

✧ ✧ Upcoming AOF Events ✧ ✧

➤ Free Movie Nights

Fridays, June 7 & June 21, 2019, 7pm – 10pm

Twice a month, [Reason Center](#) (RC) and AOF host a **Free Movie Night** under an excellent [MPLC License](#). The License prohibits us from naming the movie. But we can hint.

June 7 brings us a 2014 American supernatural horror film, "inspired by actual accounts" they say, based on a 2001 non-fiction book entitled *Beware the Night*. Despite mixed reviews it was a box office hit, and has a certain cult following.

On June 21 it's the 2012 slapstick comedy about three orphans who grow up to become finger-poking, nyuk-nyuking, numbskull janitors named Larry, Curly and Moe.

Can't guess? You kid us, right? Well, just ask Reason Center (see below). They'll tell you, then you can tell anyone.

Movie Night is an informal, picnic-style family evening. The venue has a silver screen and dynamic sound system. The house chairs may be a bit uncomfortable for a two-hour sit, but it's OK to bring blankets, pillows, lawn chairs and your own snacks & beverage, non-alcoholic please. RC often provides fluffy, buttery theatre popcorn. Children are welcome if they're cool children -- and if you judge the movie appropriate for them.

Movie Night is especially for Reason Center members, but non-members are welcome. RC *may* beg a small donation to cover costs. How can you be a member? Sign up at <http://reasoncenter.com/donate/>. Membership is a measly \$5 a month, is tax deductible if you itemize, and the perks (like this one) will fall to you like nyuck-nyucks.

Contact: Reason Center, ph. 916-426-6416 or email <reasoncenter (at) gmail (dot) com>.

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

Free Movie Nights occur two Fridays a month. Suggest your own fave film for next time!



➤ AOF/HAGSA Potluck

Sunday, June 23, 2019, 3pm

[AOF](#) (that's us) and [HAGSA](#) (the Humanist Association of the Greater Sacramento Area) cordially invite you to a joint event, a summer afternoon potluck. Friends and members of both groups are welcome. To participate, **please bring** one dish (food item) of your choice, sufficient to feed yourself + a bit more. **Also, if you will**, a beverage, drink or libation of your preference. Our goals: to dine, to converse, to socialize, and to celebrate the bloom of life in this beautiful, singular world.

Location: Home of Ruth Rezos & Ken Nahigian, 9570 Harvest View Way, map:

<http://binged.it/1IQMrzc>.

Contact: See AOF Contact Page (<http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>), or call 916-366-7061 (Ruth).

Note, the home has cats. Cats everywhere. Crazy cat-people. Do not be allergic, please!



☞ AOF regrets that *no General Membership Meeting* will occur in June. Unless of course you would like to plan one! If you have a great meeting idea, please contact the AOF Program Chair at <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

✧ ✧ Other Upcoming Events (non-AOF) ✧ ✧

➤ SkeptiCal Conference

Sunday, June 9, 2019 8am – 6pm

Presenting [SkeptiCal](#), northern California's one-day conference of scientific skepticism. This 10th annual event will have science and critical thinking presentations, exhibitors, entertainment, and opportunities for the local skeptic community to meet and converse. Registration *now open* at:

<http://www.skepticalcon.com/register-2019>.

Location: Hyatt Regency at the San Francisco Airport, 1333 Old Bayshore Hwy,



Burlingame, CA. Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/4Kmq4rhZcAScWtLT9>.
Contact: info@SkeptiCalCon.com or ph. 510-524-0172.

➤ Blasphemy Breakfast(s)

Sunday, June 16, 2019 9:30am – 11am

Join your Sac-FAN friends for a “Blasphemy Breakfast” at Mel’s Diner in Rocklin. “Not that we blaspheme that much,” they add, “but atheist-related topics are known to come up.” (Sac-FAN is the Sacramento Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers, btw, a cool group; see <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN>.) “This is a great event to start if you haven’t been to SacFAN Meetups before. Also a great group of people to answer any atheist questions you might have, help you learn more about all the freethinking goings-on in the region, or help you any way we can. It’s always a breath of fresh air to have brunch with like-minded friends. And we’ll surely be friends once we’ve met you.” Recommended: the malts, omelets, biscuits ‘n’ gravy, and grilled cheese.

