whether you smoke or not. Go ahead, light up, it's all the same to me if you live or die.

Outside of a dog, a book can be your best friend. Inside of a dog, of course, it's too dark to read. B. C.

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.](http://fampsy.org/member/lynda-gurvitz/)
[Cognitive Neurosciences](http://fampsy.org/member/lynda-gurvitz/)

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

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



Islamic Cleric Says Muslims Should Boycott Juice

A Muslim preacher's fatwa against 'Juice' is going viral on social media. Rahmathulla Quasimi Muthedathu, a Sunni cleric, has lashed out at 'Juice' in a religious speech and urged his followers to boycott all varieties of juice because it was introduced by 'Jews', the enemies of Islam! "We must chew whatever we consume, chew your water. Never drink the juice. Fruits shall never be mixed up with water. There is a race called 'Jews'. They are our enemies. Juice came from Jews. Jews.... Juice!" he continued, "...there was no juice in the world before. Who brought juice to the Middle East? It was Jews! So never drink juice."

The discussion group, Atheist Republic Community" has a discussion on this extraordinary question (with plenty of laughs) [here](#).



In 2014, the American Humanist Association and Foundation Beyond Belief announced the merger of their respective charitable programs Humanist Charities and Humanist Crisis Response to encourage humanist giving. [Humanist Disaster Recovery](#), this new joint project of the AHA and FBB, exists to provide financial support to secular organizations working locally to meet the needs of recovering survivors.

Recent recovery giving campaigns have helped relief efforts with Hurricanes Harvey & Irma, famine in East Africa, flooding in Louisiana, earthquakes in Ecuador & Nepal, and much more.

The 2020 hurricane season and California fires seems likely to bring catastrophic events to the United States once again. The foundation stands as a beacon of help representing the best tradition of the Humanist ethical and moral response.

If you think you would like to contribute to a trustworthy charity that represents your secular point of view in a world dominated by religious help more often bent on conversions rather than genuine human assistance, this may be a good alternative.

Learn more at: foundationbeyondbelief.org/disaster-recovery

Humanist Quotes

If you're going to do Shakespeare, do Shakespeare. There's a reason why he's been performed for hundreds of years. His words affect people on a very deep level. He's the true humanist. That all comes through his text, his words. **Christian Camargo**

However, we all share the firm belief in the triumph of humanist and progressive values that mankind has achieved during its long history of struggle and creativeness. **Tran Duc Luong**

I remain a humanist. We are a very curious race. **Michael Tippett**

I am a humanist. I am for nice, easy balance. **Meryl Streep**

As a citizen, hopefully I'm humanist. As an artist, I'm free. **Patti Smith**

With the development of industrial capitalism, a new and unanticipated system of injustice, it is libertarian socialism that has preserved and extended the radical humanist message of the Enlightenment and the classical liberal ideals that were perverted into an ideology to sustain the emerging social order. **Noam Chomsky**

I consider myself a political revolutionary humanist. **Bobby Seale**

Confucius was a humanist and an agnostic. **Hu Shih**

If you're living with a scientist, you see the world differently than you do with a humanist. It's in some ways very subtle, the differences in perceiving reality. **Joyce Carol Oates**

Jewish intellectuals contributed a great deal to insure that Europe became a continent of humanism, and it is with these humanist ideals that Europe must now intervene in the Middle East conflict. **Daniel Barenboim**

Enjoying your social Security, are you?

Perhaps you should investigate this item...

President Trump has signed an executive order to defer payroll taxes has fueled concerns that he is attempting to defund Social Security and Medicare, with the latest order drawing criticism from conservatives and liberals alike.

"First one is on providing a payroll tax holiday to Americans earning less than \$100,000 per year," the president said during a Saturday press briefing. "In a few moments, I will sign a directive, instructing the Treasury Department to allow employers to defer payment of the employee portion of certain payroll taxes..."

Whether Trump's executive orders, which also provided an extension of extra federal unemployment benefits at a reduced rate of \$400 per month, will withstand legal scrutiny is a matter of debate. His decision came as Republicans and Democrats in Congress remained at an impasse over a new round of coronavirus economic stimulus legislation. Under the Constitution, Congress, not the Executive Branch, is granted power over spending federal funds. **Var. news services**

Click here



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

Weak Efforts on a powerful problem

A climate action report released Tuesday by Senate Democrats drew disappointed reactions from green groups and progressive campaigners who say it does not do nearly enough to combat the potentially existential threat of catastrophic global heating caused by human activity.

The report—titled "[The Case for Climate Action: Building a Clean Economy for the American People](#)" (pdf)—was authored by 10 Democratic senators, including Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who along with Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) [introduced](#) a Green New Deal resolution in Congress last year. However, the 263-page plan mentions the Green New Deal only once—as a footnote on Page 228.

In March 2019, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) [launched](#) the Senate Democrats' Special Committee on the Climate Crisis to study the impact of climate change and devise a strategy to mitigate its damage.

