



# THE SECULAR CIRCULAR

Newsletter of the Humanist Society of Santa Barbara

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

AUGUST, 2013

---

## August Program:

**Dr. Jeff Richman**

### From The Big Bang To The Higgs Boson In Less Than One Hour

As his title suggests, Dr. Richman will take us on a tour of the universe - from the smallest particles to the whole universe. From the big bang to today with an extra peek at the future as suggested by current research. Along the way, we'll get to see some of the research tools (including the Large Hadron Collider) that Dr. Richman uses.



Jeffrey Richman is Professor of Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research is in the field of experimental elementary particle physics (high energy physics). He received his Ph.D. from Caltech in 1985 and his B.S. from Yale *summa cum laude* in 1979. He was a postdoctoral fellow at CERN and at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. He has held visiting positions at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center and at INFN Pisa.

**When:** Saturday, August 17th, 2013

**Where:** Patio Room at Vista del Monte. (**Park ONLY in spaces marked "VDM".**)

**Time:** Doors open at 2:30pm. Program begins at 3:00 pm

**Cost:** \$2 members/\$5 non-members

**Dinner:** Vista del Monte. \$22 includes tax and tip. See "Dining Out" below.

**For More Info:** [Activities@SantaBarbaraHumanists.org](mailto:Activities@SantaBarbaraHumanists.org) or call 769-HSSB

## A Universe Full of Earths

Richard Martin

For ancient civilizations it was natural to believe that the sun is in orbit around the earth like the moon, and early astronomers observed that the stars are fixed as they appeared to rotate about the earth. These observations led to the geocentric model that the earth is the center of the universe, leading to the belief that God made the universe uniquely for us.

The Greek Aristarchus of Samos (310-230 BCE) proposed the first known heliocentric model, which stated that the Earth rotates around its own axis, which in turn revolves around the Sun. The Sun was then assumed to be the center of the universe. The heliocentric theory was not accepted by other philosophers, and was finally revived nearly 1900 years later by Copernicus.

Only 86 years ago it was believed that the universe is static. Then it was discovered that the universe is expanding which started a cosmological revolution that continues today. It has led to the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe, the age of the universe (13.8 billion years), the number of stars in our Milky Way galaxy (about 300 billion), the number of galaxies in the observable universe (100-500 billion), the discovery of black holes with a massive example at the center of our galaxy, and much more. Along the way it was determined that all matter in the universe except for hydrogen and helium is formed via fusion in the stars' core' or in the explosions of stars so we are all truly children of the stars.

As astounding as all this knowledge of the universe is, it does not seem to have had much impact on the religious world views which hold that God made the universe for Homo Sapiens on the planet earth.

There has been one major area of astronomy that was not studied until recently: that of planets orbiting other stars, known as exoplanets. The challenge of detecting exoplanets has been compared to looking across thousands of miles to see a firefly buzzing around a searchlight. However

20 years ago the first detection of an exoplanet was confirmed, opening up a very challenging and exciting new field. I have been aware of the rapid progress in this field, but I was startled on July 11 to get an email from Scientific American with a color image of a blue exoplanet 63 light years from earth, known as HD 189733b. This is the first exoplanet that has been studied in color using the Hubble telescope.



On July 25th the New York Times published a commentary by astronomer Caleb Scharf titled *A Universe Full of Planets*. He refers to the exoplanet field as a scientific revolution "that could arguably alter the entire trajectory of human existence", and he notes that we have "never been able to completely convince ourselves that we're nothing special, not central to the cosmos, because our solar system has been the only planetary collective known."

As a result of new techniques, technology, and extraordinary effort, he says that "we now have firm evidence for thousands of planets, around thousands of stars. We also know something about these worlds, their sizes, their orbits, often their ages. In a handful of cases, for planets of Jupiter's or Neptune's size, we have even measured the temperature of their upper atmospheres and sniffed at their gaseous chemistry, finding substances like sodium, methane and water."

Dr. Scharf reports that based on the findings to date "the statistics tell us that something like an astonishing one out of every seven stars must harbor a planet similar in size to the Earth, and at roughly the right orbital distance to allow for the

possibility of a temperate surface environment. In other words, roughly 15 percent of all suns could, in principle, be hosting a place suitable for life as we know it."

This means that the age-old dream of finding other life in our galaxy is now much more probable. And Dr. Scharf concludes that to discover whether something akin to Earth has happened elsewhere, and whether there are other minds on other worlds thinking these same kind of thoughts, could be the biggest thing that could ever happen to our species.

