

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.”

Post Office Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591
Website: <http://FirstCoastFreethoughtSociety.org>

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The First Coast

FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

July 2011

Volume 10, Issue 7

Inside this issue:

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"A man's ethical behavior should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death."

—Albert Einstein

Science Symposium at Caltech, June 2011

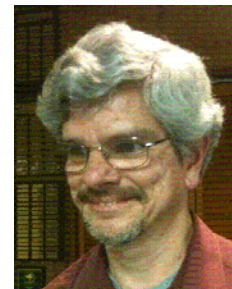
Fred W. Hill

Science is a tool and our best means for understanding ourselves and the universe we inhabit. Promoting science over superstition and pseudo-

science was the theme of the Science Symposium hosted by Dr. Michael Shermer on June 25, 2011, at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California. Fellow FCFS member Shane Christian and I attended the symposium which included lectures

by Dr. Shermer, the Amazing James Randi, Bill Nye the Science Guy, and Brian Dalton, aka Mr. Deity, as well as a panel discussion in which Dr. Donald R. Prothero, a geologist

the country filled Caltech's Beckman Auditorium, including both practicing scientists and lay persons with a keen interest in science, such as Shane and myself. Shermer, a historian of science, founder of the Skeptic Society, editor in chief of



Skeptic magazine, and prolific author, defines skepticism and science

(Continued on page 3)

"...[W]e evolved with a tendency to seek patterns because that helped our ancestors to survive. It did not, however, help them to distinguish real from false patterns."

and author of *Evolution: What the Fossils Say and Why It Matters*, also took part. Several hundred people from across

July 2011 Meeting

**"Opinions, Dominions, and Great Virginians:
The Hope for Civil Discourse"**

Ken Hurley, Co-Founder, Co-Director, Civication, Inc.

Monday, July 18, 2011, 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: Books a Million, 9400 Atlantic Boulevard, Jacksonville

What: Books planned for discussion:

- August 7, 2011 - *The Shock Doctrine*, by Naomi Klein
- September 4, 2011 - *The Good Book: A Humanist Bible*, by A. C. Grayling

Books may be found in the library, 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://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org> and then click the link to Amazon.com for your purchase.

In *The Shock Doctrine*, Naomi Klein explodes the myth that the global free market triumphed democratically. Exposing the thinking, the money trail, and the puppet strings behind the world-changing crises and wars of the last four decades, *The Shock Doctrine* is the gripping story of how America's "free market" policies have come to dominate the world--through the exploitation of disaster-shocked people and countries.

Based on breakthrough historical research and four years of on-the-ground reporting in disaster zones, *The Shock Doctrine* vividly shows how disaster capitalism—the rapid-fire corporate reengineering of societies still reeling from shock—did not begin with September 11, 2001. The book traces its origins back fifty years, to the University of Chicago under Milton Friedman, which produced many of the leading neo-conservative and neo-liberal thinkers whose influence is still profound in Washington today. New, surprising connections are drawn between economic policy, "shock and awe" warfare and covert CIA-funded experiments in electroshock and sensory deprivation in the 1950s, research that helped write the torture manuals used today in Guantanamo Bay. (Excerpt from the product description.)

For more info, contact Herb Gerson at 904-363-6446, or herbge@bellsouth.net

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: Freethinkers, let's get acquainted and enjoy intelligent conversation every 4th Sunday of the month (unless inclement weather prevails) at 10 a.m. until ? under 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 info@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org, or leave a notation on a meeting sign-in sheet.

(Science Symposium
Continued from page 1)

as “activities to understand how the world works, not formalized positions one must defend regardless of evidence to the contrary.” He opened with a lecture derived from his most recent book, *The Believing Brain: From Ghosts & Gods to Politics & Conspiracies—How We Construct Beliefs and Reinforce Them as Truths*. The experiments of scientists such as Ivan Pavlov, John Watson, and B. F. Skinner, have shown that cognitive animals not only react instinctually to certain conditioned stimuli, but also actively seek patterns, even when there is none to be found. Pigeons placed in a Skinner Box, or operant conditioning chamber, used in behavioral experiments, were provided food delivered from a chute at regular intervals and without regard for the pigeons’ behavior; within a short time six out of eight pigeons engaged in assorted behaviors, ritualistic in nature, in expectation of the food; even when the delivery was entirely randomized, the pigeons continued to behave as if the delivery was dependent upon their particular rituals. Humans, as “pattern-seeking primates,” in Shermer’s description, likewise engage in many rituals, more-so the more conditions seem beyond our control. Baseball players, for example, are far more likely to engage in rituals meant to bring them luck when they go up to bat, where on average even the best of them are likely to be struck out, than when they go out in the field where they have

a greater sense of control over the events of the game. The batters may believe that rubbing their bat a particular way, carrying or wearing a certain “lucky” token, or saying a prayer may make them more likely to hit the ball, but it has no more to do with the desired outcome than Skinner’s pigeons’ ritualistic attempts to make pellets come down the chutes.



