

**FACT**  
**P.O. Box**  
**160881**  
**San Antonio,**

## FACT

is an association of atheists, freethinkers, agnostics, secular humanists, rationalists, skeptics, and other non-theists serving the purpose of preserving the separation of church and state and promoting Freethought through education.

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# A Matter of *FACT* & The Voice

June 2009

## Church and State and the Legislative Battle for the Heart of Texas

At our next monthly General Meeting of FACT, Eric Lane will present an update on the actions taken by the present legislature that affect church/state issues. Primary will be the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the attempt by certain board members to impose 'creationism' or so-called 'intelligent design' in the public school science classroom.

Why is this debate so important? What are the risks and potential consequences if intelligent design is taught alongside evolution? And why would SBOE members want to introduce non-scientific concepts into the science classroom? We will explore and discuss this and other critically important Church/State issues and their possible impact on the future of Texas students and citizens. Bring your insights and ideas as we dissect the outcome on Church/State issues of the latest Texas legislative session.

Eric Lane is the president of the San Antonio Chapter of Americans United. For the past 40 years Mr. Lane has been actively engaged in political issues on local, state, and national levels.

General Meeting, Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> @ 1pm  
Community Unitarian Universalist Church  
4818 E. Beverly Mae

## The New Creation Evidence Museum

The new Creation Evidence Museum in Glenrose, TX is scheduled to officially open on July 4, 2009. The day's program will be as follows:

- 10:00 a.m. "Search for Noah's Ark"  
Dr. Don Shockey
- 11:00 a.m. Emma Darwin's Bible (with her personal annotations)  
David Smith, President of a Bible Foundation, London, England
- 12:00 p.m. Prayer of Dedication for the new facility  
Dr. John Morris of ICR
- 1:00 p.m. Creation for Kids  
Professor Ian Juby
- 2:00 p.m. Creation Artifacts: Display of various original artifacts from the Creation Evidence Museum's collection  
Museum Director Dr. Carl Baugh

What better way to spend your Independence Day at the place where humans and dinosaurs once co-existed. You will be able to see Emma Darwin's Bible up close and view the notes she wrote in the margins and a first-edition copy of Isaac Newton's "Prophecy of Daniel."

Source: <http://www.creationevidence.org/>

## Faith-Based Initiatives

### Elected Positions:

President, Nick Lee  
 Vice President, Jane Tuck  
 Secretary, Jim Evans  
 Treasurer, Cathy Howard  
 Publicity, Jim Barrott

### Appointed Positions:

#### Newsletter

Publisher/Editor, Marc Janssens  
 Webmaster, Jim Evans  
 Discussion Group Host, OPEN  
 Librarian, Jimmie Barnes

### Texas Hill Country Freethinkers

(No Officers)

For Information contact  
 Julie Fisher:  
 zoezappa@hughes.net

### FACT MEMBERS:

FACT wants your participation in communicating through our newsletter. Please contribute letters, articles, book reviews, highlights and comments on church/state separation, quotes, drawings, cartoons, etc. Please send contributions to [FACT.newsletter@FreethinkersACT.org](mailto:FACT.newsletter@FreethinkersACT.org).

All submissions are subject to editorial revisions at the discretion of the publisher.

By using the definition of “Freethinker” as one who arrives at his/her own conclusions about things, rather than the commonly-used narrow non-Theist connotation, one can trace the philosophy of Freethought back to pre-Christian times. That was the premise of the talk given at the May General Meeting of FACT by Nick Lee. While most civilizations developed some concept of revealed truth emanating from a Godhead, there have always been skeptics who challenge dogma and think for themselves.

The honor roll of Freethinkers includes Confucius, Epicurus and other Greek Philosophers, down through the Renaissance (e.g., Erasmus, Bruno) and the Enlightenment (Descartes, Hobbs, Locke) and into the “Golden Age of Freethought” in the second half of the Nineteenth Century.

Even during those times when religion held sway, there were some in the bosom of the Church who questioned the party line, and some of them paid a heavy price. But the cumulative application of reason slowly chipped away at the power of the church, and led to the rise of secularism throughout most of the world.

