



HOUSTON HUMANIST ALLIANCE

The Newsletter for Houston's Humanist and Freethought Community

In This issue:

Contributors, Pg. 1
Contact People, Pg.1
Calendar of Events, Pg.1
Publisher, Pg.2
Explanation of iih symbol, Pg.2
From the Editor's Desk, Pg.2
Alliance member's reports:
HOH, Pg.2
HCOF, Pg.2
Idea's Club, Pg.2
Essay:
Intolerance, Pg.3
Ron's Ramblings, Pg.3
Chronicles:
Humanists Send Message, Pg.4
Congress Steps into Battle, Pg.4
Letters, Pg.5
Food for thought and/or thought for
indigestion, Pg.7
Membership and Contact
Information, Pg.8
Statement of Principles, Pg.8
iih

Contributors:

AHA, Pg.4
Jimmy Dunne, Pg.5
Art Fay, Pg.5
Keith Irish, Pg.5
Karyl Paige, Pg.3
Ariel Thomann, Pg.5
Ron Titus, Pg.3 and Pg.7
iih

Contact people:

Tom Brucia(281-273-9030)
<mailto:tbrucia@houston.rr.com>
Art Fay (281-933-2986)
<mailto:afay@worldnet.att.net>
Bob Finch (281-491-1608)
<mailto:rdfinch@houston.rr.com>
Ross Henry (281-288-6064)
<mailto:rosshenry@mac.com>
Jim Knierien (281-495-4392)
<mailto:Jim.Knierien@thermo.com>
Keith McCaffety (713-968-652)
<mailto:thinkbolt@yahoo.com>
G Alan Robison (713-266-4329)
<mailto:galan@prodigy.net>
iih

Calendar of Events:

Sunday, January 2 | 10:00 - 12:00 noon | *Coffee Social* | at Borders Books & Music in Meyerland Plaza (I-610 W Loop S at Beechnut) | Spontaneous informal discussions are held on first & third Sundays monthly | Contact: Art Fay*

Sunday, January 2 | 12:30 - 2:00 pm | *Humanists of Houston (HOH) Brunch* | in upstairs facility of Kroger's on 1505 Wirt Rd (across street from Unitarian Fellowship) | Topics chosen by the group are discussed on first Sundays monthly | Contact: Tom Brucia*

Saturday, January 8 | 1:30 pm | *HAMCIAC Regular Meeting* | Montgomery Co. Library in the Woodlands (2nd floor) [From I-45 go west on Woodland Pkwy to 2nd traffic light; turn north (right) on Six Pines Dr; cross bridge & watch for wavy sculptures in the median; turn west (left) to Lake Robbins Rd; pass Woodlands Pavilion; turn left into Library parking lot] | Regular meetings are held on second Saturdays monthly | Contact: Ross Henry*

Sunday, January 9 | 10:30-11:30 am | *Houston Church Of Freethought (HCOF) Service* | in the Magnolia Room of the Courtyard by Marriott on 3131 West Loop (northbound just north of Richmond) | Services (including song, humor, lectures & discussion with children's classes & baby sitting available) are held on second Sundays monthly | Contact: Art Fay*

Wednesday, January 12 | 6:30 pm | *Drug Policy Forum of Texas* | TV 26 or 95 | Drug policy reform discussed every other Wednesday | Contact: G Alan Robison*

Saturday, January 15 | 12:00 noon | *Newsletter Deadline* | All articles, letters, and submissions of interest are welcome if on editor's desk, postmarks notwithstanding (e-mail format required), | Contact: Jim Knierien*

Saturday, January 15 | 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm | *Humanists of Houston (HOH) Regular meeting and Solstice party* | at the Houston Museum of Natural Science | Contact: Tom Brucia*

Sunday, January 16 | 10:30 am | *Coffee Social* | at Borders Books & Music in Meyerland Plaza (I-610 W Loop S at Beechnut) | Spontaneous informal discussions are held on first & third Sundays monthly | Contact: Art Fay*

Sunday, January 23 | 10:30 - 12:00 noon | *Ideas Club* | in Borders Books & Music on 9633 Westheimer (at Gessner) | Book reviews by members are held on fourth Sundays monthly, Contact: Bob Finch*

