

Press from page 1

the effects of religion in relation to the contemporary problems both our planet and its inhabitants are experiencing.

ATHEISTS OF FLORIDA, INC. is a member of the ATHEIST ALLIANCE, INC., a consortium of democratic, non-profit atheist organizations across the nation, all of which work to keep our government and all its agencies completely secular, relegating religion to the private matter our Constitution intended it to be.



In Port St. Lucie a nativity scene at City Hall drew a complaint from a Rabbi who argued that the city should not have any religious displays at all. He wimped out after speaking to the City Council and withdrew the complaint.

Atheists of Florida President Christos Tzanetacos followed up with this letter delivered to City Manager Don Cooper.

In January, new State Education Commissioner Frank Brogan took office ready to propose a limited pilot program that will give public school students vouchers to attend private schools.

Overseeing 2,700 schools in Florida, Brogan, a graduate of Catholic schools, proposes giving districts the option of offering vouchers to select groups of children who could "fare better in private schools."

He also wants the Legislature to authorize charter schools, run by private companies unhindered by unions and state regulations: read, "religious schools at taxpayer expense."

Adopting the misguided thinking that "competition will buoy public education", the Commissioner is well prepared for a fight with the teachers unions, whose leaders claim they won't accept any version of vouchers. In their camp is Rep. State Sen. Don Sullivan, who says any voucher proposal will hit roadblocks in the Legislature. Sullivan, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, allows there are too many unanswered questions about vouchers, including cost and oversight.

Don Cooper
City Manager / Port St. Lucie

Dear Manager Cooper,

For the past few days, being a resident of St. Lucie county myself, I have been following in the local newspaper reports the controversial issue pertaining to the nativity scene and other religious icons at the City Hall.

I was hoping that reason would finally prevail, and the City Attorney, Mr. Roger Orr, would advise you to uphold the First Amendment and keep the principle of state-church separation intact.

Unfortunately, you and the members of your Council chose to violate your own oaths of office and disregard our constitution.

Although I am sympathetic with your predicament, I wonder how your Council would react if members of other religions such as the Santeria requested the placement of a sacrificing altar with a slaughtered goat or other animal, or even a demand by the "Devil" worshippers to place the statue of their "god" in the City Hall.

Finally Mr. Cooper, even if you had to satisfy all the above, you would still be violating the rights of Atheists, Secular Humanists, Free-thinkers and other Non-believers.

It is precisely this predicament that the founders of our country were facing when they drafted our constitution and in their wisdom erected the wall of separation between state and church.

I hope that this letter will assist you to re-evaluate your position and take the only proper decision to uphold your oath to your office. After all, if the religious residents wish to exhibit their icons and symbols, they are free to do so in their homes and their churches which in our county abound. (They don't pay taxes, either).

Sincerely,

Christos Tzanetacos

President, Atheists of Florida

c.c. James Green, ACLU



8 January 1994

Atheists of Florida

Atheists of Florida
Dedicated to the absolute separation of State and church

P.O. Box 530102
Miami, FL 33153-0102

ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Tampa, Florida
Permit No. 2020

Volume IV Number 1

January, 1995

Dedicated to the absolute separation of State and church



Religion shares guilt

"Thank you for what you did" - the Rev. Donald Spitz, director of Pro-Life Virginia

Enough "isolated incidents" start to become a trend. As the clinic attacks continue in our nation, this time costing two lives in Massachusetts, the true colors of many involved in the anti-abortion movement begin to become chillingly apparent.

Even the neighbor of John Salvi III, accused in shootings at three abortion clinics, says of him,

"There's nothing wrong with John whatsoever, other than he killed a couple people."

Yet the unerving consistency remains...all perpetrators are strongly religious individuals. While some like Rev. Spitz are willing to acknowledge culpability when they thank Spitz for his murder spree, most other religions refuse to concede that their confused, medievalist message bears any responsibility for motivating such atrocities.

