

PIQUE

Newsletter of the Secular Humanist Society of New York

April, 2016

Day of Reason Brunch May 1 at Pete's Tavern - Reserve now - Page 7.

"Ah, the apple trees ..." Is it really, at long last, spring? Well, if we're making fun of Passover and Easter, it must be. We also kick around spirituality, religion in general, Texas (of course), the Standard Model of physics, American triumphalism, and a certain loathsome misogynist. But first, some positive advice on making the world better and more just (really!). – JR

HUMANISM AND ATHEISM

**Rebecca Hale and Jennifer Kalmanson
for the American Humanist Association**

(Reprinted from "2016 Humanism" on TheHumanist.com, 2/24/2016)

The rising tide of nonreligious people in the United States is accompanied by an intense focus on the "New Atheism", which, rightly or wrongly, is critiqued as being not vocal enough or downright anti-progressive when it comes to social justice issues like women's rights, racial equality, and the environment. Those familiar with the movement understand that when one declares themselves to be an "atheist", they are simply saying that they do not believe in any gods; it doesn't naturally imply a commitment to any particular social contract, whereas "humanist" means something additional. Atheism is what we don't believe; humanism is what we do believe.

Humanists are cultural progressives. When you make decisions based on rationality and scientific research, with an added dose of empathy, the effective answers to the issues of our day are the progressive answers. Science-based sex education is proven to be more effective than abstinence-based sex education. A strong middle class is best for a stable, resilient economy. Health care for all extends quality of life and strengthens economies. The civil rights of all must be protected because the only justification for seeing women and racial minority groups as inferior comes from bronze-age holy books and other outdated ideas. People who support progressive ideals most often do so because they see positive results and understand cause and effect.

While atheists and humanists reject the existence of any gods for lack of evidence, atheism and humanism are not synonymous. Most atheists and humanists are good people, but atheism in and of itself is not supported by an ethical system to guide behavior. Not all those who don't believe

in a god have fully moved past societal prejudices and old programming—and not all have cultivated empathy in a way that engenders compassion for others and builds a sense of egalitarianism.

Those who criticize the nontheist movement for not being more engaged with progressive issues may have valid points about our need to do more, but they may also be falling into the trap of thinking that all flavors of nontheist are indeed the same; that "atheist" and "humanist" are synonyms. Statistically, the majority of us are progressives who eschew bigotry, economic injustice and unbridled destruction of the environment. The majority of atheists and other nontheists hold humanist values even if they don't use that word to self-identify. Those nontheists who don't embrace humanist values are often the noisy voices of the few within the larger community.

Humanists are doing their share of "good", we just aren't often visible. We look the same as everyone else. Over the decades those of us who fit the secular "progressive activist" label have joined, contributed to, and worked within the organizations that focus on each of our particular interests: the Sierra Club, Greenpeace, the National Organization for Women, the National Council of La Raza, the Human Rights Campaign, Black Lives Matter, Planned Parenthood, and many more. We participate in peace rallies, gay pride parades, and civil rights marches. We join protests like Occupy Wall Street. The list goes on. We are there doing the work but may be unseen, unrecognized for our secularism, for our humanism.

We ask those writers who claim nontheists aren't doing enough in these areas to first recognize that we are almost always there—we just do it in the camouflage of the crowd, which is incorrectly presumed by these writers to be solely people of faith. Humanist contributions frequently go ignored.

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Our next step as a movement, especially within the American Humanist Association (AHA) is to achieve acceptance, which can be an uphill battle in face of historical discrimination against nontheists. For example, a few years ago the Stiefel Freethought Foundation wanted to make a substantial donation to the American Cancer Society. Those humanist funds were apparently rejected because the American Cancer Society did not want to be associated with “atheists”. Somehow it’s seen as a threat if we receive recognition as contributors to good deeds and humanitarian efforts. It’s a challenge to some peoples’ faith when we demonstrate that you can be good without a god, showing that god is unnecessary to being a good person. Believe if you want to, but it’s not a requirement for goodness, just as being a believer is not a guarantee of good behavior.

Our culture needs a greater recognition of humanism and the role humanism plays within the nontheist movement. The American Humanist Association defines humanism as follows:

Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism or other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.

Unpacking that statement a bit, several points become evident, not just about what humanists don’t believe, but what we do believe. Humanists hold progressive views about society and daily living. Humanists don’t believe in gods. Humanists believe that humans are capable of living meaningful, ethical lives. Humanists believe in our human power to change the world for the better. We also believe in our *responsibility* to use the abilities we have for the betterment of ourselves and our world.

When writers and thinkers began discussing the “New Atheism” as an alternative to existing establishments, the focus was on rejecting religious belief, criticizing irrational thinking, and debunking outrageous claims. What was sometimes lost was a sense of why it’s important to do these things: magical thinking writ large impairs a community from its best thinking. Standards for ethical behavior were too often absent from much of the dialogue within New Atheism. The rights of those historically subjugated and the moral standards for interpersonal behavior were left to individual conscience.

The American Humanist Association’s humanism is an alternative, re-energized for achieving social justice and renewed in our passion for every person’s right to self-actualization and dignity. The focus of the recent strategic planning efforts undertaken by the American Humanist Association Board of Directors isn’t on telling the world the positive things we believe, but on showing it through our actions and through our achievements.

While we’ll never stand silent in the face of threats to the rights of nontheists to articulate our views freely, as a movement we are reaching the critical mass where we can now accompany our historical individual activism with organizational action. By working hand-in-hand to improve the lives of our fellow humans, and by actively working to

increase the dignity with which the least of us can live, we strive for a society in which humanist views are widely available and publicly respected. New Atheists are great at exposing more people to the idea that living without a god is possible. It’s up to us humanists and our allies to make sure that we create a desirable, fair, and just world to live in. *Rebecca Hale is president of the American Humanist Association (AHA). Jennifer Kalmanson is vice president and strategic planning chair of the AHA..*

THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER. REALLY?

Michael Stone

(Reprinted from “Study Shows Religion In The U.S. Is in Decline”, on Progressive Secular Humanist.com 2/11/2016)

Good News: Despite a vocal minority of Christian extremists, religion in the United States is in decline, and secularization is on the rise. A new study finds a slow decline in American religiosity over time, demonstrating that religion in the United States is declining and mirroring patterns found across the western world.

The new research shows that contrary to anecdotal evidence, the United States is no different than other modern societies in the inevitable move towards secularization.