The newly-released report, which is the result of dozens of hearings and closed-door meetings, calls on the government to spend over \$400 billion annually with the goal of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050. It also aims to create at least 10 million new U.S. jobs in clean energy manufacturing, research, and development, while reforming lobbying laws to curtail the outsize influence of the fossil fuel industry.

According to the report, the price tag of the plan is equal to about 2% of U.S. gross domestic product. It claims that at least 40% of the benefits from these investments will "help communities of color and low-income, de-industrialized, and disadvantaged communities."

"We have the opportunity to build more and better jobs for the American people, jobs that'll help re-stimulate the economy and aid in our transition to clean energy," Sen. Schumer [told reporters](#) on Tuesday. "When Democrats retake the majority in the Senate, we will unify to move swiftly on legislation to tackle the climate crisis," he added. "Passing climate

legislation will be a top priority for Senate Democrats and me."

However, climate activists blasted the report as woefully inadequate to deal with what is arguably the greatest threat facing humanity today.

Mitch Jones, director of policy for Food & Water Action, said in a statement that the report "completes a trifecta of underwhelming and inadequate proposals from Democratic leadership," adding that the plan "relies on false solutions designed to placate the oil and gas lobby."

"Further, it fails to address the vital need to end the extraction, processing, and burning of fossil fuels, and instead sees a future for fossil fuels tied to the false promise of carbon capture," Jones said. "It even fails to include a call to ban new fossil fuel extraction on public lands, a position that was endorsed by virtually all candidates in the Democratic presidential primary."

Brett Hartl, director of government affairs at the Center for Biological Diversity, a Tucson, Arizona-based nonprofit dedicated to protecting endangered species, called the plan "weak."

"By ignoring fossil fuel extraction and the urgent need to slash planet-warming emissions 50% by 2030, Senate Democrats have utterly failed to make the case for climate action," Hartl said in an email to *Common Dreams*. "If these weak recommendations are turned into law, future generations will know that the desire to please a few special-interest polluters left them with a devastated planet." "We need strong action now to curb drilling and fracking and move quickly toward cleaner forms of energy" Hartl added.

"Strong action now," at least on paper, is being promised in Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden's recently-unveiled [climate plan](#), which proposes \$2 trillion be spent over the next four years boosting clean energy in the transportation, power and building sectors part of an ambitious economic recovery plan.

The proposal by the former vice president—who served in an administration that [promoted fracking](#) at home and abroad and was itself assailed for [not doing enough](#) in the face of the growing climate threat—has drawn praise from some activists and climate-minded political leaders.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, who made climate change the central focus of his failed 2020 Democratic presidential campaign, called Biden's plan "visionary."

"This is no status quo plan," Inslee [told](#) the *New York Times* last month. "It is comprehensive. This is not some sort of, 'Let me just throw a bone to those who care about climate change.'"

Biden's plan stands in stark contrast with the policies of the Trump administration, which earlier this month [finalized plans](#) to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—one of the largest intact [unspoiled wildernesses](#) on the planet and home to [indigenous peoples](#) who rely upon the healthy ecosystem for their physical and spiritual survival—to oil and gas development.

During Trump's tenure, the U.S. has become the [world's largest](#) crude oil producer, a position it had not held since 1973.

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 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. See, <https://polkatheists.org/>

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.

Being a nonbeliever in what seems to be a heavily religious area can often be isolating. YES – we're building a new community of atheists, humanists, freethinkers and skeptics to socialize and discuss issues we find important in a safe, friendly environment. But we also want to create a landing pad for those who may be doubting their faith or leaving their religion. Often, when people leave belief behind, they're losing more than a God belief. Sometimes family severs contact, the church friends you've been close to for years may start to distance themselves. When your religious connections are a large part of your world, it's easy to find yourself lost and alone when you walk away. If this is you, please know that YOU ARE NOT ALONE. There is a community here that cares for and values you – no commandments required.

Sept. Zoom Events

[Details—
click Here](#)

Date	Guest	Organization	Topic
8/23/2020	Sarah Henry	Child Friendly Faith Project	
8/30/2020	Anonymous		An immigrant's journey to atheism
9/6/2020	Open	Fun	Yours...
9/13/2020	Manidsa Thomas	Black Non-Believers	
9/20/2020	Bruce Weiner	The Secular Community	
9/27/2020	Ron Millar	Freethought Equality	Political Issues for an election year
10/4/2020	Cornelius Cosentino	How to improve Government Transparency -	The People's Checkbook
11/8/2020	George Hyde	Olli-USF	Fake News

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

See our listings above and on the TB-CoR meetup for linking information, see our notices on the Coalition of Reason Meetup page, or go to our website; www.aof.ngo.

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

For over 27 years, Atheists of Florida Inc. has attempted to provide much needed information about religion and the alternatives to religion which have proved to be so liberating for so many of us.

We invite you to explore the many written and audio video presentations from our library of stored information.

