

Upcoming Events

➤ AOF Directors Meeting

Monday, May 9, 7 pm

A planning meeting for AOF directors & officers, but open to *all* our friends and members. Join us, meet the Board, ask questions. Bring your visionary ideas, your incisive strategies, your tactical tactics, your cutting gripes, and your wise suggestions for events and activities. Most of all, bring your volunteerism!

Location: Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVOL8z>.

➤ Memorial Day Speak & Eat

Sunday, May 29, 2016, 01:00pm-4:00pm

Celebrate Memorial Day by exercising your hard-won right of free speech. AOF will revisit its tradition of an annual "Open Mike" potluck, where friends & members can speak out on any topic and cap it with potluck dining, thus demonstrating American superiority not only in bloviating and home-made explosives, but in glorious gluttony.

For the speak-out part, prepare a five-minute oration on any topic of interest (poem, song, speech, recital or op-ed) (just please not a reading of *Green Eggs & Ham*, you will never top Sen. Ted Cruz on *that*). Voluntary of course. We love our speakers, but listeners are cool too!



The potluck part will be appetizer-oriented, hors *d'oeuvres*. For this please bring 10-12 moderate servings of your favorite finger-food. Perhaps a canapé-style dessert. A cold beverage. A pizza. A veggie tray. No soups, stews or roast oxen please -- small-chow rules the day. (Facilities for cooking are limited.)

As usual, AOF will supply plates, cups and utensils, but you might bring your own serving gear, if the thought of bare-hand food service gives you chills (and it should).

Suggested attire for this event: red/white/blue, and/or tie-dye, or an Uncle Sam suit, or dress as your favorite hero of American folklore or history. Or just wear those comfy, dusty dungarees. This is our chance to show freethinkers can be patriotic too – in an entirely freethinky way.

Location: Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVOL8z>.

➤ Davis Community Meal – Feed the Hungry

Tuesday, May 31, 2016, 4:30pm – 7pm

Prove that Freethinkers can also serve the community! Join us in an effort to feed the poor, the hungry, the outcast. We will set up tables, serve, and clean a bit at the end. All food preparation is by the Davis Community Meal staff. Your reward is a possible free meal, camaraderie, loads of gratitude, and a good feeling. OK if you're a bit late – any help is good help!

Location: St. Martin's Episcopal, 640 Hawthorne Lane, Davis. Map: <https://goo.gl/9FtkrK>.

For more information or carpooling, call: 916-447-2169 (Don).



How did Socrates corrupt the youth? (He encouraged them to question *everything*.)

Editorial by Fran Evanisko

I am reading a book in which it seems the author has gone to great lengths to formulate a well-researched, and well-documented rational argument, to convince me that rational arguments don't convince people. I must admit, I'm not convinced.

I do understand this point to a degree though. When confronted with arguments that challenge firmly held beliefs people tend to become defensive, and possibly more deeply entrenched in the beliefs they hold and are comfortable with. The

objectives of rational arguments are typically to win a debate, persuade or to justify a given position. This approach does have its appropriate uses.

However, in more casual social interactions, regarding emotionally grounded and deeply held beliefs, rational dialog is likely more effective than rational argument. The objective of a rational dialog is to stimulate critical thinking rather than to persuade.

Last month Anthony Magnabosco gave an excellent presentation at the Reason Center about the importance or questioning believers. His method is grounded in Dr. Peter Boghossian's book [A Manual for Creating Atheists](#). The methodology, known as [street epistemology](#) can be an effective means to talk to people about their deeply held beliefs. This methodology is the "Socratic Method", the method consistently employed by Socrates in the Platonic dialogs.

If you are looking for more effective ways to engage with people in dialogs related to religion, or other sensitive issues, I suggest you look into street epistemology, and check out Anthony's [YouTube Channel](#). And, by all means read a view of Plato's Socratic dialogs.

I guess the downside of such an approach is that you may wind up challenging your own beliefs.

When you donate blood...

Please consider donating blood at the BloodSource, and if you do, use AOF BloodSource ID# **4857**.

Numerous BloodSource Donation Centers exist -- find them listed at: <http://www.bloodsource.org/Locations>.

AOF gets no perks when members donate, but it saves lives, and is good for public relations. And what can be more humanistic than donating blood?



(Thanks again to <http://xkcd.com/>)

Not a member of Atheists and Other Freethinkers? Then please join us!

Subscription / Membership Form	
<i>Mail to: AOF, PO Box 15182, Sacramento CA 95851-0182 (Attn: Membership)</i>	
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Your Membership Level (annual, please circle):	
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<i>AOF is a 501(c)(3) Educational Association, EIN 68-0325762. Dues & Donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law. Non-members may receive the AOF Newsletter for free on request (email only).</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Please check here if you do NOT want your name on lists occasionally provided to groups similar to AOF.	
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AOF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762. General Meetings are free and open to the public. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movie outings, parties! To see what awaits you, visit the website, www.aofonline.org; or contact AOF at our 24/7 voice-mail: 916-447-3589; or write to PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182. Or ... candygram? AOF Acting President: Kristi Craven. Vice-president: Mynga Futrell. Editor: Fran Evanisko. And all the rest of us, their minions.

"The purpose of Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF) is to promote the civic understanding of atheism and the acceptance of atheists in our community. Through educational programs, projects, and publications, AOF will extend secular perspectives, including the separation of religion and government and the right to think and speak freely on these perspectives.