



# The Secular Circular

Newsletter of the Humanist Society of Santa Barbara

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

APRIL 2017

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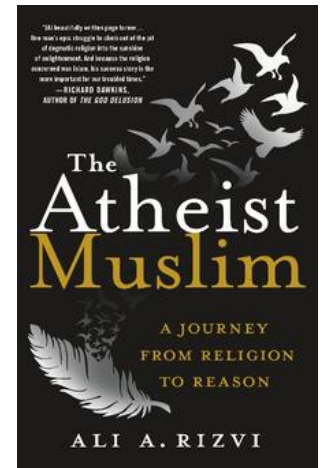
## April Program:

### Dr. Ali Rizvi: Secularism, Science and Muslim Reform

Ali is the author of the award-winning book, *The Atheist Muslim: A Journey from Religion to Reason* (St. Martin's Press, 2016). The book has been described as "a beautifully written page turner" by Richard Dawkins. Steven Pinker has described it as "an intelligent, heartfelt, and honest examination of a pressing issue in the world today." The New York Times Book Review wrote about his book: "[Rizvi] approaches his subject with the kind of scientist's rationality that ushered in the Age of Reason, yet he does so also with a passion for humanity that is inspiring. . . His open personality and earnestness make this book so compelling that Rizvi may well become the Dawkins or Hitchens for the millennial generation."



Ali grew up in Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, as part of a progressive Muslim family, before he moved permanently to Canada in his twenties. As a physician, he trained in pathology (with fellowship in oncologic pathology) at SUNY Buffalo and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and also holds a Master of Science degree in biochemistry from McMaster University. In 2011, he switched his career to medical communications so he could focus more on his writing. Ali is an avid and vocal advocate for secularism, science, and reform, particularly in the Muslim community.



Ali's book, *The Atheist Muslim: A Journey from Religion to Reason*, will be available for purchase at the time of his presentation.

**NOTE: This meeting takes place at the Faulkner Gallery, 40 East Anapamu.**

**When:** Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Where:** Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 East Anapamu Street. Parking is available at City Lot #7 (1115 Anacapa); Lot #6 (1219 Anacapa); Lot #4 (1106 Chapala); among others.

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

**Donation:** \$2 members/\$5 non-members. Students with ID are free.

**For More Info:** Call 805-769-4772 (769-HSSB)

## Activities

There is no after-program dinner scheduled for Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> because we are holding the meeting at the Faulkner Gallery in the Santa Barbara Public Library.

For our May program, we will be returning to the regularly scheduled buffet dinner at Vista Del Monte following the meeting.

## Welcome New Members!

Jon and Suzanne McBride, Goleta

## President's Column: 7 Mountains – Part III Roger Schlueter

In the two previous installments of this series we have discussed some of the organizations and people involved in the 7 Mountains or Dominionist “movement.” The view from 10,000 feet is that those who advocate extreme right-wing, Christian ideologies have been able to push their once-derided ideas into the mainstream media and, worse, into the corridors of power in Washington, DC. But let’s dive down into some specifics to see from a Humanist perspective what this might mean for policies and actions that could substantially turn the USA in a scary direction.

That adherents to Dominionist ideology have established themselves into powerful positions within the Trump Administration is not in question. The President has surrounded himself with a cadre of extremist nationalists; the quintessential example being Steve Bannon, who is now Trump’s Senior Political Advisor. Before joining the President’s team, Bannon headed *Breitbart News*, an alt-right internet site that claims to be the hub of white nationalist information and activism.

Bannon holds the view that societies undergo a

“turning” periodically in which the norms, laws and practices of a society are replaced with new concepts. At the 2016 CPAC (Conservative Political Action Conference), he stated that his chief priority, along with the president, was working toward the “deconstruction of the administrative state.” In other words, he wants to “turn” over the United States into a new, theocratic form.

We can see the powerful influence that Bannon has on Trump in the Administration’s efforts to create a ban on Muslims entering the country through Executive Orders. Another example is the sleight-of-hand that Bannon used to get himself placed on the National Security Council while at the same time removing the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Steve Bannon

Other Dominionists have prominent roles in the new Administration. Probably the most visible is Kellyanne Conway, who until recently, seemed to be on every TV and radio talk show defending Trump and his policies and Tweets. Perhaps a more influential but far less public person is Stephen Miller. In the past as an aide to Jeff Sessions, now the Attorney General, Miller was influential in defeating an attempt to overhaul the nation’s immigration policies during the Obama Administration.



