



# The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason Freethought News



Vol. 8 No. 1, January, 2019  
Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

## What's Inside?

Suncoast Humanist Soc	2*
Tampa Humanists	4*
Post Carbon Council	5*
Astronomy clubs	5
CFI Tampa Bay	6*
Tampa Bay Skeptics	10*
Books/Cooper Library	11
UU Humanists	12
Florida Atheists	13*
Tampa Bay Thinkers	15
TB Technology Ctr	15
Humanist Families	15*
Military Atheists	15*
Ethical Humanism	15
USF Freethinkers	15
Inst For Sci & Hum	16*
Secular Coalition	12
ACLU Tampa Bay	17
Coalition of Reason	17
Unified Calendar	18
Even more books	19-20

\* TBCoR member

### Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Calendar  
Rick O'Keefe  
Web site  
Jim Peterson  
Newsletter  
Jim Peterson  
Special Projects  
Mark Brandt  
& Bill Norsworthy

See our event websites at:  
[www.tampabaycor.net](http://www.tampabaycor.net) &  
[www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason](http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason)

This publication online at:  
[www.tampabaycor.net](http://www.tampabaycor.net)

Anywhere in this newsletter  
CLICK on an image or blue  
text for the link.



## Hemant Mehta

Will speak at **Darwin Day**,  
Sat. Mar. 16th

Hemant Mehta is the editor of Friendly Atheist, appears on the [Atheist Voice channel](#) on YouTube, and co-hosts the uniquely-named [Friendly Atheist Podcast](#). He is a former National Board Certified high school math teacher in the suburbs of Chicago, where he taught for seven years.

Hemant has appeared on CNN and FOX News (really). He has served on the board of directors for [Foundation Beyond Belief](#) (a charity organization targeting non-theistic donors) and the [Secular Student Alliance](#) (which supports college atheist groups nationwide). He is the author of, *I Sold My Soul on eBay* and *The Young Atheist's Survival Guide*.

## A.A. National Field Organizer, Jim Helton Speaks to local Leaders Jan 19th. In Tampa

See Page 4  
for details

Jim Helton works with affiliates, local partners, and state directors to challenge religious privilege and fight to protect church/state separation at the local level by building coalitions around specific issue campaigns, including medically accurate sex education, LGBT issues, and religious exemptions. Also, on AoF radio Jan. 4th.



## Learning skills for the job market | The world needs plumbers, poets

It is true that college is not for everyone. Training in technical skills is important and should never be thought of as inferior to going to college. The world needs welders, plumbers, electricians and mechanics just as much as it needs lawyers, doctors, writers, social workers and physicists.

But those who claim that a four year-degree at a college should focus just on technical skills miss the point of college by a wide margin. In our current age, technology in the form of software and eventually robots will make many jobs obsolete.

Employers are looking for people who can read critically, think creatively, and draw upon a variety of perspectives to solve serious problems like how to feed growing populations, how to address climate change, and how to live a fulfilling life in an era of growing inequality and rampant consumerism. These challenges do require people who can read, write and do math. But they also require people who understand history, cultural diversity, natural sciences and human nature.

When a surgeon has a leaking toilet, they need a plumber. When a welder needs medical care, they  
Continued on page 4

## Listen to Freethought Radio every Friday Afternoon at 2 PM

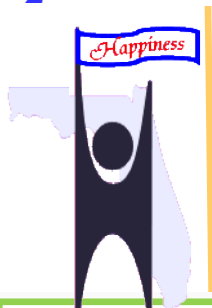
Atheists of Florida produces *Atheist Forum*, every week for information and opinion from a secular POV.

You will find a variety of subjects discussed, from atheism (of course) to science, politics, ethics, art and social culture. **Jan. 18th - Dan Barker, live !**

The broadcast is available on WTAN-1340 and on the internet at [TanTalk1340.com](http://TanTalk1340.com)

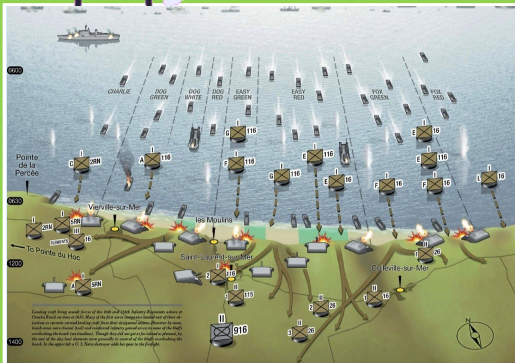
Be sure to **call-in 727-441-3000**, with your questions and comments. See page 13 for more.

Check out twenty years worth of past programs of the Atheist Forum on our website [www.aof.ngo](http://www.aof.ngo) And check our channel at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) for more.



# The Humanist Society of the Suncoast News

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



## The Greatest Invasion Ever Launched

If June 6th holds no particular significance for you, then you need to know more of this date.

Dave "Doc" Dockery will speak to us on one of the most powerful and resonant events in world history.



The invasion of France on that day in 1944 was the beginning of a process that has shaped the lives and character of us all.

It has been said that Doc's talk on this is more entertaining than any spy novel you will ever read and has the additional advantage of being true. The allies went to great lengths to convince the Nazis that they were going to attack Normandy miles away from where the actual attack occurred.. A wide range of clever and astonishing deceptions are credited with saving over 2 million allied lives. Much of what will be revealed has remained classified for more than 70 years and released only recently.

## Tampa Bay Harvest

**Food: the first kindness & the measure of our Hospitality.**  
**Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings.**  
Money is more effective than cans and boxes to get the most benefit to the greatest number of people. But we can also use personal care toiletries.  
Thanks to *Jordan Williams*. **We need volunteers!** Write to [jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com) Thanx.

## Important !

**Our meeting date is changing.**  
Beginning with this February, we will meet on the **Second Saturday** of each month.  
Please adjust your calendars and expectations accordingly.



**Please  
Join us in:**



**The Dunedin  
Public Library**  
At 223 Douglas Ave.  
in Dunedin. ([map](#))

**Saturday, Jan 5  
at 2:00 PM**

Many of our members meet afterward for more conversation and refreshment not far from the library.



Vol. XXXII No. 1 January, 2019

***Tis the season to  
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. (Pin)  
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,*  
[marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com)

*If new, please fill out the form; 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:*

**"Marios Psomas"**

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

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

\*=optional

## List of Fake News Websites:

Before you get too excited about an item you want to share or comment about, make sure the social media item is legit.

**The list:**

<http://bit.ly/2vvrXbb>



*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 Jan. 20 at Chili's's at 5 O'clock for American style cuisine, and decidedly the best company:

# Chilis

For [map](#) [Menu](#)

5430 E Bay Dr, Largo, FL 33764

Phone: (727) 539-8596

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

## Laugh Lines From the Ironic Dictionary 1-19

**FITNESS:** Salvation through perspiration.

**FLABBERGASTED:** Appalled over how much weight you have gained.

**FLATULENCE:** Emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.

**FRISBEETARIANISM:** The belief that, when you die, your Soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there.

**FLASHLIGHT:** A case for holding dead batteries.

**GARGOYLE:** Olive-flavored mouthwash.

**GOSSIP:** A person who will never tell a lie if the truth will do more damage.

**GOURMET:** A food fetishist.

**HANDKERCHIEF:** Cold Storage.

**HOOKER:** A working woman commonly despised by people who sell themselves for even less.

**IDEOLOGUE:** Generally an obscure humorless zealot who finds fulfillment by spouting the ideas of famous humorless zealots.

**INFLATION:** Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

**JEANS:** Lower half of the international uniform of youth, the upper half being the zits.

**KLEPTOMANIAC:** A thief with breeding.

**LABORATORY ANIMALS:** Furry foot soldiers drafted in the name of science. Some die nobly in the battle to eradicate cancer; others give their lives so that we might produce a peach-scented dandruff shampoo.

