

# Freethought News

Vol. 6 No. 10, October, 2017 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

## Return of the Know Nothings?

All reasonable Americans agree that we need a rational, equitable, and enforceable immigration system. But in 1965 we replaced an explicitly racist law with one that mindlessly imposed a 20,000 person immigration limit on countries big and small, near and far. (The limit on Western

Hemisphere countries didn't take effect until 1976.) There is no better reminder that equality does not always... ( see Page 17)

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\* TB-CoR member

## Freethought Radio on the air.

Atheists of Florida produces the *Atheist Forum*, every Sunday, from 7 to 8 pm. The broadcast is available on the internet at [TanTalk1340.com](http://TanTalk1340.com), live streaming on the Atheists of Florida Facebook page, 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 questions and comments. For more information and archive access, go to: [www.talk.aof.ngo](http://www.talk.aof.ngo).

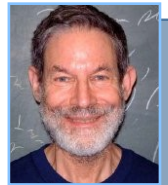


October 20 – 22, 2017  
Orlando, FL



October 20th to the 22nd in Orlando will feature amazing speakers, activities, and banquets. *It's time to feel good again!* Register at: <http://www.freeflo.org/register>

Hear **Herb Silverman**, founder of the Secular Coalition will speak at the Tampa Humanist meeting on Saturday November 18th. See page 4



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

## The Evolution of Human Happiness



With **Dr. Phil Zuckerman**

**Phil Zuckerman** is a professor of sociology and secular studies at Pitzer College in Claremont, California. He is also a regular affiliated professor at Claremont Graduate University, and he has been a guest professor for two years at the University of Aarhus, Denmark. He is also a Fellow of the Secular Global Institute. Phil is the author of several books, including *Living the Secular Life* (Penguin, 2014), *Faith No More* (Oxford, 2011), and *Society Without God* (NYU, 2008). He has also edited several volumes, including *Atheism and Secularity* (Praeger, 2010), *Sex and Religion* (Wadsworth, 2005), and *The Social Theory of W.E.B. Du Bois* (Pine Forge, 2004). See page 7.

### 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.evolvetampa.com](http://www.evolvetampa.com)

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

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. 10    October, 2017

## The Women of Freethought

Over the course of many centuries from prehistory to the present, courageous and intelligent women have played an enormous but unrecognized role among those who dared to question and confront the religious status quo in our culture and civil law; a law which demanded women's silence, subjection, servitude and obedience.



Until about 150 years ago, biblical subjection was the operative norm in western culture. Women not only were denied the

vote, they couldn't speak in public, make contracts, sue or be sued, sit on juries, attend colleges or universities, enter most trades or professions and had no control of their own property or earnings as wives. Women were not even the legal guardians of their own children, but were legally classed with children and idiots." The legal phrase for it is "civil death," but its origins were always strictly religious.

Explore the history and meaning of the roots of equality in today's world.

Celebrating

# 30 Years of Humanism

In west central Florida



Leading this discussion will be **Ms. Tracy Thomas**, chairperson of Atheists of Florida. She has had a very diverse career, graduating from Notre Dame with a degree in electrical engineering, then working with concerns dealing with explosives to banking.



## 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 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, Oct. 7 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, September 17th 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) <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 2 10-17

LOTTERY: A tax on people who are bad at math.

LYMPH: To walk with a lisp.

MARTIAL ARTS: A family of Asiatic self-defense disciplines consisting largely of sweeping ornamental gestures of the arms and legs; amusing to look at but disappointingly ineffective when one's opponent is armed with a semi-automatic.

MOSQUITO: An insect that makes you like flies better.

MYTH: A female moth.

NEIGHBORS: The strangers who live next door.

ORGASM: The punchline some women just don't get, generally because their mates have a tendency to rush through the joke.

OYSTER: A person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms.

POKEMON: Rastafarian proctologist.

PURITANISM: The haunting fear that someone, somewhere may be happy.

QUAGMIRE: Any situation more easily entered into than exited from; e.g., a guerrilla war, a bad marriage or a conversation with an insurance salesman.

REDNECK: Popular term for a rustic male, but rarely employed when addressing one in person.

REDUNDANCY: Criminal Lawyer 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,*  
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*Dave Kovar,*  
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*Jim Peterson,* President  
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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.](#)

[Cognitive Neurosciences Inc.](#)

### 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](#)

October 21st, 11 AM

Leader: *Lucas Hopegood*

For this meeting, we recommend that you consider coming to the Freeflo Conference being held in Orlando. It is an excellent opportunity for all of us to get connected with the various people involved throughout the state.