According to the new research from University College London and Duke University published in the March 2016 edition of *The American Journal of Sociology*, there is a slow, steady drop in the number of Americans who claim religious affiliations, attend church regularly and believe in God. The study, titled “Is the United States a Counterexample to the Secularization Thesis?”, also finds that these drops are driven by generational differences. For example:

- 94 percent of Americans born before 1935 claim a religious affiliation. For the generation born after 1975, that number drops to 71 percent.
- 68 percent of Americans 65 and older said they had no doubt God exists, according to the study. But just 45 percent of young adults, ages 18-30, had the same belief.
- 41 percent of people 70 and older said they attend church services at least once a month, compared to just 18 percent of people 60 and younger.

The abstract of the study reads:

Virtually every discussion of secularization asserts that high levels of religiosity in the U.S. make it a decisive counterexample to the claim that modern societies are prone to secularization. Focusing on trends rather than levels, the authors maintain that, for two straightforward empirical reasons, the U.S. should no longer be considered a counterexample. First, it has recently become clear that American religiosity has been declining for decades. Second, this decline has been produced by the generational patterns underlying religious decline elsewhere in the West: each successive cohort is less religious than the preceding one. America is not an exception. These findings change the theoretical import of the United States for debates about secularization.

Speaking about his research, David Voas, a social scientist with UCL and co-author of the study, said:

“None of these declines is happening fast, but the signs are now unmistakable. It has become clear that American religiosity has been declining for decades, driven by the same dynamic – generational differences – that has driven religious decline across the developed world.”

Mark Chaves, a professor of sociology, divinity and religion at Duke, and another co-author of the study, notes:

“The US decline has been so gradual that until recently scientists haven’t had enough data to be sure the trend was real. The US has long been considered an exception to the modern claim that religion is declining, but if you look at the trajectory, and the generational dynamic that is producing the trajectory, we may not be an exception after all.”

Bottom line: This is good news. Despite the perverse Christian extremism of some Americans, things are getting better, and religious superstition is on the decline in America.

DISRESPECTING RELIGIOUS NONSENSE

Susan Jacoby

(Excerpted from The Age of American Unreason)

Misguided objectivity, particularly with regard to religion, ignores the willed ignorance that is one of the defining characteristics of fundamentalism. One of the most powerful taboos in American life concerns speaking ill of anyone else’s faith – an injunction rooted in confusion over the difference between freedom of religion and granting religion immunity from the critical scrutiny applied to other social institutions. Both the Constitution and the pragmatic realities of living in a pluralistic society enjoin us to respect our fellow citizens’ right to believe what ever they want– as long as their belief, in Thomas Jefferson’s phrase, “neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg”. But many Americans have misinterpreted this sensible *laissez-faire* principle to mean that respect must be accorded the beliefs themselves. This mindless tolerance, which places observable scientific facts, subject to proof, on the same level as unprovable supernatural fantasy, has played a major role in the resurgence of both anti-intellectualism and anti-rationalism. Millions of Americans are perfectly free, under the Constitution, to believe that the Lord of Hosts is coming one day to murder millions of others who do not consider him the Messiah, but the rest of the public ought to exercise its freedom to identify such beliefs as dangerous fallacies that really *do* pick pockets and break legs.

Even a superstitious man has certain inalienable rights. He has a right to harbor and indulge his imbecilities as long as he pleases, provided only he does not try to inflict them upon other men by force. He has a right to argue for them as eloquently as he can, in season and out of season. He has a right to teach them to his children. But certainly he has no right to be protected against the free criticism of those who do not hold them. He has no right to demand that they be treated as sacred. He has no right to preach them without challenge. – *H.L. Mencken*

TWO WEEKS IN THE MOST “SPIRITUAL” COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

Martine Reed

We have just returned from two weeks in India. For years Bill and I had wanted to travel there, enticed by descriptions of beautiful temples and great landscapes, and by admiring comments about “the wonderful spirituality” of that country.

It was a heart-rending, deeply disappointing trip but it was also a learning experience. I finally got a handle on what “spirituality” really is. I always felt slightly stupid when people mentioned the “S word” as if it was somehow my failure and my weakness not to be able to comprehend it. After that trip, I understand that spirituality is a convenient mantle to throw over a deeply unjust, cruel and uncaring society.

There are a number of very wealthy people in India. What the traveler encounters, however, is mostly a throng of miserable people, children and adults, wallowing in cityscapes conspicuous for the heaps of foul garbage everywhere, on land and in rivers and lakes.

There are few or no toilets in urban slums and rural areas. There are no sanitation services. There are no public schools free and available to all. There are no public social services to handle neglected and abandoned children. There is a multitude of sacred cows, not producing milk because they are sterile, contributing to the general pollution.

The main religion of India is Hinduism. Its adherents believe that a human being undergoes reincarnations, seven of them, after which, if you have been very, very good you might finally attain Nirvana, a state of total detachment. To deserve that bliss, you must learn to meditate, to abandon all desires, to renounce all attachments.

I am not a fan of the Christian religions, but please remember that their main tenet, the so-called “golden rule” is something like “love your neighbor”. That injunction seems to be absent from Hinduism. If the most important thing is Nirvana, there is no point, is there, of attempting to help the children, the elderly, the sick and the poor.

I see a direct link between the prevailing religion and the catastrophe that India really is. Apparently there is not a strong enough demand to motivate the government to protect public health and finance education. Such things are simply not important. “Spirituality” is.

There are, of course, a number of charitable organizations providing alms and some services to the destitute. For instance, the Sikhs (fourth most important religion) run soup kitchens. The Catholics (third most important) run schools. But this is charity, organized at the whim of the organizer, not government-run. And it comes with strings attached.

I am still not sure of the meaning and scope of the S word. But I saw how it is used to bypass concerns of public health and social justice. Maybe I do not care any more to find out its meaning.

Maybe it does not have any.

MY CONVERSION TO HEATHEN

(A None's Story)

Arthur Harris

I was born into an Orthodox Jewish household that followed Judaism without the trappings of the Ultra Orthodox Hasidim and related groups, now known as the "Black Hats". These folks dressed, worked and socialized, fitting into their surroundings unlike those Ultras, who wore clothing that had been stylish when Napoleon was in charge, and who work to invent prohibitions, insisting on going those extra miles that they believe will guarantee them a place in Paradise when and if, but probably not at all.

