

FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENT

AUGUST

August 5	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
August 8*	Sunday 12:30 P.M.	NYC Atheists Sunday Brunch.
August 12	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
August 17**	Tuesday 7 P.M.	NYC Atheists Meetup.
August 19	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
August 22	Sunday 9 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	NYC Atheists Street Tabling — Madison Ave. (43/44 St.)
August 26	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
August 26***	Thursday 6:30 P.M.	Forum of Atheist Issues and 8/29 Demonstration Details
August 29****	Sunday 1:30 P.M.	Republican National Convention Demonstration See page 5 for more details

SEPTEMBER

September 2	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
September 9	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
September 12*	Sunday 12:30 P.M.	NYC Atheists Sunday Brunch
September 16	Thursday 8 P.M.	NYC Atheists Cable Show (Manhattan Cable Ch. 67)
September 21**	Tuesday 7 P.M.	NYC Atheists Meetup
September 26***	Sunday 1 p.m.	Ed Stephens: <i>Psychiatrist's perspective: Why Atheism Is a Tough Sell.</i>

* **Brunch Location:** EURO Diner at 126 East 28TH Street. (Between Lexington and Park Avenue.)

Brunch Cost: Order from Menu — Reservations not required.

** **Meetup Location:** Call 212-330-6794, 2 Days Before the Event.

*** **Meeting Location:** 352 7TH Avenue (Between 29 and 30TH Street at the *Source of Life Center* on the 16TH Floor.)

**** **Location To Be Announced:** See Website: NYC-ATHEISTS.ORG or Call: 212-330-6794.

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NYC Atheists Inc. is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational association. Its meetings and membership are open and all are welcomed (both nonbelievers and believers), *i.e.* atheists, agnostics, humanists, free thinkers, skeptics, separation-of-church/state advocates, and individuals who are questioning and searching beliefs.

SEE PAGE 8 FOR SPECIAL YEAR END MEMBERSHIP OFFER



PRESIDENT'S SERMON
WHAT WE EXPECT FROM THE NATION'S
PRESIDENT AND GOVERNMENT

We want a President and Government that wants and works to achieve the **Total Separation of Church and State** and that is **Honest, Moral** and has **FAMILY VALUES**.

Ken Bronstein

Honesty requires that the truth be told even if it is detrimental to one's objectives and policies. Dishonesty includes purposely omitting or leaving out facts and coercing individuals to conclusions favorable to your position and spinning/rationalizing data and information to your favor. **Morality** requires that one tries to understand, has empathy for others and does not simply base all actions upon one's own religion or theology. Appointed individuals, such as judges and administrators, must also meet these requirements.

Family values must include the support of non- traditional arrangements, family planning and reproductive rights.

EVERYBODY PLEASE VOTE

NO VOTE/NO COMPLAINT

Contact me with your comments: Ken Bronstein at NYCATHEISTS@AOL.COM or 212-535-7425.

JULY EVENTS/MEETINGS

July 1 — Cable Show #2

Jeremy Hubbell was our guest. He discussed the need for critical thinking, how ones religion impacts decision making and how spirituality allows the rationalizing of deadly combat and warfare.

July 4 — Barbecue

Thirty hungry non-believers had a great time at the NYC Atheist's July 4th barbeque, which was hosted by Eric and Elaine Stone at their home in Chappaqua, NY. We all want to thank the Stones for their generosity. We were also entertained by the very funny *America's Only Black Atheist Comedian*, Joe Dixon.

July 8 — Cable Show #3

Jeremy Hubbell again was our guest, expanding his discussion of religion and politics.

July 11 — Sunday Brunch

Fifteen people attended our Sunday Brunch. Three of the attendees, who were not members, joined NYC Atheists taking advantage of our special \$10 year end membership offer. After brunch, nine of us went to see the movie, Fahrenheit 9/11, followed by discussion of the movie while nibbling on appetizers at a local Chinese Restaurant.

July 15 — Cable Show #4

Ken Bronstein returned and interviewed our host Dennis Horvitz about his road to Atheism.

July 17 — Street Tabling

We had a good day of street tabling day in Greenwich Village, returning to the area where a year ago we had our first NYC Atheist street fair tabling. Fifteen NYC Atheists' members volunteered, in working at our Street Fair Tabling.

