

HUMANISTS

Volume 14, Number 9

Happy



Humanist

of FORT WORTH

September, 2013

This newsletter is presented by the Humanists of Fort Worth (HoFW), Texas for its members.

The "Happy Humanist" symbol is presented by IHEU (International Humanist and Ethical Union).

IN THIS ISSUE

Page:

1. September meeting notice; HoFW meeting schedule and location; !Thanks!; Quotes;
2. **AFFIRMATIONS OF HUMANISM**;
3. Amsterdam Declaration;
4. Officers, Board Members, Membership Categories;
5. Presentation for Sept. meeting;
6. From the Chair;
- 7.& 8 Religious people and intelligence?;
- 9.&10 Welcoming UUs to Humanism;
11. Free Will: The never ending debacle;
12. Free Will Reference Reading; **Know Your Bible? 13**;
13. Minutes of August meeting;
14. Treasurer's Report;
15. **Church & STATE**; Book Nook;

Man is the measure of all things, of the reality of those which are, and of the unreality of those which are not.

Protagoras (481-411 BCE)

NEXT MEETING

September 11, 2013 7:00 PM

SPEAKER: Virginia Thornton

TOPIC: THE RELIGIOUS BASES OF WESTERN HUMAN RIGHTS

More on page 5.

The *Humanists of Fort Worth* (HoFW) meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Westside Unitarian Universalist Building, 901 Page Ave.

! Thanks !

Many 'thank-yous' to the members and friends who are assisting with the cleanup and rearrangement duties after our meetings. It is much appreciated.

If you are interested in lending a hand please see one of the Board Members.

! Thanks !



THE AFFIRMATIONS OF HUMANISM: A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES



WE ARE COMMITTED to the application of reason and science to the understanding of the universe and to the solving of human problems.

WE DEPLORE efforts to denigrate human intelligence, to seek to explain the world in supernatural terms, and to look outside nature for salvation.

WE BELIEVE that scientific discovery and technology can contribute to the betterment of life.

WE BELIEVE in an open and pluralistic society and that democracy is the best guarantee of protecting human rights from authoritarian elites and repressive majorities.

WE ARE COMMITTED to the principle of separation of church and state.

WE CULTIVATE the arts of negotiation and compromise as a means of resolving differences and achieving mutual understanding.

WE ARE CONCERNED with securing justice and fairness in society and with eliminating discrimination and intolerance.

WE BELIEVE in supporting the disadvantaged and the handicapped so that they will be able to help themselves.

WE ATTEMPT to transcend divisive parochial loyalties based on race, religion, gender, nationality, creed, class, sexual orientation, or ethnicity and strive to work together for the common good of humanity.

WE WANT TO PROTECT and enhance the earth, to preserve it for future generations, and to avoid inflicting needless suffering on other species.

WE BELIEVE in enjoying life here and now and in developing our creative talents to their fullest.

WE BELIEVE in the cultivation of moral excellence.

WE RESPECT the right to privacy. Mature adults should be allowed to fulfill their aspirations, to express their sexual preferences, to exercise reproductive freedom, to have access to comprehensive and informed health-care, and to die with dignity.

WE BELIEVE in the common moral decencies: altruism, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, responsibility. Humanist ethics is amenable to critical, rational guidance. There are normative standards that we discover together. Moral principles are tested by their consequences.

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED with the moral education of our children. We want to nourish reason and compassion.

WE ARE ENGAGED by the arts no less than by the sciences.

WE ARE CITIZENS of the universe and are excited by the discoveries still to be made in the cosmos.

WE ARE SKEPTICAL of untested claims to knowledge, and we are open to novel ideas and seek new departures in our thinking.

WE AFFIRM HUMANISM as a realistic alternative to theologies of despair and ideologies of violence and as a source of rich personal significance and genuine satisfaction in the service to others.

WE BELIEVE in optimism rather than pessimism, hope rather than despair, learning in the place of dogma, truth instead of ignorance, joy rather than guilt or sin, tolerance in the place of fear, love instead of hatred, compassion over selfishness, beauty instead of ugliness, and reason rather than blind faith or irrationality.

