



THE NEWSLETTER OF  
**The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION**  
of CONNECTICUT



AHA Chapter

January 2019

UU Humanists Local Group

## *Building Community by Assigning Significance within a Secular Life*

Join us on Monday, January 21 in the Social Hall of the Unitarian Society of New Haven at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden for our first monthly meeting of 2019.

HFFC member and Humanist Celebrant Anita Peters invites us to consider what we do and do not celebrate and why. In a lively interactive presentation involving live audience polls, she will engage us in a discussion of our participation in various celebrations, religious holidays as secular events and universal life cycle events. Which occasions do secular humanists choose to celebrate throughout the year? In fact, she argues, we need our own humanist calendar of celebratory events. "When we celebrate together our values and philosophy of life, we create a community and affirm our community at the same time," says Anita, "an important development in building an understanding of secular humanism and what it means to be good without God." This year she is talking to as many humanists as she can in Connecticut and around the country. We are stop two on her journey to create a secular humanist calendar that encompasses humanism, voices our aspirations, recounts our history and expresses our values. She has submitted an application to be a presenter at the 2019 AHA Convention.

Anita Peters has been a Humanist Celebrant since 2014 and is a member of The Humanists and Freethinkers of Fairfield

## *Calendar of Events*

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

### **JANUARY 2019**

- |          |   |                            |
|----------|---|----------------------------|
| Sat., 19 | Book Discussion: "A More Beautiful and Terrible History" by Jeanne Theoharis  | 2:00 p.m. to<br>4:00 p.m.  |
| Mon., 21 | Monthly Meeting<br><br>Main program: "Building Community by Assigning Significance within a Secular Life" by Anita Peters | 7:00 p.m.<br><br>7:30 p.m. |
| Sun., 27 | Board meeting   | 3:30 p.m.                  |
| Mon., 28 | Dinner Discussion at the Wood-n-Tap, 2100 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT. (203) 248-9663.<br>Topic: The Good Life             | 7:00 p.m.                  |

### **FEBRUARY 2019**

- |          |   |                            |
|----------|---|----------------------------|
| Sat., 2  | Explorations: Left Behind America   | 2:30 p.m. to<br>4:30 p.m.  |
| Mon., 4  | Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002                | 7:00 p.m.                  |
| Sat., 16 | Book Discussion: "The Denial of Death" by Ernest Becker   | 2:00 p.m. to<br>4:00 p.m.  |
| Sun., 17 | Monthly Meeting<br><br>Main program: Dr. Abby Hafer on Darwin's Apostles                            | 3:30 p.m.<br><br>4:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 24 | Board meeting   | 3:30 p.m.                  |
| Mon., 25 | Dinner Discussion at the Wood-n-Tap, 2100 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT. (203) 248-9663.<br>Topic: TBA | 7:00 p.m.                  |

### **[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)**

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County (HFFC). She is on their Steering Committee, ran their non-fictional book club for five years and has chaired the Programming Committee since 2014. Under her leadership, HFFC introduced highly successful community celebrations for the Winter and Summer solstices. In 2018, the Winter Solstice welcomed a record 60 guests. Celebrations for the past three years have averaged 45 guests. Anita initiated and organized participation in the international Death Café movement with two other Connecticut Humanist Celebrants in 2016. Six Death Cafés in three different

cities were held for the secular humanist community in Connecticut.

As a Humanist Celebrant she officiates weddings, memorials, and other life cycle events in Connecticut. She was re-endorsed for five years in 2017 ([www.markthisdaywithlove.com](http://www.markthisdaywithlove.com)) and is a certified Funeral Celebrant of the Insight Institute's advanced training for Funeral Directors in secular memorials. She is also certified by The Equality Institute.

We will start with coffee and conversation at 7:00 p.m. followed by Anita's interactive presentation at 7:30 p.m!

