

Sacramento Reason

COR

Shine the Light of Reason!

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Sac Coalition of Reason
Calendar: sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events

Subscribe

Volume 11, Issue 3

Issue Theme: Women's History Month

January 2014

Tom Neilson Folk Singer

Friday, March 21, 7:45 PM

[Arcade Library](#)

2443 Marconi Ave, Sacramento [Map here.](#)

If you liked the work of Pete Seeger, the Chad Mitchell trio, Joan Baez, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Tom Lehrer, Mark Russell, and others like them, you'll thoroughly enjoy meeting and listening to Tom Neilson.



Coach, historian, and educator, Tom provides a voice for all those who believe in the power of folk music to effect change. His award-winning songs of humor and compassion on 14 Folk CDs have been performed in 21 countries on 5 continents. His lyrics are celebrated for their sophistication, political astuteness, and wit. [Listen to his music here.](#) Join us March 21.

Presented by Humanist Association of the Greater Sacramento Area, HAGSA.

Andrew Seidel's "Greatest Story Ever Sold"

Saturday, March 29, 12:00 noon

[Carmichael Library Community Room](#)

5605 Marconi, Sacramento [Map here.](#)

"Greatest Story Ever Sold: America as a Christian Nation" presented by author and Freedom From Religion Foundation attorney, Andrew Seidel, visiting from Wisconsin. Mr. Seidel is writing a book about separation of church and state - one of the most hidden yet critical problems in America right now. He will end his talk with a rousing inspirational message about coming out of the closet as atheist and what we can do from our homes to keep religious dogma from overtaking our legislation and courtrooms. Appropriate for teens and adults, believers and non-believers.

FREE event, including light lunch.

Come have a light lunch on us! Mingle with like-minded friends and get to know our speaker. (Andrew used to be a Grand Canyon tour guide and is a galleried nature photographer!) Mr. Seidel will speak after lunch at 1:00.

Presented by the Atheists and Other Freethinkers Speaker Series and Greater Sacramento Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation.





Facebook.com search for 'Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason'. 'Like' the Sac CoR Facebook page, where you will find a daily variety of news, humor, insights and tools for every person of reason. Our readers represent 20 countries. 40% live in the Sacramento area. Sign up to keep informed! ([Click Here](#)) or go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sacramento-Area-Coalition-of-Reason/376151155788191>

Really?

Our first "Giant Brain" computer, ENIAC, was programmed by six women. But, when they needed photos of the programmers next to the huge room-sized equipment, they asked the women to leave the room, and brought in whatever males they could find, put them in lab coats, and those were the official photos. The real programmers, all women, weren't recognized officially until 1997. *REALLY?*

Save Easter Morning!

Rise and Shine Extravaganza with Dan Barker!

At the beautiful 3 Stages Theater in Folsom, featuring Dan Barker at the keyboard, standup comedian Keith Lowell Jensen, The Mockingbirds and even an appearance by the goddess of the equinox herself! For the whole family. Free. Easter - April 20.

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"Ask The Social I.Q. Lady"

March is Women's Herstory Month. Yes, you read that right. It's about HER story. Most people are unaware of the origins of the Christian fish symbol. What does the fish symbol have to do with women? Well, it's actually a vagina, the symbol of fertility.

When it comes to mythology, there are many stories. One thing common in all the stories about "the Great Mother" is the fish symbol. It is a pointed oval sign, the "vesica piscis" or Vessel of the Fish. One particular "Cult of the Fish Mother" was traced as far back as the hunting and fishing people of the Danube River Basin in the sixth millennium BCE by Eleanor Gaddon. (Read more in the book "Blind Faith" by Morné du Toit.)

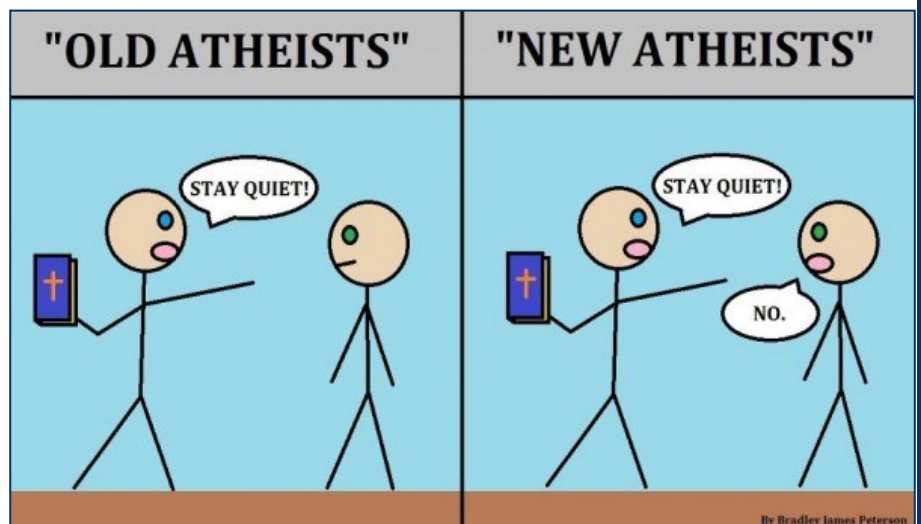
The earliest known myth of a mermaid surfaced in Assyria about 1000 BCE. The Sea Goddess Atargatis, according to ancient mythology, became a mermaid after throwing herself into the ocean. She was so in love with a human shepherd that when she accidentally killed him she wanted to become a fish. However, because her beauty was so great she could only become a fish from the waist down.

