

AOF News & Views – Newsletter for March 2016

Edited by “Fabulous Fran” Evanisko (*excelsior*)

Upcoming Events

➤ **Werner Haag - *The Bonobo and the Atheist***

Saturday, March 12, 2016, 01:00pm - 04:00pm

Werner Haag, noted member of the Atheist Community of San Jose, will visit AOF to discuss Frans de Waal's noted book, *The Bonobo and the Atheist*. De Waal focuses on the biological evolution of morality on an evolutionary time scale as opposed to the beginning of the historical record. He provides numerous examples of "lower" mammals having well-developed social codes and exhibiting empathy and sympathy, the “Lego blocks” of morality and altruism. Apes and other mammals exhibit both pro-social behavior (a proactive desire to help each other and live in harmony) and fear of group punishment for violating behavioral rules, similar to human methods of maintaining social order. So basic moral behavior predates existing religions probably by millions of years. It is not magic. It does not fall to us from the sky.

Says Werner, “My family drifted away from organized religion when I was young, and I never found any need for it thereafter. We get our morals and sense of right and wrong outside of religion anyway, i.e., from the examples set by family and members of the greater community. Critical thinking has shown me no evidence for gods and the dangers of acting on false premises.”

Werner Haag graduated from M.I.T. and has a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the Univ. of Tennessee. He worked for 10 years in basic research studying the fate of chemicals in the environment and in water treatment, then worked 25 years in industry with manufacturers of air & water treatment systems, and instruments to measure hazardous gases in the workplace.



Location: Sacramento Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

➤ **Cleo Kocol - *My Thomas Jefferson***

Sunday, March 27, 2016, 01:00pm - 03:00pm

A treat! Join us for a special performance of "My Thomas Jefferson," an original one-woman play by the Cleo Fellers Kocol, AOF charter member, champion humanist, feminist heroine, and perennial supporter of the Sacramento Coalition of Reason. Cleo will deliver the play in the voices of the three women in Thomas Jefferson's life -- his wife, his daughter, and his other daughter by Sally Hemmings.

Cleo previously presented this play to acclaim, even standing ovations. She has given numerous other well-received talks focused on extraordinary figures in American and world history such as Thomas Jefferson, James and Dolly Madison, Margaret Mitchell (author of *Gone With the Wind*), John F. Kennedy and Jackie, Marilyn Monroe, and Mexico's Maximilian and Carlotta.

Cleo taught creative writing at Nathan Hale High School in Seattle, at the Vocational/Technical Institute in Bellevue, WA, and through the Renaissance Society at Sacramento State University. At various venues she has given poetry workshops. She has received numerous awards, spoken at humanist conferences, and her work appears in academic journals and chapbooks. Her many books are available on Amazon.com.



Location: Sacramento Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

➤ **Davis Community Meal – Feed the Hungry**

Tuesday, March 29, 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 the tables, serve, and clean a bit at the end. All food prep is by the Davis Community Meal staff. Your reward is a possible free meal, camaraderie, 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).

AOF Board Meeting

AOF Board Meetings, they're not just for directors anymore! Any member or friend of AOF is welcome to sit in and advise. Please join us, meet the secret movers behind these events, and ask hard questions. Bring your ideas, your strategies, your suggestions for activities – and most of all your wonderful volunteerism! ("Hands that help ..." are beautiful hands.)

Time: Monday, March 14, 2016, 7 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

Support the Reason Center

Reason Center (RC), the culmination of a long-nurtured dream, opened in July 2014 on Tribute Road, and has already hosted over 200 freethought events, including a wedding! Currently, RC has twelve partner organizations, working together to keep it alive. Its mission is to support a social and intellectual community for freethinkers, contribute to society through education and community service, advance the civic understanding and acceptance of freethinkers, and uphold the benign separation of religion and government. (And be a place to have fun.)



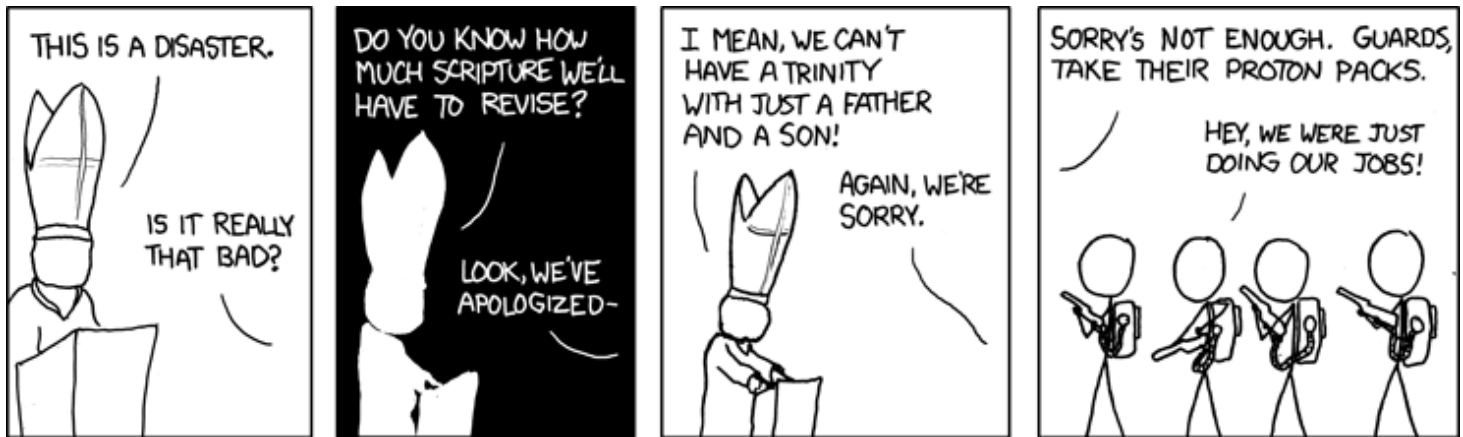
But to continue, it depends on *you* – your continued support. Please consider joining the RC, and becoming an ongoing supporter. The cost is only a few dollars a month, so small you'll hardly noticed, and you will get a tax deduction of course. To join RC or make a one-time donation, visit ReasonCenter.org, or call 916-426-6416.

"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."

AOF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762, founded in 1993. General Meetings are free and open to all. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movie outings, parties! To see what awaits, visit 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.

President: Kristi Craven. Vice-president: Mynga Futrell. Acting-only officers, because the last election flopped. Want to volunteer? Please.

Do you shop at Amazon.com? Try <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0325762>. AOF will receive a tiny payment, at no extra cost to you!



[XKCD is a remarkable webcomic. Check it out at <https://xkcd.com/>]

Subscription / Membership Form

Mail to: AOF, PO Box 15182, Sacramento CA 95851-0182 (Attn: Membership)

Name(s) _____ Phone: _____

Street _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

E-mail address (please print!) _____

E-mail is required for newsletter delivery.

Questions, concerns? Call AOF, 916-304-3796.

Your Membership Level (annual, please circle):

Patron (\$50) Family (\$30) Individual (\$20) Low-income (\$10)

Basic Dues : \$ _____

Additional Donation : \$ _____

Total enclosed : \$ _____

Please check here if you do NOT want your name on lists occasionally provided to groups similar to AOF.

Please check here if you DO want to be an AOF Activist (e-mail address required).

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).