

# FIRST COAST FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY, INC.

*An organization of freethinkers and secular humanists supporting free inquiry, education, and community in the Northeast Florida area*

**Our Motto: “To Question is the Answer.”**

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First Coast

# FreeThinker



The Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

November 2010

Volume 8, Issue 11

Inside this issue:

Pledging Allegiance	4
Book Review: The Moral Landscape	6
John Lennon and Free Speech	8
Freethought Events of Interest	12
Meet Our November Speaker	12

*All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.*

—Thomas Paine

## President's Message - November 2010

**Earl Coggins**

I call myself a free-thinker. When someone asks me for the definition of the word, I have to pause for a moment and regurgitate the definition I have stored away in my brain's hard drive — you know...the one that says a free-thinker comes to conclusions independent of authority, or more ap-

propriately defined — a person who thinks for himself or herself. Or the definition the First Coast Freethought promotes that states in part that freethinkers form opinions and con-

When I really think about being a free-thinker, or the freethought movement, or anything remotely related to freedom, especially free speech, I wonder whether or not I really have true freedom of thought and speech, or is it perhaps a watered down version of our theoretical ver-



*Speaking out can get a person in trouble, depending on what you say and who you work for.*

clusions independent of dogma, especially religious dogma.

(Continued on page 3)

## November 2010 Meeting

**Joque H. Soskis**

Retired UNF faculty member, past member and official of the faculty union of the State University System, retired member of the Florida Bar, author, freethinker.

**“What Can Possibly Explain All This? Or, a Scientist Seeks a Unifying Theory for Everything About America”**

**Monday, November 15, 2010, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**In the Sanctuary, upper parking lot level • Doors open at 6:00  
Unitarian Universalist Church • 7405 Arlington Expressway • Jacksonville, FL**

## Humanist Book Discussion Group



**When:** 2:00 p.m., the first Sunday of each month

**Where:** BARNES & NOBLE, 11112 San Jose Blvd., Jax • 904-886-9904

**What:** Books planned for discussion:

- December 5, 2010 - "Don't Sleep, There Are Snakes" by Daniel L. Everett
- January 2, 2011 - Articles, poems, or books of your choice for discussion

Books may be found in the library, may be purchased from local book stores, or purchased online. The First Coast Freethought Society will receive a small remuneration from your purchase (at no additional cost to you) if you first go to <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/> and then click the link to Amazon.com for your purchase.

**A** riveting account of the astonishing experiences and discoveries made by linguist Daniel Everett while he lived with the Pirahã, a small tribe of Amazonian Indians in central Brazil. Everett, then a Christian missionary, arrived among the Pirahã in 1977—with his wife and three young children—intending to convert them. What he found was a language that defies all existing linguistic theories and reflects a way of life that evades contemporary understanding: The Pirahã have no counting system and no fixed terms for color. They have no concept of war or of personal property. They live entirely in the present. Everett became obsessed with their language and its cultural and linguistic implications, and with the remarkable contentment with which they live—so much so that he eventually lost his faith in the God he'd hoped to introduce to them. (From Random House, Inc., description)

More info, contact Jewell Kross at [JKross@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:JKross@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org) or call 904-996-1553.

### First Coast FreeThinker

The *First Coast FreeThinker* is published for all freethinkers and potential freethinkers. Nonmembers may receive the e-mail version indefinitely. Nonmembers may receive three hard-copy issues free, after which they must join the FCFS to continue to receive hard copy.

Readers are invited and encouraged to reprint our original materials provided they give credit to this publication. The officials of the FCFS are not responsible for opinions or other statements expressed in this newsletter. The *FreeThinker* is intended to convey ideas that stimulate thought and promote discussion on a variety of subjects.

We welcome submissions. The deadline is the **FOURTH SATURDAY** of each month for the following month's issue. Submit contributions by e-mail or by U.S. mail to Fred Hill, 1817 Egner St.,

Jacksonville, FL 32206.