Wednesday, January 26 | 6:30 pm | *Drug Policy Forum of Texas* | TV 26 or 95 | Drug policy reform discussed every other Wednesday | Contact: G Alan Robison*

Wednesday, January 26 | 6:00 pm | *Houston Atheist Society (HAS)* | at Ziggy's, corner of West Alabama and Greenbriar. Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month. | Contact: Keith McCaffety*

Sunday, February 6 | 10:00 - 12:00 noon | *Coffee Social* | at Borders Books & Music in Meyerland Plaza (I-610 W Loop S at Beechnut) | Spontaneous informal discussions are held on first & third Sundays monthly | Contact: Art Fay*

Sunday, February 6 | 12:30 - 2:00 pm | *HOH Brunch* | in upstairs facility of Kroger's on 1505 Wirt Rd (across street from Unitarian Fellowship) | Topics chosen by the group are discussed on first Sundays monthly | Contact: Jimmy Dunne*

iih

About the Houston Humanist Alliance:

The *Houston Humanist Alliance* is a collection of local humanist and freethought organizations in Houston, which have come together to provide a wider range of services, information, and activities to their members. While still separated in their membership, leadership, and schedules, member-organizations of the *Alliance* share the same newsletter and mailing lists. This allows our organizations to cooperate effectively and enables individual members to be kept informed of virtually all activities of interests to humanists in the Houston area.

iih

Publisher:

[1] The Houston Humanist Alliance Newsletter (HHA NL) is published monthly by the Houston Humanist Alliance (HHA).

[2] The purpose of the HHA NL is (1) publicizing events, i.e., keeping members informed of regularly and specially scheduled meetings, (2) providing for the public at large information about humanism and humanist thought, and (3) providing a platform for members to express their viewpoints and opinions.

[3] The HHA and the editor do not necessarily agree with nor endorse the views expressed herein. Many humanists and freethinkers pride themselves with being individuals. Consensus among Humanists is therefore difficult to achieve. No one humanist can speak for all other humanists.

[4] Anyone may quote from the newsletter but is asked to please give credit where credit is due, i.e., cite author, newsletter issue (number or date), & page.

[5] All articles, letters, and submissions of interest are welcome if on editor's desk by deadline (12:00 noon on the 15th of each month), postmarks notwithstanding. E-mail format required. <mailto:Jim.Knierien@thermo.com> Name, phone number, & street address required for editorial contact purposes only.

[6] The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for space or clarity, but never with the intent to alter the thrust of the author.

[7] Snailmail editions are sent gratis to paid members of the HHA. Email editions are sent gratis to anyone else upon request. Adobe PDF editions are available gratis by sending an email to: <mailto:jim.knierien@thermo.com>.

iih

Explanation of iih symbol:

The ii of the iih represents two or more people. The h of the iih represents the humanness to which they aspire. A lower case h is used instead of an upper case H to indicate that it is better to become human (as opposed to inhuman) than it is to join a Humanist organization.

iih

From the Editors desk:

By Jim Knierien

Please excuse the tardiness of this newsletter as I have had the flu over the holidays. I spent most of the week between xmas and new-year in bed recuperating (also my vacation time haha). I normally try to publish the newsletter to arrive in the week before the first meetings of the month. Just in case I miss the deadline I put the first events of the month in the previous months newsletter.

I want to thank all who replied to my call last month for comments on the religious and political content of the newsletter. All understood that the newsletter reflects the opinions of the writers and not the 'boards' of the Houston Humanist Alliance member organizations. I will try in the future to put in more content from CSH as well as AHA as most of us are members of both groups.

Again the invitation goes out – when you find an article (especially a not copyrighted one or from an organization that would want the publicity) of Humanist interest, please forward it to me.

