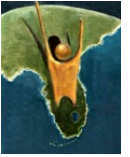




**The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason**



# Freethought News

Vol. 6 No. 11, November, 2017 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

## Puerto Rico is our Future

News reports tell of the devastation left by a direct hit from Category 4 Hurricane Maria. Puerto Ricans already coping with damage from Hurricane Irma, which grazed the island just days before, were slammed with an even stronger storm on September 20, bringing more than a foot of rain and maximum sustained winds of at least 140 miles per hour. There is still no electricity—and likely won't be for weeks or months—in this U.S. territory of 3.4 million people, many of whom also lack running water. Phone and internet service is likewise gone. Nearly all of Puerto Rico's greenery has been blown away, including trees and food crops. A major dam is leaking and threatening to give way, endangering the lives of tens of thousands. This is a huge unfolding

(Continued on page 17)

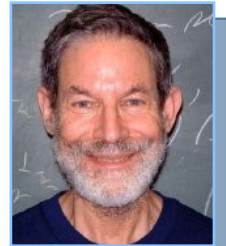
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## Dr. Herb Silverman visits Tampa

And you're invited. **Tampa Humanists** will be hosting our distinguished guest at our regular 11 AM meeting **Nov. 18th** at the North Tampa Public Library at 8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604

[Map](#)



### He will Also be speaking to the UU

**Humanists** in the Octagon of the Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater at 12:30 of the following day, **the 19th** at 2470 Nursery Rd, Clearwater, FL 33764.

A mathematician, he will speak of his experience's as a gubernatorial candidate that lead to his founding of the Secular Alliance. Despite his singular accomplishments he speaks with exceptional style and candor. You'll want to be at either venue, or her him speak on the Atheist Forum at 7 PM.

## Freethought Radio on the air.

Atheists of Florida produces the *Atheist Forum*, every **Sunday, from 7 to 8 pm**. The broadcast is available on WTAN-1340 and on the internet at [TanTalk1340.com](http://TanTalk1340.com). Listeners can call **727-441-3000**, where four lines await your call-in questions and comments. Catch live streaming on smart phones using the "TuneIn" application. If you missed the show, catch it later at our [Talk.AOF.NGO](http://Talk.AOF.NGO) archive.

Coming for **Darwin Day**, next February 3rd:

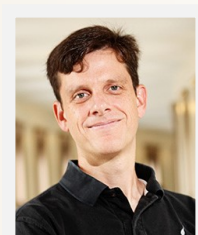
## The Evolution of Human Happiness



With **Dr. Phil Zuckerman**



**Jennifer Hancock**



**Dr. Ryan Cragun**

These three fine authors have each contributed to the cause of humanity, each building unique bridges to improve the human condition as we enlarge individual human potential to meet the responsibilities we all have to ensure our common success, beginning with survival. Tickets will go on sale soon.

### 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 website at:

[www.tampabaycor.net](http://www.tampabaycor.net)

See the full roster of the Leadership board on Page 15.

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

# The Humanist Society of the Suncoast News

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

**Dunedin Public Library** 223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin, FL

Volume 30 No. 11 November, 2017

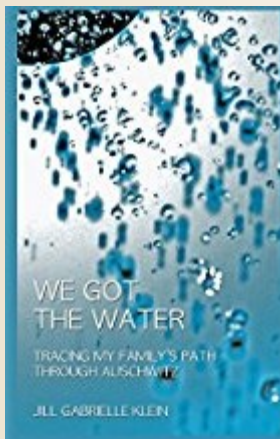
## My Year in Hell

A Remembrance of Evils Past and survival in the midst of humanity's greatest betrayal.

With *Gene 'Gabi' Klein*

*We Got the Water* is the story of the Klein family: Herman and Bertha, and their three children, Lilly, Oli and sixteen-year-old Gabi. In the spring and summer of 1944, along with more than 400,000 other Hungarian Jews, they were forced from their homes, rounded up, and sent to Auschwitz. The Kleins were aboard one of the very first trains of this mass deportation. Author Jill Gabrielle Klein follows her father, his sisters and their mother through Auschwitz and into slave labor camps in Poland and Germany providing a narrative—both harrowing and inspirational—of resilience in the face of terror.

One fact that raises the level of this talk is the inexorable disappearance of living Holocaust survivors, whose first-person accounts illuminate this dark period and inscribe it in our collective memory.



*Celebrating*  
**30 Years**  
of  
**Humanism**  
In west central Florida

A Q&A will follow a book signing. Arrangements will be made for book purchases for those who wish to obtain one. Cash only, however.

In this time when powerful anti-humanist forces are once again arising in Europe and America, it becomes ever more important to stir the embers of memory. The fate of civilization, and even human survival may depend on it.

You could not spend a more meaningful hour.



**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 to get the most benefit to the greatest number of people. Thanks to **Glenn Paul**, chair & Jordan Williams. Ed Note: Glenn needs assistance. See Page 17 also. **We need volunteers!** Write to [jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

### Be with us at

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

**Saturday, Nov. 4  
at 2:00 PM**

Many of us go to dinner afterwards at: [Los Amigos](#) restaurant not far from the Library.

**Join or renew**  
*Humanist Society of the Suncoast*

### Annual Dues

- \_E-mail news -Free
- \_Regular -\$25
- \_Reg. Couple -\$30.
- \_Supporter -\$35/40 (With pin above)
- \_Life -\$200.
- \_Life Couple -\$250.
- \_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 tax deductible (501c3) check made out to:

**"Marios Psomas"**

Memo line: "Humanist Society Dues"

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

\* = optional



### Wedding, Child naming, Memorial?

Florida has a large number of celebrants who are specially trained to solemnize the important life transitions in the Humanist way. <http://thehumanistsociety.org/celebrants/map/#FL>





*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 on Sunday, November 19th at 5 O'clock for exotic cuisine from the orient and good company too, at:

## Thai Bay & Sushi Restaurant

1300 E Bay Dr, Largo, FL 33771

Phone: (727) 584-5522

For map <https://www.zomato.com/tampa-bay/thai-bay-largo/menu>

Kindly RSVP to: (727) 581-2146

Great Conversation and good food, reasonably priced.

## Laugh Lines CYNIC'S DICTIONARY 3 11-17

**SMILE:** To expose a portion of one's skeleton as a gesture of goodwill toward a fellow human.

**TESTICLE:** A humorous question on an exam.

**TRAILER PARKS:** Latter-day gypsy camps scattered throughout the vast American hinterland; humble places of abode where hope dies young and tornadoes gravitate like flies to roadkill.

**UNWED MOTHER:** One who helps perpetuate the genes of an unwed father, without the latter's talent for becoming invisible at will.