In the United States, many individual Freethinkers have struggled to maintain the promise of the First Amendment, including Vashti McCullum, Edward Schemp, and Madelyn Murray O’Hair. Although the current political conditions, especially in Bible Belt states lead some to despair whether freethought can survive, the trend of history is with us, and demands that anyone who calls him/herself a “Freethinker” to stand up and be counted.

Nick Lee

## Pot Luck

On May 23 Nick and Vibeke Lee hosted a Pot Luck at their cozy house in Northwest San Antonio. More than 20 FACT members and friends showed up to enjoy free-flowing food, frivolity, and foolish talk. We screened a couple episodes of the hilarious Penn and Teller HBO series “BS”, toured the beautiful garden and brainstormed about ways to grow FACT.

Marc Janssens



## NDOP Protest

### by Sally Chizek

Something strange happened at the National Day of Prayer ceremony at City Hall steps on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Where were all the Christians raising their arms to the sky?

It was skimpy judging from other years, and had it not been for the children from eighteen (18) religious schools, it would have been lonely for the eight protesters. The participants, not all from FACT, were Al Scharf, Frank Hernandez, Hugh Henry, Odie Magee, Clem Wiechecki, a couple of strangers, and me.

Our numbers weren't anything to brag about either. University of Texas at San Antonio atheist group did not show up, but perhaps they were up to their eyeballs in finals.

We got some publicity, but even the event, usually very prominent in the SA Express-News, didn't get much ink. We had a brief scanning of the participants on TV at 9:00 p.m., which included us. My interview played on radio, on Friday, and a picture of Carmel (a Jew for Christ), showed me from the neck down (the other part was hidden by a protest sign) looking at her Bible trying to find the prohibition against tattoos, when she said, "Show me." Incidentally, it is Leviticus 19:28.

Frank and I got acquainted with Carmel as she was in front of us. I noticed she had tattoos on her neck (Star of David and others), and some on her ankles. I asked her if she knew that her Bible prohibited tattoos, that's when she said, "Show me." I also met a very nice Christian lady who teaches at a Catholic school. We had a very nice conversation, and she even gave me her name and asked me to call her.

It wasn't all social interaction, we had a lot of Christians challenging us with the usual: "We're a Christian nation.," "Darwin repented on his deathbed," "We have a right to pray anywhere we want," etc., etc.

I don't know if we accomplished much, but know they didn't. The weather which went up to 95 degrees (102 heat index) really cooperated. We meet at 10:00 a.m. at Panchito's for breakfast. The weather was cool with a slight breeze during the protest and only started getting hot towards the end. The car pool then proceeded to "Timbo's" for hamburgers. Whatever was or was not accomplished, we certainly had a good time being together to eat and talk.



**Every Monday at 12:30 and 8:30 PM**

Time Warner Digital Cable Channel 20

Grande Cable Channel 19

AT&T U-verse Channel 99

**FREETHOUGHT FORUM**

Hosted by Hugh Henry



FACT T-Shirts for Sale (Grey w/Black Logo)

Available Sizes: Small, Medium, Large, XLarge, 2X and 3X

Also Available: One Size Fits All Vests (Red)

Price for All T-Shirts and Vests: \$15.00

## Fahringer Fund Appeal

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) has established an annual \$1,000. Youth Activist Award in honor of Catherine Fahringer, and is soliciting donations in support of that award. I would like to encourage members and friends of Freethinkers Association of Central Texas (FACT) to join us in making a group donation.

Catherine was one of the founders of FACT and a very vocal activist for the separation of church and state, until her death in December, 2008. She was a prolific writer of letters to the editor and garnered sympathetic press coverage for her protests. She was also on the Advisory Board of the FFRF and active on the national level.

The Catherine Fahringer Student Activist Award will be granted by the FFRF to one high-school or college-age student, in recognition of his/her activism in defense of freethought or church/state separation. This would include protests against public prayers or school-supported religious observances, as well as speaking up for the freedom of conscience of non-believers.