Michael Shermer

This is part of our evolutionarily ingrained trait to see patterns everywhere, even where they don’t exist. Looking at stars, our ancestors believed they found the outlines of various animals and humanoid beings which became the basis for astrological beliefs that whichever of those starry creatures was in the sky when we were born determined our fates for the remainder of our lives. Scientific inquiry has long since debunked astrology, but millions of people, including powerful heads of state, continue to believe in it. Shermer has coined two terms to describe such behavior : patter-

nicity and agenticity. Patternicity is “the tendency to find meaningful patterns in meaningless noise” by which we connect the dots to find animals in the stars, or faces of deities in slices of pizza or toast, even a smiley face in a Martian crater. Agenticity is “the tendency to infuse those patterns with meaning, intentions and agency, often invisible beings and from the top down. Souls, spirits, ghosts, gods, demons, angels, aliens, intelligent designers, government conspiracists and all manner of invisible agents with power and intention are believed to haunt our world and control our lives.” Problematically, while we may safely discount some patterns as mere random coincidence—what appears to be a ghost turns out to be nothing more than a sheet blowing in the wind—others may be real, perhaps even dangerous. Our distant ancestors faced such choices as determining whether the sound of rustling in the grass was caused by something harmless, such as a breeze, or by a dangerous predator. Reacting in fear to a non-existent threat, a false positive, may cause you to be overly timid and jumpy. Not reacting in time, however, when there is a genuine threat, a false negative, may result in your becoming dinner. “We are the ancestors,” Shermer explains, “of those most successful at finding patterns. This process is called association learning, and it is fundamental to all animal behavior, from the humble worm *C. elegans* to *H. sapiens*.”

(Continued on page 9)

Lying in the Name of Christ

Curtis Wolf

*“Too many people have lied in the name of Christ for anyone to heed the call” —Crosby, Stills and Nash, from *Cathedral**

What if the Bible is not just wrong or full of legends? What if it was also full of lies?

This is the premise of Bart Ehrman’s new book *Forged*. In a nutshell, he documents the deceptive practices perpetrated by the authors of Christian books within and outside of the New Testament. He also show that the excuses given by biblical scholars to explain away these practices are not particularly convincing. In fact, these practices were widely condemned by ancient writers and even a bishop in the early Christian church, who condemned the forging of a letter in the name of Paul’s companion Timothy, by a church leader named Salvian. The problem was that these practices were quite prevalent despite the condemnations, and many deceptive books made it into the New Testament.

Many of the examples of deceptive practices in the early church involved forgery. Of the thirteen letters claimed to be written by Paul, only seven are considered by scholars to actually have been written by Paul. The two letters attributed to Pe-

ter were not written by the illiterate Galilean fisherman who certainly would not have had the knowledge of Greek language and rhetorical reasoning that the author of the letters had. Add to this the letter claimed to be written by James and another one claimed to be written by Jude, both brothers of Jesus, and you start to understand the enormity of the scandal. Most of the letters in the New Testament that were attributed to early church leaders were not actually written by them despite the fact that the letters claimed otherwise!

Why did these authors lie

“While it is possible that certain passages from the New Testament were written by people whose moral reasoning was sound, Christians as a whole were too willing to use deception to further their causes”

about the authorship of these letters? While there were many reasons why people forged documents, the most likely reason for Christians was to increase the authority of their letters. There was an astounding diversity of opinion within the early Christian church due mainly to the fact that Jesus’ original disciples were illiterate and did not proselytize outside of the Jewish communities throughout the Roman

Empire that largely rejected Christianity, so the original disciples quickly lost control of the Christian message when it found its

way into the Gentile world, Therefore, if Joe Shmoe decided to write a religious treatise to counter a point of view within the church with which he did not agree, he could persuade others to adopt his point of view if it appeared that the letter came

from a more authoritative early follower of Jesus. This was especially important when fighting polemic battles with “heretics” or at least what one wing of the church thought to be heretics. A little name dropping went a long way in the early Christian church!

