



THE NEWSLETTER OF
The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
 of CONNECTICUT



AHA Chapter

September 2016

UU Humanists Local Group

Common Cause

On Monday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden, our guest speaker will be Cheri Quickmire, the Executive Director of Common Cause Connecticut.

Common Cause is a nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. Its work is to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest; promotes equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all; and empowers all people to make their voices heard in the political process.

In this spirit, Common Cause serves as an independent voice for change and a watchdog against corruption and abuse of power. Together with its sister organization, the Common Cause Education Fund, it employs a powerful combination of grassroots organizing, coalition building, research, policy development, public education, lobbying and litigation to win reform at all levels of government.

Founded with 4,000 core members in 1970 to serve as a people's lobby, Common Cause has grown into a nationwide network of more than 475,000 members and supporters, with offices in thirty-six states and Washington, D.C.

To make our democracy work, we must claim it as our own. John Gardner, Common Cause's founder, wrote that, "The citizen can bring our political and

Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at meetup.com/cthumanist.

SEPTEMBER 2016

Sat., 3	Explorations: The Century of the Self, I/II	2:00 p.m
Mon., 5	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 17	Book Discussion: <i>The World Beyond Your Head: Becoming an Individual in an Age of Distraction</i> by Matthew Crawford	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Mon., 19	Monthly Meeting Main program: Cheri Quickmire of Common Cause	7:00 p.m 7:30 p.m
Sun., 25	Board meeting	2:00 p.m

OCTOBER 2016

Sat., 1	Explorations: The Century of the Self, III/IV	2:00 p.m
Mon., 3	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 15	Book Discussion: <i>The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology</i> by Thomas Paine	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Mon., 17	Monthly Meeting Main program: Stoicism & Epicurianism	7:00 p.m 7:30 p.m
Sun., 23	Board meeting	2:00 p.m

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governmental institutions back to life, make them responsive and accountable and keep them honest. No one else can."

Cheri Quickmire has been the Executive Director of Common Cause Connecticut since 2009. Prior to joining Common Cause, Quickmire served as Executive Director of One Connecticut, a Policy Analyst for the Connecticut Association for Human Services, and an

Organizer with Mothers For Justice. She is a long-time advocate for transformational social change and progressive public policy that addresses challenges to access and participation of diverse populations in a vibrant democracy.

We'll start with half an hour of coffee and conversation at 7:00 p.m. and learn about Common Cause after some brief announcements at 7:30 p.m.

Humanist Explorations: The Century of the Self

Join us at the earlier time of 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 1 at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, for the second of two sessions where we will watch *The Century of the Self*, a documentary by Adam Curtis. At each session we will watch two

of the four parts. *Century of the Self* is a retelling of the Twentieth Century as the century of Freudian psychology, in which the invention of public relations by Freud's nephew, Edward Bernays, led to the use of PR by corporations and governments to

control the behavior of markets and electorates. As each episode is nearly an hour long, we will start half an hour earlier than usual at 2:00 p.m. and run over our usual two hour duration to give some time for discussion.

Refreshments will be served.

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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.

Book Discussion: "The World Beyond Your Head"

Our book for September is *The World Beyond Your Head: On Becoming and Individual in an Age of Distraction* by Matthew B. Crawford. The discussion will take place Saturday, September 17, 2016, at 2:00 p.m. in the library of the Unitarian Society of New Haven at 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden.

From the frontispiece:

"In his bestselling book *Shop Class as Soulcraft*, Matthew B. Crawford explored the ethical and practical importance of manual competence, as expressed through mastery of our physical environment. In his brilliant follow-up, *The World Beyond Your Head*, Crawford investigates the challenge of mastering one's own mind.

"We often complain about our fractured mental lives and feel beset by outside forces that destroy our focus and disrupt our peace of mind. Any defense against this, Crawford argues, requires that we reckon with the way attention sculpts the self. He examines the intense concentration of ice hockey players and short-order chefs, the quasi-autistic behavior of gambling addicts, the familiar hassles of daily life, and the deep, slow craft of building pipe organs. He shows that our current crisis of attention is only superficially the result of digital technology, and becomes more comprehensible when understood as the coming to fruition of certain assumptions at the root of Western culture that are profoundly at odds with human nature.

"*The World Beyond Your Head* makes sense of an astonishing array of familiar phenomena, from the frustrations of airport security to the rise of the hipster. With implications for the way we raise our children, the design of public spaces, and democracy, this is a book of urgent relevance to contemporary life."

Here is a link to a *Point of Inquiry* podcast on the book with the author: http://www.pointofinquiry.org/dealing_with_distraction_in_the_modern_world_with_matt_crawford/

The book is readily available in numerous libraries around the state.

Refreshments will be served.

USNH Social Cinema

Social Cinema returns after the summer break with a new schedule. Gone are the first Friday evenings of the month. Organizer PJ Deak says, "We have a mix of Fridays and Saturdays mid-month this year. That avoids holidays and other conflicts." The first event will be in the Social Hall at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden on Saturday, September 24. The optional potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by the documentary film *Refugee* at 7:15 p.m.

Through the eyes of young people who are themselves refugees, this short documentary looks at people associated with Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) in New Haven, Connecticut. The documentary was produced by students of the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences at Wilbur Cross High School, in conjunction with film maker Nicki Chavoya.

For more information call 203-288-1807 or email office@usnh.org

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