The Assyrians began to worship Atargatis and eventually so did the Romans and the Greeks (she is known as Derketo in Greek mythology). Atargatis is considered to be the Goddess of fertility of the earth and water. The fish symbol represented her fertility and life in the water.

Christianity has a long tradition of "borrowing" from ancient mythology. Why not take the symbol of the fish? Although Christianity is a patriarchal religion, it's interesting to note one of the main symbols (aside from the cross) is the womanly symbol of fertility.

Next time you see a fish on the bumper of someone's car, remember: it's a vagina.

Andrea Griffith is a Social Intelligence expert. Learn what to say and do to get the results you want.



By Bradley James Peterson



Ancient Christian Study Group - March 16, at Noon

Shine Cafe, 1400 E St. [Map here](#). For atheists who want to know the foundations of Christianity better than Christians do. Previous biblical knowledge is not required to participate. Review the history of Rome, religions of the Roman empire, Gnosticism, Mystery cults, history of Christian persecutions, biographies of major Christians, the history of the Bible and many other related topics. Everyone welcome.

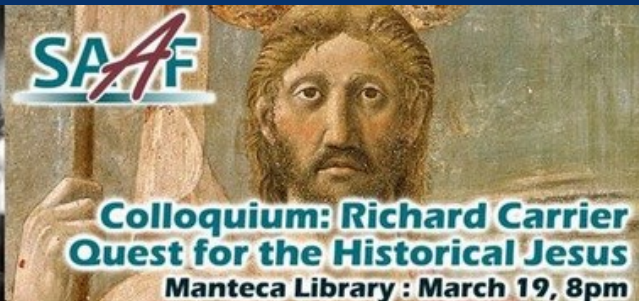
Richard Carrier in Manteca

Wednesday, March 19

8:00 PM to 9:30 PM

[Manteca Library](#)

320 W Center St, Manteca [Map here](#).



We invite Dr. Richard Carrier to help us understand what makes good evidence, how conflicting evidence is examined, and how we can mathematically ascertain the validity of a claim using Bayes's Theorem. This is a free event, open to the public, at the Manteca Library. While intended for atheists and Humanists, those of all worldviews and faiths are welcome.

Light refreshments, including coffee and Girl Scout Cookies will be available. Please bring canned food for the drive, if you *can* (no pun intended).

UC Davis Discussion Series - Everyone Welcome!

When March 6, 6 - 7 PM

Where UC Davis, Hart Hall, Room 1128 [map](#)

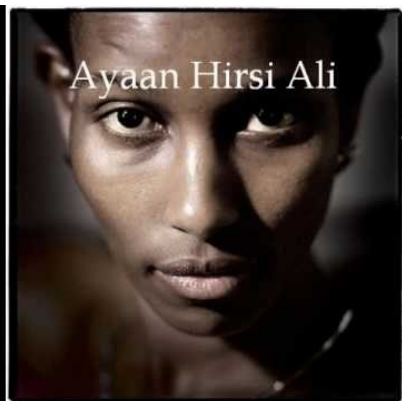
Topic: "How is Religion beneficial and or harmful to our society?"

Let's discuss the benefits and or harm that religion does to our society. Everyone is welcome to this AGASA event.

Presented by The Agnostic & Atheist Student Association, AGASA, at UC Davis. [Website here](#).



UC DAVIS
AGGIES



Ayaan Hirsi Ali

In 2005, she was named by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Speaking out against female genital mutilation and Islam, she is a founder of the women's rights organisation of the AHA Foundation.

Some popular 'Meet, Eat n Drink' Addresses and Maps:

March 8 10:00 am Brunch and Atheism, Panera Bread, 10718 Trinity Pkwy, Stockton [Map here](#)

March 16 9:30 am Blasphemy Breakfast, Mels Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd, Rocklin [Map here](#)

March 16 11:00 am Blasphemy Brunch, Mel's Diner 565 Howe Ave [Map here](#)



Blaspheming With Food Every 3rd Sunday!

Happy heathens on a fine Sunday morning! Every 3rd Sunday of the month, in various locations, come sit down to breakfast or brunch with us. Everyone is welcome! It's a nice way to meet like-minded friends. No topics, just have fun. [See the calendar](#) for all locations.

Like to Sing?

Join The Mockingbirds Every Thursday!

Join us as we learn new songs for Spring!



All are welcome. [Details here.](#)

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Gay Conversion Therapy Makes People Sick

March 23rd, 6:00pm

"Gay Conversion Therapy, You Make Me Sick" Prof. Sheldon Helms
Turner Community Library 1212 Merkley Avenue, West Sacramento. [Map here.](#)

As our country tackles the issue of marriage equality, gays in the military and other forms of inclusion of gays and lesbians into mainstream society, and as Russia and other countries enforce laws limiting the rights of their gay and lesbian citizens, fringe religious and therapeutic organizations have operated mostly in the shadows, attempting to "convert" their homosexual clients to heterosexuality through a mixture of prayer and pseudoscience.

