



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT



UU Humanists Local Group

October 2015

Can You Really Love Your Enemies?

Chris Stedman will return as the featured speaker at our monthly meeting on Sunday, October 11. The meeting will be held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, at 3:00 p.m.

The Bible quotes Jesus as saying, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Oscar Wilde suggests we should always forgive our enemies because "nothing annoys them so much." Throughout history, many have put forth loving your enemies as one of humanity's highest ideals. But is it really possible? What does it mean in practice? How do we do it? And how do we prevent the call to love those that loathe us from becoming a tool to sustain systemic injustices, or silence the suffering and anger of the dehumanized? Chris Stedman will share a story of a time he was challenged to love an enemy, and together we'll explore the possibilities and pitfalls of Mahatma Gandhi's call to "conquer [one's opponents] with love."

Chris Stedman is a Fellow of Davenport College at Yale and Executive Director of the Yale Humanist Community. Previously a Humanist chaplain at Harvard University, he is the author of "Faitheist: How an Atheist Found Common Ground with

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 2015

Sat., 3	Conversations: <i>Inequality for All</i> at the Wilson Branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, 303 Washington Ave., New Haven.	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 5	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m.
Sun., 11	Monthly Meeting Main program: Chris Stedman — <i>Can You Really Love Your Enemies?</i>	3:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m.
Sat., 17	Book Discussion: "It Can't Happen Here" by Sinclair Lewis	2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Sun., 25	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER 2015

Mon., 2	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 7	Conversations: Program TBA, to be held at the Wilson Branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, 303 Washington Ave., New Haven.	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 16	Monthly Meeting Main program: Nina Stein on her visit to Israel	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sat., 21	Book Discussion: "The Collapse of American Criminal Justice" by William Stuntz	2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Sun., 22	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.

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the Religious." In 2013, *Details* magazine named Chris as one of "five next-gen gurus who are disrupting religion's status quo" and *Mic* called him "the millennial who's busting every stereotype about atheists." He has appeared on CNN, msnbc, and Fox News, and has written for publications

including *Salon*, CNN, msnbc, *USA Today*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The Washington Post*.

Join us at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden on Sunday, October 11. We'll mingle over coffee 3:00 p.m. and Chris's presentation will follow brief announcements at 3:30 p.m.

Whatever Happened to Aid in Dying?

Earlier this year, Tim Appleton of Compassion and Choices was appearing at humanist groups all over the state, showing the touching documentary, "The Last Campaign of Governor Booth Gardner," and explaining how the proposed Connecticut Aid in Dying law would be modeled on the Oregon bill. It would allow terminally ill adults with less than six months to live obtain medications to end their lives, provided they were of sound mind and could administer the medication themselves.

Tim expects the passage of the bill to result in the same kind of improved end-of-life care, including improved pain management, that has been seen in Oregon. Terminally ill Oregonians have reported reduced anxiety from knowing that they have the medication available should conditions become unbearable: 45% of those obtaining the medication choose not to use it.

Stan Greenberg of Hartford Area Humanists has been working with Compassion and Choices on behalf of the Connecticut Coalition of Reason. Here's his update on what has happened since we last saw Tim.

After the public comments, the bill died in committee. We are now heading into one of Connecticut's alternate legislative years, when only bills proposed

Book Discussion: "It Can't Happen Here" by Sinclair Lewis

Our book for October is "It Can't Happen Here" by Nobel Prize-winning author Sinclair Lewis. This is the book that likely gave rise to the supposed famous Lewis (mis)quote "When Fascism comes to America, it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross." (The quote most likely arose from a review of the book by Harrison Evans Salisbury: "Sinclair Lewis aptly predicted in 'It Can't Happen Here' that if fascism came to America it would come wrapped in the flag and whistling 'The Star Spangled Banner.'")

From Wikipedia: "It Can't Happen Here"...a semi-satirical 1935 political novel...[p]ublished during the rise of fascism in Europe, ...describes the rise of Berzelius "Buzz" Windrip, a populist United States Senator who is elected to the presidency after promising drastic economic and social reforms while promoting a return to patriotism and traditional values. After his election, Windrip takes complete control of the government and imposes a plutocratic/totalitarian rule with the help of a ruthless paramilitary

by committees make it to the legislature to be voted up or down. Compassion and Choices is currently asking supporters to contact members of the judiciary committee to express their support for this bill. This is especially important if the committee member represents your district.

force, in the manner of Adolf Hitler and the SS. The novel's plot centers on journalist Doremus Jessup's opposition to the new regime and his subsequent struggle against it as part of a liberal rebellion. Reviewers at the time, and literary critics ever since, have emphasized the connection with Louisiana politician Huey Long, who was preparing to run for president in the 1936 election when he was assassinated in 1935 just prior to the novel's publication.

(It will be interesting to also discuss similarities with Frank Capra's classic film *Meet John Doe*.)

The New Yorker opines "Not only Lewis's most important book but one of the most important books ever produced in this country."

The book is readily available in numerous libraries around the state.

We will meet at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 17. Refreshments will be served.

You can contact Connecticut General Assembly legislators by letter or email at their home or Legislative Office Building addresses. Information about all Connecticut General Assembly members and committees can be found on <https://www.cga.ct.gov/>.

