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Sac Coalition of Reason
Calendar: <http://unitedcor.org/event-calendar-2/>

Subscribe

Volume III, Issue 8

Issue Theme: Polarization of America

August 2015

Camp Quest 2015—A Great Experience!

Camp Quest West held a record-breaking summer camp this year! With the theme "Dragons, Dinosaurs, Discovery, and Discourse". Over 100 children and 35 adults took to Malakoff Diggins Park to learn about science, Humanism, and the beautiful California outdoors.

Learning activities focused on topics like cartography, archeology, communication, leadership, identifying with disabilities, equity and fairness, and music theory. Campers could also experience activities like knitting, rocket launching, archery, canoeing, arts and crafts, and more.

The week-long program is so popular, it filled to capacity in May. Their board intends to

open a second, identical session in July 2016 while continuing to grow in Southern California as well.



Support from local donors allowed Camp Quest West to provide "camperships" to economically-challenged families, sending twenty Northern California kids to camp after receiving \$6,700 in donations.



Camp Quest West's long-term growth will seek grants and donations, improve their curriculum, hire their first ever staffer, and mentor other Camp Quest affiliates nationwide.

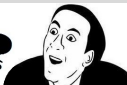
Registration for Summer 2016 opens in January. Donations are accepted any time via Camp Quest West's website at CampQuestWest.org.

facebook



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. Sign up to keep informed! ([Click Here](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sacramento-Area-Coalition-of-Reason/376151155788191)) or go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sacramento-Area-Coalition-of-Reason/376151155788191>

Really?



What Do They Really Believe?

As religion loses its hold over people we see a radical base of Christians forming in this country who want to wear their religion as a badge, to prove their worth to their in-group. It seems that "belief" in this country has now become a matter of denying more reality than the next believer. The more denial of reality the better. Denying reality? And this is how you expect to help the world, vote responsibly or even get a job? **REALLY?**

Freethought Dinner Social

**Aug 22, 5:30 PM
Bella Bru**

Fair Oaks Blvd &
Arden Way in
Carmichael.

[Map here.](#)

[Bella Bru website](#)

Please join us for conversation and good food.

[Details here.](#)

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Sacramento Reason

Hidden Falls Hike!

Sunday, August 16, 8:00—10:00 AM
Hidden Falls Regional Park
7587 Mears Place, Auburn [Map here](#)

Join us! With 20 trails to choose from, the thought can be mind boggling. Worry not, we've hiked this spot before and had a blast. So, here's to another round of the Hidden Falls!

We intend to keep this event simple and move at an easy pace in order to include everyone. I've witnessed strollers on the path we plan to take. Save the date for Saturday August 16th @ 8a.m. There will be an optional (donation based) indigenous drawings class during the break at one of the streams.

Our awesome member Dee will be hosting this hiking event!

[Details here](#)



Dr. Sankey speaking in Manteca, September 16

Julia is a vertebrate paleontologist, with a background in both biology and geology. Her current research is on Late Cretaceous theropod dinosaurs and the Cretaceous-Tertiary mass extinction 65 million years ago. She has been teaching at CSU Stanislaus since 2003.

Dr. Sankey earned her Ph.D. in 1998 from the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where she taught as an instructor in the department, and was a specimen collections manager.

This is a free event, open to the public, at the Manteca Library. Doors open at 7:15 pm. Those of all worldviews and faiths are welcome. Suggested donations of \$20 to support this and future colloquiums are appreciated. [Details here.](#)

COLLOQUIUM

DR. JULIA SANKEY





Ancient Christian Study Group - Aug. 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.

Camp with Fellow Freethinkers! Sep 4-7, Sign Up Now!

Atheist Adventures: 4th Annual FANcamp

Friday, September 4, 4:00 PM—Monday, September 7, 12:00 PM

Big Reservoir Campground, Morning Star Lake, Tahoe National Forest, Foresthill

Great site with water and space. Description from "Northern California Camping": Here's a quiet lake where only electric boat motors are allowed; no gas motors are permitted [now it is no-motors at all]. That makes it ideal for canoeists, rowboaters, and tube floaters who don't like the idea of having to dodge water-skiers. The lake is stocked with rainbow trout... Big Reservoir (also known as Morning Star Lake) is quite pretty with a nice beach and some lakefront campsites. The elevation is 4,000 feet. I have reserved the 40-person campground. Group Camp A. Click details below to sign up.