**VOTING:** The right of our citizens to do as they please behind a curtain, as long as they do it alone.

**WHITE SUPREMACISTS:** The most convincing argument against the theory of white racial superiority.

**WILLY-NILLY:** Impotent.

**X-RAY:** A diagnostic tool used to detect existing cancerous growths and create new ones for future examinations to reveal.

**Y-CHROMOSOME:** A line of genes designed for men only; the cause of virility, war, baldness, hockey, sex crimes, clever inventions and a disinclination to ask for directions when lost.

**ZOO:** A pleasant and instructive wildlife park, lately denounced for depriving animals of their right to starve or be eaten alive in their natural habitats. JP

## 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  
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~\*~\*~\*~\*~

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://SecularTherapyOrg.com)

[Cognitive Neurosciences Inc.](http://CognitiveNeurosciencesInc.com)

### Or call:

Lynda Gurvitz,  
 (727) 725-8820

Patricia Walters,  
 (813) 452-6547



## Tampa Humanist Association

Meets every third Saturday at, 11:00 AM

### North Tampa Public Library

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

November 18th, 11 AM

Leaders: **Lucas Hopegood & Jim Peterson**

Member, TBCoR,  
Hum Society, & AHA  
affiliate.

Coming this month: Professor Herb Silverman, of UC. He will talk about his new books, and lead a discussion on dealing with the new social and political realities of our country. See column on the right.

We will resume regular meetings November 18th with our special guest, Herb Silverman. Bring your friends. You'll love him!

As Humanists it is our task to discover the secret world above & 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, & the one we are inventing.

Each month a new investigation thoughtfully & critically dissects a new intersection of mind & 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.

As Isaac Asimov, former AHA president, is quoted as saying, "Since you can't take it with you, send it on ahead." Humanism is as much in need of good followership as it is of effective leadership. Now is the time to do your part in either category. We can help.

JP

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



From an Anonymous reader:

I wish that the human race were beyond tribalism, especially if it's connected to the "God" thing. I'm a devout realist, hence a devout atheist.

Nonetheless I have a son and three grandchildren in Israel. On a flight returning from a European vacation he met an Israeli woman. She became my daughter-in-law.

The do-Godders in Israel have too loud a voice for my comfort, but it's a secular democracy in most respects.

But I wish it were more like Switzerland or Uruguay.

Mahatma Gandhi:

*"The best way to find yourself  
is to lose yourself in the service of others."*



## AN ATHEIST STRANGER IN A STRANGE RELIGIOUS LAND



*Selected Writings from the Bible Belt*

**HERB SILVERMAN**

From Orthodox Jewish child in postwar America to mild-mannered mathematician in academia to legendary atheist activist in the heart of today's Republican South, Herb Silverman has always been outside the mainstream of American culture, politics, and religion. From this unique vantage point, he writes about the most pressing issues of our day, including those related to war, peace, patriotism, race, gender, and church-state separation. In this entertaining and thought-provoking volume, he curates some of his best written work. Silverman may see himself as an atheist stranger in a strange religious land, but thanks in part to his work as activist and author, atheists as a whole are no longer strangers in this increasingly irreligious land. Herb's book can be ordered from Amazon for \$10.95, or purchased from your local book monger.

### A Humanist Quote

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

Roy T. Bennett

Resilience...

## Your Money or your Morals: Capitalism and Fossil Fuel Divestment

By Joel Millward-Hopkins

The fossil fuel divestment campaign has become one of the most [rapidly growing](#) divestment movements in history and has unified an impressive diversity of supporters—from liberal [Californian universities](#) to the [Rockefeller's](#) family trust. But the contradictions between divestment and the logic of [neoliberalism](#) are enduring, and arguments between campaigners and their opponents are typically framed by questions relating to efficiency, feasibility, and the ethics of using fossil fuels.

Such questions are [certainly important](#) to ask, but we should also look beyond them, because by doing so we can uncover the deeper ethical contradictions inherent to capitalism which shed important light on strategies for change.

Economists and philosophers have long disputed whether capitalism's theoretical potential to harness human self-interest for the greater good of society is a [virtue or a vice](#). Many argue that capitalism doesn't just harness a *natural* human inclination towards self-interest, but rather [systematically cultivates](#) it. Others point to the vast increases in material wealth experienced around the world over the past centuries as all the proof we need of [capitalism's superiority](#); in this view, debates about the morality of self-interest as the driving force of change become irrelevant.

But two particular arguments against divestment demonstrate that capitalism not only cultivates negative moral values, but actively suffocates positive ones as well.

The first argument claims that divestment is hypocritical while we continue to depend on fossil fuels for our [day-to-day activities](#). In short, we are urged not to abandon the companies we rely on.

This argument is easily refuted. It is effectively a preference to act [consistently unethically rather than inconsistently ethically](#); a difficult position to defend in any context. It also fails to recognise the significant differences that exist between the agency of consumers and investors. Is a smoking addict who is determined to quit obliged to invest their pension in Phillip Morris? Of course not—they are only obliged to pay for their cigarettes. In the same way, our only obligation to fossil fuel companies is that we pay for the fuel we consume.

As consumers, our [actions are constrained](#) by factors

such as current energy and transport infrastructures, and pressures to conform to environmentally-destructive social norms. But as investors—of personal savings or [institutional money](#)—our agency, the choices available to us, and, therefore, our moral responsibility, are radically different.

Moreover, the choice of where [capital is invested in the present](#) strongly influences our future capacity for low-carbon living. But by arguing that investments should be guided only by our current, highly-constrained consumption patterns—rather than by moral values that relate to the future well-being of humans and the world around us—opponents of divestment are effectively advocating a position that would lead to a perpetual suffocation of those values.

Even more revealing is the fact that those who oppose divestment on the grounds of hypocrisy would make no such



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

accusation were it to be motivated by economic self-interest. Imagine a university that holds shares in ExxonMobil and is also connected to a fossil-fuel dependent national electricity grid (as many are). If the university's investment manager noticed that returns on the Exxon shares are falling, it's inconceivable that they would hold onto them—in the face of more lucrative share options—just in case the decision appeared to contradict the university's electricity supply. Rather, they would simply reinvest in better-performing companies, as they are paid to do.

Hence, divestment is considered perfectly legitimate if it is made for reasons related to profit but not to morals. According to the logic of opposition to divestment, the profit-motive is permitted to do things that moral imperatives are not. Not only is profit-seeking rewarded, but morally-motivated actions are ridiculed and opposed.