Location: Mel’s Diner, 6708 Lonetree Boulevard, Rocklin. Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/fTFRtMCuqWXejWJSA>.

Details: <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/261037890/>.

(Note, **another Blasphemy Breakfast**, by the Black Humanists and Nonbelievers of Sacramento, may occur June 23, 9:30am at Eggie’s Restaurant, 1650 Fulton Ave, Sacramento. For details see: <https://www.meetup.com/bhnbsacramento/events/wjxsslyzjbfc/>.)

➤ Project Linus: Blankets for Children in Need

Sunday, June 23, 2019 2pm – 5pm

Bring your spare (good quality) blankets to Reason Center to participate in Project Linus, which began in the mid-1990’s and has distributed over 2.5 million blankets to children needing comfort. Hand-made are especially welcome! For details see <https://www.projectlinus.org/>.

Contact: Nancy Sneed, ph. 916-812-9580 or email <nancysneed10(at) gmail (dot) com>.

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

Project ♥ Linus



➤ More events ...

For more secular & freethought events in the area, see the Sacramento Coalition of Reason general events calendar at <https://unitedcor.org/event-calendar-2/>. We will keep you busy, but not necessarily out of trouble.

❖ ❖ Special Free Livestreamed Event ❖ ❖

THE AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION



FIVE UNIVERSITY VENUES & WEBCAST

PITTSBURGH Carnegie Mellon University

HOUSTON Rice University

BROOKLYN Medgar Evers College

CLAREMONT Pitzer College

MIAMI University of Miami

WORLDWIDE Webcast

The AHA 78th Annual Conference, **June 7-9, 2019**, will be the first VIRTUAL American Humanist conference *streamed live* across the US (“streamed” means you can watch live from the comfort of your home, using your PC or personal device).

Events will stream from five university locations:

- Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA (June 7) - Honoring Dr. Pamela Gay, astronomer, writer, and podcaster;
- Rice University in Houston, TX (June 7) - Honoring psychologist Richard Wiseman;
- Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, NY (June 8) - Honoring comedian Leighann Lord;
- Pitzer College in Claremont, CA (June 8) - Honoring writer and actress Mara Wilson;
- University of Miami in Miami, FL (June 9) - Honoring Dr. Barry Kosmin, Director of the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture.

Each will be a half-day session. Enjoy informative sessions on humanism, science, social justice, the First Amendment, and more. Plus, opportunities to network and socialize with



fellow humanists, distinguished speakers, and celebrity guests. All from home! In your slippers or stocking feet!

2019 Conference Registration | Livestream | *Free registration*

See: <https://conference.americanhumanist.org/index.php/registration/livestream>

☞ **Also, listen any time:** *Freethought Radio*, a weekly radio show by the [Freedom From Religion Foundation](http://www.freedomfromreligion.org/). Simply visit <https://ffrf.libsyn.com/>, select a show, and enjoy.



When you donate blood...

If (when) you donate blood at Vitalant (formerly BloodSource), please use AOF ID# **4857**.

For a list of Donation Centers, see: <https://www.vitalant.org/Our-Organization/Locations.aspx>. Donations save lives and serve our ideals. What's more humanistic than donating blood?



Support Reason Center

Reason Center (RC) opened in July 2014, has hosted countless freethought events, and has twelve partner organizations. But continues to struggle. Needed: members and supporters!

RC's 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 separation of religion and government.

Please stand up for Reason Center. To set up a monthly or one-time donation, visit ReasonCenter.org.



Also, Support AOF!

You can support AOF *without spending a dime*. How? When you purchase goods at Amazon.com, simply use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0325762>. Bookmark it now! Prices & service will be just the same, but AOF gets a small kickback for whatever you purchase. Sweet.



