

PIQUE

The Newsletter of the Secular Humanist Society of New York

Upcoming SHSNY Programs and Events

ZOOM Happy Hour, Every Sunday. 5PM
ZOOM Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9806344432?pwd=c0NrNUoweDVGWWho2diTvYmJlVjVVGdz09#success>

Topics include a wide range of timely and humanistic issues

Sunday Brunch & Conversation

Sunday, January 16th
Noon-2PM
The Globe Restaurant
158 E. 23rd. St., NYC

Topic: How enlightening was the Enlightenment?

Fiction Book Club Info

Wednesday, January 12th
7:30 Via ZOOM - See [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) for details

Non-Fiction Book Club

Thursday, January 6th
7PM - Online - See [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) for details

HOLD THE DATE:

FEBRUARY 18, 2022
Darwin Day: Speaker: George Beccaloni, UK Director of the Wallace Correspondence Project.

Turning the Page - A New Year in Humanism

By Dr. David I. Orenstein

Welcome to 2022! I wish everyone reading the SHSNY newsletter a joyous, prosperous and healthy New Year. May each day bring you and those you care about glad tidings. The new year brings us much to look back upon as it does much to look forward to as we plan and work together.

And there is much work to be done! In this month's newsletter we announce several new initiatives. There is a new youth fund in the memory of John Rafferty and Donna Marxer, new minority and youth board opportunities, and new Good without God activism being planned.

We are also reminding everyone that now is the time become or renew your annual SHSNY membership. We're also pleased to offer details on our February Darwin Day program, and our monthly Globe brunch meetings.

This is also the time of year where we get to vote on a new slate of board members. This year, all voting will be offered online to each Society member in good standing.

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Announcing the John Rafferty & Donna Marxer Humanist Youth Fund

The Board is pleased to announce a newly funded initiative to support humanist youth in New York and beyond. The John Rafferty & Donna Marxer Humanist Youth Fund.

The Fund supports student humanists, from teens through college years, in support of secular student activism.

While not a scholarship fund, the new initiative will aid student humanists and their organizations who work towards creating programs and other events that support the goals of SHSNY and AHA.

Donors can contribute directly to the fund via the Society's website. Students interested in applying to the fund for support should email, info@shsny.org, for details and application information.



Turning the Page (Continued)

Finally, there are news, views and issues facing the humanist community here in NYC and around the world to discuss and ponder. Important items that we should remain cognizant of as we move forward into the new year.

So I hope you continue to enjoy connecting with us here in 2022. Or at our many programs and events, both online and in-person. And that together we can continue to build a better world through humanism and secular humanist activism, education and community building.

Minority and Youth Candidates - Get Paid to Join the SHSNY Board

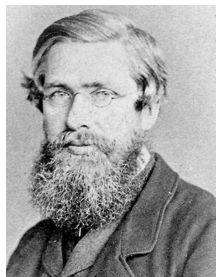
The SHSNY Board is pleased to announce two paid Minority and Youth board membership positions. The selected candidate will serve in the role of guest board member for one (1) calendar year. The role of this Board member is to help the organization become more diverse in terms of identity and programming. This is done by the candidate representing the needs, issues and concerns of humanists, atheists, skeptics, Nones and other non-believers from their ethnic, heritage and/or age group.

The selected candidates will each be paid \$1,000.00 for their work in quarterly payments. The selected candidates are required to plan at least two humanist-related programs throughout the year targeting their group; attend each Board meeting held throughout the year (four total); bring in at least four (4) new paying members (Individual or family) to SHSNY; attend the monthly in-person brunch at least six (6) times per year, and attend at least one (1) ZOOM Humanist Happy Hour per month.

If you are interested or know someone who might wish to contribute while being paid for their service, please email, info@shsny.org.

SAVE THE DATE: SHSNY's Darwin Day Program is fast Approaching!

Because of the ongoing public health issues related to COVID-19, this year's **Darwin Day** program will be held via ZOOM.



A.R. Wallace

We are pleased to have British scholar, author and humanist, George Beccaloni, speak to our group. His talk will center on the contributions made to natural selection by Alfred Russel Wallace.

Mr. Beccaloni is the Director of the

Wallace Correspondence Project. His work and research focuses on Wallace, the co-discoverer of natural selection and his contributions to Darwin's research and writing.

Wallace gets little credit and often sits outside the story of evolution. But with Mr. Beccaloni's talk, you will learn a great deal about A.R. Wallace's work, life and times. **Program Details:**

Feb 18, 2022 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87082544971?pwd=RHdjaU1BelNMM2pjTzV4dFNld2h1UT09>

Meeting ID: 870 8254 4971, Passcode: 139780

January '22						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

It's 2022 - Time to Renew Your SHSNY Membership

January is the time to commit your support to the SHSNY for another year of community engagement, fun and interesting programs and service.

After all, everyone can benefit from our rational and ethical, science- loving, human-affirming community. Here are our annual membership rates:

Individual Membership.. \$40.00

Family Membership\$65.00

Student/Senior Membership \$20.00

PIQUE Only\$30.00

You can join/rejoin online at www.shsny.org. We take PayPal, credit and debit card payments and donations.

