

The Newsletter of the Humanist Community

Our Values - Freedom, compassion, fairness, and scientific knowledge. **in Silicon Valley**

Our Vision - A human population leading ethical and personally fulfilling lives that contribute to the good of humanity.

Our Mission - To support the social and intellectual needs of our members and to live by our values and vision.



Volume 20 Issue 1

P.O. Box 60069, Palo Alto, CA 94306-0069

January 2014

www.humanists.org

650-964-7576

infohcsv@yahoo.com



Dominic Borg



Martin Squibbs



Laura Mappin



John Figdor



Hilton Brown

January Forums

January 5 **Physician-Assisted Suicide: What Would John Rawls Do?**

Physician-Assisted Suicide, even for the terminally ill, is legal in only four U.S. States. Yet there are now proposals in the U.S. and abroad to extend the right to die - to obtain and consume a reliable lethal dose of barbiturates - to those over 70 years of age, and to those whose longtime spouses are near death and who wish to die with them. How would these proposals fare under the principles of justice articulated and defended by John Rawls, the most influential political theorist of our time? Martin Carciari, Associate Professor of Political Science at San Francisco State University, and a friend of the Humanist Community, will present his application of Rawlsian principles to one of the most urgent public policy issues of our time.

January 12 **Why California Can't Buy Its Way Out of the Prison Crisis**

Our criminal justice system - including our prisons and jails - is broken AND expensive. The United States, with less than five percent of the world's population, has nearly 25 percent of the world's incarcerated population. California has one of the highest prison and jail populations in the US. Our recidivism rate, at more than 67%, is also among the highest.

Emily Harris, Statewide Coordinator of Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB), will speak. CURB's goal is to stop the expansion of the failed system and replace the brutal practice of putting people in cages for long periods with evidence-based treatment, rehabilitation, and training programs to facilitate their reintegration back into society

January 19 **Ten Beautiful Lies about Jesus**

Why would anyone think Jesus never existed? Isn't it perfectly reasonable to accept that he was a real first century figure? As it turns out, no. David Fitzgerald's award-winning book *Nailed: Ten Christian Myths That Show Jesus Never Existed At All* sheds light on ten beloved Christian myths, and with evidence gathered from historians all across the theological spectrum, shows how they point to a Jesus Christ created solely through allegorical alchemy of hope and imagination; a messiah transformed from a purely literary, theological construct into the familiar figure of Jesus - in short, a purely mythic Christ. David Fitzgerald is a historical researcher and an atheist/humanist/secular/skeptic speaker and activist.

January 26 **Meet the Candidates & Group Discussion of the Humanist Community**

The five candidates for the Humanist Community in Silicon Valley (HCSV) Board of Directors (Dominic Borg, Hilton Brown, Jonathan Figdor, Laura Mappin, and Martin Squibbs) will introduce themselves and tell what they hope to accomplish on the Board. There will be an opportunity for Q&A after their presentations as time permits, followed by a general discussion of HCSV with audience participation.

A short statement by each candidate is on the following page.

FORUM INFORMATION

Palo Alto High School - Student Center,
50 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto 94301

Sundays 11 AM-12:15 PM - Free and open to the public,

Lunch 12:15-2 PM. - A donation of \$12 is requested.

*Humanist Community
serving Silicon Valley*

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Editor

Alex Havasy

Production

Hilton Brown, Helen Athey, Marian Sanders,
Carl Angotti, Sena Havasy, Brian Davis
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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor may be submitted to
svhumanists@gmail.com. The length of your
submission should not exceed 100 words and
may be edited for clarity.

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Hilton Brown
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Peng Zhang

To contact the Board

email Arthur@arthurmjackson.com

Disclaimer:

Opinions expressed herein are those of the
authors and do not necessarily reflect the
opinions or positions of the Humanist
Community.

HELP

Do you need some help?

· For confidential assistance contact Arthur
Jackson at Arthur@arthurmjackson.com or
call 408-620-4278.