I think it is fitting that FACT should provide financial support of this award. We have the closest connection to her, and many of us have been personally inspired by her courage. If you like, you may send a check in support of the FFRF Award to the FACT Treasurer, and we will send an aggregate check to FFRF:

FACT, P.O. Box 160881, San Antonio, TX 78280

Or, you may send it directly to:

FFRF, P.O. Box 750, Madison, WI 53701

(You may also contribute through a PayPal account at the website: [www.FFRF.org](http://www.FFRF.org))

In either case, make sure you include the annotation that is it for the FFRF Student Activist Award. Although donations are welcome anytime, I would like to get this special appeal done within the next 30 days.

Thanks so much!

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## Former Fundamentalist 'Debunks' Bible

by John Blake

Just so you know, Bart Ehrman says he's not the anti-Christ. He says he's not trying to destroy your faith. He's not trying to bash the Bible. And, though his mother no longer talks to him about religion, Ehrman says some of his best friends are Christian. Ehrman, a best-selling author and a professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is a biblical sleuth whose investigations make some people very angry. Like the fictional Robert Langdon character played by actor Tom Hanks in the movie "Angels & Demons," he delves into the past to challenge some of Christianity's central claims.

In Ehrman's latest book, "Jesus, Interrupted," he concludes: Doctrines such as the divinity of Jesus and heaven and hell are not based on anything Jesus or his earlier followers said. At least 19 of the 27 books in the New Testament are forgeries. Believing the Bible is infallible is not a condition for being a Christian. "Christianity has never been about the Bible being the inerrant word of God," Ehrman says. "Christianity is about the belief in Christ."

### **Critic: 'There's a touch of arrogance' about him**

Ehrman's claims have found an audience, and controversy. He's a fixture on History Channel and Discovery Channel documentaries on Christianity. He's appeared on National Public Radio, CNN and the BBC and talked about scribes misquoting Jesus on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Yet Ehrman's popularity also may be due to a larger trend. The books of people like Elaine Pagels, author of "The Gnostic Gospels," and Dan Brown, author of "The Da Vinci Code" and "Angels and Demons," resonate with people who believe there are parts of the Bible that the church left on history's editing floor.

Some scholarly critics say Ehrman is saying nothing new.

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### YOU BE THE JUDGE

Here is the original of a letter to the editor sent to the Express-News:

It is with dismay I learn that, once again, one of the observances of the National Day of Pray (NDOP) will be held on Thursday on the City Hall steps, with a proclamation to be read by the Mayor. (Express-News, May 2<sup>nd</sup>)

I am not dismayed to learn that people pray; they have a constitutional right to do that. (Although Christ admonished his followers not to do it in public or on street corners, Matt. 6, 5-6)

I am dismayed to learn that they are doing it on public property, with the endorsement of City officials. I am dismayed to learn that this particular observance is a specifically Christian event (inspired by a New Testament verse), excludes other religions, and is not even endorsed by most Christian denominations. This is not something that a governmental entity at any level should be endorsing or providing a public space for.

On the other hand, the NDOP website lists observances inside more than ten churches around San Antonio. That is where people of faith can come together, and I will defend their right to do that.

Just not on the City Hall steps that belong to all the citizens of San Antonio, which includes followers of Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, and many other faiths, or indeed, non-believers in any faith!

Nick Lee

Here is the version, as published, after editing:

I am dismayed that, once again, the observance of National Day of Prayer will be held Thursday on the San Antonio City Hall steps, with a proclamation to be read by the mayor. Americans have a constitutional right to pray, but this is not something government at any level should be endorsing or providing public space for. The National Day of Prayer Web site lists observances inside more than 10 local churches that same day. That is where people of faith can come together, and I'll defend their right to do that. Just don't do it on the City Hall steps. They belong to all citizens of San Antonio, including Jews, Muslims, people of other faiths and nonbelievers.

Nick Lee

Sent to letters@express-news.net on Friday 29 May 2009

#### Re. Mayor Hardberger's portrait

What's so unusual about a portrait of a departing mayor? Pictures of former mayors hang on the wall of the first floor (backroom). Sounds perfectly reasonable that one of Mayor Hardberger's portrait would also hang there. Of course, his portrait will be more expensive than say, Mayor Maverick's was when he departed. However that was a different time and a different economy.