WE BELIEVE in the fullest realization of the best and noblest that we are capable of as human beings.

by PAUL KURTZ

For a parchment copy of this page, suitable for framing, please send \$4.99 to FREE INQUIRY, P.O. Box 664, Amherst, New York 14226-0664

Amsterdam Declaration

This a statement of humanist beliefs agreed to at the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) at its 50th anniversary conference in the Netherlands in 2002.

- 1. Humanism is ethical.** It affirms the worth, dignity and autonomy of the individual and the right of every human being to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others. Humanists have a duty of care to all of humanity including future generations. Humanists believe that morality is an intrinsic part of human nature based on understanding and a concern for others, needing no external sanction.
- 2. Humanism is rational.** It seeks to use science creatively, not destructively. Humanists believe that the solutions to the world's problems lie in human thought and action rather than divine intervention. Humanism advocates the application of the methods of science and free inquiry to the problems of human welfare. But humanists also believe that the application of science and technology must be tempered by human values. Science gives us the means but human values must propose the ends.
- 3. Humanism supports democracy and human rights.** Humanism aims at the fullest possible development of every human being. It holds that democracy and human development are matters of rights. The principles of democracy and human rights can be applied to many human relationships and are not restricted to methods of government.
- 4. Humanism insists that personal liberty must be combined with social responsibility.** Humanism ventures to build a world on the idea of the free person responsible to society, and recognizes our dependence on and responsibility for the natural world. Humanism is undogmatic, imposing no creed upon its adherents. It is thus committed to education free from indoctrination.
- 5. Humanism is a response to the widespread demand for an alternative to dogmatic religion.**
The world's major religions claim to be based on revelations fixed for all time, and many seek to impose their world-views on all of humanity. Humanism recognizes that reliable knowledge of the world and ourselves arises through a continuing process of observation, evaluation and revision.
- 6. Humanism values artistic creativity and imagination and recognizes the transforming power of art.** Humanism affirms the importance of literature, music, and the visual and performing arts for personal development and fulfillment.
- 7. Humanism is a life stance aiming at the maximum possible fulfillment through the cultivation of ethical and creative living and offers an ethical and rational means of addressing the challenges of our times.** Humanism can be a way of life for everyone everywhere.

NOTE:

The foregoing was reproduced
from:

Humanism: An Introduction

by Jim Herrick

Pub. 2006 by Prometheus
Books.

Don Ruhs - Editor, HoFW

Officers and Board Members

Chair: Sam Baker

Phone: 817-994-8868

Email: sambaker@hotmail.com

Vice-Chair/Past Chair:

Vacant

Secretary: John Fisher

Phone: 682-556-9894

Email: jmfthird@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Dolores Ruhs

Phone: 817-249-1829

Email: ruhsdol@sbcglobal.net

Past Chair: Dick Trice

Phone: 817-446-4696

Email: trice933@att.net

Newsletter Editor/ Past Chair : Don Ruhs

Phone: (M) 817-343-3650

Email: laidback935@sbcglobal.net

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

Single Member	\$25.00/yr.
Couple	\$40.00/yr
Patron	\$50.00/yr.
Student	\$10.00/yr.

Choose the category that best fits your needs.

See the Treasurer, Dolores Ruhs, or a member of the Board for an application.

Pay in cash or mail the application, with your check, to:

Dolores Ruhs, Treasurer-HoFW

1036 Hill Top Pass, Benbrook, TX 76126-3848

NOTE:

If you do not have access to the internet, the Newsletter may be mailed to you for an additional annual fee of \$12.00.

PRESENTATION FOR SEPTEMBER MEETING

The topic for discussion will be:

“THE RELIGIOUS BASES OF WESTERN HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES: How Do Humanists See Them?”

Presented by:
Virginia Thornton

Virginia has a B.A. in English from Cornell University and is currently working on her Masters Degree in Library Science at UNT.

She went all the way through Catholic school in Fort Worth and decided she was a humanist while working as a tour guide at Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia.

From the . . .



. . . Sam Baker

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE?

As of this writing neither the Senate nor the House has voted on the authorization for an attack on Syria requested by the president. One thing is clear. If House members were truly representative of the American people, this request would be voted down overwhelmingly. The latest poll by the Pew Research organization shows that only 29% of Americans favor air strikes against Syria while 48% oppose them, the remainder being uncertain.