We will resume regular meetings in November starting on the 18th with our special guest, Herb Silverman. 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 Issac Asimov, our former 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/>



Coming in November: 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.



September 30 marks **International Blasphemy Rights Day (IBRD)**, which the Center for Inquiry has observed since its beginning. IBRD celebrates the right of authors, artists, and dissidents to treat religious matters as they see fit, even to the point of offending believers.



Member, TBCoR,  
Hum Society, & AHA  
affiliate.

## 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*

"There is some kind of a sweet innocence in being human- in not having to be just happy or just sad- in the nature of being able to be both broken and whole, at the same time." [C. JoyBell C.](#)



# A New Normal...

Back-to-back hurricane catastrophes have plunged the United States into a state of national crisis. We've already seen one worst-case scenario in Texas: For the moment, Hurricane Harvey stands as the most costly natural disaster in U.S. history. And now there's Irma, which has wreaked havoc across the entirety of Florida, America's most vulnerable state. In just two weeks, the U.S. could rack up hundreds of billions of dollars in losses.

Make no mistake: These storms weren't natural. A warmer, more violent atmosphere — heated up by our collective desire to ignore the fact that we live on a planet where such devastation is possible — juiced Harvey and Irma's destruction.

Houston and South Florida have long been considered two of our most vulnerable regions, carved out of swamps in some of the most storm-prone parts of the Earth. Now they lay, at least partially, in ruins.

Lurking behind the horrific scenes of water rising above rooftops along swollen Texas bayous and palm trees snapping in front of battered beachfront condos is this stark reality: Climate change doesn't "cause" disasters like this, but it most certainly is making them worse.

It's scary to watch this play out in real time. People's lives and our landscapes are being altered. This is not a "new normal." There is no more normal. The effects of this new phase in our new climate reality reach far beyond the southeastern United States. Devastating floods across India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sierra Leone, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria in recent weeks collectively killed hundreds more than Harvey has and Irma likely will, combined.

A massive complex of wildfires is burning millions of acres across the North American West, with a smoke plume stretching coast-to-coast. On September 1, the day a petrochemical plant outside Houston exploded amid Harvey's floodwaters, San Francisco recorded its warmest day in history — a blistering 106-degrees Fahrenheit — hotter than oft-scorching Tucson, Arizona.

Each of these events, individually, have a connection to the warming atmosphere. Collectively, they're a klaxon siren that something is very, very wrong.

Of course, bad luck also played a role in the last two weeks. It's hard to separate the two. Harvey, a Category 4 hurricane at landfall, oriented itself perfectly as it developed to maximize the rainmaking power of an overheated Gulf of Mexico.

Irma, one of the strongest hurricanes ever recorded on Earth, hopscotched through the Caribbean, making landfall on half a dozen islands at peak strength. And a third storm, Jose, also reached Category 4 strength, prompting a complete evacuation of the tiny Caribbean island of Barbuda — just four days after it was almost completely destroyed by Irma.

So yeah, bad luck. But this is also the first time in history that the Atlantic has seen back-to-back-to-back hurricanes of Category 4 or higher. At one point on Friday, Irma and Jose both had estimated winds of 150 mph — strong enough to pulverize even well-built houses. Never before have two hurricanes of that strength existed simultaneously, much less assaulted the same piece of land.

We knew a time like this was coming. In the U.S. government's recent Climate Science Special Report —

painstakingly assembled by 13 federal agencies from the work of thousands of scientists around the world and then leaked to the New York Times for fear of censorship by the Trump Administration — the authors were clear: Hurricanes, especially the strongest ones, are going to get worse in the future.

Both physics and numerical modeling simulations indicate an increase in tropical cyclone intensity in a warmer world, and the models generally show an increase in the number of very intense tropical cyclones. For Atlantic and eastern North Pacific hurricanes and western North Pacific typhoons, increases are projected in precipitation rates and intensity. The frequency of the most intense of these storms is projected to increase in the Atlantic and western North Pacific and in the eastern North Pacific.

With each year that passes, we're locking in an extension of this horrific, tragic moment in human history — a time period between when the effects of climate change become blindingly obvious and when we actually do something meaningful about it. Scientists have warned us for decades about worsening weather. But many of our



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

leaders fail to act.