## 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,**  
**Steve Brown,**  
**Lois Fries,** Secretary  
**Dave Kovar,**  
**Brad Perryman** Vice Pres.  
**Jim Peterson,** President  
**Frank Prahl,**  
**Marios Psomas,** 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, Don Acenbrack Dec., Rob Byrch, Dec. Jackie Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard, Matt Cooper Dec, Jim Butler

~\*~\*~\*~\*

Jordan Williams, mail Publisher

**Jim Peterson, Editor**

E-Mail us at:

[jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

## Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist,  
**click:**

[Secular Therapy Org.](http://seculartherapy.org)  
[Cognitive Neurosciences](http://cognitive-neurosciences.org)

### Or call:

Lynda Gurvitz,

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

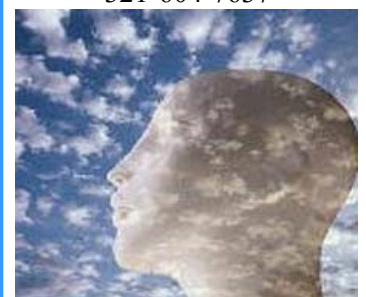
[lynda-gurvitz/](http://fampsy.org/member/lynda-gurvitz/)

(727) 725-8820

Joel Schmidt

[www.floatoncounseling.com](http://www.floatoncounseling.com)

321-604-7637



World needs Plumbers, Poets... from page [1](#).

need an M.D. When an electrician has a midlife crisis, they need a therapist. And when a rancher discovers ancient remains on their property, they need an archaeologist.

Suggesting that all the world needs are people with technical skills is naive, as is suggesting the opposite.

It is arguments like these that are making college unaffordable, as politicians cut more and more tax dollars from higher education, resulting in only wealthy kids attending college or less affluent students taking out massive loans.

Arguments against college and liberal arts education are arguments against understanding the world.

**Dr. Ryan Cragun**, Univ. Tampa Pub. in Tampa Bay Times 11-27-18

## Be a Humanist Celebrant

The Humanist Society and AHA Center for Education are in the process of planning on-site Humanist Celebrant trainings for 2019, and we are strongly considering coming to Orlando, FL. We are looking at coming either in April or next fall in August. We usually host trainings on a Saturday from ~10am to 4pm.

Celebrant trainings offer the chance for new, experienced, and prospective celebrants alike to share ideas, get to know each other, and take an in-depth look at all the aspects of planning and executing various ceremonies. Best of all, we can tailor the day to suit the needs and interests of the attendees.

**Are you interested in one of these trainings? Would spring or fall work best? Also, do you know of any free meeting space we might be able to use?** If we can get a location, and ~10 people with confirmed interest, we can move forward with planning the event. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have, and really appreciate your thoughts on this. We are trying to get these trainings scheduled as soon as possible, so please let me know at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Brody Armstrong, **Education Assistant**  
Amer. Humanist Association **202-238-9088 ext. 13**

## Tampa Humanist Association

Meets every third Saturday at, 11:00 AM

**North Tampa Public Library**

8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604 [Map](#)

January 19th Leader: **Jim Peterson**

***New Strategies for a bigger, More Powerful Freethought Movement.***



**Member, TBCoR,  
Hum Society, &  
AHA affiliate.**

## With **Jim Helton** of *American Atheists*

As National Field Organizer, Mr. Helton works with affiliates, local partners, and state directors to challenge religious privilege and fight to protect church/state separation at the local level by building coalitions around specific issue campaigns, including medically accurate sex education, LGBT non-discrimination ordinances, and religious exemptions.

*As Humanists it is our task to discover the secret world above and within the level of conscious recognition. Using the instruments of reason, & critical thinking, we strive to be at one in understanding both the world that made us, and the one we are inventing.*

*Each month a new investigation thoughtfully & critically dissects a novel intersection of mind and matter. Be part of it.*

*At present, we are a small, intimate group meeting in a neighborhood library. But we are ambitious, and hope to grow. Ideally, such small discussion groups should appear in every neighborhood. The need is as great as the potential. What is required is a few longtime humanists willing to take on the relatively small effort to secure a library meeting room once a month, post a few notices here and there (including this newsletter), and show up to lead a discussion, share a little knowledge; give something to the future. JP*

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

## Humanist Quotes

1/19

**"The true humanist maintains a just balance between sympathy and selection."**

*Irving Babbitt*

**"Three key humanist virtues are courage, cognition, and caring - not dependence, ignorance, or insensitivity to the needs of others."**

*Paul Kurtz*

**"Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion."**

*American Humanist Association*

**"Most of us must learn to love people and use things rather than loving things and using people."**

*Roy T. Bennett,*



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

## Tree Resin Replaces Oil

### *A step away from Fossil Resources*

The loblolly pine isn't the first choice of Christmas tree lovers. It's not as compact as fir or spruce, and its needles are longer, so it doesn't hold ornaments well. But the loblolly has a storied history, nonetheless.

The famous [Eisenhower Tree](#), on the 17th hole of the Augusta National Golf Club, was the bane of President Eisenhower. He hit it so many times while playing that he asked the club to cut it down. To avoid offending the president, the club's chairman abruptly adjourned the meeting, rather than reject his request. (In 2014, the late president finally got his wish when an ice storm damaged the tree so badly, it had to be removed.) Loblolly pine seeds also traveled aboard Apollo 14 and were planted all around the country upon their return, including on the grounds of the White House. Some of these [moon trees](#) still survive.

Today, the loblolly is serving a more noble purpose by helping limit the need for fossil fuels. Researchers, tinkering with the tree's genetics, have found a way to reverse-engineer how the loblolly produces resin, a discovery that could help manufacturers produce greener alternatives for a range of goods now made with oil and gas, including surface coatings, adhesives, printing inks, flavors, fragrances, vitamins, household cleaning products, paint, varnish, shoe polish and linoleum.

"The chemical composition of resins is not very different from that of certain fractions currently obtained from crude oil," said Mark Lange, a professor in Washington State University's Institute of Biological Chemistry. Lange wants to improve the production of resin to help reduce the chemical industry's reliance on fossil fuels.

"These are fossil resources that were formed over millions of years," he said. "They also are non-renewable, which means that once we run out, there is no way to replenish them within a reasonable amount of time. Before the advent of crude oil as a cheap raw material, pine resins were harvested and converted into many common household goods by the [naval stores industry](#)."

Currently, only two industries generate commercial value from pine trees—lumber and paper. Thus, in conducting their experiments, "we were thinking about how we could decrease our reliance on fossil resources while increasing the use of renewable resources," Lange said.

Their [findings](#) appear in the *Journal of Experimental Botany*.

"Our immediate goal was to begin to understand how pines produce copious amounts of resin," Lange explained. "Our longer term vision is to use this knowledge to develop trees that produce larger amounts of resin. Such trees can still be harvested sustainably for the timber and pulp and paper industries, but the resins might provide added value as a source for green chemicals. In other words, we are not thinking of resins as being the primary product but rather a high-value byproduct. Much of the commercial infrastructure, including scale-up, is already in place."

Lange and his colleagues dissected the machinery loblolly pines use to produce oleoresin, a toxic component of resin that provides the tree with an important defense against insects and pathogens. Animals can flee predators, but a tree has no such ability, so the loblolly produces oleoresin. The chemical is so toxic that it has to store it in specialized compartments, called resin ducts, to keep from poisoning itself.

To understand how the trees make oleoresin, researchers studied the cells around resin ducts, cutting them out with a laser-equipped microscope. "Essentially what you do is draw around the area that you want to cut out and then the laser follows what you've been drawing and blasts it off," Lange said.