Why the resistance by the American people to another war? First of all, we haven't been told the truth about the circumstances leading up to any of our major wars, at least since 1964. A North Vietnamese torpedo boat was supposed to have attacked a U.S. destroyer. A lie. Iraqi soldiers were supposed to have dumped Kuwaiti babies out of their incubators? A lie. Saddam Hussein was supposed to have possessed weapons of mass destruction which

somehow were an imminent threat to the security of the United States. A mistake, to be most charitable. Secondly, even after dedicating trillions of dollars to the efforts, our track record in replacing dictatorships with peaceful democratic governments has been abysmal.

There has been no peace in Iraq since we invaded, and Afghanistan remains one of the most corrupt governments in the world.

Call, write or email your representative and let him or her know your opinion about attacking Syria. It might make a difference.

Sam

“ . and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Abraham Lincoln

Gettysburg Address
Thursday, November 19, 1863

Religious people are less intelligent than atheists, study finds.

Intelligent people are more likely to be married, and more likely to be successful in life - and this may mean they “need” religion less.

By Rob Waugh | Yahoo! News

Religious people are less intelligent than non-believers, according to a new review of 63 scientific studies stretching back over decades.

A team led by Miron Zuckerman of the University of Rochester found “a reliable negative relation between intelligence and religiosity” in 53 out of 63 studies

Even in extreme old age, intelligent people are less likely to believe, the researchers found - and the reasons why people with high IQs shun religion may not be as simple as previously thought.

Previous studies have tended to assume that intelligent people simply “know better”, the researchers write - but the reasons may be more complex.

For instance, intelligent people are more likely to be married, and more likely to be successful in life - and this may mean they “need” religion less.

The studies used in Zuckerman's paper included a life-long analysis of the beliefs of a group of 1,500 gifted children - those with IQs over 135 - in a study which began in 1921 and continues today.

Even at 75 to 91 years of age, the children from Lewis Terman's study scored lower for religiosity than the general population - contrary to the widely held belief that people turn to God as they age. The researchers noted that data was lacking about religious attitudes in old age and say, “Additional research is needed to resolve this issue.”

As early as 1958, Michael Argyle concluded, “Although intelligent children grasp religious concepts earlier, they are also the first to doubt the truth

of religion, and intelligent students are much less likely to accept orthodox beliefs, and rather less likely to have pro-religious attitudes.”

A 1916 study quoted in Zuckerman's paper (Leuba) found that, “58% of randomly selected scientists in the United States expressed disbelief in, or doubt regarding the existence of God; this proportion rose to nearly 70% for the most eminent scientists.”

The paper, published in the academic journal *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, said “Most extant explanations (of a negative relation) share one central theme—the premise that religious beliefs are irrational, not anchored in science, not testable and, therefore, unappealing to intelligent people who “know better.”

The answer may, however, be more complex. Intelligent people may simply be able to provide themselves with the psychological benefits offered by religion - such as “self-regulation and self-enhancement”, because they are more likely to be successful, and have stable lives“

Intelligent people typically spend more time in school—a form of self-regulation that may yield long-term benefits,” the researchers write. “More intelligent people get higher level jobs (and better employment (and higher salary) may lead to higher self-esteem, and encourage personal control beliefs.”

“Last, more intelligent people are more likely to get and stay married (greater attachment), though for intelligent people, that too comes later in life. We therefore suggest that as intelligent people move

Continued on page 8 >>>>

>>> Continued from page 7

from young adulthood to adulthood and then to middle age, the benefits of intelligence may continue to accrue.”

The researchers suggest that further research on the “function” of religion may reveal more..

“People possessing the functions that religion provides are likely to adopt atheism, people lacking these very functions (e.g., the poor, the helpless) are likely to adopt theism,” the researchers wrote.

END

About the Gods, I have no means of knowing either that they exist or that they do not exist or what they are like to look at; many things prevent my knowing - among others, the fact that they are never seen and the shortness of human life.