Helms describes the history of attempts to define homosexuality as an illness and to make gays go straight.

Some forms of gay conversion therapy have been outlawed in California and New Jersey, and one of the primary institutions that promoted it has announced its closure, but what are the real stories behind these announcements, and do they go far enough?

Sheldon Helms is an associate professor of psychology at Ohlone College in Fremont, CA. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Bay Area Skeptics, is a regular contributor to the James Randi Educational Foundation's SWIFT blog, and is the founder of the Ohlone Psychology Club Speaker Series through which he regularly hosts top name speakers in science and skepticism.

Comedian Jim Jefferies

[Crest Theatre](#) March 1 8:00 PM

1013 K Street, \$37.50 [Map here.](#)

Jefferies is the creator and star of "Legit", an edgy, controversial original comedy series which returns to FXX for a second season on January 8. U.S. audiences got their first taste of Jefferies when he appeared on HBO's Down and Dirty with Jim Norton which in turn led to his critically acclaimed and international hit one hour HBO special, "I Swear to God". He followed that up with a Showtime special titled "Alcoholocaust and Fully Functional" on The EPIX Network.

If you aren't familiar with Jim Jefferies, check him out on [YouTube](#). His content is definitely NSFW (or most other places).



The word “computer” comes from 200 women who calculated by hand WWII military ballistics computations, and were appropriately called “the computers”. When this mathematical computation could be done electronically, they took the name these women were known by, and started to refer to the electronic machine, ENIAC, as another of these “computers”, just like the 200 women. Women were literally the first computers. Six of these female computers became [the first programmers](#).

Upcoming Events

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- 19 [Richard Carrier speaking, Manteca](#)
- 21 [Drinking Skeptically, Stockton](#)
- 21 [Evening with Tom Neilson](#)
- 22 [Humanist Hikers](#)
- 22 [Potluck Game Night!](#)
- 23 [Brunch and Atheism, Turlock](#)
- 23 [Gay Conversion Makes Me Sick](#)
- 24 [Sirens & Satyrs of Sharp crafts Manteca](#)
- 28 [Godless Game Night, Lodi](#)
- 28 [Sac Skeptics in the Pub](#)
- 28 [Dinner, Karaoke Dance, Modesto](#)
- 29 [‘Greatest Story Ever Sold’ Speaker](#)

Save The Date

Apr 20 [Rise & Shine Extravaganza](#)

May 1 [Capitol Rally](#)

May 31 [SkeptiCal in Berkeley](#)

Highway Cleanup

March 1

9:00 - 11:15 AM

Meet at Elkhorn exit
Park n Ride lot off
Hwy 99. [Map here.](#)

We have everything
you'll need. It's fun!

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John's Incredible Pizza!

Sunday, March 2, 11:00 AM

384 North Sunrise Avenue, Roseville



Bring your kids for lunch and games at John's Incredible Pizza, this Sunday at 11am. [Map here.](#)

We'll arrange tables to sit together and keep an eye on each others' kids as they have a blast with all the arcade games and other surprises like Frog Hopper, the Incredible Express Roller Coaster, the Laser Maze, Thunder Alley Bowling, and Twister. All You Can Eat, Family Amusements and Fun!

Skeptics in the Park - Family Event

Saturday, March 8, 11:00 - 3:00

Land Park Playground 13th ave. and 13th st., Sacramento

[Map here.](#)



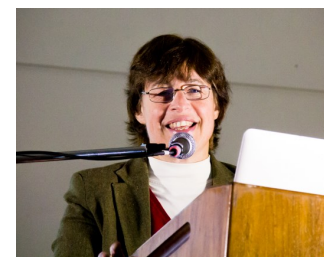
Bring your kids. Bring a picnic lunch. Come meet other skeptical families working hard to raise the next generation of critical thinkers. If someone brings a dozen eggs, maybe we'll have an egg toss contest!

Inside the greater Land Park complex, there is a nice, fenced playground just past the zoo and Fairytale Town. [Details here.](#)

Fun at Darwin Day



Always fun, informative and full of like-minded folks all honoring Charles Darwin and the evolutionary contributions that changed the world. Don't miss out on next year's Darwin Day Celebration. This year we learned from Dr. Lynn Rothschild that we are probably not alone in the universe, and why. Her delivery was as entertaining as it was educational! Thanks to The Mockingbirds and John Lucas for sound, and Matt Martin for photos!



Game Nights

Atheists and theists are all welcome. Bring a friend, roommate or honeypie. Chatting, eating, playing, laughing. Sound good? Several to choose from. Be sure to check the calendar for updates.

[Sacramento March 22 at 6:00 pm](#) or [Lodi March 28 at 6:00 pm](#) or [Oakdale March 14 at 7:00 pm](#)



New Members Meetup & Coffee

March 5, 6:30 PM
Coffee Garden
2904 Franklin Blvd
[Map here.](#)

For new and current members of SacFAN. A casual event with a quick overview of the group and plenty of time to just hang out and get to know each other.

- What SacFAN is
- Recent news and announcements
- Other local, related groups of interest
- Upcoming Events

After that, everyone is invited to continue to socialize and stay as long as you like. Buy some great drinks and snacks, and make some new friends!