In his 2009 memoir, climate scientist James Hansen warned of the "storms of my grandchildren." Turns out, he was still alive to see them. Climate writer Alex Steffen calls this new era, which feels outside the realm of normal existence, a "xenotopia," or strange world.

Every day, British naturalist writer Robert MacFarlane uses his Twitter account to define a new word that relates to our new reality. (Friday's was "caochan" — "a stream so slender or overgrown it can scarcely be seen.") Today we are already mourning a destruction that has yet to happen — a phenomenon the Australian environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht calls "solastalgia."

There's evidence that extreme weather, no matter the magnitude, won't change our politics anytime soon. Predictably and understandably, Texans and Floridians are already focused on rebuilding. But missing from the conversation right now is a frank discussion about the near future.

Destructive storms like Harvey and Irma will only become more common. Accepting that fact — and talking about the radical change necessary to reverse this trend — is the most important thing we can do right now.

Those conversations could alter the way we build our cities, so we put fewer people in harm's way. They could begin to force our government to rethink its habit of subsidizing the corporations and industries that got us into this mess.

We're not talking about far-flung creatures and concepts like polar bears and melting ice caps anymore. We're talking about the destruction of lives and places where many of us live or have visited.

At times like these, politicians like to talk about the American ability to come back stronger than ever. What if, this time, we considered planning ahead so we don't need to come back at all?

**Eric Holthaus** Is a meteorologist and contributor to PCI.



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

## What Does Secular Humanism Have to Say about the Hate in Charlottesville?

We believe this is a good time to explore what secular humanism, the philosophy that drives the work of the Center for Inquiry, has to say about this recent surge in white supremacist public activity.

Read it all here: <http://bit.ly/2w5kUXd>

(Ed. Note The following article illustrates the various strains of thought that permeate internal discussions within the humanist and atheist communities. In this case, the author takes a decided position in proposing that “New Atheism” is deficient in not embracing the “social justice” enthusiasms of some newer schools of thought. Read carefully: see if you agree.) JP

## From the Enlightenment to the Dark Ages: How “new atheism” slid into the alt-right

By [PHIL TORRES](#)

*A movement supposedly committed to science and reason has decayed into racism, misogyny and intolerance. I'm done.*

The “new atheist” movement emerged shortly after the 9/11 attacks with a best-selling book by Sam Harris called “[The End of Faith](#).” This was followed by engaging tomes authored by Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett and the late Christopher Hitchens, among others. Avowing to champion the values of science and reason, the movement offered a growing number of unbelievers — tired of faith-based foolishness mucking up society for the rest of us — some hope for the future. For many years I was among the new atheism movement’s greatest allies.

<http://bit.ly/2umLt4A>



CFI’s all new “Point of Inquiry” Podcast  
*The flagship podcast of the Center for Inquiry is beginning a brand new chapter!*

## Hope and Hubris in Space Exploration

Loren Grush, space reporter for *The Verge*, and previously of *Popular Science*, discusses space policy in the Trump era.

## Christians are more than twice as likely to blame a person’s poverty on lack of effort

Which is generally more often to blame if a person is poor: lack of effort on their own part, or difficult circumstances beyond their control?

The Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation [asked 1,686 American adults to answer that question](#) — and found that religion is a significant predictor of how Americans perceive poverty.

Christians are much more likely than non-Christians to view poverty as the result of individual failings, especially white evangelical Christians.

Read the rest here: <http://wapo.st/2uoQoC8>

## List of Fake News Websites

This is a list of [fake news sites](#). 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>

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

## Support CFI–Tampa Bay. Donate Now!

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

When you 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, please contact branch coordinator Rick O’Keefe at [tampa@centerforinquiry.net](mailto:tampa@centerforinquiry.net).

## Two Secular Mental Health Resources

CFI's official secular mental health affiliate is the [Institute for Rational Living](#). Mindfulness Rational Therapy (MRT) is an umbrella term that uses two of the most effective and powerful treatment approaches available today -- Mindfulness and REBT/CBT. It is the best from East and West. The roots of Mindfulness are over 2,500 years old and can be traced back to India, China, and Japan. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) are supported by over 40 years of rigorous research.