Alternatively, you can send your membership payment or donation to our mailing address, SHSNY, P.O. Box 7661, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150.

GLOBE Meeting Spotlight

January's Globe Lunch and Conversation program will be held on Sunday, January 16th. SHSNY's own Dorothy Kahn will host the event. The talk will focus on the European Enlightenment and whether we give it too much credit and not enough skeptical review as it relates to western dominance, oppression and issues related to imperialism and human rights.

SHSNY is Doing Good for Goodness Sake

Once the COVID-19 pandemic ebbs, we hope to begin a rigorous commitment to helping those



in need, the environment and many other noble causes through secular humanist volunteering.

Our goal is to perform these acts of kindness to prove not to ourselves, but to many others that indeed we can be and are very good without god.

We currently have partnerships with two NYC non-profit agencies and hope to grow that significantly in the years to come. Making the world a safer, richer and kinder place is almost always the credo of every secular humanist. The SHSNY plans to put those thoughts and words into action.

If you volunteer with us, you get a cool SHSNY tee shirt to wear while volunteering and while lounging about in NYC. If you are interested volunteering, please contact us at, info@shsny.org.

A Note on SHSNY Bookclub Meetings

Due to space and other constraints during the pandemic, if the ongoing fiction and non-fiction bookclubs do not have at least three (3) or more confirmed MEETUP RSVP's, the bookclub leader will cancel the meeting for the month.

The RSVP's have to be registered online at least one day prior to the program's scheduled meeting.

We hope you'll understand this need to maintain our relevance and support from our membership and those who might be interested in bookclub programming.



The Secular Humanist Society Board. Dr. David Orenstein, Board President, Members: Nancy Adelman, Jonathan Engel, Dorothy Kahn, Brian Lemaire, Carl Marxer, Claire Miller, John Wagner

Mailing Address: P.O Box 7661, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150

Voting Details and SHSNY Board Candidate Statements

In mid-January SHSNY members in good standing will be emailed a link to vote for the current slate of returning and new Board candidates. Your vote for any and all of the candidates affirms your trust and SHSNY commitment to remain the premier Secular Humanist organization in New York City.

SHSNY Board Member Statements

Nancy Adelman

TO BE ADDED

Jonathan Engel (Returning)

My name is Jonathan Engel and I submit this statement to the membership of the Secular Humanist Society of New York in support of my candidacy for another term on the SHSNY Board of Directors. I've had the privilege of serving on the Board for the past 6 years, and I am asking for your support to be elected to another term.

We should never take for granted our right to be secular. Ever since human beings created religion, those who insisted on thinking for themselves have been attacked and persecuted. Sadly, this bias against the rational and reasonable continues to this day. That is just one reason why the work of SHSNY is so relevant and important, and why I am seeking another term on the Board.

I contribute to the work of SHSNY in a number of ways. As many of you know, I am a regular contributor of essays to "Pique". I have represented SHSNY at various forums, and I give presentations on secular matters to other free-thought groups. I also host and moderate our weekly Zoom Happy Hour.

The work of SHSNY in advocating for reason, rationality, and the decent treatment of every human being is very important to me, and so I hope to continue as a member of the Board of Directors.

Dorothy Kahn (Returning)

Now we have come out of full Covid 19 lockdown it's time to seek re-election to the SHSNY Board. I've been a member of the board for several years now and have thoroughly enjoyed it. I hope that my main contribution to the Society i.e. leadership in the Third Sunday Brunch and Discussion has served the cause of Free Thought in New York. In future I mean to extend my participation in this monthly event by submitting a few paragraphs of copy to Pique introducing the specific topic for discussion. In light of this I hope that the members of SHSNY will show their confidence in me and re-elect me to the Board. Yours in humanity, Dorothy Kahn

Brian Lemiare (Returning)

Hello SHSNY members,

I would like to continue to serve on the SHSNY board. I contribute a few services to the group as treasurer: dispensing and depositing checks from our checking account and keeping a monthly accounting of income and expenses.

I always have my eye out for a good restaurant location where we can hold our monthly brunches. And ideas for outings for the members: a picnic? a sailing outing?

Carl Marxer (Returning)

As a video and communications professional, I will continue to be a resource documenting and communicating the information available to SHSNY as a group, and helping make that information more available to the general population. I have won several awards for my documentary film and motion graphics work. With my background is as a communicator and educator, I want to use the skills I have gained to spread the knowledge about SHSNY and what it stands for.

I was previously in the Atlanta area for many years, and grew tired of the religious dogma so prevalent in that area. I wanted to grow my business professionally, and decided to take advantage of the resources that the NYC area has to offer. Lucky for me, I found my cousin, Donna Marxer and the Secular Humanist Society of New York. I believe that there are lots of people that do not express them because of the pressures of organized religion. I want to help them see that it is OK to express their non-theist feelings through and with the support of the SHSNY organization.

My current duties include filming the major meetings and posting them to YouTube and Facebook. I help John Wagner with the SHSNY Facebook page. I sit in on the events committee, so that I can get the details of events I need to film. I help produce the Secular Stories podcast with David Orenstein.