· If you need to talk to someone about a
problem you're having, call Arthur Jackson
at 408-620-4278.

· If you need some other kind of help (for
example, a ride to a doctor's appointment,
some groceries brought by, a
recommendation for a lawyer), email
hchelp@yahoo.com (which forwards
your e-mail to members of the HC HELP
group, each of whom may send a reply e-mail
to you and the group if they can help), or
reach them through Sena Havasy at
senahav@gmail.com.

Statements by Candidates to the Board of the Humanist Community

Martin Squibbs: I have been a member of the HCSV since the late 1990's, and a board member for the last 2 years. I believe the HCSV is of great value in providing a secular, welcoming and open minded community for people to come, make friends and explore the essential questions of life. What values to best hold and live by; how to better treat one another, and how to better protect and respect our home, planet Earth. I want to play whatever part I am able to in supporting this community and joining with its members to seek answers to these questions and to live by them as best I can.

Dominic Borg: My foremost desire is to support HCSV in continuing to facilitate a great community and great events. Additionally, I hope to work with fellow Bay Area organizations planning events, and sharing knowledge and resources symbiotically. I would like to explore new things we could do that reflect our mission statement. I look forward to helping to get the word out about HCSV events and welcoming new people to the community.

Hilton U. Brown III: I've been a member of the Humanist Community for over twenty years. I served as treasurer for more than eight years, and I have served in several other offices in the HCSV. I want to help the community grow and fulfill the promises of our Values, Vision and Mission.

Jonathan Figdor: I've lived an interesting life, from working in a domestic violence shelter in frontier Montana to being an open Atheist in Divinity School. I was an Organizing Fellow of the Humanist Chaplaincy at Harvard University and former Assistant Humanist Chaplain there and am the current Humanist Chaplain at Stanford. I feel my contacts and experience can be a great asset to the Humanist Community.

Laura Mappin: I spent almost 10 years looking for this community. I've been an active member for one year and a self-identifying humanist for over 30 years. I was particularly drawn in by the variety of topics you discuss at your Forum. I'm particularly interested in getting more visibility for HCSV and in reaching out to many whom I believe are already looking for this kind of group so that this great resource you have built here can thrive.

The election for the Board of the Humanist Community will be held on February 2, the Sunday after the presentation by the candidates.

Only members of the Humanist Community are eligible to vote, so renew your membership early

Calendar of Events

New Year's Open House

The annual New Year's Open House will be at the home of Sena and Alex Havasy. The tree is still up, the champagne flows, come and start the New Year right with a friendly group of fellow humanists! 408-739-5638 or senahav@gmail.com.

Where: Home of Sena and Alex Havasy

When: Wednesday, January 1 from 2:00PM to 5:00PM

Fun Group Peninsula Museum of Art

Artist Susan Else creates structures, then covers them with painted and printed fabric using collage and quilting technology. Some – like the “Ferris Wheel” and “Carousel,” are even motorized. She explains, “Life is always a complicated stew of positive, negative, and shades of grey – all at once – and I want my works to reflect that complexity and ambiguity.”

Earlier this year, the Peninsula Museum of Art exhibited ‘Part One: The Legendary Joe Price.’ Only about half of the pieces that the artist and his dealer, Lee Stone, had donated to the Museum were shown. ‘Joe Price Part Two’ showcases the balance of the donated artworks, including one of Price’s most famous works, “Secrets.”

Visit www.peninsulamuseum.org or call (650) 692-2101.

Where: 1777 California Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010.

Meet at the main entrance

When: Saturday, January 18, 2014 at 11 AM

Cost: Free

Welcoming Committee

We schedule small monthly get-acquainted gatherings in private homes, assist with all holidays, greet visitors, and keep ourselves informed about goings-on in the Community.

If you are interested in attending, hosting a Coffee & Dessert, or joining the Welcoming Committee, please contact Dianne Jacobsen, Committee Chair, (diannej750@gmail.com) or Sena Havasy (senahav@gmail.com).