My neighborhood was a mix of Irish, Italian and Jewish folks with a sprinkling of Germans. We played and went to public school together with never any problems in regard to religion. We followed what we were instructed in, accepted our faiths as a matter of course and did what we were told.

But fate has a way of upsetting the applecart. We began to go to school. Not one but two. Mornings were for secular education and afternoons for religious.

Mornings were fine. I learned arithmetic, writing and best of all, reading. We had wood shop, played games and did projects for history and geography. And in regard to the seasons, sang, learned Christian hymns and had Old Testament Bible readings daily.

After school hours were spent in religious instruction for many. Catholics had catechism instruction and Jewish boys learned to read Hebrew. Not to speak or understand it, but simply to read and write it. I really never learned to speak it, instead I babbled and rocked like the other men.

In retrospect, I believe that had we learned to use it as a language, we would have been less inclined to resist. But Hebrew was the "Holy Tongue" then, reserved only for prayer. The ultra religious fought its use as the speaking language when Israel was founded.

Underpaid and much put-upon teachers taught a bunch of active, restless and very bored boys who longed to be outdoors playing baseball or football or in warm weather, swimming. Discipline was administered by a hard hand alongside the back of the head.

In public school, as long as we were unable to read, the teachers selected and read the passages from the Bible. But as soon as we were able, the pupils selected and read them, in turn. This resulted in a few miscreants who studied the bible for the "hot parts". This was well before *Playboy* and we had to seek out our porn as best we could.

Reciting the stories of Lot and his daughters, Noah and the Song of Solomon, among others, with the teachers fuming, we blithely intoned the verses. And as our classmates awaited being summoned to the Principle or to God (or more probably the Devil) we plunged ahead.

There was nothing the teachers could do, although a few waited us out and, at the slightest misstep, pounced. But the reading was not in vain. We picked up on contradictions and when we asked our priests or rabbis for clarification, we received evasive answers, outright lies or a cuff along

the head. We didn't think a lot about it, though. This was grownups world and our interest was short lived.

I was curious about other religions, not with any idea of conversion but simple curiosity. My non-Jewish friends were all Catholic and the only Protestants, other than a few teachers that I knew, were all "Negro". I ate at Father Devine's storefront, where the lovely ladies' fed us great fried chicken and yellow corn bread for a dime, (Jewish corn bread is really rye) and are still remembered fondly. But we knew a scam when we saw one and it didn't count as a serious religion.

One of my friends' fathers, who was Irish, apparently wasn't overly fond of the clergy. He found me studying a picture of a nun being pierced by arrows and other such unpleasanties and when I asked about it, suggested that the tortures she was undergoing, resulted from her refusal to commit a sexual act on the Mother Superior. I was still an innocent and only years later understood what he meant. However, my epiphany in reverse, was about to happen.

My aunt and uncle owned a candy store and most Saturday afternoons was my time to visit. They fed me ice cream and I read all the comic books (and later found those great, sexy pulp magazines of the Thirties).

Of course they could not close on the Sabbath; theirs was a 15-hour day, seven days a week, including all regular and most Jewish holidays. As a result, they drifted further away from religion, rarely attending synagogue and eating non-kosher food.

One Saturday, I turned up just as my cousins were leaving for the movies. My aunt asked if I would like to go along. Greed overcame fear and off we went. I don't recall the film but still remember cowering in my seat, waiting for the lightning bolt that was sure to eradicate this poor, weak sinner who desecrated the Sabbath by going to a movie.

It didn't happen. I emerged into the sunlight and the gnawing doubts that had been ever present bubbled up within me.

When younger, I had often been taken to Saturday afternoon Torah study at my grandfather's *shtuble*, (a small synagogue paid for and attended by men in similar trades). Grandfather was a *shechet*, a ritual kosher slaughterer of animals for food. Here these men, almost all immigrants, would dress in splendid robes for the occasion, put aside the cares of the week and debate fine points of the Torah.

For them it was a grand escape and for me it meant wine and cake and sometimes candy, joining other boys running up and down the stairs to peek in and plague the girls in the restricted upper balcony. For me, it was pleasant to sit quietly and hear the stories until one time when they discussed Job. I sat and listened and finally asked, "How could God do such things to Job on a bet with the devil?"

They patiently turned to me and explained it was a test and after all, didn't God replace his family with a new one? I asked, "But didn't he miss his old family?"

For this, I received an angry retort and perhaps a smack alongside my head. After a few more blows I no longer asked questions. But I began to ponder on a God who could

be so capricious.

God and I parted company after the Holocaust, but what really nailed it all for me was when a friend's brother asked me to accompany him to visit his baby — who'd been born with cancer and was slowly dying, painfully.

We passed through ward after ward of children, most in pain. I had been an Army medic and thought that I was inured against such horrors. But the constant sound and soft whimpering of these babies permeating softly throughout the building, reached deep within and I thought that if God could stop this and didn't, He was wicked. If He couldn't, he was impotent. So, why bother with Him at all.

At that point I knew that I wanted nothing in regard to religion. I neither know nor care if God exists. I prefer to believe that He doesn't, because if He did, He would be too deprived and too indifferent to his followers to worship.

WHY I'M A "NONE"

Steven R. Green

When I was drafted, during the Viet Nam war era (error), I chose to not state a religion in my identifying information. Hence, on my dog tags, they imprinted, "No Pref". No preference? In other words, religion was a given; I just didn't prefer one to any other. I always resented that designation. I did not express a preference because I was a non-believer, a "None". The dog tag would never be imprinted with "Atheist".

There are innumerable reasons to be a None. As a child, the dynamics of Santa Claus amazed me. Adults all over the world conspired to convince me of his existence. I was a young skeptic and questioned the myth endlessly. This led me to realize what else adults were up to.

Original Sin never made any sense. An omniscient god places two innocents in a garden, and then puts a tree in the middle of that garden, and says, "Don't Touch!" Really?

Of course, this same god proved to be a terrible parent. He put his son through a sadistic death; and that allegedly erased our collective original sin of disobeying a command to not eat a piece of fruit? Luther tried to remove the selling of indulgences; so he decided upon "predestination". No matter how you behave, it's already determined. This is supposed to lead to the Protestant work ethic? Why not just enjoy one big party? After all, whatever you do doesn't matter! I could go on with these absurdities; but I have another concept to share with you.