**ADVERTISING RATES:** Eighth-page (business card size) \$25.00, quarter-page \$50.00, half-page \$75.00, and whole page \$100.

To advertise, contact Patrice Bennett, 904-352-7005, or [PBennett@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:PBennett@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

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(President's Message - November 2010  
Continued from page 1)

sions we revere.

As the spokesperson of the First Coast Freethought Society, I have to constantly guard my speech. It's not free. I have to frame everything I say publicly into "status-quo speech" for fear of offending someone, or worse yet, being perceived as some delusional nut job representing a fringe group of similar nut jobs who can't be taken seriously. I have to be especially careful if I say anything critical of religion, regardless of how respectful I might feel or sound.

What does that say about the land of the free and the home of the brave? It says that we are a live-and-let-live society only on paper. We're not free nor are we brave. To be truly brave, all citizens of this country would have to respect a person's pursuit of happiness, even if it meant respecting something that they don't quite understand nor entirely condone. Things like the separation of state and church, or freedom of speech, or same-gender marriage, or religious plurality, to name a few.

Needless to say, calling oneself a freethinker, although not entirely disingenuous, might not be a completely accurate

label given the fact that very few people are indeed allowed or allow themselves to be entirely free.

Putting free thoughts into words can get you in serious trouble. Just ask Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*, or for that matter, ask Jesus (if he ever existed, and if



**Thomas Paine 1737 - 1809**

so, if or when he returns to earth.) Speaking out can get a person in trouble, depending on what one says and for whom one works. Many freethinkers around the world, although free to think, cannot express themselves openly for fear of vengeance or retaliation. Critically analyzing an employer's political party or religious affiliation could get one fired, so intelli-

gent freethinkers refrain from expressing themselves.

I also wonder if it's possible that my (limited) ability to think and speak freely in this country could ever be taken from me. After all, there are many periods in American history where freedom was something on a person's wish list, especially if you weren't a white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

I have the deepest respect and reverence for Thomas Paine, author of *The Age of Reason*, and a man who I feel was one of the most important members of the group of men commonly referred to as our Founding Fathers. He rallied our American troops during the Revolutionary War when we were on the verge of being defeated by the British Army. He spoke out in favor of the separation of state and church and against the many civil rights violations perpetrated prior to and during his lifetime. He was truly a freethinker. Theodore Roosevelt called him a filthy little atheist. I call him a hero.

When I stand at the podium of our meeting hall every third Monday of the month looking out at the audience while giving my announcements and introducing our speaker, I see heroes.



## Pledging Allegiance to One Nation Under God?

Michael M. Clarke

Every day, millions of people stand and face the flag, place their hands on their hearts, and pledge their allegiance to flag and country. If you swear yourself to something, then the words should matter, right? Should you not be sure of what you are pledging yourself to? What if the words do not apply to you? What if, in fact, they exclude you completely? Then what?

The pledge of allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, as follows, “*I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*”

Its history occurred as follows: It was first modified in 1923 to change the words “my flag” to “the flag of the United States;” in 1940 the Supreme Court ruled that students could be compelled to recite the pledge; in 1942 it was adopted as the official national pledge; and in 1943 the Supreme Court reversed its decision and stated that students could not be compelled to recite the pledge nor to stand for it.

The greatest change, a change in content and purpose, came later. In 1954 the words

“under God” were added to the pledge at which point the pledge became not only a pledge to our flag and country but to a nation “under god.” (Public Law 83-396, Stat 249, H.J. Res 243 enacted on June 14, 1954)

Now, I ask you, what is the non-religious person to do with this?

***It is simply wrong to force people to swear to something they can neither believe in nor endorse: “one nation under god, indivisible.”***

Let’s be honest – aren’t we being asked to swear to something we do not believe? Must I choose between pledging to my country, which I love, and pledging to an invisible deity governing my country, that does not exist? Worse yet, must we suffer the nasty looks and comments for refusing to pledge to a – so proclaimed – “godly nation” undivided?