Richard Dawkins has said "I am against religion because it teaches us to be satisfied with not understanding the world." It is ironic that we live in an amazing age of scientific discovery and technology, and yet so much of the population is stuck intellectually in the Iron Age. No one can stay up to date on the progress of science and technology, not even its practitioners except in their own narrow fields. But we humanists can feel pride and pleasure that we have opened freethinking inquiring minds unencumbered by myth, superstition and religion. Minds that can appreciate all the wonders of being human.

## Welcome New Members!

**Linda Hill**, Goleta  
**Michelle Parsons**, Santa Barbara

## Notice for ALL Members

Our HSSB polo shirts are once again available. They are similar to the old-style, but slightly thinner and less expensive at \$15.00 each. Your name can be imprinted if desired. To order, please contact Charlie Archibald at 619-7139.

## Dining Out Judy Fontana

After two great dining experiences (the Solstice Picnic and the Yacht Club) we will be returning to

Vista del Monte for a meal following the August 17th Humanist Society meeting and program. The menu is Tossed Green Salad, Whole Wheat Rolls, Flat Iron Steak, Catch of the Day, Rice Pilaf and Mashed Potatoes, Asparagus and Fresh Vegetable Blend, Assorted Desserts, House Wine, Iced Tea and Coffee. And all for only \$22 which includes tax and tip. Reservations required. RSVP to judithannfontana@yahoo.com or leave a message at 967-7911.

More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly. -Woody Allen, author actor, and filmmaker (1935- )

## A Chilling Report from Holland

*[Ed. Note] This article was submitted by John Coppejans, a native of Holland. It is a speech given by Geert Wilders, Chairman, Party for Freedom, The Netherlands, at the Four Seasons in New York, introducing an Alliance of Patriots and announcing the Facing Jihad Conference in Jerusalem.*

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for inviting me.

I come to America with a mission. All is not well in the old world. There is a tremendous danger looming, and it is very difficult to be optimistic. We might be in the final stages of the Islamization of Europe. This not only is a clear and present danger to the future of Europe itself, it is a threat to America and the sheer survival of the West. The United States as the last bastion of Western civilization, facing an Islamic Europe.

First, I will describe the situation on the ground in Europe. Then, I will say a few things about Islam. To close I will tell you about a meeting in Jerusalem.

The Europe you know is changing.

You have probably seen the landmarks. But in all of these cities, sometimes a few blocks away from your tourist destination, there is another world. It is the world of the parallel society created by Muslim mass-migration.

All throughout Europe a new reality is rising: entire Muslim neighborhoods where very few indigenous people reside or are even seen. And if they are, they might regret it. This goes for the police as well. It's the world of head scarves, where women walk around in figureless tents, with baby strollers and a group of children. Their husbands, or slaveholders if you prefer, walk three steps ahead. With mosques on many street corners. The shops have signs you and I cannot read. You will be hard-pressed to find any economic activity. These are Muslim ghettos controlled by religious fanatics. These are Muslim neighborhoods, and they are mushrooming in every city across Europe. These are the building-blocks for territorial control of increasingly larger portions of Europe, street by street, neighborhood by neighborhood, by city.

There are now thousands of mosques throughout Europe with larger congregations than there are in churches. And in every European city there are plans to build super-mosques that will dwarf every church in the region. Clearly, the signal is: we rule.

Many European cities are already one-quarter Muslim: just take Amsterdam, Marseille and Malmo in Sweden. In many cities the majority of the under-18 population is Muslim. Paris is now surrounded by a ring of Muslim neighborhoods. Mohammed is the most popular name among boys in many cities.

In some elementary schools in Amsterdam the farm can no longer be mentioned because that would also mean mentioning the pig, and that would be an insult to Muslims.

Many state schools in Belgium and Denmark only serve halal food to all pupils. In once-tolerant Amsterdam gays are beaten up almost exclusively by Muslims. Non-Muslim women routinely hear 'whore, whore'. Satellite dishes are not pointed to local TV stations, but to stations in the country of origin.

In France school teachers are advised to avoid authors deemed offensive to Muslims, including Voltaire and Diderot; the same is increasingly true of Darwin. The history of the Holocaust can no longer be taught because of Muslim sensitivity.

In England sharia courts are now officially part of the British legal system. Many neighborhoods in France are no-go areas for women without head scarves. Last week a man almost died after being beaten up by Muslims in Brussels because he was drinking during Ramadan.

Jews are fleeing France in record numbers, on the run for the worst wave of anti-Semitism since World War II. French is now commonly spoken on the streets of Tel Aviv and Netanya, Israel. I could go on forever with stories like this. Stories about Islamization.