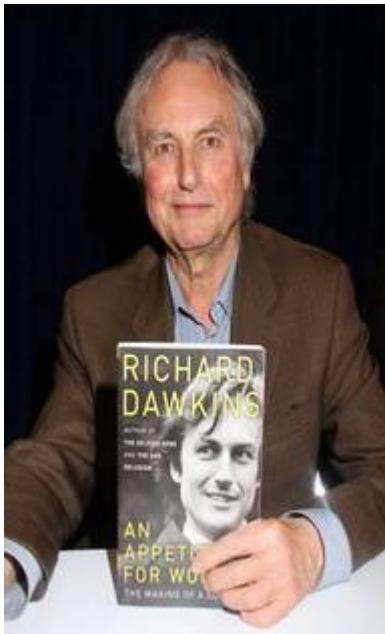
Protagoras (481-411 BCE) *Of The Gods*

Quoted from:

Humanism: An Introduction
by Jim Herrick
Pub. By Prometheus Books (2005)

“The true scientist, however passionately he may ’believe’, in evolution for example, knows exactly what would change his mind: **EVIDENCE!** The fundamentalist knows that nothing will”

Richard Dawkins



An Appetite For Wonder Sept., 24, 2013

“So far as I can remember, there is not one word in the Gospels in praise of intelligence.”

Lord Bertrand Russell (1872-1970),
British Nobel Laureate, Mathematician,
Philosopher and Peace Activist.

Quoted from:

“**The Atheist Universe**” by David Mills

Welcoming Unitarian Universalists Home to Humanism

By Roy Speckhardt Posted 07/24/2013 3:27 PM



Roy Speckhardt
Executive Director,

American
Humanist
Association

Many Unitarian Universalist leaders and quite a few individual congregations have openly moved away from viewing a humanist approach, free from theistic declarations, as the appropriate neutral philosophical place for all UUs to convene. It hasn't gone unnoticed, but the issue rarely gets addressed directly and openly. It's time for that to change.

Former American Humanist Association President Michael Werner has a new book, *Regain-ing Balance: The Evolution of the UUA*, the first in a series being released by the [publishing arm of the HUUmanists](#), that exposes what he feels is behind the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)'s growing anti-humanist sentiment in favor of what he calls radical tolerance. "The value of reason in religion has been discarded along with critical thinking, science, and progressive thought," Werner wrote, adding that a "narrow ideology has taken over the UUA."

Such a statement from Werner is all the more meaningful because, as HUUmanists president John Hooper says, "There is no one more dedicated to both Unitarian Universalism and Humanism than Mike Werner." Hooper explained to me that Werner's book is part of a larger project of creating a forum for Unitarian Universalists to consider the challenges facing the Humanist movement within Unitarian Universalism. He said, "In the spirit of Unitarian Universalism's Fourth Principle calling for 'a free and responsible search for truth and meaning,' the authors have been given the editorial latitude to

'tell it as they see it.' I'm looking forward to the vigorous dialogue that I'm certain Mike's monograph will generate."

What could Werner and Hooper possibly be talking about regarding challenges for humanists in the UUA? Unitarian Universalism is famously [tolerant of differing points of view when it comes to religion](#), including a historical acceptance of atheists and agnostics after moving away from a Christian-based theology over a century ago. It isn't uncommon for many congregations to be made up of a majority of nontheists of various stripes.

For many, the naturalist point of view on which humanism centers itself is a wonderful fit with the "religious" framework of Unitarian Universalist churches, places where so many who don't adhere to any kind of supernaturalism find comfort and meaning. The need for such places is so obvious and clear that they aren't the only show in town for religious humanists. The [Society for Humanistic Judaism](#) and the [American Ethical Union](#) also have community groups across the country that explicitly endorse the humanist philosophy.

But what has been happening over the past 10-20 years to the UUA is a failure to maintain reason as a guiding principle. Instead, the often laudable effort to be "all-inclusive" has become so dominant that in some congregations Unitarian Universalist identity has become so vague as to be insubstantial. This is due somewhat to late 20th century postmodernism that Unitarian Universalists (and many others) found so attractive. But the Everyone-Creates-Their-Own-Truth idea that is the core of postmodernism has failed, and by hanging on to it many UUA leaders and congregations are failing too.

