

# Sacramento Reason

CoR

*Shine the Light of Reason!*

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Sac Coalition of Reason  
Calendar: [sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events](http://sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events)

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Volume II, Issue II

Issue Theme: Psychics Debunked

November 2014

## Light the Night! - Let's Walk to the End of Cancer

Saturday, Nov. 1  
5:30 PM  
[Raley Field](#)  
400 Ball Park  
Drive, West Sacramento, Ca ([edit map](#))

Look for our Banner /  
Tent -- Wear a  
SacFAN or similar  
Shirt!

The Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason is proud to announce its [support](#) for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) and their Light the Night Walk, happening on Saturday, November 1, 2014, at 5:30 PM, at Raley Field.



## Why Walk? Because it's Inspirational!

To fight leukemia and lymphoma, we are working with the Foundation Beyond Belief. In our first year, together we raised \$430,000 for LLS! Freethinkers across the US and Canada formed 150 local teams.

Help Us Raise \$10,000 for Northern California in 2014.

To meet our goal, we'll need YOUR help spreading the word to your friends and coworkers. You can do this through a simple website. You can [just donate](#) to our team. About the Walk



The Light the Night Walk is the LLS's evening walk and fundraising event to pay tribute and bring hope to people battling cancer. Thousands of participants raise funds for vital, lifesaving research and patient services and, on these special nights, they carry illuminated balloons in a show of support from a caring community.



**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>



## Psychic Fined \$7 Million for Misleading the Police

Houston, no less. What would you do if a psychic told you a mass grave was under your home? The psychic called the Sheriff. He called the media. They printed the address. The address went world-wide. REALLY? ([story here.](#))

## How To Tell A Fortune

This article gives several common methods to divine one's fortune/future. [See article here.](#)

At the end is a great paragraph that if someone believes a fortune will happen to them, then they must believe there is no free will, so why not just give up? If they only want to know what might happen to them, then the answer is always yes.

## "Ask The Social I.Q. Lady"

Atheists can be moral too. Many believe that in order to have morals one needs to be religious. If you don't believe in an afterlife or a chance at reliving your life based on how well you managed through this one, then there is no reason to "behave" thus allowing you to commit atrocious sins/crimes without worry.

In America, atheists are more stigmatized than homosexuals. We have come a long way on both fronts, but there is so much more education to be realized. For example, when it comes to Darwinism and evolution, many Americans believe that if you accept the theory of evolution then there is no need for a God and thus no moral responsibility. It's a stereotype that continues and is especially prolific in the South. The preachers there go to great lengths to perpetuate the marginalization and even demonization of atheists. Even as they go on air to ask forgiveness for their cheating, lying, adulterous, stealing, homophobic, embezzling lives, their followers forgive and embrace them because that's what Jesus would want them to do. However, take a law abiding atheist, who lives a clean, moral life and gives to charity..... well, that's a whole other story.

I think the stigma of being an atheist has led a majority of atheists to adopt more "accepting" names or labels for themselves. We've come up with some pretty good ones: Bright, Freethinker, Humanist, Skeptic, Naturalist, Non-believer and the ever accepting Agnostic.

When we stand up for reason even at the expense of being ostracized, we broaden the future for the next generation. History has shown us that people as a whole *can* evolve and change, but it can only happen when we work together. Atheists can be good without a god because morality has little to do with religion.

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

## Be A Psychic! Amaze Your Friends!

Secret code for writing horoscopes, messages from the dead and palm reading: 1. Give both sides of a trait, such as "you can enjoy a lively conversation at times but you need your personal space." Be sure traits mentioned are almost all desirable. 2. Use common references, such as "surrounded by books" or "travel" or "health concerns". 3. Be vague, such as "can sometimes". 4. Ask questions in the form of hunches, such as "Has he passed?" then agree with their answer. Even more telling is how a person looks, reacts or nods. Add to that the fact that people will be amazed by one good guess while they ignore 10 wrong guesses, and you'll convince the gullible of your supernatural powers! Read a real psychic's confessions [at this link.](#)