This months essay is the body of a 'second-hand E-mail' I received from Karyl Paige. I asked her permission but haven't received a reply. I thought it was too good to go unpublished. I hope it is OK.

iih

Alliance member's reports

HOH

The Humanists of Houston Sunday brunch December 5 topic was compassion. One of the principles of Humanism is "compassion". One definition of compassion is "the humane quality of understanding the suffering of others and wanting to do something about it". Do you think this is an adequate definition? If not, what is compassion, and how does one express it? Who do you find it difficult to be compassionate toward? Why? Do you have any mental 'tricks' to get back on track when you find yourself being indifferent or callous?

The HoH monthly meeting was held Saturday December 18 as the annual Solstice party. [editor note: more on this next month – when the pictures are in.]

iih

HCOF

The December service was held Sunday December 12. Ed Uthman presented the Freethinker of the Month (Arthur Schopenhauer). Jim Ashmore presented some observations about evolution, "We Are More Than..." and Art Fay made a brief history of Christmas. Very tasteful songs were selected by Anthony Stott.

Idea's Club

Jim Knierien presented a review of the book *FREETHINKERS, a History of American Secularism* By: Susan Jacoby. The book provides an excellent history of Freethought in the United States from revolutionary to the present times.

iih

Intolerance

By Karyl Paige

“All people have prejudices and biases because we process our world in groups and categories. It is too hard to assess all things singly, so we develop shortcuts. When those shortcuts are employed rigidly and hurtfully without consideration for the feelings of individuals involved, the line of rationality is crossed to irrationality.

I am not ashamed to be intolerant of intolerance. Every open mind has limits on tolerance. Not everything goes. While I am accepting of consensual sexual behavior between or among consenting adults, I draw the line between adult and child or adolescent sexual behavior because I think consent is compromised, as it would be between a manager and an employee.

I draw the line of acceptance with ideologies that are absolute and rigid, even Humanist ones. Exchange of ideas and comprehension of what others think and feel is a growth process. When a person has no need to listen to others and no need to share, to me, that person is walking dead. I have conversed with crazy fundies in my area, causing these men to flush reddish-purple when I refer to Focus on the Family as a pro-incest group, for example, or when I remark that their mothers would be ashamed of their behavior.

Fundies are rigid, self-important egotists who have no respect for anyone else's thoughts. That mindset makes them vulnerable. They attacked public library defenders with accusations of our "agenda." They were taken aback when I asked what their agenda was. They clearly stated they opposed "recruitment" of homosexuality in library literature. I asked whether they opposed heterosexuality in all places as well. They just looked at me, for I hit them from knowledge based on study and listening to their positions. There are agreements we could make if they would converse with women as equals, but I am not acceptable to them. Mainly, I have tried to understand and respect right to their opinions without sharing those opinions. They do not respect anyone else's right to disagree with them.

When Humanists approach others with the same rigidity, we are just as vulnerable. It is not most Humanists' way to assert that there is only one way of viewing the world. Humanist thinking varies markedly. We are not unreasonable to assert a naturalistic or materialistic assessment of our tangible world, for that is realistic. We are not unreasonable to assert the scientific method of evaluation or the reality of biological evolution, for they too are realistic.

Fundies base their reality on whatever is going on in their imaginations and on whoever they can pull into their wavelength at the time. They worship sacred texts as idols. And they reserve the right to interpret those texts in their favor to shore up their privileges. There will always be people who live in imaginary worlds and who create their own realities. They create fascinating literature and add spice to the mundane. Fundies cross the line when their imaginary world is

superimposed over the material world and cannot be tested or falsified.

Imagination is important to all humans. Without the imaginations of scientists, the material world would be limited to what we can see at the moment. So science needs imagination that can be evaluated and falsified.

Fundamentalists' assertions cannot be tested, questioned, or falsified; for they are right and everyone else is wrong. When Humanists assert that their way of looking at the world is the only right way, we are just as intransigent. But we are not wrong to expect verification and falsification of all assertions. We must apply our standards to ourselves, that's all."

iih

Ron's Ramblings

By Ron Titus

[1] When NWI (News World International) TV-231 reported on 2004 1207 that the Americans who moved to Canada to avoid the Vietnam War were being accused of cowardice and being "afraid to fight", I asked myself again, "Was Mohamed Ali (formerly Cassius Clay) a coward when he stood up to his all powerful government when it insisted that he join the military and kill people that he didn't even know let alone dislike?"