[Map here](#)

[Details here.](#)

You Can Help Get "In God We Trust" Off Our Money

It's under way. We have a plan, leadership, an organized fund-raising effort in place, and an experienced legal team forming. And YOU have the chance to hop on in support right now.

A participating group in our Sacramento Coalition of Reason, Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF), has initiated a new project to educate about - and encourage support for - the recently renewed legal drive to challenge "In God We Trust" on the nation's money.

The project is called AOF's "Separation Restoration Project". All readers of *Sacramento Reason* who have distaste for the government promoting that religion-infused concept are invited to lend their support. Through this project, we hope to help the public learn more about separation of church and state while simultaneously advancing the separation ideal. How can you get involved? Join AOF, offer to help, or join others in facilitating the grass roots funding of this well-thought education and litigation drive.

AOF is taking on the role of accepting the tax-deductible donations and paying for various legal expenses as part of its educational mission. (Court filing fees alone are \$400 per District Court.) *Sacramento Reason's* readers have a chance to participate in AOF's attempt to further expand the notion of civic equality to religious/nonreligious equality. Get involved today. Be a supporter of the Separation Restoration Project! Click the link below to learn more, and become a supporter.

<http://www.aofonline.org/what-we-are.html#Separation>

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

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

Aug 16 9:30 am Blasphemy Breakfast, Mel's Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd [Map here](#)

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



Blaspheming With Food Every 3rd Sunday!

Every 3rd Sunday of the month, 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](#).

Book Clubs

Sacramento
Books & Brunch
Aug 2, 11:00 am
Chicken N Waffles
2961 Advantage Ln
[Details here.](#)

Sacramento
Aug 17, 6:30 pm
Reason Center
1824 Tribute Rd
Suite A, Sacto
[Details here.](#)

Ceres, Aug 4, 7pm
1st Tues each mo.
[Details here.](#)

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Sacramento Reason

Coming Out

By Oriana Morrison

"A Christian Holocaust is starting! Our freedom of speech is being restricted! Our faith has been spat upon and ignored! Our lives are in danger! Get your shotguns out and circle the wagons! Why? Because marriage equality is now the law of the land."

I knew my right wing fundamentalist friends and I saw things differently, but if you had told me before I saw it for myself that they would make these claims I wouldn't have believed you. I would have told you they are not that crazy. I would have been so wrong. They are completely batsh*t.

I knew our country was polarized, it often feels like a civil war is about to erupt, only it would be waged in our own back yards as we are not segregated according to politics or religion. In many cases civil war is likely to break out in our living rooms.

Seeing this extremism can make coming out as a non-theist quite frightening, but feeling that fear reminds me of a quote by Elbert Hubbard my dad had taped to his desk for many years. "If you would escape moral and physical assassination, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing--court obscurity, for only in oblivion does safety lie."

I am not advocating that anyone be reckless and come out without giving the consequences serious thought. It's wise to be prepared to face whatever backlash may come. The rewards of coming out, however, are significant. It may be that it is your voice speaking reason that will break through the fear-based assumptions held by someone close to you, helping them realize that their rights are not trampled on when the rights that they have taken for granted for so long are extended to others. Come on out and speak up for reason!



Worth Checking! Former AOF member Robert Sacerich from Roseville has started the [Rationality Unleashed Project](#) and [Rationality Unleashed Daily](#) newsletter, both quite well done and worth checking! First issue of the newsletter was about June 4. Congratulations, Robert!

