

Like to see the menu first? OK, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yys28vvv>.

Location: Vallejo's, 1100 O Street, Sac, ph. 916-498-1744. Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/vXeTpHeaAg32>.

Contact: 916-457-9123, or email: "thelynnster55 (at) comcast (dot) net"

Freethought Dinner Socials occur at Sac-area eatery, and all are welcome. Family friendly, come join the fun! (And don't be shy, suggest your own favourite eatery for next time.)

➤ Philosophers' Table: Deciding What to Believe

Sunday, September 24, 2017, 12 noon – 1pm

How do you decide what to believe?

The Philosophers Table will take a drive-by shot at [epistemology](#), the theory of knowledge and belief. How can you know anything, whom can you trust, what can you believe? Your source may be a loyal friend or respected authority with an excellent waxed moustache. Should you believe them? But suppose the info comes from the unwashed corner wino or your neighbour's nephew who lives in the basement and taxidermies squirrels. Does your skept-o-meter light up? Interesting. Why?

Exactly what *earns* your trust, and does this mean anything? If you trust someone thoroughly, are they truly trustworthy?

Let's plunk our collective wisdom on the table, strap it down, anesthetize it and dissect it. Maybe we'll learn something. ... If we can trust each other.

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

Contact: See <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>

AOF Philosophers' Tables are roundtable discussions, free to attend and open to all, religious believers too. And stay after, because another trusty meeting will follow!



➤ Mitchell Diamond: Is Religion Evolutionarily Adaptive?

Saturday, September 24, 2017, 1pm – 3pm

Just about a year ago, Mitchell Diamond (author of [Darwin's Apple: The Evolutionary Biology of Religion](#)) regaled us with an overview of why existing theories of religion fail. They just don't explain the persistent human drive for faith. He also briefly talked up his own new thesis for why humans have religion: it is a compensating mechanism for higher-order consciousness.

In this, his second talk for us, aka "The Problem with Consciousness," Mitch will delve into the nature of human cognition and why, despite our great intelligence and advanced culture, humans—including atheists and other non-believers—are still hunter-gatherers at heart.

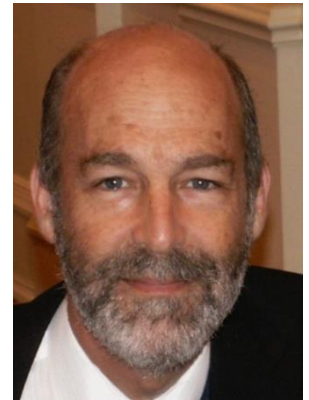
"God only exists as a creation of the human brain," writes Mitchell, "which means God is biological." Hmm.

It's another fine event of the AOF Speaker Series, as always, *free*, but if you like this talk, please consider joining AOF, and perhaps support Reason Center with a dollar or two in the donation jar. Rid yourself of that lucre; walk lighter upon the earth.

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

Contact: See <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

Bring snacks/beverages to share if you can. And after cleanup, join us for dinner (no host) at the Elephant Bar, 1500 Arden Way, across the street from Arden Fair Mall.



A Blast from the Past – Bee article by Pat Kelly

In 1995, the *Sacramento Bee's* Religion page began a new policy, to publish humanist & secular responses to moral questions alongside views from local faith leaders. Grabbing the gauntlet, AOF's own **Pat Kelley** was soon submitting her own answers. Following is an article from April 22, 1995.

Why do good things happen to bad people?

For the same reasons, bad things happen to good people. Coincidence, happenstance, recognizing opportunity are all part of good or bad fortune.

California's recent storms proved tragic for many good people yet many more people benefited nicely. Are those who gained work bad people for seizing upon the misfortune of others? What is a good or bad person? The majority of atheists are good, honest, worthwhile individuals who chose to live without theological ideology. Both good and bad happen to atheists the same as with the God-fearing population.

It is human nature to feel rankled when good fortune goes to someone who has committed an injustice, especially if it's a personal insult we feel powerless to rectify. Consider though, American folklore and literature, lionizes some people who have performed fairly despicable actions. The Puritans practiced the same type of vicious religious persecution that they claimed to flee. Christopher Columbus enslaved and killed Native Americans. Were these historic figures good people or bad people? There is much room for debate, yet criticizing the good fortune of such people seems somehow un-American. Why is that?

Pat Kelley, April 22, 1995



Another Blast from the Past

In 2005, AOF donated in support of the then-new KVIE building in South Natomas. KVIE then recognized AOF with a commemorative etched brick in the patio walkway outside the Ose Community Room, main studio. A recent visit confirmed that the brick endures! To see it, go to east end of KVIE headquarters at 2030 West El Camino Ave. You may have to hunt for it a bit, but it's worth it. (Image courtesy of Kevin L. Schultz.)



Like the Dude, *the Brick Abides*.



When you donate blood ...

You donate blood, right? At BloodSource, right? When you do, please 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's more noble and Humanistic than donating blood?

Support Reason Center

Ah, Reason Center, the gem of our community. It opened in July 2014. Since then it has hosted well over 200 freethought events. Currently it has twelve partner organizations. And the new website, <http://reasoncenter.com/>, is the coolest.

Its mission is to support a social and intellectual community for freethinkers, to contribute to society through education and community service, to advance the civic understanding and acceptance of freethinkers, and to uphold the separation of religion and government. (And to *party down*.)



Reason Center relies on continued support from members and donors. Can you help? Please consider making a contribution. To set up a monthly, or one-time donation visit the website. It is sweet & easy.

Support AOF too

You can support AOF *without spending a dime*. Really! Next time you purchase goods at Amazon.com, simply use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0325762>. Bookmark it now. Prices & service will be exactly the same, but AOF will get a small kickback for what you buy.

Not yet an AOF member? Joining is easy!

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 tickle a Board Member till he talks.

AOF Acting President: Brad Clark. Vice-president: Mynga Futrell. Editor: Fran Evanisko. And all the rest of us running-dog lackeys.

"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."

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-deductable as permitted by law. Non-members may receive the AOF Newsletter for free on request (email only).