A second revealing argument against divestment is that it leaves more opportunities for less [scrupulous investors](#) because those with more of an environmental conscience abandon the marketplace. A more effective approach, according to the critics, is for activists to become ethical shareholders by using their investments to pressure fossil fuel companies to become [part of the solution](#) to climate change.

The typical response of pro-divestment campaigners to this argument is that the kind of [shareholder activism](#) it recommends isn't ...

**Continued on page 18**





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

## Blasphemy and Other “Hate Speech”

By Ronald A. Lindsay

You have International Blasphemy Rights Day (IBRD) on your calendar, right? It's only a couple of days from now—September 30—in case for some bizarre reason you forgot.

The Center for Inquiry, a nonprofit organization of which I was formerly the president, launched IBRD in 2009 in part to draw attention to the fact that criticism of religious beliefs is prohibited through legal sanctions or social pressure in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, although there is now a formal campaign to end blasphemy laws, and this campaign has met with some success in Western countries—Denmark abolished its centuries-old blasphemy law in June—many countries, especially those with majority Muslim populations, still retain laws that impose harsh penalties for blasphemy. Pakistan, to cite just one such country, continues to have a number of blasphemy cases each year, often targeting religious minorities and sometimes resulting in death sentences.

Even when blasphemy laws are not enforced by the state, the underlying mentality that supports such laws often results in social pressure to ...

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2gek8Ri>

## Dear Christian Conservative - An Open Letter from an Ex-evangelical

by [kimberly stover](#)

Dear Christian conservative,

I do not know how to co-exist with you anymore and that breaks my heart. It's all I've ever really wanted, an authentic relationship that thrives with love, grace, laughter, and compassion. Instead the divide has deepened and the separation has grown. I wish I could change things as there has always been an instinct that knows that division is not the way. Unity is the way, however, there is no room at your table ...

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2xw62dn>

### List of Fake News Websites

These sites intentionally publish [hoaxes](#) and [disinformation](#) for purposes other than [news satire](#).

Some of these sites use [homograph spoofing attacks](#), [typosquatting](#) and other deceptive strategies similar to those used in [phishing](#) attacks to resemble genuine news outlets.

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>



## CFI's all new “Point of Inquiry” Podcast

*The flagship podcast of the Center for Inquiry is beginning a brand new chapter!*

### Lee Billings on the Search for Life in a Silent Universe

September 27, 2017, Host: Paul Fidalgo

It's a big cosmos out there. It wasn't too long ago that we couldn't be sure that any planets existed anywhere outside of our own solar system. But in just the past handful of years, we've learned that planets orbiting stars are the rule, not the exception ...

You can subscribe to [Point of Inquiry](#) in your podcast app of choice, and if you're already a subscriber, well, *don't go anywhere!*



# 15 Years

## How the brain's predictions shape religion

By Connor Wood

Have you ever had a spiritual experience? I have. One day in high school, I left campus for lunch with friends to the nearby town square. It was an autumn day, one of those perfectly blue, cloudless September afternoons when trees are rich with yellows and reds. I lay down on the grass and put on headphones. As I looked up at the azure sky, a single brilliant yellow maple leaf descended in spirals toward me, just as the chorus of the song I was listening to reached a crescendo. What happened next is hard to describe. It was as if my consciousness caught on electric fire, burst out of my skull, and spiraled upward to meet the leaf. It was like dizziness or a head rush, if dizziness also implied a sense of cosmically extreme – even maximized – joy, or profound effervescence that included the whole scope of my life and the universe itself. Words can't remotely do it any justice. And after about five seconds, it was over.

What was that experience? Where did it come from? How are people supposed to interpret or understand experiences like it? Plenty of scholars have tackled these questions from both religious and secular perspectives, from Catholic mystics like **Teresa of Avila** to agnostic psychologists like **William James** to nonbelievers like the journalist **Barbara Ehrenreich**. But a recent paper by a pair of neuroscientists, Michiel van Elk and André Aleman, offers a novel perspective: religious experiences of all kinds – mystical, ritualized, and even straightforwardly doctrinal – can be understood better if we use the framework of *predictive processing*.

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2yfX0GB>

## Support CFI Tampa Bay. Join Us Now!

Center for Inquiry is a 501(c)3 Educational Non-Profit. Memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law.

When you join us or make a [donation](#), you become a part of a worldwide movement of humanists, skeptics, atheists, and freethinkers, all working together to give voice to our values. Thank you!

For more information about CFI Tampa Bay, contact branch coordinator Rick O'Keefe at [tampa@centerforinquiry.net](mailto:tampa@centerforinquiry.net). To learn about making a special donation, talk with Martina Fern, V.P. for Philanthropy, [mfern@centerforinquiry.net](mailto:mfern@centerforinquiry.net) (716) 636-4869 ext. 426, (800) 818-7071 ext. 426

## You can Become a Certified Secular Celebrant

The Center for Inquiry has created a Secular Celebrant Program to **train and certify** secular celebrants to perform weddings, memorials, and other "milestones of life" ceremonies.

### How to Get *Certified* as a CFI Secular Celebrant and Be Listed in the CFI Celebrant Directory

**Details:** <http://bit.ly/2cGksq7>

Requirements:

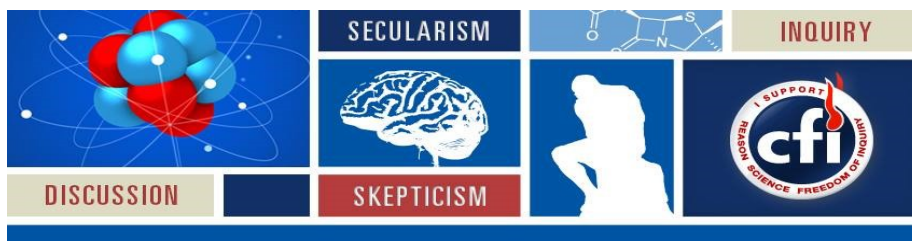
- 1) Be a CFI Member ([Planet level or above](#)).
- 2) Attend a CFI Secular Celebrant training.
- 3) Present a letter of recommendation from local CFI director or branch leader. If there is no local branch, two letters of recommendation are required: one from a previous employer and one from another person who is not a relative.
- 4) Submit an essay describing your worldview.
- 5) Be interviewed in person or by phone by the Co-Directors of the CFI Secular Celebrant Program (currently, Reba Boyd Wooden and Jim Underdown).
- 6) Approval of a CFI executive.
- 7) Pay an initial and yearly fee of \$49.

Our Secular Humanist belief is the third largest belief system in the United States, coming after Roman Catholics, all Baptists, then us. Paul Kurtz

If you won't participate,  
why expect others to do the work?