Stephen Miller

These individuals and others in the Trump Administration are members of the Council for National Policy (CNP), a secretive

organization that has three main policy goals:

- Promoting limited government (by which they mean *laissez faire* capitalism);
- Upholding traditional values (by which they mean biblical values, including antagonism towards LGBT people); and
- Providing a strong national defense.

All of these goals are manifest in current Trump policies. In particular, Trump's budget for the Department of Defense is increased by a sum larger than any since WWII.

In summary of this whole series, it is abundantly clear that the Trump Administration has brought far-right extremist views into mainstream America and into the White House. These views are antithetical to basic Humanist values and should be rejected at every opportunity.

### March for Science Earth Day, Saturday April 22

The March for Science is an international movement, led by organizers all around the world. It is taking place because of the realization by thousands of people, who value science in their lives, that staying silent is no longer an option. There are marches being planned across the United States and internationally.

**The March for Science – Santa Barbara** will take place on April 22, with speakers starting at 11:00 a.m. at De La Guerra Plaza, then a march down State Street at 12 noon, ending at Alameda Park.

Mischaracterization of science as a partisan issue, which has given policymakers permission to reject overwhelming evidence, is a critical and urgent matter. It is time for

people who support scientific research and evidence-based policies to take a public stand and be counted. Science is a non-partisan issue that reaches far beyond people in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields and should concern anyone who values empirical research and science.

Bring your signs, your passion, and your lab coats!

### A Paranormal Investigator Describes Her Journey from Believing in Ghosts to Accepting Science Hemant Mehta

*(Excerpted from Thefriendlyatheist.com, March 28, 2017)*

In a TED talk that just went up on YouTube, **Carrie Poppy**, co-host of the excellent *Oh No Ross and Carrie* podcast, talks about how she approaches paranormal activities with a skeptical mind.

I know she doesn't need to convince any of *you*, but it's a really fantastic story about how she went from believing in ghosts to realizing there was likely a scientific explanation to whatever she was feeling.

**Carrie:** "I've done over 70 investigations like this with my co-host Ross. I would love to tell you that nine times out of 10, science wins, saves the day, it's all explained. That's not true. The truth is, 10 times out of 10, science wins, it saves the day. And that doesn't mean there's no such thing as mystery. Of course there are mysteries, but a mystery is a mystery. It is not a ghost."

Read the entire article and see the video here:

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2017/03/28/a-paranormal-investigator-describes-her-journey-from-believing-in-ghosts-to-accepting-science/>

**March Speaker:  
Officer Keld Hove:  
Restorative Policing  
Robert Bernstein**

Humanist Society founding member Anne Rojas introduced Officer Keld Hove with her experience as a business owner on Gutierrez Street. She was impressed that Officer Hove was able to talk to troublesome people calmly. He was usually able to avoid trouble without arrests.

Anne also recommended the Citizen's Police Academy. The program runs eight weeks where ordinary citizens can go out with the police and see how they do their jobs. The program has other benefits, including use of the gun range.

Officer Hove has been with the Santa Barbara Police Department (SBPD) for 19 years. Before that he was a cabinet maker and a martial arts instructor. He originally came in 1984 from his native Denmark as an au pair. He was eager to take advantage of all that America had to offer.

When he got married and had a son, he decided he wanted a steadier career. He had not initially considered police work because he had a somewhat negative view of police: conservative, religious, judgmental and corrupt. The media certainly did its part to convey that message. But he decided to do some ride-alongs with the police and realized he was as wrong as could be. He saw what it was like to do their job. Plenty of nuisance issues that were due to the dysfunction of society at large.

Police need to have creative solutions. Levels of force have to be asserted. The first level is just being in uniform. An officer might make a request for a person to move along and the uniform is enough to get compliance. If not, he might move to the second level: Physically stand the person up and move him out.

The third level is the use of physical force. This is not used until the other levels are tried. The officer is not picking a fight. He is carrying out the public's wishes to stop crime when needed.

He wears a belt with varying degrees of lethality on it, starting with a baton. Hove has used it only twice. He stuck it between a running man's legs to bring him down. He prefers hands on hands.

Next is the Taser. He has used that only once. It can be used in direct contact or it can be fired at a distance. The latter can run into problems as the cables can tangle or fail to hit their mark.



*Officer Hove, with a Taser. Photo by Robert Bernstein.*

He carries pink and blue handcuffs for women or men. He finds if he needs to use them he is more likely to get them back than if he uses silver ones! He was asked, "What if the person is transgender?" Hook the handcuffs together.