As an Atheist, I find the recital of a pledge to “one nation under god” to be repugnant, and completely out of touch with reality. As written, it excludes me as an Atheist; it is simply not true.

The most recent Supreme Court ruling on the matter

came in March of 2010 when it was ruled that the pledge was “ceremonial and patriotic in nature and did not constitute an establishment of religion.” That’s fine on the grounds of the argument presented to the courts. Unfortunately, this completely misses the real problem: The pledge forces one to swear oneself, to pledge one’s allegiance, to “*one nation under God, indivisible.*”

Now I am sure many will not see the issue here, and will say “just don’t recite the part about God.” But that misses the point, doesn’t it? I am derided for not saying the pledge, but then told to modify it if I don’t like certain parts? What’s the point at all, if it means so little that I can just change what I don’t like? Moreover, what’s all the fuss about if it’s okay to just change how I say it? Well, okay then, let’s literally change it!

It is simply wrong to force people to swear to something they can neither believe in nor endorse: “one nation under God, indivisible.” One nation? YES! Indivisible? YES! Under God? NO! God is a myth and I don’t believe in fairy tales!

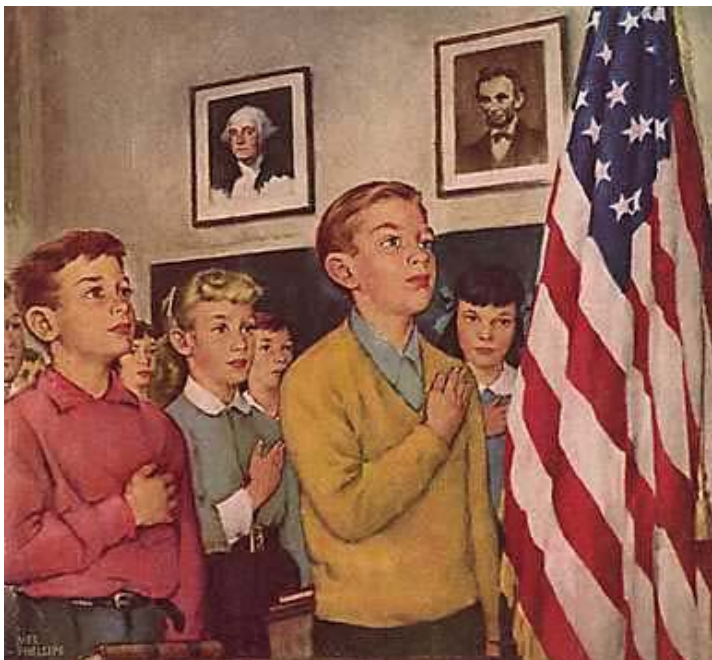
The argument that changed President Eisenhower’s mind, and thus the pledge, was, “... there was something missing

*(Continued on page 5)*

in the pledge, and that which was missing was the character-istic and definitive factor in the American way of life." Pastor George Docherty, who made that statement from the pulpit, clearly felt that religion and god were the *defining* aspects of America. But the fact is that this is not true. Certainly religion and God are one of many things that have defined America, but as that is true of almost every nation, it's not *the* defining aspect of our country. The reality is that those who pushed to change the pledge saw Christianity as the defining aspect of American life, not

just religion. With that intent in mind, the pledge is in fact

ing aspect of America is NOT our ability to believe in invisible deities. It is our compassion, our character, the allowance for freedom of speech, equality, and for diversity. These are the defining aspects of America and its people.



TODAY it is time to remove this archaic, backward, religious phrase from the pledge and to start working on the important parts,

an endorsement of a particular religion.

the best parts – "...liberty and justice for all."

No, the single most defin-



## Ongoing FCFS Activities

### Dinners for Doubters

Sign up to attend or to host a dinner yourself. If a dinner is scheduled, sign-up sheets will be found at the back table at the monthly meetings. For details on how this works, **see page 7 of the July 2008 *FreeThinker***, available on the website, or ask a greeter at the back table.