Click below

**JOIN NOW**



## Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science



Support science & reason; become a member today! *Membership starts at only \$25/year.*

Click the Flame to learn more.



BE ONE OF US



### University of South Florida Humanities Institute



For engaging speakers & socials,  
check the calendar at

<http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities>

Select lectures are available on YouTube.

*Can one truly claim to be educated without a broad knowledge of the Humanities? No!*



Beyond atheism.  
Beyond agnosticism.  
**Secular Humanism**

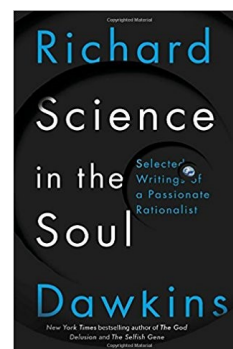


### "Science and the Public" Master of Education program

In partnership with the Graduate School of Education at the [State University of New York at Buffalo](#), CFI offers an *accredited Master of Education* program in Science and the Public, available *entirely online*.

Aimed at students preparing for careers in research, science education, public policy, science journalism, or further study in sociology, history and philosophy of science, science communication, education, or public administration, the program explores the methods and outlook of science as they intersect with public culture, scientific literacy, and public policy.

The Science and the Public Ed.M. graduate program at the State University of New York at Buffalo is now accepting applications. For information on how to apply, please visit the [Graduate School of Education website](#).



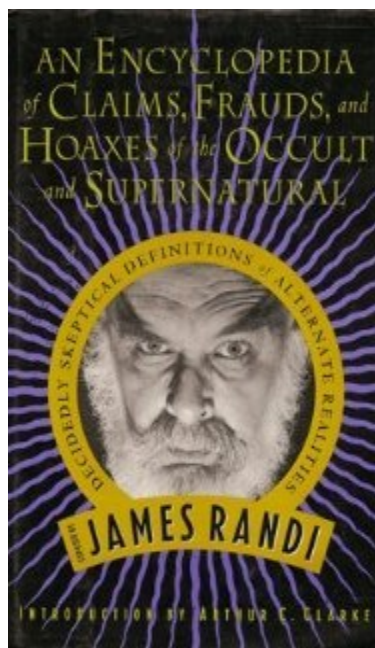
Legendary biologist Richard Dawkins mounts a timely and passionate defense of science and clear thinking with this career-spanning NEW collection of essays, including twenty pieces published in the United States for the first time.

CFI's local [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.





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!](#)



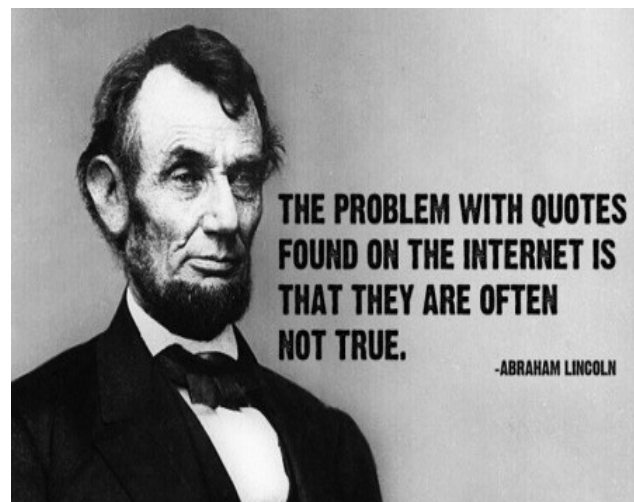
## An Encyclopedia of Claims, Frauds, and Hoaxes of the Occult and Supernatural by

James "The Amazing" Randi and Arthur C. Clarke.

"Six hundred and sixty-six entries, along with hundreds of illustrations, on such topics as the Abominable Snowman, astrologer Jeane Dixon, and the monster of Loch Ness expose the cranks, charlatans, and myths of past and present. "

You need this free book-on-the-web, if you are a skeptic. <http://bit.ly/2y9V1pH>

If you prefer your books in-hand, here is a real book for you: <http://amzn.to/2ygJeFe>



## A SKEPTICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM RESOURCE

### The Baloney Detection Kit Sandwich (Infographic)

For a class project, a pair of 11th grade physics students created the infographic shown below, inspired by Michael Shermer's [Baloney Detection Kit](#): a 16-page booklet designed to hone your critical thinking skills. It includes suggestions on what questions to ask, what traps to avoid, specific examples of how the scientific method is used to test pseudoscience and paranormal claims, and a how-to guide for developing a class in critical thinking.

Go here to see the infographic: <http://bit.ly/2yg1Y65>

## Lexicon of Unnaturalistic Alternatives

A [Book Review](#) by [Gary Posner, M.D.](#) in [Skeptical Briefs](#)

[Dictionary of Metaphysical Healthcare](#) by Jack Raso, M.S., R.D.

Everything you could ever want to know about alternative healthcare can be found in this one handy little book. Well, not exactly. But, after all, this is a *dictionary*, not an encyclopedia.

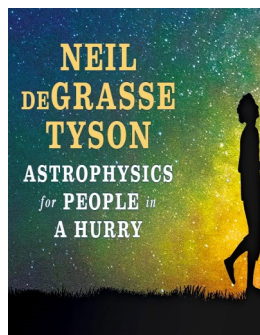
The (free on [www.Quackwatch.org](http://www.Quackwatch.org)) *Dictionary of Metaphysical Healthcare*, by Jack Raso, a registered dietitian with a master's degree in health sciences, contains entries for more alternative/paranormal health "remedies" than you can shake a stick at, although the author has inadvertently omitted "stick-shaking" from his listings. Reading the definitions of the myriad included entries, I would think that "stick shaking" would be at least as effective as most, and probably more effective than many.

Seven years in the making, this dictionary contains more than one thousand straightforward, non-judgmental definitions of therapies dubbed to be "closer to vaudeville than to science" in a previous review by Marvin J. Schissel, D.D.S.

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

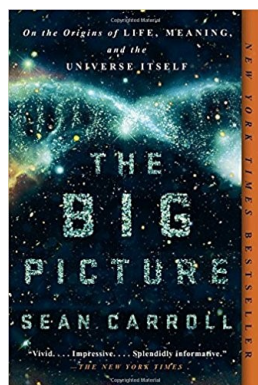
## Recommended Reading

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

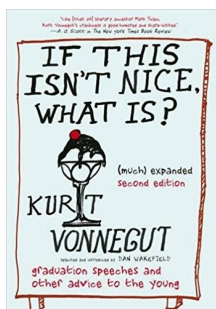


Tyson goes for succinctness and clarity--plus the wit we already know he has down--in his explanations of the nature of space and time, and how we fit within the universe. The book seeks to give those interested in the science of black holes, quantum mechanics, and the search for life outside of Earth an understanding of the topics that goes a little beyond a bunch of buzzwords, and an ability to talk and listen to others talk about them intelligently.