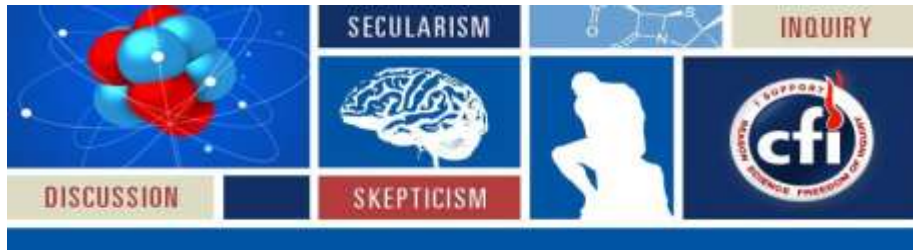
The radio/TV broadcasts are on extended hiatus for now. However, previous programs, most with discussions of timeless interest, are available **on the internet at:**

www.youtube.com/atheistforum .

Subscribe to our
You Tube Channel

Now, tune in to **the Voice of Reason** See [page 13!](#)





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



Rick O'Keefe

The Society for Science-based Medicine Joins the Center for Inquiry

The **Society for Science-Based Medicine** was formed in 2013 to serve as a community for experts and advocates working to support evidence, science, and consumer safety in health care, and to fight back against the creep of pseudoscience and quackery.

Their cause has never been more vital than it is right now, as the world faces down a global pandemic and an accompanying flood of medical misinformation. It's a mission we at CFI have always shared with SfsBM.

That's why we're proud to let you know that the Society for Science-Based Medicine is now a part of the Center for Inquiry.

As a repository of resources and information for health professionals, legislators, activists, businesses, and consumers, SFSBM has worked to provide the reality-based community with the tools and talent needed to advance science-based medicine and stop the flood of junk science and snake oil.

Now these resources will have a home with CFI. SfsBM joins our growing family of programs and initiatives dedicated to advancing science-based medicine and countering dangerous pseudoscience, including *Skeptical Inquirer* magazine and *Skeptical Inquirer Presents* online events, the legislative efforts of CFI's **Office of Public Policy** and our groundbreaking **consumer protection lawsuits** over the fraud of homeopathy, the **CFI Coronavirus Resource Center**, and, of

course, **Quackwatch**.

SfsBM content will begin integrating into the Center for Inquiry website in the coming weeks, as the *Science-Based Medicine* blog carries on its vital work independently.

The mission of the Society for Science-Based Medicine is now CFI's mission. It always has been, and now we are better positioned than ever to carry it out.

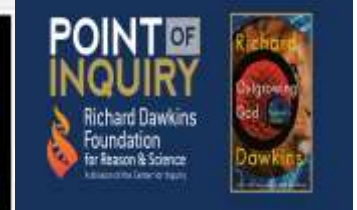
Fighting quackery and pseudoscience during a global pandemic is an enormous challenge, and it's going to take all of us working together to make a difference. Be a part of our society, and support science-based medicine with us today.

Donate: <https://bit.ly/3jxTYEW>

JOIN CFI: <http://bit.ly/2pTDfEj>

Subscribe to "The Humanist Magazine You Can Trust". Enjoy print or online access to the latest Free Inquiry articles on your computer, phone, or tablet! <https://bit.ly/30vOCRp>

Subscribe to *Skeptical Inquirer* at Just \$2.80 an Issue! SI promotes scientific inquiry, critical thinking, science education, and the use of reason in examining controversial and extraordinary claims through rigorous reporting and investigation. <https://bit.ly/32G8q7C>





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**.

Winning with less than 23% of the vote: The problem with crowded primaries in Florida

After suspending them for two election cycles, Florida eliminated primary runoff elections — known officially as “Second Primaries” — in 2005.

The reason given was that county Supervisors of Elections said they didn't have enough time between August and November to run an additional election. As a result, state lawmakers **passed HB 1673** and then Gov. **Jeb Bush** signed it into law.

Since that time, there have been countless primary elections with three or more candidates where the winner did not get over 50% of the vote. In many of those primaries, the winner didn't even get a third of the vote before moving on to the general election.

This has happened more in the last four years than in the past 10 years combined.

The most extreme example in recent memory is the 2016 Democratic primary for House District 108, where **Roy Hardemon** only managed to get to 22% of the vote in a seven-person field. To put his primary win into context, 17 of the losing candidates in the other Democratic state House primary races that year received more votes than Hardemon.

In the 2018 primary election for HD 108, there were only three candidates and the then-incumbent Hardemon lost even though he received 36% of the vote.

In 2020, we've again had many primary races where there are large groups of candidates, and we ended up with two-dozen federal and state primary winners who earned less than half the vote.

The most notable examples this year were the Republican primaries Florida's 3rd and 19th Congressional Districts, which had 10 and nine candidates on the ballot, respectively.

The **CD 3 election** saw **Kat Cammack** win with just over 25% of the vote. In CD 19, state Rep. **Byron Donalds** **won with 23%**.

The problem with allowing primary winners to have such a small share of their constituents' votes is the increased chance of

having a winning candidate who does not well represent the political beliefs and values of the voters in their district, and even sometimes those of their own party.