When: January 16 (3rd Thursday) at 3:00 PM

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee arranges potlucks and seasonal celebrations, including the annual spring dinner honoring the new Board. At the Sunday Forum it prepares the Membership Table, the lectern flowers and the table decorations. Sandy Smith’s Sunshine subcommittee sends paper cards.

Feedback and volunteers are always welcome. Please contact me at senahav@gmail.com: or 408-462-2156.

Sena Havasy,

Committee Chair

The Family Program

The HC Family Program is designed for children ages 4 to 13 in freethinking humanist families. The parents supervise the program. Participants involve themselves in science, art, and drama projects, reflecting the ideas and goals of the families and community. At the end of each program meeting, they join the community for lunch when the program is on site.

Where: Science Resource Building of Palo Alto High School, Room 1732

When: most Sundays, 10:30 AM to 12 noon, call 650-257-0478 to confirm the upcoming meeting

The Sharing Circle

One of several groups that meet prior to the Forum each Sunday, where attendees may share personal feelings or experiences, in an environment of trust and confidentiality.

Where: Palo Alto High School Student Center

When: Sundays, 10:30 AM

Free Thought Discussion

Discussion of recent news or a book. For more information check www.humanists.org/blog/free-thought-discussion/.

Where: Home of Hilton Brown

When: Wednesday, 7:30 PM (no meeting January 1)

Academic Video

View an academic video followed by discussion. For more information check www.humanists.org/blog/academic-videos/.

Where: Home of Hilton Brown

When: Thursday, 8:00 PM (no meeting January 2)

Philosophy Talk Podcasts

Listen to and discuss award-winning Philosophy Talk podcasts.

Where: Palo Alto High School

When: Sunday, January 12 and 26, from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM

Sign up and get more details at:

www.meetup.com/humanistcommunity/events/dbhrngyrnbj

History Book Group

This month we’ll read ‘Socrates vs Euthyphro,’ ‘Paine vs Talleyrand,’ and ‘Caroline vs Smallpox’ in *Damned Good Company*, our book for January.

For more information contact Sena Havasy at

senahav@gmail.com.

Where: Kimm’s Flowers: 201 W. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

When: Wednesday, January 8, at 2:00 PM

Clinic Defense

Planned Parenthood, any Saturday of the month. 1691 the Alameda, San Jose; 8:00 AM. For information, contact Alex Havasy at havasy@live.com.

Humanist Community Hiking Group

For information on the November hike, contact Bill Rausch at 510-299-0147.

Other Events of Interest to Humanists

Humanists at UUCPA Potluck and Discussion

Our meetings usually have 15 people. For the potluck, please bring a dish of your choice. Check the website below for the presentation topic.

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto

Fireside Room, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto

When: Saturday, January 4 at 6 PM (presentation at 7)

Direction to UUCPA: uucpa.org/main/location.html

Bay Area Russell Set (BARS)

Join us on Tuesday, January 21, 7:00 PM to discuss “The Conquest of Happiness,” chapter 17 “The Happy man.”

For details see: www.meetup.com/philosophy-219

Ethical Culture Society of Silicon Valley

See their website: www.ethicalsiliconvalley.org for details.

For more information on these and other groups of interest to Humanists go to:

www.humanists.org/blog/associated-organizations/

JANUARY 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <u>2:00 PM</u> New Year's Open House	2	3	4
5 <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	6	7	8 <u>2:00 PM</u> History Book Group <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	9 <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	10	11
12 <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	13 <u>7:30 PM</u> Board meeting	14	15 <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	16 <u>3:00 PM</u> Welcoming Committee <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	17	18 <u>10:00 AM</u> Fun Group
19 <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	20	21	22 <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	23 <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	24	25
26 <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	27	28	29 <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	30 <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	31	

Humanist Community
P.O. Box 60069
Palo Alto, CA 94306-006

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Humanist Community P.O. Box 60069 Palo Alto,
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