What is not reasonable is that Mayor Hardberger prayed and read an approved proclamation about the National Day of Prayer during the ceremony of Christians and their prayers at the National Day of Prayer on May 7, 2009, on the steps of City Hall, San Antonio, Texas. Although he prefaced his prayer by saying it was his own opinion and not as Mayor of San Antonio, who could tell the difference. It isn't as though he wears a uniform while on duty, and could have stepped out of it when he wants to pray in front of citizens on the steps of City Hall. He certainly looked like the Mayor to me and it looked like he was officiating in his capacity as Mayor.

A citizen conducting business at City Hall on May 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to around 3:00 p.m. could not go in the front door. He or she would have to know that the back door was open.

But, that's not really the issue. The Constitution of the United States of America was being violated by, in this case, by Christians who wanted, yea believed they have the right to marry into Government. The Government of San Antonio is more than willing to let them. A banner stretched across the entry way of City Hall proclaiming the day, and it appeared that microphones and speakers were hooked up to municipal electricity (but, they may have brought their own and their own generators, I couldn't tell), and then our mayor is their prize speaker. With so many churches and halls available, why do they insist on organizing a religious ceremony on government property. No one is denying their right to pray, even though their own Holy Bible, prohibits praying in public, but just don't do it on government property.

Christians have a strange philosophy about an invisible being (the unknown, the unproven, and the unbelievable) being so conceited that he/she wants to be worshipped on the steps of City Hall. So, not the cost of the portrait of our mayor, but the permission to hold this rally and his praying and speaking (looks like a mayor, walks like a mayor and talks like a mayor) is what is "Not a pretty picture."

Sally Chizek

### HEY, LETTER WRITERS!

**We're looking for well-crafted letters having to do with the separation of church and state, atheism, or any other relevant topic. Members are encouraged to forward published letters, or ones which were rejected by the mainstream media, for publication with the date that they were submitted.**

**Send them to: [FACT.newsletter@FreethinkersACT.org](mailto:FACT.newsletter@FreethinkersACT.org) or PO Box 160881, San Antonio, TX 78280**

## Former Fundamentalist 'Debunks' Bible (Cont'd)

Bishop William H. Willimon, an author and United Methodist Church bishop based in Alabama, says he doesn't like the "breathless tone" of Ehrman's work. "He keeps presenting this stuff as if this is wonderful new knowledge that has been kept from you backward lay people and this is the stuff your preachers don't have the guts to tell, and I have," Willimon says. "There's a touch of arrogance in it."

Yet even many of Ehrman's critics say he has a knack for making arcane New Testament scholarship accessible to the public.

"He has a gift for clear thinking and an ability to present some complicated things in simple, direct ways," Willimon says.

Some pastors also say that Ehrman forces them to confront tough questions about the Bible in front of their congregations. "His take on the scriptures is a gift to the church because of his ability to articulate questions and challenges," says Rev. Guy Williams, a blogger who also happens to be a Methodist minister in Houston, Texas. "It gives us an opportunity to wrestle with the [Bible's] claims and questions."

Ehrman: There was no resurrection

Ehrman says that no one accepts everything in the Bible. Everyone picks and chooses. He cites some New Testament's references to the role of women in church as an example.

In the first book of Corinthians, Ehrman says, the Apostle Paul insists that women should remain silent in church (1 Corinthians 14:35-36). In the 16th chapter of the book of Romans, Paul's attitude is that women could and should be church leaders -- and he cites women who were serving as deacons and apostles in the early church, Ehrman says.

Ehrman backs his arguments with a deep knowledge of the culture and history of the New Testament world. He's written 20 books on early Christianity and is an authority on ancient manuscripts used to translate the Bible. His claims, though, take on some of Christianity's most sacred tenets, like the resurrection of Jesus. Ehrman says he doesn't think the resurrection took place. There's no proof Jesus physically rose from the dead, and the resurrection stories contradict one another, he says.