Atheists of Florida released the following press release in January to focus on this issue:

PRESS RELEASE

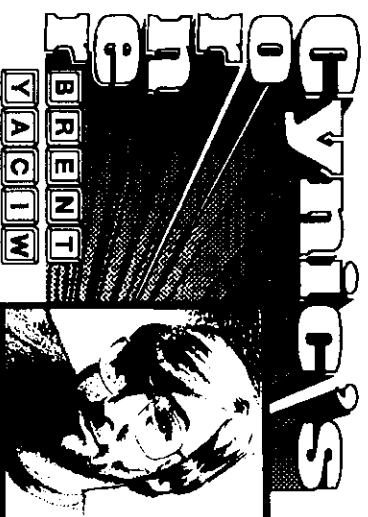
ATHEISTS OF FLORIDA, INC., strongly condemns the insensible killings of Planned Parenthood clinic receptionists Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols, along with the murders in Pensacola Florida and various other violent actions aimed at those providing legal services relating to abortion or birth control, as the direct result of religious paranoia.

Although we are firm adherents for freedom of thought and expression, which must include the freedom of and/or from religion, we hold many Local, State and Federal governments responsible for these killings.

By granting the church tax exempt status; by including the ambiguous term "god" in the national motto, the pledge of allegiance, in oaths, on state seals, and in other circumstances clearly secular in nature; by the practice of invocation before the sessions of our Congress and other elected bodies; by supporting or allowing the exhibition of religious symbols and icons on public grounds; the above-named governments have aided in promoting the antiquated, unscientific, superstitious, irrational, divisive and harmful ideas of religion, often in flagrant violation of our First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Furthermore, we are accusing the National Academy of Sciences of abdicating its responsibility for its failure to express an open opinion on (continued back page)

MANY OF US HAVE HEARD references to the "Three R's," over the years, but I have a new definition for this traditional term: Radical Religious Reich (also known as the "Radical Religious Wrong"). Despite their claims of concern over the "decline in education," these education gadflies often seem more interested in pushing religion than in quality education. For example, the issue of "school prayer" has raised its ugly head again, this time in the form of a constitutional amendment. I guess we could take that as an admission of sorts: finally, they've recognized that the Constitution does not allow "school prayer" under their terms, thus it must be changed.



A New Three R's

Here's the **JOINT RESOLUTION**, in all its, well, whatever it has:

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to voluntary school prayer. Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled

(two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

ARTICLE -

Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any State to participate in prayer. Neither the United States nor any State shall compose the words of any prayer to be said in public schools.

What I find most interesting about this is what it doesn't say. It says nothing about a chosen time, so apparently any child who decides he or she wishes to avoid taking a test can simply start praying. If no person can be required to participate, will all the freethinking teachers be allowed to leave the room, leaving the class unsupervised for the "voluntary prayer?" What about kids who don't want to pray--will they be roaming the

halls? It doesn't say "shall not be required to stand there and put up with being insulted," does it? Additionally, since neither the federal or state government will be composing these prayers, that leaves it open for any bozo with a local following to be put in charge, hence we could have Scientist-prayers, Satanic prayers, you name it. Anything. It says nothing at all about "nonsectarian," which is, yes, an oxymoron, but at least an attempt at inclusiveness, however inadequate.

Much of this nonsense is due to an inadequate education in the first place. If the RRR's were educated properly on the subject of church and state, the question of a "right to pray voluntarily" would never come up. Obviously, teachers need every minute of time for real education, but they also need to stop dancing around religious issues. "Just the facts, Teach, was prayer ever banned from schools?" "Why no, Freddy, only organized prayers that clearly served to establish religion through government officiation." Simple and clear.

Of course, the Radical Religious Reich is so excited about this amendment because they see it as a foothold on a slope that's been far too slippery for them so far. Once prayer is instituted, the kids will naturally ask who they're praying to and why. Even if the teachers answer "you'll have to ask your parent or preacher that question," it legitimizes the parasitic relationship, and the "authority" of the church.

If it does pass, the RRR is likely to treat it as a symbolic victory that will encourage them to push us further backward. Once it's agreed that it's okay to trample our rights "just a little, for the good of the country," it never takes long for more serious violations to occur, as in the 1950's with McCarthy & Co. In fact, I'm sure that the RRR would rather we forget that and dwell on their "Ozzie & Harriet" vision of the era.