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Activist Corner By Julie Wedge

It does not go unnoticed to this woman born in February that Black History Month is followed immediately by Women's History Month. Imagine if the faithless community had someone that fit both categories and was an activist...oh wait...nonbelievers do!

Sikivu Hutchinson is the 2013 Secular Woman of the Year. She is an African American author who follows in the footsteps of both her father and her grandfather as masters of the written word. *Moral Combat*, her first book, is a masterpiece of feminism, activism, atheism and how the religious right has tried to claim the civil rights movement. In her words, "While black male non-believers are given more leeway to be heretics or just MIA from church, black women who openly profess non-theist views are deemed especially traitorous, having 'abandoned' their primary role as purveyors of cultural and religious tradition."



Sikivu Hutchinson

Ms. Hutchinson was also a founding member of the Black Skeptics Group in March of 2010 in "response to the emergent need amongst African-American non-believers to have some kind of community and interpersonal connection to each other, in real time". If you would like to participate in the group or just become a follower – like me – they can be found on Facebook and all over social media. I would certainly encourage you to check it out! Ms. Hutchinson is someone I have admired for some time. Not only does she live her non-belief, she writes incredibly eloquently, and she gives great insight into activism and the trials of black women who challenge the societal norms. She inspires many to live authentically, and as we all know that is a daunting task!

Sikivu Hutchinson connects each of us beautifully, harmoniously, and with great love and intelligence. Please join in celebrating one of our own this month.



Madelyn Murray O'Hair fought and won in the Supreme Court to rid public schools of bible reading in 1963, the year she then founded American Atheists.

Local Groups to Visit or Join

Name	Emphasis		Tax Ded		Website
Agnostic & Atheist Student Association (AgASA)	UC Davis student group Socialize with like-minded students.	Y		<u>Y</u>	agasadavis.wordpress.com
Americans United for Sep of Church and State (Sac Chapter)	Promotes individual activism, confronts violations	N	Y	<u>National only</u>	au-sac.org
Secular Student Alliance @ Sacramento State University (CSUS)	CSUS student group to socialize and promote freethought.	Y		<u>Y</u>	csusaso.wordpress.com
Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF)	Events both social and presented, for growth and fun.	Y	Y	N	aofonline.org
Brights Action	Translate our naturalistic worldviews into constructive actions for school/library/media	Y	Y	<u>Internat'l only</u>	the-brights.net/
FACTS Church	Church-like hymns, rituals, all the trappings in secular form.	Y	Y	N	factschurch.com
Greater Sacramento Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation	Protecting the constitutional principle of separation of state and church.	Y	Y	N	sac.ffrf.org
Humanist Association of the Greater Sac Area (HAGSA)	Humanist events, speakers, focus is on doing good.	Y	Y	<u>Y</u>	hagsa.org
Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason	Directing the community to the various groups of reason.	Y	N	<u>Y</u>	SacramentoCoR.org
Sac Area Skeptics (SAS)	Promotion of skeptical thinking, awareness of reality, logical skills.	Y	Y	<u>Y</u>	http://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/
Sac City Freethinkers	Sac City College student group. Meet, question, promote, unite.	Y		<u>Y</u>	saccityfreethinkers.wordpress.com
Sac Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers (SacFAN)	Meetup for variety of fun, learning, singing, projects, games, activism.	Y	N	<u>Y</u>	SacFAN.org
Sac Organization for Rational Thinking (SORT)	Discussions of rational thinking and science over mysticism and anti-rationalism.	Y	N	N	home.comcast.net/~kitray2/site/?/home
Sac Think Atheist	Events, podcast, and forum to fight anti-atheism and gain tools.	N		N	thinkatheist.com/group/sacramentocalifatheists
Secular Coalition for California	Train to engage media and lobby state politicians. Activist resource.	N	N	<u>Y</u>	Secular.org/states/chapters/california
Secular College Student Alliance	Sierra College student and faculty group for non-belief in religion.	Y		<u>Y</u>	secularstudents.org/sierra
Stockton Area Atheists and Freethinkers (SAAF)	Meetup events and philanthropy, from Galt to Modesto.	Y		<u>Y</u>	StocktonAAF.org
Sun City Roseville Humanists	Humanist opportunities for our Sun City residents. Meets 1st Sundays from 1:00 to 3:00.	N	N	N	scred.org/sub_category_list.asp?category=98

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By Sara Lone

I'm not huge into following what happens to celebrities in the real world. Living in a state with the in/famous Hollywood scene made me wonder . So I googled it, and there are some pretty cool female celebrities without belief in a god!



I picked the ones I thought were coolest (yeah, shameless.) Eva Green (Casino Royale!), Keira Knightly (from Pirates), Angeline Jolie, Sarah Silverman, and (drumroll please!) Katharine Hepburn! The last one is a killer, she was born in 1907! She spoke about her religious beliefs publicly and the American Humanist Association actually awarded her with the 'Humanist Arts Award' in 1985. Katharine, representing our community, was named in the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* list of "300 Women Who Changed the World", and in 1999 the American Film Institute named her the "Greatest American Screen Legend" among females. Although born and raised in a world of oppression against atheists, she was double-whammied being a woman, and she still stood up for her beliefs and was extremely successful! Check your movie stars, peeps. And the next time you see a movie with a celebrity from our community, make sure as the credits roll in the theater to yell, "REPRESENT!!"