## Ancient Christian Study Group - Nov. 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.

## Secular Tree Decorating Party

Sunday, November 30, 2014  
10:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Melanie's House

Address to be sent before event (in Sacramento)

Come celebrate the holiday season with dogma-free decorating, warm beverages, snacks, and, later in the day, when we're finished decorating, games. Please bring a potluck dish, holiday leftovers, or a snack to share. I will have donuts /pastries for those who show up bright and early to help set up the artificial tree and decorate it. There will be twisted holiday music for our listening pleasure while we decorate, such as Bob Rivers and Dr. Demento. If you have any offbeat holiday recordings, please bring them. My collection is limited.

The morning and afternoon will be spent decorating, and then we will play games and eat and hang out afterwards. Folks are free to stay all day or show up for whatever portion fits into their schedule.

[Details here](#)



## Screening and Discussion: "The New Black"

Monday, November 3, 2014  
5:45 PM to 9:00 PM

[University of the Pacific - DeRosa University Center](#)  
3600 Pacific Ave, Stockton, CA ([map](#))

The Colliver Lecture this year will sponsor a screening of the film The New Black, which depicts the tensions in African-American religious communities in Maryland during the run up to the referendum on same-sex marriage in that

state (Prop 6). The filmmaker, Yoruba Richen, will be present to introduce the film and take questions after the screening. Trailer: <http://www.newblackfilm.com/trailer/>

This is a free, public event. Parking after 5:30 PM is free.

Arrive and join us at any time. Here's the plan:

5:30pm - Meet at The Lair (upstairs) for dinner and drinks.

6:30pm - Doors open at the Ballroom. Refreshments will be served.

7:00pm - The event begins.



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

Nov 8 10:00 am Brunch and Atheism, Panera Bread, 10718 Trinity Pkwy, Stockton [Map here](#)  
Nov 16 9:30 am Blasphemy Breakfast, Mels Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd [Map here](#)  
Nov 16 11:00 am Blasphemy Brunch, Mel's Diner 565 Howe Ave [Map here](#)



### Blaspheming With Food Every 3rd Sunday!

Happy, well-fed heathens! 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.

### Book Clubs

**Ceres**, Nov 4 7pm  
1st Tues each mo.  
*A Short History of the Jewish People*,  
Scheindlin  
[Details here.](#)

**Ceres**, Dec 2, 7pm  
*Is God a Moral Monster?* By Copan  
[Details here.](#)

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### Coming Out

By Oriana Morrison

Those who claim to be psychics have a bag of tricks that they use to fool the uninformed and the gullible. They prey on those who are worried about their future either in the workplace or in a romance, and even more tragically those who have lost loved ones by telling them that they can speak to their dead mother or child. As Herb Dewey and Thomas K. Seville divulge in *King of the Cold Readers*, we all think we are unique in our human experience when the truth is we have such similarities in life that it makes predicting these commonplace experiences simple to one who is willing to learn the tricks of the trade.

It is not uncommon to encounter skepticism in regards to psychics, and yet many people seem to believe that the claims the alleged psychic makes are true.

If you are finding coming out as an atheist or as skeptical concerning religion intimidating as I did, and I found coming out to my best friend who simply describes herself as nonbelieving difficult, it might prove easier to come out first as skeptical when it comes to psychics and the like. Doing so can open the door to further conversations in which your skepticism about religion can be more easily broached.

Religion and psychics both cause harm as shown in cases such as the one regarding [Presley "Rhonda" Gridley](#), so discussing the pain and damage psychics have caused can make it easier to later discuss the often very negative effects of religion.

If that fails, you might try playing Tim Minchin's 9-minute beat poem [Storm](#) for your intended audience, they'll most likely get your point and a laugh to boot.



### Highway Cleanup

Saturday, Nov. 1, 9—11 AM  
Take the Elkhorn Exit off Hwy 99 [Map here](#)  
Meet in the Park n Ride on the west side.  
The activity captain will provide all safety equipment, including comfortable hard-hats and gloves, stylish safety vests, collection bags, and handy trash pickers. Thanks for keeping our section clean, under the Atheists and Other Freethinkers sign on the freeway!



