



# The Secular Circular

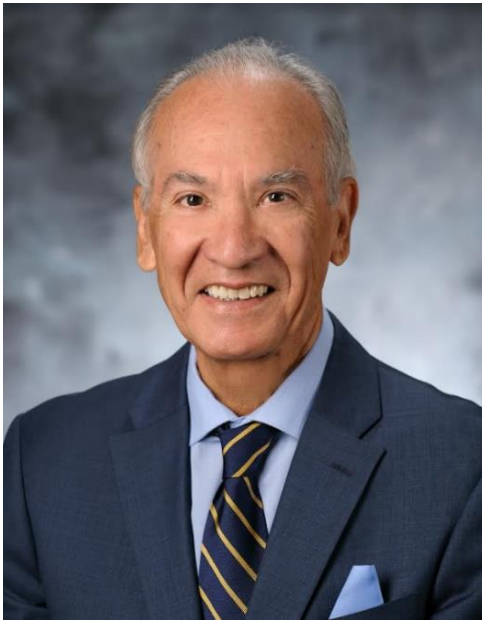
Newsletter of the Humanist Society of Santa Barbara

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

JULY 2022

***Join us for our July Speaker Presentation on Zoom!***

## **A History of U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Sanctuary Movement in Los Angeles.**



Professor Mario T. Garcia

**Our Program:** UCSB Professor Mario Garcia will review the history of U.S. imperialism in Central America since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. American military, economic, and political interventions produced client states (“Banana Republics”) dependent on U.S. support. Peasants were heavily exploited in support of corporate interests; their small properties were often stolen. Such inequities led to civil wars in which many were displaced from the countryside to become both political and economic refugees, many of whom sought refuge in the United States.

Professor Garcia will also discuss the U.S. Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s which was a people’s response to the Reagan administration’s refusal to accept refugees (particularly from El Salvador and Guatemala) who were fleeing persecution and civil wars. The Reagan administration did not acknowledge that these authoritarian governments were engaged in political persecution. Many good Americans especially in religious communities came to the support of the refugees and provided shelter, food, medical, and legal assistance in whatever way possible.

Los Angeles received many of these refugees. The sanctuary movement was centered at La Placita Church in downtown L.A. headed by its pastor, Fr. Luis Olivares. Professor Garcia will discuss the many ways that La Placita provided sanctuary and how this was motivated by Fr. Olivares’ embrace of Liberation Theology which called for Catholic communities to have a preferential option for the poor. The story of Fr. Olivares and that of others in the sanctuary movement resonate with our present moment when thousands of Central American refugees are still seeking refuge in our country and many others refuse to embrace them as humans in need.

**Our Speaker:** Professor Mario T. Garcia is a Distinguished Above Scale Professor of Chicano Studies & History at UC-Santa Barbara. He is the author and editor of numerous award-winning books, and a past Teacher of the Year at UCSB. His lecture will include content from his 2018 book, *Father Luis Olivares- A Biography: Faith Politics and the Origin of the Sanctuary Movement in Los Angeles*. Professor Garcia received his Ph.D. in History from UC San Diego.

**When: Saturday July 16, 3:00 p.m.** Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88193881833>.

## The HSSB Secular Circular – July 2022

### July 4<sup>th</sup> Editorial

*By HSSB Member, Professor Joe White,  
Emeritus, SBCC Philosophy Chair, SBCC*

Greetings SB Humanists.

As I've grown increasingly irritated with the information coming out of the Jan. 6 Committee on the insurrection, I decided I should write an editorial for this July 4 holiday. Here goes:

This July 4th marks the 246th year since our declaration of independence from the authoritarian, arrogant, madness of King George III. (The formal vote for independence actually occurred on July



Professor Joe White

2, 1776, but history is complicated.) As a lifetime citizen of the United States, I am proud to be a part of our great American experiment in political freedom. I always vote and celebrate the July 4th holiday. Our history has demonstrated repeatedly how a few have sacrificed so much that so many can live in freedom, a freedom under the rule of laws which citizens have self-legislated through our democratic process. I haven't always agreed with those laws but that's democracy!

While Thomas Jefferson and George Washington are oft cited on July 4th holidays, I'd also like to mention here Abraham Lincoln for his role in saving our Union some four score and seven years after the Declaration of Independence. Founding Fathers, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, faced death repeatedly and courageously as both struggled mightily in our war for independence, a war that left some

70,000 American patriots dead from their military service.

President Abraham Lincoln, 16th President, and the first Republican President, paid the ultimate price with his life. As Lincoln described eloquently in his Gettysburg Address at the Gettysburg's battlefield, a battle fought, July 1- 3, 1863 with over 50,000 casualties, during a civil war fought ironically to extend freedom,

"May our nation experience a new birth of freedom and may government of the People, by the People and for the People not perish from this earth."

