THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

AHA Chapter

October 2014

CSH Affiliate

Finding Our Common Humanity: Building Community & Building Bridges

Please join us on Monday, October 20 at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, when we are pleased to welcome Chris Stedman as our featured speaker.

Atheist voices are increasing in the public square, but for many atheism and anti-theism have become synonymous. Is the chasm of understanding between atheists and theists growing wider? Can atheists and theists identify shared values and build partnerships for the common good, or are their disagreements too vast? How does Humanist community help atheists engage with people of faith? Yale Humanist Community Executive Director Chris Stedman will share his story, reflect on Humanist community, and explain how atheists and theists can come to better understand one another and work together to improve the world we share.

Chris is Executive Director of Yale Humanist Community, atheist columnist for Religion News Service, Emeritus Managing Director of State of Formation at the Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue, and a former Harvard University chaplain. He is the author of Faitheist, which Booklist described in a starred review as "an intimate and deeply affecting portrait… [that] proves [he is] an activist in the truest sense and one to watch." Chris received an MA in Religion from Meadville Lombard Theological School at the University of Chicago, for which he was awarded the Billings Prize for Most Outstanding Scholastic Achievement. Previously a Content Developer and Adjunct Trainer for Interfaith Youth Core, where he helped shape their ongoing collaboration with the Obama administration, Chris has written for Salon, CNN, MSNBC, USA Today, The Huffington Post, and The Washington Post. In 2013, he was named one of the "five next-gen gurus who are disrupting religion's status quo" by Details magazine and "the millennial busting every stereotype about atheists" by MicNews.

The evening will start at 7:30 p.m. with an informal half hour of conversation and refreshments. Chris will talk following 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.

OCTOBER 2014		
Sat., 4	**Humanist Conversations:** Talk by Azar Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*	**2:30 p.m**
Mon., 6	**Social** Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	**7:00 p.m**
Sat., 18	Book discussion: "Dog Whistle Politics" by Ian Haney López	**2:00 p.m.**
Mon., 20	Monthly Meeting	**7:30 p.m**
	Main program: Chris Stedman of Yale Humanist Community — ***Finding Our Common Humanity: Building Community and Building Bridges***	**8:00 p.m**
Sun., 26	Board meeting	**2:30 p.m**
NOVEMBER 2014		
Sat., 1	**Humanist Conversations:** TBA	**2:30 p.m**
Mon., 3	**Social** Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	**7:00 p.m**
Mon., 17	Monthly Meeting	**7:30 p.m**
	Main program: Wendy Webber of YHC — *Interbelief Service as an Alternative to Dialogue*	**8:00 p.m**
Sun., 23	Board meeting	**2:30 p.m**

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Humanist Conversations

At John Pawelek's presentation on his visit to Tehran, one of his suggestions was to read "Reading Lolita in Tehran" by Azar Nafisi. To go along with that suggestion, Cynthia found a wonderful talk by Azar Nafisi in which she talks about revolution, university, politics, religion, and western literature in a short, fascinating lecture that appears to have been at the National Press Club and aired by C-Span2's Book TV in 2004. Never mind the year. Her erudite comments are as relevant now as ever. We'll meet at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 4 at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

Refreshments will be served.

Email List

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Book Discussion: Dog Whistle Politics

The Book Group will next meet on Saturday, October 18, at USNH at 2:00 pm. We will be discussing "Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class" by Ian Haney López.

Campaigning for president in 1980, Ronald Reagan told stories of Cadillac-driving "welfare queens" and "strapping young bucks" buying T-bone steaks with food stamps. In trumpeting these tales of welfare run amok, Reagan never needed to mention race, because he was blowing a dog whistle: sending a message about racial minorities inaudible on one level, but clearly heard on another. In doing so, he tapped into a long political tradition that started with George Wallace and Richard Nixon, and is more relevant than ever in the age of the Tea Party and the first black president.

In Dog Whistle Politics, Ian Haney López offers a sweeping account of how politicians and plutocrats deploy veiled racial appeals to persuade white voters to support policies that favor the extremely rich yet threaten their own interests. Dog whistle appeals generate middle-class enthusiasm for political candidates who promise to crack down on crime, curb undocumented immigration, and protect the heartland against Islamic infiltration, but ultimately vote to slash taxes for the rich, give corporations regulatory control over industry and financial markets, and aggressively curtail social services. White voters, convinced by powerful interests that minorities are their true enemies, fail to see the connection between the political agendas they support and the surging wealth inequality that takes an increasing toll on their lives. The tactic continues at full force, with the Republican Party using racial provocations to drum up enthusiasm for weakening unions and public pensions, defunding public schools, and opposing health care reform.

Rejecting any simple story of malevolent and obvious racism, Haney López links the two central themes that dominate American politics today: the decline of the middle class and the Republican Party's increasing reliance on white voters. Dog Whistle Politics will generate a lively and much-needed debate about how racial politics has destabilized the American middle class — white and nonwhite members alike. — *From Amazon.com*

Friday Oct. 3rd: USNH Social Cinema

This month's film is "Living On One Dollar."

How do 1.1 billion people in the world live on less than one dollar a day? Four college students set out to live and learn this reality, and return home transformed — challenging us to make a difference for others.

Free Rice & Beans Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Film at 7:15 p.m.

Plus — Diaper Drive For JUNTA

Having kids is expensive!!! Please bring a donation of diapers for JUNTA to Social Cinema on October 3rd. All sizes are needed.

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MEMBERSHIP

Adult $35
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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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