**“How To Tell The Future” Video** In this workshop from The Amaz!ng Meeting 2012, Ray Hyman instructs participants on how to do "psychic" or character readings. They also perform readings on each other. The goal is not to increase the number of cold readers, but to show how easily a cold reading can convince people they have experienced the supernatural. [Watch the 2 hour video workshop here.](#)

## Upcoming Events

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**21** [Drinking Skeptically in Stockton](#)  
**23** [Brunch and Atheism in Turlock](#)  
**23** [Sunday Assembly at Reason Center](#)  
**28** [Game Night, Lodi](#)  
**28** [Sacramento Skeptics in the Pub](#)  
**28** [Finally Friday—Dinner and Karaoke](#)  
**30** [Secular Tree Decorating Party](#)  
**Dec 2** [Book Club in Ceres](#)  
**Dec 3** [Welcome New Members Mtg](#)

## Save The Date

**Dec 13** [Ask an Atheist at Arden Fair](#)  
**Dec 21** Solstice HumanLight Party  
**Feb 3** Jerry DeWitt in Sacramento  
**Feb 7** Jerry DeWitt in Manteca  
**Feb 8** Darwin Day

*The Skeptic's Annotated Bible* is in Print!  
[Buy it here.](#)

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## Colloquium Speaker: Dr. Alan Lenzi

Two ancient poems — the biblical Book of Job and the Babylonian Ludlul Bel Nemeqi (composed 800 years earlier) — amid all of their differences, display several striking similarities and share a common theme.

The common theme in both texts is the necessity for humans to accept the inscrutable sovereignty and decisions of the god who caused the suffering.

Dr. Lenzi will argue that these two texts ultimately are about silencing religious criticism and dispelling doubts about the religious status quo in their respective communities (a function the Book of Job carries on to this day).



### About the Speaker

Alan Lenzi (PhD, Brandeis University) is an associate professor in the Department of Religious and Classical Studies at University of the Pacific. He works in the field of first millennium ancient Near Eastern religious traditions, especially Babylonian and Assyrian.

He has published books on secrecy in Mesopotamian and biblical religious texts, the Babylonian "Job," and ancient Akkadian prayers and hymns. He is editor of the ancient Near Eastern section of the online journal Religion Compass.

[Map here.](#) [Details here](#)



## Sunday Assembly—November 23

The Sunday Assembly is a secular congregation that celebrates life. Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento

Our events -- on the fourth Sunday of each month -- are 75 minutes of music from a live band (80s and 90s pop hits), inspirational talks, poetry and art, donuts and coffee, and more, followed by an optional potluck.

[Map here](#)  
[Details here](#)

**Reason  
Center**



## Want to Read More About Fake Psychics Who Got Caught?

Here are 13 links, each one a gem of debunking that will light your eyes with laughter, tears or glee. Click on any number:

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) [12](#) [13](#)



### AN AMERICAN ATHEIST

Listen to our local atheist radio show [at this link](#).

**“Matt Dilla-hunty”** - Tom chats with The Atheist Experience host and public speaker Matt Dilla-hunty during his trip to Sacramento. [Listen to the 43 minute show at this link.](#)

Tom begins the segment by asking whether people should try to convert, or proselytize others. Listen as Matt answers that question, shares his background and a few personal stories, in this informal talk. Other news up for discussion can be found on the homepage, [at this link](#).

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#### Little Activisms

By Judy Saint

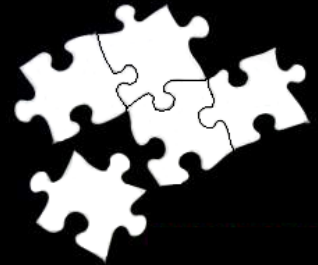
This month many families will gather to enjoy a few days together. Some of us might be expected to hold hands in prayer to give thanks to God in remembrance of how he brought a band of people to America and helped them survive against so many disasters.