He says he doesn't believe the followers of Jesus saw their master bodily rise from the dead, but something else.

"My best guess is that what happened is what commonly happens today when someone has a loved one die -- they sometimes think they see them in a vision," Ehrman says. "I think some of the disciples had visions."

Ehrman says he immerses himself in the Bible, though he doesn't believe in its infallibility, because it's the most important book in Western civilization.

"I have friends who teach medieval English," he says. "They don't believe in Chaucer, but they think Chaucer is important," he writes in the conclusion of "Jesus, Interrupted."

### **The fundamentalist turns agnostic**

Ehrman once had a different attitude toward the Bible.

He was raised in the Episcopal Church in Lawrence, Kansas, and became a fundamentalist Christian at age 15 when he met a charismatic Christian youth group leader who reached out to him. Ehrman says he later persuaded his parents to embrace a more conservative brand of Christianity.

He says he became so devoted to the Bible that he memorized entire sections. He was convinced the Bible was "God's words."

But Ehrman says he began to develop doubts about the infallibility of the Bible after attending Princeton Theological Seminary to become a college Bible professor.

He even began to change his opinion of the Christian youth group leader who helped convert him. The youth leader visited Ehrman's father when he was dying of cancer in a hospital.

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## How Critical Do We Have To Think?

by Clem Wiechecki

Let's all put on our critical thinking caps so we can become familiar with what it is we are dealing with. I've heard some Atheists say that we have to cozy-up to Christians and other religious types in order to get their support to further our own agenda. We should use critical thinking as part of our repertoire in order to soften our approach in securing/obtaining political power/participation.

I call those Atheists; "Appeasement Atheists" (The two best examples of appeasement I can think of are the Neville Chamberlain and the Vichy French), because they are trying to work with religious thought processes and beliefs that are diametrically opposed to Atheism. Those "AA's" as I will call them believe that we can work together with people "within the system" who want to destroy Atheism and all that it stands for. Why would I want to work with someone who wants to deny me my rights as a citizen of the United States and to destroy the Constitution on which this country is based and replace it with a theocracy ruled by dictatorship, tyranny and fascism?

One should always negotiate from a position of power and Atheists in this country have no power to speak of. With no power, then what are Atheists supposed to do, be nice to the religious and hope they will throw us a bone? Catering to the enemy will not accomplish anything except provide time for them to further extend their plans.

Not only that but these same religious people know that Atheists want to eliminate all religious manifestations, so why should they let their guard down and let Atheists work with them to destroy what they stand for? Isn't that the height of hypocrisy; say one thing and do another?

Let's see; "Hey Mr. Christian, Atheists want to eliminate your god, your religion, your church and usurp your control of the state. Will you work with Atheists on that project? I certainly hope so, because Christians and Atheists can get a lot done together." Right!

Do you really think that Christians and other religious types are going to have an "Aha moment," and say; "Gee, We control the church and the state in this country, but we were wrong about our god and his religion, so let us drop our life-long beliefs and enmities and embrace Atheism in order to work together with our Atheist friends in making this country and the world a better place to live?"

Don't hold your breath! It will never happen anytime soon! The longer the AA's foster the belief that we have to work with Christians, the longer it will take for Atheism to take its proper place on this planet. Atheists have to work toward making our own rights because no one is going to give them to us.

"I don't know that atheists should be considered as citizens, nor should they be considered patriots. This is one nation under God." Pres. George H.W. Bush

When Pres. George H.W. Bush said that about Atheists, I knew he didn't include me. Right! I am a citizen, I served my country in the military for 20 years as a patriot and I am an Atheist. He was talking about some other Atheist down the street. Pres. G.H.W. Bush verbally discounted my whole life as if I didn't or shouldn't exist. How is any Atheist supposed to work with someone like that? What would it take?

Let's see, Atheists are supposed to calmly discuss the Atheist agenda with people who think the way G.H.W. Bush does? What do you think it would take for Atheists to take the challenge to their way of life seriously? When they open Atheist internment camps?