A total of fifty-four million Muslims now live in Europe. San Diego University recently calculated that a staggering 25 percent of the population in Europe will be Muslim just 12 years from now. Bernhard Lewis has predicted a Muslim majority by the end of this century.

Now these are just numbers. And the numbers would not be threatening if the Muslim-immigrants had a strong desire to assimilate. But there are few signs of that. The Pew Research Center reported that half of French Muslims see their loyalty to Islam as greater than their loyalty to France. One-third of French Muslims do not object to suicide attacks. The British Centre for Social Cohesion reported that one-third of British Muslim students are in favor of a worldwide caliphate. Muslims demand what they call 'respect'. And this is how we give them respect. We have Muslim official state holidays.

The Christian-Democratic attorney general is willing to accept sharia in the Netherlands if there is a Muslim majority. We have cabinet members with passports from Morocco and Turkey.

Muslim demands are supported by unlawful behavior, ranging from petty crimes and random violence, for example against ambulance workers

and bus drivers, to small-scale riots. Paris has seen its uprising in the low-income suburbs, the banlieus. I call the perpetrators 'settlers' because that is what they are. They do not come to integrate into our societies; they come to integrate our society into their Dar-al-Islam. Therefore, they are settlers.

Much of this street violence I mentioned is directed exclusively against non-Muslims, forcing many native people to leave their neighborhoods, their cities, their countries. Moreover, Muslims are now a swing vote not to be ignored.

The second thing you need to know is the importance of Mohammed the prophet. His behavior is an example to all Muslims and cannot be criticized. Now, if Mohammed had been a man of peace, let us say like Gandhi and Mother Theresa wrapped in one, there would be no problem. But Mohammed was a warlord, a mass murderer, a pedophile, and had several marriages - at the same time. Islamic tradition tells us how he fought in battles, how he had his enemies murdered and even had prisoners of war executed. Mohammed himself slaughtered the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza. If it is good for Islam, it is good. If it is bad for Islam, it is bad.

Let no one fool you about Islam being a religion. Sure, it has a god, and a here-after, and 72 virgins. But in its essence Islam is a political ideology. It is a system that lays down detailed rules for society and the life of every person. Islam wants to dictate every aspect of life. Islam means 'submission'. Islam is not compatible with freedom and democracy, because what it strives for is sharia. If you want to compare Islam to anything, compare it to communism or national-socialism, these are all totalitarian ideologies.

Now you know why Winston Churchill called Islam 'the most retrograde force in the world', and why he compared Mein Kampf to the Quran. The public has wholeheartedly accepted the Palestinian narrative, and sees Israel as the aggressor. I have lived in this country and visited it dozens of times. I support Israel. First, because it is the Jewish

homeland after two thousand years of exile up to and including Auschwitz; second because it is a democracy, and third because Israel is our first line of defense.

This tiny country is situated on the fault line of jihad, frustrating Islam's territorial advance. Israel is facing the front lines of jihad, like Kashmir, Kosovo, the Philippines, Southern Thailand, Darfur in Sudan, Lebanon, and Aceh in Indonesia. Israel is simply in the way. The same way West-Berlin was during the Cold War.

The war against Israel is not a war against Israel. It is a war against the West. It is jihad. Israel is simply receiving the blows that are meant for all of us. If there would have been no Israel, Islamic imperialism would have found other venues to release its energy and its desire for conquest. Thanks to Israeli parents who send their children to the army and lay awake at night, parents in Europe and America can sleep well and dream, unaware of the dangers looming.

Many in Europe argue in favor of abandoning Israel in order to address the grievances of our Muslim minorities. But if Israel were, God forbid, to go down, it would not bring any solace to the West. It would not mean our Muslim minorities would all of a sudden change their behavior, and accept our values. On the contrary, the end of Israel would give enormous encouragement to the forces of Islam. They would, and rightly so, see the demise of Israel as proof that the West is weak, and doomed. The end of Israel would not mean the end of our problems with Islam, but only the beginning. It would mean the start of the final battle for world domination. If they can get Israel, they can get everything. So-called journalists volunteer to label any and all critics of Islamization as 'right-wing extremists' or 'racists'. In my country, the Netherlands, 60 percent of the population now sees the mass immigration of Muslims as the number one policy mistake since World War II. And another 60 percent sees Islam as the biggest threat. Yet there is a greater danger than terrorist attacks, the scenario of America as the last man standing. The lights may go out in Europe faster than you can

imagine. An Islamic Europe means a Europe without freedom and democracy, an economic wasteland, an intellectual nightmare, and a loss of military might for America - as its allies will turn into enemies, enemies with atomic bombs. With an Islamic Europe, it would be up to America alone to preserve the heritage of Rome, Athens and Jerusalem.