Ehrman also argues against excuses used by scholars to explain away the deceptions when they cannot bring themselves to admit that the New Testament is full of lies. These excuses were as follows:

- The forger believed that the Holy Spirit was inspiring him to write in the name of an early Christian leader.
- The forger was writing in the tradition of an early church leader and therefore would use the leader’s name



to show that the letter represented that tradition.

- It was common for members of philosophical schools to write in the name of their teachers as a display of humility towards their intellectual heirs. The idea is that the forger was not good enough to claim the ideas in his writings when they actually flowed from what the early church leader said.
- Certain letters were written largely by secretaries of the early church leaders so it was not surprising that the style of these letters seemed to differ from other letters actually written by the leaders.

Ehrman points to the lack of evidence for and the implausibility of these excuses. He also points that these excuses were used by many scholars who should have known better.

Ehrman also writes about other types of deceptions within the early church. Some Chris-

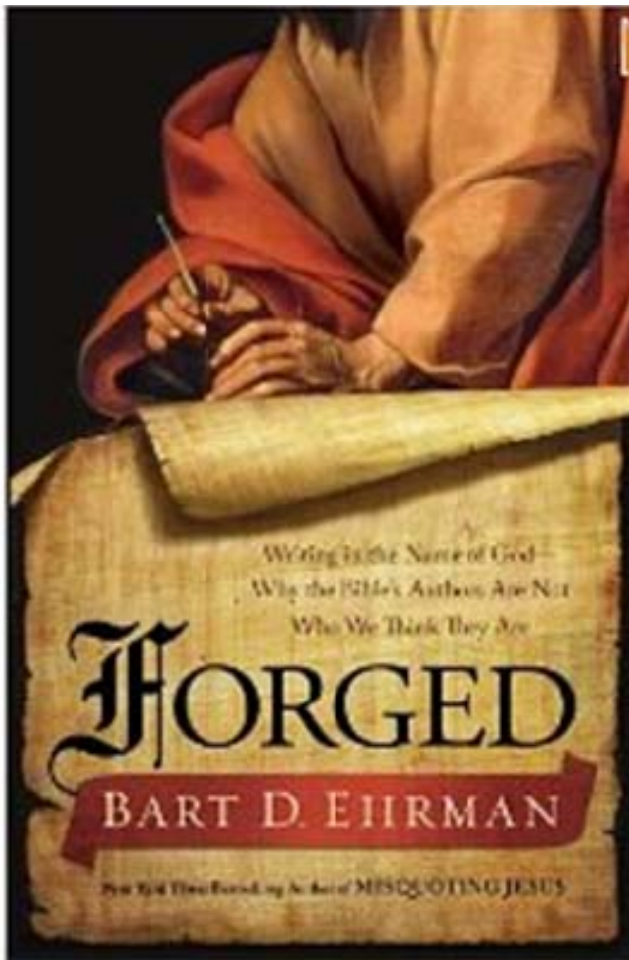
tian books, including the gospels, were misattributed to early church leaders, even though they were originally anonymous. Some stories about Jesus within and outside of the New Testa-

sometimes deliberately. Finally, the bane of existence for all teachers, plagiarism sometimes reared its ugly head within the New Testament.

While this is an impressive book, I was a little disappointed in the final couple of pages of the book. When he had an opportunity to take his book to its logical conclusion and question why we should believe in a book that has so many lies, he basically punts the ball. I feel no need to follow in his footsteps.

At the beginning of this article, I quoted from a song by Crosby, Stills and Nash. That line from the song says it all. There are too many lies in the New Testament for us to trust it as an authoritative source of moral teaching. While it is possible that certain passages from the New Testament were written by people whose moral reasoning was sound, Christians as a whole were too willing to use deception to further

their causes, and that leads to the conclusion that Christianity is morally bankrupt as a religion.



ment canon were fabricated. Copyists often inserted text within New Testament manuscripts that they were copying, sometimes inadvertently and

July Social

- Where:** OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, near the Avenues Mall.
When: **Tuesday July 26, 2011** 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 (or 268-8826) by **Tues. a.m.**, if you plan to go!

The United States Was Not Founded on “Judeo-Christian Principles”

Dennis Middlebrooks

We are all familiar with the claim that the united states was founded on “Judeo-Christian principles.” I suppose this is true if you are talking about slavery, genocide (of Native Americans), and subordination of women. All have deep “Judeo-Christian” roots and were instrumental in the development of the United States of America.