Researchers then compared cells near the resin ducts with cells farther away, to find the genes that trigger oleoresin production. "Our work helps to unravel the mechanisms underlying the production of resin in pine trees, a secretion that can also serve as the basis for the production of renewable, green chemicals," he said. Understanding the genetic blueprint of loblollies will help scientists improve resin production in pines, or even replicate the resin-producing mechanism

*Continued on Page 17*

### 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. For additional information send your emails to: [spaceaminer@gmail.com](mailto: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

Welcome 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/>



The mission of the Center for Inquiry is to foster a secular society based on science, reason, freedom of inquiry, & humanist values. Since 2002, our all-volunteer chapter has served West Central Florida. Won't you support us? [Join our community today.](#)



*Rick O'Keefe,  
Coordinator*

### Some of January's activities are:

- Brandon—Skeptics at Brunch
- N. Pinellas—CFI Supper Club
- Howard's Skeptics Corner—Dec. 6
- 2+ astronomy clubs' meetings
- CFI SHARE Book Club—Dec. 1
- Thank Goodness 4 Godless Friday Nights
- Tampa Bay Tech Center many activities

And more at <http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I>

**Subscribe to our CFI Tampa Bay newsletter here:** <http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I>,  
Then scroll down the page until you see the red section with "Receive E-Mails".

Captivating talks on science, humanism, skepticism, and other smart stuff. Find talks by topic, speaker, or event. Is this better than 24 hour Trump manure on "the news"? Yes! Is this better for your mental health than reality TV? Obviously! So, go here: <https://reasonabletalk.tv/>

### Naturalized: White Settler Christianity and the Silence of Earth in Political Theology

#### [Political Theology and Ecology](#)

The white US Evangelical denialists see something that many other political theologians do not: that taking seriously our ecological relations requires a kind of paganism.

Over the past decade I have puzzled over why white US Evangelicals (WUSE) turned from cautiously concerned about climate change to open hostility to the very idea of it. As some WUSE now malign as pagan anyone who cares for Earth and warn parents about the [Green Dragon](#) coming for their children's souls, I have tried to understand the strategy of their political ecology. Why publicly wager your way of faith on the non-existence of a problem? Why, as anthropogenic environmental troubles become ever more a part of daily experience, align evangelical faith with material sources of the trouble? It seems irrational on first glance.

### [The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life without Illusions](#) by Alex Rosenberg

We can't avoid the persistent questions about the meaning of life-and the nature of reality. Philosopher Alex Rosenberg maintains that science is the only thing that can really answer them—all of them. His bracing and ultimately upbeat book takes physics seriously as the complete description of reality and accepts all its

### [The Anunnaki Bible: The Sumerian Text's Origin of the Judeo Christian Bibles](#) by Donald Blackwell

This revealing work is devoted to word for word textual evidence, juxtaposing the ancient texts with the Judeo Christian Bibles, to reveal what to date has been surreptitiously ignored, pushed aside, and avoided. His decades long careful research and scholarly approach will provide the reader with the knowledge and ability to make a syllogistic decision....or not.

In a [lawsuit](#) filed Monday with a U.S. District Court, the Center for Inquiry (CFI) is challenging Texas's marriage law, which limits the authority to solemnize marriages to clergy and certain government officials. 2JIA0Wh  
And, you can give us support: <http://bit.ly/2pTDfEj>



### [How to Break Up with Integrity: Rilke on Unwinding Separation and the Difficult Art of Recalibrating Broken Relationships](#)

We speak of love as a gift, but although it may come at first unbidden, as what Percy Shelley called a "speechless swoon of joy," true intimacy between two people is a difficult achievement — a hard-earned glory with stakes so high that the prospect of collapse is absolutely devastating. When collapse does happen — when intimacy is severed by some disorienting swirl of chance and choice — the measure of a love is whether and to what extent the kernel of connection can be salvaged as the shell cracks, how willing each partner is to remain openhearted while brokenhearted, how much mutual care and kindness the two who have loved each other can extend in the almost superhuman endeavor of redeeming closeness after separation.

consequences. He shows how physics makes Darwinian natural selection the only way life can emerge, and how that deprives nature of purpose, and human action of meaning, while it exposes conscious illusions such as free will and the self. The science that makes us nonbelievers provides the insight into the real difference between right and wrong, the nature of the mind, even the direction of human history. The Atheist's Guide to Reality draws powerful implications for the ethical and political issues that roil contemporary life. The result is nice nihilism, a surprisingly sanguine perspective atheists can happily embrace.



17  
years in  
Florida



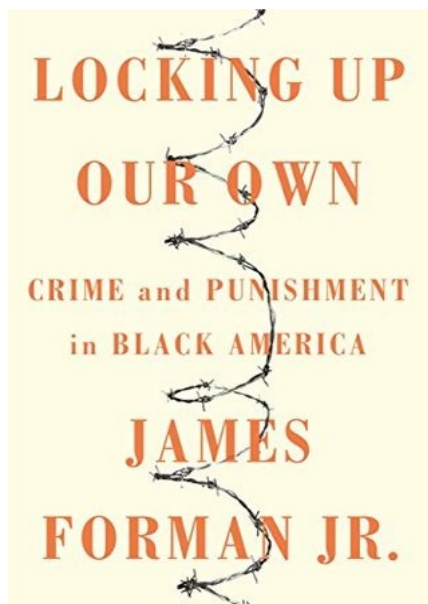
Know the difference, between those who stay to feed the soil and those who come out to grab the fruit.  
~ Anon.



*The Morning Heresy* is your **daily digest** of news and links relevant to the secular and skeptic communities. What you wouldn't otherwise know.



**Richard Dawkins  
Foundation**  
for Reason & Science  
A division of the Center for Inquiry



## *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*

by James Forman Jr.

In recent years, America's criminal justice system has become the subject of an increasingly urgent debate. Critics have assailed the rise of mass incarceration, emphasizing its disproportionate impact on people of color. As James Forman, Jr., points out, however, the war on crime that began in the 1970s was supported by many African American leaders in the nation's urban centers. In *Locking Up Our Own*, he seeks to understand why.

Forman shows us that the first substantial cohort of black mayors, judges, and police chiefs took office amid a surge in crime and drug addiction. Many prominent black officials, including Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry and federal prosecutor Eric Holder, feared that the gains of the civil rights movement were being undermined by lawlessness—and thus embraced tough-on-crime measures, including longer sentences and aggressive police tactics. In the face of skyrocketing murder rates and the proliferation of open-air drug markets, they believed they had no choice. But the policies they adopted would have devastating consequences for residents of poor black neighborhoods.

A former D.C. public defender, Forman tells riveting stories of politicians, community activists, police officers, defendants, and crime victims. He writes with compassion about individuals trapped in terrible dilemmas—from the men and women he represented in court to officials struggling to respond to a public safety emergency. *Locking Up Our Own* enriches our understanding of why our society became so punitive and offers important lessons to anyone concerned about the future of race and the criminal justice system in this country.

"From my obligation to my fellow humans I draw fellowship, purpose, meaning, strength, courage, conviction, insight, and the basis of all morality. How can such joy be burdensome?" ~ David Whitman, Psalms and Aphorisms

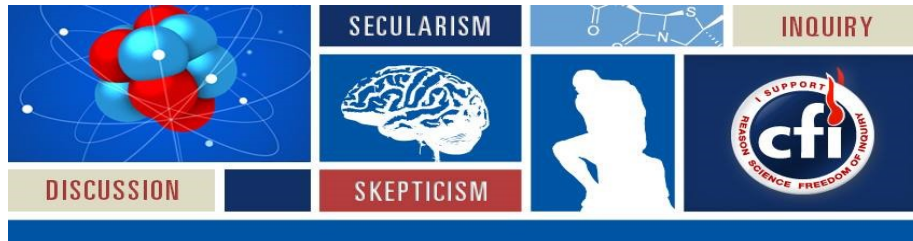
Keep up on all current events at: <https://CFITampaBay.org>

*Being all-volunteer means CFI needs volunteers, members, and donors. Might you become one?*



Click below

**JOIN NOW**



### Special freethought days in January:

Thomas Paine Day, January 29. And here are two excellent buys:

1. *To Begin the World Over Again: The Life of Thomas Paine* — from us, \$19.99 DVD of a acclaimed one man play.
2. *Common Sense* booklet by Thomas Paine.