As a clinical social worker, with over 40 years of experience, I've decided that religious observance is a form of neurosis: the Religion Neurosis. The basic dynamic of this neurosis is Denial. There are several basic aspects to life that religion helps its adherents to deny. First, we have the reality of mortality. We are all here on borrowed time. We all die. But religion advises us to expect an afterlife — Heaven, Limbo, Hell, whatever. Buddha tried to show us how everything is impermanent. But by the time Buddhism got to Tibet so many layers of an afterlife were placed upon it that it should be called by a different name. Taken to its extreme, actual life on earth becomes merely a "dress

rehearsal", and martyrs will finally get their reward in some cosmic brothel on the other side.

There is also the terror of being forgotten. So religion creates ancestral spirits who stay with us. There's no harm in paying homage to our ancestors, just acknowledge that they are gone. There is no reincarnation, just a recycling of energy. Mortality and impermanence leave us with an existential void. Maintaining a community, not wishful thinking, can help alleviate that pain.

Another significant aspect of contemporary religion neurosis is fear of the female, especially of female sexuality. I say, "contemporary" because ancient pagans and goddess-worshippers recognized sexuality as a gift from the Goddess. The Indian religion we call Hinduism retains that perspective, but it too is rapidly being "modernized" by contemporary elites.

Denial of death and impermanence ... fear of females and of sex altogether ... creating fantasies which the person then believes desperately ... ostracizing or harming anyone who refuses to believe the fantasy ... and rationalizing to explain any contradictions (e.g. the question of evil) ... all are symptoms of a serious psychological imbalance.

When you accept that "this is *not* a dress rehearsal", when you accept mortality and impermanence, you're liberated from mental obstructions. You then have the option to live this life to its fullest extent. You have the choice to make this life better for everyone, instead of awaiting your reward after death.

You are responsible for your own life choices; no god or gospel decides for you. Enjoy the journey.

EDWARD HENRION

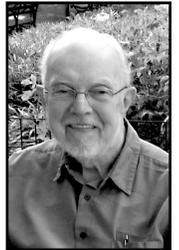
1928 – 2016

Ed Henrion, an artist who, with his wife Marilyn, was an active member of SHSNY for more than a decade, died in hospital February 25 while recovering from surgery.

Originally from Detroit, Ed taught art at Erasmus High School in Brooklyn for 25 years before retiring in 1987. He and Marilyn — herself a fine artist — met as classmates at the Cooper Union College of Arts & Sciences in New York, both graduating in 1952. Married the same year and residents of Greenwich Village ever since, they credited the spirit of play in their relationship — which produced four children and four grandchildren — for its endurance.

Marilyn and Ed co-authored *Book of Chance I: words=images*, 2011. Ed also authored *Sweet & Lovely*, 2011 and *Top Hat*, 2011, all available on Amazon.

A humanist always, Ed donated his body to NYU Medical School for scientific research and teaching.



Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

SHSNY CALENDAR: APRIL - JUNE 2016

SHSNY BOOK CLUB

THURS, APRIL 7, 7-8:30 pm
THE COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF NEW YORK

28 East 35 St. (front lounge)
We'll discuss

**THE ORIGINS OF
POLITICAL ORDER:**

**From Prehistoric Times to the
French Revolution
PART 1**

Francis Fukuyama

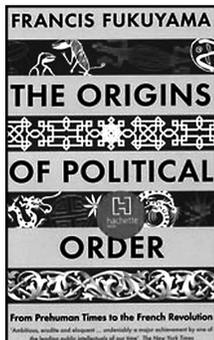
Bestseller Fukuyama provides a sweeping account of how today's basic political institutions developed, beginning with politics among our primate ancestors and follows the story through the emergence of tribal societies, the growth of the first modern state in China, the beginning of the rule of law in India and the Middle East, and the development of political accountability in Europe up until the eve of the French Revolution.

Drawing on a vast body of knowledge, history, evolutionary biology, archaeology, and economics, Fukuyama has produced a brilliant, provocative work that offers fresh insights on the origins of democratic societies and raises essential questions about the nature of politics and its discontents. from tribes to national governments.

We'll read and discuss the first half of this blockbuster (Chaps 1-15), then the second half in May.

— Paperback

Join us even if you haven't finished reading. The SHSNY Book Club is open to all ... and free!



SHSNY BOOK CLUB
THURS, MAY 5, 7-8:30 pm
Community Church of New York
**THE ORIGINS OF
POLITICAL ORDER:
PART 2**

We'll conclude our reading and our discussion.

SHSNY BOOK CLUB
THURS, JUNE 2, 7-8:30 pm
Community Church of New York
**POLITICAL ORDER AND
POLITICAL DECAY: From the
Industrial Revolution to the
Globalization of Democracy
PARTS 1 & 2**

Francis Fukuyama

Taking up the essential question of how societies develop strong, impersonal, and accountable political institutions, Fukuyama follows the story from the French Revolution to the so-called Arab Spring and the deep dysfunctions of contemporary American politics. — Paperback

PLANNING AHEAD

The usual SHSNY schedule is ...

Book Club: First Thursday
at the Community Church of NY
Movie Night: Second Monday
at Stone Creek Lounge.

Brunch: Third Sunday
at Stone Creek Lounge

Great Lectures: 4th Wednesday
at Stone Creek Lounge.

Studying Humanism: Last Monday
at the Community Church of NY

More info: www.shsn.org,
and/or 646-922-7389

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MEET US ON MEETUP

www.meetup.com/shsn-org/

TEXT US ON TWITTER

@NY_Sec_Humanist

SHSNY MOVIE NIGHT

MON, APRIL 11, 6:30 pm
Stone Creek Bar & Lounge
140 East 27 St (Lex-3rd Aves)
**MONTY PYTHON'S
THE MEANING OF LIFE**

Just in time for the Passover/Easter season, the naughty Brits offer their usual tasteful sketches involving favorite body parts and bodily functions, the wonders of war, the miracle of birth and a special preview of what's waiting for us in Heaven. Outrageously vulgar and funny, the *NYTimes* called this the best Python film of all.



After-Film Discussion:

Does life have any meaning?

SHSNY Movie Night is FREE.
(But put something on the bar besides your elbow.)

BRUNCH & CONVERSATION
SUN, APRIL 17, 11:30 am
Stone Creek Bar & Lounge
140 East 27 St. (Lex-3rd Aves)

We gather in the saloon's back room, where we have enough privacy to have different conversations around the several large tables, as well as the big one led by Dorothy Kahn.

The expanded pub-grub menu has been enhanced with an \$11 breakfast special, the Bloody Marys are hot, the beer is cold, and conversation sparkles.