It is not true, however, if you are talking about democracy, philosophy, geometry, the stage drama, poetry, the field of history, the Latin alphabet, concrete, aqueducts, and the classical architecture found in so many of our government buildings, museums, and universities. These were all developed in pagan Greece and Rome centuries before the Christ cult displaced the deities of Mount Olympus.

It is not true if you consider the influence of pagan Roman Law on western jurisprudence, including that of the United States, to this very day.

It is not true that the United States was founded on “Judeo-Christian” principles if you consider the existence of a body called the Senate in our national and state governments. The Senate does not come from the Bible but from pagan Rome, which borrowed the idea from

the pagan Etruscans.

It is not true if you consider that in the early years of the United States, it was common to immortalize prominent men like Washington and Franklin with Roman tunics, not Christian halos.

It is not true if you consider the immense influence of non-Christian Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Baron de Montesquieu, Thomas Paine, David Hume, and Denis Diderot on many of the Founders, especially Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison.

“It is not true if you consider that for the first 180 years of our history, our national motto was the secular “e pluribus unum,” (from many, one), and not “In God We Trust’”

It is not true if you consider the complete absence of democratic governments in Europe in the 1,500 years that elapsed between the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire and the Declaration of Independence.¹

It is not true if you consider that Great Britain, the nation that we fought for eight long years to achieve independence from, rightly considered its mo-

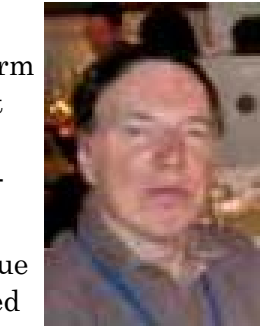
narchial and aristocratic form of government to be based on biblical principles.

It is not true that the United States was founded on “Judeo-Christian” principles if you consider that the Treaty of Tripoli, signed in 1797 by President John Adams and passed unanimously by the Senate, explicitly declared that the government of the United States “is in no sense founded on the Christian religion.”

It is not true if you consider that the harshest critics of the Founding Fathers and the secular constitutional government were not atheists but prominent members of the Christian clergy, who rightly pointed out that

the foundation of our national government was “un-Christian” and afforded no privileged place for the Protestant churches. These irate men of God also lamented the fact that the most prominent Founding Fathers were not Christians, but Deists.

It is not true if you consider the complete absence of any mention of Christianity or God in the text of the Constitution.



(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

It is not true if you consider that for the first 180 years of our history, our national motto was the secular “*e pluribus unum*,” (from many, one), and not “In God We Trust,” which replaced the original motto in 1956 due to Cold-War hysteria.

It is not true if you consider there was no reference to a deity on our national currency until the 20th Century, but there was a reference to a “*Novus Ordo Seclorum*,” i.e., “A New Order of the World,” along with Freemason imagery, right from the beginning.²

It is not true if you consider that when the Constitution of the Confederate States of America was drafted in 1861, the Southern delegates placed “God” in the preamble in order to contrast it with the godless United States Constitution. That godly preamble was immediately followed by the clauses protecting the divine institution of slavery in perpetuity.

It is also not true when you consider the phrase “Under God” was not placed in the Pledge of Allegiance until 1954, 62 years after it was written. Even today, we can say that for most of the Pledge’s history, it was god-

less.³

The roots of our country are Greco-Roman and European Enlightenment. What we have achieved is in spite of “Judeo-Christian” civilization, and not because of it. Let’s not be afraid to point this out!

This article was originally published in the Capital District Humanist Society of Loudonville, NY, newsletter, and forwarded



Latin mottos on the Great Seal of the United States
E Pluribus Unum: From Many, One;
Novus Ordo Seclorum: New Order for the Ages;
Annuit Coeptus: Providence Favors Our Undertakings

by former FreeThinker editor Hugo Borreson who is still active in freethought activity from his new home in Rochester, New York.

Editor’s notes:

1. There actually were several republics during that period — the Dutch Republic and the republics of Genoa and Venice were all still existent when the United States was founded, although by the end of the 18th

century the Dutch were ruled by a king, while Genoan and Venician republics fell to Napoleon’s forces and were ultimately absorbed into what would become the Kingdom of Italy. The tiny Republic of San Marino, however, has continued to exist since its founding in 301 CE.

2. According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury website, the phrase “In God We Trust” first appeared on U.S. currency in 1864, initially on the two-cent coin, and was used sporadically on U.S. coins between then and 1908, when a Congressional act required the phrase on all U.S. coins. However, the phrase did not appear on U.S. paper currency until 1957, after “In God We Trust” became the new national motto.