Books never go out of style—especially **those about space**. E-readers are great (whether it be **Kindle**, **Kobo**, or **Nook** in variety), but there's something about having a physical book in hand that can transport you to distant worlds. Reading about space with kids is a proven winner if you ask *Ars'* writer Cyrus Farivar—a recent **run through science books with his five-year-old daughter** even led the duo to write letters to some NASA scientists about **Europa**. So try something like **The Jupiter Stone** for the little ones; a 2018 re-print of the greatest rocket science book ever (**Ignition**) may be better for the slightly older crowd.

First published Nov. 12, 2012, these **infographics** on the **distribution of wealth in America**, highlighting both the inequality and the difference between our perception of inequality and the actual numbers. The reality is often not what we think it is.

### References:

- 1.1. **It's the Inequality, Stupid: Eleven charts that explain what's wrong with America.**
- 2.2. **Wealth Inequality in America**
- 3.3. **How Unequal We Are: The Top 5 Facts You Should Know About The Wealthiest One Percent Of Americans**
- 4.4. **CEO pay is 380 times average worker's**

The sad tale is that the situation is much worse now. The bottom third of us barely register on the wealth chart, while the wealthy, even though they haven't done as well as the top 0.1%, have sucked up ownership of so much that even the carcass left to the middle class is desiccated. This is not just an American phenomenon. Weep!

## CHURCH AND STATE

Nobel prize winner Brian Schmidt: '**Climate change ...** the great challenge for humanity over the next 100 years'

- ◆ ◆ Rick Santorum: Separation Of Church And State is A Communist Idea, Not An American One
- ◆ ◆ Trump theocrats claim abuses against women and LGBT people are Christian values
- ◆ ◆ Cardinal Burke: Gay couples shouldn't be invited to family gatherings if children are present
- ◆ ◆ Oklahoma Republican Declares That Rape Is The 'Will Of God'
- ◆ ◆ Propaganda works – 58 percent of Republicans believe education is bad
- ◆ ◆ Why aren't religious views classed as delusions?
- ◆ ◆ Twenty Vile Quotes Against Women By Church Leaders from St. Augustine to Pat Robertson

Those articles are all here, and much more news: <http://bit.ly/2FQVO3t>

**READ THIS:** TB-CoR's **Meetup** makes it easy to **view & RSVP** to our activities & some affiliated events. The value to us of your joining our Meetup is that we need to know how many folks expect to attend an activity. Some programs are limited in seating; some require ordering books, etc.; some are open only to paid-up CFI members; & some require prepayment. So, sign up if you aren't already participating.





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!](#)



## When Continental Drift Was Considered Pseudoscience

More than 100 years ago, a German scientist was ridiculed for advancing the shocking idea that the continents were adrift

By [Richard Conniff](#)

Six seismologists and a civil servant, charged with manslaughter for failing to predict a 2009 earthquake that killed 308 people in the Apennine Mountain city of L'Aquila, in Italy, will serve six years in prison. The charge is remarkable partly because it assumes that scientists can now see not merely beneath the surface of the earth, but also into the future. What's even more extraordinary, though, is that the prosecutors based their case on a scientific insight that was, not long ago, the object of open ridicule.

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2rPuvx1>

## The Trouble with Pseudoscience—It Can Be a Catastrophe

*Sounds Sciencey*—By [Sharon Hill](#)

*Pseudoscience is what one might call a two-dollar word. Skeptics often throw it around because of its weightiness and the values it transmits. We need to talk about this word, where it came from, and why we should be cautious about using it.*

Pseudoscience is a pejorative term that is bestowed upon a set of ideas, not used by choice by the holder of those ideas. It's "false" science, fake science, an imitation missing a vital part, the knockoff, the wannabe, the cheap imitation... OK, you get what I mean.

Contrary to what we think we can say constitutes pseudoscience, there are no set criteria to identify it. It's not a simple thing but a sticky wicket. It's whatever scientists say doesn't belong to legitimate science—a problematic definition. We often must use examples to explain what we mean. Wikipedia [has a list of topics](#) that have been characterized as pseudoscience by someone, sometime. Common examples include: astrology, cryptozoology, paranormal investigation, ufology, parapsychology, psychoanalysis, alternative medicine, homeopathy, and creationism.

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2rQsErW>

"It is no defense of superstition and pseudoscience to say that it brings solace and comfort to people. ... If solace and comfort are how we judge the worth of something, then consider that tobacco brings solace and comfort to smokers; alcohol brings it to drinkers; drugs of all kinds bring it to addicts; the fall of cards and the run of horses bring it to gamblers; cruelty and violence bring it to sociopaths. Judge by solace and comfort only and there is no behavior we ought to interfere with." ~ **Isaac Asimov**

Special thanks to Dr. Gary Posner for undertaking the arduous task of scanning many of the printed news articles about Tampa Bay Skeptics that have appeared in various newspapers and magazines since Guttenberg. Or, at least 1988. These efforts appear on our Web site here: <http://bit.ly/2E0F5tg>.

Some additional scans may be posted in the future. Many useful links appear at the bottom of the page here:

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

## The Pseudoscience of Beauty Products

Why the dubious claims of so many skin-care companies go unquestioned and untested

By Timothy Caulfield

Last year, as part vanity project, part science experiment, I decided to adopt a new skin-care routine, something that an aging celebrity might use on a daily basis. My goal was to determine whether, in fact, a high-tech routine can make a difference. Are beauty products worth it? Find out here: <http://bit.ly/2rScqhW> (As if you don't already know.)

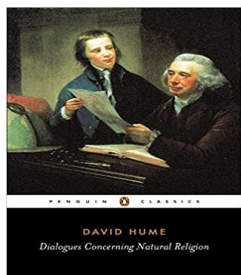


## The **Committee for Skeptical Inquiry**

promotes science and scientific inquiry, critical thinking, science education, and the use of reason in examining important issues. It encourages the critical investigation of controversial or extraordinary claims from a responsible, scientific point of view and disseminates factual information about the results of such inquiries to the scientific community, the media, and the public.

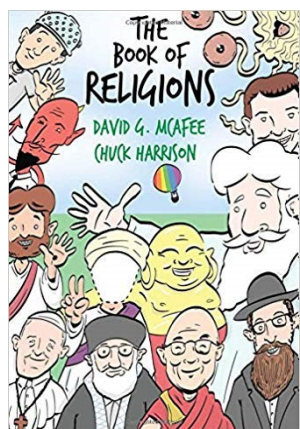
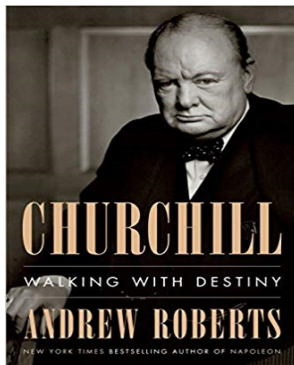
## Recommended Reading

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



*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, by David Hume. Jerry Coyne writes, "This book is famous, of course, but I've never read it. One of my colleagues in Croatia, a philosopher, recommended it to me as one of the best demolitions of the design argument ever made. It's not long, so I want to see what Hume says."

*Churchill: Walking With Destiny*, by Andrew Roberts. Jerry Coyne writes, "This is touted widely as the best one-volume biography of Churchill. I've never recovered from William Manchester's dying before he finished his magisterial 3-volume biography of Churchill, and this way I can find out what happened after Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940."



What are religions and why do people follow them? Where did they come from and how have they shaped our lives? This *interactive* book answers all those questions and more!

David G McAfee and Chuck Harrison have once again teamed up to help everyone learn about beliefs, gods, and religions! It all started out with *The Belief Book*, then continued with *The Book of Gods*, and now it's time to learn all about religions, even how to create one of your own!

The fully illustrated and interactive *Book of Religions* is for readers and thinkers of all ages, including kids and kids at heart.

Announcing the winners of the 10th Annual Goodreads Choice Awards, the only major book awards decided by readers. Votes Cast: 5,027,741.

Billed as the "only major book awards decided by readers," the 21 categories attracted more than 5 million votes from users of Goodreads, the Amazon-owned book social network.