**Vincent Parr, Ph.D., Director**  
[Institute for Rational Living](#)  
 2502 N Rocky Point Dr, Suite 1010  
 Tampa, FL 33607-1406  
 1-727-278-8446 Fax: 1-727-391-8459  
 mail: [vparr@ishv.net](mailto:vparr@ishv.net)

**ABF Behavioral Health** -- Active-brain-oriented counseling/therapy center. There's nothing mystical about healing yourself through your mind-body connection. William A. Lambos, Ph.D. is the Chief Cognitive Neuroscientist & Director of Clinical Assessment ( <http://www.cns-wellness.com/> )  
**William A. Lambos, Ph.D.**  
 10840 Sheldon Road Suite B  
 Tampa FL 33626  
 Toll Free: 877.332.4698 11131 Winthrop Market St.  
 Phone : 813.235.4270 Riverview FL 33578  
 Fax : 888.451.8670 Toll Free: 877.332.4698  
 Phone : 813.235.4270  
 Fax : 888.451.8670

## 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. 1. Be a CFI Member ([Planet level or above](#)).
2. 2. Attend a CFI Secular Celebrant training.
3. 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. 4. Submit an essay describing your worldview.
5. 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. 6. Approval of a CFI executive.
7. 7. Pay an initial and yearly fee of \$49.

## Can reason make room for religion in public life? By Ruth Jackson & Hanna Weibye

Contemporary Western liberals often assume that theological and political worldviews are competing discourses. Religion, when it enters the political arena, is cast as just another ideology vying for power. But treating the theological and the political as warring forces stops us from looking at the more surprising ways that they interact and inform each other.

Read the rest here: <http://bit.ly/2vMcZt3>

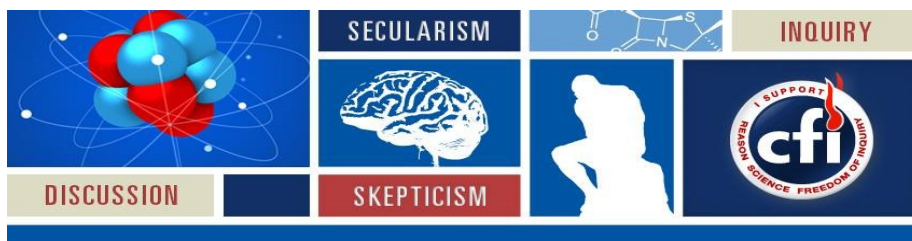
The rich will strive to establish their dominion and enslave the rest. They always did. They always will... They will have the same effect here as elsewhere, if we do not, by (the power of government), keep them in their proper spheres. ~ Thomas Jefferson Letter from Governor Morris to James Madison (1787)

**We made it easier! Please Support CFI Tampa Bay**

New program: For CFI Tampa Bay to receive any money, members must select “donate” and *dedicate the donation to us specifically.*

Click below

**JOIN NOW**



## Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science



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

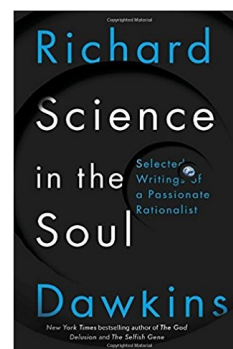
Click the Flame to learn more.



### Remembering (and Forgetting) Dead Infants in Late-Roman and Early Medieval Britain with Distinguished Scholar-In-Residence: Robin Fleming

Tuesday, October 17th, in CWY 206, 6:00 pm - Reception to follow

This Fall the Humanities Institute is happy to welcome Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence, Robin Fleming. Fleming is a professor of history at Boston College, where she teaches courses on late Roman and early medieval history, the Vikings, ancient and medieval historical writing, and material culture. She has written books on the people of Roman Britain and Anglo-Saxon England, using both written records and archaeological evidence to write historically rich stories about medieval life. Her public talk, "Remembering (and forgetting) Dead Infants in Late-Roman and Early Medieval Britain: will be based on her current research projects: attempting to determine how Roman ways of life, identity, burial, and status marking changed once the Roman economy collapsed and connections to the wider Roman world began to unravel.



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.

University of South Florida  
**Humanities Institute**



For engaging speakers & socials,  
check the calendar next Fall:  
<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!*





# YOUR BEST LETTERS

## Improve shelter organization

My wife and I volunteered at a hurricane shelter in Hillsborough County starting the evening of Friday, Sept. 8, and into the late morning of Saturday, when the shelter reached capacity. Our zone had not been evacuated and we were in a position to help, so we did what we could. I can only inadequately express how impressed I was with the people there to help. The principal and her staff did all they could to convert their school into a makeshift home for 500 or so people. Volunteers gave their time, energy, love and caring to help people find some security. And to the Tampa Police Department who eventually showed up, took charge and brought order to the shelter, you have my eternal gratitude.