3. Curiously, the original version of the Pledge of Allegiance was written by a socialist minister, Francis Bellamy in 1892. It underwent several revisions before being adopted by Congress as the official national pledge in 1942.



Eon Traveler, by Sandy Hartman

*Ask the Four Winds where I am three billion years ago
I will tell you
I live in boiling waters deep, near ocean fumaroles
I float in primal seas and cling to geysers' steaming shoals*

*Ask the East Wind where I am five hundred million years ago
I will tell you
I know the ages' secrets
I change I thrive
I grow
I swim free in savage seas
I search the seashores for a home*

*Ask the South Wind where I am three hundred million years ago
I will tell you
I watch volcanoes spitting fire
I feel the earthquakes shake the land
I crawl the fetid mud slicked swamps
And climb lush ferns in teeming sands*

*Ask the West Wind where I am two hundred million years ago
I will tell you
I am the blooms and leaves that crown the tropic trees
I am the thundering beasts that shake the earth beneath
I am the great toothed hunter in the shadow haunted seas*

*Ask the North Wind where I am ten million years ago
I will tell you
I fly the glacial thermals
I live in worlds of drifting snow
I swim beneath the ice that caps the oceans cold
Ask the Wild Wind where I am a million years ago
I will tell you
I range the grassland prairies
I nest the canyon crags
I wade in pools and mountain streams that wander, twist and flow*

*Ask the Whirl Wind where I am ten thousand years ago
I will tell you
I burrow deep near restless dunes
I leave my tracks in scouring sands
I ride the howling gales that never cease to blow*

*Ask your people where I am
I will tell you
They are creatures of their thoughts
Who think that they are wise
They dream their stories and believe them
They think creation is their prize*



*They say that I am in their hope
They will not see that they are wrong
Their people are too many
They overwhelm the ages gone*

*They take much more than they return
They poison living waters
They burn the air they breathe
They strip the land and bury Earth in trash
They destroy the lives of eon generations*

*No safe future do they leave
No sweet lands are left behind
No place for shelter can survive
The unslaked need of all their kind*

*Woman! Wake up! Look around
I am in you
Rise up now and save your people
The Eon tides of history will not be denied*

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Condolences to FCFS member and friend
Milie Taylor and family on the loss of her son
John S. Taylor, D. O. (1961 - 2011)
in whose memory the above poem is submitted
by Sigrun Buckley

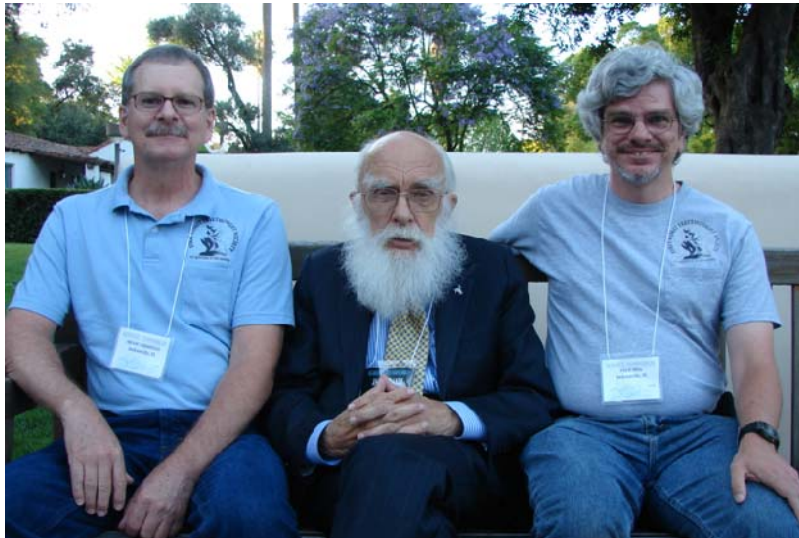
*(Science Symposium,
Continued from page 3)*

Thus we evolved with a tendency to seek patterns because that helped our ancestors to survive. It did not, however, help them to distinguish real from false patterns. Humans have had to learn to question, to be skeptical, and to determine a scientific method to detect whether apparent patterns are real or not. Religions provided answers based on the supernatural, agents that we cannot see or touch, although many imagine that they can hear them and are certain that those agents respond to their prayers. Other superstitious beliefs abound in our age, often with the intent of defrauding believers out of their money, as when mediums claim to speak for the dead and charge a heavy price for the service.

