



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

March 2006



CSH Affiliate

## David Hume, Humanist Hero

Join us on Monday, March 20, when Doug will talk about the life and thought of David Hume, the greatest philosopher of the Scottish Enlightenment, who lived from 1711 to 1776. Hume wrote about religion, politics, economics, international trade, and history, and strongly shaped all subsequent thinking about psychology, ethics, government, morality, separation of church and state, and the social sciences. He was a powerful influence on his young friend and fellow Scotsman Adam Smith, who would become the great economist. He was also befriended by Benjamin Franklin, who advocated his ideas among the founding fathers. The writings of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton show the influence of Hume's ideas. His fame spread widely among thinkers and writers in his own lifetime.

The French social historian Chastellux told Hume in a letter that his name "had become as estimable in the republic of letters as was that of Jehovah among the Hebrews." In the modern period, Albert Einstein said that the critical thinking necessary for the discovery of Special Relativity was decisively influenced by Hume's philosophy. His outwardly serene personality disarmed many who were anxious about the radical nature of his ideas. Philosophy has never been the same since David Hume.

Doug Peary was born and raised on a farm in northern Maine as a fundamentalist Christian. He became a Unitarian in 1972 in Springfield, Mass. He studied business and philosophy and then attended Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley. In 1980 Doug was ordained as a UU minister, and the

## Calendar of Events

### MARCH, 2006

Sat., 4	Humanist Conversations: Religion in Connecticut Public Schools.	2:30 p.m.
Sun., 12	Book discussion, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden: <i>Blood and Oil</i> by Michael T. Klare	3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Mon., 13	Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. RSVP at <a href="http://humanism.meetup.com">humanism.meetup.com</a> . (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 20	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden Coffee and conversation Main program: <i>David Hume, Humanist Hero</i> , presented by Doug Peary.	7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Wed., 22	Dinner at Lisboa, 19 Lafayette St., Waterbury. (203) 754-0789 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 25	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	2:30 p.m.

### APRIL, 2006

Sat., 1	Humanist Conversations: TBA	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 3	Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. RSVP at <a href="http://humanism.meetup.com">humanism.meetup.com</a> . (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 17	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden Coffee and conversation Main program: <i>Complicity</i> by Hartford Courant Staff	7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Wed. 19	Lecture: Dr. Niles Eldredge, <i>What Darwin Saw</i> at Luce Hall Auditorium, 34 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven, followed by dinner at Indochine Pavilion, 1180 Chapel St., New Haven	4:00 p.m.
Sun., 23	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	2:30 p.m.
Wed., 26	Dinner at Lisboa, 19 Lafayette St., Waterbury. (203) 754-0789 for directions.	7:00 p.m.

[WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG](http://WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG)

same year he was certified as a Humanist Minister. In 1982 he became a Federal Labor Investigator in Oakland with the National Labor Relations Board, and he still works for the NLRB in Hartford.

Inspired by the life stories of outstanding Humanists, and finding that others were likewise inspired by them, Doug began writing the first of his popular "Humanist Hero" presentations in 1986, seventeen of which are

now available in book form. He is currently working on a second volume, which will include this presentation on David Hume.

In 1989 Doug was a charter member of this organization. He has served as its president, and is currently its vice-president and treasurer.

Bring a friend on Monday, March 20 to 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden at 7:30 p.m. for coffee and conversation followed by Doug's presentation at 8:00.

[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)

**E-mail List**

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

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

**Thanks**

Thank you to everyone who has joined our organization or renewed their memberships!

**Religion Makes Its Way Into Connecticut Public Schools**

The February 2006 issue of *Connecticut Magazine* has a fairly short informative article about the impact of the Federal Equal Access Act of 1984 entitled "The Jesus Question." Join us in a discussion of this article on Saturday, March 4 at 700 Hartford Turnpike at 2:30 p.m. We have plenty of extra copies of the magazine for members who attend, and the article is short enough that we can put aside a little time to read it before the discussion, so please come if the topic interests you, even if you can't find the article before the meeting. Refreshments will be served.

**Book Group: Blood and Oil**

The next book discussion will meet at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden on Sunday, March 12 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. We will discuss *Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing Dependency on Imported Petroleum* by Michael T. Klare, Director of the Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies at Hampshire College in Amherst and a defense analyst for *The Nation* and National Public Radio. Refreshments will be served.

**Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery**

At our monthly program on April 17 we will hear about two reports originally published by the Hartford *Courant* in *Northeast*, its Sunday magazine, on the important roles played by prominent citizens of Connecticut in promoting slavery. These reports, in the issues of September 29, 2002 and April 3, 2005, have been expanded into a much larger account of Northern collusion in slavery, and made into an important book published in 2005. The authors are Anne Farrow and Joel Lang, investigative reporters, and Jenifer Frank, editor, of *Northeast* magazine. The magazine articles have been made into a special report sent by the Connecticut Department of Education to every middle and high school in the state. The original research is required reading in many college classrooms. Our program on April 17 will be presented by one or more of the three authors. Don't miss it!

**What Darwin Saw**

The Edward P. Bass Distinguished Visiting Environmental Scholars Program, and the Yale Institute for Biospheric Studies, are sponsoring a lecture by Dr. Niles Eldredge, noted paleontologist and curator of the Darwin Exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC. The lecture - *What Darwin Saw* - is free to the public. It will take place on Wednesday, April 19 at 4:00 p.m. in the Luce Hall Auditorium at 34 Hillhouse Avenue in New Haven.

Join us for dinner after the lecture at Indochine Pavilion, a Vietnamese restaurant, at 1180 Chapel St.

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>		Name(s): _____
i Adult . . . . .	\$35	Address: _____
i Family . . . . .	\$50	_____
i Newsletter Only . . . . .	\$10	Telephone: _____
i In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to Humanist Association of Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.		E-Mail Address: _____
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		Where did you hear about us? _____
		Comments: _____
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