



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

November 2011



CSH Affiliate

## *A Non-theistic “Modern Synthesis” of Humanism and Naturalism*

We are pleased to welcome Dr. John Hooper, current president of the Association of Unitarian Universalist Humanists (HUUmanists), to tell us about a non-theistic “modern synthesis” of Humanism and Naturalism on Monday, November 21 at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

About his talk, John tells us: “Naturalists have taken a leadership role in celebrating the awesome epic of biological evolution. Humanists have celebrated the shared human experience of being alive and the inherent worth and dignity of all living human beings. Defending human freedom and drawing on the revelations of science (without resorting to supernatural hypotheses), both humanists and naturalists seek to continuously improve our objective understanding of the universe and our place in it. Exciting new multidisciplinary scientific studies are leading to new revelations about the nature of human experience itself. This nascent ‘naturalizing of experience’ provides a unique opportunity for celebrating a ‘modern synthesis’ of humanism and naturalism that requires absolutely no supernatural considerations.”

John Hooper is a retired scientist and research & development executive (Ph.D., 1969, in chemistry from Carnegie Mellon University). Dr. Hooper subsequently earned a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts from Clark University in 2001. Since his retirement in 2003, he has pursued interests in science and religion, naturalism, humanism, and

## *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).

### NOVEMBER

|          |   |                             |
|----------|---|-----------------------------|
| Sat., 5  | Humanist Conversations: Transcendent Man  | 2:30 p.m.                   |
| Mon., 7  | Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002  | 7:00 p.m.                   |
| Sun., 13 | Social walk in Woodbridge, with optional group lunch to follow  | 10:30 a.m. to<br>12:00 noon |
| Sat., 19 | Social walk in Woodbridge, with optional group lunch to follow  | 10:30 a.m. to<br>12:00 noon |
| Mon., 21 | Monthly Meeting<br>Report on FFRF conference  | 7:30 p.m.<br>7:50 p.m.      |
|          | <b>Main program:</b> Dr. John Hooper, President of HUUmanists — A Non-theistic “Modern Synthesis” of Humanism and Naturalism. | 8:00 p.m.                   |
| Sun., 27 | Board meeting   | 2:30 p.m.                   |
| Tue., 29 | Dinner at Imperial Caribbean Restaurant, 51 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell. (860) 613-0005  | 7:00 p.m.                   |

### DECEMBER

|          |   |                           |
|----------|---|---------------------------|
| Mon., 5  | Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002            | 7:00 p.m.                 |
| Sat., 10 | Book discussion: “Predictably Irrational” by Dan Ariely   | 3:00 p.m. to<br>5:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 17 | Humanist Conversations: TBA   | 2:30 p.m.                 |
| Mon., 19 | Pot-luck dinner<br>Annual meeting and elections, followed by Solstice Party and silent auction. | 7:30 p.m.<br>8:00 p.m.    |
| Sun., 25 | Annual brunch at Pacific Buffet, 20 Ives Rd #301C, Wallingford CT. (203) 269-6888               | 12:00 noon                |

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

Unitarian Universalist social witness. John is a member of several scientific societies and advocacy organizations. As an elected member of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s (UUA) Commission on Social Witness, he was responsible for guiding the first four-year Congregational Study/Action Issue on peacemaking through the UUA Social Witness process, resulting in the adoption of the “Creating Peace” Statement of Conscience at the 2010 UUA General Assembly. Dr. Hooper is the immediate past Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist congregation in Westport, CT. Having previously served as president of the Unitarian Universalist Religious Naturalists (UURN), he is currently president of the Association of Unitarian Universalist Humanists (HUUmanists) and a Board Member of The Humanist Institute. He is married to Dr. Gail Pesyna, vice president of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Gail and John are members of the President’s Council of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Join us at 700 Hartford Turnpike at 7:30 p.m. for coffee and conversation. At 7:50 p.m., attendees of this October’s Freedom from Religion Foundation conference in Hartford will tell us a bit about what the rest of us missed, and Dr. Hooper will talk at 8:00 p.m.

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

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(203) 281-6232  
[president@cthumanist.org](mailto:president@cthumanist.org)
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- Membership Halina Platt
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- Publications Carol Siddall
- Publicity Dan Blinn
- Hospitality Randy Olear

**Newsletter**

- Editor Carol Siddall  
(203) 264-8546  
[editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org)
- Production: Richard Siddall  
(203) 264-2182  
[webmaster@cthumanist.org](mailto:webmaster@cthumanist.org)

# Conversations, Transcendent Man

Join us on Saturday, November 5, at 2:30 p.m. when Humanist Conversations will view and discuss the first half of the 2009 documentary on Ray Kurzweil and his ideas, "Transcendent Man" (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1117394/>). In addition to Kurzweil's explanation of his "law of accelerating returns" and its implications, the film includes opinions from both his supporters and his critics. Dennis Kababik will be leading the post-film discussion, which will center around the concept of the singularity, which is well defined in the film, and what this means to the future of evolution. Refreshments will be served.

# Woodbridge Walk

Join us Sunday, November 13, and Saturday, November 19 from 10:30 a.m. until noon for a walk on a 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. *We will meet on the trail next to the intersection of Center Rd (Route 114) and Beecher Rd.* If you arrive after 10:30 a.m., just wait at this location and you will see us in a few minutes, or you can call one of the mobile numbers below. The event will be canceled in the event of rain or snow. Contacts: Manny Ratafia: e-mail: [manny@ratafias.com](mailto:manny@ratafias.com), home (203) 387-7348, cell (203) 901-9553; or Nina Stein: home (203) 757-2539, cell (203) 215-0022; or Marsha Zellner: home (203) 393-2816, cell (203) 494-3856.

# 400 Thanksgiving Dinners

Since Meals on Wheels does not deliver dinners on Thanksgiving Day, each year the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK), affiliated with the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries (ICM), takes 300 names of elderly people, and ICM volunteers deliver Thanksgiving dinners to them. They also prepare a sit-down dinner for 100 of New Haven's homeless and working poor. If you could prepare or deliver food or write a check to "ICM" and send it to June Schafer, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden CT 06517-1321, it would be greatly appreciated. If you have questions call (203) 281-6232.

# Book Group: "Predictably Irrational"

The next HAC book discussion will be on Saturday, December 10, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m., at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. The book we will be reading is "Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions" by Dan Ariely. Lots of copies are available in Connecticut public libraries <<http://www.iconn.org/FindALibraryInConnecticut.aspx?cat=consortia>> as well as in book stores and online. Carol Siddall will be the moderator. Refreshments will be served.

Dan Ariely is the James B. Duke Professor of Psychology and Behavioral Economics at the Fuqua School of Business. He studies how people actually act in the marketplace, as opposed to how they should or would if they were rational beings. His books let the reader join in his explorations.

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06517-1321. Submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles should be made to this address or to [editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org).

Please include a SASE to have material returned. We welcome letters, articles, photographs, poetry, comic

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| <p><b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>Adult . . . . . \$35</p> <p>Family . . . . . \$50</p> <p>Newsletter Only . . . . . \$10</p> <p>Our membership year is 1/1-12/31.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>Name(s): _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Telephone: _____</p> <p>E-Mail Address: _____</p> <p>Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO</p> <p>Where did you hear about us? _____</p> <p>Comments: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
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