✧ ✧ Secular Holidays (June) ✧ ✧

➤ Hug an Atheist Day

Saturday, June 1, 2019

In 2009, freethinker William Bermudez started [Hug an Atheist Day](http://www.huganatheistday.com/) (June 1st) to poke fun at other groups popping up at the time to encouraged hugging. He asked people to run up and hug atheists or any nonbeliever in general, whether agnostic, skeptic, secular humanist, or with other heretical views. In the words of one blogger:

It doesn't matter what your worldview is, practice a little tolerance. Find your nearest Atheist, Absurdist, Agnostic, Anti-Religionist, Antitheist, Apatheist, Deist, Dystheist, Existentialist, Freethinker, Gropaga, Ignostic, Mahayana, Marxist, Misotheist, Naturalistic Pantheist, Nihilist, Nontheist, Pastafarian, Secular Humanist, Skeptic, Spagnostic, Structuralist, Buddhist, Zen Buddhist, or anyone else who doubts the existence of a god, and & give him/her the biggest hug ever!

But use common sense, because not everyone appreciates uninvited hugs.



➤ World Environment Day

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

The goal of **World Environment Day** is to raise worldwide awareness of environmental issues, and to generate action for conservation. The United Nations General Assembly established [World Environment Day](http://www.unenvironment.org/events) in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Each year celebrations occur at different locations around the globe. To find one this year, see <https://www.unenvironment.org/events>.

World Environment Day gives environmental issues a human face. The philosophy has changed little over the last three decades; it still strives to associate faces with issues and empower people to be advocates of sustainable and equitable development. By promoting an understanding that communities are pivotal to changing the attitudes towards environmental issues, and advocating partnerships, World Environment Day strives to ensure all nations and peoples enjoy a safe, clean, healthy, and more prosperous future.

In the words of the United Nations Environment Programme, "On this World Environment Day, let us not despair, but instead examine the state of our environment. Let us consider carefully the actions which each of us must take, and then address ourselves to our common task of preserving all life on earth in a mood of sober resolution and quiet confidence."



Groups around the world hold activities to acknowledge and celebrate this day. Find an event near you, and join the fun!

➤ Solstice (June)

Friday, June 21, 2019

Called Summer Solstice in the northern hemisphere, Winter Solstice in the southern, people have marked the **June Solstice** one way or another for thousands of years. Many religions have seasonal holy days linked to this day. It is the day when the Northern Hemisphere has more daylight than at any other time of the year. In the Southern Hemisphere, the least daylight occurs this day in June. (The exact date of the June Solstice varies from year to year, but usually it is between the 20th and 23rd of June.)



"Solstice" comes from two Latin words: "sol" (meaning sun) and "sistere," (to cause to stand still). At noon in either hemisphere the sun will be high in the sky during summer, low during winter. On the day with the greatest number of daylight hours, the sun reaches its maximum elevation; we call this the Summer Solstice. Likewise, the day with the least daylight is the Winter Solstice.

In the Northern Hemisphere, the June Solstice is officially the first day of summer, also called Midsummer because it comes roughly during the midst of the growing season in Europe.

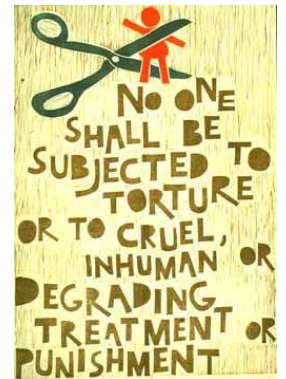
➤ Torture Victims' Day

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

In 1997, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolution **52/149**, establishing June 26 as the United Nations [International Day in Support of Victims of Torture](#). The goal is the eradication of torture and the functioning of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This day gives all an opportunity to stand united against cruelty, and remember that torture is a violation of basic human rights.

Clearly the abolition of torture is a key issue to freethinkers and humanists, and too often the worst perpetrators of this atrocity are highly religious societies. But secular societies have been far from innocent. This is a cause where we can often join hands with our religious brothers and sisters.

Take a moment on this day to visit the [United Nations webpage](#) for this secular holiday, and also to view the [Interactive World Map of torture](#).