Come join 20 or more freethinkers for food, fun and conversation.

Discussion:

What lies ahead for America?

SHSNY CALENDAR: APRIL - JUNE 2016

GREAT LECTURES ON DVD
WED, APRIL 27, 7 pm
 Stone Creek Bar & Lounge
 140 East 27 St (Lex-3rd Aves)

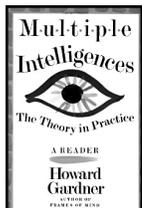
EXTRAORDINARY MINDS

Jared Diamond

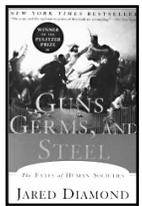
in conversation with
Dr. Howard Gardner

Dr. Diamond, a professor of geography and physiology at UCLA, is well known for his work in the fields of ecology and evolutionary biology. and as the author of eight books, including *The Rise and Fall of the Third Chimpanzee*; *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, which won the Pulitzer Prize and has been translated into 36 languages, and the best-selling *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Succeed*.

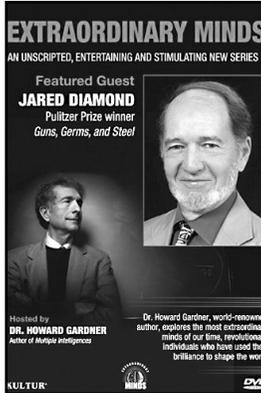
The ease with which Diamond can explain major patterns in human history has made him a popular draw for lecture audiences and the international media.



Dr. Gardner is Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, an influential public intellectual and the author of 25 books that have been translated into 29 languages, including *Multiple Intelligences*; *New Horizons*; and *Five Minds for the Future*.



Great Lectures on DVD is FREE
(But put something on the bar besides your elbow.)



STUDYING HUMANISM
MON, APR 25, 6:30-8:30 pm
 Community Church of NY
 28 East 35 St. (Gallery)
 2015-16 Meeting/Discussion #6
ROMANTICISM & THE EVOLUTION OF HUMANISM

Our November discussion of "The Enlightenment and Romanticism" was so interesting that we agreed to continue the conversation in January. A blizzard killed that evening, so we're catching up this month.

Scholar Mike Orzechowski has put together short passages on three Romantic icons - Victor Hugo, Wordsworth and Baudelaire - to guide our discussion.

The file is on the Calendar page for April 25, on the website, www.shsn.org, and you can (should!) read it in under half an hour.

NOTE: Studying Humanism is a *study* group. If you have *not* done the reading, you may still *audit* the discussion - all are welcome, definitely including newcomers!

Tell Us Your "None" Story, Get a Free Humanist Book

SHSNY members: Send *your* story (see pp 4-5) to editor@shsn.org and choose one of these books by SHSNYers as our "Thank you".

- Philip Appleman: *The Labyrinth: God, Darwin, and the Meaning of Life*
- Giddian Beer: *Kouken: Jewels, Jolts & Jeremaids*
- Jennifer Michael Hecht: *Stay: A History of Suicide*
- Philip Kitcher: *Life After Faith: The Case for Secular Humanism*
- David Orenstein: *Godless Grace*
- Massimo Pigliucci: *Answers for Aristotle*
- John Rafferty: *A Fit of Pique: Dispatches from the Culture Wars*

Book now to guarantee your place!
SUNDAY, MAY 1, NOON
SHSNY's 9th Annual DAY OF REASON BRUNCH
 at **PETE'S TAVERN**
 129 East 18 Street

Our speaker will be:
DAVID ORENSTEIN
(The Paleolibrarian)
"Godless Grace:

How Non-Believers are Making the World Safer, Richer and Kinder"

Can we be good without god? According to their new book, *Godless Grace: How Non-Believers are Making the World Safer, Richer and Kinder*, not only do authors David Orenstein and Linda Ford Blaikie show through example that we can act morally and ethically without god belief, but with interviews of humanist boots-on-the-ground non-believer activists.



David's fast-paced PowerPoint presentation will also discuss the history of skepticism and the current political battles the freethought movement is waging to ensure all secularists have the legal right to be free of god belief.

BRUNCH IS JUST \$20 ...
 ... for your choice of 11 entrees, tax, tips and a drink included.

Join up to 50 of your fellow and sororal freethinkers for one of SHSNY's best annual get-togethers. Meet old friends, make new ones, schmooze, network and discuss ideas (what we do best).

But don't wait. Our upstairs private room at Pete's only seats 50. So guarantee your place by booking now, at www.shsn.org, using your credit card or PayPal.

THIS JUST IN IN TIME FOR PASSOVER

Herb Silverman

(Reprinted from "Godless Jews" on Huffington Post Religion Blog, 11/6/2015)

I'm not accustomed to being part of the majority in most things, especially religion. One notable exception comes from a recent Harris survey that shows the majority of American Jews do not believe in God. While I'm mildly surprised by such a high percentage, I'm not totally shocked. Throughout my academic career, hardly any Jews I have known believed in God. This, of course, is not a random sample because the percentage of atheists in academe is higher than in the general population, rising to about 93 percent in the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

Gentiles are often surprised to learn that there is no religious belief requirement to be a Jew. Jewish law says I'm a Jew because I was born of a Jewish mother, just like I'm an American because I was born in America. These definitions have nothing to do with beliefs.

While there is considerable diversity within Christianity, most Christians believe there was something very special about Jesus. Some even believe that Jesus is God as the second person in a Holy Trinity. We all can name many well-known Christians like Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Mother Teresa, and the Pope. But most well known Jews are atheists: Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx, Groucho Marx, Mel Brooks, Woody Allen, Jon Stewart, Sarah Silverman (no relation, unfortunately), and many more. I'm hard-pressed to name even one pious Jew, dead or alive, who is a household name worldwide — except maybe Jesus. And I have my doubts about him.

A 2013 Pew Research Center survey of American Jews found that 62 percent said being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry and culture, while just 15 percent said it's a matter of religion. Only 28 percent thought an important component of being Jewish meant being part of a Jewish community, and an even smaller 19 percent said observing Jewish law was important. Interestingly, 42 percent said having a good sense of humor is essential to being Jewish (Humoristic Jews?). The survey didn't ask about "Gastronomic Jews", but I'm one of those, too. I like latkes, knishes, matzo balls, and even Gefilte fish.