## **[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)**

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**Officers**

President Carol Siddall  
 (203) 264-8546  
[president@cthumanist.org](mailto:president@cthumanist.org)  
 Vice-President  
 Secretary Richard Siddall  
 Treasurer Nina Steiner

**Committee Chairs**

Program Carol Siddall  
 Membership Frank Avitable  
 Development Gayle Walter  
 Publications Jim Ritter  
 Publicity Carol Ritter  
 Hospitality Randy Olear

**Newsletter**

Editor Carol Siddall  
 (203) 264-8546  
[editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org)  
 Production: Richard Siddall  
 (203) 264-2182  
[webmaster@cthumanist.org](mailto:webmaster@cthumanist.org)

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We welcome humanist-themed letters, articles, poetry, news items, cartoons, and illustrations.

Please include a SASE to have material returned. Approximate circulation: 180 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership.

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

**Membership Renewals**

The HAC membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Any board member will gratefully accept your renewal!

**Explorations: Left Behind America**

Join us at 2:30 p.m. in the library at 700 Hartford Turnpike on Saturday, February 2. In much of the country, outside of some major urban areas, local economies are in decline, populations are dwindling, and the opioid epidemic is spreading. While not a new story in post industrial America, the implications are becoming increasingly severe, with few satisfactory solutions. This is the story of Dayton, Ohio, a once thriving city, only some fifty years ago. What happened, and what does the future hold for this place and many others like it?

**Book Discussion: The Denial of Death**

Our book for January is *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History* by Jeanne Theoharis. The discussion will take place Saturday, January 19, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. in the library of the Unitarian Society of New Haven at 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden.

Our book for February is *The Denial of Death* by Ernest Becker. The discussion will take place Saturday, February 16, 2019, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the library of the Unitarian Society of New Haven at 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden.

From *Amazon*:

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1974 and the culmination of a life's work, "The Denial of Death" is Ernest Becker's brilliant and impassioned answer to the "why" of human existence. In bold contrast to the predominant Freudian school of thought, Becker tackles the problem of the vital lie – man's refusal to acknowledge his own mortality. In doing so, he sheds new light on the nature of humanity and issues a call to life and its living that still resonates more than twenty years after its writing.

"It puts together what others have torn to pieces and rendered useless. It is one of those rare masterpieces that will stimulate your thoughts, your intellectual curiosity, and last but not least, your soul..."

– Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, author of "On Death And Dying"

**Dinner Discussion: The Good Life**

The March, 1994, proceedings of the fifteenth congress of the World Federation of Humanists was entitled, "Humanism and the Good Life." "The Good Life" appears seven times in the eighth edition of Corliss Lamont's classic text, "The Philosophy of Humanism" ([www.corliss-lamont.org/philos8.pdf](http://www.corliss-lamont.org/philos8.pdf)). Bertrand Russell is famous for his quote, "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge" ([bertrandrussellsociety.org](http://bertrandrussellsociety.org)). Of course, this is a classical concept. Aristotle talks about it in his *Treatise on Government* ([www.gutenberg.org/files/6762/6762-h/6762-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6762/6762-h/6762-h.htm)).

What are your thoughts on the good life?

Join us for this discussion at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 28 at the Wood-n-Tap at 2100 Dixwell Avenue in Hamden. Please RSVP via meetup or [programs@cthumanist.org](mailto:programs@cthumanist.org).

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>		Name(s): _____
! Adult . . . . .	\$35	Address: _____
! Family . . . . .	\$50	_____
! Newsletter Only . . . . .	\$10	Telephone: _____
! Our membership year is 1/1-12/31.		E-Mail Address: _____
! In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to		Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO
! Humanist Association of Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.		I want my newsletter electronically <u>only</u> (circle one): YES NO
As a chapter of the American Humanist Association we share your information with AHA. Please check this box if you do <u>not</u> want to be contacted by the Secular Coalition for Connecticut about legislative action <input type="checkbox"/>		