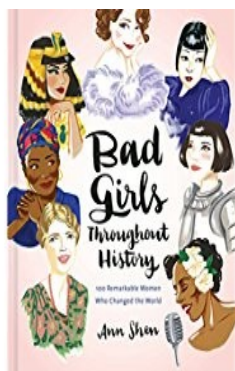
Sean Carroll is emerging as one of the greatest humanist thinkers of his generation as he brings his extraordinary intellect to bear not only on Higgs bosons and extra dimensions but now also on our deepest personal questions: Where are we? Who are we? Are our emotions, our beliefs, and our hopes and dreams ultimately meaningless out there in the void? Do human purpose and meaning fit into a scientific worldview?



*If This Isn't Nice, What Is?* includes eleven speeches and four pieces of journalism on related themes. Six of the fifteen are new to the second edition—on topics as wide-ranging as why it is that Kurt Vonnegut's dog loves people more than Kurt Vonnegut does, and what it feels like to be the most censored writer in America—and much, much more.



Aphra Behn, first female professional writer. Sojourner Truth, activist and abolitionist. Ada Lovelace, first computer programmer. Marie Curie, first woman to win the Nobel Prize. Joan Jett, godmother of punk. The 100 revolutionary women highlighted in this gorgeously illustrated book were bad in the best sense of the word: they challenged the status quo and changed the rules for all who followed. From pirates to artists, warriors, daredevils, scientists, activists, and spies, the accomplishments of these incredible women vary as much as the eras and places in which they effected change.



**Evolve Fish is a good source for freethought goodies:** Pins, jewelry, posters, buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, etc.

<http://evolvefish.com/> To access more Freethought history & perspectives, you may wish to check out Frank Prahl's Freethought Library. Contact [fprahl@verizon.net](mailto:fprahl@verizon.net)

## The Matt Cooper

### Humanist Lending Library

Humanist Society members (only) can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to Marios Psomas at: [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](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                                   | 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. <b>The God Delusion</b>                           | <b>Richard Dawkins</b>                                       |
| 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. <b>Plan B</b>                                     | <b>Lester Brown</b>  |
| 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. <b>A brief History of Time</b>                    | <b>Stephen Hawking</b>                                       |
| 25. Breaking the Spell                                | Daniel Dennett   |
| 26. <b>The Philosophy of Humanism</b>                 | <b>Corliss Lamont</b>  |
| 27. The Quotable Atheist                              | Jack Huberman  |
| 28. 50 Reasons People Believe In G.G. Harrison        | 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 | Editors of Free Inquiry                                      |
| 33. Imagine There's no Heaven                         | David Friedman   |
| 34. Hidden Order                                      | Malcom Gladwell  |
| 35. What the Dog Saw                                  | Ori, Rom Brafman   |
| 36. Sway  | Steven Pinker  |
| 37. The Better Angels of our Nature                   | Christopher Hitchens   |
| 38. Letter to a Young Contrarian                      | Thomas Friedman  |
| 39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded                            | William Poundstone   |
| 40. Gaming the Vote                                   | Alexa KcKearing  |
| 41. Subversion Fable                                  | David Stamos   |
| 43. Evolution and the Big Question                    | David Stamos   |
| 44. <b>Why People Believe Weird Things</b>            | <b>Michael Shermer</b>                                       |
| 45. The World is Curved                               | David Snick  |
| 46. The Snow Ball                                     | Warren Buffett   |
| 47. <b>The Moral Landscape</b>                        | <b>Sam Harris</b>  |
| 48. <b>How We Believe</b>                             | <b>Michael Shermer</b>                                       |
| 49. Full House  | Steven Jay Gould   |
| 50. The Origins of Political Order                    | Francis Fukuyama   |
| 51. <b>Asimov's Guide to the Bible</b>                | <b>Isaac Asimov</b>  |
| 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. What Happened in Ohio?                            | Fitakis, Rosenfeld & Wasserman                               |
| 61. Autobiography of Mark Twain                       | Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith                                     |
| 62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible                      | Various  |
| 63. <b>12 Vol Complete Works</b>                      | <b>Robert Ingersoll</b><br><b>(A gift of, Joe Reinhardt)</b> |
| 64. On Religious Liberty                              | Roger Williams & Davis                                       |
| 65. The God Makers                                    | Baker & Hunt   |
| 66. Inevitable Illusions                              | M. Piattelli-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 Eagers  |
| 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                                   | Stenesh  |
| 79. <b>Thoughts of a Freethinker</b>                  | <b>New Kaye</b>  |

\*  
Essential  
works



# THE PRO-TRUTH PLEDGE

Do you think members of your group are concerned with the rising tide of **fake news and alternative facts in our public discourse**? If you're interested, I'd be happy to arrange for a **presentation on this topic for your group about a science-based project to address this problem**, the [Pro-Truth Pledge](#) (PTP), designed to roll back the tide of lies in our public discourse through combining behavioral science with crowdsourcing. If a presentation will not work for you, I hope you can at least share with your members about this initiative so that they know about it and consider joining by forwarding them this email.

I think they will be interested because so many skeptic, secular, and humanist individuals are highly concerned with fake news and alternative facts, which go against the essence of truth, science, reason, and evidence for which they stand. Signers of the PTP include prominent public figures in the skeptic and secular movement, like **Peter Singer, Steven Pinker, Dan Barker, August Brunsman, Greg Epstein, Aron Ra, Noah Lugeons, Herb Silverman, Thomas Smith, Chris Shelton, CW Brown, Ed Brayton**, and many others. There are also national organizations such as the **United Coalition of Reason, Atheist Alliance of America, and Philosophical Atheism** that have joined this project. You can see a complete list of public figures and organizations who took the pledge at [this link](#), which includes both people in the movement, and plenty of those outside the movement as well. Altogether over 20 organizations, 50 politicians, and 170 public figures have taken the pledge, and many hundreds of private citizens, including members of secular, humanist, and skeptic groups across the country.

Let me share more about this initiative. The pledge asks signees - which includes private citizens, public figures, and organizations - to **commit to 12 behaviors that research in behavioral science shows correlate with an orientation toward truthfulness**. These behaviors include clarifying one's opinions and the facts, citing one's sources, and celebrating people who update their beliefs toward the truth. Private citizens who sign the pledge get the benefit of contributing to a more truth-oriented society. Public figures and organizations get more substantive rewards for signing the pledge, in the form of positive media and public recognition; the ones who know about but do not sign the pledge correspondingly get less positive media and public recognition as truth-tellers. Taking the pledge is especially salient for candidates for office, as the ones who take it get a boost and the ones who do not get questioning about why they failed to take the pledge, as in [this letter to the editor](#) in a major regional newspaper.