Theological ideas about God are private matters in Judaism When a rabbi from the Reform Synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina spoke to our local secular humanist group, one of our members asked him how many in his congregation were atheists. He said, "I don't know. We don't ask such embarrassing questions." The rabbi just laughed when another member asked, "Which answer would be more embarrassing?" The rabbi later told me that he was an atheist.

When I was growing up in the 1940s and 50s, what got my family's Jewish juices flowing was not God, but anti-Semitism. There was still a post-World War II "us vs. them" mentality, which meant that we should never trust goyim (gentiles). My family became worried whenever I had a

gentile friend. Many years later, I committed what would be a cardinal sin (if Jews had cardinals) of marrying a gentile. After I told an Orthodox aunt that I was getting married, she had just one question: "Is she Jewish?" When the aunt got the dreaded answer that Sharon Fratepietro is not Jewish, the aunt refused to even meet my bride to be. When I told a more liberal aunt that Sharon and I are both atheists, she asked, "Couldn't you marry a Jewish atheist?"

Today, fortunately, there is not much anti-Semitism in this country, which means that anti-anti-Semitism is no longer an essential factor for most Jews. Much to the dismay of some Jews, tolerance for Jews in our culture has turned intermarriage into the norm among American Jews. My wife Sharon is an ex-Christian, and we have a wonderful interfaithless marriage. But godlessness isn't only for Jews. Since it's easier for Jews to accept atheists in their families than it is for Christians and Muslims, I expect there are a lot of closeted atheists in these other religions. The Secular Coalition for America, of which I'm president, contains a Jewish atheist organization, Society for Humanistic Judaism, as well as Ex-Muslims of North America. Unlike with Jews, I guess the terms "Christian atheist" and "Muslim atheist" really are oxymorons.

Surveys consistently show a shift in this country away from religion, especially among Millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996). Not coincidentally, we are becoming a more open and inclusive society. If I were a believer, I'd say "thank God" for the change.

THE STORY OF EASTER: A HEAVY METAL EXEGESIS

Duff McKagan, Guns N' Roses bassist

I think the bible's a good story, you know? I mean, Jesus was back then, the Romans were just squashing everybody, and here came this guy who had positive thoughts, I think that's all there was to it. And he turned all these people on to all these positive thoughts. All of a sudden all the people were going, "This guy's fucking groovy." And the Romans were like, "Not that groovy, because he's fucking taking over all of our people we're squashing, so we're gonna kill him." He was just a positive guy who wanted to spread love and goodness. And the Romans did not dig that. And they fucking squashed him like a grape.

THE STORY OF EASTER: A MUSLIM ANALYSIS

Jesus & Mo

Mohammed: Easter is rather confusing. Let me see if I have this right — the humans you created so displeased you that you had to have yourself crucified before you could let them have a relationship with you again. Then they put your temporarily dead body in a cave where you chilled for a couple of days before coming back to life as a magical bunny rabbit that lays chocolate eggs.

Jesus: Now that's just silly.

Mo: Which bit?

THE STORY OF EASTER: A CATHOLIC CONUNDRUM

Stephen Colbert

My own church, the Catholic Church, is against capital punishment, which I think is hypocritical, because if it wasn't for the death penalty, they wouldn't even have a religion.

THE STORY OF EASTER: A (sort of) JEWISH EXPLANATION

Lenny Bruce

Because I'm Jewish, a lot of people ask me why I killed Christ. What can I say? It was an accident. It was one of those parties that got out of hand. I killed him because he wouldn't become a doctor.

IS THE "EASTER" STORY WE KNOW A JOKE?

Kari Henley

(Excerpted from "What do a Rabbit, Colored Eggs and Candy Have to Do with Jesus – The History of Easter Revealed" on Huffingtonpost.com, 4/11/2009, and reprinted from PIQUE, April, 2010)

Ever stopped to wonder how bunnies, eggs and scavenger hunts are related to Easter's religious celebration of Jesus dying on the cross and rising again? Strange bedfellows they are. I never had any idea as a kid. No one seemed to question the whole odd mix: why would a rabbit have a basket of eggs in the first place, and how that tied in to crucifixion and resurrection was another matter. Let's explore some Easter myths while popping a few chocolate Cadbury treats. ...

Before Moses was around to have the first Seder, or Jesus walked the Earth, we celebrated the rites of Spring at this time of year, with the perfect balance of light and darkness, called the Vernal Equinox. ...

It turns out the celebrations of Easter's egg-toting-rabbit evolves from a mythic German goddess named Ostara, (Oestre/Eastre) who was the Germanic Goddess of Springtime. According to the Encyclopedia Mythica:

"In ancient Anglo-Saxon myth, Ostara is the personification of the rising sun. In that capacity she is associated with the spring and is considered to be a fertility goddess. She is the friend of all children and to amuse them she changed her pet bird into a rabbit. This rabbit brought forth brightly colored eggs, which the goddess gave to the children as gifts. From her name and rites the festival of Easter is derived."

All other European words for "Easter" derive from the Hebrew word *pasah*, to pass over, thus reflecting the Christian holiday's Biblical connection with the Jewish Passover. I find it ironic the holiest day in the Christian faith, dedicated to celebrating the Son of God, is named after a goddess.

According to www.godchecker.com, Ostara was very popular with the Anglo-Saxon people, who worshiped her under the name Eostre. Yet there is something odd about

how little there is written about her; the myth only resides in one area, and is recorded to exist for a fairly short period of time. Most Sumerian, Greek and Egyptian figures like Isis, Kali, and Demeter were widely worshiped for thousands of years, and many of the stories had moral components or attributes to emulate. What's the moral element of the Easter bunny? Something about it just doesn't fit with other myths.

Was it all a joke?

Recent research suggests that the Ostara myth was potentially *invented* during a mischievous moment by the Venerable Bede. This well-known monk mentioned her in connection with the pagan festival Eosturmonath in a book written in 750 C.E., but extensive research has failed to find a trace of her prior to that.

Imagine: a famous monk makes up a weird story about a goddess who never existed who turns a bird into a rabbit that lays colored eggs; and it morphs into a mega-watt holiday celebrated the modern world over.

Wow. Imagine the irony in making up a goddess myth, which becomes linked with the "greatest story ever told", and simultaneously serves as a mecca of commerce for Hershey, hat makers and basket weavers.