Congratulations to the best books of the year! <http://bit.ly/2SvL38E>

Smart people are often suckers! Psychology writer Maria Konnikova talks about her book, *The Confidence Game*, and the ways people can be drawn into a con. From magicians and psychics to pyramid schemes, Konnikova outlines what is going on in the brains of both the con artist and the mark.

See the video here:  
<http://bit.ly/2A9uXL6>

## The Matt Cooper

### Humanist Lending Library

Humanist Society members can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com). Then pick it up at the next meeting. **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated.

#### # TITLE AUTHOR

1. The Expanding Circle Peter Singer
2. In Gods we Trust Scott Atran
3. Why Evolution is True Jerry Coyne
4. The Second World War 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 Walljasper
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 KcKearring
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

Evolve Fish is a good source for freethought paraphernalia:

<http://evolvefish.com/>

To access more Freethought history & perspectives,  
Frank Prah's Freethought Library [fpahl77@gmail.com](mailto:fpahl77@gmail.com)



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

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



SC wants **you** to represent the voice of thousands of people of reason in the halls of power.

As our government undergoes its seemingly perpetual crises, the secular coalition is needed to remind citizens & officials alike that ours is indeed a secular society. But to preserve its character from the predations of zealots requires your involvement.

## St Pete Atheists // Freethought Group

Moderated by: Gary Thompson

Contact: [easy8@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:easy8@tampabay.rr.com)

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

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

\* "To Smell the Roses Along the Way"

**Next meet:** Parkside Café on 49th St. 11 AM,



AOF is joining with other FBB teams to collect funds to help the Foundation make grants to address the needs of the children separated from their parents.



## Help us

## Help Children

**Donate Now**

Go to

<http://bit.ly/AOFHelp>

## UU Humanists of Clearwater

at 2470 Nursery Rd. in Clearwater.

Usually every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 12:30 to 1:30 pm, after UU services,



## University of South Florida Humanities Institute

Jan. 24 - Giselle Anatol

Location: CWY 206

Time: 6:00 pm



*The Things that Fly in the Night.*

GISELLE LIZA ANATOL is Associate Professor of English at the University of Kansas, USA, and the editor of two previous books, *Reading Harry Potter: Critical Essays* (Praeger 2003) and *Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays* (Praeger 2009)



### The Crafty Freethinker ...

Yorkshire lass born and bred, currently living in the Sunshine State. Maker of fine Secular Jewelry, and lifelong freethinker, my work can be seen by clicking on the image above.

## The Hotline Project



**184-I-DOUBT-IT**

## Travel Now



**Phone: 800-557-5463**

**Text: 407-314-5403**

Freethought  
Friendly  
Travel  
Agency

[https://  
www.thetravel  
superhero.com](https://www.thetravelsuperhero.com)

Stef Katz

**Travel by  
Stef**

## A Humanist Discussion group in East Tampa !



## UU Humanists of Tampa

Public Discussion, 2nd Wednesday eve from 7-9 PM, & on the 4th Sunday Morning 9:45-10:45.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa

# Atheists of Florida,



**Ed Golly, Chair - Judy Adkins, Exec. Dir.**  
**Al Hann, Vice chair,**

See **AoF Meetup** for details Website: <http://aof.ngo>

AoF is a comfortable & safe place in which to find rewarding new friendships, to 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 Forum



**Fridays 2 to 3 pm.**

The broadcast is available **on the internet** at [TanTalk1340.com](http://TanTalk1340.com), live streaming on smart phones using the "TuneIn" application, [www.youtube.com/atheistforum](http://www.youtube.com/atheistforum) and on the following frequencies in the Tampa Bay area –

**WTAN AM 1340, WZHR AM 1400, WDCF AM 1350, WTAN FM 106.1, and WZHR FM 104.3.**

Listeners can call **727-441-3000**, where four lines await your call in of questions and comments. All programs are being archived on the AoF web site, [www.aof.ngo](http://www.aof.ngo).

**Dan Barker** Answers your Questions on Jan 18. Tune in!

Subscribe to our

**You Tube Channel**

 **iTunes**



## January Events

[Find details by clicking here](#)

*meetup*

**Jan 6**

TampaDinner  
meet. Check  
meetup for  
place - time.

Be sure to check for  
changes and RSVP!

**Jan 13th**

11am  
Parkside  
Café P.P.

**Jan 20th**

Chilis Rest.  
Largo 5 PM  
See page 3  
top.

**Jan 27th**

Yummy  
House, Tampa  
5:PM

### 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).

### A new year and a new opportunity to make our world a (slightly) better place.

The Florida Statutes (Title XLVIII Chapter 1003 Section 46) require schools to "teach abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage as the expected standard for all school-age students while teaching the benefits of monogamous heterosexual marriage." State law also requires that the School Board shall provide an evidence-based, medically accurate comprehensive health education curriculum. These two approaches seem contradictory, especially since marriage equality has been the law of the land.

This year we should focus on getting this nonsense out of our schools. There is no evidence that these programs prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease. In fact, it has been found that adolescents who took "virginity pledges" were found to have higher rates of sexually transmitted infections and non-marital pregnancies than those who did not. These curricula are usually full of false, misleading, or incomplete information.

With your help we can address this issue. We need to:

- **determine** how the schools are addressing this issue;
- **build** a coalition with local groups, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, Catholics for Choice; LGBT groups, etc.;
- **write** letters to the editors to bring awareness to our community;
- **find** members of the house or senate that would introduce a bill to amend the statutes regarding this;
- **Contact** members of the house and senate to let them know of our objection to this legislation;
- **Encourage** students to object to this miseducation.

Join with us to address this miseducation of our students.

Sign up to participate by emailing [Admin@AtheistsofFlorida.org](mailto:Admin@AtheistsofFlorida.org).

## Poll Finds Atheism Is No Longer a Political Taboo

(Washington, D.C., December 11, 2018) – Although the U.S. Constitution prohibits religious tests for public office, one of the greatest taboos in American politics has been for a candidate to be an atheist. A new poll conducted by Lake Research Partners for the American Humanist Association and the Center for Freethought Equality found that “being non-religious or atheist need not be considered an impediment to a candidate’s electoral success.”

The results of the poll indicate that there is a growing preference for secular leaders, and that a majority of voters across every demographic prioritize other political concerns over issues of religious faith or lack thereof. Preference for religious candidates virtually disappears when voters consider the policy stances of a non-religious candidate. Seventy-two percent of poll respondents were willing to vote for a non-believer or non-religious candidate who shares their policy positions.

“It’s heartening to see that the political bias against atheist and humanist candidates is disappearing,” says Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the American Humanist Association and the Center for Freethought Equality. Speckhardt continues, “This poll demonstrates that voters care more about a candidate’s policy stances, than his or her religious identification.”

For voters who support pro-choice and pro-marriage equality Democratic candidates, 74 percent said that a candidate being “non-religious” or “agnostic” would make no difference in their vote. An additional 14 percent said they would be even more likely to vote for the non-religious or agnostic candidate. When the term “atheist” was used, support for the candidate only dropped slightly (72% no difference in their vote and 10% more likely to vote for the candidate).

Not surprisingly, results of the poll did vary by political party. Forty-eight percent of Republicans said they would be less likely to vote for an atheist candidate who shared their political positions; however, most younger Republicans (68% of those under 35 and 54% of those under 50) said that a candidate’s atheism would make no difference to them.

“People who have stayed out of the political arena because of the bias against atheists and agnostics should be encouraged by these findings,” says Ron Millar, Political and PAC Coordinator at the Center for Freethought Equality. Millar urges, “the humanist, atheist, and agnostic community to be fully and openly engaged in our democratic process. Our political system depends on the active participation of all our citizens.”

Courtesy of the American Humanist Assoc.  
12-26-18



## The Framers were not Cross Enthusiasts

When conservatives discuss legal philosophy, they like to talk history. Under the banner of originalism—the approach to legal analysis that interprets the US Constitution as it was understood at the time of drafting—conservatives see the mindset of the framers as paramount. With history as their guide, originalist jurists try to discern the intent of the framers and rule accordingly, with little concern for the fact that the dynamics of today’s society would have been unimaginable to the eighteenth-century men who drafted the Constitution.