The pledge **crowdsources the truth** by asking volunteers to evaluate the statements of public figures who sign the pledge, ensuring they stick to the truth, and asking them to clarify their statements if needed. You can read more

about how the rewards and evaluation process works in the FAQ section of the [PTP website](#). For a more thorough explanation of the mechanism of the PTP and a validation study, see [this draft](#) of an academic article, currently undergoing peer review. The PTP is part of the broader [Pro-Truth Movement](#), which has already had **positive mainstream media coverage**, on [TV](#), on [radio](#), and in prominent print venues such as [Scientific American](#), [The Humanist](#), and [Free Inquiry](#).

I hope that you yourself are interested in [taking the pledge](#) and would also be happy to arrange for a **presentation** by a speaker about the Pro-Truth Pledge for your group, if you think your members would be interested in this topic. We have a number of speakers available, and if you are interested, I can get in touch with them and make arrangements. I myself can be one option for a virtual presentation, and we have other speakers available for virtual presentations as well (see below for my bio if you're interested in me as a speaker). In some areas, we have in-person speakers, and if you're interested, I can see if one is available.

## Bio

Dr. Gleb Tsipursky is passionate about promoting truth-oriented behavior, rational thinking, and wise decision-making in public discourse. He researches these topics as a [professor](#) at Ohio State University, and serves as the President of [Intentional Insights](#), a nonprofit devoted to popularizing these topics. Its main current focus is the [Pro-Truth Pledge](#), a project that aims to reverse the tide of lies and promote truth in public discourse through combining behavioral science and crowd-sourcing. He authored a [number of books](#), most notably *The Truth Seeker's Handbook: A Science-Based Guide* and [Find Your Purpose Using Science](#), and has a new book forthcoming in 2018, *The Alternative to Alternative Facts: Fighting Post-Truth Politics with Behavioral Science*. Pieces by him regularly come out in prominent venues such as [Time](#), [Scientific American](#), [Psychology Today](#), [The Conversation](#), [Salon](#), [Truthout](#), [The Huffington Post](#) and reason-oriented venues such as [The Humanist](#), [Skeptical Inquirer](#), [Free Inquiry](#), [American Atheist Magazine](#), [Secular World](#), [The Human Prospect](#), and [Patheos](#). He has appeared as a guest on network TV, including affiliates of [Fox](#) and [ABC](#), and radio stations such as [NPR](#), [WBAI](#) (New York City), [KGO](#) (San Francisco), [700WLW](#) (Cincinnati), [KLRD](#) (Dallas), [AM980](#) (Canada), as well as reason-oriented podcasts, such as [Ra-Men Podcast](#), [The Scathing Atheist](#), [Serious Inquiries Only](#), [Sensibly Speaking](#), and [The Humanist Hour](#). He is available to speak to reason-oriented groups through the [American Humanist Association](#) and [Center For Inquiry Speakers' Bureau](#).



# Atheists of Florida, Inc.



Tracy Thomas, Chair - Al Hann, Pres, Judy Adkins, VP  
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. »

Atheists of Florida is pleased to announce the renewal of its live outreach talk program, the ***Atheist Forum***, every Sunday evening, **from 7 to 8 pm.**



The program is airing on TanTalk Radio. The broadcast is also available **on the internet at [TanTalk1340.com](http://TanTalk1340.com)**, live streaming on smart phones using the **"TuneIn" application**, 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.talk.aof.ngo](http://www.talk.aof.ngo).

Atheists of Florida is seeking guests for the *Forum* and will offer advertising on the program for other Freethought organizations to promote their special events or seek membership from listeners. Contact our production office at: [af@talk.aof.ngo](mailto:af@talk.aof.ngo).

The *Atheist Forum* continues an outreach tradition begun in 1993. It affords an opportunity for members of the freethought community, now quite numerous, to have an outlet to explain their position to a broader public, and recruit new organization members. A number of well-known guests will be interviewed and take questions on, important topics of the day and new explorations of hidden aspects of human nature and the natural world. There'll be a few chuckles along the way, and local news too. Tune in and participate; give us your ideas, opinions and arguments. Celebrate the forum's open ended possibilities for expanding our community. Now is the time to make a difference: **you** are that difference. Tune in!



## Ever wonder what Florida Freethought groups are doing?

Now you can easily know.

Atheists of Florida have a new freethought Calendar: <http://AtheistsOfFloridaInc.org/calendar/> Know what's going on around the state.



## Be a Celebrant!

Do you like to help people celebrate milestones in their life? Do you want to help someone when they lose a friend or family member?

Consider becoming a celebrant. An atheist celebrant.

### An Atheist Celebrant?

An Atheist celebrant officiates and assists with a secular or civil ceremony, such as a wedding, a service to welcome new family members, coming-of-age rituals, end of life services, etc. Celebrants work with people to create a secular experience intended to be uniquely personalized, deep and loving, based on the person's personal philosophy, and not the celebrant's. A celebrant may have suggestions on how to approach the occasion, and if appropriate, the venue and setting, music, and textual sharing's.

### Why do we have rituals?

According to [The Journal of Cultural Anthropology](#), "*Ritual is arguably a universal feature of human social existence: just as one cannot envision a society without language or exchange, one would be equally hard-pressed to imagine a society without ritual. And while the word "ritual" commonly brings to mind exoticized images of primitive others diligently engaged in mystical activities, one can find rituals, both sacred and secular, throughout "modern" society:....*"

According to the UNESCO webpage "[Social practices, rituals and festive events](#)" (<https://ich.unesco.org/en/social-practices-rituals-and-00055>):

Rituals "... are significant because they reaffirm the identity of those who practice them as a group or a society and, whether performed in public or private, are closely linked to important events...."

### Want to be an Atheist Celebrant?

If you are interested in becoming an AOF celebrant, see: [celebrants.aof.ngo](http://celebrants.aof.ngo) or contact us at 478-227-5263.

## 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"

## Tampa Bay Thinkers



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

**November 13th**

**Topic: Nationalism vs. Globalism**

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

## 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**

On the web at: [www.maaf.info](http://www.maaf.info)

## Humanist Families of Greater Tampa

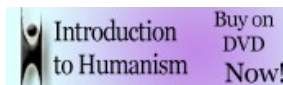
**Jennifer Hancock** started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year. There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in 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](https://www.facebook.com).

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.