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Humanist Conversations: Inequality for All

What is a good society and what role does the widening income gap play in the deterioration of the nation's economic health? We will watch and discuss the 2013 documentary *Inequality for All*, presented by Robert Reich (Secretary of Labor from 1993 to 1997; Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley) and directed by Jacob Kornbluth (Haiku Tunnel, Best Thief in the World). *Inequality for All* won a U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Achievement in Filmmaking at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival.

Join us at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 3, at a new venue, the Wilson Branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, at 303 Washington Avenue, New Haven. There's free parking behind the library. The lot can be reached from the driveway on Washington Ave, or from an entrance on Daggett Street. The library entrance is at the corner of Washington Ave and Daggett Street. We will be downstairs in the Family Place room.

Light the Night Walk at Bushnell Park October 22nd

The Hartford Area Humanists are once again sponsoring a team for the Light the Night Walk, a fundraising campaign benefitting The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) and their funding of research to find blood cancer cures. The Light The Night Walk brings together families and communities to honor blood cancer survivors, as well as those lost to the diseases, and our team is helping to shine a light on the importance of finding cures and providing access to treatments for blood cancer patients. This event is part of the nationwide effort to support the LLS led by the Foundation Beyond Belief.

This year the Hartford Area Humanists have significantly increased their fundraising goal and are looking to greatly expand the team participation at the walk. Please consider donating or joining the team via the Hartford Area Humanists fundraising page at: pages.lightthenight.org/ctwhv/HartfrdL15/HartfordAreaHumanist. You can donate to the entire team or an individual team member. Your entire donation goes to the LLS. Please also consider a matching gift donation if your company offers such a benefit.

Please note that you do not have to be a member of the Hartford Area Humanists to walk with the team or to donate to this worthy cause. In fact we would love to see you at the event even if you don't plan to walk. Our team gets together for dinner at a local restaurant after the walk.

Additional details can be found on the Hartford Area Humanists meetup page: meetup.com/Hartford-Humanists/events/225508935/

Not Just an Alternative to 12-Step

This month our president, Carol Siddall, will be the guest speaker at the Hartford Area Humanists monthly meeting. Carol will share how facilitating SMART Recovery meetings has given her a sense of really doing humanism, and how it's changing her view of the culture wars, from the school-to-prison pipeline to the war on Christmas.

The Hartford Area Humanists will meet on Tuesday, October 27th at the Wood 'N Tap Restaurant in Rocky Hill. Drinks and conversation start at 6:30 p.m. A brief business meeting, dinner, and guest speaker all start at 7:00 p.m.

Due to space constraints, please RSVP at meetup.com/Hartford-Humanists/events/225508935/

USNH Cinema: Social Justice Shorts

On Friday, October 2, the USNH social cinema at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden will present two short films on local issues. The optional potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by the films at 7:15 p.m.

First: "Living in a Broken System" A Mothers for Justice film about the lives of people living on TANF in Connecticut.

Then "here: one small blue state's struggle with immigration. A documentary by Jamie Almodóvar"

There will be a discussion afterwards with members of Mothers for Justice and with Director Jamie Almodóvar. For more information call 203-288-1807 or email office@usnh.org.

Email List

To join, send an email to:
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Officers

- President Carol Siddall
(203) 264-8546
president@cthumanist.org
- Vice-President June Schafer
- Secretary Richard Siddall
- Treasurer Carol Podgwaite

Committee Chairs

- Program David Schafer
- Membership Halina Platt
- Development Rebecca Williams
- Publications Richard Siddall
- Publicity Deidre Kennedy
- Hospitality Randy Olear

Newsletter

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

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October at Yale Humanist Haven

The Yale Humanist Community now holds two Humanist Haven events each month, on the first and third Sundays at 1:00 p.m. at The Grove, 760 Chapel Street, New Haven. Parking is available on the street (free on Sunday) or in nearby lots.

October 4: Juhem Navarro-Rivera, Ph.D — “The Nonreligious in American Politics: Challenges and Promises“

Political scientist Dr. Juhem Navarro-Rivera will discuss the challenges nonreligious Americans face today and how they can shape the American political landscape in 2016 and beyond.

Dr. Navarro-Rivera’s research on secularism, race, and politics has been featured in the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and international press such as *The Times* (London) and *Reforma* (Mexico City). He sits on the editorial board of *Secularism and Nonreligion*, the first international journal of secular studies and is an advisory board member of the Yale Humanist Community.

October 18: Joseph Gerstein, M.D. - “Addiction Recovery Support without 12 Steps — Or a Higher Power”

On Sunday, October 18, the presentation will be on SMART Recovery, a simple, modern, self-empowering, abstinence-oriented, science-based addiction recovery program. The presenter will be Dr. Joe Gerstein, the Founding President of SMART Recovery Self-Help Network and the Executive Director of Boston Humanists. Dr. Gerstein will illuminate the SMART Recovery 4-Point Program, the SMART Inside/Out correctional program, and explain the scientific underpinnings of these programs and how the meetings work in practice.

A retired Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Gerstein has served on founding boards of SMART Recovery Australia and SMART Recovery UK, and has personally facilitated over 3000 SMART Recovery meetings in hospitals, prisons and communities around the world.

editor@cthumanist.org. We welcome humanist-themed letters, articles, poetry, news items, cartoons, and illustrations.

Please include a SASE to have material returned. Approximate

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

<p style="text-align: center;">MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>! 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.</p>	<p>Name(s): _____</p> <p>Address: _____</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>I want my newsletter electronically <u>only</u> (circle one): YES NO</p> <p>Where did you hear about us? _____</p> <p>Comments: _____</p>
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