Without the Second Primary we would not have had Govs. **Bob Graham** and **Reubin Askew** or U.S. Sen. **Lawton Chiles**, none of whom finished first in their party primaries, not to mention countless other down-ballot candidates who did not get the most votes in their first primaries, yet went on to win their second and then elected office.

One possible solution, and one that would not result in an extra election, is to use ranked choice voting, also known as instant-runoff voting.

Dozens of municipalities around the country run their elections using this method, and Maine is now using it for all of its state and federal elections. Even statewide political parties such as the Virginia Republican Party have used RCV to elect party officials.

In a ranked choice voting system, voters are **given the option** to vote for each candidate as their first, second, third, etc. choice in any election with more than two candidates.

When voting is complete, the elections office will tabulate all of the first-choice votes. If no candidate gets more than 50% of the vote, then the candidate with the least number of votes is dropped, and the second choice of the voters who had ranked the dropped candidate as their first choice are counted for the remaining candidates. This process repeats until one of the candidates gets a majority of the vote.

In the case of the 2018 San Francisco mayoral election, the results went into the 9th round of tabulation before a single candidate had over 50% of the vote.

Here in Florida, there is a newly formed organization called “**Rank My Vote Florida**” that is working on implementing ranked choice voting in our state.

Back in 2007, voters in the City of Sarasota passed a referendum by over 77% to conduct their city's elections using RCV.

Sarasota County's Supervisor of Elections office has voting equipment and software capable of tabulating RCV ballots, but the Florida Secretary of State has not yet certified the equipment.

According to **Perry Waag**, treasurer of Rank My Vote Florida, “... we have engaged the services of a well-respected Tallahassee attorney to make a legal case supporting Sarasota and it was presented to the Division of Elections earlier this year. Instead of being blown off we got asked procedural questions of how it would work ‘if’ they allowed it, so we are cautiously optimistic that we will finally get approval for Sarasota to proceed within the next six months.”

So, a positive response from the Division of Elections could result in RCV being authorized for the first time in a local election in Florida.

If that authorization is not given, then there are three other options available ... Read the rest: <https://bit.ly/3g9UdTz>

Upcoming events: RSVP for admission links!

Sept 10th, 7:00 pm [Online: Sept. 10: Viral BS: Medical Myths and Why We Fall For Them](#)

Sept 15th, 1:00 pm [Online: Tampa Bay Technology Center \(TBTC\) Monthly Meeting](#)

Sept 26th, 12:00 pm [Sept OnLine - Center for Inquiry's SHARE Book Club](#), *The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*, by Toby Ord

Sept 29th, 7:00 pm [Online: CFI INSIDER SERIES: Evolution is for Everyone](#)



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!](#)



TRUTH COSTS MONEY, LIES ARE FREE

By Nathan J. Robinson

(Excerpted from "*The Truth Is Paywalled But The Lies Are Free*" at <http://currentaffairs.org>, 8/2/2020)

Paywalls are justified, even though they are annoying. It costs money to produce good writing, to run a website, to license photographs. A lot of money, if you want quality. Asking people for a fee to access content is therefore very reasonable. You don't expect to get a print subscription to the newspaper gratis, why would a website be different? I try not to grumble about having to pay for online content, because I run a magazine and I know how difficult it is to pay writers what they deserve.

But let us also notice something: *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Republic*, *New York*, *Harper's*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Financial Times*, and *The London Times* all have paywalls. Breitbart, Fox News, the Daily Wire, the Federalist, the Washington Examiner, InfoWars: free!

You want "Portland Protesters Burn Bibles, American Flags In The Streets", "The Moral Case Against Mask Mandates And Other COVID Restrictions", or an article suggesting the National Institutes of Health has admitted 5G phones cause coronavirus—they're yours. You want the detailed *Times* reports on neo-Nazis infiltrating German institutions, the reasons contact tracing is failing in U.S. states, or the Trump administration's undercutting of the USPS's effectiveness—well, if you've clicked around the website a bit you'll run straight into the paywall.

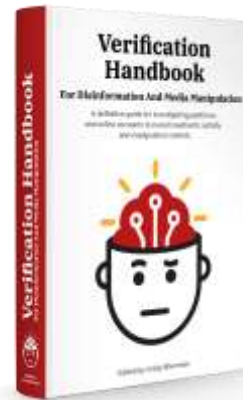
This doesn't mean the paywall shouldn't be there. But it does mean that it costs time and money to access a lot of true and important information, while a lot of bullshit is completely free.

Tampa Bay's "Weeping Icon" Fiasco

By Gary P. Posner



On Tuesday, July 18, 1989, alleged miracles began occurring at the Greek Orthodox Shrine of St. Michael in Tarpon Springs. Tears began to flow from the eyes of the Virgin Mary on one of the numerous icons hanging in the shrine, and within hours, tears were reportedly flowing from five other icons. The Tampa Tribune reported that the Rev.