I’ve commented previously on originalist jurisprudence as embodied by the godfather of originalism, the late Justice Antonin Scalia, so I won’t go down that road again here. Suffice it to say that originalism, as practiced nowadays, is more often an agenda-driven means to an end. That is, when past events contradict a desired outcome for conservatives, suddenly history is no longer their valued guide.

A case in point is the legal dispute over a forty-foot concrete Christian cross on public land in the middle of a busy traffic circle in Bladensburg, Maryland. After the American Humanist Association successfully challenged the cross in the Fourth Circuit court of appeals, the Maryland commission that owns the structure (along with the American Legion, which had intervened in the case) asked the Supreme Court to review the case. The Supreme Court granted review, and will hear the case this winter.

If the justices consider the true history of crosses as public memorials, they should uphold the Fourth Circuit’s ruling.

Because the cross was erected in the 1920s as a memorial to fallen soldiers of the First World War, its defenders claim that it passes constitutional muster. In making this argument they prefer to avoid the primary legal test for analyzing Establishment Clause violations—the Lemon Test (named after the 1971 *Lemon v Kurtzman* case), which considers, among other things, whether a government action has the primary effect of advancing religion. Of course a huge Christian cross advances Christianity, so there’s no way it could pass that test. Instead, cross defenders would prefer to argue history—the age of the cross, the fallen soldiers, honoring the dead, etc.

If so, humanists and others concerned about church-state separation should say one thing: bring it on! The true history of crosses in America reveals that the government has rarely utilized them,

*Continued on page [20](#)*

## Tampa Bay Thinkers



Discussing serious matters since 2008. **Carrollwood Cultural Center**, Tampa, every 2nd Monday, monthly at 7 PM.

**Monday, January 14, 2018**

**Topic: TBA**

See our Meetup site:

[www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/](http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/) for more info.

## Humanist Families of Greater Tampa

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

There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly Humanist Way of life. Jennifer is author of several books including: *The Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, & her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine*.



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

See more at: <http://www.Jen-Hancock.com>.



## USF Freethinkers

Join [Freethinkers@USF](mailto:Freethinkers@USF) for

genuine, conversational discourse & a communal atmosphere.

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:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FreethinkersUSF/> for more information.

contact: [fadibitar@mail.usf](mailto:fadibitar@mail.usf)

**TB-CoR Welcomes**

## Ethical Humanism

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.

Organizer **Bart Worden** hopes to get a local Meetup group started soon. Watch these pages.



## Tampa Bay Technology Center & Thinkers Salon



**We repair our member's computers - Free!**

Lectures, discussions, & hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. Our new address is 2189 Cleveland Street, Suite 229, Clearwater FL 33765. [Map](#)

Check out [Thinker's Salon](#) a forum for serious social & scientific ideas & issues.

Find us at:

[www.tampa-bay.org](http://www.tampa-bay.org)

## The Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers



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 members.

**Local Contact:** Chris  
([christbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:christbrown@yahoo.com))  
MSgt, USAF (Retired)

Co-Organizer:

**MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists (MASH) MacDill AFB**

# 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 as Darwin Day in February, Solstice day in December, and other activities all year long.

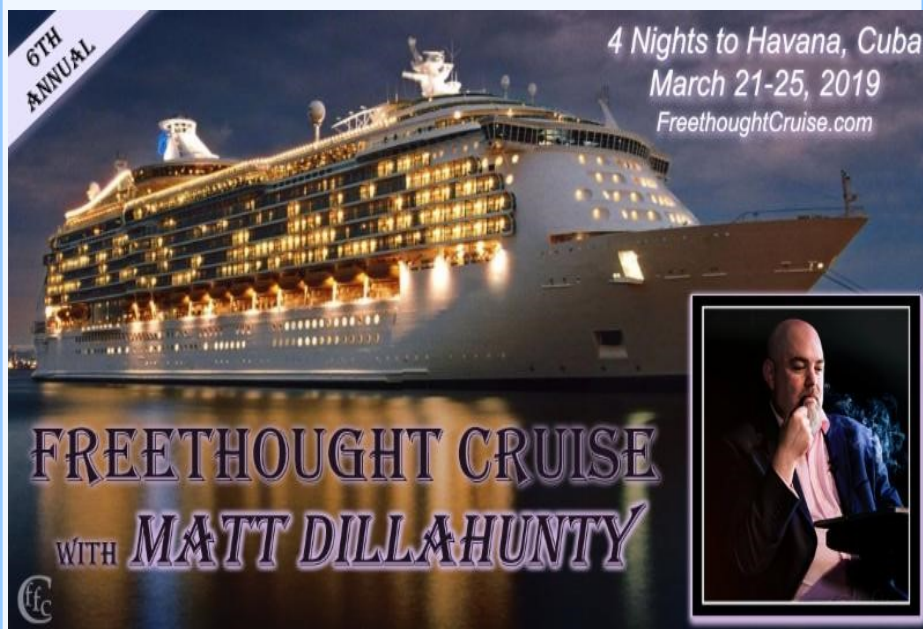
We are especially grateful to the national office of the United Coalition of Reason & its director, Sarah Levin.

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 groups identified with the secular / freethought / Humanist / Atheist movement.*

As this momentum continues to grow, we will keep you informed of developments . JP

**Contact:** [tbcor@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcor@metrodirect.net)  
Or see, <http://tampabaycor.org/>  
Or, <https://unitedcor.org/coalition-of-reason/tampa-bay/>



**Mar 21-25, 2019**

**Freethought Cruise to Cuba with Matt Dillahunty**

Enjoy a cruise aboard the Royal Caribbean's Majesty of the Seas.

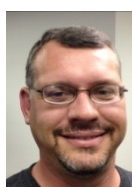
Two ports of call offer opportunities to enjoy the intrigue of Havana, Cuba and the culture and coastline of Nassau, Bahamas. Each night on board you can enjoy dinner as well as numerous entertainment options.

Refurbished in 2018, the ship boasts a rock climbing wall, original theater productions, Splashaway Bay for kids, outdoor movies and sports for the whole family, live bands and other musicians, Vegas-style casino. There are opportunities for entertainment or you can find a quiet place to sunbathe, read, or enjoy a philosophical discussion with your new freethinking friends. [RSVP on Meetup](#)

### CRUISE DETAILS

- From: Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Ship: Majesty of the Seas, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line
- Dates: March 21st - 25th, 2019
- Ports of Call: Havana, Cuba and Nassau, Bahamas
- Itinerary and much more at [freethoughtcruise.com](http://freethoughtcruise.com)

Sponsored by *Central Florida Freethought Community*



### TBCoR Leadership Team 2019

Judy Adkins  
AoF

Bill Norsworthy,  
UUCH

Mark Brandt,  
UUCH

Chris Brown,  
MAF

Jenn Hancock,  
GTBHF

Rick O'Keefe,  
CFI, TBS

Jim Peterson - Facilitator  
HSS, TBPC

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

## Resin... Continued from Page 5

in different species, such as an E. coli or yeast, Lange said. Doing so could help drive down the cost of resin, making it competitive with the chemical byproducts of oil and gas.

Plants have become a valuable resource for producing numerous consumer goods, including pharmaceuticals such as morphine and chemotherapy drugs, essential oils for aromatherapy, compounds that mimic estrogen, antioxidants, cannabidiol for pain control (not the stuff that provides the high), and most everyone's favorite stimulant, caffeine. "As natural factories go, plants are industry leaders," Lange said.

By supplanting oil and gas as a resource, plants could help the world wean itself off of fossil fuels, aiding in the fight against climate change. Manufacturers now [dependent](#) on oil and gas to manufacture these products will need to look elsewhere for raw materials. Plants could provide them. "There is a strong, almost universal, consensus across scientific disciplines that climate change is one of humanity's most pressing challenges," Lange said. "I think we can make a difference in the chemical sector by looking at resins as byproducts of existing commercial processes, which will have benefits both economic and environmental."