Continued on page 10 >>>>

"I'll be blunt," Werner wrote. "Unitarian Universalism is dying." Werner may be overstating here, but it is in serious trouble. Werner, who is also a long-time and active Unitarian Universalist, doesn't *really* go that far either. What he means is that, given their current direction, the present form of Unitarian Universalism is dying. His book outlines several ideas on which the church can rebuild its falling numbers, including the abandonment of "radical egalitarianism and radical inclusiveness" in favor of "the responsible search for truth and meaning."

Unitarian Universalism needs to come home to humanism, and I think there is a better-than-average possibility that a large number of UUs agree with me. But they've not been asked. This anti-humanist sentiment is coming from UUA leaders, not the laity. And not being an organization that has a nationalistic view of itself, many individuals and local congregations may be largely unaware of the problem or think it's a minor or isolated issue.

I see evidence of this frequently. I'll speak to a UU humanist in Fort Collins, Colorado, or Sanibel, Florida, or Fredericksburg, Virginia, or a whole host of other locals and they'll tell me something like this: "It's probably just at my congregation, but a new minister was chosen last year and they use a lot of spiritual language that makes me uncomfortable, and it seems like the congregation is moving away from humanism."

For those who find value in community but don't mind leaving unanswered questions about the foundations of their convictions, the current direction of Unitarian Universalism is probably seen as just fine. And it's apparently fine for many in UU leadership to lose a third of their membership over time as increasing numbers of congregants become frustrated by the theistic emphasis that excludes them. But this is not a path of growth, numerically or philosophically. So my challenge to UUA members is to read (or re-read) [Humanism and Its Aspirations](#). Then

Continued next column >>>>

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

1. *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
2. *Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;*
3. *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;*
4. *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*
5. *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;*
6. *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;*
7. *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

start a conversation with the members of your congregation and its leadership about the direction in which the UUA and your local congregation is heading. No matter what ends up being decided, just the act of talking about it -- something not generally being done right now -- will be beneficial.

END

Free Will: The Never Ending Debacle

SUPERSTITION IN ALL AGES

Jean Meslier (1678-1733)

*Translated from the French original by Miss
Anna Knoop 1878*

FREE WILL IS AN IDLE FANCY:

Theologians tell and repeat to us that man is free, while all their teachings conspire to destroy his liberty. Trying to justify Divinity, they accuse him really of the blackest injustice. They suppose that, without grace, man is compelled to do evil: and they maintain that God will punish him for not having been given the grace to do good! With a little reflection, we will be obliged to see that man in all things acts by compulsion, and that his free will is a chimera, even according to the theological system. Does it depend upon man whether or not he shall be born of such and such parents? Does it depend upon man to accept or not to accept the opinions of his parents and of his teachers? If I were born of idolatrous or Mohammedan parents, would it have depended upon me to become a Christian? However, grave Doctors of Divinity assure us that a just God will damn without mercy all those to whom He has not given the grace to know the religion of the Christians.

Man's birth does not depend upon his choice; he was not asked if he would or would not come into the world; nature did not consult him upon the country and the parents that she gave him; the ideas he has acquired, his opinions, his true or false notions are the necessary fruits of the education which he

has received, and of which he has not been the master; his passions and his desires are the necessary results of the temperament which nature has given him, and of the ideas with which he has been inspired; during the whole course of his life, his wishes and his actions are determined by his surroundings, his habits, his occupations, his pleasures, his conversations, and by the thoughts which present themselves involuntarily to him; in short, by a multitude of events and accidents which are beyond his control.

END

Meslier, a Roman Catholic priest, who, after a pastoral service of thirty years at Etrepigny in Champagne, France, wholly abjured religious dogmas, and left as his last will and testament to his parishioners, and to the world, to be published after his death, . . .

Anna Knoop

COMMENTARY:

It's truly amazing that some 280 years after the death of Fr. Meslier, and now into the twenty-first century CE, that there are still fundamentalist religions that continue to insist that we were *created* with "free will" by an Almighty God!