Ali did not earn my admiration for his ring prowess, but rather because of his heroic stand against the almighty US government that was requiring its innocent citizens to kill other innocent but foreign citizens.

I don't recall Ali doing any jail time. So why didn't Canada's American refugees stay behind and fight the draft like Ali? Would I have stood up as Ali did? I suspect that Ali's reputation (and money) was greater than that of most of the other draft resisters.

[2] Believe it or not, I am not necessarily opposed to pre-emptive strikes.

Killings in self-defense are generally deemed justified when the threat to one's life is IN PROGRESS; they do not allow for anticipating the threat. But waiting until one is killed (or "seeing a mushroom cloud") is obviously too late for any successful self-defense.

But if a pre-emptive war is justified, then I'd like to see THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ALL THE WOMEN WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN PRISON FOR "MURDERING" THEIR HUSBANDS.

What comes to mind is my memory of the shy, unassuming, self-effacing black lady I visited in the Angleton TX county jail in the 1960s. It was my first visit with a real life "murderer". She admitted to killing her husband WHILE HE WAS ASLEEP. It could be argued that he was not a threat to her AT THAT MOMENT. She said that when he was awake he physically beat her daily. She appeared to stand less than five feet tall and to weigh less than 100 pounds. She described her husband as standing more than six feet tall and weighing over 200 lbs. Her efforts to physically defend herself while he was awake were understandably ineffective.

See Ramble continued on pg.6

Humanists Send Message to Supreme Court:

By AHA December 13, 2004

The American Humanist Association submitted an amicus brief to the Supreme Court today signed by sixteen national organizations, that addresses the two Ten Commandments cases the Court will be hearing early next year.

"This brief makes clear that the Court must now declare once and for all that displays of the Ten Commandments on government property are violations of the Establishment Clause of the US Constitution," says Tony Hileman executive director of the AHA.

Keeping religion and government separate is imperative to Humanists and others signing this brief. The brief confirms that "The content, context, and history of the displays...clearly show that the government's purported purpose was a sham and that the primary purpose was religious."

The broad array of religious and secular organizations joining the AHA in this brief represents those who don't accept the Ten Commandments as articles of faith. Signing this brief which addresses *McCreary County, KY, et al. v ACLU of KY, et al.* and *Thomas Van Orden v Rick Perry, et al.*, are the Association of Humanistic Rabbis, the American Ethical Union, Atheist Alliance International, the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, Equal Partners in Faith, the Humanist Society, the Humanist Institute, HUUmanists, the Institute for Humanist Studies, the International Humanist and Ethical Union, Internet Infidels, the National Center for Science Education, the Secular Coalition for America, the Skeptics Society, the Society for Humanistic Judaism, and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

AHA president and constitutional lawyer Mel Lipman describes how this amicus brief will be of key importance to the Supreme Court justices as they review this case: "This brief shows the perspective of those who are disenfranchised by public displays of the Ten Commandments. To endorse a sectarian point of view is not the business of government. Neither the age of unconstitutional displays nor the proximity of them to constitutional ones should have a bearing on the fact that state-sponsored religious displays are unconstitutional."

To view the brief, go to <http://www.americanhumanist.org/TenCommandmentsBrief.pdf>.

lih

Congress Steps into Mt. Soledad Cross Battle

By AHA November 22, 2004

"In a time when politics and ideology trump reason, government officials are trying to impose their faith-based views on the rest of us by hacking away at Thomas Jefferson's wall of church-state separation," stated Tony Hileman, executive director of the American Humanist Association.

Less than three weeks after religious conservatives falsely claimed a moral mandate, congressional leaders have begun an assault on constitutional protections. The \$388 billion omnibus spending bill derails efforts to keep church and state properly separated, attacks reproductive rights, hurts the environment, infringes on privacy rights, and threatens low-income Americans.

Longtime Humanist Philip Paulson has been fighting court battles since 1989 in efforts to remove the Easter Cross on Mount Soledad in a San Diego park. The forty-three-foot cross on city property is clearly unconstitutional as court after court has said. As part of this omnibus bill, Congress establishes the land surrounding this cross as a national veterans memorial, hoping to put a stop to Paulson's efforts to remove it.