### Secular Sunday Morning in the Park (or Atheist Sunday Morning)

Freethinkers... let's get acquainted and enjoy intelligent conversation **every 4th Sunday of the month** (unless inclement weather prevails) at 10 a.m. until ? at the pavilion at Losco Park, 10851 Hood Rd., S., Jacksonville 32257, between Shad and Losco Roads. Need directions? Call Beth Perry at 904-733-5489 or Google the address to get a map and directions. We generally provide coffee. Bring a breakfast snack and **a chair or two**. Note, if it's too hot under the pavilion, we take our chairs to some trees with a nice breeze. Mark your calendar. We hope to see you there!

### Caring Tree

If a telephone call to a member is in order, or if a sympathy card, flowers, or some form of support is needed, please contact **Judy Hankins** at 904-724-8188, or e-mail her at [JHankins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:JHankins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org), or leave a notation on a meeting sign-in sheet.

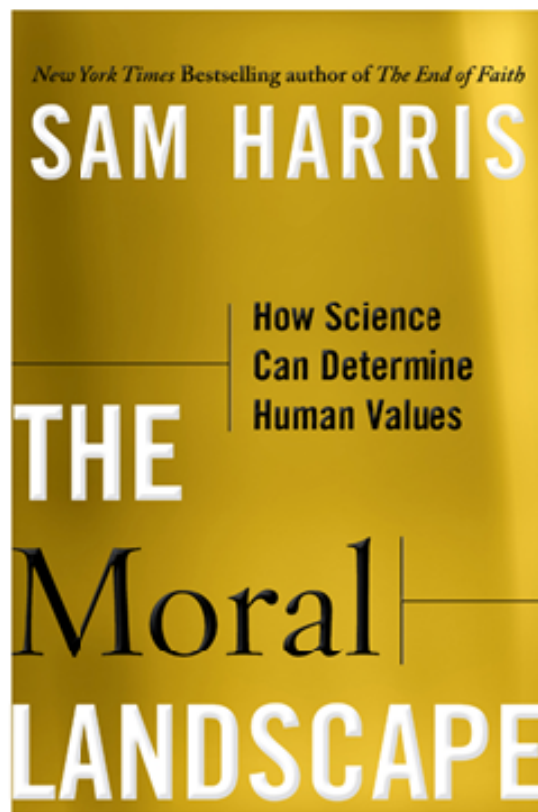
## Book Review: *The Moral Landscape* - You'll need GPS for Sam Harris' new book

Jessica Zellers

I want to like this book, I really do. But Sam Harris doesn't make it easy. First, I need to address a major problem with his writing style: Endnotes. Too much vital content is mislaid in excessive endnotes, a continuing issue from his previous book, *The End of Faith*. I have no objection to proper citation or occasional clarification and further explanation. However, it is inappropriate to give your unique use of the term *science* in endnotes when your book is subtitled "How Science Can Determine Human Values". There are 334 endnotes spanning 43 pages and two endnotes are over two pages a piece. Vital information and evidence needs to be included in the body of the work.

Whew, that felt good—now content. First, before you pick up the book, go online and watch his TED talk. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hj9oB4zpHww](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hj9oB4zpHww) This speech and comments received were part of the development of his argument, and a much clearer presentation of it. Second, when you start reading **do not** skip the second endnote of the introduction, as, like most of his endnotes, this is vital to understanding him. In this book the term *science* (which is used a lot) is more broadly defined than anything I have ever seen. Beyond the traditional definition of

"hard sciences" or even a systematic investigation governed by rational thought (social sciences), Harris uses the term as any statement or claim which can be used to form true beliefs about the world. Using his own example, the fact that JFK was assassinated is "science." "Facts of this kind fall within the context of 'science,' broadly con-



strued as our best effort to form a rational account of empirical reality." With so much effort that has been put into PR of the meaning and function of science on fronts like evolution, it is distressing that someone of Harris' visibility would be so intentionally perverse.