Upcoming Events cont'd from pg 1

- [16 Blasphemy Break-fast in Rocklin](#)
- [16 Blasphemy Brunch Dixon/Vcville](#)
- [16 Blasphemy Brunch Arden/Arcad](#)
- [16 Coffee Klatch in Modesto](#)
- [16 Ancient Christian Study Group](#)
- [17 Book Club in Sacramento](#)
- [17 Self Defense, RC](#)
- [19 Concert in the Park, Stockton area](#)
- [20 Self Defense, RC](#)
- [21 Drinking Skeptically, Stockton](#)
- [22 Stockton Pride Festival + Booth](#)
- [22 "Hair" Musical](#)
- [22 Freethought Dinner Social](#)
- [23 BHNBS Humanity Breakfast Yummm](#)
- [23 Brunch and Atheism in Turlock](#)
- [25 Game Night in Stockton](#)
- [25 Self Defense, RC](#)
- [26 Concert in the Park, Stockton area](#)
- [26 Board Games at Reason Center](#)
- [27 Self Defense, RC](#)

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Issue Theme: Polarization of America

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Science Nights

Wednesday, August 5, 6pm—8pm

World of Wonders Science Museum, 2 N. Sacramento Street, Lodi

Free. Science Night Live is an engaging science experience with a casual atmosphere for the curious minds in our community! Come Aug. 5 to hear UC Davis Prof. Annaliese Franz talk about sustainable fuel from ... wait for it... algae!

[Map here](#)

[Details here](#)

Freethought Day—Mark Your Calendar, October 11

Chance to mark your calendars—Heads Up!

Annual Freethought Day is set for October 11 this year. As you remember, last year we had a tremendous number of speakers and displays on the grounds of the State Capitol Building downtown. What better statement to send the community than to have a great outpouring of support for freethought right at our Capitol where laws are made. Plan now to attend!



Advanced Reading Book Club

We read important essays, books and listen to audio recordings. We tend to the left on most things but are open to any and all. The more the merrier. For the 27 different meetings in August (yes, 27 meetings!) see the Meetup [calendar at this link](#).

Upcoming Events

cont'd from previous page

28 [Sacramento Skeptics in the Pub](#)
28 [Finally Friday—Dinner, Karaoke](#)
29 [BHNBS Planning](#)

September

1 [Self Defense, RC](#)
1 [Book Club, Ceres](#)
2 [Science Night Live](#)
2 [Welcome New Members Meetup](#)
3 [Self Defense, RC](#)
4-7 [4th Annual Atheist FANcamp](#)
4 [Dinner, Wine and Art Hop, Lodi](#)
8 [Self Defense, RC](#)
11 [Game Night in Salida](#)
12-13 [Volunteer to Promote Free-thought Day](#)
12 [Brunch and Atheism, Stockton](#)
13 [Sacramento Sunday Assembly, SSA](#)
15 [Self Defense, RC](#)

Save the Date

Sep. 16 [Dr. Julia Sankey, Manteca](#)
Sep. 22 [“Family Values: For the Bible Tells Me So”, Marie Bain](#)
Oct. 11 [Free-thought Day](#)

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Sacramento Reason

Little Activisms

By Judy Saint

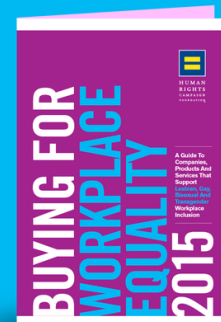
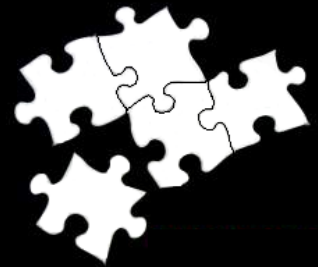
Evangelicals and atheists are growing while the moderate religious middle is disappearing. America is polarizing, and it seems LGBT rights is the current defining core. Evangelicals are quick to support those businesses in the news for their bigotry and illegal discrimination of LGBT individuals. Evangelicals go out of their way to support a chicken fast food because it donated tons of money against LGBT rights. They boycott Coke because it has LGBT sensitivity training for employees. Some support a bakery that refused to bake a same gender wedding cake.

Using our pocketbook to vote, as it were, is not a bad idea. Let's direct our money toward those who support LGBT rights to show support. You might not know a directory of such upstanding businesses exists. It does. And it's easy to check.