"Relying on legislative trickery to erode constitutional values is simply inexcusable," added Hileman. "Houses of worship and citizens retain their inalienable right to practice their religion in their churches and on their private property, but public land must remain free of governmental favoritism."

Also part of this omnibus bill is an anti-abortion provision. Humanists see this and other assaults on women's right to choose as a government intrusion on religious freedom. The provision allows federally funded healthcare providers to refuse to provide or pay for abortions. Current law provides "conscience protection" to doctors who don't want to undergo abortion training. This new provision expands that "protection" to health care institutions, like hospitals, clinics, and insurers.

"This abortion provision is a direct strike on *Roe v. Wade* and represents a huge step by Congress down a dangerous slope that can only lead to the complete undermining of women's reproductive rights in America. The right to choose is a freedom that must be protected," concluded Hileman.

AHA president Mel Lipman summed up, "Now is not the time to compromise on values held by a majority of Americans. This assault on women's reproductive rights and the constitutional separation of religion and government should not go unchallenged."

Letters

From: ajthomann@pol.net
Sent: Friday, December 03, 2004 12:39 PM
To: klawrence@houstonpbs.org

Dear Mr. Lawrence.

I am a long time watcher and member. Indeed, I lost the remote control for my main TV, so it just stays on Channel 8. Although I don't watch nearly as much TV as most folks, I'd say 90% of that is with KUHT.

I greatly enjoyed "Pollyanna" when I found serendipitously a few days ago. Tonight I was planning to see "Now", which along with "Nova" is one of the few things I watch with some regularity. Instead, I find "Pollyanna" again -- and once is enough.

I understand that tonight's "Now" addresses the topic of evolution, including an interview with Richard Dawkins. I was dismayed to learn you will not carry it. Is evolution too controversial for you? Are you afraid of the religious right? Are you failing to uphold, on my behalf, your little piece of the First Amendment (re. both freedom of speech AND the establishment clause)?

Please note I expect the courtesy of a non-generic reply.

Sincerely,

Ariel J. Thomann, M.D.
755 International Blvd., # 133
Houston, TX 77024
(713) 681-9366
ajthomann@pol.net

[editor note: Through the work of Ariel and other "squeaky wheels" KUHT did later rebroadcast the entire NOW program – with sufficient advance notice.]

From: jimmydunne [jimmydunne@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Saturday, November 27, 2004 8:18 PM
To: Michelle Malkin
Subject: Tell toddler the truth

Dear Michelle Malkin, Re:
Your 11/26 column.

Your 4-yr-old daughter should be told the truth. There is NO god, heaven, hell, devils, angels or a soul that leaves the

body. They are all only figments of our imagination.

As a humanist, we use critical thinking to look for evidence before accepting claims of supernatural beings or paranormal activities. There is NO evidence that there is a god. I am proud to be an atheist/humanist. Humanists work to make a better world. Religion = Superstition.

As educator Horace Mann said, "You should be ashamed to die until you have won a victory for mankind."

Jimmy Dunne, Houston 281.584.9707

Ms. Veronica Bucio
Op-Ed
Houston Chronicle

Dear Ms. Bucio:

I just talked to you about possibly visiting your office to discuss this submission, but I understand your inability to oblige. The item is as follows:

In "Faithlessness for do-it-yourselfer", John Horgan makes many valid observations.

As a fellow unbeliever, I too deplore the "squabbling" between (and within) organizations. But then, we Freethinkers (by whatever name) are notoriously as easy to herd as cats. For example, one of our oldest organizations, the American Humanist Association, printed personal definitions of "Humanism" submitted by members over a period of about 2 years. The result was scores, perhaps hundreds, of sometimes-discrepant opinions -- which nonetheless had common themes.

The above is a severe organizational disadvantage when compared with people whose "God gene" leads them to flocks where they readily embrace a common dogma, creed, or set of marching orders. Thus, our local groups count their memberships in dozens rather than many thousands.