July 18 — Harbor Cruise

There is no doubt that members of NYC Atheists are party animals. All had a fabulous time aboard the retired NYC Fire Department Fireboat Harvey. The food was great, traveling first north up the Hudson and passing the Aircraft Carrier, *Intrepid*, then heading south to the Statue of Liberty. We saluted the Lady with our 18,000 gallons of water per minute from our eight water cannons. (very impressive). Then headed around the battery, under the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. Seeing the NYC skyline was impressive. A once in a lifetime event.

July 22 — Cable Show #5

Allen Gardiner, a NYC Atheist member discussed his Path to Atheism.

July 29 — Cable Show #6

Bob Morgan, a NYC Atheist Board member, discussed his Road to Atheism.

FUTURE/EVENTS

Aug. 5, (Thursday) Cable show #7
8:00 – 8:30 P.M.
Manhattan Cable:Ch. 67
RCN Ch. 110

Pat Berger, NYC Atheist Member
discusses her Path to Atheism

Aug 8, (Sunday) Brunch:
12:30 P.M. — Euro Diner,

126 East 28th St. (Park/Lexington)

Aug 12, (Thurs.) Cable Show #8
8:00 – 8:30 P.M.

Manhattan Cable: Ch. 67
RCN Ch. 110

Guest: TBA
Subject: TBA

Aug. 17, (Tues.) NYC Atheists
Meetup: 7:00 P.M.

Call 212-330-6794 three days
before event for location

Aug 19, (Thurs.) Cable Show #9
8:00 – 8:30 P.M.

Manhattan Cable Ch. 67
Guest: TBA

Aug 22, (Sunday) Street Tabling
9:00 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.

Madison Ave. (43/43rd Street)

Aug 26, (Thursday) Forum and
8/29 Demonstration Details
6:30 P.M.

Aug 26, (Thurs.) Cable Show #10
8:00 – 8:30 P.M.

Manhattan Cable Ch. 67
Guest: TBA

Aug 29, (Sunday) Republican
National Convention
Demonstration

1:30 P.M.
Details: TBA

MY ROAD TO ATHEISM

By Dan Gislao

I arrived at my position concerning the existence of a god after a long period of questioning. It started when I was in fifth grade. Patty Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army were in the news, and cults were on everyone's mind. The latest government-inspired panic had cultists hiding behind every tree, waiting to drag your child off for indoctrination.

At school the teachers distributed a pamphlet telling parents how to tell if their children were being influenced by a cult. I read the pamphlet on my way home. It described the various means cults used to recruit and indoctrinate followers. Tools such as deprivation, mindless repetition, surrender of the ego, confession of sins, isolation and peer pressure, guilt by association with sinners and oppressors, and the need to atone. Raised Roman Catholic, I never bought into the religion. Now this pamphlet had suddenly put me into a state of terror. My parents were indoctrinating me into a cult!

It was at this point that I first questioned the teachings of the Catholic Church. I saw how Catholicism differed with Christianity, and tried to reconcile these differences but could not. By the time I reached high school I saw religion as silly, but the question of the existence of a god was something I didn't care about. I did not see how it affected me either way.

When I was twenty-one I became a letter carrier with the U.S. Postal Service. In my time there I learned that wherever one finds Stupid People, be it in post

offices, prisons, or presidential cabinets, one finds a God Squad. At my office one learned quickly that management was The Enemy and their reason for existence was to abuse workers. Push back and one could often rely on the laziness of The Enemy to make them seek an easier target, usually a member of the God Squad. The God Squad would tolerate all abuse, and then cite Jesus as a rationalization for their mistreatment. Jesus tells them not to judge, to love their enemies, to submit to those who oppress, to turn the other cheek, and that they are no better than those who steal from them. What made people act in such a cowardly, irrational manner?

At this time I decided to read the Judeo-Christian Bible. Not parts of it, but the entire book, cover to cover. It disgusted me. Having discarded Catholicism years earlier, I did the same with Judaism and Christianity. The former was superstition, the latter a death cult. As I learned of other religions, I realized how dangerous they are. I witnessed the differences between reality, faith, and wishful thinking. I saw how the teachings of religions and belief in a god or gods were antithetical both to the natural desires and happiness of humankind, and the preservation of civil society where individual rights are cherished and defended. I now can question every premise, whether it comes from a religionist or a statist. I am proud of many things but perhaps proudest of being an atheist.