Dear friends, liberty is the most precious of gifts. My generation never had to fight for this freedom, it was offered to us on a silver platter, by people who fought for it with their lives. All throughout Europe, American cemeteries remind us of the young boys who never made it home, and whose memory we cherish. My generation does not own this freedom; we are merely its custodians. We can only hand over this hard won liberty to Europe's children in the same state in which it was offered to us. We cannot strike a deal with mullahs and imams. Future generations would never forgive us. We cannot squander our liberties. We simply do not have the right to do so.

We have to take the necessary action now to stop this Islamic stupidity from destroying the free world that we know.

## Meeting of Minds

Our July program was a recreation of the Steve Allen series *Meeting of Minds*. Steve Allen, the originator of the Tonight show, created what one critic called "the ultimate talk show" on the PBS network from 1977 to 1981: the *Meeting of Minds* series. The shows were constructed in a typical chat-show format, but featured guests who played important roles in the drama of history. Some who appeared were Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, Marie Antoinette, Florence Nightingale, Thomas Paine, Francis Bacon, Thomas Jefferson, and Voltaire.

The characters appearing in this included Steve Allen (played by John Pagano), Adam Smith (William York Hyde), Margaret Sanger (Meredith McMinn) and Mohandas Gandhi (Paul Nay). The play was admirably directed by Meredith McMinn and produced by Ray Stone.

As those of you who attended this event, it was extremely well done and quite thought provoking. Here is a picture from this event.



**Paul Nay (Mahatma Gandhi), John Pagano (Steve Allen), Meredith McMinn (Margaret Sanger), William York Hyde (Adam Smith)**

### HSSB Contact Information

#### Officers:

*President:* Richard Martin

[president@santabarbarahumanists.org](mailto:president@santabarbarahumanists.org)

*Secretary:* Suzanne Spillman

[secretary@santabarbarahumanists.org](mailto:secretary@santabarbarahumanists.org)

*Treasurer:* Colin Gordon

[treasurer@santabarbarahumanists.org](mailto:treasurer@santabarbarahumanists.org)

#### Board Members at Large:

Wayne Beckman

David Echols

Judy Fontana

Mary Wilk

#### Newsletter Editor:

Diane Krohn

[Editor@santabarbarahumanists.org](mailto:Editor@santabarbarahumanists.org)

#### Newsletter Deadline:

Deadline for submissions to the Secular Circular is midnight, the last day of each month.

**HSSB meetings** are held on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 2:30 pm, usually in the Patio Room of Vista del Monte, 3775 Modoc Rd., Santa Barbara. More information is available at our web site: [www.SantaBarbaraHumanists.org](http://www.SantaBarbaraHumanists.org) or by contacting any board member. At meetings, a donation of \$2 from members and \$5 from non-members is appreciated. First-time visitors are welcome on a complimentary basis.

To send a copy of this newsletter to someone interested in our Society, please send their contact information to: PO Box 30232, Santa Barbara, CA 93130, or contact Mary Wilk at 967-3045, or [mwilk@cox.net](mailto:mwilk@cox.net). Newsletters are also available at the above web address.

**Annual HSSB membership dues** are \$36 for a single person, \$60 for a couple, and \$100 (or more) to become a Society Supporter. One may subscribe to our newsletter only for an annual fee of \$20.

#### Link to HSSB Photos:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/Humanist.Society.of.Santa.Barbara>

**HSSB Phone:** 805-769-HSSB



## HSSB Calendar

**Tuesday, August 13. Board Meeting**, 5:30pm. Home of **Mary Wilk**. Members invited to attend.

**Saturday, August 17. Monthly meeting.** Jeff Richman, *From the Big Bang to the Higgs Boson*. Vista Del Monte, Patio Room, 2:30pm.

**Sunday, August 25.** (and the last Sunday of every month), 10am, **Secular Sunday Brunch** for humanists, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, freethinkers, singles, couples and families without religion. No cover charge; membership not required. Pay only for your food, drink and tips. Cody's Cafe, 4898 Hollister Ave. in the Turnpike Center, Goleta in the room to the right as you enter the restaurant. For information phone Board member, Mary Wilk at 805-967-3045.

**Saturday, September 21. Monthly Meeting.** Jamie Mattoch, Legalizing Marijuana.

**Saturday, October 19. Monthly Meeting.** Professor Joe White, Modern Developments in Philosophy.

**Saturday, November 16. Monthly Meeting.** Jason Torpy, Discrimination in the Military.



Humanist Society of  
Santa Barbara  
PO Box 30232  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130