For your little activism this month, I'm asking you to take a look at one very popular shopping and purchasing guide, which lets you know which major businesses support or do not support LGBT. You may not know this guide exists. It is very well researched and objective. Major companies receive annual scores based on a variety of objective factors, such as serving and hiring LGBT, having job security or sensitivity training for employees and other important features important to everyone's civil rights.

Take a look online, or download a copy. Put the app on your cell phone to check when you're out. Let me list a few categories in the guide: Apparel, Auto, Home, Insurance, Banking, Restaurants, Travel, Pets, Technology, Retail, Food, and many more areas. Here is a sample of a few companies with 100% ratings (the higher the rating, the more good programs for LGBT the company has in place): Best Buy, Staples, Macy's, Target, B of A, Coke, Disney, Chevron, Safeway, Starbucks, Showtime, American Airlines, and Nationwide, to name a few. You can see thousands more, rated from 100% down to 0%. Yes, they even name the baddies.

[Download the HRC Buyer's Guide here](#), to show support for those companies who stand up to religious bullying and boycotts, to stand firm for everyone's equal civil rights.



**SUPPORT
BUSINESSES
THAT
SUPPORT
EQUALITY.**

Check out HRC's
Buyer's Guide for
help with your
holiday shopping.

WWW.HRC.ORG/BUYERSGUIDE
#BUY4EQUALITY



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 Aug 26 at 6:30 pm](#) or [Stockton Aug 25 at 6:00 pm](#) or [Salida Aug 14 at 7:00 pm](#)



New Members Meetup & Coffee

Aug 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

Everyone is invited to continue to stay as long as you like. Buy some great drinks and snacks, and make some new friends! \$1 donation.
[Details here.](#)

Marie Bain: "Family Values: For the Bible Tells Me So!"

The Lively and Talented Marie Bain!
Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd,
Suite A
September 22, 7:00 PM

Join us for an entertaining, informative talk with Marie Bain entitled, "Family Values: For the Bible Tells Me So". With scripture, song and satire, Bain explores the Bible in a free-wheeling interpretation of family values. You'll laugh, you'll cry, and yes, it's better than Cats! By the end, you'll understand what gays, crabs and cross-dressing have in common! Education is a wonderful thing, and no one better to deliver new perspective on "Family Values" than the quick and sharp Marie Bain.

Rated "R" due to sexual content and violence. (Have you read the Bible?)

Sponsored by the AOF Speaker Series. Everyone is welcome. Free. Donations appreciated.

[Map here.](#)

[Details here.](#)



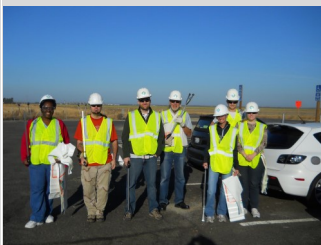
Rhyme and Reason By Paula Polemerick

I need only invoke faith on high
And they'll buy my implausible lie
Though my deeds reek of folly
I'm Yahweh by golly
A jolly good Hollywood guy



Local Groups to Visit or Join

Name	Emphasis		Tax Ded		Website
Agnostic & Atheist Student Association (AgASA)	UC Davis student group	Y		<u>Y</u>	Website here
Americans United for Sep of Church and State (Sac Chapter)	Promotes individual activism, confronts violations	N	Y	<u>National only</u>	au-sac.org
Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF)	Events both social and presented, for growth and fun.	Y	Y	N	aofonline.org
Black Humanists and Non Believers of Sac (BHNBS)	Doubts about religion? You're one of many. Social and other Meetup events.	Y	N	<u>Y</u>	Website here
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 Founda-	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>	Website here
Sac Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers (SacFAN)	Meetup for variety of fun, learning, singing, projects, games, activism.	Y	N	<u>Y</u>	SacFAN.org
Sac Politics and Philosophy Group	Meetup group for Thinking Beings!	N	N	N	Website here
Secular Coalition for California	Train to engage media and lobby state politicians. Activist resource.	N	N	<u>Y</u>	ca.secular.org
Secular Student Alliance - Sac City College	Sac City College student group. Meet, question, promote, unite.	Y		<u>Y</u>	Facebook page here
Sierra College Secular Student Alliance	Sierra College student and faculty group for non-belief in religion.	Y		<u>Y</u>	Website here
Stanislaus Humanists	Book groups, discussions, game nights, theatrical movies, karaoke, dancing.			<u>Y</u>	Website here
Stockton Area Atheists and Freethinkers (SAAF)	Meetup events and philanthropy, from Galt to Modesto.	Y		<u>Y</u>	StocktonAAF.org
Student Alliance @ Sacramento State University (CSUS)	CSUS student group to socialize and promote freethought.	N		<u>Y</u>	csusaso.wordpress.com
Sunday Assembly Sacramento	Secular congregation celebrates life with pop music, inspirational talks, donuts and more.	Y	Y	<u>Y</u>	Facebook page here