One minor point: Mr. Horgan mentioned the pseudoscientific horrors of Nazism and Soviet-twisted Marxism. His point is well taken, but he forgot to mention that Hitler's soldiers wore belt buckles inscribed with the motto "God is with Us".

Unlike Mr. Horgan, I am active in several of the "isms" he decries. I have found

that various Houston-area groups differ in some ways, but share three core principles:

- Rejection of supernaturalism (deistic or otherwise),
- Responsibility for one's actions in the absence of mythical external forgiveness, reward or punishment, and
- Finally, (the ultimate morality) while not forgetting duty to self, Human beings must help one another since there is NO one else who will help.

I disagree with Mr. Horgan's opposition to our "banding together" to share thoughts -- and to make our voices heard! I learned it approximately 28 years ago, from someone very senior to me in these movements. She reminded me personally that we have a moral duty to prevent our lives and our country from being taken over and run by people whose actions stem from blind and unthinking "faith-based" convictions rather than from reason, logic and facts. She was right. For better or worse, she was not to be allowed to live to see that her worst fears are now coming true. Our struggle must go on.

Ariel Thomann

From: Keith Irish [krirish@ev1.net]
Sent: Friday, December 03, 2004 10:35 PM
To: Knierien, Jim
Subject: RE: HHA Newsletter 12-04 attached

Jim, I appreciate the open policy of the newsletter, allowing members to express themselves. I would hope the other readers would accept the notice in the newsletter that opinions are those of the various authors, and not necessarily official position statements of any of the groups. And again, if people find something with which they disagree, perhaps that should prompt them to write a reply for the newsletter.

-Keith

From: Arthur A. Fay [afay@att.net]
Sent: Saturday, December 04, 2004 1:24 PM
To: Knierien, Jim
Subject: HHANL

I am in agreement with your policy of refraining from censorship and also for emphasizing that the opinions expressed are those of the author. It seems almost

redundant having to point this out to a group of humanist/freethinkers.

I used to complain that a disproportionate number of humanists seem to reflect left-wing (whatever that means anymore), liberal, Democrat Party points of view. Then I realized upon closer inspection that my own views reflect some aspects of the "liberal" viewpoint and some from the "conservative" (fewer conservative ones these days). And I also realized if I wanted to see another point of view, I ought to take the time and write it myself. Maybe next month...<g>.

All in all, I think you are doing a great job in putting together this newsletter.

Art

iih

Ramble continued from pg. 3

[3] But would not these husband-killing women be a threat to the rest of society should they be released from prison?

Admitting that SOME of the incarcerated women MIGHT indeed be a danger and menace to society, I do not believe that ALL of them - or even MOST of them (or ANY of them) - are such a threat. The "problem" (an abusive husband) in their lives is dead, no longer living, and they no longer have a reason to kill anyone else.

Two other women come to mind: (1) The woman who with her automobile ran over her husband -- several times just to make sure he was dead -- is no longer a threat to the rest of society, only to her future husbands. (2) The woman who became famous -- or infamous -- for severing her husband's private body part is no longer a threat to society, only to her future husbands. Are either of them really a threat to us?

[4] The current Bush Administration (Dubya Bush, Cheney, Rice, Rumsfeld, etc) may have truly believed that Iraq was a threat to the US, and thus justified a pre-emptive strike. I did not feel so threatened. And I still feel more threatened by the current Bush Administration itself than I do by any foreign government, including Iran and North Korea. Which of us has paranoia? Are we both paranoid?

Let me repeat what I've said in this column before: (1) I love my COUNTRY (The American people may be ignorant and often mean, but I want to be with them.); (2) I love my country's GOVERNMENT (The US Constitution and its Bill of Rights are the best in the world!); but (3) I still despise my country's government's current ADMINISTRATION (Its policies deny civil liberties to its own citizens and it delights in waving a gun instead of a palm branch at our foreign neighbors.).

I believe that sitting back and watching our country and world go to hell in the proverbial handbasket without a whimper is not human; it is what I would call INHUMAN!

Patriotism is human and tyranny is inhuman, regardless of who is doing it.