Part II The Real History of Human Sex

Facts are important to Atheists. Not that we must memorize everything that has to do with issues that we are often confronted, because we are Atheists, but it is important to be able to counter superstition with knowledge. The following may be more information than you ever wanted about the biological history of sex, but at least now you will have a source that is more reliable than the Bible. It was the Bible toting Christians that compelled me to search out this material. I discovered early on that the very religious expect scientific information to be documented, while they learn back and toss out words like *miracle, faith and Biblical*.

Sperm first observed in 1677 by Anton Van Leeuwenhoek.
Human egg first observed in 1827 by Karl Ernst von Baer.

Discovery that cilia in the oviduct move the egg in 1934 by Jan Purkinje.
In 1844 Rudolf Albert von Kolliker shows that the egg is a cell and that all cells in an organism originate by division from the egg cell.

Wilhelm Friedrich Benedikt Hofmister described in detail how a fertilized plant ovule develops into an embryo in 1847.
In 1852 Rudolf Albert von Kolliker discovers the cellular origin of sperm, which previously had been thought to originate from a fermentation process.

In 1856 zoologist Edmund Wilson is the first to note the X and Y chromosomes.
In 1882 Walther Flemming reported his discovery of chromosomes and mitosis (cell division).

In 1887 Edouard-Joseph-Louis-Merie van Beneden discovered the formation of haploid cells (cells that contain only one half of the DNA) during cell division of the sperm and ova (meiosis).
In 1888 Theodor Boveri discovers the

centrosome. (This structure is now known as a Centriole and was discussed Part I.)
In 1905 Clarence McClung finds two paired X chromosomes in females and an paired XY in males.

In 1951 M.C. Chang and C.R. Austin independently discovered Capacitation, the necessity for an incubation period for sperm in the female reproductive tract in order to develop the capacity to fertilize the ovum—five to seven hours in humans. It can take place in the vagina, oviduct or uterus, but most often in the oviduct. We now know that human sperm is viable for several hours after capacitation, probably up to seventy-two hours, and that the human egg is viable for only a few hours after release from the ovary. We do not know exactly how long the egg is viable, but probably 6 to 12 hours (This is another reason that virgin birth in humans is impossible, because the egg would not be living when it entered the uterus and therefore would be unable to attach to the uterus wall. According to Luke 2:21, Jesus was conceived in the womb.)

In 1959 Scott and Dzuik developed an electro-ejaculator for mice which led to the development of a variety of electro-ejaculation instruments to accomplish ejaculation in many animals including humans and elephants.

In 1987 David C. Page announced the discovery of a single gene found on the Y chromosome that causes maleness.

It may be interesting to compare the above information with some Bible verses that are seldom referred to by clergy. Sex in the Bible refers mostly to incest, homosexuality and prostitution. If it is examined closely, there are references to sex on a more biological basis. Some of the verses in the Bible where the biology of sex is mentioned:

1. Seed; Genesis 38:8-9; Onan spilled his seed
 2. Age of parenthood; Genesis 5:3, 5:18, 5:25, 17:17 and 21:5
 3. Menstruation; Leviticus 12:2-6, 15:16-24 and John 16:21
 4. Nocturnal emissions; Deuteronomy 23:10-11
 5. Stoned for not being virgin; Deuteronomy 22:20-21
 6. Virgin birth; Matthew* 1:16 and Isaiah 7:14
 7. Fertilization in the uterus; Luke* 2:21
 8. Homosexuality; 1 Corinthians* 6:9
 9. Masturbation; 1 Corinthians* 6:9.
- * New Testament

Next month:
Part III - Who is responsible for spontaneous abortions?
Part IV - The helping hand



Published ten times a year by Atheists of Florida, Inc., a non-profit, educational organization designed to help to increase awareness about atheist activities, to intellectually stimulating contacts for the membership, and general correspondence should be sent to:

Atheists of Florida
P.O. Box 589154
Miami, FL 33258-0152
Contact phone is (305) 996-0210
Annual dues are prorated:
Jan-Apr May-Aug Sep-Dec
Sustaining \$50.00 \$35.00 \$15.00
Couple 40.00 25.00 10.00
Individual 30.00 20.00 10.00
Student (under 25 yrs.) \$10.00 all yr.
Send newsletter correspondence to:
Tampa Bay Chapter
P.O. Box 130733
Tampa, FL 33681-0733

The A. of F. newsletter is provided free to our members as a medium of exchange. Letters from members are published on a space-available basis. Articles may be edited for clarity or length.
Atheists of Florida, Inc. is affiliated with the national Atheist Alliance for purposes of information exchange.