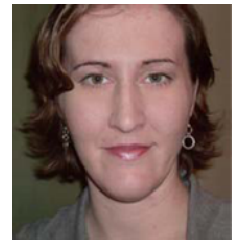
Finding a formal argument

is exceedingly difficult (very surprising when the author has a BA in Philosophy), but his goals are clear. One, ethics/morals are concerned with the well-being of conscious creatures, and science can make and evaluate such claims. Two, such claims are not limited to a linear continuum. As in any landscape, there are a variety of peaks and valleys (highs and lows of human well-being) and in short there is more than one way to skin a cat.

This book is a direct challenge to Stephen J. Gould's non-overlapping magisteria regarding science and religion. By extension, he enthusiastically attacks cultural relativity and how deeply it is pervasive among academicians. He uses extensive evidence of where neuroscience is headed as proof that we will be able to quantify and answer most of these questions in time. However, he doesn't make the fullest use of contemporary evidence.

The strongest evidence to support moral universalism (his position) that I am aware of is a study involving the Trolley Problem (or train) where people across vast cultural differences all gave essentially the same answer. The Trolley Problem is a

(Continued on page 7)



set of moral dilemmas and famously starts, “If a trolley were headed towards 5 men on the tracks and you were standing by a switch and could divert the trolley to another track with only one man, would you throw the switch?” The series of problems goes on and was changed to be relevant to the respondents (e.g., a question about an out of control car was changed to a hungry crocodile for a tribal audience). This could be prime evidence for his argument, but Harris only hinted at it (so obliquely that I’m not sure this is what he was referring to).

The most convincing evidence he does use is only briefly mentioned. There are several studies that can attribute some aspects of human morality to other animals: Monkeys will allow themselves to starve to prevent relations from receiving painful shocks, mice will exhibit more distress if another mouse they know is suffering versus an unknown mouse, and dogs and chimps exhibit a sense of fairness in regard to food rewards. These and others all support that morality is an evolved trait. Therefore, since we’re all human, our individual cultural framework can’t override a deep evolutionary morality.

None of this is new information. The animal studies were done by other scientists. Daniel Dennett has eloquently made a convincing argument that relig-

ion, and by extension ethics, is a function of the natural human experience. Harris even gives credit that his concept of applying rationality to morals and there being a variety of ways to experience peak and low well-being (his entire Landscape metaphor) was already described by William Casebeer and Owen Flanagan (who both revived Aristotle’s position).

At the end of the book (yes,



**Sam Harris**

we’re almost there), he presents three statements that could falsify his thesis. I had charges to level at the first two before the end of the paragraph, and he goes on to argue strongly in opposition of his own third statement. We have stepped through the looking glass when the author destroys his own thesis. The statements that would falsify his thesis: 1) Well-being is haphazard with no correlation to the brain, 2) if there is no correlation between “inner life” and life circumstances, and 3) [very hard to determine] something like, well-being is based in hap-

piness, therefore if killing people makes a murderer happy, they are on the same elevated place in the moral landscape as a saint.

Possible ways to falsify these claims (1), anyone who has taken Psych 101 can tell you that experience is based on context. Most people would agree that spanking is a punishment or that peanut butter cookies are a treat, unless of course you

really enjoy being spanked or are allergic to nuts. (2) I’ll skip the fact he never explains what ‘inner life’ means. His own extensive discussion on psychopaths lays effective challenge to this claim. Not to mention Stockholm syndrome and other mental disorders. (3) Following his abrupt and effective dismantling of his own thesis was a very odd experience. I won’t try to paraphrase. But in the

end, if the worst of humanity can be on the same heights of well-being as the best, then his thesis hasn’t gotten us anywhere.

I have many more comments on this book. However, I will conclude here before the newsletter editor requires me to whittle this down. There are things I couldn’t get to, including Harris’ lengthy and effective attack on religious apologists in the scientific community (Francis Collins)—interesting tangent, but irrelevant to his thesis. The fact that our perceptions can be so

*(Continued on page 9)*



## John Lennon and Free Speech

Fred W. Hill

It was nearly 30 years ago today, I woke up to the news that John Lennon had been murdered. A mentally unbalanced fanatic who both idolized and hated the ex-Beatle stalked and shot him, later citing a variety of conflicting motives. Whatever the reason, the heinous deed was done and those who loved Lennon and his music were left to mourn.