From a more critical lens, we were disappointed. My wife was emailed late Friday and asked to volunteer due to her connection to USF. When she arrived, the night before the shelter was supposed to open, it was chaotic. People were waiting to get in and some had already been let in 12 hours before the shelter officially opened. Some had special needs and had to be redirected to another shelter. Others had come with nothing and found that the shelter had very little to offer other than a roof, walls and food for a few days. No cots. No blankets. No snacks. And most importantly, no clear order.

The principal and her staff did what they could, but the volunteers were put in charge of registering people who showed up. They had virtually no training but were suddenly told they were responsible for an entire shelter. After my wife described the situation, I showed up the next morning hoping to help. I saw firsthand the lack of organization. There were five or six volunteers along with the school staff. We were told to register people as they arrived. We had them fill out two forms, neither of which we had read before we started handing them out.

As I helped, I learned. I asked questions. I was told — and I don't know how true this is — that the Red Cross was going to send at least one person to staff each shelter, someone with training and experience. Those trained Red Cross employees never showed. Why? I don't know.

I was also told the shelter was not the responsibility of the Red Cross but of Hillsborough County. Again, I believe that is true, but I don't know. If it is, I am wondering why the county didn't have trained volunteers in place.

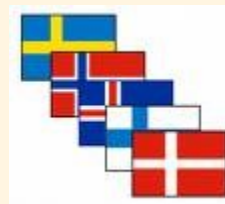
I understand that hurricanes are chaotic. I don't mean to take anything away from the efforts of all those who helped. I write this because I was surprised at the lack of organization. If the Red Cross isn't in a position to help, government officials should be. Without straying too deeply into politics, I think the government has to take responsibility for emergency preparedness and not rely on a charitable organization that may or may not show up.

We're all still reeling from Irma, and we were spared what could have been a much worse storm. But this is also the time to reflect on what went right and what went wrong. Having shelters was right. Not having trained people to staff the shelters was wrong.

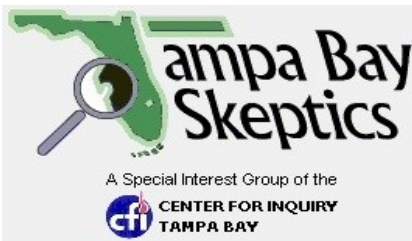
**Ryan Cragun, Tampa**

From the Tampa Bay Times 9-16-17

## Just a little more on Phil Zuckerman...



**Phil Zuckerman's** extensive sociological analysis of the Nordic countries picks up on Scandinavian attitudes toward death, and a strong sense in which the finality of death means that we should seek pleasures and progress in, and for, this world—very much akin to what we find in Ingersoll's saying "the time to be happy is now." These countries score at the very top of the "happiness index" and enjoy healthy societies, which boast some of the lowest rates of violent crime in the world (along with some of the lowest levels of corruption), excellent educational systems, strong economies, well-supported arts, free health care, egalitarian social policies, outstanding bike paths, and great beer. How did this come to be? **Join us February 3rd to learn more.**



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!](#)



## Sarsaparilla for Syphilis?

I recently acquired an old sarsaparilla bottle, its label stating that it was intended for medical treatment of such diseases as “chronic rheumatism,” “obstinate cutaneous eruptions,” and “syphilitic conditions.” It was to be used orally,



Yes, this is the same sarsaparilla long used as an herbal tea and tonic that evolved into a health drink before finally becoming a soda pop similar to root beer (Nickell 2011).

The bottle shown (see photograph) held Fluid Extract Sarsaparilla, containing 40% alcohol, and was sold by the William S. Merrell Company of Cincinnati, founded in 1828. (It is a machine-made but cork-stoppered bottle of amber glass, measuring about 4¾ inches tall by about 2 inches diameter. I would estimate it to date from about the 1920s, but I have not yet found this particular bottle reliably dated.)

As this century-old bottle suggests, sarsaparilla (a name for varieties of the herb *smilax*) has a history of being used for treatment of venereal diseases. According to Herbalpedia, when a syphilis epidemic swept Europe in 1494, sarsaparilla became a popular treatment. In the United States, it appeared—in an 1835 Shaker religious society herb catalog—for treating, among many other diseases, “secondary syphilis.” And during the wild-west era, cowboys were said to drink sarsaparilla after visiting a bordello (“Sarsaparilla” 2011; Nickell 2011).