Officers
Chairman: Alben E. Lyngzredson
President: Zaretskys
Vice President: Anthony J. Schleiter
Secretary: Ed Golly
Treasurer: Charles A. Ross
Atheist Hotline Coordinator: Celia Grantz
State Board of Directors
Steven Miles
Florence Morgenroth
Louis Miller
Ed McDougall, Sr.
Daniel Street
Brent Yacinto
Jim Strayer
Koko Brogdon
Nan Owens
Michael A. Sturgulewski
Ken Poulsen
Dr. John Xanthopoulos
Newsletter Editor: Ed Golly

Anthony J. Schleiter
Financial Consultant



Private Client Group
One Turnberry Place
19495 Biscayne Boulevard
Suite 700
Aventura, Florida 33180
305 933 6222 Dade
800 937 0335 Toll Free

Thirty-Fours Years As An Atheist Teacher

— by Jim Strayer

Insight

After being a biology teacher for thirty-four years it seems only natural to reflect on some of the more

interesting to pics that were brought up by students or came up naturally because of the subject matter and as a result of current events.

Biology is very interesting and quite straight forward except for drug use (mostly alcohol and tobacco), human reproduction and evolution. I have tried to grasp thirty-four years of issues and compress them into something meaningful.

Part I He Spilled His Seed on the Ground (And we do not mean wheat)

In my first year of teaching I was asked by a tenth grade student if Onan was killed by the Lord because he had masturbated instead of having intercourse and was masturbated therefore evil and dangerous to health. My answer was no, no and no.

Part four of this presentation deals with the biology of masturbation. What I would like to give here is a summary of what science has learned about sperm because it has great bearing on some of the propaganda given out by the religious right. Let me start by quoting from the Bible one of the many stories about seed.

"And Er, Judah's first born, was wicked in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his, and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the Lord: wherefore he slew him also". Genesis

Retired biology teacher and
Atheists of Florida Board
Member Jim Strayer lives in
Ormond by the Sea, FL

38: 7-10.

The Bible has the term seed applied to so many things that it is difficult to assess what it should really mean. It makes it very clear that males give seed to females. Although, even this general use this has some problems when it comes to plants. Plants being created on the third day are not living in a Biblical sense, because life was not created until the fifth day. Plants were never given the command to go forth and multiply so in a Biblical sense botanical seeds are asexual. The fact that plants have ovaries that produce ova and that pollen produces sperm seems to have been overlooked by God.

There are some facts that have been discovered about sperm that will help us understand the problem. Human sperm were first observed in 1677 by Antony Van Leeuwenhoek and he proceeded to discover and observe sperm in almost every animal he studied. His writings are still considered classic today. We know that sperm carry the DNA component of the male. That is, one half of the genes necessary to produce a viable zygote. Researchers have discovered that the sperm also carries the structure that is necessary for organized animal cell division. This is the Centriole and it is not present in eggs, but must be provided to the egg cell so that ordered cell division may take place. The fact the egg cannot divide and produce viable offspring without the centriole is one of the main reasons that makes virgin birth impossible.

It is interesting that the structure (Mitochondria) that are necessary for movement in the sperm do not enter the egg. Only the head of the sperm enters the egg taking with it the DNA and the Centriole. The flagella (the tail) which contains the mitochondria does not enter the eggs. We all hear about getting one half of our genetic material from each parent, but all of us got the structures that enable us to produce energy from our mothers. We also received from our fathers the ability of the fertilized egg to divide and develop normally. Now, try to fit this information into the story of the Holy Ghost.

