



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

July 2011



CSH Affiliate

“What If The World Went Humanist?”

*Excerpts from the works of
John H. Dietrich*

Presented by P.J. Deak

In the 1920's, Humanism took America by storm! Entire congregations of orthodox Christians abandoned their theistic mythologies in favor of “a faith in the possibility of improving human life ... a belief that the power to realize great ideals lies in mankind itself,” an understanding that “the earth is not a stage on which man enacts a role created and directed by another; it is his natural environment,” and that “God was made by man in his image.”

In the 1920's, the Scientific Method became the driving force by which Americans defined their religious beliefs. Gone was the animism, polytheism and monotheism of their fathers — replaced wholesale by scientific naturalism — and liberalism, that drive for “change that seems to make for progress” and “has no creed that can be recited,” was embraced by the American public. All of America's people cared for one another, and “every man and woman became a savior in so much as they devoted their life to that which makes for the welfare of humanity.” And it was good. And it did not require any God.

Unfortunately, it didn't really happen that way. But such were the hopes and aspirations of early 20th century humanists like John Dietrich, whose lectures attracted crowds of thousands to his Minneapolis congregation, whose Sunday addresses were broadcast live on radio and whose words of hope for an American faith grounded in scientific, non-theistic humanism were published across the nation.

While the optimism and hope expressed by Dietrich may not

Calendar of Events

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

JULY

Sat., 2	Poetry pot-luck David Schafer on American Poetry	1:00 to 2:00 pm. 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Mon., 4	Independence Day Cookout at Crystal Lake, 100 Livingston Road in Middletown	12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.
Sat., 9	Humanist Conversations: Forgiveness, Part II	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 11	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m.
Sun., 17	Social walk in Woodbridge, with optional group lunch to follow	10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Sun., 17	Book discussion: <i>God is Not One</i> by Stephen Prothero	3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Mon., 18	Monthly Meeting Main program: P.J. Deak on John H. Dietrich	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sun., 24	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Thu., 28	Dinner at Imperial Caribbean Restaurant, 51 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell. (860) 613-0005	7:00 p.m.

AUGUST

Mon., 1	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 6	Humanist Conversations: Poetry — Bring a Poem II	2:30 p.m.
Sat., 13	Picnic at the Lyons' home in Cornwall Bridge	11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Mon., 15	Monthly Meeting Main program: “Religion as a Natural Phenomenon”	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Thu., 25	Social dinner: Location TBA	7:00 p.m.
Sun., 28	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.

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have lead to the type of non-theistic religious transformation of America that he envisioned — one in which “we may have lost God, but we will have discovered man” — his words were inspiring to the authors of the Humanist Manifesto of 1933, and are as relevant today for those who seek to create a world where “all the energy spent in the worship of God would instead be devoted to the service of mankind” as they were in the 1920's.

Come hear Dietrich's words from almost 100 years ago as an inspiration for action in the 21st century. We will meet on Monday, July 18, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden at 7:30 p.m. for refreshments and conversation and P.J. will present Dietrich at 8:00 p.m.

Poet Luck—Poetry and Pot Luck

Join us on July 2 at 1:00 p.m. when we will have a pot luck meal and a discussion on poetry led by David Schafer, including poetry related to Independence Day. The pot luck will be from 1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. and the discussion and poetry will run from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. We will meet at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike. For the pot luck, please bring an appetizer, main dish, salad, or a dessert.

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Email List

To join, send an email to:
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Independence Day Cookout

Brian Ditter and Tara McLaughlin invite HAC to a cookout and pot luck on Independence Day, Monday, July 4, from noon to 4:00 p.m. at Crystal Lake Park, Middletown.

Please RSVP: Brian Ditter: (xxx) xxx-xxxx (voice or text), (860) 704-0439 or Tara McLaughlin: (860) 545-5065.

If you have a little extra time to help set up that morning, please be sure to let Brian know when you call.

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Conversations: Forgiveness, Part 2

This month's Humanist Conversations will be on the second Saturday, July 9th, at the usual time, 2:30 p.m. Those who were at last month's discussion on forgiveness decided we should continue the discussion into this month.

Generally regarded as a positive response to human wrongdoing, forgiveness is a conceptually, psychologically, and morally complex phenomenon. Forgiveness has over the past quarter century engendered the interest of scholars and practitioners in such disparate fields as psychology, law, politics, international affairs, sociology, and philosophy. To assist our discussion, we will watch a short excerpt from the PBS film *Forgiveness: A Time to Love and a Time to Hate*.

Woodbridge Walk Sunday July 17

Join us on Sunday, June 17, from 10:30 a.m. until 12 noon for a walk on a paved walking/jogging trail in Woodbridge followed by optional lunch. Fitzgerald Trails is located at 100 Center Road in Woodbridge, Connecticut, and there's plenty of parking at the Woodbridge Town Library at 10 Newton Road. If you stand in front of the library with the entrance behind you, in front of you will be the main parking lot and across the street you will see a white building with green trim. Walk to the street (which is Center Road) and cross to the other side of the street where the white building is. Turn left and walk about 50 yards. The walking trail will be on your right. We will meet on the walking trail adjacent to Center Road. If you arrive after 10:30 a.m., just wait at this location and you will see us in a few minutes as we walk around the track. You can also try calling Manny Ratafia on his cell phone at 203-901-9553 or Nina Stein on her cell phone at 203-215-0022. Afterward, some of us will go to a nearby diner or other restaurant for lunch. The event will be canceled in the event of rain. If in doubt about the weather, contact Manny Ratafia: e-mail: manny@ratafias.com, home 203-387-7348, mobile 203-901-9553 or Nina Stein: home 203-757-2539, mobile 203-215-0022.

Book Group: "God is Not One"

The next HAC book discussion will be on Sunday, July 17, from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. and we will meet at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. The book we will be reading is "God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World—and Why Their Differences Matter" by Stephen Prothero.

Lots of copies of the book are available in Connecticut public libraries <<http://www.iconn.org/FindALibraryInConnecticut.aspx?cat=consortia>> as well as in book stores and online. This discussion will be led by Bill McWilliams.

06517-1321. Submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles should be made to this address or to editor@cthumanist.org.

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: 180 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership.

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

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