For your viewing pleasure, the randomness below was created by yours truly. I die with Craigstrolls - which you should all check out - and I always see people posting for papers to be written. Seriously? If I had the money to pay someone to write all my stuff!.....I mean... I still wouldn't. Nope....not at all....

Your homework: ifaketext.com and craigstrolls.com - send 'em in. Gimme watcha got! Maybe I'll pick the best one and post it next moooonnnnnth

sacramento craigslist > gigs > writing gigs > create posting

contact Posted: seconds ago

[account] [post]

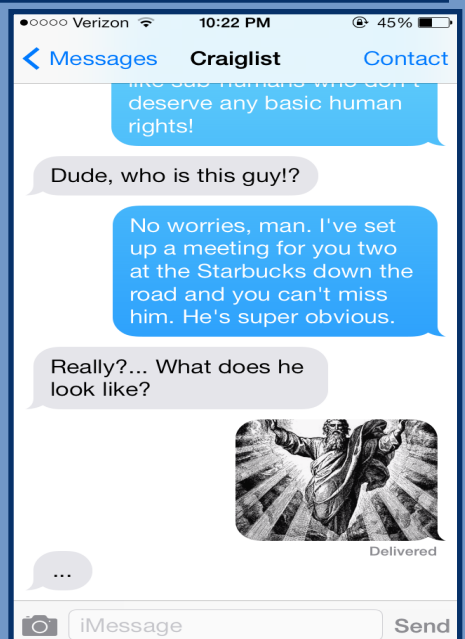
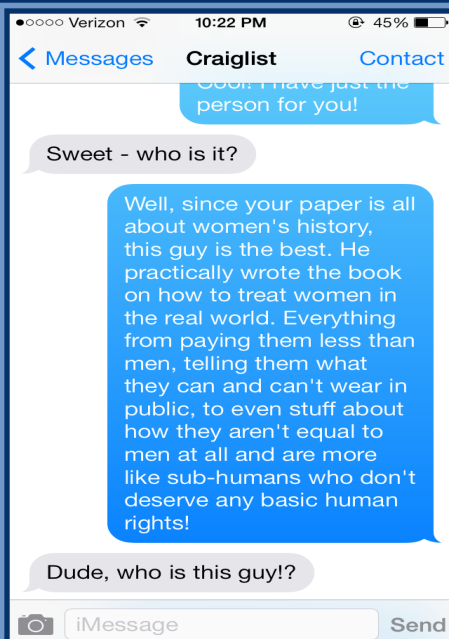
Need someone to write paper! Women's history... (Sacramento)

HELP!

I need someone to write my women's history paper for women's history month! I will pay - it needs to talk about like... oppression and stuff... 10 pages minimum. Due March 1 - we can meet and talk deets. Thanks guys - txt me 916-555-6844.

edit text edit images

publish





NATIONAL SECULAR NEWS - LISTEN EVERY WEEK

Call (559) 726-1300 every Thursday at 9:00 AM Enter Code: 953064. Or, if you prefer getting your national secular updates by email, then [sign up here](#).

Freethought Movie Night

March 16, 6:30 - 9:30

2250 Scarborough
Drive, Lodi

"The Master"

Each month features
a different movie,
shown in a comforta-
ble setting with a
projector and large
screen, in David's
clubhouse.

We'll order out. \$10
chip in for dinner.

National Day of Reason - May 1



Wear yellow at the
State Capitol Rally
6:00 pm. Fight reli-
gious infiltration
into government.
Oppose govern-
ment-sanctioned
prayer. Join Us!
Get your NDOR
gear (t-shirts, mugs,
etc.) to show your
support of separa-
tion of church and
state at [this](#)
[EvolveFish link](#).

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Family Time

By Rick Tracewell



I am very thankful that if a strong woman today "came out" as an atheist for change, it wouldn't be breaking news. But in 1980? Or, how about in 1880? Run this past your kids.

Knowing the opposition we all experience today from religious "friends" and family, I can't imagine what women would have had to face by being an outspoken atheist before the 19th century. It must have taken incredible strength of their convictions and a large dose of "I don't give a crap"...both greatly needed in this arena.

Not surprisingly, women atheists were powerful forces of change for women's rights in America. Makes sense to me – it takes the same religious delusions to keep the bible and it's "morals" relevant.

Here are just a few (I could fill a hard drive, no kidding) strong women who have made incredible differences in the secular cause and women's equality movement:

Madalyn Murray O'Hair – Founder of American Atheists and the winner of *Murray v. Curlett* (1963) which ended bible reading in public schools.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton – A staunch feminist and leader of the women's suffrage movement, Stanton wrote "The Woman's Bible" in 1895 which seriously criticized how women are portrayed in the bible.

Susan B. Anthony – Ironically, a celebrated American female icon (have you seen a silver dollar lately?) Anthony spent her life fighting to destroy the image of American women as second class citizens.

"I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do because I notice it always coincides with their own de-sires." ~ Susan B. Anthony

Ernestine Rose – Considered the first woman labeled "atheist feminist", she was instrumental in passing the Married Woman's Property Act in New York.