MARK ANDREW TROP Attorney at Law

Shoreview Bldg., Ste. 201
9999 N.E. 2nd Ave.
(305) 759-5727 Miami Shores, FL 33138

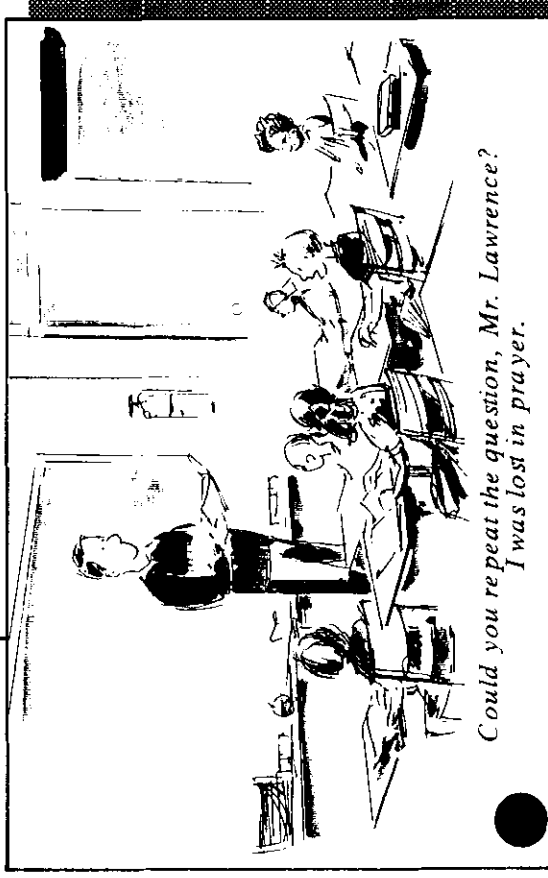
Atheists of Florida CHAPTER MEETINGS:

MIAMI: Miami chapter meeting: **Sunday January 29th** at 2:00 in the Board room of the **Main Library in Ft. Lauderdale.** Speaker: Mr. Tony Nunez
Topic: The life of the unknowns Jesus and his relation to the white brotherhood of Egypt. Atheist Hotline: (305) 936-0210.

TAMPA: The Tampa Bay Chapter will meet **Saturday, January 28** at the **Clearwater East Public Library** from **10:00 am to noon.** We will plan the "Jeopardy" satire. For more information: Ed Golly 839-7567.

MANA-SOTA: **Sunday, January 29th** from **1:30 to 5:30** at the **Marie Selby Public Library** we will host **Atheists of Florida State President Christos Tzanetakos.** Please be sure to attend this important meeting. In less than one year, we have grown to a chapter of 17 members. Christos has been, and continues to be, a tireless leader of our organization and cause in the state. Let us show our support and respect by attending this meeting.

I'm especially concerned with the lessons this issue will teach children. Far from being a good thing for morality, religion teaches some pretty sick lessons. For example, if this amendment passes, it will demonstrate that the Constitution is essentially meaningless, since a powerful minority can alter it at will. The underlying message is that might makes right, otherwise known as "tyranny of the majority." If you don't like certain people, perhaps because their logic skills and education surpass yours, you should simply get a bigger gang together and beat up on them as you please. As long as the majority feels like bullying a minority, it's okay. This means that slavery and the Holocaust were perfectly justifiable, since the rights of the minority don't matter. This also establishes the gang motif, an increasing problem in schools.



Could you repeat the question, Mr. Lawrence?
I was lost in prayer.

It also teaches them to forget anything they may have learned about logic and science. You needn't bother to prove something works; if enough people think it's true, they're right. Even if they only pretend to think so, they're still right. Even if they don't even think about it at all, even if they only go along to get along, even if there's not one shred of hard evidence supporting them, they must be right. Thus the earth actually was flat before the fifteenth century or so, and the moon used to be made of green cheese. The Easter Bunny and Santa Claus are real. Elvis is still alive and working in a Walmart.

It also teaches them that they shouldn't bother to work in school, do homework, or worry about tests. If it is god's will (you may substitute the fantasy of your choice) that you will pass, you will pass. If not, nothing you can do will alter this. How could a mere student, a puny human, oppose the will of an almighty gawd? (Excuse the Southern Baptist spelling, y'all.) In other words, passing a test means you've got it made, since god obviously loves you, and therefore you can feel free to do whatever you want with him on your side. On the other hand, failing a test means god hates you, so you might as well give up on life even if you're a really good groveler, since god never changes his mind. (Okay, he does, but the bible has it both ways so which are you going to believe? Try to decide without any critical thinking, since you long ago realized that was unnecessary.)

