



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

April 2008



CSH Affiliate

## *Abraham Lincoln, as Perceived in His Own Time by Robert Ingersoll*

**\* NOTE DATE CHANGE \***

Join us on **Monday, April 21, 2008**, at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden, when our vice president, Doug Peary, will treat us to an unusual variation on his Humanist Hero series; he will present Abraham Lincoln using the words of the orator Robert Green Ingersoll.

Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, and lived and worked as an attorney in Illinois before becoming President. Robert Ingersoll was born in 1833, lived and worked in Illinois as an attorney, became Attorney General for the State of Illinois, and became a nationally renowned skeptical freethinker and prominent speaker.

During his lifetime, Ingersoll told the story of Lincoln using the testimony of those people who knew and loved Lincoln as to his views on religion. Many of Lincoln's friends were skeptics and deists, who told Ingersoll of Lincoln's freethinking and deist views. Lincoln was never a member as an adult of a Christian church and followed the deist religious views of Voltaire,

## *Calendar of Events*

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at [humanism.meetup.com](http://humanism.meetup.com).

### APRIL, 2008

Sat., 5	Humanist Conversations: <i>Election Rhetoric</i>	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 7	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 21	Monthly meeting * NOTE DATE * <b>Main program:</b> Doug Peary: <i>Abraham Lincoln, Humanist Hero, as Perceived in His Own Time by Robert Ingersoll</i>	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sat., 26	<b>Bible Reading Group:</b> Genesis to Abraham.	2:30 p.m.
Sun., 27	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Wed., 30	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.

### MAY, 2008

Sat., 3	Humanist Conversations: TBD	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 5	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 10	<b>Book discussion:</b> Neil Shubin's <i>Your Inner Fish</i>	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 19	Monthly meeting <b>Main program:</b> Amanda Metskas, President of Camp Quest, Inc.	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sun., 25	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Tue., 27	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.

**WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG**

Jefferson, Paine and Franklin.

Doug's talk replaces the presentation by Herb Silverman previously announced in the March newsletter. Herb will speak for us on a future date. Please note that we've rescheduled the April meeting back to the third Monday of the month.

Bring a friend for this presentation sure to be as entertaining as it is informative on Monday, April 21, 2008, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. Coffee and conversation will begin at 7:30 p.m. followed by Doug's lecture after a brief business meeting at 8:00 p.m.

## *Conversations: Election Rhetoric*

Join us for our next conversation at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 5 at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. "Election Rhetoric: How Do We Decide Where to Get Our Information and What Does It Mean — Really?" The last two weeks have brought crises for the Democratic candidates; Rev. Wright for Obama and Clinton's over-heated description of her arrival in Bosnia. How did this happen? What did they say? How did we find out about any of it? We have video of Obama's speech, Bosnia, and an interview with McCain as well as some print articles. Refreshments will be served.

## *Membership to Vote on Camp Quest Sponsorship*

Our speaker for our May 19 anniversary meeting will be Amanda Metskas, President of Camp Quest, Inc. Our board has discussed the possibility of presenting a gift to Amanda to help support a camper for one session, and our president is calling a short business meeting before the main talk at 8:00 p.m. on April 21 so our members can consider this idea.

[www.cthumanist.org](http://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.

Many thanks for our surprise birthday party, replete with delicious birthday cake and Humanist T-shirts. You're a wonderful group and you keep us young and active! Sincerely yours, June and David

# Bible Discussion Group, Part II

The second meeting of the HAC Bible Discussion Group will be on Saturday, April 26, 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

For this meeting, please read the following:

A) In "How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now" by James L. Kugel, the following:

- Chapter 2. The Creation of the World—and of Adam and Eve 47-57*
- Chapter 3. Cain and Abel 58-68*
- Chapter 4. The Great Flood 69-80*
- Chapter 5. The Tower of Babel 81-88*
- Chapter 6. The Call of Abraham 89-106*

B) On Wikipedia, the entries

- "Book of Genesis" at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genesis>
- "Lilith" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilith#Lilith\\_in\\_the\\_Bible](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilith#Lilith_in_the_Bible)

For anyone joining the group now, please familiarize yourself with the readings for the first meeting as well as for this one. A history of assigned reading is available at <http://www.cthumanist.org>.

On April 26, we will also watch a short video.

There may be additional suggested short on-line readings for the April 26 meeting and Manny Ratafia, the group coordinator, may suggest specific issues or questions to think about in preparation for the meeting.

See you on April 26. Feel free to invite a friend. Please go through the assigned reading materials.

# Book Discussion — Your Inner Fish

The next book we will read is "Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body" by Neil Shubin. This fascinating book is written by one of the world's experts in this field, is packed with lots of information, and is, surprisingly, a very easy read. Although this is a new book, lots of copies are available at public libraries as well as at bookstores and online. We will meet to discuss this book on Saturday, May 10, 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

"Why do we look the way we do? What does the human hand have in common with the wing of a fly? Are breasts, sweat glands, and scales connected in some way? To better understand the inner workings of our bodies and to trace the origins of many of today's most common diseases, we have to turn to unexpected sources: worms, flies, and even fish.

"Neil Shubin, a leading paleontologist and professor of anatomy who discovered Tiktaalik—the "missing link" that made headlines around the world in April 2006—tells the story of evolution by tracing the organs of the human body back millions of years, long before the first creatures walked the earth. By examining fossils and DNA, Shubin shows us that our hands actually resemble fish fins, our head is organized like that of a long-extinct jawless fish, and major parts of our genome look and function like those of worms and bacteria.

"Shubin makes us see ourselves and our world in a completely new light. Your Inner Fish is science writing at its finest—enlightening, accessible, and told with irresistible enthusiasm." — *Random House*

**MEMBERSHIP**

- i Adult . . . . . \$35
- i Family . . . . . \$50
- i Newsletter Only . . . . . \$10

i In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to Humanist Association of Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.

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