Of the countless brands and types of sarsaparilla, some claimed to cure the following: “Venereal Disease” (Dewitts S., registered 1891), “Syphilas [sic]” (Gooch’s Extract of S., adv. 1879), and “Syphilitic Taints and Sores” (Dalton S., incorporated 1892); there were no doubt many others (Fike 2006, 214–221).

As early as 1800, many physicians were denouncing sarsaparilla as having no effect against syphilis, yet it continued to be sold and used for that purpose. Today’s herbalists may still tout it for treating venereal diseases from gonorrhea and syphilis to herpes, with Herbalpedia citing otherwise unidentified “Chinese tests” that “reportedly” showed sarsaparilla, combined with five additional herbs, cleared “90% of the acute cases” of syphilis (“Sarsaparilla” 2011). Believe it or not. Medical authorities today appear to give it little notice, since better science offers better treatments—antibiotics for syphilis and gonorrhea, for example.

Follow Joe Nickell, CFI Investigative Briefs, here: <http://bit.ly/2cqy7vj>

## Advocatus Diaboli with Tom Flynn



Tom Flynn is the Center for Inquiry’s vice president for media and director of Inquiry Media Productions. He is also executive director of the Council for Secular Humanism and editor of its flagship magazine, *Free Inquiry*. He designed and directs the Council’s museum at the Dresden, N.Y., birthplace of 19th century agnostic orator Robert Green Ingersoll. He has written or edited eight books, including *The New Encyclopedia of Unbelief* (Prometheus, 2007).

### What Secular Humanism Means to Me

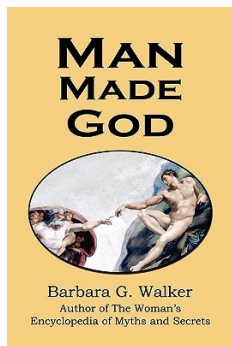
It’s been a while since I blogged here! Herewith, an oldie-but-goodie from the October/November 2010 issue of FREE INQUIRY. At the time I was kicking off an event inviting readers to describe secular humanism is one word. I picked the word “emancipatory.” Subject only to a 1000-word limit, here’s what I wrote. <http://bit.ly/2fjQciA>



It’s time once again for the forces of reason and science to come together; time for critical thinkers to connect, learn from one another, and sharpen their skills; time for the leading lights of skepticism to share their wisdom and rally the troops. It’s time for CSICON 2017, back in Las Vegas, October 26–29. Join luminaries such as James Randi, Richard Dawkins, Eugenie Scott, Richard Wiseman, Lawrence Krauss, and master of ceremonies George Hrab for the biggest skeptics’ event of the year, returning to the Excalibur Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. CSICON 2017 will be packed with fascinating talks and presentations, dazzling entertainment, and fun social events with fellow skeptics.

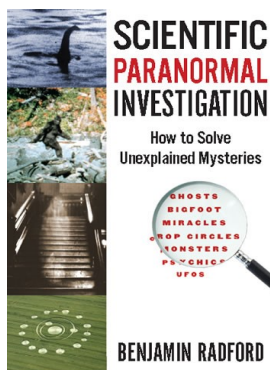
## Recommended Reading

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



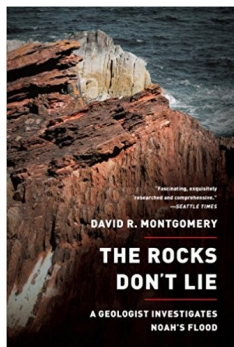
In this remarkable collection, Walker turns a critical eye towards: -Religion as big business -Religion's effects on children -The Bible as a "moral guide" and "history" - Biblical infallibility -The doctrine of "original sin" -The biblical attitude towards sexuality -God as "Father" -Church doctrine regarding women -Church history vis-a-vis the Dark Ages, Inquisition, and book- and witch-burning -Christian afterlife traditions - Traditional Christian origins -And much more...

CFI's Ben Radford's book *Scientific Paranormal Investigation* is being used as a classroom text again this year by several college and university professors to teach students critical thinking and principles of investigative skepticism. Also, Ben's book *Tracking the Chupacabra* (the topic of two *Skeptical Inquirer* articles) was used as a classroom text at Los Angeles Mission College in a course on Mexican American Folklore in the Chicano/Chicana Studies program.