Some of us, though, might feel uncomfortable praying, in particular giving thanks for that time in history. Some of us might understand that what brought these people to this country was persecution from fellow Christians, which continued in full with these colonialists in no different fashion, even on this new soil. Some of us might understand that survival was in large part with the help of non-Christians, who arguably should be the object of our thanks, rather than a god. Some of us might just not be comfortable praying, regardless of to whom or why – we just don’t like supporting the notion of supernatural beings.

What we do is different for everyone, of course. Some of us accept the scorn and shunning from family and friends, and others of us hide our preferences to be included and “loved”.

If you can, perhaps say in a matter-of-fact way, as if you are asking for more potatoes, that you don’t believe in these things, and smile while you invite the others to continue. Then sit back and either begin eating if you’re ready to be slapped upside the head, or just wait. If speaking up is not for you this year, maybe think of yourself as an anthropologist studying a remote tribe, and join in their quaint little custom, examining how they are affected by it, and what it means to them.

Remember that taking risks is how we learn who we are, and how others come to know us, too. Be brave.





## 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 Nov 15 at 6:00 pm](#) or [Oakdale Nov 14 at 7:00 pm](#) or [Lodi Nov 28 at 6 pm](#)



### New Members Meetup & Coffee

Nov 5 at 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

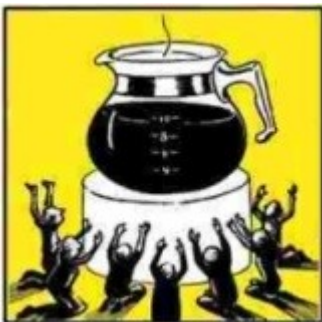
Everyone is invited to continue to stay as long as you like. Buy some great drinks and snacks, and make some new friends!

[Details here.](#)

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### Coffee Church Nov 2, 3:00 pm

Sunday, November 2

3:00—6:00 PM

Panera Bread

2731 Del Paso Rd, Sacramento

We know you aren't in REAL church so come join us for coffee and conversation! Laughs included! We meet at the big table in the center of the dining area. Please don't bring any outside food. Dress warmly! Also, please make note this is Panera on Del Paso ROAD. There is also a Del Paso Blvd.

### Coffee Klatch in Modesto

Sunday, November 16, 11:00 AM

[Queen Bean](#)

1126 14th Street, Modesto, CA ([map](#))

Always the third Sunday of each month. Bring books, devices, or notepads while we solve the world's problems and exchange witty repartee. [Details here](#)



### Freethought Dinner Social

[Dad's Kitchen](#) 2968 Freeport Blvd

Saturday, November 15, 2014

6:00 PM [Map here](#) [Details here](#)

From recent Yelp reviews (Oct 2014): "Stand up establishment. .. has organic ingredients ... Service is kind... worth the wait here!" and "Chill patio to enjoy breakfast and some coffee. ... Will definitely be back!" Possible limited parking though, carpool if you can. [See website and menu here.](#)



# Local Groups to Visit or Join

Visit the Reason Center for more friendly information about our freethinking community and events. [1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A](#)

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



## Finally Friday! - Dinner, Karaoke, and Dance!

Nov 28, 7:00 pm. Torri's Japanese Restaurant, 2401 E Orangeburg Ave, Modesto.

We start dinner at 7:00. After dinner we hang out for karaoke and fun! Kids are welcome till 10.

[Map here](#) [Details here](#). By the way, if you wish you had a Finally Friday in your city, start one!



### Skeptics in the Pub - Two Locations

#### Sacramento

Sac Skeptics in the Pub

Fri Nov 28, 6:30p  
Hoppy Brewing Co  
6300 Folsom Blvd

[Map here](#)

[Details here](#)

#### Stockton

Drinking Skeptically

Fri Nov 21, 6:30p  
Valley Brewing Co.