New poll finds church membership down to 50% among Americans

By [Sky Palma](#) of [Deadstate.org](#)

According to a recent [Gallup poll](#), people who belong to a church or some other religious institution has dropped 20 percentage points over the last 20 years, hitting a low of 50 percent last year.

In 1999, church membership was at 70 percent but has fallen ever since. In regards to the percentage of adults in the U.S. who claim no religious affiliation, that number has jumped from 8 percent to 19 percent.

The Catholic Church has seen a significant drop as well, with people who identify as Catholic dropping 13 percentage points over the last two decades. Protestants saw a drop in membership of 73 percent to 67 percent. Hispanic Americans saw one of the biggest declines in church membership, from 68 percent to 45 percent since the year 2000. When it comes to political affiliation, Democrats saw a much larger decline than Republicans. According to Gallup, Dems fell from 71 percent to 48 percent, compared to a small drop for Republicans — 77 percent to 69 percent.

Speaking to the [Associated Press](#), Boston University sociology professor **Nancy Ammerman** said the declines are due to changing cultural and generational factors. "Culturally, we are seeing significant erosion in the trust people have for institutions in general and churches in particular," she said. "We are also seeing a generational shift as the 'joiner' older generation dies off and a generation of non-joiners comes on the scene."

The [Friendly Atheist's](#) **Hemant Mehta** thinks the changes are also due to more sinister reasons, namely the sex abuse scandals that have rocked religion, along with the increasingly apparent hypocrisy of its leaders. In short, the declines shouldn't be "all that shocking," Mehta writes.

"The largest religious denominations in the country — Catholics, Southern Baptists, white evangelicals — have all been going through public sex abuse scandals that involve covering up the crimes on behalf of leaders," Mehta says. "White evangelical Christianity has also effectively become synonymous with the atrocities of the Republican Party and the Trump administration specifically.

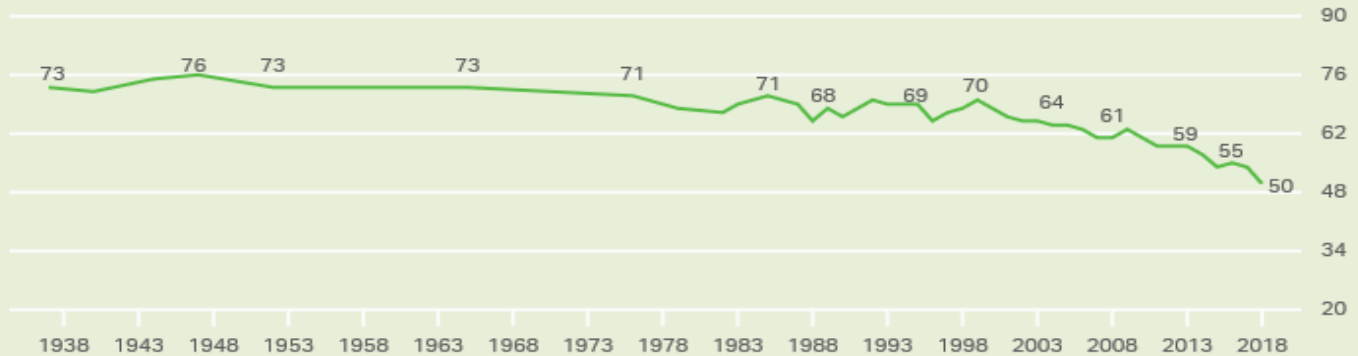
"When that's what religion has to offer, what benefit do you gain by proclaiming yourself one of them?" he added. "Even beyond that, those organized religions oppose LGBTQ rights, reproductive freedom, scientific data, and sex education.

They stand for discriminating against gay people, not defending the poor. After a tragedy, they offer thoughts and prayers, not solutions.”

Church Membership Among U.S. Adults Has Declined, Especially in the Past 20 Years

Do you happen to be a member of a church, synagogue or mosque?

■ % Yes, member



Based on annual aggregated data, usually based on two surveys

GALLUP



Not yet an AOF member? Please join us!