WE'RE NO. 16! OR, HOW TO REALLY MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN

Part 1

Phil Torres

(Reprinted from "We're No. 16! Why Donald Trump's boorish American exceptionalism is so wrong", on salon.com, 1/30/2016)

As a resident of white suburban America, I grew up believing that, as Fox News host Sean Hannity once so eloquently put it, "The U.S. is the greatest, best country God has ever given man on the face of the earth." This article of faith in the superiority of the U.S. was instilled deep within my brain as a child, right next to the belief that Jesus was born of a virgin and then visited by three Wise Men. But as I began to travel the world a few years ago — a globetrotting adventure that took me through Europe and Canada and inspired me to start a journal of international rankings of countries according to various metrics — it became increasingly clear that American exceptionalism is a baseless mythology of tribalistic self-aggrandizement perpetuated by people who (if I may generalize a bit) can't locate Denmark on a map.

As it happens, the champions of this unique brand of nationalism are largely concentrated on the political right, where one also finds the attitude of anti-intellectualism in toxic doses. I don't think this is a coincidence. The fact is that when one looks at infrastructure, life expectancy, family paid leave, health care, social mobility, income inequality, political corruption, government efficiency, economic stability, childhood poverty, student debt, water quality, education, prosperity, happiness and even Internet speed, one finds the U.S. absent from the top 10 "best countries"

in every single instance. While the U.S. continues to have the largest economy in the world and the biggest military budget, in most categories relating to prosperity, security, happiness and well-being, the great American empire falls somewhere between the developed and the developing world.

But don't take my word for it. As Plato observed, beliefs without justification aren't knowledge, and justification requires evidence. So, let's look at some statistics from various sources, beginning with the World Economic Forum (WEF), a Swiss not-for-profit foundation that's "independent, impartial and not tied to any special interests".

According to the WEF, the U.S. fares as follows relative to the rest of the world: 16th in quality of overall infrastructure, 22nd with respect to competition, 33rd in terms of public institutions, 34th in terms of ethics and corruption, 35th in terms of health, 58th in terms of primary education, 67th in terms of security and 73rd in terms of wasteful government spending.

In terms of the WEF's overall "global competitiveness index," Switzerland comes in first with a value of 5.7 (out of 7), followed by Singapore with 5.6, and then the U.S., Finland, Germany, Japan, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands all tied with 5.5. So, not terrible overall — yet conservatives would cringe at the thought that we're tied with multiple "socialist" countries for third place. As it happens, though, the U.S. is far behind such countries according to other international rankings. Forbes, for example, ranks the U.S. as the 22nd best place for business in the world, with countries like Denmark, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Finland above us. Even the Heritage Foundation's 2015 Index of Economic Freedom leaves the U.S. out of the top 10, placing Hong Kong, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland and Denmark at the top.

In terms of "prosperity," a concept that includes factors like governance, education, health, personal freedom and the economy, the London-based Legatum Institute ranks the U.S. 11th, with Norway, Switzerland, Canada and Sweden being the most prosperous. We're also ranked 13th in the world with respect to social mobility, or the freedom for underprivileged individuals to climb the social ladder and become successful. The result is that, as Politifact confirmed in a "Mostly True" rating from 2013, it's actually "easier to obtain the American dream in Europe" than it is in the U.S. Take a moment to let that sink in. According to the research that Politifact cites, "Of the 10 countries studied, the United States had the strongest link between parents' education and a child's economic, educational and socio-emotional outcomes ... more pronounced than in the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Nordic countries, as well as Canada and Australia."

Social mobility is important in part because studies show that "a lack of wealth does make poor people sadder," and social immobility prevents those without wealth from acquiring it. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the U.S. isn't among the top 10 happiest countries. According to the most recent data, we're the 15th happiest country in the world, behind Switzerland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway and our

gentle neighbor to the north, Canada.

Another factor relevant to happiness concerns the overall empowerment of women, who constitute 50.8 percent of the U.S. population. As the Global Gender Gap Index reports, countries like Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark score the best, while the U.S. ranks a shameful 20th. Yet another happiness factor relates to the prevalence of childhood poverty. Here the U.S. ranks 34th out of 35 countries considered by a recent study. Sadly, this is consistent with a 2014 report from Johns Hopkins that found that "teenagers in Baltimore face poorer health and more negative outlooks than those in urban centers of Nigeria, India and China". Other studies have revealed that rates of PTSD among inner-city residents in America are "as high or higher than [rates among] Iraq, Afghanistan or Vietnam veterans."

There's also evidence to suggest that people "are happier in times when the gap between rich and poor is smaller." In other words, if a country is rich but all its wealth is concentrated among a small class of elite billionaires, society as a whole might be miserable. So, how does the U.S. fare in this respect? To quote a Pew Research Center article on the issue, "the U.S. has one of the most unequal income distributions in the developed world ... even after taxes and social-welfare policies are taken into account." In fact, of the 10 richest people in the world, eight are American. And the situation of inequality is only getting worse globally: just six years ago, the 388 most affluent people owned the same wealth as the poorest 50 percent. Today, Oxfam reports that "The world's 62 richest billionaires have as much wealth as the bottom half of the world's population." Yes, you read that correctly: 62.

The U.S. also ranks 43rd in the world for life expectancy, 37th with respect to health care, 20th in terms of political stability and 26th with respect to cleanliness, according to the Environmental Performance Index, maintained by researchers at Yale and Columbia University. And while we're often an early adopter of new technology, we rank 22nd with respect to our Internet speed. Regarding our moral behavior in the world, the Global Peace Index, which ranks 162 countries according to their "national peacefulness," places the U.S. in 94th place — closer to the bottom of the list than the top. (In fact, a 2014 global survey found that the world as a whole sees the U.S. as the number one threat to world peace.) Furthermore, unlike many other countries in the developed (and developing) world, college education isn't free for Americans, we don't have a universal health care system, and we're the only "major country" in the world that fails to provide family paid leave, as Bernie Sanders is fond of pointing out. Even our tap water isn't among the safest in the developed world, nor do we have any of the best airports.

The point is that, as should be clear by now, there's an unequivocal pattern of American inferiority when our country's performance is juxtaposed with the rest of the developed world's.

(Part 2 of this essay will appear in May PIQUE)

ON THE ALL-AMERICAN BEAUTY AND RIGHTNESS OF DE-FACTO SEGREGATION

“Archie Bunker”

(Thanks to Larry Shaw for forwarding this on Facebook, although a few words were lost to audience laughter)

[Archie to liberal “Meathead” son-in-law Mike]

You need an American history lesson. You don’t know nothin’ about Lady Liberty standin’ there in the harbor, with her torch on high, screamin’ out to all the nations in the woild, “Send me your poor, your filthy, your deadbeats.”