For Disinformation and Media Manipulation

The latest edition of the *Verification Handbook* arrives at a critical moment. Today's information environment is more chaotic and easier to manipulate than ever before. This book equips journalists with the knowledge to investigate

social media accounts, bots, private messaging apps, information operations, deep fakes, as well as other forms of disinformation and media manipulation. The first resource of its kind, it builds on the first edition of the *Verification Handbook* and the *Verification Handbook for Investigative Reporting*.

The book is published by the European Journalism Centre and supported by Craig Newmark Philanthropies.

Christos Matos of St. George's Greek Orthodox Church in New Port Richey, who had been presiding over the proceedings at St. Michael's, told the faithful that "It's a sign from God we are sinful, and we shall repent," although the Rev. Tryfon Theophilopoulos of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Tarpon Springs speculated that "It's a sign of happiness from...the holy mother." But whether happy or sad, Mary's tears have attracted visitors by the thousands, and donations of thousands of dollars.

I received a phone call from Channel 10 (WTSP-TV) on July 21 requesting that I accompany one of their reporters to the Tarpon Springs shrine. So on Monday, July 24, I went to have a first-hand look at the miraculous weeping icon. In my pocket was the large color photograph taken on July 19 that appeared in the St. Petersburg Times on July 20.

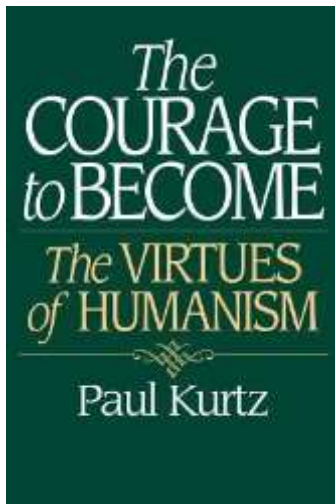
Read the rest: <https://bityl.co/3CRU>

Teacher Institute for Evolutionary Science

Calling all teachers of **English Language Learners!!** We are thrilled to offer the TIES student-guided units, along with the student response sheets, rubrics, and exams **in Spanish!!!** We have both middle and high school versions available. Check it out: <https://tieseducation.org/teacher-materials/#spanish>
Email if need anything - bvazquez@centerforinquiry.org

Recommended Reading

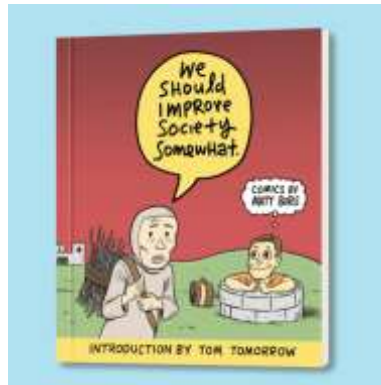
Click on the book's **image** for more info



Does life have meaning if one rejects belief in God? This book responds affirmatively to that question. Paul Kurtz, America's leading secular humanist, provides a powerful defense of the humanist alternative, rejecting both religious spirituality and nihilism. In this inspirational book, Kurtz outlines the basic virtues of the secular humanist outlook. These virtues include courage, not simply to be or to survive, but to overcome and become; that is, to fulfill our highest aspirations and ideals in the face of obstacles. The two other virtues Kurtz identifies are cognition (reason and science in establishing truth) and moral caring (compassion and benevolence in our relationships with others.) Kurtz offers an optimistic appraisal of the human prospect and outlines a philosophy both for the individual and the global community.

A new 184 page collection of political cartoons from *The Nib's* founding editor, Matt Bors. Working as a political cartoonist for more than a decade, Bors' brain is now fully melted by the internet and churning out his most memorable satire.

This book from Clover Press collects his best work from the last several years of non-stop political tumult over Trump, ineffectual Democrats, the collapse of all reason, and the hypocritical sin of participating in society while criticizing it.



Relive all the trauma of the first several years of the Trump presidency through the Pulitzer-nominated cartoons of Tom Tomorrow! You've never laughed quietly to yourself so much at humanity's impending doom!

It's a hilarious but nightmarish trip down memory lane, from the Great Inaugural Crowd Size debate to the nomination of Bret ("I LIKE BEER") Kavanaugh, from Muslim bans to concentration camps, from the Mueller report to the latest outrageous thing you just read about this morning -- Tom covers it all so you can hide in bed with a blanket over your head and pray for that asteroid to finally hit the planet. And don't worry, readers, the show is far from over. This merry-go-round of pain goes on and on, and Tom Tomorrow will be there, er, tomorrow. At least, until Trump finds a way to have him deported.

See more books (if any) on the back page.