The gun is a last resort. It has a built-in light. If he is exploring a dark area he is using the gun light. If he encounters trouble, the gun is instantly ready and pointed where needed.

The first time pointing a gun at a person feels weird. You don't want to use it. You want the person to comply. You are ready to stop their threat. You don't want to shoot to kill. You want

to stop them from hurting an officer or another person.

HSSB member Sylvelin asked why do so many news reports show a person being killed by police rather than wounded? Why can't they shoot to disable, not kill? Officer Hove called her up to the front. He challenged her to touch his hand. He was able to move it out of the way. He asked her to aim for his shoulders or legs, the best disabling targets. It is difficult. The chest offers the largest target. So they are in fact trained to aim for that target.



*Sylvelin (L) and Officer Hove(R). Photo by Robert Bernstein.*

What if the other person only has a knife, not a gun? Statistics show that if the knife-wielding person is within 21 feet, it is necessary to shoot. There is no time to react any other way at that distance. Beyond 21 feet, it may be possible to offer other options.

"We don't want to shoot." But he explained that he doesn't want his wife to find out that he had valued the attacker's life more than his own.

In movies the shot person is thrown back four feet. In real life, a person can keep coming with three or even four bullets in him.

For awhile it was thought shooting at the hip was a good target to stop forward motion. But it was too hard to hit. Officer's lives were lost under policies to aim there.

Officers are forbidden to do warning shots. A shot fired in the air has a good chance of coming down and hitting an innocent person. What goes up, comes down at the velocity it was fired.

Officer Hove then began his presentation on Restorative Policing. Homeless people are the primary candidates for this style of policing. Citations or arrests are done with the intent of behavior modification. Citations or arrests result in negative publicity, expenses and disruption of one's life.

But if a person's life is already messed up, this won't work. You can keep punishing the person, but if his faculties are not working, it just results in constant pain for him.

Unlike in Hove's native Denmark, the US has a social welfare system that offers the lowest level of involvement. If a person cannot pay the rent, he will be kicked out. Then he will have a bad record so that no one will rent to him. He goes to a shelter. But then he is kicked out of the shelter for drinking. He is sent to a drunk shelter. There he is beaten, then gets a dog to protect himself. But he can't bring the dog to the shelter. How can that person recover?

They end up in the law enforcement system, yet they have complex needs. They are disruptive, but not necessarily intentionally. Hove pointed to a professional psychologist in the audience and asked how much training she had: eight years. He got six months at the police academy.

Restorative Policing has been happening for ten years. The idea is to decriminalize these problems, to make them a social work problem. These are "Peter Pan's lost boys." Even if their problems can't be fixed, they have a safe place.

When Reagan was governor, these people were kicked out of institutions. But no money was provided for their support on the outside. One person can be a big drain. That person can

result in 4-5 calls in a day. These people "colonize" a park and make it undesirable.

Hove showed a video of two guys who were drunk in a park. They resisted his requests. One was in a wheelchair. Hove eventually persuaded them to get into the back of the police car. One did not have handcuffs. That is against the rules but he was complying then. They asked Hove to take them to the station "the long way" so that they could listen to "Bad to the Bone" on the radio.

Hove showed a photo of one of them at age six. He looks nice and cute. Hove sent him back to his family in Nashville. He got sober, but ended up back in the park. He died soon after, behind a dumpster.

Other cases ended somewhat better. One challenge is that drug and alcohol treatment programs have limited openings. If there is a gap in taking the person, he will get drunk again. Hove has to persuade the jail to keep the person for a few extra days. It costs a bit more in the short run, but it saves a lot of money and grief in the long run.

Mental illness is complex. It is not fixed with a pill. Mentally ill people often don't understand what others want or need from them. They don't think the same way we do. Yet their reality is as real to them as yours is to you. Mental illness is an organic ailment just like cancer or a broken limb. "Getting mad at the fly does not make it go away"(an African proverb).

It is common for the people Hove deals with to fear sleep. Some may be bipolar. They fear waking up and finding they have switched from being high to being depressed. The bipolar frequency can vary. As the time approaches, the person's fear rises. They can become so catatonic they can't even kill themselves. After three days without sleep, the person will start to hallucinate. Pills may offer some relief, but at the expense of gaining 60 pounds and losing all

sex drive. Not a good prospect for a 25-year old woman with a college degree.