When Joe Christian says; "Atheists have no rights and should be removed from the face of the earth," I scratched my critical thinking cap and thought; gee, did he really mean that? He couldn't have been serious could he?

I'm supposed to work with people who denigrate Atheists in order for me to further an Atheist agenda? Just how far do you think an Atheist would get? An Atheist wouldn't even get in the door in an attempt to discuss anything politically substantial.

Even when liberal theists want to work with Atheists, how can there be a common goal? Why fight for separation of church and state when the theists have control of the church and the state? Why would a theist want to give up control of something just to help an Atheist? It will never ever happen. Theists are not going to give up anything they have power and control over. Atheists are going to have to take it from them. Why would an Atheist want to separate church and state? How about if Atheists eliminate the church and take control of the state?

[Continued on the next page](#)

## How Critical Do We Have To Think? (Continued)

How much appeasement/passivity/catering to the opposition do we as Atheists have to consider before we realize that it doesn't work? How many asses do Atheists have to kiss before something happens? How long is it going to take for Atheists to wake up and take our proper place in society?

Are we too smart? Are we too far above the crowd to be interested in the lowly politics which affect our "above the clouds" lives? Are we too good to take part in our democratic process? Do we really care where our country is going, and is it going there without us? Have we put too much "faith" in people like Bush who want to lead us to the "promised land?" What is the answer that it will take to get 35 million "unchurched" Americans including the 16 million professed Atheists off their American asses and on their feet to do something? 35 million mouths can make a lot of noise when they speak as one.

Every Christian that I have spoken to in the last 20 years has been asked the following question: "If I can prove to you that there is no god will you become an Atheist?" Every Christian has answered: NO!

That is what we are dealing with and Atheists are supposed to put on their critical thinking caps on in an effort to find a way to negotiate with that mind-set? It's not going to happen.

One of the reasons it's not going to happen is because of how Michael Bakunin sums it up: "The idea of God implies the abdication of human reason and justice; it is the most decisive negation of human liberty, and necessarily ends in the enslavement of mankind, in theory and practice."

Nowhere in the fictional bible is democracy mentioned because the gods are dictators and fascists. Nowhere in the old testament or new testament does Yahweh, El or Jesus outline any plan to govern any country. The gods and their followers took it for granted that governments would be run by infidels until the Messiah or the Kingdom of God arrived. We are dealing with something new concerning a "Christian Nation" and we need to find out how to combat it. How much critical thinking do we need before we do something?

Thanks to [positiveatheism.org](http://positiveatheism.org) for the Bush quote and [Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia) for the Michael Bakunin quote

## Former Fundamentalist 'Debunks' Bible (Cont'd)

The youth leader used a bottle of hotel shampoo to "anooint" his father, and tried to persuade his father to confess specific sins, Ehrman says. Ehrman says he was angry at the minister for acting 'self-righteous' and 'hypocritical.' "For a vulnerable high-schooler who is trying to figure out the world, a personality like that is very attractive," Ehrman says. "They're like cult leaders. They have all the answers."

Ehrman says he later became an agnostic because he couldn't find the answer to another question: How could there be a God when there is so much suffering in the world? An agnostic is one who disclaims any knowledge of God, but does not deny the possibility of God's existence. Today, Ehrman describes himself as a "happy agnostic."

But some people can't believe an agnostic can be happy, he says. They tell him that they're praying for him. Others say worse. They say he's being fooled by Satan and he's headed to hell. Some say he's the anti-Christ.

"I'm not that powerful," he says, laughing.

His family, however, feels no obligation to talk to Ehrman about his ideas on the Bible, Ehrman says. His mother, brother and sister remain conservative Christians. He once tried to talk to his mother about his new beliefs, but the discussion proved fruitless. "My mom is a strong evangelical," Ehrman says. "We talk basketball. We don't talk religion." Still, Ehrman says he still sends his mother and siblings copies of his latest books. They've never responded, he says.

"I imagine they're hidden in a back room," he says.

Whether it's his family, critics or students, Ehrman says he has a better handle on why he is so threatening to so many people -- some Christians worry they will make the same decision he has.