Don Ruhs-Editor

Free Will reference reading >>>>

Free Will: Reference reading:

- Alkek**, David S., M.D.: “The Self-Creating Universe” (2007), 8, 69, 88, 110, 116.
- Armstrong**, Karen: “In the Beginning” (1996), 28, 114: “A History of God” (1993), 164.
- Clark**, Thomas W. – “Crime and Causality?” Free Inquiry, Feb/Mar 2005, pgs. 34-37.
- Carleton**, Paul D. – “Concepts,” (2004) (see *Volition*): pg. 132-138
- Dennett**, Daniel C.: “Breaking the Spell” (2006), 202, 245, 325; “Elbow Room” (1997), 2-7, 8, 10, 16-20, 37, 152-172.
- DeBona**, Maurice Jr. – “Atheism: Genetics to Geology”
- Dershowitz**, A.M. – “The Genesis of Justice” (2000), pgs. 52-54, 115, 213.
- Ehrman**, Bart D.: “God’s Problem” (2008), 11-13, 15, 120-123, 197, 229-230.
- Graffin**, G.W.; Provine, W. B. – “Evolution, Religion and Free Will,” (2003), Sigma Xi
- Harris**, Sam: “Free Will” (2011); “The Moral Landscape” (2010), 102-106, 110-112, 206n37, 215n97, 216n102, 217-218n111; “The End of Faith” (2005), 173, 272-274.
- Hawking**, Steven: “The Grand Design” (2010), 22, 30-33, 178,
- Kauffman**, Stuart A. – “Reinventing the Sacred” (2008) pgs. 197-229 (Chap. 13, The Quantum Brain?).
- Newberg**, Andrew – “Why We Believe What We Believe,” (2006) pgs. 158-159, 201.
- O’Connor**, Timothy – “Free Will,” (2002, rev. 2005). Assoc. Professor of Philosophy, Indiana University.
- Pinker**, Steven – “How the Mind Works” (1997) pgs. 53-56, 558-564; “The Blank Slate,” (2002) pgs. 127-128, 175-180, 397.
- Pigliucci**, Massimo – “Can There Be a Science of Free Will?” *Skeptical Inquirer*, Vol. 31, Issue 3
- Shermer**, Michael – “How We Believe,” (2000) p.5; “The Science of Good and Evil,” (2004) pgs. 11, 68, 107-111, 120-126, 130-138.
- Shotwell**, David A. – “The Free Will Problem Again,” Free Inquiry, Feb/Mar 2005, pgs. 31-33.
- Smith**, George H. – “Atheism: The case against God,” (2006) pgs. 73-87.
- Wilson**, E.O. – “Consilience,” (1998); pgs. 108-109, 118, 238-265 (Chap. 11, Ethics and Religion).

Editorial . . . Know Your Bible? 13

Don Ruhs

All Bible quotes are taken from the King James Version (KJV).

From: Various sources, including the Holy Bible.

It’s been said that numbers don’t lie, but that liars do numbers!

In light of the above phrase, let’s take a look at one specific incident of *Bible Math*!

This incident, of course, is the grandiose tale of The Great Flood and Noah’s Ark. **Genesis 6**

Given the *size* of this boat, the *number* of animals to be taken aboard, the *multi-tons* of food required to feed *all* on board, the *number* of human beings given the responsibility to man this vessel, the *number* of days it rained, the *multi-million tons* of water that must have covered our planet, the *number* of days the water stayed, the *amount of pressure* all that water must have caused, the *number* of sea creatures that surely would have been annihilated because of that *pressure* and the deadly conditions caused by the mixing of the waters!

This, according to the Bible, was a world-wide deluge, but there is no record of any such phenomenon, of course. The Egyptian civilization, for instance, was in a particularly flourishing state at this very time and was building its pyramids. Nor do the Egyptian records speak of any floods other than the annual overflow of the Nile, as far as we know.

This is not to say, however, that the biblical story of the Flood was not based on some actual, but local, flood in Sumerian history.

Sir Isaac Asimov (1920-1992)
Asimov’s Guide to The Bible

**HUMANISTS OF FORT WORTH
MONTHLY MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. By Chair Sam Baker. There were twenty-five persons present.

Our speaker this month was Pejman Rahimian, Ph.D. He spoke to us about growing up in post-1979-revolution Iran in a moderate Islamic family, the required religious activity in school as a boy, and his personal journey to becoming an atheist, which is protected under the Constitution of his adopted country, the United States, but would be dangerous to one's life in his native Iran. His atheism is his personal decision, but he does not try to convince other Islamists away from their religion.