157 W Adams St  
Stockton, CA  
Restaurant and bar  
just off the Miracle  
Mile. Join in!

[Map here](#)

[Details here](#)



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By Sara Lone

Using spirituality to connect to our physical world is just plain silly. Spirituality is not a pre-req to living a happy, healthy, full life, but it's so often a forced ingredient. We have *Family Guy* jokes about televangelists, because they exist and make their money for a reason: everyone is looking for a connection with "spirituality", because religious leaders have packaged it as truth, sold it well, and now we feel like we need it. Well I'm telling you, a life without spirituality is DIVINE!

Time to get into your downward facing dog for this example. We always hear about yoga being this mystical, spiritual, check your auras, tap into your third eye, breath in those karmic waves, out-of-body experience, but it just ain't so. Although yoga began in the Hindu religion, you don't have to be a swami to experience legit physical positives from yoga — everyone needs to calm their mind and do some stretching — and there are reasonable benefits from yoga, making mystification unnecessary. For starters, studies show that people who do yoga sleep better, have fewer migraines, a boosted immunity, lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and then some. The best part? None of these have anything to do with an invisible man in the sky! They're tangible... because you're usually pretty sore after a good yoga sesh...

The point is, we don't need spirituality to enjoy the benefits of an awesome practice like yoga. Yeah, ok, so it started that way — but nobody needs all that hullabaloo; humans are much better off using science to explain the physical benefits of stuff like yoga. Unless you source that scientific study that says eating dark chocolate doesn't have health benefits. Gonna have to go full-blown religious on you and la-la-la-la-la-la-la...

Contact Sara at [Under30@sacramentoreason.org](mailto:Under30@sacramentoreason.org).  
#under30nones



"Someone is here, someone sad and lonely,  
desperately seeking attention...  
but enough about me"

## Host Your Own Event!

Think of something you enjoy doing, then list your event on a Meetup calendar for your area. It's simple. Join the Meetup group, then click on 'calendar' in the sidebar, then click on any date. If it's something you enjoy, then no matter how many show up, you'll have a good time! Here are a few:

[Sacramento](#)

[Stockton](#)

[Stanislaus](#)

[Butte County](#)

[SF Bay Area](#)

[San Jose](#)



### From our Readers

#### God and Trees Submitted by Bob Schmidt

If there is a god and god created trees, it did a wonderful job. If there is a god and it created human beings, it was less successful.

Believers contend that when god created humans, it gave them the ability to think for themselves. Maybe that was a mistake.

Many humans choose to do good things, to love each other, to help each other, and that is a good thing.

But some humans choose to do evil, to kill others and to steal from others and to do harm in various ways. That is not a good thing.

Homo sapiens are said to have originated about 200,000 years ago, and that would certainly be long enough for humanity to learn what is in its best interests, that doing good is better than doing evil. But many of us haven't learned. Look at us. We are still choosing to kill each other. The Economist magazine recently printed that wars in the Middle East had accounted for more than 600,000 deaths in the period from 1975 to 2014. The deaths are going on each day in Israel and Palestine and Ukraine.

We kill each other many at a time with bombs or one at a time with handguns. Everyday in the newspapers of too many cities there are stories about citizens shooting other citizens to death.

Most of the time in history, and currently, wars are fought in the name of religion. If there is a god who considers religion important, why does it allow that?

There are other questions god, if there is one, should answer.

If there is an all-powerful god, how can it allow babies to be born with Down's Syndrome, or autism, or without sight or hearing. There is no choice involved.

Humans have the ability to love each other, and that is good. Some people develop love with members of their own sex, and there are some people who believe that is evil although no choice seems to be involved, just as some people are born to be left-handed or with brown hair or tall or short, again with no choice involved. Some males and female babies are born with the wrong bodies, the humans we now call transgender. Again, no choice is involved.

Is god involved with any of that?

But if there is a god and it made trees, thank you god.



## Sacramento African American Humanists

African Americans may be the nation's most religious minority, but the churches and religious leaders don't speak for many of us.

Today as in the past, many African Americans question religion and religious institutions. More and more of us stand for reason over faith. Freethought over authority. Critical thinking in place of superstition. Many of us are nonreligious; some are nontheistic.

**African Americans for Humanism** supports skeptics, doubters, humanists, and atheists in the African American community, provides forums for communication and education, and facilitates coordinated action to achieve shared objectives.