Now, about this nonsectarian nonsense. Imagine a truly nonsectarian prayer: Dear god, allah, buddha, or whatever you are, assuming you exist, which of course I can't prove, but

(continued)

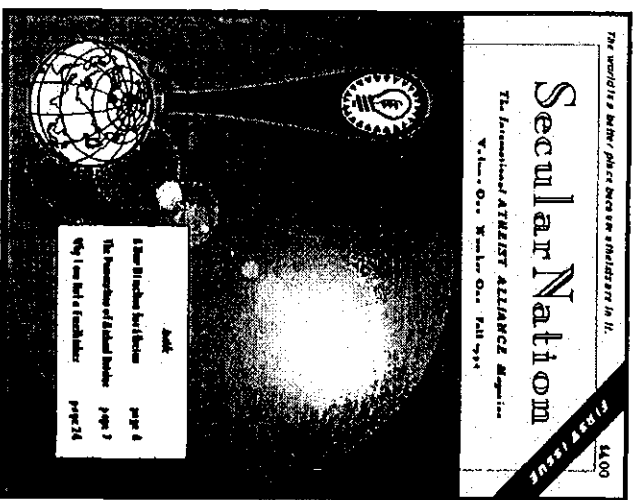
Secular Nation

is the only magazine in the U.S. published by, for, and about atheists.

You received the free first issue, and now, **Secular Nation** is available only by subscription.

The only way you can be sure to receive the next lively, fact-filled issue is to subscribe.

You can subscribe to **Secular Nation** for \$14.00 per year, find out what's happening and support an important cause.



ATHEIST ALLIANCE / Secular Nation
P O Box 5296 · San Mateo, CA 94402-5296
 I have enclosed my check/money order for \$14.00 made payable to ATHEIST ALLIANCE. Send my one year **Secular Nation** subscription to

Name _____
 Street _____
 City/State/Zip _____

I have enclosed my tax deductible gift of \$ _____

A not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, ATHEIST ALLIANCE is a national association of democratic, autonomous atheist societies dedicated to separation of governments and religions.

I'm supposed to have faith anyway, at least that's what they say though I'm not sure why: I'd like to ask you for your help on this test, since I didn't bother to study, knowing that if you do exist there's not much I could do that matters. Anyway, I'd like to ask you to please protect me from knowing anything except what I'm supposed to know, and even from knowing there are things I'm not supposed to know; which is, you know, about the best I can expect from you, since if you exist and are a rational being you must admire reason more than blind faith, but then why do I need faith, and why do you let all those bad things happen to people if you're good, and if you're not good maybe I should be asking for things I don't want so you'll be sure and give them to me, like, I really, really, don't want a new car for my birthday. Anyway, if you're up there, I hope you're listening, at least, if you're a good god, but if not then ignore everything I've said. Amen, hallelujah, hare krishna, send money, et cetera.

Are these the messages our schools should be sending? I think not. Let's hope Newt Gingrich gets stopped before he does permanent damage.

One last note: Democrats aren't my party of choice; just the best of a bad lot in most cases. Still, Clinton has been a tremendous disappointment, especially in his firing of Jocelyn Elders. Finally, someone with the guts to say that needed to be said, and the confidence that Clinton was standing behind her. Too bad she wasn't wearing a knife-proof vest! **A**

BORN hatched

In our October/November, '94 newsletter we introduced the formation of a coalition formed to unite various groups to work in harmony to preserve our civil liberties. After two meetings the name *Bill Of Rights Network* has been unanimously agreed upon. BORN is now organized and into the activity stage with many committees formed which include:

- OUTREACH
- OPERATIONS
- INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY
- LEGISLATION CLEARING HOUSE
- PUBLIC EDUCATION
- CRISIS ACTION

We seek to make BORN a statewide organization bringing in a wide variety of groups which will be affected by the Religious Reich. The next meeting will be February 4th at 1:00 pm at the Montgomery Ward building in Tyrone Mall, 2170 Tyrone Blvd., St. Pete. If you would like to participate, please attend. For more information, call Florence Morgenroth at 578-1677. **A**

Universal Atheism

Dr. Albert E. Lyngzeidson



Message from the

Chairman

AS WE APPROACH the end of the millennium it is most appropriate for us to pause for a sober reflection and assessment of the meaning of universal atheism in the 21st Century.