## Life & Death Decisions

By **Luis Grenados**, AHA

Most of us have known personally, or at least heard about, individuals for whom life is no longer worth living. People who suffer from permanent and severe pain, with no reasonable prospect for recovery, have decided that in their particular circumstance the positives of continuing life are heavily outweighed by the negatives, so it's time to pack it in. It's hard to condemn people who make this choice—so long as it's entirely voluntary, based on overwhelming evidence, and others (e.g. children) are not overly reliant on the person's continued existence.

That's where assisted suicide laws, sometimes called "Right to Die" or "Death With Dignity" laws, come into play. Without the protection of these laws, any doctor (or other person) who provided such assistance would be guilty of a serious crime. Jennifer Ouellette, in her speech accepting the American Humanist Association's Humanist of the Year Award last spring, spoke movingly of the need for more such laws. She is right, and AHA is justly proud of being one of the first national organizations to support this kind of legislation. However, the devil is in the details. Not every legal maneuver in the direction of assisted suicide is a good idea. Here are some issues to ponder.

**Age:** The model statute enacted in several states can only be used by adults. In Belgium, though, the law has been extended to include children as well, so long as there is parental consent. This sounds shocking at first, but children can experience just as much misery, with just as little hope for recovery. Why should they be forced to suffer more than adults?

Conversely, the Netherlands has considered "Completed Life" legislation legalizing assisted suicide for anyone over age seventy-five (or in another version, over seventy), *Continued on Page 20*



**Humanists of Sarasota Bay, Inc.**  
Sarasota, Florida

## Keeping up with Jennifer... *Thinking Freely* *Speaking Out*



### Controlling your Response to the uncontrollable

Most people don't deal well with uncertainty. This is why the serenity prayer is still so important – to everyone. I take a humanistic approach, meaning, I take a realistic and compassionate approach to the problem.

1. What can I control? Really. Having a science-based approach helps me know what is within my control and what is not. The key to the serenity prayer – is knowing the difference between the things you can control and the things you can't. Science can help you. That is what is known as wisdom.

2. I work on something else. When something is beyond my control. Instead of spending my time worrying about it. I find something that is within my control and work on that. It might be something tangential. It might be completely off topic. But I find giving myself something constructive to do helps me not waste time worrying about something I don't have control over.

3. Flipping Coins and other superstitious behavior. I know flipping coins won't help me know how something will turn out. But it still helps me reduce stress and gives me a good laugh. Most of our superstitious behaviors are to help us feel like we have control over things we don't control at all. It gives us the illusion of control. And that illusion can be very calming. To take advantage of this without getting lost in fantasy/magical/wish fulfillment – I flip coins. Not having control over something is very very stressful. If we can trick our brains into relaxing – we will be much better off. So I engage in coin flipping to help convince my brain – it's under control so it will relax and let me focus on things that actually would be constructive. The key is to not take whatever superstitious thing you do seriously. Give your brain the illusion of control – but be aware – it's still beyond your control. And yes – this does work. It's like a placebo for the brain.

I have a 6 hour online course called [Living Made Simpler](https://humanistlearning.com/livingmadesimpler1/) that teaches humanist coping skills - step by step to help you learn how to be more effective at - life without resorting to supernaturalism. <https://humanistlearning.com/livingmadesimpler1/>

My courses are online at: <https://humanistlearning.com>

Thanks and take care. *Jennifer Hancock*

Friday, Jan. 18, 2019. James Helton of American Atheists - The Time Is Now

All lectures are at The Center for Arts and Humanity, 1226 N. Tamiami Trail, unless specified otherwise.



## Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – January 2019 Calendar

This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when & where .... We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions.  
Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson. Your RSVP is requested, & often is required for admittance.  
See our Meetup site for more: [www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason](http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Coalition-of-Reason)



Various Sunday, 2 PM; & Friday night	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Freethought Social & Godless Friday Night	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I">http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I</a>	
TBA – various activities	S TAMPA– Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details & <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup">http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup</a>	
TBA – various activities	S TAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics, Inc..	Details & <b>RSVP</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I">http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I</a>	
2nd Saturday, 2 PM see Pg. 2 3rd Sunday -Dinner see Pg. 3.	DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	Details & <b>RSVP</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists">http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists</a> <b>Now on the 2nd Saturday at 2 PM !</b>	
3rd Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER– UU Clearwater Humanists	Details: <a href="http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists">http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists</a>	
TBA – various activities at MOSI	E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource Society (MARS) at MOSI	Details & <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi">http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi</a> Other events: <a href="http://bit.ly/MARS-home">http://bit.ly/MARS-home</a>	
TBA - numerous events— this semester	E. TAMPA– Humanities Institute at USF	See <b>Web site</b> for full listing of many events & calendar. <a href="http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities">http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities</a> Locations vary! <b>Page 11.</b>	
4th Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper	<b>RSVP is required.</b> Seating is limited to 25! <i>For CFI &amp; TBS paid members.</i> <a href="http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I">http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I</a>	
3rd Saturday, 11 AM	N TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & <b>RSVP</b> : <b>No program this month!</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists">http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists</a>	
4th Saturday, 10:30 AM;	CLEARWATER – CFI Readers Book Discussion	Limited to 10 paid-up CFI members. <b>RSVP is required. Must have read the book under discussion to attend.</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I">http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I</a>	
3rd Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH– Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. <b>RSVP</b> here: <a href="http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers">http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers</a>	
4 <sup>th</sup> Friday, 8 PM general meeting. Many more events monthly.	ST. PETERSBURG– Astronomy Club	For several dates, locations, & details: <a href="http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home">http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar">http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar</a>	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday plus various other times/venues	TAMPA BAY REGION– Center for Inquiry Tampa Bay	Details & <b>RSVP</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I">http://bit.ly/2ljTe9I</a>	
TBA – various activities	TAMPA BAY REGION– Humanist Families	<b>RSVP</b> here: Family outings & other activities. Details & <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN">http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN</a>	

## 2019 Freethought Cruise

Nassau-Cuba itinerary. For more details: P. **16** or, [www.freethoughtcruise.com](http://www.freethoughtcruise.com). Departs March 21.



Read more on the web at: [www.tampabaycor.net](http://www.tampabaycor.net)



## Conscious Communication:

# Why Did Jakelin Caal Maquin Die?

BY [LUCIANO GONZALEZ](#) • 20 DECEMBER 2018

*[Conscious Communication](#) focuses on how to communicate effectively and the importance of honing communication skills. It challenges humanists to be conscious of how they address and interact with others. Ideally each of these posts will motivate humanists to work on specific aspects of communication, as well as improve their listening skills.*

## 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 Shot!**

The tragic December 8th death of seven-year-old Jakelin Caal Maquin, who had journeyed with her father from Guatemala and had been in US custody for two days, has moved many immigration activists and communities to grief and fury. Her death has started a massive call for more investigations into the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency as well as increased oversight of the agency.

Jakelin's death was initially attributed to dehydration, but reports since have suspected she died of septic shock. Many suspect that CBP officers didn't do enough to prevent her death; according to the [LA Times](#), the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics thinks her death was "without doubt preventable." Others, including immigration hardliners, defend the agency for doing all it could for someone who crossed into the country illegally. The challenge here isn't to determine who's correct in this difference of opinion, but rather how to communicate effectively with people who are grieving and who are enraged.

Grief and fury are immensely powerful emotions. They move people to action and can motivate truly fiery statements. When people are engaging communities, especially if they themselves aren't from those grieving or enraged communities, they need to be cognizant of the emotional realities of those who are. Many of the voices who've been calling for more calm from activists in response to Jakelin's death fail to explicitly recognize the pain those activists are feeling. This hinders effective communication, even though the people calling for more nuance in responses to this news are doing so in good faith and want to be understood and engaged on this topic.