Today, we are, to paraphrase Lincoln, engaged in a great culture war testing whether this nation, or any democratic nation, so conceived and dedicated [to freedom], can long endure. There are three individuals today which history has cast into the long shadows of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. These individuals, if they have the courage and integrity, could decisively begin the end of our present, violent culture war: Vice President Mike Pence, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Trump Chief of Staff Mark Meadows.

Pence, McConnell and Meadows: we, the People, now know that you each knew early on that the 2020 Presidential election was not stolen. You knew that President Joe Biden was legitimately elected. Now, after a parade of prominent Trump Republican officials have testified before the January 6th Committee, you knew for months prior to the January 6th coup attempt, that not only was the 2020 election fair and free but you also were informed that the multiple baseless Trump "Stop the Steal" Federal, State and individual level schemes to secure Trump's authoritarianism were unconstitutional, and likely criminal. You knew then. You know now.

Nearly a year and a half since the Trump failed coup, you, Mike Pence, Mitch McConnell, and Mark Meadows, have been virtually silent, MIA!

Your collective silence has and continues to perpetuate this toxic Trump deceit now endangering our democracy and numerous individual lives. Pence, McConnell, Meadows you are culpable. Your forthright voices this July 4th can change the course of our present political upheaval. Your enabling silence, your repeated acts of omission, place you squarely in the 18th century British Tory camp, the 19th century Confederate camp. Is this your idea of Making America Great Again by restoring the madness of monarchical authoritarianism?

As Georgia Deputy Secretary of State, Gabriel (Gabe) Sterling, stated in December 2021, “You, who have not condemned this (Trump) lie, are complicit!” Do you Pence, McConnell, Meadows stand with the mad King or with our American experiment in democracy this July 4th? It is becoming apparent that your Republican legacy is to create a government of a few people, by even fewer people and for one person. Take a walk through Arlington Cemetery, read the ages of the fallen, then muster the courage to fulfill your oath of office by protecting us from foreign and domestic threats. Clearly, forcefully inform the American People of the whole truth that is now self-evident. You three Republican leaders can undermine this “Stop the steal” bullshi., to quote your Republican Attorney General William Bar’s view of Trump’s schemes. Speak out this July 4th or let history record your reputations alongside those of Benedict Arnold and John Wilkes Booth.

*J. White, Lifetime U.S. Citizen  
Advocate for Democracy*

## Board Election Results

Thanks to those of you who took the time to respond to our Board Election email. We had 29 members register their support for the slate of uncontested candidates willing to serve. There were no objections to any officer or Board Member, nor any write-ins proposed. Many of

the member voters expressed their sincere appreciation and gratitude for the Board Members’ willingness to serve our community.

The officers for HSSB for the July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 fiscal year are:

President: Judy Flattery  
Secretary: Diane Krohn  
Treasurer: David Flattery

The At-Large Board Members are:

Mary Wilk	Robert Bernstein
Wayne Beckman	Judith Fontana
Jules Bender	

We also thank Hugh Smart, who is retiring from the Board, for his year of service and support.

Thanks to all who support the cause of Humanism on the central coast by leading, promoting, or participating in our Humanist Society of Santa Barbara.

**Every Mother A Willing Mother  
Every Child A Wanted Child**  
*Humanist Society of Scotland*



**In Memoriam:**  
**Helen Heightsman Gordon**  
9/7/32 – 5/8/22  
*By David Echols*





Helen Gordon

I am sad to report the passing of long-time HSSB member Helen Gordon: a mother, grand- and great-grandmother who coincidentally died late Mother's Day night.

Helen joined the HSSB in 2006 and served on our Board in 2012. Having graduate degrees in English Literature and a Ph.D

in Education, she taught Community College and authored award-winning textbooks, historical novels, and poetry. She was a renowned punster and a Shakespeare wonk.

Aside from her involvement in the HSSB, Helen was an active member of both the downtown Unitarian Society and the Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Goleta. Her benevolent legacy continues in her many charitable works for human rights, literacy, equal pay, and ecology.



Helen Gordon

She brought joy, wit, and compassion to all she met.

## Summer Solstice Picnic

*Photos By Marian Shapiro*

Approximately 30 Humanists enjoyed a potluck lunch at Stow Grove Park on Saturday June 18. The event was organized by Judy Fontana and Suzanne Spillman. Potlucks are easy and fun. We hope to host another one in the fall.











### Spoons Left At The Potluck Picnic

Did you attend the Summer Solstice-Juneteenth-Father's Day potluck picnic and leave your spoons



behind? They miss you. Please contact Suzanne Spillman at Urbanfollies@gmail.com to arrange a reunion.