Atheism has been much maligned and misunderstood not only from negative propaganda from reactionary religious elements, but also due to confusion amongst atheists themselves as to what they do and do not stand for. In this statement I hope to impart some coherence and clarity to the atheist cause; and thusly, hopefully, present a proper and fitting agenda for universal atheism as it prepares to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

To begin: 'atheism' in its full import and meaning is more than a mere recognition that there is no god. It, at its best, also manifests a profoundly positive attitude and perspective about this planet we call home and the place of humanity on it. Perhaps, foremost, atheism begins with the blunt recognition that we are essentially alone and fully responsible for our fate; to look for aid or blame toward a supernatural presence reveals nothing less than what is most ignoble about being human "a weakness born of ignorance and conceit. By focusing upon the concrete existential reality of humanity and its problems, atheism promotes a wholeheartedly practical and timely approach to solving humanity's problems. Accordingly, by founding its operating principles firmly upon the empirical method, atheism establishes its

most fundamental ethical tenet: moral fallibilism. In contrast to the intolerance of religious moral absolutism and dogmatism, moral fallibilism is an attitude of strength and ideological malleability — an attitude that is willing to revise, reconsider, and modify its moral precepts in the light of new and changing circumstances and evidence. This attitude fosters open communication and dialogue, and thus is a most potent means to diffuse the conflict and tension that inevitably results from dogmatism. Atheism does *not* have to mean a moral nihilism nor an arbitrary relativism; given its fundamentally empirical persuasion a 'moral fallibilism' is its most fitting purpose.

Morised with the theoretical imperatives of a moral fallibilism, atheism by its very nature fosters a global ethic in the practical applied aspect of its moral purpose; a global ecological ethic is an absolute mandate for an enlightened mind, for it is only such an ethic that can sever the strange holds of ethnocentrism, factionism, and 'traditionalism' that have historically blocked environmental and ecological progress. This Earth is the only one we have, and it is high-time we liberated ourselves from centuries of religious ideological myopia that have been ruining it and focused political and environmental concern upon a global environmental ethic. Perhaps nowhere is the urgency of the need for such an ethic revealed more so than in the ghastly spectacle of over-population and the imperturbable denial by most religions of the immensity of this problem. Our positive emphasis of the practical benefits of an atheist agenda, inspired by moral fallibilism and a global ecological ethic, must be well-tempered by an assiduous campaign promulgating the 'superstitious' and insidious detrimental effects religion still has upon humanity.

Religious dogmatists have often attacked atheism as an empty nihilism lacking a meaning for life. We should boldly counter that we atheists find life supremely meaningful if for no other reason than the noble goal of the betterment of humanity; and moreover we do *not* find it necessary to debase ourselves by finding a meaning in life *only* through the hallucinogenic comfort of a fictional transcendence (viz., 'god'). And so, on the verge of the 21st century, we pause and reflect; and with a strengthened resolve and clear vision meet the challenges that await us. **A**

Dr. Albert E. Lyngzeidson is a professor of philosophy at Florida Atlantic University and lives in Davie, FL



Registration Information



FIRST ANNUAL ATHEIST ALLIANCE CONVENTION
Easter Weekend, April 14, 15, 16, 1995

A star-studded cast of speakers, entertainers and workshop panelists — all in the glamorous ambience of the Beverly Garland Hotel in North Hollywood, California (eight miles from downtown Los Angeles).

Program participants committed so far:

Ramona Ripston, executive director, ACLU
Dr. Gerald Larue, professor emeritus of biblical history and archeology, Univ. of So. Calif; author: *Freethought Through The Centuries*, and *OBITAR: Objectivity and Balance In Teaching About Religion*.
Dr. Albert Lyngzeidseton, professor, author, lecturer: *The Meaning of Atheism, The Challenge of the Christian Right*.
Dr. John Xanthopoulos, distinguished scholar (Florida Atlantic Univ.), writer, editor: *Equity and Empowerment of Women*.
Dr. Meg Bowman, educator, author, lecturer, counselor: *Role of Atheists in the Third Wave*.
Marie Castle & Steve Thorne, atheist political activists: *Political Strategies to Out-Maneuver the Religious Right*.
Valerie White, Esq., attorney: *Protect Your Interests in Family Court*.
Sharon Presley, Ph.D., director, Institute for Critical Thinking: *Belief Style Traps—Tyranny of the Mind*.