Atheists and Other Freethinkers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762, incorporated in 1993. Meetings are free and open to the public. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movies and parties! See what awaits you at www.aofonline.org.

AOF President & Editor: Fantastic Fran Evanisko
Vice-president: Marvelous Mynga Futrell
Secretary: (Currently vacant – volunteer needed!)
Treasurer & Registrar: Kinetic Ken Nahigian
Webmistress: Palpable Pat Kelley
Directors at large:

Dave Flanders, Roger Zabkie, Pamella Rivera,
Linda Ostrofsky (Jetta), Kaeleigh Pontif
... And the rest of the motley team.

How to Contact AOF:

- Call 916-304-3796 (voicemail)
 - Or write to PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182
- Or visit <http://www.aofonline.org/contact> to e-message us

How to Join AOF:

Visit <http://www.aofonline.org/join>, or come to a meeting. We have forms.

AOF's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Atheists-and-Other-Freethinkers/533365556831322>

AOF is affiliated with the Alliance of Secular Humanist Societies (ASHS), Atheist Alliance of America (AAA), American Atheists (AA), American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Sacramento Coalition of Reason (SCoR).

AOF Mission Statement:

“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.”

What is a Freethinker? One striving to form opinions of life, religion, politics and philosophy on the grounds of reason and experience, rather than tradition, authority or custom. He or she need not be an atheist, though in a religious society most atheists do tend to be freethinkers.

AOF supports a benign separation of Church and State as the best means to protect the liberty and intellectual commerce of citizens. “... to keep forever from these shores the ceaseless strife that has soaked the soil of Europe in blood for centuries” (James Madison, 1803).

Our vision: to be a venue where secular and unchurched citizens can socialize, dialog, develop friendships and enjoy shared company. AOF does not discriminate on such grounds as race, sexual orientation, age, gender, class, physical debility or (*cough*) religion. We welcome the fair-minded of all political persuasions and preferences. Any who will treat others with respect and dignity may join.

Donations to AOF are tax deductible, and the newsletter is free by email. Please share with sympathetic friends.

Letters, submissions? We love them! See:

<http://www.aofonline.org/read/submission-guide.html>.

Other Groups of Interest

Reason Center, a freethought venue and safehouse for all.
1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento; ph. 916-426-6416
Email reasoncenter@gmail.com; <https://reasoncenter.org/>,
<https://www.facebook.com/reasoncenter/>

United Coalition of Reason Sacramento (SacCoR)

A group of all the groups.
Ph. 916-572-7020 or email sacramentocor@gmail.com
<https://unitedcor.org/coalition-of-reason/sacramento-area/>

Humanist Association of the Greater Sacramento Area

Meets 3rd Sunday most months at Reason Center.
POB 216223, Sacramento, 95821-8223; ph. 916-514-9974
<http://hagsa.org/>; email president@hagsa.org

Sunday Assembly Sacramento

Church alternative, each 2nd Sunday at Reason Center.
<http://sacramento.sundayassembly.com/>,
<https://www.facebook.com/SundayAssemblySacramento> or
<https://www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly-Sacramento/>
Email david@LodiUnited.org

Compassionate Humanists

Meets 1st Sunday each month in Roseville.
PO Box 769, Newcastle, 95658; ph. 916-836-5269
<https://compassionatehumanists.com/discussion-groups/roseville/> or <https://www.meetup.com/Compassionate-Humanists/>; email info@compassionatehumanists.com

Think Atheist of Sacramento

A social network and discussion group.
<http://www.thinkatheist.com/group/sacramentocalifatheists>

Americans United chapter in Sacramento (AU-Sac)

Church/State Separation and issue advocacy.
P.O Box 163418, Sacramento CA 95816; ph 916-684-4730
<http://www.au-sac.org/>; email president@au-sac.org

Central Valley Alliance of Atheists and Skeptics (CVAAS)

438 E. Shaw Ave #221, Fresno, 93710, ph. 559-335-3228
<http://www.cvaas.org/> or <https://www.meetup.com/Fresno-cvaas/events/>; email info@cvaas.org

