



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

September 2005



CSH Affiliate

What's Going on in Humanism Today?

This month our regular third-Monday evening meeting will attempt to answer the question, "What's Going on in Humanism Today?" A panel including David Schafer, June Schafer, Richard Siddall, and Carol Stone will report especially on two major national meetings they've attended recently, and one that's coming up in October. In May, Carol and Richard attended the annual meeting of the American Humanist Association in Albuquerque, NM. In June David, as president of the UU Humanists (HUUmanists), and June, as a volunteer worker for the same organization, participated in the UUA General Assembly in Fort Worth, TX. David will be an invited speaker at the World Congress of the International Academy of Humanism meeting in Amherst NY, October 27-30, on the overall theme "Toward a New Enlightenment."

As we look at the world around us, we see an unprecedented need for people to work together, bringing our human compassion, rational thought, and the methods and discoveries of science to support the highest ethical solutions to the bewildering array of enormous problems we face.

Join us and bring a friend on Monday, September 19 at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden for coffee and conversation followed by our presentation at 8:00 p.m.

Did You Know?

We will stop supporting meetup.com next year when they charge a monthly fee. You can RSVP for dinners by contacting Carol Stone at (203) 264-8546 or editor@cthumanist.org.

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER, 2005

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| Sat., 3 | Humanist Conversations: Selections from Studs Terkel's <i>Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do</i> . | 2:30 p.m. |
| Sat., 10 | Picnic and book discussion at Bill & Kathy Lyon's home in Cornwall Picnic Book discussion: Antonio Damasio's <i>Looking for Spinoza</i> | 1:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m. |
| Mon., 12 | Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. RSVP at humanism.meetup.com. (203) 799-9601 for directions. | 7:00 p.m. |
| Mon., 19 | Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden Coffee and conversation Main program: Panel Presentation: What's Going On in Humanism Today. | 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 25 | Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden | 2:30 p.m. |
| Wed., 28 | Dinner at Lisboa, 19 Lafayette St., Waterbury. (203) 754-0789 for directions. | 7:00 p.m. |

OCTOBER, 2005

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| Sat., 1 | Humanist Conversations: Meet Muhammad Yunus, micro-credit inventor, in an episode of the PBS series: <i>The New Heroes</i> | 2:30 p.m. |
| Mon., 10 | Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. RSVP at humanism.meetup.com. (203) 799-9601 for directions. | 7:00 p.m. |
| Mon., 17 | Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden Coffee and conversation Main program: Ken Feder <i>Archaeology on Mars</i> | 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. |
| Wed., 19 | Dinner at Lisboa, 19 Lafayette St., Waterbury. (203) 754-0789 for directions. | 7:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 23 | Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden | 2:30 p.m. |

WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG

September Conversations: Working

Participate in a special Labor Day celebration on September 3 at 2:30 p.m. Choose a write-up of a job you are not familiar with from the Studs Terkel classic *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do* (ISBN: 1565843428) and come prepared to share it. Each write-up describes someone's job and is typically under ten pages long.

If you haven't gotten the book by Saturday morning, it's still not too late to grab a copy at your local library, flip through to a short write-up and come prepared! And we'll even watch an excerpt from a DVD of the Broadway play. As usual, refreshments will be served.

www.cthumanist.org

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Please include a SASE to have material returned. We welcome letters, articles, photographs, poetry, comic strips, news items, cartoons and other illustrations related to humanism. Approximate circulation: 120 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership.

The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

Picnic and Book Discussion

Join us on Saturday, September 10, for a picnic and book discussion in the northwest hills of Connecticut at the lovely home of Bill and Kathy Lyon. The picnic will start at 1:00 p.m. and the book discussion will begin at 3:30 p.m.

The Lyons will provide chicken, kielbasa, hamburgers and hot dogs as well as soft drinks. Feel free to bring and share one or more side dish, beverage (alcoholic is welcome) and/or lawn chair.

Directions to 120 Dudleytown Road in Cornwall, Connecticut, from the New Haven area:

Take Route 8 north from either I-95 or the Merritt Parkway. Go through Waterbury and get off at exit 38 (Thomaston). Make a left at the end of the exit ramp. Go a short ways until you see signs for Route 254. Make a left onto 254 and head up towards Litchfield. 254 ends at Route 118 where you make a left turn and go up the hill about a 1/2 mile. Make a right onto Route 63 before you go through Litchfield center. Stay on 63, pass the Goshen Fairgrounds, and make a left onto Route 4 at the rotary in Goshen. In a few miles you will make another left at an intersection in order to stay on 4. Watch for a sign for Cornwall Village. You will make a left onto Pine Street (a right would take you onto Route 25). At the end of Pine St. make a left onto Valley Road. Follow this for 2 miles. Continue on Valley Road past the second street on the left (Everest Hill Rd.). Go over a small metal bridge, and then the road forks. A right takes you onto Dudleytown Road which is unmarked and a dead end. Climb a mile up the hill. The road turns to dirt a half mile up. At the end there's a metal gate, beyond which is a dirt path. The driveway is on the right. There is no mailbox, but #120 is painted on the telephone pole. The Lyon's phone is (860) 672-0550 in case you get lost.

The book will be *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* by Antonio Damasio. ISBN: 0156028719.

For the full text of an interview with Antonio Damasio, visit: harcourtbooks.com/authorinterviews/bookinterview_damasio.asp.

Q: Are there neurobiological foundations for Ethics?

A: Yes there are. One of the payoffs of the new understanding of emotions and feelings is the realization that moral behavior does not begin with humans. In certain circumstances numerous non-human species behave in ways that are, for all intents and purposes, comparable to the moral ways of human beings. Interestingly, the moral behaviors are emotional -compassion, shame, indignation, dominant pride or submission. As in the case of culture, the contribution of everything that is learned and created in a group plays a major role in shaping moral behaviors. Only humans can codify and refine rules of moral behavior. Animals can behave in moral-like ways, but only humans have ethics and write laws and design justice systems. Animals can show attachment to others but as I discuss in the book only humans love in the proper sense of the term.

October Conversations: A Social Hero

Join us in October to meet Muhammad Yunus in an episode of the PBS series: *The New Heroes*. If you wish to do research before the meeting, read *Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty* or *Banker to the Poor: The Autobiography of Muhammad Yunus, Founder of Grameen Bank*.

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