**AFRICAN  
AMERICANS  
FOR  
HUMANISM**

**In an irrational world, those who stand for reason must stand together.**

The Sacramento African American Humanists supports skeptics, doubters, humanists, and atheists in the African American community, provides forums for communication and education, and facilitates coordinated action to achieve shared objectives.

For more information, e-mail [sacaahumanists@gmail.com](mailto:sacaahumanists@gmail.com)

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/blackhumanistsofsacramento>

Read the AAH Blog entries at this link: <http://www.aahumanism.net/articles>

Watch AAH videos and lectures online at this link: <http://www.aahumanism.net/media>

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## Don Knutson on Israel/Palestine

November 16, 3:00 PM

Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento

"I have been to the Middle East twice. The first time was in 2004 when, at the invitation of a friend, I went to Lebanon and Syria to view Palestinian refugee camps. That sufficiently whetted my appetite to see Israel, so I went the next year on a tour and was among the half of my group who got permits to visit Gaza. I have numerous photos of the destruction I saw then. Hard to believe that it is much worse now."

This meeting should also provide an opportunity to discuss the Israel/Gaza conflict that has occurred since Alison Weir's April 27 presentation on the US connection to Israel/Palestine. [Map here](#) [Details here](#)

Sponsored by HAGSA. [Join here](#).



**Reason  
Center**



## Listen Up! By Cleo Kocol

Once I had my "fortune" read by a witch doctor in Africa. He tossed bones and sticks, weighed objects before telling me that the rest of my life would be enjoyable. That I was married to a good man who appreciated me. He followed these pronouncements with generalities that would fit most people and then with a long face said I'd have back trouble. That it would plague me throughout my life. But that no matter, my life would be interesting and long.



So let's examine his "fortune telling." I was an American who had traveled to his land. Easy to say my life would be good. Easy to surmise I was married; I wore a wedding ring. Easy to say I was married to a good man. He had probably glimpsed us walking around the reconstructed Shona village. I was also of an age where I probably had grandchildren. So apparently my husband and I got along and so he was "good." Same sex marriage was not yet taking place in America, so easier for the fortune teller to narrow that aspect down. Most all people have back problems at some point in their life, so he couldn't miss with that. As for a long life, easy to predict for Americans when looked at from an African perspective.

When fortune tellers, mind readers, and other psychics come into your life, all it takes is common sense, logic and science to refute them. But like all magic, their slight of hand, their pronouncements can be fun if you keep your thinking hat on. People who have already concluded that religion is a form of magic should have no problem. It's fun to see if you can "outsmart" people who are out to "outsmart" you. Enjoy the tarot cards, the palm reading, scream when women are sawed in two, but keep in mind it's all a trick.



### Diane "Kit" Moser, b. 1944

Wife to Ray Spangenburg, co-founder of the Sacramento Organization for Rational Thinking, author, educator, and past co-editor of the *Bay Area Skeptics Information Sheet* (BASIS), left us quietly in April 2014 after a prolonged illness. With her husband she wrote more than 50 books and over 100 articles on science, science history, biography and critical thinking. Their most recent was *Carl Sagan: A Biography*, issued by Prometheus Books in 2008.



Her husband, Ray, says, "She was really special in a hundred ways I cannot begin to explain - from her free spirit to her intellectual capabilities and personal integrity."

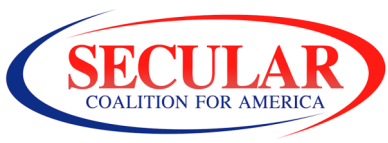
We remember her and miss her.

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

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

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Sacramento Reason

## Dept. of Bad Bills

By Tom Manger

I predict that the Secular Coalition for California is going to have a very busy year in 2015. (No cold reading necessary for this prediction!)

The SCCA has been in existence for only two years. In that time we've been busy in Sacramento - monitoring & lobbying for/against specific bills, communicating with individual legislative offices, submitting position papers, attending committee meetings and giving testimony, creating Secular Scorecards for politicians at the statehouse, holding Lobby Day and Advocacy Day events, keeping our fellow freethinkers informed about goings-on in Sacramento, and working to increase the size and reach of our secular coalition.

