



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

April 2010



CSH Affiliate

## ***December 21, 2012: The End of the World As We Know It?***

December 21, 2012 marks the end of the current cycle of time according to the Maya calendar. But does that mean the Maya predicted the end of the world on that date? Will time stop, the Earth stop rotating on its axis, the sun become a supernova, and will our entire solar system get sucked into a giant black hole at the center of our galaxy? Should we all be exchanging Christmas gifts early in December 2012, because none of us are going to make it to the 25th of that month? Inquiring minds want to know.

Our very popular Connecticut State University archaeology professor, Dr. Ken Feder, will attempt to ease your concerns about 2012 because he knows the Maya didn't predict anything particularly momentous on that date. Then again, maybe he's part of a government cover-up to prevent widespread panic before it's lights out for good! You decide on Monday, April 19 at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. We'll begin with refreshments at 7:30 p.m. The formal program will begin after brief announcements at 8:00 p.m. Come and bring a friend!

## ***Calendar of Events***

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

### APRIL, 2010

- |          |   |                        |
|----------|---|------------------------|
| Sat., 10 | David Schafer presents "Historical Jesus?"  | 3:00 to<br>5:00 p.m.   |
| Mon., 19 | Monthly Meeting<br>Main program: Ken Feder, Ph.D. "2012: The End of the World As We Know It?"   | 7:30 p.m.<br>8:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 24 | Potluck lunch and Mark Twain memorial film "A Connecticut Yankee," with Bing Crosby, Rhonda Fleming, William Bendix, and Cedric Hardwicke | 1:30 p.m.              |
| Sun., 25 | Board meeting   | 2:30 p.m.              |
| Thu., 29 | Hartford-Area social dinner, Michel Angelo's Pizzeria, 825 Cromwell Ave., Rocky Hill. (860) 257-3136                                      | 7:00 p.m.              |

### MAY, 2010

- |          |   |                        |
|----------|---|------------------------|
| Sat., 1  | Humanist Conversations: May Day   | 2:30 p.m.              |
| Sun., 2  | Connecticut Food Bank "Walk Against Hunger," East Rock Park, New Haven. Donate or register to join us at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/2010hacwalkteam">http://tinyurl.com/2010hacwalkteam</a>  | 1:00 to<br>3:30 p.m.   |
| Mon., 3  | Social Dinner at Equinox Diner, 285 Boston Post Rd, Orange. (203) 298-4100  | 7:00 p.m.              |
| Mon., 10 | NOTE DATE CHANGE<br>Anniversary Meeting and Potluck<br>Main program: "Who Are These Doubters, Anyway? The Demography of Unbelief" - Tom Flynn, Executive Director of the council for Secular Humanism and Editor of <i>Free Inquiry</i> | 7:30 p.m.<br>8:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 15 | David Schafer presents "Historical Jesus?" (part 2)   | 3:00 to<br>5:00 p.m.   |
| Sat., 22 | Book discussion: "Justice" by Michael Sandel, at Marsha Zellner's home in Woodbridge.   | 3:00 to<br>5:00 p.m.   |
| Sun., 23 | Board meeting   | 2:30 p.m.              |
| Thu., 27 | Hartford-Area social dinner, Michel Angelo's Pizzeria, 825 Cromwell Ave., Rocky Hill. (860) 257-3136  | 7:00 p.m.              |

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

## ***Anniversary Meeting and Potluck: "Who Are These Doubters, Anyway? The Demography of Unbelief"***

**DATE: Monday, May 10**

We take great pleasure in announcing that Tom Flynn, Executive Director of the Council for Secular Humanism and Editor of *Free Inquiry* magazine, will be the speaker for our 21st anniversary potluck celebration.

You've seen the various religion polls and the reported

percentages of unbelievers — and the polls vary widely. How do you know which polls are more reliable? Join Tom Flynn as he explores how sociologists and pollsters measure religious belief and unbelief. He will also cover the controversies and scandals in the polling field, and what the polling data on religion really

mean (for example, how many of those "no religious preference" people are really atheists?).

Bring a dish to share for our anniversary potluck dinner on Monday, May 10, at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike. Dinner (with anniversary cake) will be followed by Tom Flynn's presentation at 8:00 p.m.

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

**Email List**

To join, send an email addressed to [hac-announce-request@cthumanist.org](mailto:hac-announce-request@cthumanist.org) with the subject **subscribe**.

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

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

May Conversations will be about May Day. If you would like to recommend any supporting video/audio/text, please send an email to: [editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org)

# Historical Jesus?

Saturday, April 10, 3-5 p.m., 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden. At Tom Platt's suggestion, we're sponsoring a limited series of discussions entitled "The Historicity of Jesus and Early Christianity: A Historical, Scientific, Scholarly and Critical Examination." The aim of this series is to provide reliable evidence-based information on this complex subject, which will be best understood as a kind of puzzle, parts of which are well understood while many others are less so, and some remain a complete mystery. Those who participate may be surprised to learn precisely how much of the puzzle falls into each category. This first session will summarize the relevant and well-documented geographical, historical, archaeological, linguistic, and literary background, during the period from around 100 BCE to 100 CE, of Jewish, Roman, Greek, and neighboring cultures that serve as the minimum setting for a clear understanding of the known and probable origins of what we will call "Early Christianity." The presentation will be based on handouts and an analytical viewing of the first hour of the four-hour *Frontline* series "From Jesus to Christ," with an introduction to the paperback "From Jesus to Christianity: How Four Generations of Visionaries and Storytellers Created the New Testament and Christian Faith," by L. Michael White, one of the principal contributors responsible for the TV series. Other sessions will follow at intervals of roughly one month, and each will include additional handouts and one hour of DVD materials from the *Frontline* series and two other sources. David Schafer will present all sessions and lead the discussion. For further information call 203-281-6232. Everyone is welcome!

If you would like to read supportive online information before the first session see:

- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/>
- <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0060816104/>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/etc/bios.html#white>

# Potluck & Movie

On April 24, at 700 Hartford Tunpike in Hamden, we will have a potluck lunch and will view the 1949 film "A Connecticut Yankee," with Bing Crosby, Rhonda Fleming, William Bendix, and Cedric Hardwicke, adapted from Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court." The pot luck lunch will start at 1:30 p.m. and we will show the film at 2:15 p.m. Please bring an appetizer, salad, sandwiches, or main dish. We will provide drinks and desserts.

# Book Discussion: "Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?"

On Saturday, May 22, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. we will discuss "Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?" by Michael J. Sandel. (Note: This is not the paperback "Justice: A Reader" by the same author.) We will meet at the home of Marsha Zellner in Woodbridge. Directions and more details will be in the next newsletter.

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	
Adult . . . . .	\$35
Family . . . . .	\$50
Newsletter Only . . . . .	\$10
Our membership year is 1/1-12/31.	
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.	
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Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO	
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