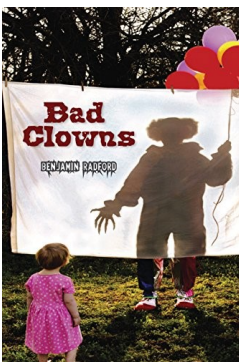


How the mystery of the Bible's greatest story shaped geology: a MacArthur Fellow presents a surprising perspective on Noah's Flood.

Montgomery takes readers on a journey across landscapes and cultures. In the process we discover the illusive nature of truth, whether viewed through the lens of science or religion, and how it changed through history and continues changing, even today.



Bad clowns—those malicious misfits of the midway who terrorize, haunt, & threaten us—have long been a cultural icon. Read the history of bad clowns, why clowns go bad, & why many people fear them. Going beyond familiar clowns such as the Joker, Krusty, John Wayne Gacy, & Stephen King's Pennywise, it also features bizarre, lesser-known stories of weird clown antics including Bozo obscenity, Ronald McDonald haters, killer clowns, phantom-clown abductors, evil-clown panics, sex clowns, carnival clowns, troll clowns, & much more.



**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 [fpahl@verizon.net](mailto:fpahl@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   |
| 29. Mathematics and Politics                    | Alan Taylor  |
| 30. Stealing Elections                          | John Fund  |
| 31. The God Virus                               | Darrel Ray   |
| 32. What Every American Should Know About World | Rossi  |
| 33. Imagine There's no Heaven                   | Editors of Free Inquiry                                      |
| 34. Hidden Order                                | David Friedman   |
| 35. What the Dog Saw                            | Malcom Gladwell  |
| 36. Sway  | Ori, Rom Brafman   |
| 37. The Better Angels of our Nature             | Steven Pinker  |
| 38. Letter to a Young Contrarian                | Christopher Hitchens   |
| 39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded                      | Thomas Friedman  |
| 40. Gaming the Vote                             | William Poundstone   |
| 41. Subversion Fable                            | Alexa KcKearing  |
| 43. Evolution and the Big Question              | David Stamos   |
| 44. <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?                      | Fitrakis, 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. 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 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

# 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 the **Atheists of Florida Facebook page**, 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](https://culanth.org/curated_collections/4-ritual) ([https://culanth.org/curated\\_collections/4-ritual](https://culanth.org/curated_collections/4-ritual))

*"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)" (<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.

**October 9th**

**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

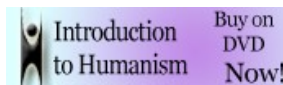
**Jennifer Hancock** started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year. There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in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



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!



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.



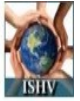
## [ACLU of Greater Tampa Bay](#)

In the wake of the 2016 outbreak of toxic algae in the St. Lucie River and Estuary and along Florida's Treasure Coast, the ACLU of Florida was asked by members in the region and several environmental organizations to investigate the state's record of transparency with regard to the dissemination of information about the potential grave danger to the public health posed by the algae flow. Specific concern was expressed about the state's performance in delivering needed information evenly to all citizens in affected areas, and whether the state understates scientific evidence of dangers to public health.

The following report was researched with the help of local residents, scientists, media sources, and those state employees who cooperated with an ACLU of Florida investigator.

[DOWNLOAD REPORT](#)

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



Genuine human progress consists largely in undoing the damage done to the world by inhumane biblical ideas and actions. Some of this progress is, ironically, initiated by progressive religionists. A very best example of this is the eradication of chattel slavery. The Bible condones life-long slavery for the captives of the Hebrew people.

In Luke 12:47-48, Ephesians, chapter 6 and numerous other passages, slavery is condoned. Abolitionists "corrected the Bible" and managed to kick slavery to the curb with human thought and human action. Yet, the Bible still condones slavery. As Twain pointed out, "The slavery text remained; the practice changed, that was all...." Christianity's main slogan could be "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em, lead 'em, and hog the glory." Indeed, this had been the case with the persecution of alleged witches. The Bible had taught that believers should not suffer a witch to live. However, rational and empathetic human beings finally discovered that persecuting and killing alleged witches is downright inhumane. However, as Twain noted again, "The witch text remains; only the practice has changed." Sadly, the text and the practice remain in some parts of the world. In nations such as Malawi, Ghana, Nigeria and other African nations, alleged witches are still being persecuted and killed in the name of God. As long as the text and the practice continue to influence the thoughts and actions of highly irrational and superstitious believers, the problem will persist.