Sacto Atheist-Agnostic Gatherings & Events (SAAGE) †

Online social group (Yahoo ID required).
<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SAAGE/info> or
<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SEINE/info>

First Atheist Church of True Science (FACTS)

PO Box 233345, Sacramento, 95823; ph. 707-739-6837
<http://www.factschurch.com/>; email factschurch@gmail.com

Sacramento Area Skeptics (SAS)

Meets monthly for critical thinking, science advocacy, beer!
<https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/> or
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sacskeptics/>
Email sacskeptics@gmail.com or sbaker81@comcast.net

Greater Sacramento FFRF Chapter

Church/State watchdog, secular advocacy.
<http://sac.ffrf.org/>; email sacffrf@gmail.com

Sacramento Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers

<https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/> or
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SacFAN/>

Sacramento Brights Action Meetup

<https://www.meetup.com/Brights-Action-Sacramento/>
Email the-brights@the-brights.net

Black Humanists and Non-Believers of Sacramento

Multiple meetings each month, breakfast parties, outreach!
<https://www.facebook.com/blackhumanistsofsacramento> or
<https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/>
Email BlackHumanistsNonBelievers@gmail.com

Sacramento Area Multi-Belief Discussion Meetup

Meets monthly each 2nd Saturday in Roseville.
<https://www.meetup.com/Sacramento-Area-Multi-Belief-Discussion-Meetup/members/>

Stockton Area Atheists and Freethinkers (SAAF)

Ph. 209-610-0651 or email david@LodiUnited.org
<http://www.stocktonaaf.org/> or
<https://www.meetup.com/StocktonAtheists/>

UC Davis Agnostic & Atheist Student Assoc (AgASA)

Secular student association.
457 MU Bldg, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/DavisAgASA/>
Email davis@secularstudents.org or agasadavis@gmail.com

CSUS Secular Student Alliance

Secular student association.
<https://www.facebook.com/SacStateSSA/> or
<https://sacstatessa.wordpress.com/>
Email csus@secularstudents.org

Sacramento City College Freethinkers

Secular student association, meets each Tuesday.
<https://www.facebook.com/SSAatSCC/>
Email SacCityFreethinkers@gmail.com or
secularstudentssaccity@gmail.com

Sierra College Secular Student Alliance

5100 Sierra College Blvd, Rocklin, CA 95677
Email freethinkersofsierra@gmail.com or
sierra@secularstudents.org

Yuba Community College Freethinkers †

2088 N Beale Rd, Marysville, CA 95901
<https://www.facebook.com/ssayc/>
Email yccd@secularstudents.org or tsmith@yccd.edu

Waldorf School Secular Students

3750 Bannister Rd, Fair Oaks, CA 95628
Email sacwaldorf@secularstudents.org

Laguna Creek High School Secular Students †

9050 Vicino Drive, Elk Grove, CA 95758
Email lagunacreek.hs@secularstudents.org

† Possibly in abeyance. If you have new info, let us know please!

Blast from the past. In 1995, the *Bee's* Religion page agreed to publish humanist & secular responses to moral questions along with views from local faith leaders. Grabbing the gauntlet, AOF's own **Pat Kelley** was soon submitting her own answers. Here is a highlight.

January 13, 1996. What would Jesus say to the Material Girl?

All that is known about Jesus is that he existed and was briefly an itinerant, apocalyptic preacher. Most information about Jesus comes from the Gospels, which are not historic documents but greatly embellished testimonies of faith written generations after his death. They said that Jesus was a radical, identifying with poor, downtrodden outcasts of society. He preached tolerance of a merciful god and a kingdom of love and peace. Most of his followers were members of the "fringe" and since Madonna is so outrageous, Jesus probably would feel quite comfortable around her. ... A true victim of free speech, Jesus's greatest crime was in advising followers to find a personal relationship with God - even if it meant disregarding authority. He was murdered for his outspoken attacks on priests, Pharisees, hypocrites and businesses. Today he might advise Madonna to become a "Spiritual Girl" and donate her wealth to groups that help protect individual rights to freedom of speech and religion.