Ignoring the emotional realities of grieving and enraged responders can become a form of tone-policing, an often unintentional response to an argument or statement that refuses to address the substance of the response and instead focuses on the presentation of the argument or statement. Often with tone-policing there's an assumption that because a statement or argument is communicated in an angry or mournful way, it can't be a rational response; those who've made the statements or arguments need to "calm down" to be capable of having a reasonable and productive conversation or debate. However, thinking consciously about communication, we must acknowledge that anger and grief are appropriate and rational responses to tragedy—and the death of a child is without a doubt a tragedy. Statements or arguments that come from places of anger and fury are valid, and can absolutely be rational.

If we want to have productive conversations about injustices when we disagree with each other about how to correct those injustices, here are a few things that can help:

1: Accept that you might have to wait and let a community mourn. This is the best choice for people who are unsure of their ability to communicate effectively with those who are moved by and are speaking from a place of anger. It's okay to be unsure of your ability to handle speaking and engaging with people who might lash out. That's a fair and valid concern for anyone, especially people with less experience in engaging with folks holding an oppositional viewpoint. Some people recognize that when tragedy strikes a community, the best response should be to wait and let that community react before trying to introduce productive solutions and responses.

2: Don't try to debate people. Rather, prioritize sharing opinions and learning from each other. Framing a conversation as adversarial and trying to convince someone of your viewpoint misses the opportunity to learn about how a real person is reacting to a tragedy in a place of mutual respect and good faith.

3: Create or at least support real opportunities for the affected community to speak their truth, share their feelings, and be recognized by people in power as valid and authentic. This could come in the form of vigils, protests, and the creation of content such as articles, videos, or art.

4: Be aware that people can disagree productively, respectfully, and positively. Be even more aware that disagreements don't mean one person/perspective or the other is more valid or correct. If someone pretends they have a monopoly on correctness they could miss real and constructive points by the people with whom they disagree.

*Continued on page [20](#)*

## Why Jalelin... Continued from page 19

Having conversations, learning from others, and engaging with people in efforts to find actionable responses to injustices and tragedies matters a lot, so ultimately it's necessary to engage with victims and work to make sure similar tragedies don't repeat. Part of that involves having bold, productive conversations with people who are mourning and people who are enraged. Jakelin's death is a tragedy that has caused unimaginable pain to her family and grave concern from and among the immigrant community nationwide. And it has prompted a range of conversations discussing accountability and justice. As new developments emerge, we have to ask ourselves what we want from this. It's easy to say we want justice in whatever way possible, but how is that achieved? Do we join calls for a formal and full investigation? Do we want to hold someone accountable? Are we calling our members of Congress and writing letters to the editor?

Another valuable question is: How we do actively improve the conversations we're having with people who disagree with us? How do we convince people who are unaware of the protections and rights immigrants, including undocumented ones, have according to [our constitution](#)? Of the importance of holding government agents maximally accountable? Arguments that appeal to our shared humanity and rely on the value of life would seem best.

Communicating effectively and persuasively is difficult but it can be done so long as we are conscious of how we communicate and we are willing to learn from the conversations we have with both those we agree with and those we disagree with. Let's learn together and move forward with justice and hope in mind whenever possible. \*

## Life & Death Continued from Page 17

regardless of the person's health. It seems insulting to give people fewer protections under the law just because they happen to be older.

**Mental capacity:** The US model statute can only be used by mentally competent persons. Some of the worst suffering, though, is experienced by people who are mentally deficient. The Netherlands has an ongoing case of a seventy-four-year-old woman who had signed an ambiguous advance directive before incurring serious dementia. She had no medical condition that would likely result in death, but doctors decided that her suffering was so great that her life should be ended. When she resisted, relatives were brought in to hold her down so that the lethal injection could be administered. Maybe that's legally right, but it seems unsettling.

**Bureaucracy:** While a fair amount of opposition to assisted suicide comes from a religious perspective, some of it comes from fellow humanists. Prominent UK humanist Brendan O'Neill argues that the bureaucratic red tape involved in some legislative regimes promotes needless suffering in and of itself. For example, the US model statutes are exceedingly detailed, with waiting periods and multiple layers of protection to assure that the patient genuinely desires this result. If the time ever comes when I seek aid, I will absolutely hate all that. The process itself might finish me off.

By contrast, the Netherlands seems to be moving toward few rules or protections at all. There are reports this month of a case there involving a doctor who unquestionably violated the rules but who did so "in good faith," according to a regional review board. A prosecutor is pressing the case forward, not to put the doctor in jail, but to establish a legal precedent for future situations. "Good faith" seems awfully nebulous when someone—perhaps a person who is merely temporarily depressed—has his or her life is on the line. A National Institutes of Health study that analyzed Dutch assisted suicide in the 2012-2016 period found thirty-three cases where the rules on the books were not followed.

**Money:** Having people live too long can be a real pain in the pocketbook for family members, medical bureaucracies, and health insurance companies. Once you *can* move yourself out of the way, the argument might go, then why *shouldn't* you? People who are already struggling in a fragile emotional condition could be especially susceptible to subtle or unsubtle nudging toward death. California passed a law this autumn that may be problematic.

## Cross Continued from page 14

20

particularly as war memorials. In fact, the framers never did.

As pointed out by Dr. Kurt Piehler, a historian from Florida State University and an expert on the history of war memorials, this country has no tradition of using crosses to honor its war dead. Of the thousands of war memorials scattered across the nation, few utilize crosses and even fewer can be described as a freestanding cross like Bladensburg's. "The use of the Cross in war memorials . . . has never been generally accepted," he writes in an expert opinion for the court in the Bladensburg case.

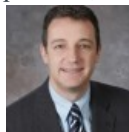
There's a good reason for excluding the Christian cross from public war memorials, Piehler explains: "The absence of Crosses on war memorials mirrors the sensitivity displayed by the American military respecting religious pluralism and diversity."

In other words, many fallen soldiers are not Christians, so no government memorial should use a Christian symbol as a means of honoring war dead.

The Christian cross, after all, is the preeminent symbol of Christianity, both to Christians and non-Christians alike. As Piehler points out, "Some non-Christians even view the Cross as hostile to their belief." Thus, the cross simply can't be used as a universal symbol for war dead. Indeed, even many Christians would object to such a practice.

One interesting tidbit from Piehler's report (which can be read in its entirety [here](#)) is that many Protestants did not consider the cross to be a legitimate symbol of Christianity until the late nineteenth century. Protestants apparently often interpreted the cross as a symbol of Roman Catholicism, and thus avoided use of it themselves. As one who has explored many old New England graveyards, I can appreciate that this information explains why colonial-era headstones almost never display a cross. Catholics were a rarity in colonial New England ("as rare as a comet or earthquake," John Adams once gladly remarked), and therefore so were crosses.

Whether the Supreme Court uses the traditional Lemon Test or a more historical approach, a forty-foot Christian cross on public property should have little chance of surviving a constitutional challenge. Under *Lemon*, it obviously advances Christianity, and historically it reflects no valid tradition. For the sake of Jefferson's wall of separation, we hope the Supreme Court agrees. \*



David Niose (@ahadave) is author of *Fighting Back the Right: Reclaiming America from the Attack on Reason* and legal director of the American Humanist Association.

Previously, it had been a felony to advise or encourage another person to commit suicide. It still is, but there is now an exception for the kind of assisted suicide sanctioned by California's "End of Life Option" law. You're now free to pester and wheedle grandma all you want, to get your inheritance more quickly. So is the hospital staff—you know, those folks who make big bonuses if they meet budget goals established by the insurance companies. There are already documented cases of insurance companies pushing doctors toward recommending assisted suicide rather than more expensive courses of treatment.

I can picture myself possibly wanting assisted suicide someday, or being willing to assist in the suicide of another. But I cannot picture myself ever encouraging anyone else to make that choice—if anything, I would push anyone who wanted to confide in me to be extremely certain before taking the irrevocable step. I have serious misgivings about that new California law. Life-or-death issues are terribly complicated, and we're far from being in a good place. But we must get over our discomfort, and in the case of religion a total ban, regarding end-of-life decisions. \*