As part of his effort to promote science over superstition, Shermer came up with a Baloney Detection Kit, consisting of 10 questions skeptics should ask about any claim regarding the supernatural: 1) How reliable is the claim? 2) Does the source make similar claims? 3) Have the claims been verified by someone else? 4) Does this fit with the way the world works? 5) Has anyone tried to disprove the claim? 6) Where does the preponderance of evidence point? 7) Is the claimant playing by the rules of science? 8) Is the claimant providing positive evidence for their theory (as opposed to simply attacking a theory they don't like)? 9) Does

the new theory account for as many phenomena as the old theory? and 10) Are personal beliefs driving the claim?

James Randi, who retired from a long career as a stage magician to become a staunch debunker of those who profess paranormal powers, exposing Uri Geller's psychic spoon bending powers and Peter Popoff's faith healing powers as frauds on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. Randi has also offered a



L-R: Shane Christian, James Randi & Fred W. Hill

cash prize, which between 1968 and 1996 grew from \$100 to \$1,000,000, to anyone who can prove they have paranormal abilities under a strict, scientific protocol designed to prevent any cheating and agreed to by both parties. So far, as Randi told us during his lecture, over 1,000 people have taken the challenge but no one has rightfully claimed it and several famous psychics, including Sylvia Browne and John Edward have tellingly declined to take the challenge. .

Bill Nye, formerly host of The Science Guy, a long-running science program on PBS, and currently executive director of the

Planetary Society, noted that young children have a natural interest in science which should be encouraged, emphasizing the importance of teaching them to understand basic math and algebra by the optimal age of 9 as part of the means to keep them interested in science even as their hormones start to divert their attention. He emphasized we can truly help change the world for the better through promoting reason and science and a

greater knowledge of the impact we have on the world, including climate change and destruction of natural habitat.

Brian Dalton, a former Mormon, as "Formon" as he likes to say, performed skits from his popular podcast program, Mr. Deity, wherein he and his cast "look at the every-day life of the creator and every-

thing he must endure in his attempts to manage his creation," as described on his website. Dalton also described his loss of faith as he began to question the tenets of Mormonism and religion in general, gradually developing a reverence for the scientific method, free thought, and critical thinking, providing a fitting closure for the day's lectures and discussions.

Whether raised freethinkers or theists, science has proved the best way to truly know the world and escape our genetic propensity for dogmatic superstitions.



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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All FCFS personnel may be reached via e-mail at info@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

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.

Information for Contributors

We welcome submissions. Articles for consideration should be submitted via e-mail to the e-mail address shown below. Contributors who cannot submit manuscripts electronically may send them to Fred

Hill, 1817 Egner St., Jacksonville, FL 32206. The deadline for time-sensitive material is the FOURTH SATURDAY of each month for the following month's issue.

We prefer articles no longer than 1,000 words. Longer articles will be evaluated in terms of whether their importance and degree of interest to our readers warrant publication.

All accepted manuscripts are subject to editorial modification. Our style guide is *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Manuscript submissions cannot be returned. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references where applicable.

E-mail Address for Submissions
Editor@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

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 info@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 • (904) 419-8826

2011 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
904-419-8826 • CarrieRen@att.net • <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>
All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

Upcoming Freethought Events of Interest on the First Coast

Monday	July 18	FCFS Monthly Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	July 23	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for August 2011 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Sunday	July 24	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday	July 26	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday	August 7	FCFS Humanist Book Discussion Group, Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Monday	August 8	JAM Meetup at European Street Café in San Marco - 6:30 p.m.
Monday	August 15	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jax - 6:30 p.m.

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/>

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

2011 NPR CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP FUND DRIVE IS DECLARED A SUCCESS!

Carrie Renwick, Fundraising Chair

We are happy to report that our freethought message broadcast on NPR (National Public Radio) member station WJCT 89.9 FM, covering the Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia area, will continue!

Our Annual Fund Drive has been declared a success, and there will be no more calls or e-mails this year. However, the “NPR-o-Meter” is accurate. We have not QUITE reach our goal of \$4095. As of Saturday, July 9, we have collected \$3,466, leaving a balance of \$626. We will be receiving an additional \$500 in matching funds from a generous donor’s employer, leaving us only \$126 from our goal. Surely some of you still plan to donate but have not done so. Now would be a great time! I feel sure we can bring our NPR-o-Meter up to the top.

Many, many thanks to those of you who have already contributed and have brought us so close to success!

—Earl Coggins, President and Carrie Renwick, Fundraising Chair