And all the nations sent them in here – they came swarmin’ in here like ants. The Spanish PRs ... the Japs, your Chinamen, your Krauts and Hebes ... all of them come in here, and they’re all free to live in their own separate sections, where they feel safe. And they bust your head if you go in there.

That’s what makes America great, Buddy!

ART AND FANTASY EXPLAIN “SPOOKY ACTION” Flash Light

(In response to “Spooky Action 101: Is Space as We Know It a Kind of Illusion”, by George Musser, PIQUE, March.)

During the Ptolemaic dynasties ancient Egyptian astronomers became so advanced they could accurately predict eclipses of the Sun and Moon. That was great science in its day, but it was based on the geocentric model of our solar system, where the Sun revolved around the Earth, the opposite of what we know to be true today.

This shows that it’s possible to have a model in physics which is totally backwards, but can still make good predictions. Of course, eventually you observe phenomenon which such a backwards model can’t explain. Can it be that the Standard Model of the atom, which has served science so well for making predictions up until now, is also backwards, and that’s why it can’t explain Spooky Action?

If physics is at a loss to explain non-locality, perhaps it’s time for art to try applying, “the vision thing” to the problem. In the graphic sci-art novel, *Rabinart.com*, we meet Bill Rabinovitch, who graduated from Worcester Polytechnic with an engineering degree, and went on to work on the discovery of Quasars for NASA. However, he eventually decided art was his true calling, and left science to become an artist.

The story relates a fantasy Bill has, wherein he meets a space alien pilot who looks suspiciously like Han Solo, the pilot in *Star Wars*. Naturally, Bill asks about the space alien’s theories of physics. The pilot explains that we have the Standard Model of the electron totally backwards. It’s not a tiny particle which creates a seemingly infinite electrostatic field, rather it’s a cosmic-sized field in which time-space resonates, constantly expanding and contracting. The extreme of contraction appears to us as the tiny electron particle, which constantly re-forms at a different point in the locus of points we call the electron shell. (This is the

real reason the position of the electron can’t be predicted: it’s not there until it forms again. Einstein never believed Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.)

Although a photon can’t travel through space faster than light speed, there’s no reason to believe time-space itself can’t expand and contract almost instantly over vast distances. (In fact you have to believe it to accept Guth’s theory of the Inflationary Period.) It is the huge resonant fields which extend vast distances that become entangled with each other, and that effects the way the particles they form behave, so one electron particle can instantly effect another entangled one, although there’s vast distance between them. Thus, realizing how the Standard Model is backwards explains the mechanism of Spooky Action without having to resort to metaphysics. The alien pilot also explains many of the other phenomenon, such as Dark Energy, which baffle our scientists.

Rabinart is meant as a fun read, a take-off on *Star Wars*, where Alien Physics just provides a bit of alien color to the story. If it causes scientists to think outside the Standard Model “box”, that would be a plus, Fair warning: if you don’t understand how time-space can bend, you’re probably not going to be able to follow all of Bill’s questions, let alone all of the pilot’s explanations, so just think of it as an alien language, like Klingon.

We hope you enjoy the story, in any case. There’s also a scene in which an android debates an ancient Egyptian god, claiming the god is a fraud who doesn’t exist. The god’s defense, that He exists as neural software in the minds of His believers, will either amuse or infuriate Secular Humanists.

A DISSENT TO A DISSENT Chic Schissel

Joel Galker (“Why I Am *Not* a None”, PIQUE, March) claims he is not a “None” and indulges in etymological speculation regarding the word. He mentions that atheists are accused of being “secret” believers, and he calls the word “belief” into question.

Do I, as an atheist, *believe* God doesn’t exist? Do I *believe* in science? Science operates on probabilities, not certainties. My “belief” in science is constrained by these probabilities. Perhaps the word “opinion” is easier to take than is “belief”.

PIQUE’s Editor asserts that Joel is indeed a None, and I agree. Galker, get thee to a Nonery!

THE DALAI LAMA ON THE FUTURE (OR NOT) OF RELIGION

All the world’s major religions, with their emphasis on love, compassion, patience, tolerance, and forgiveness can and do promote inner values. But the reality of the world today is that grounding ethics in religion is no longer adequate.

This is why I am increasingly convinced that the time has come to find a way of thinking about spirituality and ethics beyond religion altogether.

ONE MORE REASON WHY THE NORWEGIANS USE "TEXAS" AS A SYNONYM FOR "CRAZY"

Michael Stone

(From "Crazy Creationist Wins In Texas Board Of Education Vote", ProgressiveSecularHumanist.com, 3/2/2016)

Texas State Board of Education candidate Mary Lou Bruner won big on Super Tuesday, earning 48 percent of the vote in the three-person-race GOP primary. Bruner believes that baby dinosaurs lived on Noah's ark, and school shootings are a product of kids learning evolution. As for President Obama, Bruner once wrote:



Obama has a soft spot for homosexuals because of the years he spent as a male prostitute in his twenties. That is how he paid for his drugs. He has admitted he was addicted to drugs when he was young, and he is sympathetic to homosexuals; but he hasn't come out of the closet about his own homosexual/bisexual background.

What else? "School shootings started after the schools started teaching evolution", and "The Democrat Party had JFK killed because the socialists and communists in the party did not want a conservative president."

OUR THIRD NON-ENDOSEMENT OF 2016

John Rafferty

(Transcribed from "Quotes" by Our Principles PAC)

(Note: As a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, SHSNY cannot make any political endorsements. But we can quote. Just sayin' - JR)

Real quotes from Donald Trump about women:

"Bimbo." "Dog." "Fat pig."

"A person who's flat-chested is very hard to be a 10."

"I'd look at her right in that fat, ugly face of hers ..."

"Look at that face. Would anyone vote for that?"

"She [Princess Diana] had the height, she had the beauty, she was crazy. But these are minor details."

"I like kids. I mean, I won't do anything to take care of them. I'll supply funds, and she'll take care of the kids."

"You know, it really doesn't matter what they write, as long as you've got a young and beautiful piece of ass."

"That's a pretty picture, you dropping to your knees."

"There was blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her whatever."

"Women, you have to treat 'em like shit."



Day of Reason Brunch. Reserve now - See page 7
Humanism & Atheism Page 1
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Celebrating (?) the Passover/Easter Season Page 8
"We're #161 - Wahoo!" Page 9

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