Referred to as the “Smart Beatle” during the early years of Beatlemania, he became a target because in interviews and songs he espoused many controversial opinions about religion and politics, seemingly unaware that pop stars aren’t supposed to do that. Oh, sure, Elvis could gyrate his pelvis in a suggestive manner while singing songs derided as “black music” (to use the polite term), but afterwards he was polite and deferential, never saying anything of substance that might truly antagonize authority. The Beatles, and Lennon in particular, proved to be a different breed of pop stars.

Despite their early image as loveable, funny “mop tops,” the Beatles did challenge authority. The magnitude of their success was such that they were more influential than any of their musical contemporaries, hence they were more dangerous to the status quo. Bad enough that their “long” hair inspired millions of young American men to flout the old crew cut conformity by letting their own hair grow out, but in their off-the-cuff responses and jokes to interview-

ers they seemed to openly mock authority. Then they defied the old Southern ruling class during their first American tour, announcing that they would not play at the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville unless the audience was desegregated, Lennon asserting, “we never play to segregated audiences and we aren’t going to start now. I’d rather lose out appearance money.” Racism still dominated the city where just four years earlier, on “Ax Handle Saturday,” mobs of pro-segregation whites went on a violent rampage, beating every African-American they could find



**John Lennon, 1976**

while the police looked on or actively supported the rioters. Local authorities remained pro-segregationist, even after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned most forms of racial discrimination throughout the nation, was enacted that July. In this instance, however, city officials relented, and the Beatles

performed as scheduled that September 11, 1964, for a desegregated audience, one day after Hurricane Dora ravaged Jacksonville.



Things got uglier during their 1966 tour after a teen magazine plastered on its cover part of Lennon’s most infamous quote, made during an interview by Maureen Cleave for the London Evening Standard: “Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn’t argue with that; I’m right and I will be proved right. We’re more popular than Jesus now; I don’t know which will go first—rock ‘n’ roll or Christianity. Jesus was all right, but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It’s them twisting it that ruins it for me.” Rash claims, but in England they raised little concern. The Beatles grew up in a culture that no longer took religion too seriously. Even in the U.S. there was little comment regarding an interview with all four Beatles conducted by Jean Shepherd for the February 1965 issue of *Playboy* wherein they all admitted to being atheists or agnostics. Paul McCartney remarked, “We probably seem anti-religious because of the fact that none of us believe in God.”

Of course, readers of *Playboy* were unlikely to be shocked at such comments, while Bible-thumpers were unlikely to admit to even glancing at a *Playboy* cover, never mind perusing its contents. However, after a teen

(Continued from page 8)

magazine, *Datebook*, plastered Lennon's "more popular than Jesus" boast on its August 1966 cover, American Christians, particularly in the South, exploded in hellish rage. Radio stations throughout the Bible Belt banned Beatles' songs from their playlists, and several hosted burnings of their records and memorabilia. Ku Klux Klansmen picketed their concerts and threatened to kill them. The anger was fueled as much as for what the Beatles represented as what Lennon said – changes they could not roll back. Their cultural control was rapidly crumbling, as Jim Crow laws were struck down and many of their children became ever more rebellious, challenging old mores, some even thinking for themselves and rejecting antiquated religious beliefs.

The furor mostly died down after Lennon issued an apology, and despite the uproar the Beatles remained massively popular, although they never toured again. Lennon continued to outrage conservative sensibilities with his words and actions – posing nude with his then mistress, Yoko Ono, on an album cover; becoming an anti-war activist; singing such lyrics as "God is a concept by which we measure our pain" and "Imagine there's no Heaven" on his first two solo albums, *Plastic Ono Band* and *Imagine*. President Nixon became so paranoid that Lennon would arouse his fans to oppose him that he initiated efforts to have Lennon, who came to prefer the United States to England, deported.