Invasive thoughts come to these people and yell at them. Hove offered us a taste of this: We were to sit for 30 seconds and not think of a pink elephant. It requires a constant struggle of distractions that cannot be sustained - especially not in sleep.

Tyler Richardson was a messed-up-looking alcoholic who wanted to do a rehab program. It turned out he had worked for Koko, the sign-language gorilla! The staff there remembered him and were happy to get him back! Hove drove him there and talked to him on the phone every day. It was a good investment for Santa Barbara to keep him in another place where he could function. In the end, Richardson died homeless in Redwood City, unable to keep from drinking. It hurt. "He was a good man."

Quite a few homeless had a good education and a good job until something kicked them into a downward spiral.

The homeless are a wide mix. They segregate themselves on State Street. At the bottom of State Street are the old-time drunks. In the middle are young traveling kids. They are often anarchists who righteously steal from "capitalist pigs." Above Carrillo are Hove's people. They don't want to be with criminals.

Hove said that he loves his work.

As a child, I lived in Officer Hove's homeland of Denmark. I remember a society that seemed to function well. We could walk to the doctor of our choice for free care. I do not ever remember seeing homeless.

When I first came to California, I lived in a rooming house full of mentally ill people living on Social Security assistance. I was impressed with how well they functioned, simply by having a safe room to call home. It cost

taxpayers a few hundred dollars a month, but they were not bothering anyone and they had a good quality of life. As I understand it, those programs mostly stopped accepting new people.

I appreciate the good work that Officer Hove is doing and we could use more officers like him.

But I would also like to see us try variations of the successful programs of Denmark and the Social Security programs that seemed to work in the past; programs that offer a hand up, not a hand out; programs that offer safe housing, mental and physical health; and a way to work and be a productive member of society for all but the most severe cases. We share values to the extent that we are all working together on common goals. That IS mental health!

You can also read Robert Bernstein's write up with more photos at [edhat.com: http://www.edhat.com/site/tidbit.cfm?nid=183567](http://www.edhat.com/site/tidbit.cfm?nid=183567)



## Immigrants and Violence: Americans Were a Lot Braver in 1920

Judd Lienhard

(Reprinted from *Thehumanist.com*, March 20, 2017)

On the night of June 2, 1919, the assistant secretary of the Navy, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and his wife Eleanor walked past the home of Attorney General Mitchell Palmer. Just after they entered their house, which was across the street from the Palmer residence, a massive bomb exploded in front of the attorney general's house. The bomb had gone off prematurely and body parts of the man responsible, Carlo Valdinoci, landed on the Roosevelt's front porch. Valdinoci was an Italian anarchist.

That night anarchists, targeting government officials, had detonated seven other large bombs across the country. None of the targeted men were killed but many of their homes were badly damaged and a night watchman died from an explosion in New York City that night.

In April of that year the same anarchists sent thirty-six mail bombs to the homes and offices of high-ranking government officials and business leaders. Fortunately, most were discovered before detonating after an intended victim opened one from the wrong end. It failed to detonate and he was able to alert officials. However, the housekeeper of a senator had her hands blown off by one, and the senator's wife had her face mangled.

Folks weren't as lucky a year and a half later. On the morning of September 16, 1920, a horse-drawn carriage stopped in front of 23 Wall Street in lower Manhattan. It was packed with one hundred pounds of dynamite and cast iron sash weights. The massive bomb went off in front of J.P. Morgan Bank headquarters,

killing thirty-eight people and grievously injured 143 more.

Those responsible for the violence were known as Galleanists—anarchists influenced by an Italian immigrant named Luigi Galleani who moved to the United States in 1901 and began preaching violent revolution in a working-class Italian immigrant neighborhood in New Jersey. For fifteen years he published a newsletter called *Cronaca Sovversiva* (Italian for *Subversive Chronicle*) that, at its peak, had 5,000 subscribers. It argued against the existence of God, called for free love, promoted attacks on officials and published the names and addresses of prominent government leaders and capitalists. In his newsletters Galleani also published detailed instructions for bomb making. The immigrants he spoke to were ripe for revolution due to their squalid living conditions and brutal work environment.

From 1914 to 1920 Galleanists spread across the United States and launched hundreds of deadly attacks. They attempted mass poisonings using arsenic, stabbed policemen, and bombed a police station in Milwaukee, killing nine officers and a woman.