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
43. Evolution and the Big Question David Stamos
44. Why People Believe Weird Things Michael Shermer
45. The World is Curved David Snick
46. The Snow Ball Warren Buffett
47. The Moral Landscape Sam Harris
48. How We Believe Michael Shermer
49. Full House Steven Jay Gould
50. The Origins of Political Order Francis Fukuyama
51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible Isaac Asimov
52. Autobiography of Mark Twain Harriet Smith, Editor
53. Science Friction Michael Shermer
54. Genius James Gleick
55. Inevitable Illusions Piatrelli & Palmarini
56. Demon Haunted World Carl Sagan
57. Being Right Is Not Enough Paul Waldman
58. Loser Takes All Mark Crispin Miller
59. Taking Back Politics Cathy Allen
60. Spiritual Common Sense Mark Lindquist (Gift by author)
61. Autobiography of Mark Twain Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith
62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible Various
63. 12 Vol Complete Works Robert Ingersoll
64. On Religious Liberty Roger Williams & Davis
65. The God Makers Baker & Hunt
66. Inevitable Illusions M. 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

More Freethought news. Per *Judy Adkins*

More links on page 12

Organization	Link	Headline	Date	Author
American Atheists	https://www.atheists.org/2020/08/fulton-v-city-philadelphia/	American Atheists Urges Supreme Court Not to Impose Blasphemy Law, Warns of Atheist Lawsuits	8/20/20 12:00 AM	American Atheists
American Atheists	https://www.atheists.org/2020/08/betsy-devos-religious-liberty-guidance/	American Atheists Blasts DeVos's Assault on Religious Freedom and Vulnerable Minority Groups	8/10/20 12:00 AM	American Atheists
American Atheists	https://www.atheists.org/2020/08/37-civil-rights-organizations-bullying-atheist-students/	37 Civil Rights Organizations Ask Department of Education to Ensure Protections for Religious Minority and Nonreligious Students	8/6/20 12:00 AM	American Atheists
American Atheists	https://www.atheists.org/2020/08/department-of-education-data-collection-atheists/	Department of Education Could Put Atheist Students in Harm's Way	8/3/20 12:00 AM	American Atheists
American Atheists	https://www.atheists.org/2020/07/church-state-separation-senate-covid-bill-action-alert/	Tell Congress to Protect Church/State Separation in Senate COVID Relief Bill!	7/31/20 12:00 AM	American Atheists
American Ethical Union	https://aeu.org/2020/08/week-of-8-17-2020/	Week of 8/17/2020	8/17/20 12:00 AM	Emily
American Ethical Union	https://aeu.org/2020/08/week-of-8-10-2020/	Week of 8/10/2020	8/11/20 12:00 AM	Emily
American Humanist Association	https://www.theahafoundation.org/fbi-ten-most-wanted-fugitive-yaser-abdel-said-now-in-custody-after-committing-honor-killings-in-2008-fbi/	FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitive Yaser Abdel Said Now in Custody After Committing Honor Killings in 2008 – FBI	8/27/20 12:00 AM	The AHA Foundation
American Humanist Association	https://www.theahafoundation.org/massachusetts-bans-fgm-after-seven-year-push-by-survivors-and-advocates/	Massachusetts Bans FGM After Seven-Year Push by Survivors and Advocates	8/27/20 12:00 AM	The AHA Foundation
American Humanist Association	https://www.theahafoundation.org/imo-women-groups-laud-unicef-noa-over-fight-against-female-genital-mutilation-the-guardian/	Imo women groups laud UNICEF, NOA over fight against Female Genital Mutilation – The Guardian	8/26/20 12:00 AM	The AHA Foundation
American Humanist Association	https://www.theahafoundation.org/one-step-at-a-time-un-womens-health-agency-helping-shift-dangerous-social-norms-un-news/	One step at a time: UN women's health agency helping shift dangerous social norms – UN News	8/26/20 12:00 AM	The AHA Foundation
American Humanist Association	https://www.theahafoundation.org/promoting-critical-thinking-on-college-campuses-in-the-era-of-covid-19/	Protected: Promoting Critical Thinking on College Campuses in the era of COVID-19	8/26/20 12:00 AM	The AHA Foundation
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/under-god-in-pledge	America's Pledge Of Allegiance Was Originally Secular	8/27/20 12:00 AM	boston
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/votes-for-women	Celebrating Suffrage: Women, Religion And The Right To Vote	8/26/20 12:00 AM	boston
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/falwell-liberty-resign	Scandal Gives Liberty University An Opportunity To Move Beyond The Falwells	8/25/20 12:00 AM	boston
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/devos-pandemic-aid	Federal Court Squashes Latest DeVos Attempt To Funnel Tax Aid To Private Schools	8/24/20 12:00 AM	boston
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/Essay-Contest-2020-Aggarwal	AU Student Essay Contest Winner: Your Medical Care Shouldn't Depend On Someone Else's Religion	8/20/20 12:00 AM	LHayes
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/Essay-Contest-2020-Bokesch	AU Student Essay Contest Finalist: An America 'By The People' Requires Church-State Separation	8/19/20 12:00 AM	LHayes
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/Essay-Contest-2020-King	AU Student Essay Contest Finalist: Religious Freedom Is Essential To Preserving America's Diversity	8/18/20 12:00 AM	LHayes
Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/Essay-Contest-2020-Announcement	Meet The Winners Of AU's 2020 Student Essay Contest	8/17/20 12:00 AM	LHayes