## Tampa Bay Technology Center & Thinkers Salon



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

Lectures, discussions, & hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. **300 S Duncan Ave. Suite 275, Clearwater, FL 33755.** [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)



## Humanistic Judaism of Tampa Bay

Visit the [Meetup](#), or email [Jeff Lipkes](mailto:Jeff Lipkes)



The mission of the [Secular Coalition for Florida](http://instituteofscienceandhumanvalues.com/index.htm) 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!



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

As our government undergoes its quadrennial crises of morphology, 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.



## [ACLU of Greater Tampa Bay](#)

Every twenty years, a Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) is appointed to examine the Florida Constitution, hold public hearings, and recommend changes to the Florida Constitution that will appear on the ballot. That time is now. The 2017-2018 Florida Constitution Revision Commission has convened and we believe that over the next few weeks and months it will propose several ballot initiatives for the November 2018 ballot that will strip away our constitutional protections and put Florida into the civil liberties fight of its life.

We have a [list of resources you can use](#), including talking points and general information on our website. You can also [contact the individual commissioners at any time to express your concerns](#) through the CRC website.

Get the Bank of Wisdom—**FREE**.  
Contact [Marios Psomas](#), Librarian



**Norm R. Allen Jr.** is the editor of two ground-breaking books,

- AFRICAN-AMERICAN HUMANISM: AN ANTHOLOGY
- THE BLACK HUMANIST EXPERIENCE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO RELIGION.

He is currently writing a third book, SECULAR, SUCCESSFUL and BLACK: 25 PROFILES.

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 "the and/or strengthen 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.

For a sampling of Norm's many columns, see: [www.instituteofscienceandhumanvalues.com/FP/ishv-projects/reasonings.htm](http://www.instituteofscienceandhumanvalues.com/FP/ishv-projects/reasonings.htm)



## [UU Humanists of Clearwater](#)

Usually every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, after UU services. We are a group of Unitarian Universalists committed to a humanistic & non-theistic worldview. For more information, E-mail us [here](#).

UUC has a strong team of lay **Pastoral Care Associates** who offer confidential, emotional support and spiritual companionship to fellow church members. You can access pastoral care by contacting Rev. Patrice Curtis at [727-531-7704 ext 5](tel:727-531-7704) or [revpatrice@uuc.org](mailto:revpatrice@uuc.org).

Please note that emails sent to the front office are not confidential; emails to Rev. Patrice are.



## **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  
11400 Morris Bridge Rd. Tampa, FL 33637



# 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, **Jason Heap**.

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.net/>**  
**Or, <https://unitedcor.org/coalition-of-reason/tampa-bay/>**



## The Secular Academy

The Secular Academy has new online classes at [SecularActivism.Org](http://SecularActivism.Org)

Dr. Richard Carrier's one-month course on [Moral Reasoning from Theory to Practice](#) is offered during June – \$69.

Dr. Jon Mills' new one-month course on [Inventing God: The Psychology of Belief](#) is offered during June – \$69.

Classes at [SecularActivism.Org](http://SecularActivism.Org) are accessible online 24/7, so you can participate at any hour of the day when you have some time. There's nothing 'live' to be missed, and you aren't using video, just text-based forums. Instructors respond individually to all questions and love extended conversations.

-- The Secular Academy is a project of Partners for Secular Activism, a 501c3 nonprofit educational organization started in 2014 by John Shook, PhD. For several years Dr. Shook worked with the founder of secular humanism, Paul Kurtz, to develop online education for the growing secular community. Take a look at his new book on [science's epic victory over religious ignorance](#).

Know someone interested in earning a master's degree? The 'Science and the Public' program from the University at Buffalo, NY, is a part-time and completely online Masters of Education degree. This is America's only entirely online program for the secular promotion of science and science-based policy - [gse.buffalo.edu/online/science](http://gse.buffalo.edu/online/science)



October 20th of this year marked the beginning of the statewide Florida Humanist Conference in Orlando.

Your TB-CoR was an exhibitor there and saw a goodly contingent from our area.

The event featured an long list of outstanding and exciting speakers, and three (3) comedy acts!

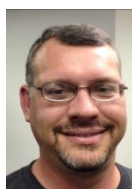
Stay tuned for



Bill Norsworthy,  
UUCH



Mark Brandt,  
UUCH



Chris Brown,  
MAF



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## TBCoR Leadership Team 2017

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## Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – November 2017 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. *Meeting planners need this information.*  
**Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://www.tampabaycor.org/>**



2nd Sunday, 2 PM	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Freethought Social	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to <b>RSVP:</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup">http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup</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/TampaBaySkeptics-Meetup">http://bit.ly/TampaBaySkeptics-Meetup</a>
1st 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>
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 <a href="#">Web site</a> 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/CFI-TB_Meetup">http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup</a>
3rd Saturday, 11 AM	NE TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & <b>RSVP:</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists">http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists</a>
4th Saturday, 10:30 AM;	NW HILLSBOROUGH– 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/CFI-TB_Meetup">http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup</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/CFI-TB_Meetup">http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup</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>



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Sign up now. <https://freethoughtcruise.wordpress.com/> Lvs. Port Canaveral March 3-7, 2018

### *Puerto Rico from page 1*

tragedy. But it's also an opportunity to learn lessons, and to rebuild very differently.

Climate change no doubt played a role in the disaster, as warmer water generally feeds stronger storms. This season has seen a greater number of powerful, land-falling storms than the past few years combined. Four were Category 4 or 5, and three of them made landfall in the U.S.—a unique event in modern records. Puerto Rico is also [vulnerable to rising seas](#): since 2010, average sea levels have [increased](#) at a rate of about 1 centimeter (0.4 inches) per year. And the process is accelerating, leading to erosion that's devastating coastal communities.

Even before the storms, Puerto Rico's economy was in a tailspin. It depends largely on manufacturing and the service industry, notably tourism, but the prospects for both are dismal. The island's population is shrinking as more and more people seek opportunities in the continental U.S.. Puerto Rico depends entirely on imported energy sources—including bunker oil for some of its electricity production, plus natural gas and coal. The Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) is a law unto itself, a monopoly that appears mismanaged (long close to bankruptcy), autocratic, and opaque. Over 80 percent of food is imported and the rate of car ownership is among the highest in the world (almost a car for each islander!).

To top it off, Puerto Rico is also in the throes of a debt crisis. The Commonwealth owes more than \$70 billion to creditors, with an additional \$50 billion in pension obligations. Puerto Rico's government has been forced to dramatically cut spending and increase taxes; yet, despite these drastic measures, the situation remains bleak. In June 2015, Governor Padilla announced the Commonwealth was in a “death spiral” and that “the debt is not payable.” On August 3 of the same year, Puerto Rico defaulted on a \$58 million bond payment. The Commonwealth filed for bankruptcy in May of this year after failing to raise money in capital markets.