Highway Cleanup

Location : CalTrans Park-&-Ride lot on Elkhorn Blvd west exit off Hwy 99, see [map](#).
Aug 15, 9:00 AM. Everyone welcome for this fun group activity. [Details here](#).



Skeptics in the Pub -

Two Locations

Sacramento

Sac Skeptics in the Pub

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

[Map here](#)

[Details here](#)

Stockton

Drinking Skeptically
Fri Aug 15, 6:30-11p
Valley Brewing Co.
157 W Adams St
Stockton, CA
Restaurant and bar
just off the Miracle
Mile. Join in!

[Map here](#)

[Details here](#)



What is "Recovering from Religion"?

By Michele Howden

Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A Third Wednesdays at 6:30-8:00

Announcing a new support group for people recovering from the harmful indoctrination of highly controlling authoritarian religions. At present the members of the group meet monthly the third Wednesday of the month at the Reason Center at 6:30. We sit around the table, and each person checks in, has a turn to share and be heard. We help each other however we can.

Our intention is to create a safe space where those who have left their faith can come and connect and find comfort and support with others going through a similar shift. Also we hope to support those who are "coming out" as well as those who are not free or safe if they reveal their true thoughts, doubts, beliefs and view changes to those around them.

Already the group is doing sweet things. Ralph the Wrecker is paying the rent at the Reason center for our meetings. David Jacobs listened well to another member and took needed action: he rallied funders Alex Von Allman, Paul Story, Esther Franklin, Judy Saint and also David himself contributed financially so that a member could finally attend a much-needed Journey Free Recovery Retreat! The content of this retreat has been a valuable guide to her which she shares with the group. Another sweet thing starting this June is the retired therapist Phil Lazier has offered to meet weekly with a small group to go deeper. Also he hopes to attend the larger monthly meetup. He used to help Viet Nam war veterans heal from PTSD.

We ask that attendees come only if they are currently working through the enormous challenge of healing from RTS. We ask that you respect the space as a place of healing. We have agreements for confidentiality: what's said in the group stays in the group. We agree not to share any names or words, or details of the meeting with anyone. You may not come out of nosiness. [More information here](#)



RECOVERING FROM RELIGION



"Here's to 12 years of Catholic school and 10 years of therapy."

College and High School Atheist and Freethought Groups

Students! You may have a club for like-minded freethinkers and not know it—right on your campus. Look for your Secular Student Alliance (SSA) on campus. Don't have one? Start one! You can get all the help you need from the national and state SSA leaders. [More information here.](#)

Feed the Hungry

Take this chance to mark your calendar: September 29

In months with a 5th Tuesday, AOF and other free-thinkers travel to Davis to help serve food to the homeless.

This great program joins forces with the religious, with chefs, and with the public, in service to those in need.

Never a lull in the conversation! Never a distraction from the mission of helping those in need.

Look for more details next month, but think about marking your calendar now to join on September 29.

You'll always remember it.

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Sacramento Reason

Secular Family Day

Nearly every month, the **third Saturday** is "Secular Family Day" -- a day for the whole family to get out and meet other secular families in a fun place somewhere in the Central Valley.