**Humanist Society of Santa Barbara  
Congratulates  
Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson**

### Upcoming On-line Events of Interest to Humanists

- July 2, 2-4pm PST. **The Revolutionary Ideas of Thomas Paine.** Maurice Bisheff. Thomas Paine believed that basic, universal



principles were the foundation of self-government in man, society, and democratic republics. Paine was a famous pamphleteer, revising literary canons of the age. He appealed to the faculty of "common sense" in each human being with an inspirational vision of universal human rights balancing liberty, equality, tolerance, sociability, and

opportunity. His application of impersonal spirituality, philosophical reasoning, and scientific discourse were valuable ways of developing human potential for the betterment of mankind. Paine is relevant to our current global revolution in self-awareness and to the possibilities of a universal Republic(s) of Conscience today.

Participate in the event in-person (Concord Hall, 1407 Chapala St., Santa Barbara) or view it live-streamed on the [Institute of World Culture Youtube channel](#).

- July 16-17: SkeptiCal 2022: Northern California's science and skepticism conference. This is on-line conference, with presenters including Susan Gerbic, Leighann Lord, Steven Novella, Bill Nye, and others. [SkeptiCal Con 2022](#)
- July 21: Speaking of Humanism: Finding Yourself in Humanist History. An on-line presentation by the American Humanist Association, with speaker Luciano Joshua Gonzalez-Vega. [Finding Yourself in Humanist History](#)
- October 20-23: CSIcon 2022, Las Vegas, NV. CSIcon is back! Speakers include mentalist Banachek, Susan Gerbic, Richard Dawkins, Eddie Tabash, Julia Sweeney, and many more. [CSI Conference 2022](#)
- October 28-30: Freedom From Religion Foundation National Convention, San Antonio, TX. Speakers include author John Irving, Texas commentator Jim Hightower, abortion rights advocate Amy Hagstrom Miller, and many others, [FFRF Convention](#)

## HSSB Contact Information

### Officers:

*President:* Judy Flattery,

[sbhumanisteditor@gmail.com](mailto:sbhumanisteditor@gmail.com)

*Secretary:* Diane Krohn, [DJKrohn1@gmail.com](mailto:DJKrohn1@gmail.com)

*Treasurer:* David Flattery,

[david.flattery@post.harvard.edu](mailto:david.flattery@post.harvard.edu)

### Board Members at Large:

Wayne Beckman, Robert Bernstein, Mary Wilk, Jules Bender, Judith Fontana

### Newsletter Editor & Submission Deadline

Judy Flattery, [sbhumanisteditor@gmail.com](mailto:sbhumanisteditor@gmail.com)

Deadline for submissions to the Secular Circular is midnight, the last day of each month. Our web site, [www.SBHumanists.org](http://www.SBHumanists.org), archives current and past issues of the *Secular Circular*. Non-members may subscribe to hardcopy of this newsletter for an annual fee of \$20. E-mail copies provided to members and interested non-members at no charge.

**To Join or Donate to HSSB:** Annual Membership dues are \$36 for an individual, \$60 for a couple, \$100 for a Society Supporter, and \$300 (or more) for a Society Patron. Dues payments and other donations can be made via PayPal ([Paypal.me/SBHumanists](https://www.paypal.me/SBHumanists)) or check. Include your name and contact information when submitting payments. Make checks out to *Humanist Society of Santa Barbara* and mail to Mary Wilk, P.O. Box 30232, Santa Barbara, CA 93130. For further membership information contact Mary Wilk at [mwilk@cox.net](mailto:mwilk@cox.net).

Join our Facebook Group. Watch our speaker videos on [YouTube](#). Subscribe to our [Meetup](#) page to be notified of upcoming events.





Humanist Society of Santa Barbara  
P.O. Box 30232  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130

## HSSB Calendar

**Tuesday July 12, 5:00 p.m. HSSB Board Meeting.** Join as early as 4:45pm for socializing. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83592300667>. Members always welcome to attend.

**Saturday July 16, 3:00 p.m. *A History of U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Sanctuary Movement in Los Angeles*.** Professor Mario T. Garcia, UCSB Chicana & Chicano Studies. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88193881833>.

**Tuesday August 16, 5:00 p.m. HSSB Board Meeting.** Join as early as 4:45pm for socializing. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83592300667>. Members always welcome to attend.

**Saturday August 20, 3:00 p.m. *Darwin's Impact on Science Education*.** Dr. Andy Thomson, MD, psychiatrist, University of Virginia. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88193881833>.

**Sunday August 21, 3:00 p.m. Premier of the HSSB Production of *Inherit The Wind*.** . Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88193881833>.

**Tuesday September 13, 5:00 p.m. HSSB Board Meeting.** Join as early as 4:45pm for socializing. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83592300667>. Members always welcome to attend.

**Saturday September 17. *Humanism, Rationalism, and Religious Unrest in India*.** Babu Gogeneni.