Americans United - The Wall of Separation Blog	https://www.au.org/blogs/religious-diversity-US	Whether Christian Nationalists Like It Or Not, Religious Diversity Is The Future Of America	8/13/20 12:00 AM	boston
Black Non-Believers	https://blacknonbelievers.com/2020/08/26/scholarships-billboards-and-more/	Scholarships, Billboards, and More!	8/26/20 12:00 AM	Nick
Center for Inquiry	https://centerforinquiry.org/news/pandemic-denial-on-thursdays-skeptical-inquirer-presents-with-carol-tavris/	Pandemic Denial on Thursday's SKEPTICAL INQUIRER PRESENTS with Carol Tavris	8/24/20 12:00 AM	Paul Fidalgo
Ex-Muslims of North America	https://exmuslims.org/apostasyday/	Apostasy Day	8/22/20 12:00 AM	editor
Foundation Beyond Belief	https://foundationbeyondbelief.org/news/june-july-winners-2020	June and July Winners! Beyond Belief Network Team of the Month & Photo of the Month	8/21/20 12:00 AM	Eric eric@fortituedeaz.com
Foundation Beyond Belief	https://foundationbeyondbelief.org/news/June-July-2020-BBN-Roundup	June & July Beyond Belief Network Roundup	8/16/20 12:00 AM	Eric eric@fortituedeaz.com
Freedom From Religion Foundation	https://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/37825-ffrf-scores-two-for-the-u-s-constitution	FFRF scores two for the U.S. Constitution	8/27/20 12:00 AM	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	https://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/37822-breaking-news-ffrf-lawsuit-convince-puerto-rico-education-department-to-stop-coercive-school-prayer	BREAKING NEWS! FFRF lawsuit convinces Puerto Rico Education Department to stop coercive school prayer	8/27/20 12:00 AM	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	https://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/37821-ffrf-lambastes-government-persecution-of-nigerian-atheist	FFRF lambastes government persecution of Nigerian atheist	8/26/20 12:00 AM	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	https://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/37820-ffrf-condemns-kenosha-police-shooting-and-vigilante-homicides	FFRF condemns Kenosha police shooting and vigilante homicides	8/26/20 12:00 AM	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	https://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/37800-ffrf-women-s-leadership-project-announce-first-ever-lorraine-hansberry-scholarships	FFRF & Women's Leadership Project announce first-ever Lorraine Hansberry Scholarships	8/24/20 12:00 AM	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF joins in Saturday's Apostasy Day observance	FFRF joins in Saturday's Apostasy Day observance	8/21/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	Sen. Cassidy, please don't preach on social media	Sen. Cassidy, please don't preach on social media	8/20/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF files Supreme Court amicus brief against foster care discrimination	FFRF files Supreme Court amicus brief against foster care discrimination	8/20/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF awards \$26,100 in 2020 high school essay contest	FFRF awards \$26,100 in 2020 high school essay contest	8/17/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF celebrates recent multiple wins	FFRF celebrates recent multiple wins	8/13/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF lauds New York's enlargement of window for clergy sex abuse survivors	FFRF lauds New York's enlargement of window for clergy sex abuse survivors	8/12/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF alerts IRS, once again, to Pastor Jeffress' brazen politicking	FFRF alerts IRS, once again, to Pastor Jeffress' brazen politicking	8/11/2020	
Freedom From Religion Foundation	FFRF's answer to Speaker Pelosi: Action, not prayer	FFRF's answer to Speaker Pelosi: Action, not prayer	8/11/2020	
Society for Humanistic Judaism	https://shj.org/coming-in-as-a-humanistic-jew/	Coming In As A Humanistic Jew: A Christian Minister's Son's Story	8/16/20 12:00 AM	Paul Golin
Society for Humanistic Judaism	https://shj.org/drawing-on-seniors-perspectives/	Drawing on Seniors' Perspectives for Support in Difficult Times	8/15/20 12:00 AM	Paul Golin
Society for Humanistic Judaism	https://shj.org/my-journey-to-humanistic-judaism/	My Journey to Humanistic Judaism	8/14/20 12:00 AM	Paul Golin

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 September 14th online at 7 PM

Topic: **The Crisis of the Natural World**

Thoughts on the future of our species and the planet on which it lives. Jim Peterson will lead discussion.

See our Meetup page for meeting [link](#)

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. Learn more [here](#).

Karen Assel, Leader

The Socrates Cafe

A monthly discussion since 2008.

Hosted by **Brent Hardaway**.



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

Join us on Zoom to discuss "?"

RSVP [HERE](#) for more information on the next Zoom meeting

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

HUSBAY is only holding meetings on Wednesdays via Zoom. We don't plan the topics much in advance. People interested in joining us can contact dbhelgager@comcast.net or text to 941-350-0927.



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 movement.