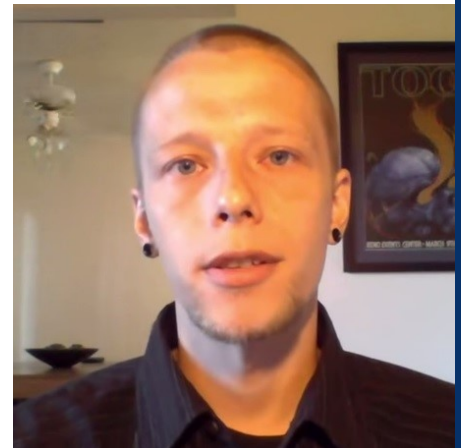
All ages are invited, including those without kids, and most events will be pet-friendly, too! Due to the randomness of our venue each month, be sure to read all the details about food, travel, parking, and more. And be sure to ask questions.

Next date: August 15. Check for [details at this link.](#)

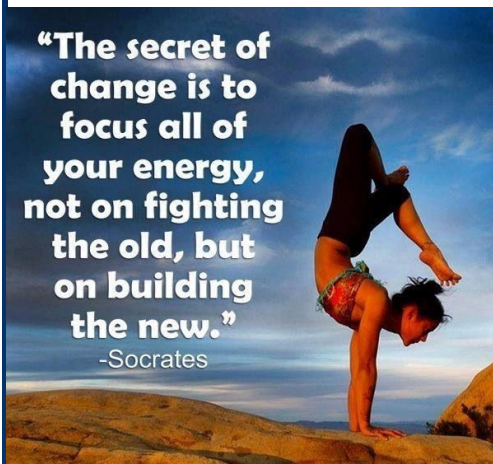
"Saved By Reason" New Prison Outreach

Joshua Turner is turning his experiences into outreach for a system he knows all too well.

Joshua was recently interviewed on the David Pakman Show where he explains his past as a former neo-Nazi in the prison system.



"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."
-Socrates



His well articulated talk presents Saved by Reason, a critical thinking outreach he developed post-prison. Following Peter Boghossian's style is much easier since Mr. Boghossian has accepted a position on the Advisory Board of Saved by Reason.

Check out how well Joshua explains it all in this [interview at this link.](#)

Juvenile Hall Update

By Judy Saint

For the first time ever, all the girls erupted in spontaneous applause at the end of our last Freethought Class at juvenile hall. Sometimes it's magical. Recent topics, for example, have been how people will avoid your good point by attacking you instead, extinct human species and evolution overview, and where morality really comes from (hint: it's not from religion). The girls asked if we would talk about ghosts, so that's what we covered in the next class—all the woo of astrology, palm reading and ghosts.

The girls love to look at photos and handouts that they can pass around the circle. At the previous class, Dee prepared a wonderful set of color photos of cute animals showing empathy and understanding of others' needs, in their own species and even across species. Some girls became quite engaged, nodding or even giggling at all the appropriate places, like when I teased Dee about making elephant noises for us. Then, of course, there are a few in some classes who generally keep their heads down, whether to keep from making eye contact or maybe their only way to show independence in a jail situation. Whatever the reason, I like to remember that they did press the button in their cell asking to be released to attend the class. That may be more telling than their demeanor in class. This is jail, after all.

We usually run past our 11:45 ending time, making sure the girls can ask questions privately if they want as they are returned to their cells. One girl, after class recently, spoke up with some eagerness to tell me what happened in bible class the previous Thursday. She recounted how the bible teacher told a story of god helping her through a math class that she knows she could not have passed on her own. The inmate telling me this then said she questioned the bible teacher, "Are you saying that you're too stupid to understand math?" She said the teacher affirmed, yes, she is too stupid to understand math. The girl telling me this couldn't believe anyone could be so ridiculous as to think that; to admit stupidity to that degree. She delighted in telling me how lame this bible teacher's response was to her. I saw two things here that I'm so proud of. One, this young girl felt free enough to question her bible teacher. Two, she appropriately saw the bible teacher's pride of stupidity as ridiculous. This class is working.