Lennon won his struggle to stay in America, only to be gunned down by a self-

proclaimed born again Christian who apparently wanted to be the famous ex-Beatle even as he loathed him for his anti-religious statements and lyrics. Lennon's very outspokenness and stardom drew his killer to him. Due to his brash nature, Lennon became an activist for free speech, no matter if it sometimes made him seem too arrogant, too idealistic or even downright foolish. At his best, however, Lennon advocated that people overcome their prejudices, think for themselves, be open to new ideas and love one another. Sometimes, speaking so freely can prove hazardous, for both the famous and the lesser known. We may never all "live as one," as Lennon expressed in "Imagine," but in spite of all the danger we should not fear to express ourselves and strive for greater harmony amongst humanity.



(Book Review: *The Moral Landscape*, Continued from page 7)

easily manipulated (peak/end rule, endowment effect, etc). Building an argument for "the illusion of free will," then going on to say that the illusion is an illusion. General lack of firm argument structure, and most of neurological evidence is where neurology is headed, not what it can offer now. This is less than convincing coming from someone with a PhD in neurology and a BA in

philosophy. His dissertation was a first draft of the book, and yet the dissertation is not cited.

Unlike Dawkins, Sagan, or Dennett, Harris is closer to the start of his career than others, and

***"We would all be better off in a world where we devoted fewer of our resources to preparing to kill one another. Finding clean sources of energy, cures for disease, improvements in agriculture, and new ways to facilitate human cooperation are general goals that are obviously worth striving for."* —Sam Harris**

his future is promising. However, this argument at this time is not fully developed or at least not fully argued. I would recommend reading the book, as long as

So, should you read it? I really wanted to like this book. Sam Harris is a passionate voice of reason in public debate. And his newly minted PhD should pay dividends in future debate.

you can read it as an experience without trying to be too logical. What was the point of the moral landscape? I don't know, but I have some good pictures.



First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.  
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### Statement of Purpose

The First Coast Freethought Society, Inc. is an educational, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization dedicated to supporting nonreligious persons in the Northeast Florida area and promoting a nontheistic approach to everyday life.

### Meetings

The FCFS meets the THIRD Monday of each month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Jacksonville, upstairs in the sanctuary, 7405 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, Florida 32211, (904) 725-8133. Meeting time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Meetings are free and open to the public. Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

For other activities besides monthly meetings, please see the website, brochure, or newsletter!

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<b>Vice President</b>	Carrie Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Secretary</b>	Patrice Bennett	352-7005
	<a href="mailto:PBennett@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">PBennett@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mark Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>At-Large</b>	Richard Keene	386-1121
	<a href="mailto:RKeene@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">RKeene@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>At Large</b>	Alex Mabee	864-6198
	<a href="mailto:AMabee@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">AMabee@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>At-Large</b>	Steve Peek	742-5390
	<a href="mailto:SPeek@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">SPeek@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Other Appointments</b>		
<b>Parliamentarian</b>	Fred W. Hill	358-3610
	<a href="mailto:FHill@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">FHill@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>E-mail Secretary</b>	Carrie Renwick	268-8826
<b>Finance</b>	Mark Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Publicity</b>	Carrie Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Website</b>	Mark Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Welcome</b>	Judy Hankins	724-8188
	<a href="mailto:JHankins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">JHankins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
<b>Long-Range Planning</b>	Curtis Wolf	573-3847
	<a href="mailto:CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	

## November Social

**Where:** OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, near the Avenues Mall.  
**When:** **Tuesday November 23, 2010** at 6:00 p.m. Proceed directly to our room. **Drinks at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00.** (Order from the menu.)  
**RSVP:** [CarrieRen@att.net](mailto:CarrieRen@att.net) (or 268-8826) by **Tues. a.m.**, if you plan to go!