<p>SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP OFFER SEE PAGE 8</p>

WHY AM I AN ATHEIST?

By Bob Morgan

Born in Massachusetts, I was raised in the Congregational Church (successor to the old New England Puritan church). Then I came to Columbia University and the City of New York.

At Columbia, my eyes were opened to a plethora of philosophical, artistic and scientific visions. Learning the basic theories of Freud and Marx made me question the basic enigmas of individual free will and wellsprings of social behavior. Then I came to Friedrich Nietzsche: his discovery of the dual nature of my favorite ancient Greeks; his view of the leaps of evolution; and his responsible atheism.

For a while, I called myself an apatheist (I didn't care if there was a god or not) and proposed that the universe could have started from the "explatron" (the primary piece of matter that had existed forever and ever). This was fun for a while.

In graduate school, I studied anthropology and read about the roles of myth and religion. I concluded that all of these religions were but human projections, products of our drive to understand and control events. Religion served an evolutionary role. Its explanation of origins and its sanctification of social rules bolstered human faith in the ability to reason and confidently act to ensure the group's survival. Suddenly, I saw religions as mentally-created veils to cover the face of mystery and rescue believers from the paralysis of meaninglessness: they were but rationalistic constructs to bridge

the abyss of not knowing what the What Is actually is.

Perhaps if there were but one religion, I might have become no more than an agnostic: the choice would be to believe or not to believe. But there are so many of them: all claiming to be the universal truth even though they are in conflict, not only with science, but with each other. For most individuals including myself, the only true religion is the one that they were fed —along with their pablum.

I asked myself: How can this obvious brainwash actually be a freely willed discovery of the "great truths" of meaning and eternal existence?

Atheists, for all their praise of pursuits of answers, are able to live within the sense of mystery manifest in the brave confession "I don't know".

Ironically, I became an atheist because the religions seemed, not beyond the pale of logic, but too rationalistic. Viewed objectively, each made sense in its own way. But if all could not be true, how could any ONE, with its incomplete vision, be true? Yet Voltaire's challenge remained: Is human reason strong enough to support a social structure? Is humanity doomed to need religion? Is a new one evolving for our needs?

This led to my final reversion to the atheism of my birth state. I was fortunate to have heard Joseph Campbell early in his career. Among his books is a four volume work, *The Masks of God*. His scientific views on myth augmented my earlier thoughts.

Now I have come to a conclusion: Atheism is but the beginning of a new era of humanity: a post-religious one. Liberating myth from religion, we can dance naked to multi-universal music. All we have to do is to unfold our own Myth — a myth of connectedness to all of What Is.

But that is another story.

My Path to Atheism

By Jake Shafer

I have been an Atheist since the age of seven. I grew up in a household with a Jewish mother and a Christian father. Neither of them wanted to upset my grandparents by choosing one religion over another, so they chose to raise my brother and me without any religion. I do not think I was ever very religious. On January 28, 1986, the NASA Challenger exploded. I was very upset that night. I was still trying to grasp how such a horrible thing could have happened to the astronauts. Then President Reagan came on TV and at the end of his speech, he used the word God. His use of the word God made me realize that I could not believe in a being that would kill all those innocent people. I refused to believe that an all-powerful God would use his powers for such a horrible act. From that day forward, I refused to buy into religion.



STEVE ALLEN
COMEDIAN, ATHEIST

**AUGUST 29 – 1:30 P.M.
Republican National Convention**

As of this date, we do not know the exact location of our demonstration.

In our discussions with the New York City Police Department, they have stated that the present plans are to use 8th Avenue south of 31st Street as the designated demonstration area. We will not know our exact location until about August 23. Once we learn our location, we will alert you via email, post it on our website: *NYC-ATHEISTS.ORG* and on our telephone answering service. (212-330-6794)

Suggestions:

Appearance/Clothing:

Conservative and neat

Behavior: *No Yelling, No*

Confronting, No Amplified Sound

Personal Items/Care: *Go to the bathroom, Bring Sunglasses, Hat, Water, Snacks, Comfortable Shoes, Camera, Video, Notepad and Pen.,*

Equipment/Signs: *NYC Atheists will supply Slogan Signs, Handouts.*

After the demonstration we will meet for a critique.