All of this, as well as exaggerated fears of Bolshevism, triggered the Immigration Act of 1918 and the Sedition Act of 1918, which expanded the criteria that allowed for deportations and the suppression of free speech. Both were widely condemned at the time despite waves of attacks. It sparked the [First Red Scare](#) in which nativism swept the country and people were arrested, detained, and deported without warrant. It was used to justify labor union suppression and even racism. Americans became wary of immigration from southern and eastern Europe, and Italians were sometimes targeted in violent attacks. The scare passed quickly when predicted uprisings failed to materialize in the early 1920s.

The point here is that despite all of the injustices committed against our citizens at that time and the massive amount of attacks carried out by radicals, there was never a blanket immigration ban considered on Italian or eastern European immigrants. Even then, when people had much more concrete reasons to be afraid, we still protected the immigration and travel rights of Italians in general. Compare this to today's fear about Muslim immigrants in the United States, where since 9/11 there have been but a handful of lone-wolf attacks by mostly native-born fanatics. History shows this recent executive order and mass paranoia to be truly unprecedented. Even during the early-twentieth-century wave of Italian anarchist attacks, our presidential candidates did not campaign on a platform of a sweeping Italian immigration ban.

Indeed, the day after the 1920 Wall Street bombing, thousands of Americans defiantly and bravely gathered for a previously scheduled patriotic rally at the exact same intersection. Today a whole lot of people are in favor of President Trump's travel ban (in some polls as many as half of all Americans). What happened to the United States? How did we become so cowardly?





## Non-HSSB Events of Interest

### Upcoming Events in California:

- April 16: Dean Buonamano: *Your Brain is a Time Machine*. Center for Inquiry West, Los Angeles.  
[http://www.centerforinquiry.net/la/events/your\\_brain\\_is\\_a\\_time\\_machine/](http://www.centerforinquiry.net/la/events/your_brain_is_a_time_machine/)
- April 23: Dr. Andrew Shtulman: *Scienceblind: Why Our Intuitive Theories About the World Are So Often Wrong*. Skeptics Society Science Salon #12, Pasadena.  
<http://www.skeptic.com/upcoming-lectures/scienceblind-why-intuitive-theories-about-the-world-are-often-wrong/>
- May 7: Ronald Aronson: *Social Hope in the Time of Trump*. Center for Inquiry West, Los Angeles.  
[http://www.centerforinquiry.net/la/events/social\\_hope\\_in\\_the\\_time\\_of\\_trump/](http://www.centerforinquiry.net/la/events/social_hope_in_the_time_of_trump/)
- May 18-21: A Conference Called Wonder: A conference dedicated to celebrating life and building secular communities. Speakers include Pippa Evans and Ryan Bell. San Diego.  
<https://www.aconferencecalledwonder.com/>

### Upcoming Events Outside of California:

- June 8-11: American Humanists Association 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Speakers include Rob Boston, Greta Christina, Carl Coon, Rachael Berman, and many others. Charleston, South Carolina.  
<http://conference.americanhumanist.org/>

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#### 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). At meetings, a donation of \$2 from members and \$5 from non-members is appreciated. First-time visitors are welcome on a complimentary basis. Students are free with a Student ID.

**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.

To join HSSB, please send your contact information and a check for your membership dues to HSSB, PO Box 30232, Santa Barbara, CA 93130, Attn: Mary Wilk. For membership information contact Mary Wilk at [mwilk@cox.net](mailto:mwilk@cox.net).

For any information about HSSB, call 805-769-4772.

Copies of this newsletter are posted on the HSSB website.

See us on Facebook





Humanist Society of  
Santa Barbara  
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Santa Barbara, CA 93130

### **HSSB Calendar**

**Tuesday April 11: Board Meeting:** 5:30 p.m. Home of **Mary Wilk**. Members invited to attend.

**Saturday April 15: Monthly Meeting:** Dr. Ali Rizvi will talk on Secularism, Science, and Muslim Reform; the Faulkner Gallery at the Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 E. Anapamu St. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. and talk starts at 3:00 p.m.

**Tuesday May 16: Board Meeting:** 5:30 p.m. Home of **Mary Wilk**. Members invited to attend.

**Saturday May 20: Monthly Meeting:** Jacie Rowe, Northern California Coordinator, Final Exit Network, will be speaking on Final Exit Network, a non-profit organization that offers resources to implement the California End of Life Option ; the Patio Room at Vista del Monte. Meet at 2:30 p.m. for socializing and light refreshments. Talk starts at 3:00 p.m. Optional buffet dinner after the talk at Vista del Monte.