Dan Barker, entertainer, public relations director for Freedom From Religion Foundation: *Songs of Cheer for Friendly Neighborhood Atheists*.
Edythe McGovern, literature professor, co-author of *They're Never Too Young To Read* with **Helen Muller**, librarian, author: *Teach the Children*.
Molleen Matsumura, project director, National Center for Science Education: *How to Make Creationism Go Extinct*.
Howard Kreisner, editor, *Secular Nation*; president, San Diego Atheist Coalition: *Separation of Church and State*.
Ben Ackerley, author, *X-Rated Bible: Religion May Be Hazardous to Your Sex Life*.
Paul Krassner, comedian: *The Lighter Side of Unbelief*.
Workshops: Panelists are still being gathered. Learn how to establish a local atheist center, how to put atheism on the information superhighway, how to produce and distribute atheist cable TV programs, and more.

Watch for updates as the program continues to be filled out.

Enjoy all this in the gorgeous Beverly Garland Hotel, with free shuttle service to nearby Universal City and City Walk, the second largest tourist attraction in California after Disneyland.

Plan to stay long enough to take in the sights of Hollywood.

☞ Tour Universal Studios ☞ See the Hollywood Wax Museum ☞ Check out the La Brea Tar Pits
☞ Visit Malibu Beach & Sunset Strip ☞ Go up Magic Mountain ☞ Stop at Grauman's Chinese Theater
☞ And much, much more.

Ten Great Reasons To Be There

1. It's a FIRST! It's FRIENDLY! It's ACTION-ORIENTED!
2. Hob-nob with hot shot atheists from all over.
3. The Religious Right has gone too far. Learn how to stop them.
4. Be an active participant, not a passive receptacle.
5. If discussions get too hot, you can take a dip in the pool.
6. The convention will be taped for international distribution.
7. Atheist celebrities from other countries will be there.
8. You'll learn a LOT and share practical wisdom.
9. It will all be recorded in a notebook you take home.
10. What better way is there to spend an Easter weekend??

Make your travel plans and send in the reservation form on the reverse side.



Package Price List & Reservation Form

PLEASE NOTE

"All meals" means two breakfasts, two lunches, and two banquets.
If you select a shared room, state on the reservation form who you want to share with.
If you do not state a preference, the convention staff will pair you with someone.

If you are arriving by plane, please book your flight for the Burbank airport.
It is only a few minutes from the hotel and there is free shuttle service.

If you want to stay at the hotel beyond Saturday night, state how many nights on the reservation form and we will arrange it with the hotel (subject to availability). Your extra cost at the special convention rate will be about \$80 a night, which you can pay to the hotel when you arrive.

1. Shared room (Friday & Saturday nights) all meals, all activities	\$250
2. Private room (Friday & Saturday nights) all meals, all activities	\$350
3. No room, all meals, all activities	\$175
4. No room, no meals, all workshops	\$60
5. Breakfast only, Saturday	\$25
6. Breakfast only, Sunday	\$25
7. Luncheon only, Saturday	\$30
8. Luncheon only, Sunday	\$30
9. Banquet only, Friday night	\$50
10. Banquet only, Saturday night	\$50
11. All workshops, Saturday banquet	\$100

After the convention adjourns on April 16, we will have the four conference rooms and theater for our use until midnight. The following people are invited to stay for post-convention activities: Atheist Alliance executive board members, convention committee members, and any convention attendees who want to participate in reviewing and critiquing our first national convention. There is a very nice restaurant and bar on the premises for a no-host cocktail and/or dinner break.

Easter Weekend, April 14, 15, 16, 1995

Convention Reservation Form

Please reserve ___ of package # ___ @ \$_____ each. My check is enclosed.

I will also be available to serve as convention staff.

Name: _____ Phone(s): (_____) _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Please return this form to:
ATHEISTS UNITED
P. O. Box 8464
Universal City, CA 91608-0464