*Norm Allen Jr.*



## [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



## 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)

## 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/>**



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

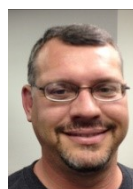
Your TB-CoR will be an exhibitor there and we expect to see a goodly contingent from our area. The event features an long list of outstanding and exciting speakers, and three (3) comedy acts! For more information and to register for the conference, go to: [www.freeflo.org/](http://www.freeflo.org/)



Bill Norsworthy,  
UUCH



Mark Brandt,  
UUCH



Chris Brown,  
MAF



Jenn Hancock,  
GTBHF



Rick O'Keefe,  
CFI, TBS



Jim Peterson,  
HSS, TBPC  
Facilitator



Al Hann  
AoF

### TBCoR Leadership Team 2017

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

## Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason – October 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 <i>10 paid-up CFI members.</i> <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>	

### 2018 Freethought Cruise With Annie Laurie Gaylor & Dan Barker

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





**“Know nothings” from page 1....**

amount to equity than the fact that Monaco (pop. 39,000 and Mexico (pop. 128 million) each have the same quota. That didn't bother the many US industries that depend on cheap immigrant labor, because hiring immigrants without documents worked nicely for them. But a system that fosters a shadow economy with an extralegal workforce makes for terrible, corrosive policy. Still, whatever the defects of our immigration laws and enforcement system, it makes no moral or political sense to punish children who had no choice about where they grew up and have no homeland to return to. The president's claim that DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) led to gang violence in places like Los Angeles gets it exactly wrong: gang violence in Central America prompted kids to flee to the border. They were, by any reasonable definition, refugees, but we repelled them. If any got through and joined gangs, they would receive no protection from DACA.



A DACA Immigration Day event in 2012 at the McGeorge School of Law ([source](#))

The idea that young immigrants are displacing Americans from jobs also makes no sense: during the period the president refers to the economy was swiftly recovering and in the closing days of the Obama Administration we surpassed full employment, typically defined as 95 percent of the active workforce. (The remaining 5 percent gives the economy room for job-seekers to find openings and employers to find qualified applicants.)

There's nothing new in these ploys. Throughout American history, wealthy elites have played working class whites for suckers by pitting them against immigrants or freed blacks. In the mid-nineteenth century, [a secret society informally called the Know Nothings](#) rose on a groundswell of nativist hate. Led by a pugnacious, conspiracy-theory-spinning New Yorker (sound familiar?), the Know Nothings spewed hate for immigrants, hate for women's rights, and above all, hate for Catholics. Standing in



**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.

for today's Muslims, Catholics were branded “liars, villains, and cowardly cutthroats,” and, oh yes, they were accused of being rapists as well.

The Know Nothings' nativist rants proved convenient to an emerging class of “Robber Barons”—wealthy new elites who profited from industrialization and practiced “Social Darwinism” by recruiting wave after wave of immigrants, as well as former slaves from the South and then fomenting clashes with white workers.

While Trump plays to his base, the superrich are doing it again, planning big tax cuts for themselves while stripping protections, programs, and parks from ordinary Americans. Why struggling white people think that white nationalism now will benefit anyone except Trump and his rich cronies baffles me. Why any Republicans want their party to become the new Know Nothings mystifies me. Why anyone wants the United States of America to be known for deporting young people who've done nothing wrong sickens me.



**Clay Farris Naff** is an award-winning journalist and the *Humanist*'s science and religion correspondent. He has been a Tokyo correspondent for United Press Radio. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Free God Now*. He is an international freelance reporter for National Public



## USF PCGS FALL OPEN HOUSE

OCTOBER 13, 2017

Join us at the Patel College of Global Sustainability at the University of South Florida on **Friday, October 13, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm** for our Fall Open House.

At the event, you will have an opportunity to connect with our faculty, meet our dean, and learn more about our master's degree program, global internships, and job opportunities.

**Complimentary continental breakfast is provided!**

**Breakfast begins at 8:30 am**, so be sure to arrive early to grab a bite to eat and get settled.

**[RSVP Now!](#)**

## Puerto Rico in Extremis

**Richard Heinberg, fellow Post Carbon Institute**

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. This is a huge unfolding 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

### 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/>



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. 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. Climate change is quickly moving from abstract scenarios to grim reality. 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. A sustainable island requires:

- **Investing 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.

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.

NB. Edited for space