**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: spaceaminer@gmail.com.

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

M.A.R.S. – Tampa Astronomy Club 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!*

- Sep. 29 • 7pm • Antiracism in the Classroom
with Frank Leon Roberts
- Oct. 7 • 7pm • Poetry Reading with Jericho Brown
- Oct. 29 • 7pm • Book Group: Ordinary Girls
- Dec. 3 • 7pm • Book Group: Citizen
- Date TBA • 7pm • Humanities & Hops: Finding Your Calling



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: <https://orgsync.com/87429/chapter>



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, TBPCC,
CoR Facilitator

TBCoR Leadership Team 2020



Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – September, 2020 Calendar

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

See our Meetup site for more/ONLINE: www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason



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	STAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics, Inc..	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/2ljTe9l
2nd Saturday, 2 PM 3rd Sunday -Dinner see Pg. 3.	DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast see Pg. 2	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists On the 2nd Saturday at 2 PM! All face to face meetings suspended for the duration of the pandemic.
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 venues	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/>

Problems with The “Sermon on the Mount”

By **Norm R. Allen Jr.**

Paul Kurtz Institute for Science and
Human Values



The so-called “Sermon on the Mount” is widely regarded as Christianity’s most important moral message. It is Jesus at his moral best. Even many atheists are highly impressed with the sermon, as well they should be.

However, there are still problems with it, and there is not a single word in it that even hints at omnibenevolence, moral perfection or divine wisdom. After all is said and done, it is, for the most part, a great message from a fallible human being.

What is missing from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, chapters 5-7)? A great deal. There is no forceful denunciation of slavery. On the contrary, the Second (New) Testament repeatedly condones it. Yet, what could possibly be a worse “sin” against humanity than slavery?

Perhaps holy wars might be worse in the eyes of some people. However, millions of people have been killed in wars in the name of Christ. The omniscient God in human form should have explicitly condemned wars in his name, knowing that Christians would surely wage such wars. “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” is simply not enough to deter intolerant, violent Christians. Jesus could have and should have at least said something like “resist with all of your might anyone that ever tries to wage a war in my name.” Such a message would have done far more to avert Christian-led wars than a mere sentence blessing the peacemakers.



If God is truly opposed to patriarchy, the sermon would have been the perfect place to condemn it in clear, unequivocal terms. Yet, he neglected to do so, while the Second Testament consistently promotes it. It is left up to progressive Christians to cherry-pick and “re-interpret” certain passages to counter Bible-based patriarchy, sexism and misogyny.

Progressive Christians combat homophobia, even though the Bible – including the Second Testament – condones it. If Christ

has no problem with homosexuality, he should have made this clear in the sermon. Yet he refused to do so, and many good Christians oppose homosexuality, same sex marriages, and so forth.

The omniscient God knew that racism would eventually become a major problem throughout the world. Jesus had the perfect opportunity to predict it and to condemn it. Yet, he did not so much as mention the word (he could have and should have introduced it to the world.) Once again, the son of God blew a great opportunity to help future generations in his wonderful sermon.

Many women throughout history have been persecuted, abused and brutally killed as alleged witches. Even today, Christians and other religionists in such nations as Ghana, Malawi, and Tanzania harm alleged witches. Jesus should have challenged the biblical teaching instructing believers not to suffer a witch to live.

The omniscient God could have added at least a sentence or two about the importance of animal welfare and animal rights in the sermon. As it stands, the Bible is a masterpiece of speciesism, concerned only with human affairs.

Many Christian apologists rationalize biblically sanctioned genocide and other crimes against humanity by saying that Christ brought a “new covenant,” and that the First Testament no longer applies. Yet Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matthew 5:17-18.) How could it be any other way? After all, God is immutable. This talk of a second covenant is nonsense.

Jesus makes the false promise of heaven to persuade people to accept his message. What is worse, he threatens people with “hell fire” (Matthew 5:22). The concept of hell might be the worst idea in the history of religion. As Robert Green Ingersoll stated, it makes the Sermon on the Mount hypocrisy and cant.

Rather than viewing the Sermon on the Mount as the be-all-and-end-all of moral teaching, Christians should see it as a golden opportunity for improvement. Just as any child could easily come up with her own Ten Commandments that would be vast improvements over those found in the First Testament, modern Christians could easily improve upon the Sermon on the Mount. All they need is a little bit of moral imagination. The Sermon on the Mount was cutting edge stuff 2,000 years ago. But, understandably, today we can do much better.

Norm R. Allen Jr. is the editor of two ground-breaking books: *African-American Humanism: An Anthology*, and *The Black Humanist Experience: An Alternative to Religion*. He is currently writing a third book, *Secular, Successful, and Black: 25 Profiles*. For 21 years, Allen had been the first and only full-time African American secular humanist to travel the world promoting secular humanism. He has spoken on numerous radio and television shows including National Public Radio and to 72 humanist groups in 30 African nations. His writings have appeared in numerous books and encyclopedias, including *Voices for Evolution*, published by the National Center for Science Education.