"I changed my mind," he says. "My students find me more dangerous that way. I really do know what they're talking about when they stake out an evangelical position."

Source:<http://www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/05/15/bible.critic/index.html>

## Chiropractic Fires Woman for Being an Atheist?

by Austin Cline

Amanda Donaldson has been in treatment for breast cancer and, just to add to her burdens, she's allegedly been fired from her job at El Dorado Chiropractic because Dr. Scott Dawson doesn't approve of the fact that Donaldson and her husband Brant are atheists. Dr. Dawson has denied the story and tried to defend his actions as owner of El Dorado Chiropractic, but his story doesn't quite ring true to me.

The Donaldson's claim that on March 26<sup>th</sup> "Dr. Dawson began threatening her over her job" because of Brant Donaldson religious opinions posted on 'The Cancer Chronicles' blog. Brant goes on to say in his blog that Dr. Dawson "...threatened to fire her if I did not remove the religious part of the entries...". For fear of consequences towards his wife, Mr. Donaldson removed his personal religious opinions from previously posted entries.

Brant also stated that Dr. Dawson "...would still pressure his religious viewpoint on her and threaten to fire her if she continued to be an atheist." And that his wife "...has been told that she is being punished for her lack of faith."

Source: AtheosToday

Can you imagine the outcry from Christian organizations if the doctor were an atheist who fired a Christian and told her that she is "being punished for her faith"? Can you imagine how such an incident would be used by Christian organizations to "prove" that there is anti-Christian conspiracy and that Christians must suffer oppression in America?

Yet here we have what appears to be a clear, unambiguous example of anti-atheist bigotry and anti-atheist discrimination. What's more, it's an incident that creates a significant amount of harm because not only did Amanda Donaldson lose a job in a bad economy, but she lost her health insurance as well — insurance which she needs more than the average person given her cancer. How likely do you think she is to get a decent job given how much time she has to keep taking off right now for treatment, and how likely do you think it is that a new insurance policy will do anything for her given all the exemptions for "pre-existing conditions" which they impose?

I don't think it would be to unreasonable to ask whether a case of discrimination like what this appears to be is ultimately also a case of trying to hasten a person's death simply because they don't share your religion.

Source: Excerpt from article posted on [www.atheism.about.com](http://www.atheism.about.com).



Professor Thompson proves once and for all that God does exist.

# Genesis Revisited: A Scientific Creation Story

by Michael Shermer

In the beginning—specifically on October 23, 4004 B.C., at noon—out of quantum foam fluctuation God created the Big Bang, followed by cosmological inflation and an expanding universe. And darkness was upon the face of the deep, so He commanded hydrogen atoms (which He created from Quarks) to fuse and become helium atoms and in the process release energy in the form of light. And the light maker he called the sun, and the process He called fusion. And He saw the light was good because now He could see what he was doing, so he created Earth. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

And God said, Let there be lots of fusion light makers in the sky. Some of these fusion makers He grouped into collections He called galaxies, and these appeared to be millions and even billions of light years from Earth, which would mean that they were created before the first creation in 4004 B.C. This was confusing, so God created tired light, and the creation story was preserved. And created He many wondrous splendors such as Red Giants, White Dwarfs, Quasars, Pulsars, Supernova, Worm Holes, and even Black Holes out of which nothing can escape. But since God cannot be constrained by nothing, He created Hawking radiation through which information can escape from Black Holes. This made God even more tired than tired light, and the evening and the morning were the second day.

And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the continents drift apart by plate tectonics. He decreed sea floor spreading would create zones of emergence, and He caused subduction zones to build mountains and cause earthquakes. In weak points in the crust God created volcanic islands, where the next day He would place organisms that were similar to but different from their relatives on the continents, so that still later created creatures called humans would mistake them for evolved descendants created by adaptive radiation. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

And God saw that the land was barren, so He created animals bearing their own kind, declaring Thou shalt not evolve into new species, and thy equilibrium shall not be punctuated. And God placed into the rocks, fossils that appeared older than 4004 B.C. that were similar to but different from living creatures. And the sequence resembled descent with modification. And the evening and morning were the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that hath life, the fishes. And God created great whales whose skeletal structure and physiology were homologous with the land mammals he would create later that day. God then brought forth abundantly all creatures, great and small, declaring that microevolution was permitted, but not macroevolution. And God said, "Natura non facit saltum"—Nature shall not make leaps. And the evening and morning were the fifth day.