**JEAN-PAUL SARTRE,
ATHEIST**

**JUNE 27- MEETING
GERRY DANTONE**

Director of Long Island Secular Humanists

Subject: Humanism

The basis for humanistic ethics lies in a fact: that humans care about their own lives and the lives of others. Either we care about our lives and the lives of others or we do not. In essence, ethics is a fact of humanity, not a logically derived decision. We want happiness for ourselves and for others. Ethics makes it more possible for us to achieve that happiness. One could reduce it further by saying that our own happiness is partially and greatly dependent on knowing that others, particularly those close to us, are also happy and doing well. In this way, all happiness is self-centered while at the same time we acknowledge that concern for others is part of that happiness. I personally could not be happy if my children are not also doing well, and to a lesser degree, if there is much human misery among many people of the world. Human nature generally dictates that the closer others are to you, the more you care.

If this “fact” of human nature were not true, then we would not have any need for ethics. If we did not care about our own happiness or that of others, anything would be fine, including all sorts of misery. I think the history and collective wisdom of humanity is tremendous evidence that humans deeply desire happiness, which might be defined as a state of affairs that a human would prefer.

Of course, not all persons are made happy by the same thing; wide latitude must be given

humanity to find its happiness. Only the infringement on the right of others to pursue happiness should be a basis for prohibiting some behaviors.

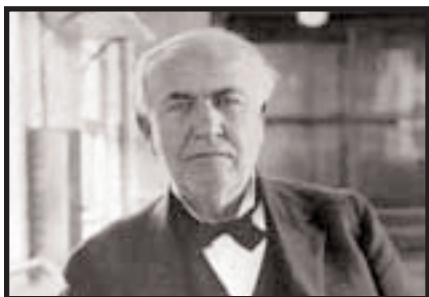
Another exception is those people who do not care about what happens to themselves or others. The vast majority of humans agree that those who do not care must be made to abide by the laws that the vast majority (or less ideally, those who have great power though not a majority) have decided serves to protect that majority. Sometimes the majority is wrong or oversteps what should be prohibited, and debate should be allowed on those issues. But the fact remains that the group in power will restrict behavior based on some notion of overall good, misguided or otherwise. A humanist will work to correct oppression of others because he or she cares.

Dogma, secular or religious, works to make people overlook their natural compassion for others. If one sticks to a principle or dogma even if the evidence is contrary or if a continued behavior leads to human misery, then one is being dogmatic. At that point, one is caring more about a lifeless dogma than people. Exactly what use is an ethical system that accepts human misery as an outcome? Humanists are consequentialists and judge the ethics of an action by the results, and not just the short term results, but the full effects of an action.

That is why freethinking must be a central aspect of humanism: one cannot cling to principles that do not work in practice. Even humanism has its stubborn adherents of both the left and right wing (or centrist wing.)

The question of “why should I care about others” is pointless. Either you care as a fact of nature, just as you have five fingers on each hand, or you don’t care. Do you ask, as if it’s a conscious decision, “why do I have five fingers on hand?” Either you do or don’t. And note that as a fact of nature that some people do NOT have those five fingers, and some people do not care. However, human consensus is clear: we value caring.

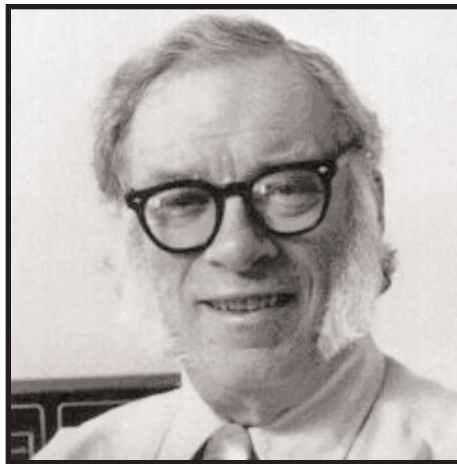
In promoting a system of ethics, what system would you prefer your neighbor hold: One that promotes and accepts concern for others, or one that is self-concerned or unconcerned? Humanism does not guarantee better character in people. It may only lay a foundation and an outlook of the world that nurtures caring. In essence, it is up to humanity to determine what it naturally values and what behaviors enhance our lives. We cannot impose a code or morals; we can only foster independent thinking and freedom to inquire. What we do with it will be the measure of humanity.



Thomas Edison, American inventor (1847-1931).

“Religion is all bunk.”

“I have never seen the slightest scientific proof of the religious ideas of heaven and hell, of future life for individuals, or of a personal God.”