This secular/feminist movement has an incredible record. These powerful women fought to give all of us the ability to further the narrative. Thank you ladies.



"Mommy, what did you do in the War on Women?"

“Without atheists united in some form of community, the US would be lost overnight to a theocratic right, ready to overturn whatever secular laws remain in the constitution. While some atheists are worried about definitions, the right is worried about overturning women's rights, ending marriage equality and enforcing bad economic policies that drive more Americans into poverty. “ From a Huffington Post [article](#).

Coffee Klatch

[Queen Bean Coffee House](#)

**Sunday
March 16, 11:00a**

1126 14th
Street, Modesto

Always the third
Sunday of each
month.

Bring books, devices,
or notepads while
we solve the world's
problems, exchange
witty repartee, or
just nurse Friday
night hangovers.

Everyone pays their
own way.

Book Clubs

**Ceres:
March 4, 7-9 PM**
“The Quest for His-
torical Jesus”
[Details here.](#)

**Sacramento:
Mar 17, 6:30 pm**
“Religious Literacy -
What Every Ameri-
can Needs to
Know, and Doesn't”
Coffee Garden
2904 Franklin Blvd
[Details here.](#)

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CA Bill Update

By Tom Manger, Secular Coalition for California

The California 2014 Legislative Session started on January 6th and the Secular Coalition for California has been busy sorting through recently introduced bills. Here are a few bills we've identified and will be actively lobbying to support.

Women's History Month is being officially honored by a bill (HR 33) that was introduced by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal.

Senator Holly Mitchell introduced a bill (SB 1053) that will require FDA approved contraceptive methods, sterilization procedures, and patient education and counseling services be classified as "essential health benefits" for certain grandfathered health plans.

School districts will have more flexibility in providing programs to pregnant teens, parenting teens and their children if a bill (AB 2111) introduced by Assemblymember Tom Ammiano passes.

Senators Mitchell and Block introduced a bill (SB 1165) that encourages the State Board of Education to include instruction about dating violence, sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention as part of the state's Comprehensive Sexual Health program taught to all teenagers in public schools.

There are a number of other bills we are tracking – both in support and in opposition. Visit our website or like our Facebook page to stay informed.

Your voice – by way of reaching out and directly contacting your legislator – makes a difference. Email, phone or in-office visits are all great ways to contact them. And, think about joining us for our Lobby Day on May 1st. ---<http://ca.secular.org>

How Do I Find My Representatives?

US Senate: http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

State Senate/Assembly: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>

Local representatives can always be found on your City or County websites.

JOIN YOUR FRIENDS
IN HOLY MATRIMONY
humanistweddings.org



Perform Legal Weddings

Become a fully legal Wedding Officiant with American Humanist Association using this online course. [Link here.](#) Need a Humanist Celebrant for any life event? [Find one here.](#)

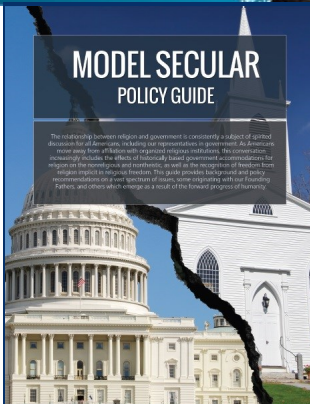
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MODEL SECULAR POLICY GUIDE

The relationship between religion and government is constantly a subject of heated discussion for all Americans. Religion and government are intertwined in many ways, and the effects of religiously based government on the lives of Americans are many. This guide provides background and policy recommendations on a variety of issues, some originating with the Founding Fathers and others which emerge as a result of the changing religious landscape.



Secular Policy Guide

Finally, we can tell our elected leaders exactly what a secular America would look like. Here are our issues and concerns, put together by the Secular Coalition for America.

[Link here.](#)

The policies we advocate help to promote a religiously-neutral government. They are solid policies that are good for the country as a whole—both the religious and non-religious alike.

[Subscribe here](#) to receive the emailed Newsletter, Action Alerts, or Morning Read by SCA.

Legal Minute By Arash Khosrowshahi

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution which prevents laws that discriminate on the basis of sex. The ERA has existed in some form since 1923, and over the decades has gained the support of feminists, liberals, civil rights advocates, and more recently labor unions. However, the ERA failed to become part of the Constitution in the 1970s and 1980s thanks to the efforts of Republican lawyer Phyllis Schlafly and the Religious Right.

Through their efforts, the ERA was lambasted as destroying gender roles by forcing women to be drafted, eliminating sexual assault protections, and preventing domesticated women from recovering property after divorce proceedings. Thirty-five states, including California, ratified the ERA, but the required thirty-eight state minimum was not met by the 1979 and 1982 deadlines set by Congress. Nevertheless, over twenty states, including California, have an ERA in their state constitutions.

This issue should concern Freethinkers for a number of reasons. For one thing, there is currently a dialog about feminism's place in our movement, and given our identification with Enlightenment values of egalitarianism and secularism, support of the ERA naturally makes sense. Moreover, first-wave feminism in the nineteenth century was motivated by women who were atheists and secular-minded, who recognized the negative impacts religion had on women in the West over the centuries. And it is no surprise that it was the Religious Right that successfully gutted passage of the ERA in the 1980s.