He also showed us certain posts on social media in Iran spoofing Islam, and told us that there is an Iranian re-configuration of the internet amounting to a crack-down that may eliminate such posts. Further, he described the off-shoot of Islam called Sufism, which is a personal journey divested of the traditional requirements of Islam, and which contains some truly beautiful and poetic elements, for example in the poetry of Rumi, singing prayers and meditative movements to music.

After a break for refreshments, Dr. Rahimian took questions from the audience in an interactive conversation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8: 55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Fisher

John Fisher, Secretary

Humanists of Fort Worth

September 2013

Humanists of Ft. Worth (HoFW)

Treasurer's Report

Report Date: 14-Aug-2013

Beginning Balance 10-July-2013 **\$1,275.16**

CREDITS	Date	Amount	
DUES	8/14/2013	\$50.00	
Snack Donations	8/14/2013	13.00	
TOTAL CREDITS			<u>\$63.00</u>

DEBITS	Activity	Ck. #	Date	Amount
HoFW Donation	Camp Quest	426	8/01/13	\$179.98
Bobbi Lotven	Snacks	427	8/15/13	\$8.77
Treasurer	Snacks	428	8/14/13	\$6.29

TOTAL DEBITS **\$195.04**

TOTAL CREDITS LESS DEBITS **\$132.04**

Ending Balance 20-Aug-13 **\$1,143.12**

Attest:

Signature: *Dolores M. Ruhs* Date: 20-Aug-2013

Dolores M. Ruhs Treasurer
Don Ruhs Clerk

Copies:

Chair	Sam Baker
Vice-Chair	Vacant
Rec. Secy.	John Fisher
Treasurer	Dolores Ruhs
Board Member	Don Ruhs
Board Member	Dick Trice

c:\My Documents\HoFW Treasurer's Reports MSXL 20-Aug-2013



Church

&

STATE



the **BOOK NOOK**

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

The 1st Amendment to the Constitution of the United States—"The Establishment Clause."

From: *Americans United for the Separation of Church & State* September 2013, page 22

This space is intended to focus attention on books, authors, subjects and articles that may be of interest to humanists, agnostics, atheists, and freethinkers.

And Man Created GOD

A History of the World at the time of Jesus

By Selina O'Grady

Published by St. Martin's Press March 26, 2013

AROUND THE **W**ORLD

Church of England to Control Some State Schools

Education officials in Britain have proposed allowing the Church of England to assume control of thousands of State-run schools.

Under the plan, the schools will become privately funded academies. Anglican bishops will have the power to appoint school governors for these institutions, and the schools would be accountable to the church.

The church already runs more than 5,000 schools in the United Kingdom. The country has a long tradition of merging church and school. Religion News Service reported that there were no government-run schools in the country prior to 1870.

The move is opposed by the National Secular Society. Its president, Terry Sanderson, stated, "The Church of England is rapidly changing its focus from its primary purpose - church worship - which has failed spectacularly, with empty pews all over the country, to getting its message out in schools."

To explore the power that religious belief has had over societies through the ages, Selina O'Grady takes the reader on a dazzling journey across the empires of the ancient world and introduces us to rulers, messiahs, priests and holy men. Throughout, she seeks to answer why, amongst the countless religious options available, the empires at the time of Jesus 'chose' the religions they did?

The Jesus cult, followed by no more than 100 people at the time of his death, should, by rights, have disappeared in a few generations. Instead, it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Why did Christianity grow so quickly to become the predominant world religion? What was it about its teachings that so appealed to people? *And Man Created God* looks at why and how religions have had such an immense impact on human history and in doing so uncovers the in-eradicable connection between politics and religion - a connection which still defines us in our own age. This is an important, thrilling and necessary new work of history.

Editorial comment, author unknown.

•••••

"This vividly compelling account of how Christianity rose triumphant from the religious and civil tumults of its earliest days is a must read. With cinematographic force it brings that epoch so astonishingly and educatively to life that no-one should be allowed to lay claim to Christian or indeed any religious faith who has not read this book first, and meditated on its import. It lays the facts bare, unsparingly and with a sharp eye; and the facts speak very loudly for themselves."

A.C. Grayling

Author of *Meditations for the Humanist: Ethics for a Secular Age* and *The Good Book: A Humanist Bible*