If you are an adult female interested in being on the list of leaders or co-leaders out there (Rancho Cordova area) let me know by emailing admin@sacramentoreason.org. You can co-lead this class one time to get the feel of it, and then you can apply for a permanent ID Badge if you care to join us again any time after that. Some leaders and co-leaders like visiting once a month, some prefer less often, or just to substitute when needed. Never any obligation. No skills necessary, just be yourself. Letting the girls know how to think for themselves is what they love to hear and what this class is about. This should be fun and fulfilling, not a stressor. Think about it. It means a lot to the girls. It will mean a lot to you.

CARTOON: Ben, by Daniel Shelton



Listen Up!

By Cleo Kocol

Anyone who thinks we're in an end game, that freethought will take over the USA, is very much mistaken. But we are in a transition mode, and overall it is good. Non-believers of all stripes are speaking out. Hard liners, new agers, and non-theists in a wide ranging spectrum of non-theism have taken the genie out of the bottle. And the far right, hell and brimstone believers are frightened. If we speak out enough, will we upset their apple-cart, change their attitudes? Probably not. But we can put them back in the churches where they belong.

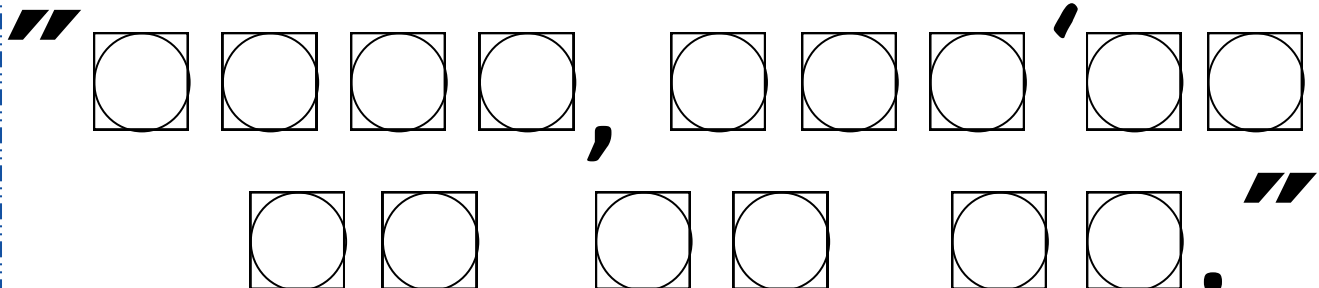
For centuries Christian zealots have reinforced their thinking. But so have we. As Madison and the founding fathers ensured, we Americans have separation of church and state. It is our task to preserve it, to put it front and center on our agenda. Keep the churches in the churches and out of commerce. Keep Christianized government hands off our bodies. Keep government free of religion. In countless ways religious legislators are disregarding the boundaries, and we must be vigilant and fight back.

Cleo Says**LISTEN UP!****Skeptic's Scramble**

by Enig Mama

Joke: "What did the hypocritical preacher say when he was caught violating the fifth book of the bible?"

(Answer is upside down, bottom of next page.)



Use these letters, one time each:

D D E E E M N O O O R T U U Y

JOIN YOUR FRIENDS
IN HOLY MATRIMONY
humanistweddings.org



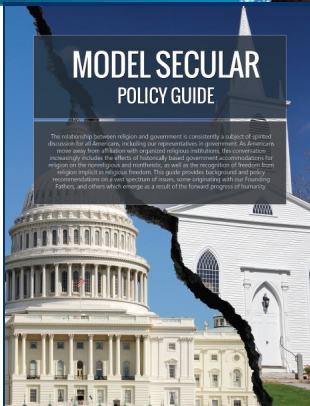
Perform Legal Weddings

Become a fully legal Wedding Officiant with American Humanist Association using this online course. [Link here.](#)

Volume III, Issue 8

Issue Theme: Polarization of America

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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 Watch By Arash Khosrowshahi

The Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled on June 30, 2015 that the Ten Commandments monument outside of the Oklahoma state capitol building be removed for violating Article 2, Section 5 of the Oklahoma Constitution.

Article 2, Section 5 reads as follows:

"No public money or property shall ever be appropriated, applied, donated, or used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, or system of religion, or for the use, benefit, or support of any priest, preacher, minister, or other religious teacher or dignitary, or sectarian institution as such."