The impact of the ERA, were it to become the law of the land, is inconclusive, as it is the courts that must interpret its meaning, not the propaganda politics of the Religious Right. But allowing women the chance to be treated equally under the law is a fight all of us should be committed to.

These are opinions of Arash Khosrowshahi, Attorney at Law. None of these statements should be construed as creating an attorney-client relationship, nor as legal advice. The statements are provided for educational purposes only.



Perm. req'd from S. Oestreich (Addis, Jnl. Free Inquiry) (c) 2004

Drinking Skeptically - March 21, 6:30 PM

[The Valley Brewing Co](#) We will be Drinking at Valley Brew. VB is a restaurant and bar located just off the Miracle Mile in Stockton. We'll have reservations for 6:30 pm based on the RSVPs we see here. Don't drink? That's okay. Valley Brew has a wide selection of appetizers and entrees, even for the vegetarians in our group. 157 W. Adams Street, Stockton [Details here.](#)

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Sacramento Reason

Forgetting God

By Aaron Asbury

Hey there! Have you ever walked away from a religious background?

I'd be willing to bet most of us have. Have you ever carried any of the prior teachings (indoctrination, brainwashing... either substitute nicely) with you into your new, secular life? Perhaps unconsciously? "Like what?" you might ask. Discrimination. Inequality maybe.

I'd like to think that I haven't, though I've run the gamut of indoctrination. However, I know some who have. Leftovers from lessons learned during vulnerable times.

My mother, single with two kids, stumbled upon a welcoming community of good, Christian folk when going through some hard times. They took us in, provided for us. Adherence to their ways was the only cost. Though they weren't "out there" in terms of most we were used to, they were literalists when it came to that almighty bible.

The biggest sticking point for me, upon reflection, was the broad difference between men and women. Specifically their freedoms and duties.

We all know the bible prescribes some stringent rules in the treatment of women, and these people followed them to a 'T'.

Luckily we escaped, literally, before really bonding with them and their ways. Still, my mother carries some of those lessons even today. Dressing modestly, covering her head at church, washing her husbands feet, keeping her tongue held and not challenging male authority. Even in the face of abuse. I've brought these things up to her before but god's will trumps reasoning. She chooses to follow her beliefs in that way, as do others I know, and that remains their choice. I worry, though, for my teenaged sister, being taught a "woman's place" in life.

We as freethinkers should pride ourselves in the equality we share, and strive to teach it, by action even, to others. There IS a better way, and it's a co-ed experience. No god required.

Aaron writes a blog of the same title, musing on his life after god, at www.forgettinggod.com



No Blasphemy Brunches in Your Area? Here's What To Do!

Every third Sunday of each month, check the calendar for all the locations of the various Blasphemy Breakfasts and Brunches happening! No topics, no rules, just show up for some Sunday morning pancakes and omelets with some great people. Great for the whole family. Don't see a location near you? Start one! We can help you find a location and get started! [Email here](#) if you're interested. It's easy!

Listen Up!

By Cleo Kocol

So, it's women's history month. Thanks to the powers that be for the crumbs. Shouldn't our history be part of the whole year? Women worked their butts off for the Equal Rights Amendment.

But the men in power made sure it didn't pass. It behooves the corporations and the power structure to keep us down. The United States has never signed the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) proposed by the United Nations in 1978. It was ratified by over 180 nations. The USA is the only industrial nation that hasn't signed.

We apparently agree with the Islamic nations who also haven't signed. But, hey, today women are making 77 cents for every dollar a man makes. Isn't that progress? Women were making 59 cents in the '70's with Hispanic and African American women making even less. Some progress. Less than a penny a year!

While it's great to build shelters for abused women, how about telling men not to beat, rape, and disparage women? Republican men talk about "legitimate" rape. They hold hands with the religious right. It's important that freethinking, non-religious women and men learn about the past and realize all the facets used against us. Roe V Wade is being seriously curtailed in state after state.

As Hillary Clinton said in Beijing, women are humans, too. Should we be a nation of young women who are baby factories? Old women in poverty? Families forced to live on the streets? Our survival as a nation that cares about all its citizens needs women who are equal in all ways under the law.

Cleo Says

**LISTEN
UP!**



Anne Gaylor - In her years of outspoken feminist and free-thought activism, where her common-sense pronouncements on the harm of religion turned her into a media lightning rod, nobody better embodies the child in the fairy tale who "tells it like it is." She fought in court for her rights, prompting one reporter to ask her, "So, what is your organization, *freedom from religion*?" She then went on to use that name, founding what is now called the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

Freethought Dinner Social

Wednesday, March 19, 2014, 6:15 PM

Eastern Empire Restaurant 460 Howe Avenue, Sacramento

There's parking. (This is the shopping center with Safeway). You can print a coupon from their online site: <http://www.easternempirerestaurant.com/menu/menudinner.html> Please join us for conversation and good food!



