



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

March 2008



CSH Affiliate

## *The Loch Ness Monster: Anatomy of a Plesiosaur or Anatomy of a Myth?*

Join us on Monday, March 17, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden to welcome back one of our very favorite speakers, Dr. Kenneth L. Feder, professor of anthropology at Central Connecticut State University and the author of *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology*.

A Scottish television news report announced a recent sighting of the world renowned Loch Ness Monster, tracing back eyewitness accounts of a leviathan in the loch to 565 AD. But is that correct? Is there a long history of sightings of what sounds like a plesiosaur in the loch? Or can the sightings be traced back only to the twentieth-century and is there a far more prosaic explanation for the phenomenon of the Loch Ness Monster than one suggesting that there is a remnant population of ancient sea beasts in the loch? You won't need any scuba equipment to investigate its authenticity when Ken Feder applies a skeptical approach to the the story of the Loch Ness Monster.

Bring a friend for this presentation sure to be as entertaining as it is informative on Monday, March 17, 2008, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. Coffee and conversation will begin at 7:30 p.m. followed by Ken's lecture at 8:00 p.m.

## *Conversations: Nader for President?*

Join us at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 1 at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. We will watch and discuss the seventeen minutes of Ralph Nader's announcement on *Meet the Press* on Sunday, February 24. Refreshments will be served.

## *Calendar of Events*

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at [humanism.meetup.com](http://humanism.meetup.com).

### MARCH, 2008

Sat., 1	Humanist Conversations: Nader for President?	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 3	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 17	Monthly meeting	7:30 p.m.
	<b>Main program:</b> Ken Feder: "The Loch Ness Monster: Anatomy of a Plesiosaur or Anatomy of a Myth?"	8:00 p.m.
Sat., 22	<b>Book discussion:</b> George Orwell's <i>1984</i>	2:30 p.m.
Sun., 23	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Wed., 26	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 29	<b>Bible Reading Group:</b> Biblical scholarship.	2:30 p.m.

### APRIL, 2008

Sat., 5	Humanist Conversations: TBD	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 7	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 14	Monthly meeting	7:30 p.m.
	<b>Main program:</b> Herb Silverman: Coalitions and Solidarity in Humanism	8:00 p.m.
Sun., 27	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Wed., 30	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.

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

## *Book Discussion — Orwell's 1984*

Join us on Saturday, March 22, from 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden when we will discuss *1984* by George Orwell. Copies of this classic book are available at public libraries as well as at bookstores and online.

Remember: war is peace; freedom is slavery; ignorance is strength.

## *Camp Quest*

Camp Quest is the first residential secular summer camp in the United States for youth, emphasizing critical thinking and a naturalistic worldview. There are six independently operated camps in different parts of the country. The board of the Humanist Association of Connecticut would like our members to consider sending money to help support a camper (one summer costs \$550 per camper). Think about it, and we'll discuss it at our next meeting. Check [camp-quest.org](http://camp-quest.org) online as a great opportunity for our young people.

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

**E-mail List**

To join, send an e-mail addressed to [majordomo@cthumanist.org](mailto:majordomo@cthumanist.org) with **subscribe announce** in the body of the message.

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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.

# Plan to Bring a Friend on April 14!

## Bible Discussion Group

The first meeting of the HAC Bible Reading Group will be on Saturday, March 29, from 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

The book we will be discussing at this first meeting and at our other meetings in the near future is *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now* by James L. Kugel, based on his extraordinarily popular course at Harvard. Copies of this book are available at public libraries as well as at bookstores and online.

The plan for this group is to go through the book at a reasonable pace over a period of time and to include readings from other sources at each meeting.

The assignment to prepare for this first meeting has four parts:

A) The New York Times review article "Reading Is Believing, or Not" By David Plotz. (Available at

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/16/books/review/Plotz-t.html>)

B) In *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now* by James L. Kugel, the following:

Preliminaries — pages xi-xiv

The Rise of Modern Biblical Scholarship — pages 1-46

C) The article "The Editorial Team Behind the Bible — Interview with Richard Elliott Friedman." (Available at [http://www.beliefnet.com/story/139/story\\_13986.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/139/story_13986.html))

D) In the Wikipedia article on the Documentary Hypothesis, you will learn how familiar figures such as Thomas Hobbes and Baruch Spinoza were involved in the study of who wrote the bible. (Available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary\\_hypothesis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_hypothesis))

If you have difficulty obtaining the additional readings (A, C or D above), you can contact Manny ([development@cthumanist.org](mailto:development@cthumanist.org) or (203) 387-7348), any board member, or you can even ask your local librarian for help!

## Conference

Join the International Humanist and Ethical Union and the American Humanist Association for the 17th annual World Humanist Congress in Washington DC at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel on June 5-8, 2008. Early registration rates expire March 14, so hurry! <http://americanhumanist.org/conference/>

## Hartford Events

Ed Savage invites you to the March Adult Education series on "The Secular Mind" at the Hartford Unitarian Meetinghouse, 50 Bloomfield Avenue in Hartford. The cost of the seminar is \$15.00 and includes a copy of *The Secular Mind* by Robert Coles. The seminar will take place at 1:00 p.m. on March 2, 9, 16, and 30.

Session topics include: the apostasy of secularists (Robert Coles' essays); religion and brain science (David Schafer); the moral challenge of counter insurgency (from the introduction to the new *Counterinsurgency Manual of the US Army and Marine Corps*) or any other topics of interest to the group.

To register for the seminar, call the meetinghouse at (860) 233-9897. For directions visit <http://www.ushartford.com/map.html> or call the same number..

<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: _____
		Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO
		Where did you hear about us? _____
		Comments: _____
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		_____