Historically, Article 2, Section 5 was made part of the constitution when Oklahoma joined the Union because religious leaders of both Native American and Christian faiths feared government and politician interference with religion.

The court had reasoned that the plain meaning of the constitutional provision was that indirect use of public property in a broad sense was prohibited, and since the Ten Commandments monument is part of the Judeo-Christian faith tradition, its placement on public land was unconstitutional.

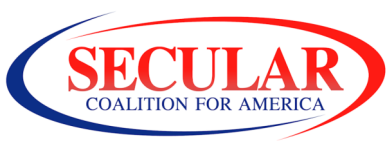
Importantly, the court made clear that it took no position on whether the monument violated the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution, constraining itself only on the state constitutional issue. That said, the court did mention that some federal precedent exists for allowing such religious monuments on public land if for a non-religious historic purpose. Whether the defendants in this case wish to take the case to the United States Supreme Court to determine the federal issue has yet to be determined.

Importantly, this case puts an abrupt end to the Satanic monument that was also causing controversy in the state. Since the monument was proposed to be placed on the same capitol grounds in Oklahoma, it would likewise violate Article 2, Section 5.



These statements are opinions of Arash Khosrowshahi, Attorney at Law, not to be construed as creating an attorney-client relationship, nor legal advice. Provided for educational purposes only.

Answer to Skeptic's Scramble on previous page: "Dude, you're on to me!"
You know, like "Deuteronomy": Just a fun pun. :-)



NATIONAL SECULAR NEWS

Receive timely information and news of importance to the separation of church and state on a national level. [Sign up here to receive emails.](#)

First Southwest Secular Student Conference

CLAREMONT, CA - On Friday September 25 the Secular Student Alliance at the Claremont Colleges will host the Southwest Secular Student Conference, an inaugural leadership event for secular students. The conference will feature talks and panels by activists from the secular community, such as Greta Christina, author of *Comforting Thoughts About Death That Have Nothing to Do with God; Coming Out Atheist: How to Do It, How to Help Each Other, and Why; and Why Are You Atheists So Angry?: 99 Things That Piss Off the Godless*, and Heina Dadabhoy, a former Muslim and prominent atheist blogger with her own book soon to be released called *A Skeptic's Guide to Islam*, as well as training on campus organizing by student leaders.

"The Southwest Secular Student Conference is the leadership event that students deserve. The goal is to build up the strongest, most confident, and capable secular leaders on the west coast," said Mariah Farris, Development Coordinator for the Southwest Secular Student Conference.

In addition to building strong and sustainable secular campus communities, the conference seeks to equip students to engage their local communities on topics such as secular identities, gender equality, LGBTQ issues, poverty, equitable education, service projects, among many others.

"These are not optional topics, because many lives are deeply affected and, at times, defined by them," said Dan Pemberton, Southwest Regional Campus Organizer at the Secular Student Alliance.

The Southwest Secular Student Conference starts the evening of Friday September 25 and concludes the afternoon of the following Sunday. Over the weekend students will experience a no holds barred level of training on the in the areas of community, advocacy, service, and education. To help defray the cost, free early registration and travel aid grant money are offered to students.

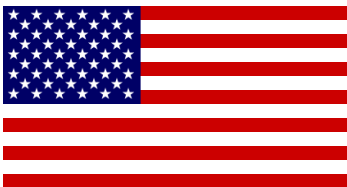
The Secular Student Alliance at the Claremont Colleges is an affiliate of the Secular Student Alliance, a network of hundreds of groups at high school and college campuses.

The conference will take place on September 25-27, 2015 at the Rose Hills Theatre in Claremont, CA. More information can be found at <http://southwestsecular.org>.

The Thinking Atheist Interviews Richard Dawkins

[Watch the whole interview at this link.](#)





Logical Fallacies On Parade

Name this logical fallacy, when a person makes a claim that sounds true to some because it cannot be disproven. (Answer upside down at bottom.)

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 for details.

Print one copy of this newsletter to leave in a coffee house or other public location. You never know.



Name is "Appeal to Ignorance". Graphic is from the Book of Bad Arguments.

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/event-calendar-2/>



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