A shrinking economy, a government unable to make debt payments, and a land vulnerable to rising seas and extreme weather: for those who are paying attention, this sounds like a premonition of global events in coming years. World debt levels have soared over the past decade as central banks have struggled to recover from the 2008 global financial crisis. Climate change is quickly moving from abstract scenarios to grim reality. World economic growth is slowing (economists obtusely call this “secular stagnation”), and is likely set to go into reverse as we [hit the limits to growth](#) that were first discussed almost a half-century ago. Could Puerto Rico's present presage our own future?

If so, then we should all care a great deal about how the United States responds to the crisis in Puerto Rico. This could be an opportunity to prepare for metaphoric (and occasionally real) storms bearing down on everyone.

It's relatively easy to give advice from the sidelines, but I do so having visited Puerto Rico in 2013, where I gave a

presentation in the Puerto Rican Senate at the invitation of the Center for Sustainable Development Studies of the Universidad Metropolitana. There I warned of the inevitable end of world economic growth and recommended that Puerto Rico pave the way in preparing for it. The advice I gave then seems even more relevant now:

- **Invest in resilience.** More shocks are on the way, so build redundancy in critical systems and promote pro-social behavior so that people's first reflex is to share and to help one another.
- **Promote local food.** Taking advantage of the island's climate, follow the Cuban model for incentivizing careers in farming and [increase domestic food production using permaculture methods](#).
- **Treat population decline as an opportunity.** Lots of people will no doubt leave Puerto Rico as a result of the storm. This represents a cultural and human loss, but it also opens the way to making the size of the population of the island more congruent with its carrying capacity in terms of land area and natural resources.
- **Rethink transportation.** The island's current highway-automobile dominance needs to give way to increased use of bicycles, and to the provision of streetcars and light rail. An interim program of ride- and car-sharing could help with the transition.
- **Repudiate debt.** Use aid money to build a sharing economy, not to pay off creditors. Take a page from the [European “degrowth” movement](#). An island currency and a Commonwealth bank could help stabilize the economy.
- **Build a different energy system.** Patching up the old PREPA electricity generating and distribution system would be a waste of money. That system is both corrupt and unsustainable. Instead, invest reconstruction funds in distributed local renewables and low-power infrastructure.

These recommendations met with a polite response in 2013, but there was little subsequent evidence of a dramatic change of direction. That's understandable: people tend to maintain their status quo as long as it's viable. However, when people are in dire straits, they're more likely to listen to unconventional advice. And when denial is no longer possible, they're more likely to face reality.

Obviously, the Puerto Rican people have immediate needs for food, water, fuel, and medical care. We mainland Americans should be doing all we can to make sure that help reaches those in the throes of crisis. But Puerto Ricans—all Americans, indeed all humans—should be thinking longer-term about what kind of society is sustainable and resilient in this time of increasing vulnerability to disasters of all kinds.

**Richard Heinberg, Fellow: Post Carbon Institute, Ca.**



**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 at left.



## Capitalism... Continued from page 5

... appropriate in this case. Fossil fuel companies aren't like those who produce clothes or food or electronics: the impacts of fossil fuels don't just arise from the ways in which the supply chain currently happens to operate; rather, they are inseparable from the products themselves.

Lobbying a company to improve wages and working conditions is one thing; lobbying them to stop selling their primary product is another. [Past experience](#) suggests that it is therefore [very unlikely](#) that shareholder engagement could be successful in the case of fossil fuels (although a more aggressive '[forceful stewardship](#)' approach might have greater chance of success).

Either way, when such debates become stalled on a choice between strategies it is easy to overlook the way in which moral values are suffocated. From the perspective of those who oppose divestment, market logic determines that it is better for investors to work within the norms of the system, even to achieve moral goals. One divestment skeptic puts it particularly bluntly, arguing that "[moral outrage is not as effective as capitalism](#)."

Are such arguments merely pragmatic—a call to take a rational, consequential moral stance rather than an emotional, categorical one?

In considering this question, it's worth recognising that this argument sounds uncomfortably like those made in the [early days of capitalism](#), when profits depended upon [slavery rather](#)

[than fossil fuels](#). Owning slaves was often justified via the argument that, if released, they could be in an [even worse situation](#), left at the mercy of the new exploitative industrialist class. Therefore, it was better to keep hold of slaves and treat them slightly better; a position which, at the time, may have been considered rational in moral terms by some. However, a transformation in values since the abolition of slavery has shown it to be indefensible.

Capitalism has always strongly resisted any challenge to the energy source that lies at the heart of its profits, whether that was from human-energy in the form of slaves or fossil fuel-energy today. While benign changes around the periphery of production are tolerated reluctantly, actions that threaten to achieve more fundamental changes are deemed to have dangerous, unintended consequences, or are dismissed as having no consequences at all. The divestment campaign highlights how the logic of capitalism achieves this goal, in part, by declaring moral inclinations to be obsolete whenever they threaten to be transformational. Those campaigning for divestment must therefore prepare to be ridiculed with accusations of [hypocrisy](#), [naivety](#) and a misguided sense of [moral superiority](#).

Such accusations are especially harsh given that most serious campaigners don't believe that divestment is an [effective tactic on its own](#). The general consensus is that it is [primarily a moral and political strategy](#), not an economic one. But it is also crucial to recognise that not all opponents of divestment are CEOs, industry lobbyists and Wall Street bankers who are set to profit directly from fossil fuel companies going forward. They may also include people who, if asked openly, wish for the same future as the average environmental campaigner, but have had their own moral inclinations suffocated by [capitalist realism](#) and the cynical view of human motivation that is the foundation of [neoliberal psychology](#).

The divestment movement highlights a set of challenges to the future of capitalism that extend far beyond its unsustainable environmental externalities. With considerable clarity, it shows the ways in which market logic not only cultivates action that is led by calculated self-interest, but also actively suffocates [intrinsic human drivers](#) towards questions of [fairness and equality](#).

Fortunately, these values have evolved over [tens of thousands of years](#) and, despite these latest attempts at suffocation, they will not die easily. The challenge—of particular importance for the divestment movement—is to move towards a society in which our morals are worth at least as much as our money, and ideally much, much more.

## 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: [spaceexaminer@gmail.com](mailto:spaceexaminer@gmail.com)

Meetings are normally held on the fourth Friday of each month (except November & December when it is on the third Friday) at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL, 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 7:00PM to 9:00PM. Meetings are free & open to the public.

**Details & RSVP:**

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