[5] When asked what was the best advice ever given or received, I pondered briefly, then said "Life is too important to be taken seriously." (Ha!)

iih

Food for thought and/or thought for indigestion

By Ron Titus

[1] 'Got this from HCOF-Talk, 2004 1206, Digest 1968 Message 5 wherein James H. Berry contributes:

(1) (The US Constitution) says, "We the people..." not, "We the corporations...."

(2) "Fascism should more properly be called corporatism, since it is the merger of state and corporate power." (Benito Mussolini)

(3) Puritanism: The haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy. (H.L. Mencken)

(4) The income ratio of chief executives to average workers in corporations went from 40-to-1 in the 1970s to 282-to-1 in 2002. (The Washington Spectator)

(5) "One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors." (Plato)

(6) "As democracy is perfected, the office of president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be adorned by a downright moron." (H.L. Mencken, 1880 - 1956)

(7) "The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny." (James Madison)

(8) I'd rather be a tree hugger than a tree killer.

(9) It's science and reason vs. religion and faith.

(10) "And I said on my program, if -- if -- the Americans go in and overthrow Saddam Hussein and it's clean, he has nothing, I will apologize to the nation, and I will not trust the Bush administration again." (Bill O'Reilly, Good Morning America, March 18 2003)

[2] "I'm going out telling the story that I think is the biggest story of our time: how the right-wing media has become a partisan propaganda arm of the Republican National Committee. We have an ideological press that's interested in the election of Republicans, and a mainstream press that's interested in the bottom line. Therefore, we don't have a vigilant, independent press whose interest is the American people."

[Bill Moyers, quoted by Frazier Moore in an article ("Bill Moyers retiring from TV journalism") forwarded in a 2004 1210 email from G Alan Robison]

[3] "Your life is governed by what is true (whether you believe it or not). Your experience is fabricated of what you believe (whether it is true or not)."

[reprinted from a 2004 1118 email from Jonathan Williams]

[4] Propaganda does not deceive people; it merely helps them to deceive themselves.

[Eric Hoffer, quoted in a 2004 1120 email from Jonathan Williams]

[5] Observing how people torture themselves needlessly, I concluded that "Hell is not where people are sent; it is where they want to be!"

[6] "I didn't want to be known as the archbishop of anarchy."

[Folk singer Bob Dylan, CBS TV's 60 Minutes, 2004 1205]

[7] Bumper stickers suggested by Sheila Finch: (1) "Humanists celebrate human achievements" and (2) "Freethinkers keep America free"

[email dated 2004 1129]

iih

POST MASTER: Please return undelivered
copies to sender. Thank you.

12086 Sela Lane
Houston, TX 77072-3341

Membership and Contact Information:

Whether you are a humanist, or seeking to pursue a meaningful life without theism, or simply reexamining your beliefs and exploring the humanist approach to knowledge and moral issues, consider contacting one of our organizations. We will be happy to answer any questions about humanism and/or membership.

Humanists of Houston (HOH): Houston chapter of the American Humanist Association (AHA) / Founded 1978 / jimmydunne@msm.com / 281-584-9707 (1306 W Brooklake Houston TX 77077)

Humanist Association of Montgomery County, Isaac Asimov Chapter (HAMCIAC): Montgomery County chapter of the American Humanist Association / rosshenry@mac.com / 281-288-6064

Houston Atheist Society (HAS): Affiliated with American Atheist Society / Founded 2003 / thinkbolt@yahoo.com / 713-968-6520

iih

Statement of Principles:

The following are the core principles upon which our member-organizations are allied. Individual member-organizations may have missions beyond the scope of the Alliance itself, but any Houston-based group whose mission is compatible with these principles is welcome to join our community of organizations.

We are committed to freedom of thought and expression, as well as human rights and equality.

Our beliefs are based on healthy skepticism, physical evidence, the scientific method, and naturalistic philosophy -- unfettered by faith, mysticism, the supernatural, or any other form of superstition.

We stand for the pursuit of moral excellence, ethical integrity, and social responsibility based on humanity's needs and happiness in *this* world and not in an alleged "after life."

iih