And, for 2015 we're working to introduce our own legislation.

This is a big step for us. We've been pouring over existing laws to find sections of code with too much sectarian influence. We've identified two sections of code that are ripe for some minor edits. So, we've been verbally "shopping" our proposed changes with legislators who have supported secular values as evidenced by their voting records. (See our Secular Scorecard - <http://states.secular.org/states/california/>!) And, we've received some positive feedback.

One of our proposed bills seeks to increase secular options for marriage solemnization which is heavily skewed towards religious solemnizers. Our second proposal will eliminate use of the undefined term "criminal abortion" as (unevenly) applied in the CA Business and Professions code. Contact me directly if you would like more specific information.

So, in the weeks to come, we will be reaching out to legislative offices and presenting a more formal write up of our proposed changes. We're hopeful that we'll get some forward momentum. But, much will depend upon the results of the upcoming statewide elections.

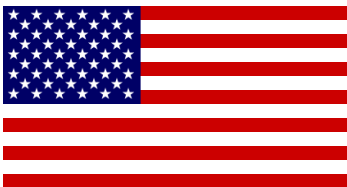
Fortunately, pollsters and statisticians have replaced psychics in making election related predictions! But, I'll make one last prediction upon parting...

Freethinkers won't have their voices heard in the halls of the Sacramento Statehouse unless they vote. So, get out there and vote!

Find out more about the [Secular Coalition for California](#), our [Key Issues](#), and be sure to [subscribe to Action Alerts](#). You can also [Like us on Facebook](#). Email us with any questions - [california@secular.org](mailto:california@secular.org).







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 8.

Print one copy of this newsletter to leave somewhere for others to read. You never know who is questioning.

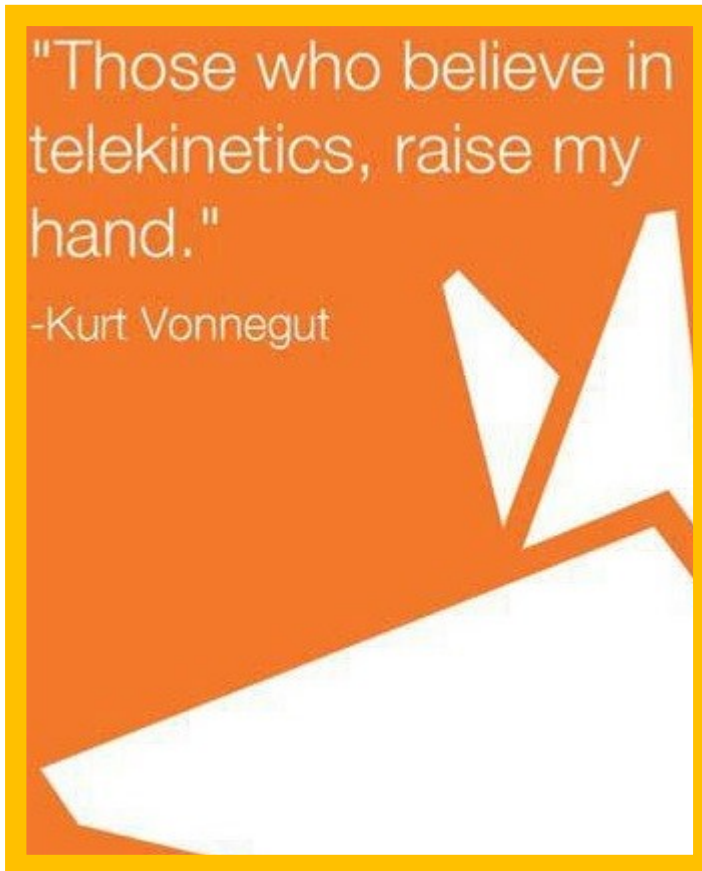


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## Sacramento Area's Freethinking Calendar

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/>