And God created the pongidids and hominids with 98 percent genetic similarity, naming two of them Adam and Eve. In the book in which God explained how He did all this, in one chapter He said he created Adam and Eve together out of the dust at the same time, but in another chapter He said He created Adam first, then later created Eve out of one of Adam's ribs. This caused confusion in the valley of the shadow of doubt, so God created theologians to sort it out.

And in the ground placed He in abundance teeth, jaws, skulls, and pelvises of transitional fossils from pre-Adamite creatures. One chosen as his special creation He named Lucy, who could walk upright like a human but had a small brain like an ape. And God realized this too was confusing, so he created paleoanthropologists to figure it out.

Just as He was finishing up the loose ends of the creation God realized that Adam's immediate descendants would not understand inflationary cosmology, global general relativity, quantum mechanics, astrophysics, biochemistry, paleontology, and evolutionary biology, so he created creation myths. But there were so many creation stories throughout the world God realized this too was confusing, so created He anthropologists and mythologists.

By now the valley of the shadow of doubt was overrun with skepticism, so God became angry, so angry that God lost His temper and cursed the first humans, telling them to go forth and multiply themselves (but not in those words). But the humans took God literally and now there are six billion of them. And the evening and morning were the sixth day.

By now God was tired, so He proclaimed, "Thank me its Friday," and He made the weekend. It was a good idea.

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/>

## June Events

### June 2<sup>nd</sup> – THCF First Tuesday Lunch

1:00 pm: Meet other Freethinkers at the Texas Hill Country Freethinkers' First Tuesday Lunch (held monthly)

Host: Julie Fisher

Discussion Topic: "Torture-Effective? Legal?"

**Naple's Italian Restaurant**  
**215 W. Bandera Rd, Boerne**

### June 10<sup>th</sup> – THCF Lunch in the Northwest

1:00 pm - Meet other Freethinkers at the Texas Hill Country Freethinkers' Lunch (held monthly)

Host: Julie Fisher

Discussion Topic: "Spirituality"

**Ilsong Garden**  
**6905 Blanco Rd**  
**NEW LOCATION!**

### June 20<sup>th</sup> – The Lunch Bunch

11:30 am: Join us for good food before the Meeting

**Sarika's Thai Restaurant**  
**4319 Medical Dr (Near Fredericksburg Rd)**

### June 20<sup>th</sup> – FACT General Meeting

1:00 pm: General meetings occur on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month (unless otherwise announced)

Speaker: Eric Lane

Title of Presentation: "Church and State and the Legislative Battle for the Heart of Texas "

**Community Unitarian Universalist Church**  
**4818 Beverly Mae East (off Babcock)**

### June 27<sup>th</sup> – FACT Discussion Brunch

9:00 am - Join us for a brunch and discussion the last Saturday of every month.

Host: TBD

Topic: TBD

**DENNY'S Back Room**  
**4510 Fredericksburg Rd**  
**(South of Crossroads Mall)**

## July Events

### June 7<sup>th</sup>—THCF First Tuesday Lunch

### July 15<sup>th</sup>—THCF Lunch in the Northwest

### July 18<sup>th</sup>—General Meeting

### July 25<sup>th</sup>—FACT Discussion Brunch

June 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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## FACT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to :** FACT, P.O. Box 160881, San Antonio, TX 78280-3081

### ANNUAL DUES (Jan-Dec)

A.	Individual Paying Member	\$30
B.	Family (2 or more members)	\$42
C.	Active Duty Military/Full-time Student (non-voting)	\$18

- Membership dues are due in January.
- Dues are non-refundable.
- New members who join after the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the year will pay a prorated amount for the remainder of the year.
- Members who paid dues the previous year, but who are paying late, will be liable for the entire year.
- Donations in addition to dues are always welcome.