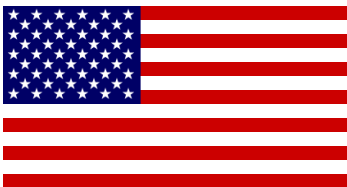
First-Ever Atheist to Visit Sacramento Juvenile Hall

By Judy Saint

Juvenile Hall Report (10 teen girls): Amazing! They were very elated to receive books to read about atheism. They had tons of questions. They had tons of 'evil' experiences and devil possessions to ask about. I saw their minds open right before my eyes. I'm not sure I've ever seen so much information relished before. OH! I was the first-ever atheist EVER to come talk at Sacramento's juvenile hall - EVER! They get church folks 2 to 3 times each week, who, I'm told, yell and threaten hell and get mad if you question them. The probation officer said she's never seen the girls so engaged in a "class" before. They were on the edges of their seats, on best behavior, for over 2 hours and didn't want to stop. In fact, 10 minutes past our time I mentioned the notion of logical fallacies, and they pleaded with the officer to let me stay 5 more minutes to tell them some. So, I did and they were blown away that what happens to them in arguments is recognized and even has labels. They couldn't get enough. My best moment was at the end when a girl who had made a promise to God that she'd never deny his existence if he would just let her give birth without handcuffs (which happened), but she told me she now realized it was her who made that happen, not a god. "I did it myself," she said proudly. She came to that conclusion on her own- we hadn't talked about that. I didn't push anything on them, I was just real. They responded so well to someone who wasn't "shittin' them". It was like offering water to people dying of thirst. The officer told me their most difficult girl they've ever had was in my class, and she was a puppy trying to tell me things and ask wonderful questions. Another, I'm told, goes around spouting her Christianity, but last night she ended up firmly wanting to work for AU, which involves believers in the fight for separation of church and state. One girl asked if there could be such a thing as a "Christian atheist". They eagerly listened to definitions of atheist/agnostic/freethinker wanting to find themselves there. They listened! Oh my gawd did they listen! I never had to say anything twice. When I explained that faith has two meanings, they totally got it immediately and almost laughed they were so happy to understand that finally. The whole 2 hours was like that. Of course I'm going back. If anyone would like to join me, or do this on your own, please let me know. I don't have enough time to give these girls what they need, and they want it on a regular basis. And just like I wasn't shittin' them, they weren't shittin' me, either. It was real. They had genuine questions and fears. They were totally open to my responses, and when they were skeptical I honored their skepticism. They were never rude or bull-headed. Very open. No one has ever suggested to them that there is no such thing as sin, or ever asked them what evil the devil actually did in the bible, or pointed out how much religion is trying to take away women's rights, and on and on... It was amazing talking with these girls. They felt empowered. I felt their lives. We both gained.

If you can visit the hall with me, or on your own, please get in touch so we can coordinate. Email me (Judy) at this email link ([click here](#)).

Buy Books from my "Books Behind Bars" Wish List on Amazon. They are sent directly to me, and I will deliver them to juvenile hall. Tax write off through Atheists and Other Freethinkers, PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851. Tax ID #68-0325762. Keep your Amazon receipt as your tax receipt. The girls value these books like you wouldn't believe. Thank you!!! *(Each book sale from this link benefits AOF.)*



We firmly support the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, including the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion" and Article Six "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States".



Can I make tax deductible donations?
Yes! Many freethinking groups are 501c3.
See Page 7 for details.

We're on the Web!
SacramentoCoR.org



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PO Box 15182
Sacramento, CA
95851-0182

E-mail:
admin@sacramentoreason.org
Judy Saint, Editor
Photographer, Matt Martin

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Honoring Betty Simonsma

An atheist, wife and mother who helped establish Sacramento's Atheist and Other Freethinkers, AOF, passed of natural causes on February 7, 2014 at age 88, survived by her husband of 61 years, Merle Simonsma.

A 55-year resident of Sacramento, Mrs. Simonsma first became president of Atheist and Other Freethinkers in Sacramento in 1995, active in the organization until the time of her death.



She attended a one-room country elementary school, boarding in town in order to attend high school. During World War II, Betty moved to LA, working at Douglas Aircraft. While there she also pursued her passion as a trapeze artist and appeared in the 1945 4th of July Rose Bowl Circus & Fireworks Show.

Betty and Merle raised five children, all graduated from Elk Grove High School. As the children were growing up, Betty earned her teaching credential.

Mynga Futrell recalls AOF's first meeting, in May of 1993, on the patio of Betty's beautiful Elk Grove estate. A quiet firebrand and gently assertive about her atheism, she was a devoted supporter of American Atheists and the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

Some may recall Betty's "Dial-an-Atheist" service that existed in Sacramento in the late 1980's and early 90's.

"Betty was a wonderful woman," writes Mynga, "and delightfully artistic. She was a proud and courageous atheist activist with a lovely gentle manner. As an untiring helper and contributor within the AOF organization, she provided such an admirable example to fellow citizens."

Sacramento Area's Freethinking Calendar

The Sacramento Area has its own event calendar for atheists, skeptics, humanists, and all other freethinkers. Sacramento Area groups love to cooperate and mingle, all supporting each other in these times of religious zeal. The Sac Coalition of Reason, which maintains this automatically-updated calendar, is not a club or group with a Board, or rules, but is a resource directing anyone interested to find local freethinking groups that suit them. Bookmark this calendar on your devices. It's a handy one-stop reference for almost everything going on up and down the valley.

<http://unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events>