Isaac Asimov

“I am an atheist, out and out. It took me a long time to say it. I’ve been an atheist for years and years, but somehow I felt it was intellectually unrespectable to say that one is an atheist, because it assumed knowledge that one didn’t have. Somehow it was better to say one was a humanist or agnostic. I don’t have the evidence to prove that God doesn’t exist, but I so strongly suspect that he doesn’t that I don’t want to waste my time.”



Ethan Allen (1738-1789)
American Revolutionary

“In those parts of the world where learning and science have prevailed, miracles have ceased; but in those parts of it as are barbarous and ignorant, miracles are still in vogue.”

HAVING FAITH

After starting a new diet, I altered my drive to work to avoid passing my favorite bakery.

I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning and there in the window were a host of goodies. I felt this was no accident, so I prayed, “Lord, it’s up to you....if you want me to have any of those delicious goodies, create a parking place for me directly in front of the bakery.”

And sure enough, He answered my prayer....on the eighth time around the block, there it was!

Quotes from various Church Bulletins

The sermon this morning: “Jesus Walks on the Water.”

The sermon tonight: “Searching for Jesus.”

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be “What Is Hell?” Come early and listen to our choir practice.

For those of you who have children and don’t know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare’s “Hamlet” in the church basement on Friday at 7 P.M. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Sunday School: Children will be led in sinning and Bible study.

Don’t let worry kill you. Let the church help.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

After the worship service...

This evening at 7 p.m. there will be a hymn sing in the park across from the church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

Announcement in a church bulletin for a national Prayer and Fasting Conference: "The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals."

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.

Ladies, Ladies

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.

Ladies' Bible Study will be held Thursday at 10 a.m. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Choir Practice

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

The rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing "Break Forth Into Joy."

Which Door Do I Use?

The Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. Please use the back door.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The Members of the Congregation

Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24th in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5 p.m. Prayer and medication to follow.

No Good Deed Will Go Unpunished

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

Watch Out for Those Potlucks

Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and have a healthy lunch.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hospitality.

How Much Money Should I Give?

The associate minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours."

From an ex-Catholic who is a NYC Atheist Member

Most people know that in the Middle Ages, the Catholic church sold what were called "Indulgences" to bring in revenue. These were pieces of paper that were supposed to grant you so many years off your time in purgatory, depending on how much you paid.

I recently discovered that there is a souvenir shop in St. Patrick's Cathedral. I went to the shop and on a crazy impulse, asked if they sold Indulgences.

The clerk looked puzzled. "Indulgences?" she said. "No, I don't think we have any in stock. I'll have to ask Father Terry."

**JOIN
NYC ATHEISTS
See Next Page for
Membership application.**

**NYC ATHEISTS
NEW P.O. BOX
Cooper Station
P.O. Box 93
NY, NY 10276-0093**

RECENT NYC-ATHEIST ACTIVITIES



July 4 — Barbecue

Ken Bronstein (President) thanking Eric and Elaine Stone for hosting our July 4th Barbeque.



July 4 — Barbecue

Joe Dixon, "The only Black Comedian" entertaining us at the Barbeque.



July 18 — Harbor Cruise

Members of NYC Atheists ready to depart for Harbor Cruise and Picnic.



July 18 — Harbor Cruise

Our Fireboat pumping 18,000 gallons of water per minute.

NYC ATHEISTS: SPECIAL 2004 YEAR END MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

First Name: _____ **Last Name** _____
Street Address: _____ **Apt No.:** _____
City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____
Email: _____@_____ **Phone:** (____) _____ - _____

NYC Atheists Inc. is a non-profit (501c), non-partisan, and educational association with the purposes and goals:

1. To promote the total and absolute separation of church and state
2. To educate and inform the public about Atheism
3. To provide a forum for examination and discussion about Atheism
4. To develop and engage in educational, cultural, charitable, and social activities that are beneficial to the members of NYC Atheists Inc., the Atheist community, and the community at large.

YOUR 2004 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

\$ 10 — SPECIAL 2004 YEAR END MEMBERSHIP — \$ 10

DONATION: \$ _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**CHECK PAYABLE TO: NYC ATHEISTS INC. – SEND APPLICATION TO:
 NYC ATHEISTS INC. MEMBERSHIP — COOPER STATION P.O. Box 93 NY, NY 10276-0093**