First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 • (904) 288-6291

2010 Membership Application



Name		Date	
Home address	City	State	Zip Code
E-mail address	Home phone	Business phone	
Occupation	Areas of interest and/or expertise		
How did you hear about us? Comments? _____			

Membership level (please select one):

- |                                                  |                                                      |                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular (\$30/yr.)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Carl Sagan (\$50/yr.)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Darwin (\$200/yr.)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$15/yr.)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bertrand Russell (\$75/yr.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Ingersoll (\$500/yr.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior - 65+ (\$15/yr.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Paine (\$100/yr.)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (\$1,000)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$45/yr.)       |                                                      |                                                       |

Do you object to your name appearing on our membership list, distributed to other members?  Yes  No

I'm interesting in getting involved in the FCFS as a(n):

- General member    Committee member    Officer    Financial supporter

- Annual dues cover the period of January 1 through December 31.
- The initial dues for new members joining in July through September are half the regular rates. Membership extends to the end of the current calendar year.
- The initial dues for new members joining in October through December are the full, regular rates. Membership extends to the end of the following calendar year.

***You can make a lasting impact on the future of  
freethought and secular humanism in this community  
...if you provide for the First Coast Freethought Society in your Will.***

Your bequest will ensure that the FCFS continues to be a beacon for freethinkers on the First Coast and to remain a vital Voice of Reason in the Northeast Florida area. Several options are available for establishing a bequest (specific, percentage, residual, or contingent). We will be happy to provide the appropriate wording to you and your attorney, depending upon your wishes.

For further information, contact  
Carrie Renwick, P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 or  
904-288-6291 • [CarrieRen@att.net](mailto:CarrieRen@att.net) • <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>  
All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

## 2010 Freethought Events of Interest on the First Coast

Monday	Nov. 8	JAM Meetup at European St. Café, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Monday	Nov. 15	FCFS Monthly Meeting - L. Barry Albright, Ph.D. - 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	Nov. 23	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday	Nov. 27	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for August 2010 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Sunday	Nov. 28	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	Dec. 5	FCFS Humanist Book Discussion Group, Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Monday	Dec. 20	FCFS Monthly Meeting - 6:30 p.m.

Ancient City Freethinkers and Humanists (ACFH) • <http://www.meetup.com/A-C-F-H/>  
First Coast Freethought Society (FCFS) • <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>  
Jacksonville Atheist, Agnostic, Secular Meetup Group (JAM) • <http://www.jaxatheists.com/>  
Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason (NeFCoR) • <http://NorthEastFloridaCoR.org/>

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**The FCFS is a proud member of the Humanists of Florida Association  
and the Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason**

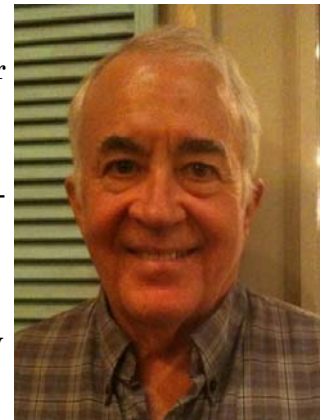
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## Meet Our November Speaker

**M**any of you will know our November speaker, Joque Soskis, as he is an active member of the FCFS, an avid participant in the Q&A of our monthly meetings, and a regular diner at the Olive Garden socials.

For most of his working life, Joque was involved in law enforcement. He served as a police officer and police administrator and is retired from the criminal justice faculty of UNF, where he taught criminal law, criminal procedure and evidence, forensic science, information systems, and law enforcement administration in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. Until his retirement, he was a member and official of the faculty union of the State University System. He is also a retired member of the Florida Bar. He was raised in Florida and has lived in Jacksonville since 1978. He was active for many years in the establishment of the Riverside-Avondale area as a historic district.



Joque plans to explain why Americans seem not to be too concerned about the various ways in which things are deteriorating in the US relative to other industrialized democracies. He intends to cite a number of examples, then suggest a possible explanation. He hopes for a “knock-down, drag-out Q&A discussion raging far into the night.” Join us for the fun!