Claire Miller (Returning)

Raised Unitarian, I've been a non-believer since childhood. That non-belief has only gotten stronger with age.

I've had the pleasure of serving on this board for 5+ years, serving as Events Coordinator. I look forward to continuing to serve this community.

David Orenstein (Returning)

I am humbled and delighted to place myself in nomination to the board of the Secular Humanist Society of New York. When I was elected President of the board in September of 2021, little did I know that the COVID crisis would hit so close to home. That we would soon lose a mentor and dear friend, John Rafferty, to this terrible pandemic. In his memory and our combined future, my twin goals as President are to focus on both honoring the past achievements of this wonderful secular humanist organization while also building it programmatically, socially, and financially for generations to come.

Serving as a link in a chain is important. It is a constant reminder that while we are all finite that our work can have infinite implications and touch people for years to come. As a tenured full professor of anthropology, I know this to be true. I hope in the short time as your President that I have gained your trust, my hope is that I will be permitted to attain and sustain it by being re-elected to the board. Yours in secular humanist peace.

John Wagner (Returning)

I want to continue my 10-year commitment to the SHSNY's Executive Board where I am currently a vice president, so I am asking for your vote. I want to expand and strengthen our Humanist community. Here are some of my current activities and goals:

- I represent the SHSNY and the American Humanist Association at the UN where I work on the Committee for Freedom of Religion and Belief (CoFoRB), the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Committee on Human Rights (CHR).
- I have promoted the development of social media and I believe we should redouble our efforts to use social media to attract new members and to educate the public about humanism. I started and administer our Facebook page, which has grown to over 1600 followers.
- I strive to increase the involvement of members of the SHSNY in secular politics, and I wrote a number of articles under the "The Humanist Activist," banner in Pique.
- I am vice-president of the Committee for Secular Equality, a lobbying and educational group set up by the American Humanist Association which is associated with a Political Action Committee.
- I am co-chair of the Secular Coalition for New York, a lobbying organization that has been endorsed both by the SHSNY and the American Humanist Association.
- I have helped organize many of the events and educational activities sponsored by SHSNY.
- I have worked to establish more activities & services that will strongly appeal to families with children, people that are in school, those just entering the work force, and those with active careers.
- I believe we should strive for a higher public profile and take credit for ongoing activities and services produced by SHSNY.

I am a Professor of Neuroscience at Weill-Cornell Medical College in NYC and a founder of a biotech start-up called Sveikatal, Inc. I have been a freethinker and humanist since I was a teenager. I grew up in Iowa, received a Ph.D. from Princeton, continued my studies at the U. of California, San Francisco, and was on the faculty at Harvard Medical School. I am a member of SHSNY, the American Humanist Association, NYC- Atheists, American Atheists, Gotham Atheists, The Freedom From Religion Foundation, NYC Skeptics, the Iowa Atheists & Freethinkers, and Center for Inquiry-NY. I am also active in Progressive Democratic Politics and I am on the Board of the Four Freedoms Democratic Party.

Once again, I ask for your support.

David Madison (New)

While serving as Methodist pastor for nine years, David Madison pursued graduate degrees at Boston University School of Theology. But upon completion of his PhD in Biblical Studies in 1975, his belief in God had evaporated. He didn't lose his faith, he states, but rather **saw through it**—quoting Dan Savage. It was necessary to reinvent himself, and he found his way into secular careers. From 1997 until 2014 he was the director of an association of career coaches. He retired from that career.

Even as he pursued his secular careers, however, his thoughts on Christianity and the Bible continued to churn, resulting in the publication of his first book in 2016, **Ten Tough Problems in Christian Thought and Belief: A Minister-Turned-Atheist Shows Why You Should Ditch the Faith**. Soon after that he was invited by John W. Loftus to write for his blog, *Debunking Christianity*. He publishes a weekly article on the blog—many of them focused on biblical criticism, following Mark Twain's insight that "the best cure for Christianity is reading the Bible."

In August 2021 Madison's second book was published, **Ten Things Christians Wish Jesus Hadn't Said: And Other Reasons to Question His Words**. He also maintains The Cure-for-Christianity Library (www.cureforchristianity.com), which now has more than 525 book titles. Most of these works have been published since 2000, and explain, in detail, the falsification of theism, Christianity especially. He has recorded well more than a hundred brief videos that are available on his YouTube channel.

Notable Secularism in the News

Bala Still in Nigerian Custody:

Humanists International reports that Mubarak Bala, the president of the Humanist Association of Nigeria remains in prison for the crime of blasphemy. Bala was placed in custody in April of 2020 and remains in prison without legal representation or access to the outside world.

Planning Ahead with the Brussels Secular Studies Association

The Secular Studies Association Brussels (SSAB) invites submissions for its inaugural conference on Secularism and the State to be held in the Fall of 2022.. Generally speaking, research will be presented in English, but this call is open to other languages as well, i.e. French and Spanish.

Humanist International's First ZOOM Conference –

Steven Pinker Presented on his new book. The conference theme "Humanism in time of crisis" A moment to reflect upon the response of the global humanist community to the global COVID-19 emergency. **Here's the link:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1837tN_Ruk